Orchard Tourism: Exploring New Prospects Beyond Farming in Shimla Region

Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Hotel Management

By

Jyoti Thakur

Registration Number: 41800536

Supervised By

Dr. Uma Pandey (22821)

Assistant Professor

School of Hotel Management and Tourism,

Lovely Professional University

Jalandhar

LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PUNJAB

2025

DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that the presented work in the thesis entitled **"Orchard Tourism: Exploring New Prospects Beyond Farming in Shimla Region"** in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.)** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision **Dr. Uma Pandey**, working as Assistant Professor, in the School of Hotel Management and Tourism of Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations, due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of other investigator. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.

(Signature of Scholar)

Name of the scholar: Jyoti Thakur

Registration No.: 41800536

Department/School: School of Hotel Management and Tourism

Lovely Professional University,

Punjab, India

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph. D. thesis entitled **"Orchard Tourism – Exploring New Prospects Beyond Farming In Shimla Region"** submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the reward of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** in the School of Hotel Management and Tourism, is a research work carried out by **Jyoti Thakur (41800536)**, is bonafide record of her original work carried out under my supervision and that no part of thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or equivalent course.

(Signature of Supervisor)

Name of supervisor: Dr. Uma Pandey

Designation: Assistant Professor

Department/School: School of Hotel Management and Tourism

University: Lovely Professional University,

Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

This research work is an attempt to address the ongoing two problems in the mountainous state of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla being the nucleus of this research. Himachal is symbolic of natural beauty and horticulture production. The administrative division of Shimla comprises four Districts - Solan, Sirmaur, Kinnaur, and the state capital Shimla itself. The research area represents 40% of the tourist inflow and 83% of the horticulture produce of the state. The tourism market has flourished in the state in the last 3 decades leading to unplanned and haphazard construction and deteriorating the overall tourism aesthetics. The negative impacts of mass and seasonal tourism and over-saturation of the tourist destinations are evident causing stress on the civic infrastructure. From the rural residents' perspective, the research tries to highlight their farming situation. The primary challenges hindering profitable and efficient horticulture include the small size of landholdings and insufficient mechanization. The technical scale economies and lack of support systems impact their continuance of farming. Orchard Tourism; a subsidiary of agritourism has been proposed as a solution to resolve these issues. Tourism would be a complimentary activity for these Orchardists to enhance their Incomes while retaining their Orchards. Simultaneously, the tourism market could be diverted to the rural countryside from the overwhelmed tourist spots.

As Orchard tourism is a relatively new concept in Shimla, this research first represents exploratory findings to bring to light potential development and challenges anticipated. Using thematic analysis, the prospects of developing Orchard tourism from the perspective of farmers, entrepreneurs (homestay operators) and industry experts are gauged. Findings indicate that both financial and non-financial aspects would play a crucial role in guiding Orchardist's choices to diversify their operations. Foremost, Orchards are the rural pride of their community and the continuance of farming emerged as a principal theme. Secondly, there is a positive intention to transform Orchards into tourism resources with the integrated use of rural resources. However, there are Challenges anticipated in transforming the orchard into a tourism product. These farmers have voiced their fears and Expectations they have from the Local System and Government.

After ascertaining the provider's viewpoint, the research next tries to identify the available strengths and possible opportunities for Orchard Tourism Development in this region. The themes generated from qualitative analysis provided constructs for the quantitative survey which was conducted on 410 orchardists in the same region. The sample respondents representing Orchardists have been chosen using Cluster and Quota sampling. Employing EFA, CFA and SEM, a five-factor model was developed. The factors are- a) Hope of Rural Pride, b) Intention to transform Orchards into a tourism resource, c) Integrated use of rural resources, d) Expectation from the government and local system and e) Expectation for learning and self-evolution. The findings reveal positive and noteworthy influences. The expectation of Government support emerged as a positive factor influencing participants' intentions to transform their orchards and learning/ self-evolution opportunities, subsequently affecting both the Hope of rural pride and the integrated utilization of rural resources. Additionally, a mediation analysis was conducted, indicating that the intention to transform orchards played a complete mediating role in the relationship between government support and both rural pride and integrated use. However, it was found that learning did not serve as a mediating factor in these relationships. Thus, Key strengths were identified in factors like local pride, the intention to transform, and judicious use of rural resources. Promising opportunities for further growth were recognized in Government support and the availability of learning opportunities.

The next part of the research aims to analyze the factors influencing tourist visit intention to the Orchard destination. It is essential to comprehend the nuanced preferences and expectation levels of tourists to improve the overall tourism experience and guarantee long-term success. The research further examined the relationship between tourist motivation, expectations, orchard tourism attributes, and intention to visit an orchard. Using a structured questionnaire, a survey was conducted on tourists and 515 responses were collected. The sample has been drawn using the Purposive sampling method. Data has been analyzed using SPSS-AMOS. The descriptive statistics for Orchard Tourism Attributes, Tourist Expectations, Tourist Motivation, and Tourist Intention reveal predominantly positive perceptions and consistent levels across participants. The structural model suggests positive influences of Tourist Expectations and Motivation on Orchard Tourism Attributes. Subsequently, there is a positive impact of Attributes on Tourist Intention. Expectations indirectly affect Intention through their

impact on Attributes, while Motivation has a direct influence on Intention. The research affirms the presence of both partial and full mediation effects. These findings advocate a positive outlook on Orchard Tourism Attributes and favorable tourist opinions. Generally, tourists hold high expectations across various aspects of this form of travel. Opinions about allocating time and financial resources to orchard-based tourism reflect diverse perspectives on the value of such experiences. Notably, a consistent level of motivation was observed among the research participants.

The results of this investigation provide important implications and can aid in designing and implementing marketing programs for Orchard tourism development and enhancement. Building linkages between Orchards and tourism is critical for realizing a demand-supply relationship between urban and rural areas in Shimla. It has wide potential for economic, social and environmental benefits. The issues related to product development, education and training, marketing and government support stand as barriers to the development of orchard tourism in Shimla. Government participation in rural tourism initiatives has been very limited. Existing policies seem inadequate, requiring reforms to realize the potential of orchard tourism with a focus on community engagement.

Theoretical implications and avenues for future research are abundant. Acknowledging the research's limitations prompts further exploration. Key areas to consider include the geographical scope, and recognizing potential limitations in applying findings to areas with different cultural contexts. Additionally, examining policies related to orchard tourism and comparing them with other domains could highlight gaps and opportunities. Further analysis of environmental impacts, such as water usage and waste management, would enhance understanding. A longitudinal study tracking changes in orchard tourism over time could provide valuable insights into its sustainability. Investigating tourist behavior and preferences regarding orchard tourism could guide the development of tailored offerings.

Keywords: *Orchard Tourism, Orchardist, Sustainable, Integrated horticulture, Rural Pride*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"Dedicated to my parents- Smt. Santosh Thakur & Late Shri Joginder Singh Thakur"

I extend my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, **Dr. Uma Pandey**, whose expertise and guidance have been instrumental in shaping this thesis. I am highly grateful to **Dr. Rohit Chauhan** for his unwavering support and valuable input at every stage of this research process.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my family for their love, understanding and encouragement during this challenging yet rewarding journey. Their support has been the cornerstone of my academic pursuits.

To everyone who has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the completion of this thesis, I offer my sincerest thanks…

Dated:16-04-2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

"And the blossoms are in plenty: an almond blossom; a plum blossom; an apricot blossom; a peach blossom; a cherry blossom; an apple blossom; all are magical moments for anyone living or holidaying in an orchard"

(Blossom Holidays Himachal, 2014).

Introduction

Tourism is a multifaceted phenomenon that significantly shapes economies, stimulates cultural exchange, and promotes sustainable development worldwide. Its value, importance, and need stem from its ability to generate employment, stimulate economic growth, preserve heritage, and nurture mutual understanding among diverse societies. One of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the world, Tourism has undergone many expansions and diversification over the years. Tourism is a powerful economic driver, generating substantial revenue and employment opportunities not only for developed countries but also for many developing countries (Zhao & Xia, 2019). The travel and tourism sector worldwide contributes 7.6% to the global GDP and creates 22 million new jobs (WTTC, 2022). This sector's growth stimulates investments in infrastructure development, accommodations, transportation, and related services, creating a ripple effect throughout the economy. The 'United Nations World Tourism Organization' (UNWTO, 2024) reports that international tourism receipts touched $1.4 trillion in 2023, demonstrating its significant contribution to the balance of payments and economic stability.

While tourism brings numerous benefits, it also carries the responsibility of sustainable development. The impacts be they environmental or social are not always beneficial for local communities and their economies. Recognizing this, the sustainable tourism movement aims to minimize negative environmental impacts while maximizing socio-economic benefits. Sustainable practices encompass responsible resource management, biodiversity conservation, and the inclusion of local communities in tourism planning and decision-making processes. Such practices promote cultural exchange and mutual understanding among people from different backgrounds. As tourists engage with local

communities, traditions, and heritage sites, they gain insights into diverse cultures, encouraging appreciation and tolerance. Such interactions contribute to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and promote peace-building efforts worldwide. By promoting community-based tourism initiatives, destinations empower residents to actively participate in tourism activities, leading to improved livelihoods and socioeconomic development. This approach helps distribute the benefits of tourism more equitably among all stakeholders (UN Tourism, 2017).

1.1 Rural and Agri Tourism

Modern-day tourism has become more 'experiential' demanding new forms of tourism with the potential to offer authentic and innovative experiences to tourists. One of the alternative forms of tourism is orchard tourism, which is synonymously termed farm tourism and agritourism in different places across the world. A rapidly growing segment of the tourism industry that offers visitors the opportunity to experience rural life, agricultural activities, and the beauty of orchards, this form of tourism not only provides unique and immersive experiences for travelers but also offers numerous benefits to agricultural communities, local economies, and the preservation of cultural heritage.

This research aims to identify and evaluate various prospects of developing orchard tourism in the Shimla region as an alternative and sustainable tourism that will help the region's distressed farming community. This chapter first introduces the background and context of farm tourism and orchard tourism specifically, followed by the problem statement identified, the research aims, objectives, and questions formulated about the problem, the relevance, and finally the theoretical lens used in the research.

Tourists travel for novelty, escape, relaxation, and self-development (Pearce & Lee, 2005). There has been phenomenal tourism growth in the last century. However, this growth was limited to certain destinations. The world's greatest tourist destinations have been some of the most popular cities where tourists draw in large numbers for variety, resonance, and excitement. This concentration of tourist traffic in established destinations leads to the development of mass tourism. Mass tourism has been described by Urry (1990) as a collective gaze by tourism seekers for whom authenticity and naturalness don't matter**.** The congestion and over-saturation of favorite mass tourist destinations around the globe called for more novel and diverse forms of tourism. The

United Nations World Tourism Organization wants to make tourism better for the environment and communities. They emphasize programs like Tourism for SDGs to achieve this goal ("Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030", 2017).

Having witnessed the superficiality and negative impacts of mass tourism, the new-age tourist seeks novel travel with sensitivity towards the destination, people, and belief system. Most of these alternative, niche, or special interest tourism resources are available in rural areas or the countryside (Roberts & Hall, 2004.) Tourists with higher levels of awareness, interest in culture, and environmental consciousness are opting for alternate forms of tourism (Hall & Mitchell., 2005). Alternative tourism is when people tour a place, which is unique to the usual tourist destinations. It is a window to the real-life experience of a rural lifestyle, miles away from the hustle and bustle of our monotonous cities. Visitors prefer to interact more with the local people rather than simply visiting the attractions of these tourist destinations. The local culture and communities are highlighted over mainstream tourism. Unlike the damages caused by mass tourism, alternative tourism aims to reduce the damage to the environment by being ecologically sensitive and avoiding the undesirable social and cultural impacts of large-scale tourism developments.

Agritourism as a practice has been there for many centuries, it was conceptualized in the last few decades. People living in urban areas used to travel to rural areas to meet their relatives and friends. This used to give them a break from their busy and stressful city life. These trips rejuvenated their bond and connection with rural life, its culture, and traditions. The change in tourist travel trends was reported by James Maetzold (2002) "People are taking more and shorter trips, doing more traveling by car, combining business travel with vacations, looking for new experiences, adding diversity to their experiences, traveling as a family, and looking to go back to their roots." Going back to one's roots and cherishing that cultural heritage with their family was a big driving force. Shift to a modern lifestyle due to rapid urbanization and migration of the rural population towards urban areas; primarily for employment has been witnessed in the past few decades. It eventually resulted in fewer visits to relatives and lesser acquaintance with the rural areas.

Agritourism presents the agriculture and farming lifestyle both as a tourist destination and an attraction. It is a form of 'special interest tourism' which caters to the needs of modern tourists who wish to explore and familiarize themselves with agricultural activities. Initially, this concept was commenced and thus developed in Europe and North America, and later was followed by its spread and adoption in many countries across the world. In 2004, Mr. Pandurang Taware, a farmer and entrepreneur, introduced agritourism in India. He created the 'Agri Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC)' in Baramati, Maharashtra.

Agritourism is studied by researchers under different product categories. There is a lot of divergence in agritourism research at the conceptual level (Barbieri, 2020). People sometimes use terms like agritourism and agro-tourism to refer to the same thing as farm tourism and rural tourism. Different authors have different ways of conceptualizing agritourism, but they are all connected ideas (Fleischer & Tchetchik, 2005; Yang et al., 2010).

1.2 Orchard tourism

Orchard tourism is a niche market in the business of horticulture and tourism. It can be more broadly defined to include travel where orchards and farms are critical components of the overall experience. The tourist gets to experience the original and rural country life amidst natural surroundings. The hosts let their farms open to these tourists besides offering a comfortable stay and local cuisine. Orchard tourism is travel motivated by gardening. It is a farm-based business where farming and tourism go hand in hand. A native farmer allows the tourist to view the system of fruit growing, harvesting, and post-harvest handling. It gives an insight into the daily life of rural people. At the same time, it also helps the farmers to generate additional revenue and employment from their farms.

Theoretically, the concept of Orchard Tourism is fairly new but it has been experienced in several countries for the past many years. It is a well-established sector in countries like the USA, UK, France, China, New Zealand, etc. The practice of visiting Farms for recreation has been as old as the late 1800s when families used to travel to meet their friends and relatives. This would give them respite from the summer heat. In the 1920s, Visiting the countryside gained more popularity as automobiles were widely being

used. Again, in the 1930s and 1940s, rural recreation gained momentum as people were escaping cities due to the Great Depression and World War II. This led to the development of various farm activities such as horseback riding, farm petting zoos, etc. during the 1960s and 1970s. It was during the 80s and 90s of this era, when vacations and commercial tours to these farms and 'bed and breakfast operations', were popularized (Oregon Agritourism Handbook, 2018).

Tourism in farms has experienced significant growth globally, with various regions implementing unique initiatives to integrate agriculture and tourism. In China, Cui et al., (2021) analyzed the spatial distribution of picking orchards, identifying key factors such as terrain, urban proximity, and economic conditions that influence orchard tourism. They emphasized the need for strategic planning to enhance the appeal of these attractions. In Taiwan, agritourism has become increasingly popular, with the government establishing recreational areas around farms and fishing villages. By integrating produce, nature, and festivals, Taiwan has developed over 75 recreational farming zones and licensed nearly 317 recreational farms, significantly contributing to the agricultural industry's revenue (Wang & Hao, 2023).

In Catalonia, Spain, the Fruiturisme project in Aitona offers experiences of viewing fruit trees in bloom. Vallbona and Farran (2023) conducted an in-depth study on the role of tourism as an economic driver in rural areas, highlighting the significant support from the Aitona Town Council and the collaborative efforts of the local community in creating an ideal environment for this recognized tourist product. In Oman, Abri et al., (2023) assessed the recreational value of Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar, a mountainous area known for its pomegranate cultivation. They found that the consumer surplus per trip was approximately five times the average travel cost. The study also revealed that higher densities of orchards positively influenced both the demand for recreation and the resultant consumer surplus.

Orchard tourism contributes to diversifying rural economies by generating additional income streams for farmers and rural communities. These activities create opportunities for farmers to supplement their agricultural income, especially during off-seasons, and stimulate entrepreneurship and small-scale business development in rural areas. Not only as an economic driver, but it is also an effective tool for nutritional security, poverty alleviation, and large-scale employment. It can serve as a major source of

income for the skilled and unskilled in the rural (Awasthi et al., 2013). The tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh is ready to witness this new phenomenon of orchard tourism.

Orchard tourism is important for keeping farming traditions alive. Showcasing the horticulture activities in the rural surroundings helps generate appreciation and awareness amongst the tourists. When people visit working orchards, they get to see how farms work and understand the importance of local produce. It brings educational opportunities for visitors, essentially for children and tourists visiting from big crowded cities. Horticulture activities of picking, packing and processing fruits, volunteering in fieldwork, and attending workshops on the latest farming techniques help people understand more about farming. It helps to connect with our nature and natural resources and the people who live in the rural areas. This also brings people from the city and the countryside closer, helping them to understand each other's lives and cultures. The word "agritourism" holds different meanings to different people around the world. This leads to confusion and debates about creating policies and support programs for this novel industry. (Quella et al., 2021) propose that even though there are some specific definitions for certain situations, there should be a common contextualizing of agritourism; to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts.

The **operational definition** of orchard tourism in the context of the present research may be, 'Orchard tourism can be defined as presenting the horticulture and farming lifestyle, along with associated practices in the rural surrounding as the tourist destination as well as attractions by an orchardist'.

1.3 Scope of the Research

Once the summer capital of British India, Shimla holds a chief place among tourists for its natural beauty and colonial history. It is one of the leading tourist destinations in the country. As per recent data, the state witnessed an influx of 1,51,00,277 visitors (domestic and international) in 2022; an upsurge of 167.87% from the previous year (HPTDC, 2023). Most of the visitors plying to Shimla region do not get to experience the rich and authentic bio-cultural diversity contained in the rural. To overcome the seasonal mass tourism and to decongest the tourist traffic from popular destinations, the state government must dwell concept of alternative tourism. Tourism in orchards

can help solve many problems in rural Himachal, such as joblessness, improving the lives of the local community, supporting education, and providing opportunities for women and young people. It also encourages traditional arts and crafts, preserves cultural heritage, and safeguards the area's natural resources and environment.

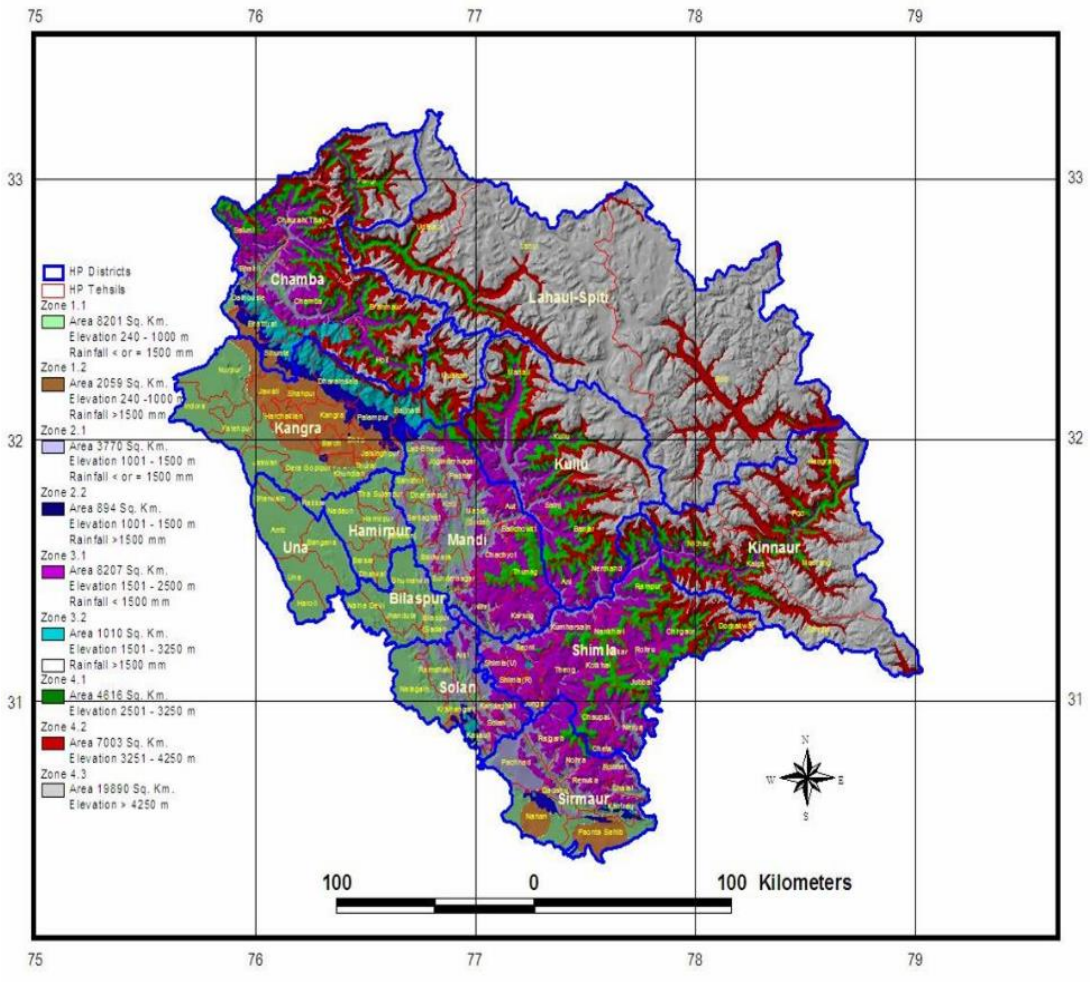
The present research is focused on the development of the orchard tourism sector in the Shimla region of Himachal Pradesh, India.

1.4 Research Area

Himachal Pradesh has 12 Districts which are administratively grouped into 3 Divisions- Shimla, Mandi & Kangra. Shimla division has 4 Districts under as Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur & Kinnaur. More than 90% of the state population is rural (Census, 2011) and thus, dependent on agriculture or Horticulture. Of the entire area available for farming, only 75 percent is suitable for cultivation. From this, only 13 percent is used for active farming, including areas being cultivated and those temporarily left unused. Because of small land plots and terraced fields, it's challenging to use machines for farming in this region. The majority of the land belongs to marginal and small farmers (86%), and less than 15% lies with medium and large-scale farmers (Agricultural Statistics 2022). Because Himachal Pradesh has the right geography and weather, there has been a change in how land is used over the last few decades. More land is now used for growing fruits and vegetables rather than traditional crops. The area under fruit cultivation has increased from 79.2 hectares (1950-51) to 2,35,785 hectares (2021-22). (Statistical Yearbook 2022-23).

Figure 1.1

Agro-climatic map of Himachal Pradesh (Research Area-Shimla Region: Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Kinnaur)



Note: From Department of Agriculture, Himachal Pradesh

The state possesses diverse agroclimatic conditions, making it suitable for cultivating a wide variety of horticultural products. These include horticultural crops ranging from 'temperate to sub-tropical varieties' such as mushrooms and vegetables, flowers, tea, hops, and medicinal plants. Except for fruits that thrive in warm, humid coastal regions, almost all types of fruits grown in the country can be cultivated in Himachal Pradesh.

The state is categorized into four agroclimatic zones based on elevation and climate suitability for specific crops (Department of Agriculture - Himachal Pradesh):

1. **Low Hill (including Valley areas and plains):**
    - Elevation: 365-914 meters Amsl (above mean sea level).
    - Rainfall: 60-100 centimeters.
    - Suitable Fruit Crops: Citrus, Pear, Strawberry, Plum, Mango, Guava, Litchi, Loquat, Fig, Ber, Papaya, early grape varieties, Jackfruit, Banana.
2. **Mid Hills (Sub Temperate):**
    - Elevation: 915-1523 meters Amsl.
    - Rainfall: 90-100 centimeters.
    - Suitable Fruit Crops: Pear, Strawberry, Kiwi Fruit, Stone fruits (Peach, Plum, Apricot, Almond), Persimmon, Pomegranate, Pecan nut, Walnut.
3. **High Hills and Valleys in the Interiors (Temperate):**
    - Elevation: 1524-2742 meters Amsl.
    - Rainfall: 90-100 centimeters.
    - Suitable Fruit Crops: Apple, Soft Pear, Strawberry, Cherry, Walnut, Almond, Chestnut and Hazelnut.
4. **Cold and Dry Zone (Dry Temperate):**
    - Elevation: 1524-3656 meters Amsl.
    - Rainfall: 24-40 centimeters.
    - Suitable Fruit Crops: Apples, Prunes, Drying type Apricot, Almond, Chilgoza (a type of pine nut), Pistachio nut, Walnut, Hazelnut, Grapes, and Hops.

The nature and geography of the state have played a role in developing horticulture (growing fruits and vegetables) in the upper areas and mid-hills, while the valleys are

used for growing cereals. The state government and farmers have taken advantage of this, making the state known as the 'Horticultural State of India.' Apples are the main fruit crop, and in the year 2022-23, the state produced 672.34 metric tonnes of apples (Statistical Yearbook 2022-23). Most of the apples come from five districts: Shimla, Kinnaur, Mandi, Kullu, and Chamba.

Geographically, the Shimla division – the research area, is characterized by its hilly and mountainous terrain, a common feature across all districts in Himachal Pradesh that influences agriculture, tourism, and lifestyle. The division with districts Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur, and Kinnaur, represents 83% of the total horticultural produce of the state (Agriculture statistics, 2022) and 40% of tourist inflow (Tourist statistics, HPTDC 2023). The region boasts of a range of agro-climatic zones, agricultural practices, and socio-economic conditions that mirror those of other districts in Himachal Pradesh. This diverse yet representative sample ensures that valuable insights achieved from the findings can be generalized to the whole state. Similar to the agricultural practices in other districts, the farmers in the Shimla division are engaged in mixed farming, which includes horticulture, floriculture, and the cultivation of traditional crops. The terraced farming technique is common across the region as well due to the hilly terrain. From low-altitude areas in Solan and Sirmaur to high-altitude regions in Kinnaur, this diversity makes it an ideal area to study different orchard practices and their impacts, with findings applicable to other districts with similar conditions. For instance, the apple orchards in Shimla and Kinnaur share growing conditions with those in Kullu and Mandi, ensuring that insights into apple tourism can extend to these regions. By including districts with different elevations, the research captures a range of microclimates, allowing the study to cover the spectrum of conditions affecting orchard tourism, from lower foothills to high mountains. Studying the impact of altitude on fruit quality and harvest timings in Kinnaur can provide insights relevant to high-altitude areas like Lahaul-Spiti and Chamba. Additionally, the districts within the Shimla division are renowned for their fruit production, particularly apples in Shimla and Kinnaur, and peaches, plums, and other stone fruits in Solan and Sirmaur, providing a strong foundation for tourism centered around fruit cultivation and harvesting. The varying seasons in these districts provide opportunities for different types of tourism activities throughout the year, such as blossom tours in spring and harvest tours in autumn, making it an attractive study locale for understanding seasonal impacts on

orchard tourism. The uniform socio-economic conditions across the state, including reliance on agriculture and tourism, ensure that strategies for improving orchard tourism can be generalized to other districts. The cultural and historical significance of the Shimla division resonates with the common cultural heritage shared by Himachal Pradesh, allowing cultural festivals promoting orchard tourism in Shimla to be adapted and implemented in culturally rich areas like Chamba and Kangra. The well-developed tourism infrastructure in the Shimla division can serve as a model for other districts looking to develop or enhance their tourism offerings. The shared characteristics facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practices between districts, promoting sustainable agricultural and tourism development. Himachal Pradesh is known to offer a variety of tourism experiences due to its diverse landscapes and cultural richness. Shimla division, being a popular tourist destination, already has a well-developed tourism infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, and hospitality services. The region captivates tourists seeking adventure tourism, ecotourism, Raj era, and spiritual tourism but incorporating orchard tourism can create a well-rounded and enjoyable experience that caters to diverse interests and ages. Being a native of Shimla, the researcher possesses an intrinsic understanding of the region's socio-cultural, economic, and environmental conditions. The four adjoining districts form a contiguous region of rich orchard landscapes. The geographical proximity of these 4 districts facilitated a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the region's horti tourism dynamics.

Shimla: Shimla is the present capital of Himachal Pradesh. Popularly known as the "Queen of Hills", Shimla was also the former summer capital of colonial India. It continues to attract a large number of tourists with lush green hills and snow-capped peaks. Shimla or "Shyamala" is the commercial and cultural hub apart from being the educational center of the state. Shimla is the "heartland of orchards" and Apple remains the favorite cash crop of most of the horticulturists. British missionaries introduced apple cultivation in Kotgarh during the early 19th century. However, the credit for the commercial growing of apples goes to American Missionary Samuel Evans Stokes who imported American varieties of apples. Soon this fruit revolution spread across the state. Apple alone contributes to 67234 tonnes (83%) out of 81461 tons of fruit produced in the state (Department of Agriculture HP, 2022).

Alongside the Indo–Tibetan highway, one can see old and new apple orchards in Mashobra Valley, Kufri, Theog, Narkanda up till Kinnaur. On the other axis, plenty of orchards are visible towards Kotkhai, Jubbal, Rohru, Chaupal, and Chanshal heights. The lower and middle belts of Shimla also bear temperate and tropical fruits like cherries, plums, apricots, nectarines, peaches, walnuts, and pears. The popular tourist destinations of Kufri, Fagu, Narkanda, Hatu Peak, and Hatkoti are overcrowded during the tourist season. There are beautiful treats at Kotkhai, Jubbal, Kumarsain, Thanedar, Chirgaon, and Rohru which remain unexplored. The best time to visit Shimla is considered to be from April to June and October to December. The blossoms of these orchards begin in February and last up to April. July to October is the harvest time of most of these crops. Thus, orchard tourism can attract tourists during the lean tourist season and elevate tourism throughout the year. There is an increasing demand for rural and orchard tourism by the urban population living in the cities. These people want to enjoy rural life but there is a lack of such type of facilities. Hence, it is an opportunity for the farmers to create additional income sources and develop orchard tourism centers.

Solan: Solan remains the hub of vegetable and stone fruit production. The region grows plenty of plums, apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches, and pears & the higher hills around Chail also grow apples. The region is full of commercial floriculture & mushroom farms. The famous 'Dr. Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry' located at Nauni, is the nucleus for conducting research & introducing many new fruit varieties. Sadhu Pul Valley is laden with acres of flower fields producing gladiolas, carnations, marigolds & other flower crops. The townships of Dagshai and Kasauli are remnants of the cantonment that the Britishers built. From May to July, the Shimla - Solan highway turns literally into a roadside market with local fruits and vegetables.

Sirmaur: Sirmaur is known for pilgrimage & Tourist centers of Paonta Sahib & Renuka Ji. However, there is much more to explore beyond that. Strawberry Fields in Nahan and Paonta, Mango and Kinnow Orchards around Bir Bikramabad & famous orchards of Rajgarh offer plums, peaches, apricots, pears as well as apples. Rajgarh boasts a renowned reputation for its exceptional quality, taste, and size of peaches, earning it the distinction of being recognized as the Peach Valley of the region. The peach orchards, sprawling over approximately three thousand hectares in Rajgarh,

predominantly cultivate the popular July Albert variety of peaches. Habban Valley, Haripur Dhar, & Rajgarh have some of the most beautiful untouched tourist spots. Chur-Chandni is the highest Shivalik mountain chain.

Kinnaur: Kinnaur is known as one of the finest fruit producers in the world. The varied produce of Kinnaur are apples, almonds, dried apricots, grapes and raisins, chilgoza (edible pine) & the local liquor "Angoori". Kinnauri Beans & Kala Zeera (Cumin) are also sought-after products of the valley. Kinnaur is a popular tourist destination amongst adventurers and Eco-Tourist. There are many places of interest such as Kalpa, Nichar, Sangla Valley, Kamru, Chitkul, Ribba, Moorang, Pooh, Nako & Chango.

Given the backdrop and importance of the Shimla Region, in the context of Orchard and tourism, it was most logical to select it as a place of research.

1.5 Rationale and Need for Research/ Statement of Problems

The research problem identified revolves around the issue of over-tourism in the tourist destinations of Shimla. The urban and suburban areas of Shimla have been witnessing tourism for ages. Shimla has always been known for its scenic beauty and rich colonial heritage. Apart from this, religion and culture also attract a lot of pilgrims. Once known as the "Queen of hills," Shimla is now facing threats due to excessive tourist inflow, resulting in a concrete and plastic wasteland. The peak seasons witness an overwhelming number of tourists, causing congestion and strain on civic infrastructure. This influx has led to environmental degradation, pollution, and weak construction techniques in demand-driven tourism infrastructure. The unprecedented heavy rainfalls in the year 2023 witnessed massive infrastructural and human loss in the state which is majorly attributed to haphazard constructions and cuttings/mining. Moreover, Shimla being in a seismic zone VII makes it vulnerable to earthquakes, further exacerbating concerns. As a consequence, Shimla is losing its charm as an eco-tourist destination, and the local community is growing hostile due to the aftermath of over-tourism. Despite the benefits, mainstream tourism has acquired negative connotations, prompting policymakers, residents, and visitors to express serious concerns. Local culture and social system suffer due to mass tourism and ignoring the carrying capacity of the place. In addition to local issues, global problems like resource depletion and environmental degradation, including tourism's impact on climate change and the

effects of adaptation and mitigation measures on travel patterns, need to be considered (H.P Tourism Policy, 2019).

The state of Himachal Pradesh has the highest rural proportion at 90% (Government of India, 2011). While horticulture remains a significant income source, the state economy is also boosted by tourism and hydropower. However, the farming community faces several challenges. Reliance solely on horticulture is inadequate due to small-scale individual production and the prevalence of small land holdings, with an average size of 1.0 hectares as per the 2015-16 Agricultural Census.

Challenges like increasing costs of fertilizers, pesticides, farming equipment, and uncertainties in weather affect horticulture production. Researchers like Sharpley (2009) and Su et al. (2019) have talked about Agritourism as a solution to minimize the negative impacts of tourism while benefiting rural communities. Adopting Horti-tourism as a sustainable approach can strengthen farmers' economies, mitigate crop failure risks, solve market issues, and promote rural development (Gyawali et al., 2022).

The integration of orchards and tourism into a commercial enterprise can create new tourist destinations, yielding dual benefits from both sectors. To address the challenges faced by low-income farming communities and reduce tourism pressure on cities and towns, comprehensive solutions need to be identified. Regularising policies on integrated tourism approaches is vital in the current scenario where such strategies are lacking.

To escape the seasonality factor and to promote tourism in the countryside of Shimla, orchard tourism is the need of the hour. It will aid in the economic development of the rural areas along with promoting socio-cultural heritage. Ecotourism individually can’t shift the trend right now. Adventure tourism though a well-established sector by now; is usually not cherished by families and the elderly. Orchard Tourism can provide holistic development by providing opportunities for rural populations at their home and tourists seeking novelty and authentic experiences.

Very few studies are undertaken in this area not only across the state but also across India. Fresh and new researches need to be conducted to understand the Agri practices and develop literature from a tourism management perspective.

1.6 Objectives of the Research

1) To explore the potential of orchard tourism development in the Shimla region.

2) To understand the strengths and opportunities for orchard tourism in the rural environment of the Shimla region.

3) To assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations.

Significance: This research is significantly important because orchard tourism is a novel and unexplored concept not only in the region but in the state as well. Agritourism for diversification is a well-researched and strategically implemented technique across the globe but holds fewer inputs in India and for geographically tough terrains like Himachal Pradesh. The methodological approach taken to establish the objectives is a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches validating the findings thereof. The conceptual model developed for this research is new and can be applied to any other horticulture destination. This research work firstly aims to minimize the issues of over-tourism at existing destinations in urban space by substituting these with alternative tourism attractions and destinations in rural areas. This in turn will provide benefits of tourism to a larger proportion of the population living in these rural locations. Secondly, this work tries to highlight the rural offerings of the state prevailing in the form of horticultural assets infused with the cultural lifestyle. Tourism in the Shimla region has primarily been depicting the colonial culture of the Raj era, pilgrimage, or most recently some adventure sports masking the ethnic culture and horticultural lifestyle of the majority of the population of the state. The state has the highest percentage (90%) of the rural population in India and horticulture is the chief earning source. Thus, to develop orchard tourism to diversify the tourism product in Himachal Pradesh and simultaneously showcase the rural cultural heritage of the state, this research was undertaken.

1.7 Theoretical Lens:

"To explore the potential of orchard tourism development in the Shimla region," the most suitable concept that aligns with this first objective of the research is the concept of "Rural Tourism" with a focus on "Agritourism."

Rural tourism, including agritourism, can help rural areas grow economically beyond just farming. Agritourism is known to provide tourists with authentic and indulging experiences. Orchard tourism is a type of agritourism, which is basically about connecting tourists with rural life, traditions, and local culture. In this case, it focuses on letting tourists experience orchards and learn about how fruits are grown. This research looks at how these experiences can attract tourists to the orchard region. It also explores would this activity bring tourists and local communities together, promoting understanding and cultural exchange. Agritourism is often good for the environment and local culture, and understanding its potential in Shimla could help develop tourism practices that benefit everyone.

Thus, research here is focused on rural tourism, specifically agritourism, to figure out how orchard tourism can help Shimla's rural development and provide genuine tourism experiences.

For the second research objective, "To understand the strengths and opportunities for orchard tourism in the rural environment of the Shimla region," the concept of "Destination Competitiveness" is best suited. By conceptualizing Destination Competitiveness, we look at the strengths of Shimla to stand out as an orchard tourism destination and attract more tourists compared to other places. This involves finding unique points like natural beauty, cultural heritage, warm and hospitable locals, and other factors that make it different from other places. It may also involve aspects related to a variety of orchards, methods of farming - traditional or modern, and local products that may interest tourists. Destination competitiveness also examines the availability of tourism-related infrastructure and services in the projected areas like the rural areas of Shimla. This includes transportation, accommodation options, and other services that will support orchard tourism. The target market and potential tourist segments can be identified too. The involvement of local communities, government agencies, tour operators, and orchard owners can help to develop and promote orchard tourism in the best way possible.

“To assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations” which is the last objective of this research, the “Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)” by Ajzen (1990) is proposed. TPB will help in understanding the factors that may influence visitors’ intentions to engage in this specific tourism activity.

By doing so, stakeholders can design more effective strategies to attract tourists to orchards in Shimla and enhance their overall experience. The unique aspects of orchard tourism in Shimla, such as scenic beauty, fruit picking, and nature walks, can be highlighted in the light of TPB and simultaneously marketing visitors' pleasant experiences in the orchards. Environmental and Cultural Benefits can be emphasized by the eco-friendly and sustainable nature of orchard tourism.

Encouraging satisfied visitors to share their positive experiences through reviews and testimonials, can significantly influence potential tourists' subjective norms, making them more likely to visit orchards based on the recommendations of others. By involving local communities and residents to promote orchard tourism in Shimla, tourists will perceive that the local community supports and values this activity, and their subjective norms will become more favorable. Providing clear information about the orchards, including their locations, accessibility, and facilities available, and addressing any concerns about transportation and infrastructure will enhance tourist's perceived behavioral control. Additionally, TPB can be used to devise strategies to overcome concerns related to costs by offering affordable tour packages and Seasonal Variability by offering diverse activities and attractions in the orchards throughout the year to attract tourists during different seasons. To evaluate the effectiveness of the applied strategies, conducting surveys or interviews with visitors can help gauge their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control towards orchard tourism in Shimla. This feedback can be used to refine and improve the tourism offerings continuously.

1.8 Research Methodology

The methodology adopted to carry out the present research is scientifically derived from the above research objectives. The research work is designed to quantify the collected primary and secondary data and interpret the same by adopting suitable statistical tools. The details of the methodology are as follows.

Research Design

In most tourism studies, people use surveys and questionnaires to collect information. But as per the need of this research, more detailed information was required. So qualitative methods have also been used specifically in objective 1. Even though the

idea of orchard tourism has been studied in different places as farm tourism or agritourism, but it's fairly new in this research. A descriptive research design with qualitative and quantitative methods was chosen to get a better understanding.

The availability of tourism products in rural areas that have the potential to attract tourists was explored through thematic analysis. It will help cater to the demand for non-standardized and heterogenized tourism commodities.

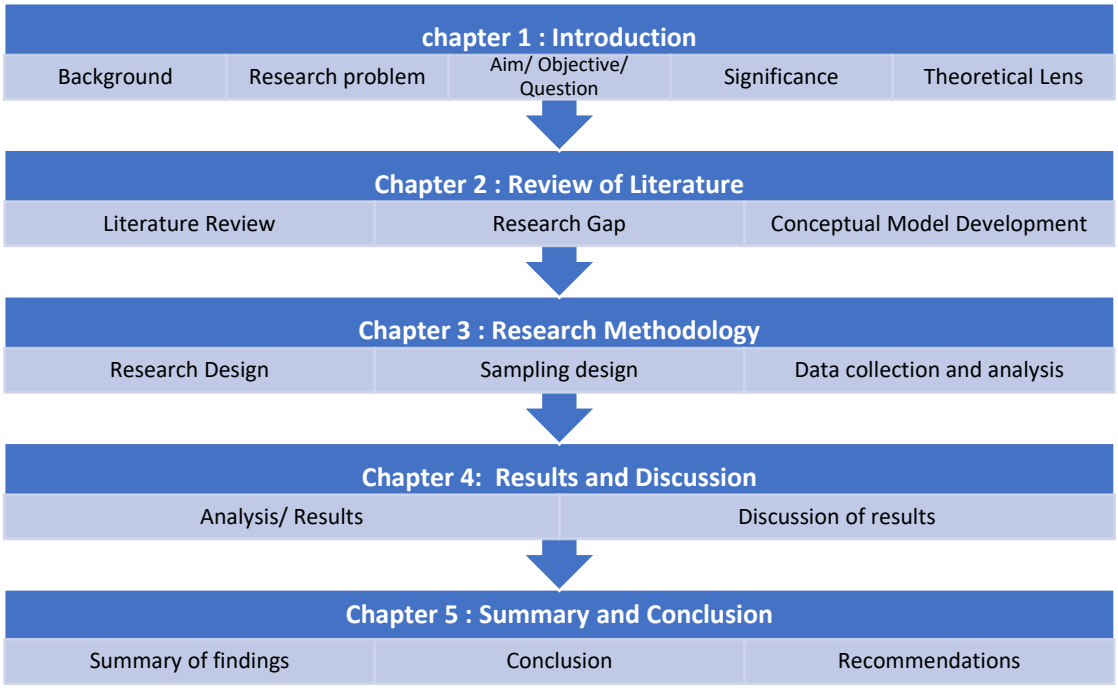
The review of the literature also provided the relevant constructs for the research. The elements of agri and farm tourism highlighted in the literature were utilized in the context of the Shimla Division. Also, the present research focuses on both the demand and supply side of the orchard tourism business perspective. The research instrument used is the questionnaire for tourists and potential orchard tourism operators (farmers/ orchardists), which was designed with inputs from derived themes, various studies and recommendations from experts.

There are two types of samples involved in this research i.e. potential operators/ farmers and tourists. The sampling techniques adopted for the achievement of the first and second objectives are cluster sampling and quota sampling. For accomplishing the third objective, the purposive sampling technique was applied.

1.9 Structural Outline of Research

Figure 1.2

Schematic overview of the chapters



Overview of the research: The first chapter of the thesis starts with an introduction, giving background, and focusing on the research problem identified for this research. Further, it states the aims, objectives, and research questions identified. Finally, the significance of this research and theoretical lens are discussed.

The second chapter on the Review of literature follows this. An in-depth literature review was done to clearly understand the evolution of agrotourism followed by different terms, types, and concepts associated with it. Different policies related to tourism in the research area were probed in detail and thus the research gap was identified. Two conceptual models were developed based on the review of the literature and research problem, which are presented in the following chapter.

After the completion of the literature review, the third chapter on research methodology is presented. This section discusses the methodological framework adopted for achieving the objectives. The methodological framework constitutes a research design, followed by sampling design, and lastly, data collection and analysis measures adopted.

The fourth chapter deals with results and discussion. Findings for each objective with brief analysis were done in this section.

The last chapter of this thesis summarizes findings followed by the conclusion of this research. At last, recommendations are made.

CHAPTER-2

LITERATURE REVIEW

"Fruit cultivation has changed livelihood patterns in HP and as newer cash crops change lifestyles so do they attract a new breed of tourists to undiscovered destinations, where life moves with the season and beckons the travelers to part take in nature's bounty"

(Blossom Holidays, 2014)

According to Maetzold (2002), modern travel trends show that people opt for more frequent but shorter trips, rely on car travel, and often combine business trips with vacations. They seek new and diverse experiences and are interested in family travel. Additionally, there is a growing desire to connect with their roots while traveling.

2.1 Agritourism: A subset of Rural tourism

Tourism in rural areas not only gives the opportunity to enjoy nature and culture but also is low cost, which appeals to a larger segment of the market. The appeal of rural areas to urban populations is enhanced by the resident's authentic cultural essence (Nilsson, 2002). It presents an affordable opportunity for diverse groups such as families, couples, and seniors to experience and appreciate the rural environment and culture.

The growth of tourism in the countryside can be attributed to a variety of factors (OECD, 1994). First, travelers are becoming more educated and interested in unique experiences. Second, people are curious about heritage and culture and explore rural destinations. Third, with more leisure time, people are looking to escape busy urban areas for peaceful rural settings. Rural places have become accessible with improved transport and communication, boosting tourism. The constant upsurge in health and nature-based activities has attracted tourists to outdoor activities in rural areas. People are seeking special interest in local food preparations in rural areas giving heights to culinary tourism.

Rising concerns about the environment and sustainable travel are leading people to seek nature-friendly destinations, often found in rural areas. Such travelers seek authentic

experiences and engage with local cultures in rural communities. Tourists move from city life in search of peace and tranquility. The senior and active generation is also looking for leisurely experiences that suit their preferences. Tourists nowadays are interested in real learning and rewarding travel opportunities. Rural destinations align well with the travel preferences of people seeking personalized and unique experiences. At many established tourist villages, the presence of rural agencies helps in promoting and facilitating tourism. It has contributed to its growth and popularity among diverse groups of travelers.

2.2 Agritourism Typologies

Agritourism involves visiting an operational farm, agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness site to appreciate, enjoy, and educate oneself, or engaging in recreational activities related to agricultural, natural, or heritage resources. It encompasses a wide range of activities where visitors can admire the farm landscape or actively participate in agricultural processes for leisure and recreational purposes (Tew & Barbieri, 2012).

Activities related to farming and tourism are expanding, involving a variety of people, learning opportunities, and spectator experiences. These activities can include visiting farms, fishing, and photography. Training sessions and demonstrations, and going on guided tours of farms are some features. Some places even offer cooking classes. There are events like harvest festivals and dance programs in barns. Accommodation facilities are in the form of farm stays, homestays, and bed and breakfasts. One can also buy fresh produce directly from the farm (Bernardo et al., 2004).

In countries like India and the US, agritourism has been positively impacting the rural economy. Despite progress, poverty continues to be a significant challenge in rural India (Thorat et al., 2017). Introducing tourism in rural regions has the potential to contribute to poverty alleviation. As per a report from Business Economics (2019), revenue from agritourism is witnessing an impressive annual growth rate of 20% in India.

Taware (2010) has defined Agro-tourism in the Indian context as an ‘agri-business activity’ where local farmers or individuals from the area offer guided tours of their farms, providing visitors with the opportunity to observe the cultivation, harvesting, and processing of locally grown foods which varies from coconuts to pineapple, corn

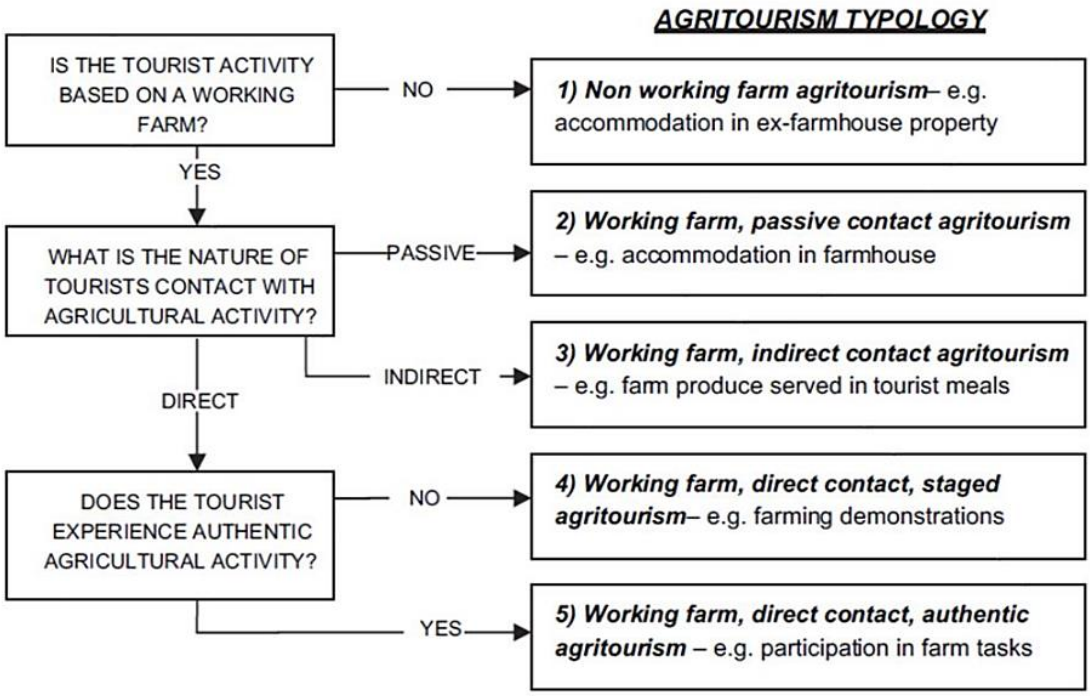
and sugar cane, or other agricultural produce that might be unfamiliar to them in their home country. Typically, these farmers also offer homestay opportunities, allowing visitors to stay with them and gain educational insights into farm life and practices.

The fusion of agriculture with tourism promotes growth and development in rural regions (Rogerson, 2012; Sharpley & Vass, 2006). Agri tourism is characterized by certain authors as a component of rural tourism that is commonly grounded in local traditions (Colton & Bissix, 2005; Nilsson, 2002). While Nilson defines this as a form of rural tourism, characterized by its small-scale nature, strong local ties, and deep-rooted connection to local traditions, Colton and Bissix, acknowledged agri tourism as a method of diversifying farms and serving as an alternative source of income for agricultural enterprises within rural tourism. According to Adam (2004), agritourism primarily revolves around three main activities: 'sightseeing attractions,' 'engaging activities,' and 'purchasing farm products.' These activities form the core of the agritourism experience and offer visitors a diverse range of enjoyable and memorable opportunities.

Agritourism was recognized as a diverse product by Flanigan et al., (2014), and Phillip et al., (2010). Phillip, 2010 created a typology to define agritourism, which categorizes it into "working – non-working farms agrotourism" and "staged – authentic agritourism" as shown in Figure 2.1

Figure 2.1.

A typology for defining agritourism

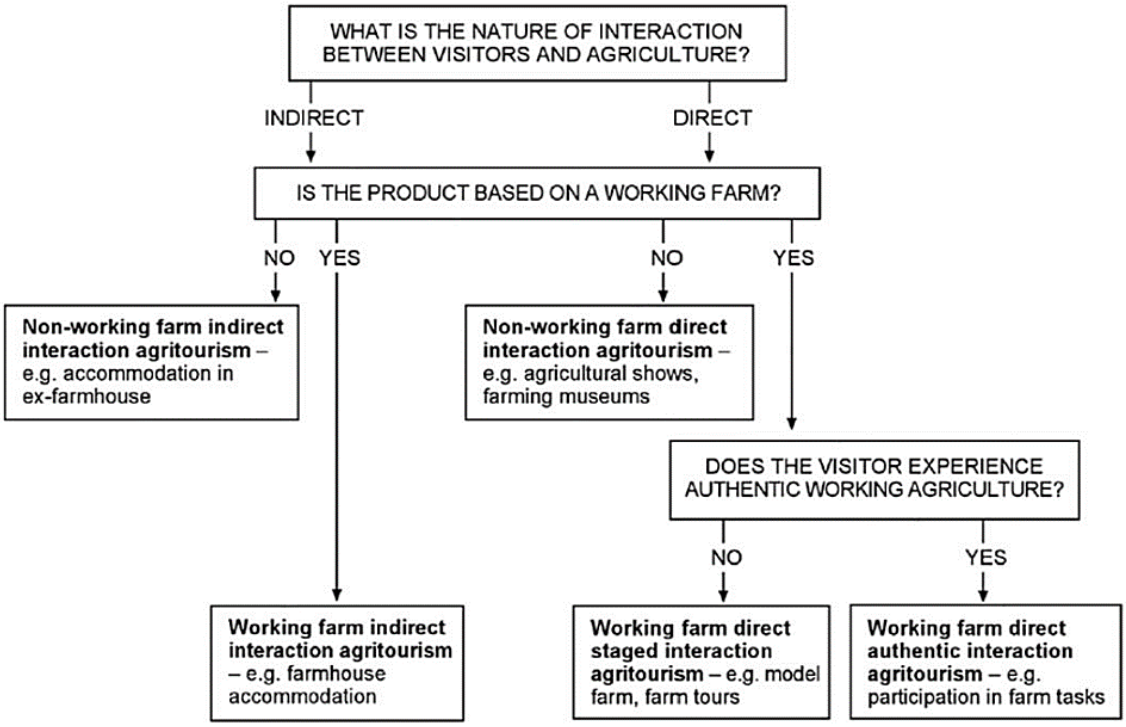


Note: From A typology for defining agritourism by Phillip, S., Hunter, C., & Blackstock, K. (2010).

Flanigan (2014) introduced a revised typology based on the work of Phillip, depicted in Figure 2.2. The non-working farm type was further divided into two categories: ‘Non-working farm indirect interaction agritourism (NWFII)’ and ‘Non-working farm direct interaction agritourism (NWFDI)’. The typology was further refined by merging the categories of working farm ‘passive’ and ‘indirect’ types into a single category named "Working farm indirect interaction agritourism" (WFII). The other two categories, based on staged and authentic experiences, remained unchanged and were retained as "Working farm direct staged interaction agritourism" (WFDSI) and "Working farm direct authentic interaction agritourism" (WFDAI).

Figure 2. 2

Revised typologies of defining agritourism



Note: From Agritourism from the perspective of providers and visitors: A typology-based study by Flanigan, S., Blackstock, K., & Hunter, C. (2014).

Tourists' and farmers' expectations seem to be best fulfilled by a "working farm that offers direct and staged interaction with agriculture". Agritourism, offering leisure and educational activities on working farms, has become a popular diversification strategy (Gil Arroyo et al., 2013).

Agritourism stands out from other types of tourism in three unique ways. First, it allows oneself to be part of the exciting process of food production and rural life, satisfying their practical side. Second, it caters to their curiosity by giving them a chance to learn about farming. Third, it fulfills their emotional needs, letting them experience the peaceful and charming countryside (Sznajder et al., 2009).

Agritourism in many countries mainly involves providing accommodation and meals on the farm. Farm families often renovate their buildings to create cozy lodging facilities, which they then operate similarly to a Bed & Breakfast (Beus, 2008).

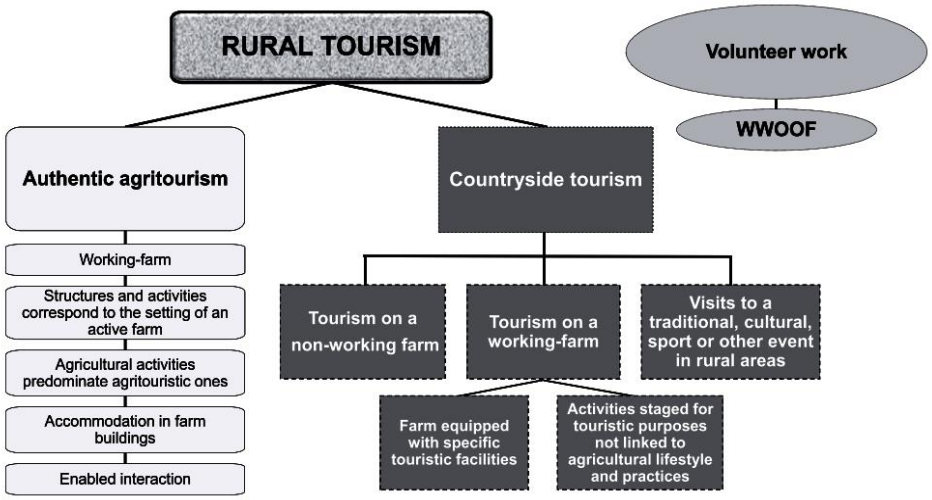
Barbieri & Streifeneder, (2019) advocated that Agritourism varies worldwide, depending on local resources and landscapes. For example, Italy is known for wine tourism, Spain for its historic casas rurales, and Peru for indigenous cultural experiences. Geopolitics and economies also play a role; in China, whole agricultural villages are transformed into agritourism destinations (Han, 2013; People, 2010).

Researchers have developed various conceptualizations of agritourism, focusing on specific attributes unique to this form of tourism (Phillip et al., 2010). Though agritourism has been bracketed into various product categories, the concept still lacks consensus among researchers (Barbieri, 2020). Flanigan et al., (2015) also reiterate the lack of agreement concerning the concept, scope, and theoretical structure of agritourism.

While some scholars advocate for a stricter definition that distinguishes authentic agritourism from broader rural tourism (Streifeneder, 2016), others propose a framework categorizing activities into core and peripheral tiers (Chase et al., 2018). These inconsistencies impact taxation, regulation, and tourism quality control, prompting initiatives like the Red Rooster certification in South Tyrol and international research collaborations to establish a unified framework (Lamie et al., 2021). As agritourism grows, balancing authenticity with inclusivity remains crucial for sustainable development and economic viability.

Figure 2.3

Distinctive Features of Authentic Agritourism and Countryside Tourism

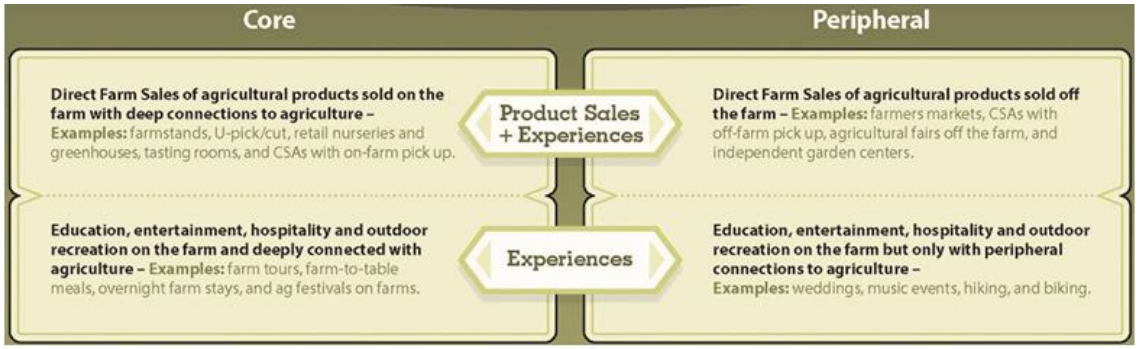


Note: From Agriculture first: Assessing European policies and scientific typologies to define authentic agritourism and differentiate it from countryside tourism by Streifeneder. T. (2016).

Chase et al., (2018) emphasize the complexity and variability in the understanding of agritourism across different contexts. The lack of a universal definition creates challenges in communication, measurement, policy formation, and program development. To address these issues, the authors propose a conceptual framework categorizing agritourism into five main activities direct sales, education, hospitality, outdoor recreation, and entertainment while distinguishing between core and peripheral activities. Rather than presenting a definitive model, the framework is intended to spark further discussion and refinement of agritourism definitions, particularly in the U.S. context. Ultimately, she encouraged continued debate and research to achieve a standardized definition and framework, which would facilitate better policy support and economic assessments of the sector.

Figure 2.4.

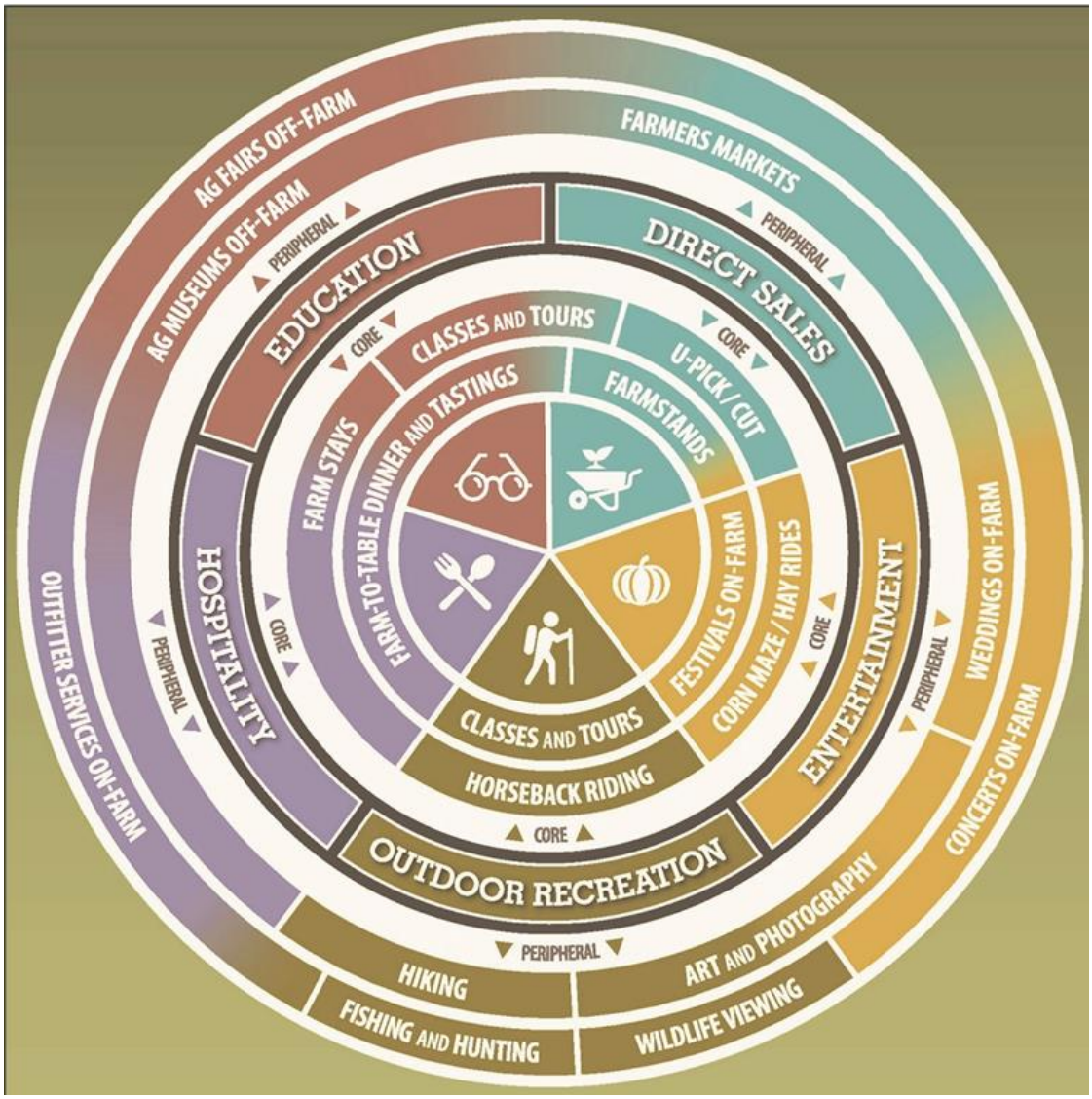
Core and Peripheral Tiers of Activities in Agritourism



Note: From Agriculture First: Assessing European policies and scientific typologies to define authentic agritourism and differentiate it from countryside tourism by Chase, L. C., Stewart, M., Schilling, B., Smith, B., & Walk, M. (2018).

Figure 2.5

Five Categories of Agritourism including Direct Sales, Education, Hospitality, Outdoor Recreation, and Entertainment, and Examples of Core vs. Peripheral Activities



Note: From Agriculture First: Assessing European policies and scientific typologies to define authentic agritourism and differentiate it from countryside tourism by Chase, L. C., Stewart, M., Schilling, B., Smith, B., & Walk, M. (2018).

Sometimes, people use the terms ‘agritourism’ and ‘agro-tourism’ interchangeably with farm tourism, rural tourism, and horti tourism (Fleischer & Tchetchik, 2005; Yang et al., 2010). Of late, different authors have given various definitions of agritourism, each looking at it from a different but connected viewpoint. The diverse ways people define agritourism show that it's generally seen as a mix of farm-related resources, activities, and traditions. It aims to provide both entertainment and education, ultimately helping farmers make more money (Rauniyar et al., 2021). Streifeneder (2016) explains the

criteria that distinguish authentic agritourism apart from other types of rural tourism; not necessarily connected to effective farming. Pavić et al., (2018) say agritourism is a way to add variety to farming, earn extra income, and create a partnership between agriculture and tourism. Ammirato et al., (2020) talk about how agritourism is linked to sustainability and can help rural areas develop sustainably. Andéhn & Decosta (2021) point out the challenge for agritourism places to authentically share experiences and explain their role in a larger geographical context. After reviewing agritourism literature, it's clear that there are many different themes researchers look at, with various perspectives on the concept of agritourism. Rauniyar et al., (2021) highlight the breakdown as 54% of studies call it agritourism, 39% consider it rural tourism, and 7% identify it as farm tourism.

2.3 Agritourism: An Alternate Sustainable Solution

Agri tourism is quoted as alternative tourism by authors like Maetzold (2002) & Topcu (2007). The Local communities can benefit from alternative tourism as it opens up new markets and income opportunities for them. Nature-based tourism products are among these alternative methods, which offer sustainability benefits for both the environment and the entrepreneurs involved.

The integration of alternative tourism into mass tourism can mitigate the negative impacts of mass tourism while ensuring sustainable development. While Spain, Greece, and Slovenia adopted alternative tourism to complement their mass tourism industries, Croatia replaced mass tourism entirely, citing its environmental degradation and low economic returns (Christou, 2012). Key findings highlight that alternative tourism promotes sustainability, community integration, and cultural preservation, offering long-term socio-economic benefits. Spain diversified tourism products to reduce seasonality, Greece modernized infrastructure and embraced eco-tourism, Slovenia focused on eco-friendly small-scale tourism, and Croatia emphasized cultural tourism to enhance quality and local engagement.

While alternative tourism offers a promising path to reform, its true impact depends on its ability to influence and reshape mainstream tourism practices (Gonsalves, 1987).

Butler (1990) argues that while alternative tourism is often portrayed as sustainable, community-friendly, and environmentally considerate, it is not devoid of challenges.

Tourism-induced issues such as environmental degradation, resource depletion, and socio-cultural changes are inevitable when tourism development exceeds capacity limits. Butler (1990) warns that alternative tourism can still lead to significant impacts due to its tendency to penetrate deeper into local communities and fragile ecosystems, potentially causing long-term changes.

Natural and cultural resources are prioritized in alternative tourism planning and development. Triarchi & Karamanis (2016) identifies ecotourism, cultural tourism, and creative tourism as core forms of alternative tourism. Ecotourism emphasizes interactions with nature and includes subcategories like nature tourism and low-impact tourism. Cultural tourism has grown dynamically due to globalization, technological advancements, and increased educational levels, enabling tourists to engage interactively and creatively with cultural sites. Creative tourism is presented as an evolution of cultural tourism, focusing on co-creating experiences between visitors and hosts through networks, courses, and events. However, careful planning and creative design are essential for deeper connections and authentic experiences for travelers.

Agritourism as a ‘diversification strategy’ for a distinguished and sustainable rural economy has been studied by authors like Phelan and Sharpley (2010), who have found it to protect agriculture incomes against market uncertainties. Sustainability in tourism means how tourism affects the economy, society, and the environment at present and in the future. Three fundamental approaches to Sustainable tourism development are preserving the local culture, ensuring economic viability, and safeguarding nature.

2.4 Orchard Tourism

Himachal Pradesh can flourish as an orchard tourism destination a unique niche market combining horticulture and tourism. The state's geographic location and climatic suitability have significantly contributed to the growth of horticulture, especially in the higher areas and mid-hills. The state government and the local farmers have astutely harnessed this opportunity, making Himachal Pradesh stand tall as the 'Horticultural State of India.' The region's agricultural landscape is primarily characterized by small holdings and terraced fields, with a significant portion of the population dependent on horticulture. Notably, the majority (90%) of the state's population resides in villages, further emphasizing the importance of agriculture as a way of life. The apple, in

particular, is a major horticultural crop in Himachal Pradesh, with vast production concentrated in districts such as Shimla, Kullu, Mandi, Kinnaur, and Chamba. This shift from traditional agriculture to horticulture has been a gradual but transformative process over the decades, as evident from the substantial increase in fruit cultivation area from 79.2 hectares in 1950-51 to an impressive 2,35,785 hectares in 202-22 (Statistical Yearbook 2022-23). Therefore, in the above pretext, it is more logical to study orchards as a farming component for studies about farming, horticulture, and agriculture.

Orchard tourism can be seen as a convergence of tourism and gardening, primarily focusing on travel motivated by gardens and agriculture. It involves farm-based businesses where local farmers or residents offer tours of their orchards, providing visitors with insights into fruit growing, harvesting, post-harvest handling, and storage. Additionally, it offers a pollution-free environment for tourists to enjoy. Through this experience, visitors get a glimpse of rural life, cultural elements, and traditions that they might not encounter in their own cities or home countries (Awasthi et al., 2013).

The concept of orchard tourism, though relatively new in theoretical terms, has been a practical reality in several countries for many years. Nations like the USA, UK, France, China, and New Zealand have successfully embraced this niche, paving the way for Himachal Pradesh to follow suit and establish itself as an esteemed player in the industry. (Awasthi et al., 2013). Orchards and farms take center stage, providing travelers with an experience of the rural countryside and the picturesque beauty of natural surroundings.

Guiding Principles of Orchard Tourism:

1. Offer Engaging Sights: Provide well-organized orchards, nurseries, animal shelters, organic farming displays, processing units, traditional homes, and local attire for visitors to explore.

2. Provide Interactive Activities: Allow visitors to participate in fruit harvesting, taste-testing, and cultural activities like festivals and fairs, cooking sessions, traditional games, local tours, and enjoyable campfire gatherings.

3. Present Buying Opportunities: Make available a variety of products for purchase, including fresh fruits, processed fruit items, dried fruits, locally crafted souvenirs, and exquisite wooden artworks.

Awasthi et al., (2013) have explained several models in Orchard Tourism:

a) The traditional model involves only fruit harvesting and is typically set in serene rural landscapes.

b) The rural landscape model comprises citizens' orchards developed in picturesque countryside backgrounds.

c) The theme park model features a series of thematic activities focused on showcasing fruit processing techniques and various fruit products, such as vineyards with wineries and wine cellars.

d) The eco-recreation model is based on the "Arboretum" concept, where trees are planted naturally, and leisure activities are developed at intervals.

e) The tech education model consists of an experimental orchard where new varieties of fruits are cultivated, and innovative fruit production technologies are exhibited.

f) The comprehensive recreation style model is primarily developed from a tourist perspective and offers extensive leisure facilities for visitors' enjoyment.

With limited land available for cultivation, orchard tourism can become a significant avenue for additional revenue and employment for local farmers. The tourists who visit these farms not only get a glimpse into the fascinating process of fruit growing, harvesting, and post-harvest handling but also delve into the daily lives and rich cultural heritage of the rural communities. Through sustainable practices and a deep connection with nature, this form of tourism strengthens rural economies and socio-cultural exchanges between visitors and hosts (Chauhan, 2022).

The relationship between tourism and agriculture varies depending on the political, administrative, and socio-cultural contexts. This is particularly sensitive in developing countries, where agriculture plays a significant role, and land use management may not

be well-established. As a result, the farming community is highly vulnerable to external changes like the expansion of tourism. Balancing the competing uses of agricultural land for tourism and other purposes poses a serious challenge to achieving sustainable national and global development goals (Ghadami et al., 2022).

Orchard tourism is not just about visiting farms; it's also about innovation and sustainability. The focus is on making orchard tourism more sustainable and supporting rural development (Chauhan, 2022). By embracing innovation, one can modernize agricultural farms just like in any other industry. This means creating unique and exciting experiences for tourists while also offering the necessary services and promoting local products. With these changes, orchard tourism has become a powerful tool for the growth of rural areas and the overall economy (Bhatta & Ohe, 2020).

For the last forty years, changes in agriculture, politics, and society have shaped the global agricultural landscape (Wilson et al., 2006). In the ever-changing vista of agriculture, the traditional ways of farming have undergone remarkable transformations. Factors such as dwindling manpower, evolving farm structures, and a constant push for high-yield production have led to both challenges and opportunities for farmers (Busby & Rendle, 2000). Despite significant crop yields, farmers find themselves grappling with low commodity prices and a lack of support from government-backed agricultural programs. Rising production costs and the unpredictable commodities market further exacerbate their struggles. Conventional approaches to farm management are becoming obsolete, necessitating the development of new methods and alternative strategies to mitigate the economic uncertainties in farming (Lack et al., 1995). According to Barrett et al., (2010); Foster (2010), the integration of advanced agricultural technology is crucial for economic progress. However, the adoption rate of such technologies remains significantly low. In developing countries, especially those with agrarian economies, a majority of small-scale farmers continue to depend on traditional methods due to the absence of improved technologies. Various challenges and local conditions limit their willingness and ability to embrace innovative farming techniques. As industrialization spreads its reach, encroaching on farmlands through suburban development, the available space for farming continues to diminish (López & García, 2006). In the face of these challenges,

farm families are resilient, seeking alternative income sources to sustain their way of life and preserve their cherished family farms.

One of the reasons for the low income of farming households is the small size of their agricultural land. Many farmers have very small farms, often less than one hectare in size (Agriculture Census, 2015-16). This limits their income and makes it difficult for them to adopt new agricultural technologies due to a lack of capital. Additionally, in agrarian societies, the land is divided among children in each generation, leading to further fragmentation of land and decreasing farmers' incomes to the point where it becomes economically challenging to work on such small plots of land. As a result, farming families face economic hardships (Ghadami et al., 2022).

The demand for fruits especially apples from Himachal Pradesh has significantly increased, indicating a thriving market in the country. As fruit production rises, horticulture's share in the overall agricultural produce has also multiplied, reshaping the land use pattern. However, the traditional apple orchards, featuring age-old varieties like ‘Royal Delicious, Red Delicious, Rich a-red, Golden Delicious, and Red Golden’, are losing their appeal among both producers and consumers. Some of these orchards have already experienced declining productivity. In the past, standard orchards generated high returns and profitability, but today, high establishment and maintenance costs, along with the challenges posed by climate change, make the effort to preserve orchards more arduous. Additionally, the quality of the fruit faces stiff competition from new varieties emerging from local and international markets. While there is an effort to expand into stone fruits, the significant challenge remains the absence of essential post-harvest technology capable of managing the perishable characteristics of these fruits. The challenges and limitations related to orchard management significantly impact the small-scale growers' decision to adopt new technologies. Resident farmers express a desire for modern horticultural technologies, such as new crop varieties, scientific farming practices, advanced and cost-effective machinery, practical training to enhance skills and knowledge, effective information and communication techniques, and comprehensive government support both financially and systematically. However, it is evident that these advancements require substantial capital investments and are not feasible for small growers. Farmers who can't adapt to these changes are most affected and have sought alternative ways to sustain their farms (Singh et al., 2018).

In general, tourism brings external capital into the local economy of the destination. These financial revenues play a crucial role in supporting communities undergoing economic transitions, ensuring their survival. The advantages encompass diversification strategies for local industries, increased employment opportunities, higher incomes, and the growth of business revenues (Hjalager, 1996). One promising strategy that has emerged over the past few decades is agri-tourism. By embracing this innovative approach, farmers not only effectively manage their farm resources but also unlock additional income streams. Agri-tourism is a harmonious blend of agriculture and tourism, offering visitors an authentic farm experience. The benefits are not limited to the farmers themselves but also positively affect the entire community (Lack et al., 1995).

Many researchers and authors have looked into how agriculture and travel/tourism industries come together. They've studied how agri-tourism affects farming and the overall socio-economic landscape (Srikatanyoo & Campiranon, 2010; Wicks & Merrett, 2003). Agri-tourism ventures are like thriving businesses within working farms, ranches, or agricultural facilities. They blend farming and tourism, offering a unique and exciting experience for visitors. These visitors not only learn about farming but also support farmers by providing extra income (Mace, 2005).

Orchard tourism will come to the rescue for family farms, keeping them strong and supporting our horticultural history. It will not only make farms more productive by letting people enjoy them for fun but also bring a boost to local communities, helping them thrive economically (Nickerson et al., 2001). The realm of horti-tourism will not just be limited to financial gains (Addinsall et al., 2017). It will allow for the appreciation of crops, livestock, and the broader farming ecosystem. Orchard tourism will enhance the value of the Orchard products by integrating them with the sociocultural context at the farm level (Nilsson, 2002). This appreciation enhances the value of orchard resources and strengthens the bond between growers and the community they serve.

An examination of the agritourism literature reveals that while research in this field has been steadily growing and diversifying in recent years, it still lags behind other management research domains in terms of volume and the number of researchers involved (Rauniyar et al., 2021). The authors have chiefly pointed out the growth

potential in agritourism services. Despite this realization, there are knowledge and innovation gaps that restrain its operationalization (Hjalager et al., 2018). The main focus of existing literature lies on developed nations and extensively explores the motivations and satisfaction of operators and visitors in this domain. However, very limited research has been undertaken on the Quality and Identity aspects of Agritourism. Promoting agritourism in small agrarian countries is crucial for poverty reduction and rural development. Still, this growth has been slower compared to the pace seen in developed countries (Bhatta & Ohe, 2020).

We need to focus on important research topics that have been overlooked but are important for making the most out of agritourism (Barbieri, 2020).

2.5 Orchard Tourism Development

Developing orchard tourism depends on special conditions that are specific to a place. There aren't many research papers about regular farming places where tourism isn't usual, both in rich and poorer countries. Consequently, a thorough investigation is essential to explore the potential and specific conditions required for horticulture tourism in such ordinary villages or farms (Bhatta & Ohe, 2020).

The research on Orchard Tourism and farm tourism in Himachal Pradesh is currently limited. However, references can be drawn from tourism studies, particularly adventure, culture and religion, and eco-tourism.

There is currently no specific policy, proposal, plan, or scheme dedicated to 'orchard tourism.' Existing tourism policies overlook the tolerance level during peak tourist seasons, leading to challenges with increased tourist inflow. The lack of integration in tourism development is evident, with separate policies for rural tourism, sustainable tourism, and eco-tourism, and no coordination with sectors like Agriculture, Horticulture, and Rural Development.

Tourism trends have shifted from natural to heritage and colonial, and from adventure to eco-tourism. The need of the hour is orchard tourism, which bridges the gap between sustainable and rural tourism. However, there is no single window access for orchard tourism development.

Consequently, there is a necessity for exclusive research to identify the need and requirements for establishing such businesses from the perspective of operators, particularly marginal, small, and semi-medium farmers, and homestay operators. Additionally, a tourism perspective is essential to understand the intentions and expectations of tourists interested in engaging in orchard tourism.

While exploring the potential of Agri-tourism development in Sri Lanka, (Malkanthi & Routray, 2012) reported it as currently an emerging industry worldwide, offering opportunities to experience agricultural life and leisure activities leveraging the agricultural business, rural landscapes, village life, and local culture.

As we explore the possibilities of converting orchards into a tourism resource, we witness the fusion of tradition and innovation, where age-old farming practices blend harmoniously with the excitement and curiosity of the modern traveler. This dynamic coexistence breathes new life into rural landscapes and creates sustainable growth for both horticulture and tourism. Agritourism is generally seen as a form of social innovation in mountain agriculture and rural development, promoting a sustainable approach to farming (Ciolac et al., 2020). Fruit crops are mainly grown in rural areas, so orchard tourism can bring economic and social benefits to the local people. It allows tourists to interact with the locals, creating a mutually enriching experience. Promoting orchard tourism in a village can generate income for rural communities through tourist visits, which can help prevent people from leaving rural areas and moving to cities (Awasthi et al., 2013). As a strategy, it requires cooperation from those involved, especially family members. It is a multifunctional and cooperative approach that could be helpful for horticulture and rural development (Sidali et al., 2011).

Horti-tourism is a smart and sustainable way to boost farmers' income. It helps them avoid losses from crop failures and solves market issues while also supporting rural development. For new countries with limited resources, farm tourism can be a game-changer, rapidly increasing farmers' earnings, protecting the environment, and improving the lives of people in rural areas (Gyawali et al., 2022).

Engaging in diversification into tourism does not necessarily demand large investments in farm infrastructure, labor, or equipment. Instead, farms venturing into tourism are more likely to concentrate on activities that make use of their existing resources,

without the need for significant additional investments (Tew & Barbieri, 2012). Numerous agri-tourism activities can be effectively managed by a small farm crew, usually farm families themselves. Some examples of orchard tourism activities are visiting farms, staying at bed and breakfast places, taking rides on tractors or bullock carts, and helping on fruit farms like grapes and mangoes. People also run small businesses making things like jam, chutney, curd, and yogurt. These activities require minimal staff (Pandurang, 2010). Studies show that agritourism success depends on the 'quantity and quality' of farm families, as well as the size of the operational farm (Hung et al., 2016). Moreover, agri-tourism does not solely benefit male parties; it also provides an opportunity for unemployed women, housewives, or even young girls in farm families. This allows them to gain financial benefits without hampering their daily routines. Agri-tourism, in this sense, can be seen as a gender-equitable agricultural development initiative (Topcu, 2007).

The successful development of farm tourism primarily relies on farmers' willingness and capacity to set up the required infrastructure, along with tourists' interest in visiting such attractions. The success and growth of agritourism depend on the supply and demand factors. Considering both - what's offered and what people are looking for, we can figure out what conditions are needed for agritourism to grow (Bhatta & Ohe, 2020).

Traditional accommodation options in popular tourist spots face challenges like non-occupancy during the off-season, making it necessary to explore alternative forms of accommodation in rural areas (Guttentag, 2015; Moscardo et al., 1996). Integrated rural tourism, which emphasizes sustainability, local control, and a diversified supply chain, has the potential to transform rural experiences into valuable tourist attractions (Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Cawley et al., 2007).

The type of accommodation demanded by tourists in rural areas varies based on motivators, cultural values, and preferences for interaction opportunities (Moscardo et al., 1996; Pina & Delfa, 2005). Tourists seeking rural experiences and cultural fascination tend to prefer staying in traditional homes (Park et al., 2014). Providing convenience, reputation, and rural identity is crucial for rural accommodations to serve perceived value to tourists (Peña et al., 2016).

The opportunity for orchard tourism arises as commercial tourism often fails to contribute significantly to the development of the local community (Naidoo & Sharpley, 2016). Hence, exploring the integration of homestays with orchards to create a new micro-entrepreneurship opportunity in Orchard Tourism becomes essential. Apart from economic viability, the assessment will also help to understand the advantages and disadvantages and highlight the various challenges associated with this approach. The aim is to investigate the potential fusion of homestays with orchards, giving rise to the promising concept of Orchard Tourism.

Currently, the spread of tourism in the outer areas can be observed by analyzing the growth of homestays in Shimla i.e. Districts of Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur, and Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh. Most registered homestays are concentrated around the established destination of towns and cities, indicating the need for more widespread tourism activities in rural areas (DoT & CA, 2021).

For successful orchard tourism, it is essential to integrate various local attractions and resources (Huang et al., 2016). Rural accommodations play a significant role in preserving rural culture while providing necessary services for tourists (Choo et al., 2017).

From the perspective of stakeholders, it is crucial to assess the growth potential and viability of the proposed business. Profitability is a key consideration for any venture. To identify the destination's potential, factors like the need for tourism development and available resources must be taken into account. In rural areas, large-scale commercial activities may not be feasible, so utilizing local resources becomes essential. Considering the economic profile of the population, it may not be realistic to expect them to start big hotels or resorts. Thus, converting one's own house into a homestay accommodation can be a practical and viable option. Homestays offer excellent opportunities for tourist accommodation in rural areas, providing authentic and immersive experiences. According to the Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation (DoT & CA, 2008), homestays are private houses in good condition, easily accessible in the countryside, such as farmhouses, orchards, tea gardens, etc. These accommodations primarily qualify under the scheme, especially big houses with spare rooms.

A shift in tourists' travel and accommodation preferences towards less crowded and popular destinations is evident in avoiding mass tourism. Unlike commercial hotels and resorts, homestay accommodations offer travelers the opportunity to experience the authentic essence of a place, including its land, people, culture, and cuisine. Researchers Lanier and Berman (1993) reported Homestays as private homes that rent out unused rooms to supplement income and provide opportunities for meeting new people.

A homestay offers the complete advantages of farm tourism. Particularly, homestay programs play a significant role in generating income for rural disadvantaged people (Ashley et al., 2000). Homestay setups have been seen to positively impact community development (Ibrahim & Razzak, 2010). The visible benefits of these programs are strengthened social networks (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010), women empowerment (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013) and better economic conditions (Truong et al., 2014).

The primary motivation for running a homestay unit, especially for operators with operational orchards, is to generate new or additional income. Standalone small farms are often unable to provide substantial income, so homestays offer a valuable source of revenue. Homestays also provide a new use for land and other available resources, such as livestock and nature trails. Providing necessities like food and beverages also holds cultural significance beyond mere practicality. The possibility of expanding a small orchard business into a diversified venture serves as a strong motivation for some operators. Simultaneously, it can promote the rich and authentic rural culture of Himachal. Transportation is another crucial amenity required by tourists. Cabs and taxis are commonly anticipated forms of transport, but there is room for improvement in the transport sector to promote sustainability. Studies recommend the use of public transport for sustainable tourism planning (Schiefelbusch et al., 2007). Emphasizing walkability and utilizing the local transport system are key components of sustainable transportation.

Homestays offer personal hospitality with informality and a glimpse into the culture and traditions of the host society. The interaction between guests and hosts and their cross-cultural exchange makes it a preferred choice for foreign and local tourists seeking the comfort of a homely environment.

More than just regular holidays spent exploring the local place; they are a ‘destination’ in themselves (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). Staying in these places means being close to nature and having access to local culture (Gu & Wong, 2006; MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003).

Middle-sized farms and smaller farms can make the most of this opportunity and offer rooms on their premises to avoid heavy investment in facilities (Ohe & Ciani, 1998). Studies have shown that farmers who adopt farm tourism are often younger and willing to take risks. They tend to have secure farm succession plans and less productive soils (Meraner et al., 2018).

If the sole motivation for an agri-tourism enterprise is additional income, it is less likely to succeed compared to when the farm family genuinely enjoys engaging with the public, educating people about agriculture, and sharing their farm and lives with tourists (Adam, 2004).

Integrated tourism is an expanded notion within rural tourism, involving the vertical and horizontal collaboration of stakeholders and the utilization of locally produced services to ensure sustainability. The resources taken into account encompass cultural, social, environmental, and economic aspects (Cawley et al., 2007). Agritourism can be effectively integrated into local economies and rural lifestyles without causing significant disruptions, providing an opportunity to uplift the agricultural economy (Wicks & Merrett, 2003).

While orchard tourism has great economic potential, many farmers have been seen struggling to run successful agri-tourism businesses because they lack entrepreneurial skills (Colton & Bissix, 2005). The shift from farming to tourism represents a significant transformation as it requires acquiring new skills and competencies and can also impact the mindset and identity of the individuals involved (Brandth & Haugen, 2011).

Farmers face big challenges when they try diversification, like getting into horti-tourism. It can affect how they see themselves, their lifestyles, and how they make decisions (Domenico & Miller, 2012). The government should make new policies to push farmers to start horti-tourism businesses. This can be done by offering subsidies and technical assistance throughout the farm operations (Gyawali et al., 2022). In

developing countries, policymakers should encourage the involvement of females, provide access to credit or subsidies for farmers, and oversee agritourism planning and development. Connecting everyone involved and adapting innovative approaches in agritourism can minimize adverse effects on society. This is highlighted by Bhatta and Ohe in their review of studies in 2020.

2.6 Overview of Tourism Policies in Himachal Pradesh

In 2008, the Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation (DoT & CA) started the Homestay Scheme to help rural areas grow in tourism. Its primary objectives were to decrease the burden of urban tourism and encourage sustainable practices. The scheme aims to offer comfortable and standardized homestay facilities in rural tourist destinations, following the example of the 'Incredible India Bed and Breakfast Scheme.' Travelers have the chance to experience Himachali customs and traditional cuisines by staying in private houses located in beautiful rural areas like farms, orchards, and tea gardens. To support this initiative, these homestays will receive exemptions from commercial tariffs on electricity and water bills. The HPTDC (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation) will provide training to the owners, family members, and staff of these homestays, and also help with reservations, marketing, and publicity. However, the policy benefits are limited to a maximum of 4 rooms per homestay.

In 2013, the Himachal Pradesh Sustainable Tourism Development Policy was introduced, followed by the adoption of a tourism policy in 2019. The latter was specifically designed to streamline the objectives of the sustainable development policy. It emphasized the core principles of sustainability, inclusion, and guest respect. It recognized niche tourism as a key driver of inclusive growth while maintaining a strong focus on sustainability. The main objectives were to improve the tourist experience and get more private-sector investments. To make this happen, the state was split into three categories: "A" for places that aren't well-known but could be great for tourism, "B" for middle-level places, and "C" for the places that are already popular with tourists (Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs, 2019).

The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Policy of 2019 wants to support sustainable tourism that lasts a long time, creates jobs, keeps nature safe, and helps

people in the future. More and more tourists are coming to the state every year. The policy wants to reach goals that keep development going, make money for local communities, offer travelers quality experiences, keep nature safe, and get businesses to invest. It serves as a guide to ensure 'sustainable and inclusive growth' in the tourism sector of Himachal Pradesh. The state has abundant natural and manmade resources like mountains, lakes, rivers, snow, countryside views, temples, monasteries, old buildings, traditional dances and attires, local crafts, and cuisine. The Department of Tourism plans to use these assets to develop tourism products around ten different themes for tourism development.

Figure 2.6

Promotion Themes of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy 2019

Note: From The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019. (DoT & CA, 2019).

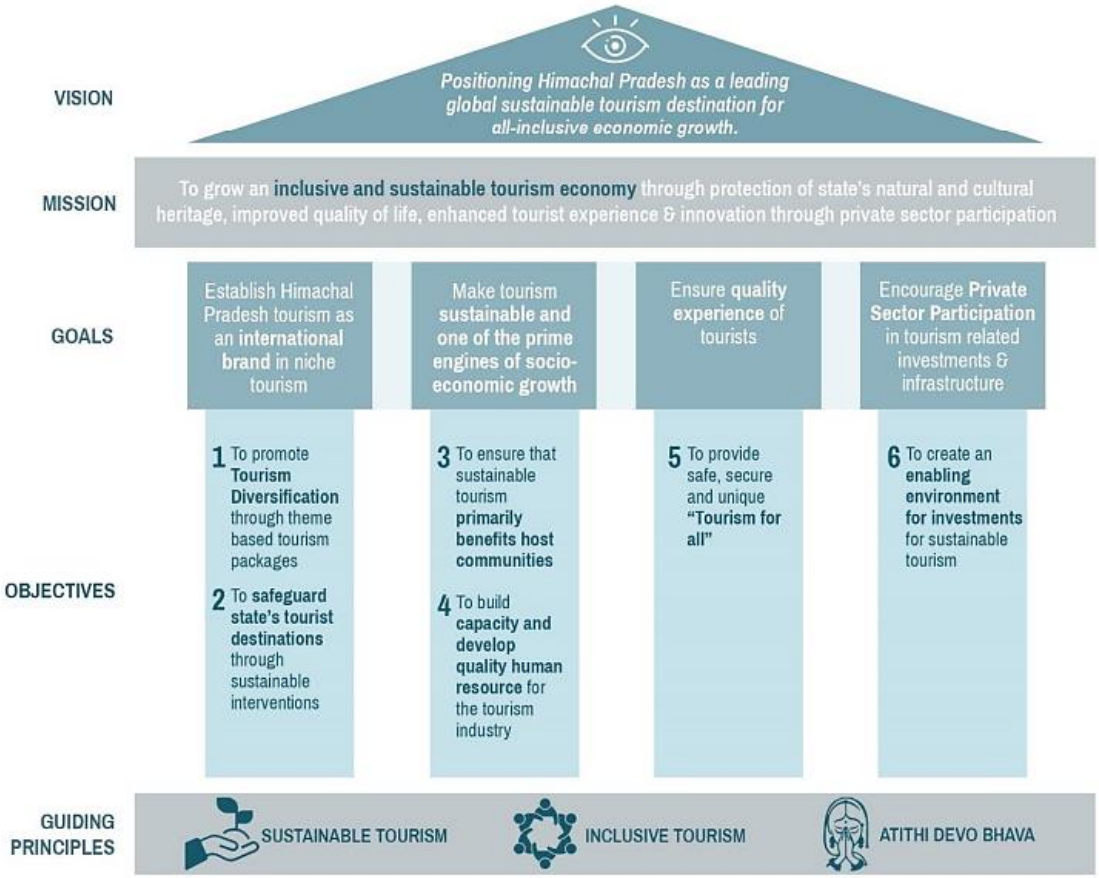
As a second promotional theme, Agro/Organic tourism has been stated to bring visitors to farms, orchards, or ranches to experience countryside life, taste local food, and learn farming traditions. Himachal Pradesh has many organic farms and stone fruit orchards for agro-tourism. To make tourism better, they will work on improving villages, putting

on cultural shows, offering eco-friendly farm stays, making airports better, training human resources, creating awareness, and getting businesses to help out.

The districts of Shimla, Kinnaur, and Chamba are identified as well-performing districts and Sirmaur along with Mandi, Bilaspur, Lahual-Spiti, and Kullu are identified as potential districts for agro/ organic tourism development.

Figure 2.7

Foundations of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy 2019



Note: From The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019. (DoT & CA, 2019).

In 2021, the initiative "Nayi rahein nayi manzilein" was launched to unlock tourism potential in new regions. This initiative encompassed diverse projects focusing on wellness tourism, sports tourism, and mountain tourism (DoT & CA, 2019).

2.7 Economic and Demographic Profiles: Agriculture, Horticulture, Tourism Contributions, and Regional Statistics

Solan, Shimla, Sirmaur, and Kinnaur collectively cover a significant portion of the state's 55,673 sq. km area, with Kinnaur alone accounting for 6,401 sq. km (11.5% of the state). As per the 2011 Census, Shimla has the highest population among these districts at 8,14,010 (11.86% of the state), followed by Solan at 5,80,320, Sirmaur at 5,29,855, and Kinnaur with 84,121 residents. The rural population forms a significant majority in these districts, highlighting their predominantly agrarian and rural character. In Solan, 82.39% of the total population resides in rural areas, contributing **7.74%** to the state's rural population. Similarly, Shimla has 75.27% of its population living in rural areas, accounting for **9.91%** of the state's rural demographic. Sirmaur's rural residents make up 89.19% of its total population and contribute **7.65%** to the state's rural population. Kinnaur, being entirely rural, has 100% of its population in villages, representing **1.36%** of the state's rural population. The sex ratio varies, with Sirmaur at 918 females per 1,000 males, while Kinnaur has a lower ratio of 757. Literacy rates are above 80% across these districts, with Shimla leading at 84.55%. Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations vary significantly, with SCs being prominent in Solan (28.23%) and Shimla (25.23%), while Kinnaur has the highest ST population at 57.47%. The state's per capita income is ₹2,22,227 (2022-23), with these districts reflecting similar economic trends.

Agriculture and horticulture form the backbone of these districts' economies, characterized by small and marginal landholdings. The average operational holding size ranges from 0.95 hectares in Kinnaur to 1.25 hectares in Sirmaur. Shimla leads in apple cultivation, contributing 78% of the state's total apple area, producing 6.72 lakh metric tons in 2022-23. Kinnaur is renowned for high-quality apples and apricots, with 65% of its cultivated area dedicated to fruits. Solan and Sirmaur focus on mixed-fruit cultivation and vegetable production, with Solan accounting for 15% of the state's vegetable yield. Horticulture investments include high-density apple plantations and cold storage facilities, particularly in Shimla and Solan.

In rural areas, as agriculture and horticulture dominate, the majority of the workforce is engaged as cultivators or agricultural laborers. For instance, in Shimla, approximately **55%** of the rural workforce is employed in horticulture, primarily apple

orchards. In Solan and Sirmaur, mixed farming and vegetable cultivation engage over **60%** of the rural labor force. Kinnaur's employment reflects its tribal economy, where around **45%** of workers are involved in high-altitude farming and related traditional practices. Urban areas, particularly in Solan and Shimla, employ in industries such as tourism, education, and healthcare, with Solan hosting industrial hubs like Baddi and public sector jobs, which employ **18%** of the workforce across these districts.

Development efforts are reflected in the annual budgets allocated to these districts. Shimla has the highest development budget at ₹450 crore, focusing on heritage tourism and winter sports infrastructure. Solan follows with ₹320 crore, emphasizing wellness and adventure tourism. Sirmaur's ₹310 crore budget supports religious tourism and agricultural diversification, while Kinnaur's ₹210 crore is allocated for eco-sensitive tourism and tribal welfare. Major tourism projects include Shimla's heritage preservation initiatives (₹75 crore), Solan's adventure hubs (₹50 crore), Sirmaur's religious circuits (₹45 crore), and Kinnaur's tribal homestay networks (₹30 crore). These strategic investments aim to balance economic growth with cultural and environmental conservation (Statistical Year Book, Himachal Pradesh 2022-23).

Over the past three years, the Shimla region has shown distinct patterns in tourist arrivals, with both domestic and international tourists. Shimla district consistently leads in tourist arrivals among the four districts, contributing approximately **18%** of the state's total tourist footfall annually. Domestic tourists dominate the influx, comprising over **95%** of the visitors, with international arrivals accounting for a modest share. Solan, leveraging its proximity to key urban centers and industrial hubs, accounts for around **7-8%** of the state's total tourist arrivals, with a similar domestic-international split.

Sirmaur, focusing on religious tourism and eco-tourism, captures around **5-6%** of the state's total, while Kinnaur, known for its adventure and tribal tourism, represents **2-3%** due to its remote location and limited accessibility. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted tourist arrivals significantly in 2020, with recovery trends evident by 2022. The state witnessed an influx of 1,51,00,277 visitors (domestic and international) in 2022; an upsurge of **167.87%** from the previous year. Domestic tourism has been the driving force behind this recovery, highlighting the reliance on local travel demand. Overall, the data reveals the importance of district-specific tourism strategies to cater

to diverse tourist preferences and enhance the contribution of these regions to Himachal Pradesh's tourism economy (Tourist-Statistics 2023, HP Tourism).

2.8 Orchard Tourism Experience- Expectation, Motivation, Destination Attributes and Intention

Amidst the increasing monotony of expanding urban culture, even within hill stations, orchard tourism serves as a refreshing escape. It provides an opportunity to immerse oneself in the essence of the land, connect with its people, and relish the fruits that significantly enrich their lives" (Blossom Holidays., 2014).

Traveling has become a way for people to break from their daily routines and try new things (Iso-Ahola, 1982). Wanting a change and looking for fun are some reasons people want to travel (Crompton, 1979). When tourists go on trips, they want both personal things for themselves and to meet new people, like having their own choices and talking to others (Ryan, 1995).

Different researchers have looked at why people want to travel in different situations. For example, when it comes to festivals, they found three main reasons: wanting excitement, being social, and spending time with family (Liu et al., 2019). Another research about festivals saw six main reasons: exploring different cultures, trying new things, resting and getting away, being with groups of friends, getting to know new people, and being with family (Chi et al., 2020). More research on why people choose to visit places like adventure or eco-friendly spots shows that a desire to take a break and having an interest in something both influence the decision of where to go (Ahmad et al., 2020).

In Saudi Arabia, experts analyzed reasons that make people want to travel, such as appreciating different cultures, having a desire to learn, being social, having financial considerations, spending time with family, having specific interests, relaxing, and having convenient facilities. The other similarities that draw people to travel could be a sense of safety, participating in activities, connecting with the community, visiting religious sites, considering budget, having free time, and enjoying luxurious amenities (Alsahafi et al., 2023). Similarly, research about tourists visiting the Algarve region in Portugal found common themes like acquiring new skills, wanting a break, and seeking fun and relaxation (Ribeiro et al., 2019). The combination of personal reasons and

destination attractions continues to influence people's choices of travel destinations, no matter where they are (Alsahafi et al., 2023).

The USP of mass tourism was offering standardized and budget-friendly packages, which used to dominate the industry. This led to problems of monotonous experiences and environmental degradation. Nature-based and rural tourism has emerged in response as alternative tourism options top (Maetzold, 2002; Topcu, 2007).

The way people think of travel has changed a lot. Now, more people want experiential and sustainable experiences when they go on trips. They want to connect with nature, learn about different cultures, and get to know local communities. In the past, people used to travel just for fun at certain times of the year. But now, they want more meaningful experiences. They want to explore the cultures, nature, and traditional lifestyles of different communities (Carril et al., 2015). This change is happening because of globalization, which affects the kind of tourism people like. There are a few reasons why more people want unique and innovative tourism experiences. Some of these reasons include higher disposable income among individuals, a tourism market that has become more mature, and people having free time for leisure (Park & Yoon, 2011).

What tourists expect (Tourist expectation), what they plan to do (Tourist intention), and the place they want to visit (Tourism destination) - are all closely related aspects of the tourism industry. Their interconnection has a significant influence on travelers' decisions, experiences, and the success of a destination (Khaidi et al., 2019). In tourism, wanting to visit a place is like a feeling in your mind. It comes from what you think about the place, what others expect, and the situation you're in when you start planning the trip (Moutinho, 1987).

Travel expectations refer to the anticipations, hopes, and desires that individuals have before embarking on a trip or journey. These expectations can be influenced by a variety of factors, including personal preferences, cultural influences, prior experiences, social media, and marketing materials. Travel expectations encompass a wide range of aspects related to the journey. When tourists visit Shimla, their expectations can vary based on their individual preferences, prior knowledge, and motivations (Thakur & Monga, 2022). Many tourists visit Shimla with the expectation of experiencing awe-inspiring

beautiful landscapes and snow-laden mountains. Shimla's cool and pleasant weather, especially during the summer months, is a significant attraction for tourists seeking respite from the heat in other parts of India. They expect the climate to be enjoyable, unique, and different from their previous experiences, providing them with something new and revitalizing. The serene environment and peaceful ambiance attract tourists who seek relaxation and tranquility. Shimla's colonial-era architecture and heritage buildings liberate tourists' interests in history and architecture (Gautam, 2012).

While socializing, they may expect exciting opportunities to engage with the local community and explore the unique customs and practices of the region. They would expect to purchase local handicrafts and woolens, Additionally, they may want to try authentic cuisine, which would be different from their previous culinary experiences (Chauhan, 2022). In orchard tourism, the main goal is to provide experiences that resonate with the visitor's expectations. Orchards provide a sense of engaging in something significant. Orchard tourism may present a chance to discover more about oneself. Volunteering in Orchard farming combines the joys of nature with educational elements. It can be an ideal setting where one can rejuvenate while gaining knowledge about fruit cultivation (Meng et al., 2020).

In tourism and travel research, there are two related concepts called travel intention and travel motivation. While they share some similarities, they have distinct meanings and implications. The intention is about a planned or desired outcome – It is something that is consciously chosen, and it is often associated with goal-setting and decision-making. Motivation, on the other hand, is the underlying drive or force that pushes to take action. It's connected to emotions like curiosity, excitement, or having a sense of purpose. So, intention is about the plan or goal, and motivation is about the drive or emotions that inspire one to take action toward that plan or goal (Hasan et al., 2020).

According to Jang & Namkung (2009), an individual's decision to travel could be influenced by his/her motivation. It means the psychological factors that make a person want to go on trips. Motivations can be intrinsic or extrinsic. A lot of focus has been placed on understanding what makes tourists want to travel (Crompton, 1979). In the beginning, researchers sorted travel motivation into four types: those who go on big group trips, those who travel alone but with a group, those who explore a lot, and those who wander around (Cohen, 1979). Tourist motivation mainly comes from two things:

wanting to escape from regular life, called 'push factors,' and being attracted to things in a new place called 'pull factors' (Crompton, 1979).

Travel motivations can influence travel intentions. A person's reasons for traveling can greatly influence their decision to go on a trip. When someone has strong travel motivations along with desired travel experiences, it is more likely that they will develop an intention to travel to fulfill those motivations (Valencia et al., 2022). For instance, if someone is eager for adventure and discovering new places, they might plan a trip to explore exciting destinations. Likewise, if someone is looking to relax and unwind, they might decide to take a vacation to a peaceful resort or beach.

Travel intention means a person's plan or wishes to travel in the future (Kim et al., 2006). It shows how much someone wants to travel and is often measured by asking people about their future travel plans or if they're likely to take a trip. Many things can affect travel intention, like personal interests, money, time availability, and outside influences such as recommendations or promotions. It is an important predictor of actual travel behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975; Hsu & Crotts, 2006). While ‘Theories of intention’ reflect the characteristics of intentions, The ‘Belief-desire theory’ is the traditional and prevalent approach. It simply states that having a desire to perform a certain action and a firm belief that one will perform this action equals having an intention.

Travel motivations act as the driving forces that generate a person's desire to travel, and this desire is then transformed into an intention to act upon it by making concrete travel plans. However, it's important to note that while travel motivations can influence travel intentions, they are not the sole determinant. Other factors such as financial constraints, time availability, and logistical considerations may also impact an individual's travel intentions (Alonso et al., 2015).

Tourists visiting Shimla can have various intentions depending on their preferences, interests, and motivations. They may have a variety of intentions based on what they hope to experience and explore. Many tourists may already have considered places they want to visit, Sightseeing and Exploring. With Shimla's beautiful landscapes and proximity to the Himalayas, nature enthusiasts may plan to invest time and money in activities like trekking, hiking, camping etc. Those seeking relaxation may plan to

unwind and enjoy the tranquil atmosphere, taking a break from their usual routines. Travelers interested in culture may have plans to visit temples, interact with locals, and participate in cultural events or festivals. Tourists looking for culinary experiences can imagine exploring Himachali dishes. Findings from previous studies suggest that physical factors and destination image impact visitor's intentions positively (Ahmad et al., 2021).

The theory of planned behavior (TPB), proves valuable in elucidating an individual's intention to visit. The TPB scale (Ajzen, 1991) measures the intention of individuals to engage in a specific behavior, such as visiting a tourist destination. It considers three main factors: a) 'Attitude' toward the behavior, b) 'Subjective norm', and c) 'Perceived Behavioral control'

As urban life disconnects people from nature and agriculture, there's a growing desire for emotional fulfillment through contact with the natural world, animals, and rural areas (Sznajder et al., 2009). Moreover, modern travelers are becoming more environmentally conscious with better education and awareness. They are now choosing ecologically sustainable forms of rural tourism (Chandrashekara, 2014). A tourism product is unique and intricate compared to other products because it involves the consumption of experiences. These experiences encompass visual impressions, taste, smell, touch, and other sensory stimuli, all combined to form the overall tourism experience (Wojciechowska, 2022).

A destination is not like other products because it is made up of various elements that come together to form a complete package. These elements include staying facilities, hospitable behavior of the host, attractions, entertainment, culture, arts and heritage, and the natural environment (Morgan et al., 2003). These destination attributes form an amalgam significantly influencing tourist choices at different stages (Kim, 2022).

When we think about what makes a place stand out, it's not only about having nice views. Other factors, like how well the people there do their jobs, how the place is built, and how much resources it has, also make a big difference. Other experts, like Crouch & Ritchie, (1999) have talked about this too. Another group of researchers, Kim and their team (2012), tried to figure out what tourists truly value. They discovered that

things like how pretty a place is, how friendly the locals are, how much there is to explore, how clean it is, and how peaceful it feels, all matter a great deal to tourists.

The significance of destination attributes, which are a blend of diverse elements that draw travelers (Lew, 1987) to a particular location, cannot be overstated for several compelling reasons. Orchard destinations are highly significant for attracting travelers due to their unique combination of different elements. A place's ability to attract visitors depends on how people see it as beneficial for them. Tourists choose destinations based on what they think is important about each place (Turner & Reisinger, 1999). They compare different things each place has to offer. Whether an orchard destination can draw visitors or not depends on how people think it can give them benefits and good experiences. Past research has already identified essential tourism-related attributes and their impact on the overall performance of tourism in various destinations (Assaf & Josiassen, 2012).

Studies have pinpointed characteristics that significantly shape how tourists see a place. These include the attractiveness of the scenery, the welcoming nature of the people, the potential for exploration, the quality of the environment, and the sense of peacefulness (Kim et al., 2006). A lot has already been discussed about Orchard tourism offerings which would turn it into a unique experience. Activities like hands-on fruit picking, guided tours, and educational opportunities about farming practices (cultivation, irrigation systems, pruning techniques, pest management), the orchard's history, and sustainability are, to sum up, a few. Further more elaborate and enhancing experiences may be sought like- tasting experiences of fresh fruits and homemade products, and farm-to-table meals. Orchards are often in beautiful rural settings, perfect for leisurely walks and picnics. Some orchards even offer accommodations like farm stays for an immersive overnight experience. Shimla, with its rich cultural heritage, adds more to the tourist experience with colonial architecture, temples, local interactions, and cultural events. Orchards may provide accommodations like farm stays or rural cottages, allowing visitors to stay overnight amidst the orchard. This provides an opportunity to experience farm life, connect with nature, and enjoy the tranquility of the orchard environment.

A business’s ability to generate revenue is directly defined by the quality and memorable experiences provided to customers (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). The initial

attraction of tourists to an orchard destination is driven by its unique attributes, and this leads them to participate in various recreation activities and explore the place. These attributes then become essential components that impact the overall experiences of the visitors. Therefore, it becomes vital for hosts of orchard destinations to focus on delivering pleasantly memorable tourism experiences (MTEs). Practical guidelines for achieving this goal are currently lacking in the tourism literature (Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

To cultivate repeat visits to a destination, tourism enterprises should prioritize creating an environment conducive to positive and enduring tourism encounters. These encounters are characterized by leaving a favourable impression that remains vividly etched in memory, persisting even after the event concludes (Kim et al., 2012). Conversely, negative memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) are those instances that are recollected with a negative sentiment after the occurrence. It's worth noting that not all gratifying tourism experiences are inherently positive and memorable and similarly, not all dissatisfactory tourism experiences necessarily translate into negative experiences.

Past research has investigated the constituents of MTEs, acknowledging factors like “hedonism, novelty, knowledge, meaningfulness, involvement, local culture, and refreshment”, all of which contribute to the potent creation of lasting memories (Kim et al., 2012).

However, there's still a missing piece in understanding how to make memorable tourism experiences happen in places like orchards. A main problem in the existing research about tourism is that we don't have enough information about the specific things in a place that make these memorable experiences. Figuring out these things is important because it helps us learn more about memorable experiences and gives the people in charge of these places ideas about how to create better experiences for tourists (Kim, 2014).

Orchard tourism attributes can have a significant impact on tourists' visit intentions and their level of expectation. The attributes of orchard tourism contribute to shaping tourists' perceptions and anticipation of their experience. Deslandes (2003) found that

the tourist’s travel intention was positively related to the perceived attributes of the travel destination.

Orchards provide an opportunity for tourists to engage with authentic agricultural practices and experience sustainability initiatives firsthand. The attributes of authenticity and sustainability can attract tourists who prioritize responsible and meaningful travel experiences. The expectation of engaging in sustainable practices, supporting local farmers, and understanding the farm-to-fork journey can shape tourists' visit intentions and increase their level of expectation.

By offering unique experiences, educational value, natural beauty, sensory delights, cultural immersion, and sustainability initiatives, orchard tourism can create a compelling and fulfillling experience for tourists seeking a distinct and meaningful travel experience (Suhartanto et al., 2020).

The tourism destination is the focal point of the entire tourism experience. The destination attributes measure the image of a destination held by tourists. It assesses various dimensions, including cognitive, affective, and conative aspects of destination image, which in turn influence tourists' intention to visit (Baloglu & Mccleary, 1999). It encompasses the physical attributes, cultural offerings, attractions, accommodations, infrastructure, and services that draw travelers. The destination's unique features, authenticity, accessibility, and quality of experiences directly impact tourists' satisfaction and likelihood of returning. Moreover, a destination's reputation and appeal shape tourists' expectations and intentions to visit (Gautam, 2012; Wang et al., 2022). Tourist expectations include the anticipated outcomes, experiences, and benefits that individuals foresee when considering a trip. These expectations are built upon various factors, including prior knowledge, marketing efforts, word-of-mouth, and personal desires. Positive expectations can lead to heightened enthusiasm and anticipation for the trip, while misaligned expectations might result in disappointment. Tourist expectations directly influence their intentions to visit a particular destination. Tourist intention refers to the inclination or determination of individuals to visit a specific destination. It is a precursor to actual travel behavior and reflects the decision-making process. Intentions are influenced by a complex blend of factors, including personal motivations, perceived value, marketing messages, recommendations, and perceived feasibility. Positive intentions are a strong indicator of potential visitor arrivals, and

they guide the planning and management of tourism infrastructure, services, and marketing strategies (Wang et al., 2016).

Southan (2024), writing for Condé Nast Traveler, highlights the emerging trend of "rural upskilling" within agritourism. This movement allows participants to reconnect with ancestral skills through experiences such as milking cows, blacksmithing, and carpentry. For example, Babylonstoren in South Africa offers masterclasses in these crafts, while The Newt in Somerset, UK, provides opportunities to craft apple cider and roll beeswax candles. In Portugal, the Viceroy at Ombria Algarve enables guests to experience shepherding and traditional pottery making. In the United States, Paintrock Canyon Ranch in Wyoming caters to the growing interest in cowboy culture, offering horseback riding and authentic ranch experiences.

In this literature review chapter, a comprehensive examination of existing research publications and references from reputable databases has been conducted. The relevance and significance of these sources are critical, as they offer valuable insights into the development of agritourism, highlighting key issues faced by the academic community, particularly in conceptualizing and contextualizing this domain. These resources have been instrumental in shaping research concepts, refining the methodology, and situating this thesis within the existing body of knowledge. The key findings from the agritourism literature have significantly influenced the direction and framework of this thesis. Additionally, review publications serve as metadata for both seminal and recent work in the field of agritourism. Several papers have guided specific aspects of this research, while a few have been frequently cited and referenced throughout. These key papers are presented in the table below.

Table 2.1

Most referred studies on conceptualization, contextualization and Metadata on Orchard Tourism

Title	Authors	Methodology	Key findings	Relevance to Current Research - Discussion
A bibliometric analysis of Crossref agritourism literature indexed in Web of Science.	Dimitrovski, D., Leković, M., & Joukes, V. (2019).	Bibliometric and keyword analysis to assess current trends and predict future directions in agritourism research. Sample- 21 Crossref journals indexed in Web of Science	There is a recently increased global interest in rurality. Tourism Management is the most influential journal in spreading knowledge regarding agritourism. Carla Barbieri is recognized as the most influential author in the field of agritourism.	The study serves as a valuable resource in this research by compiling and synthesizing a wide range of research findings. This helps in understanding current research trends and gaps. Agritourism has received growing academic attention over recent decades. More agritourism studies are needed to provide valuable guidelines for agritourism providers, tourists, and destination managers.
Agritourism: structured literature review and bibliometric analysis	Sourav Rauniyar, Maya Kant Awasthi, Sanjeev Kapoor, Ashok K. Mishra (2023)	Structured literature review of agritourism research Sample- 459 relevant publications. 1980 to 2019, using Web of Science and Scopus databases Visualization of similarities (VOS) software for graphically mapping and Epistemological Analysis	The paper identifies major research trends and patterns in agritourism studies over the years. It maps the geographical distribution of agritourism research, highlighting regions with the most publications, and analyzes citation patterns to identify influential papers and authors in the field. While highlighting gaps in current agritourism research and suggesting areas for future studies, it also encourages interdisciplinary approaches combining tourism, agriculture, and rural development. The paper suggests the need for more policy-oriented research to support agritourism	Recognizing the broad and diverse themes within agritourism is crucial for a comprehensive approach to orchard tourism. Insights into pricing strategies and the motivations and determinants for engaging in agritourism helped to understand what attracts tourists and how to meet their expectations. Diversification strategies informed the recommendations on enhancing the appeal and resilience of orchard tourism. Addressing challenges and opportunities specific to the Shimla region, informed by the broader agritourism literature, allowed to propose tailored solutions to local issues.

			development and emphasizes the importance of sustainability in future agritourism research.	
A Review of Quantitative Studies in Agritourism: The Implications for Developing Countries	Kumar Bhatta 1 and Yasuo Ohe (2020)	Structured Literature review Sample - 85 quantitative papers	The review paper highlights several crucial aspects related to agritourism development, particularly in developing countries. It emphasizes the importance of promoting female participation, ensuring workforce quality, and providing financial support such as credit or subsidies to farmers. Additionally, it underscores the need for effective planning and monitoring of agritourism projects. Despite its potential, agritourism's growth in developing countries, especially South Asian nations, is slower compared to developed countries. This development hinges on farmers' willingness and infrastructure readiness, as well as tourists' interest. The paper also points out that sustainability in agritourism is influenced by both supply and demand factors, and innovation plays a key role in driving sustainable development by modernizing agricultural practices and integrating tourism services.	Exploring typologies and gender roles provided insights into the dynamics of workforce and community involvement in agritourism. This understanding helped to advocate for policies that support women, ensure workforce quality, and provide financial incentives to farmers. Furthermore, the emphasis on collaboration among stakeholders to develop sustainable and thriving orchard tourism was a key takeaway that was integrated into this thesis, aligning with the broader objectives of rural development and creating enriched tourist experiences. Reference papers addressing both supply and demand factors, modernized practices and integrated services helped assess the overall viability of this novel concept.
Orchard Tourism as an Enterpriserises.	Awasthi, O. P., Singh, A. K.,	Multi-faceted approach to evaluate orchard tourism's impact	Orchard tourism is an emerging sector with significant potential for driving economic growth and benefiting rural	Orchard tourism has gained popularity due to its multifaceted benefits. It not only drives economic growth but also supports rural development by creating

	& Verma, M. K. (2013).		areas. Key principles for successful orchard tourism include providing attractions for visitors to see, such as well-planned orchards and nurseries; offering engaging activities, such as fruit harvesting, tasting, and festivals; and having products for visitors to buy, like fresh fruits and local handicrafts. Various models of orchard tourism, including traditional orchards, rural landscapes, theme parks, eco recreation, tech education, and comprehensive recreation styles, cater to different tourist preferences and enhance the overall visitor experience.	employment opportunities and providing additional income sources for local communities. Additionally, orchard tourism promotes nutritional security and poverty alleviation, making it a valuable tool for rural upliftment. By offering diverse attractions and activities, orchard tourism ensures a comprehensive and enjoyable experience for tourists, encouraging longer stays and repeat visits. These models can be adapted to the specific context of the Shimla region to maximize tourist engagement and satisfaction, enabling sustainable rural development.
Factors Affecting the Change of Agricultural Land Use to Tourism: A Case Study on the Southern Coasts of the Caspian Sea	Iran Mostafa Ghadami, Andreas Dittmann, Mousa Pazhuhan and Naser Aligholizadeh Firouzjaie (2022)	Qualitative methodology unstructured interviews with farmers and experts from the agricultural department snowball sampling	It reveals that the transition of agricultural lands to tourism is driven by a combination of structural inefficiencies and individual factors. Key findings include the conversion of agricultural lands to tourism due to easier land use changes, legal loopholes, and economic disparities between the sectors. This shift is driven by ineffective land management systems and unstable government policies, which undermine agriculture's competitiveness and lead to increased land prices. Consequently, farmers, especially younger generations, view agriculture as less appealing	The study's examination of the conflicting relationship between tourism and agriculture highlights the critical issues in land management systems and policy frameworks that parallel challenges faced in Shimla. The recommendation of mixed methodologies—combining qualitative insights from interviews with structural critiques—also served as a model for this research. The study provides a critical perspective that contrasts with the more commonly reported view of tourism and agriculture having a complementary or constructive relationship, as seen in agro-tourism. Instead, it highlights the destructive impact that tourism can have on agricultural activities, particularly in developing countries.

			compared to tourism jobs. The study highlights the need for coordinated stakeholder efforts and sustainable land-use policies to balance tourism development with agricultural sustainability.	
Agritourism research: A perspective article	Barbieri, C. (2020).	Building upon the existing literature and existing agriculture and tourism trends, this paper elucidates on the future of agritourism spaces and research	This paper highlights important progress in agritourism research, focusing on how it is described, understood, and studied. It shows that agritourism is now a well-established field, with future developments expected to include educational farm activities and recreational agricultural spaces. The paper emphasizes the need to understand where agritourism falls between education and recreation. It also suggests that future research should explore how agritourism can help bridge the gap between rural and urban areas, addressing the differences and tensions between these communities.	The paper's vision for the future of agritourism, spanning from educational to recreational spaces, aligns with the potential scope of orchard tourism in Shimla. Furthermore, the recommendation to explore agritourism's role in mitigating the rural-urban gap is particularly relevant.
Why is diversification an attractive farm adjustment strategy? Insights from Texas farmers and ranchers	Barbieri, C., & Mahoney, E. (2009).	This study uses a principal component factor analysis to examine the goals driving agricultural entrepreneurship and diversification. Data were collected on the importance of various financial and	Explores motivations for farm diversification through agritourism. Farmers' diversification goals include reducing risk, growing markets, improving financial conditions, pursuing personal goals, increasing revenues, and maintaining family connections. Factors such as the farmer's age, family history	Understanding the diverse motivations behind farm diversification helps tailor orchard tourism initiatives to meet local farmers' needs, such as economic stability and family heritage preservation. The study's insights on demographic and geographic influences can guide targeted policies and support systems for effective orchard tourism strategies in Shimla.

		non-financial goals for farmers in Texas.	of the farm, household income, number of employees, and proximity to urban areas influence these goals.	
Tourism product development and product diversification in destinations	Benur, A. M., & Bramwell, B. (2015).	This paper develops two conceptual frameworks to analyze tourism product features and strategic options in destinations. The methodology involves creating and applying these frameworks to understand the development, concentration, diversification, and intensification of tourism products.	The study emphasizes the importance of primary tourism products in attracting tourists and ensuring the competitiveness and sustainable development of destinations. It highlights key elements such as niche and mass tourism products, parallel and integrative diversification, and thematic and spatial synergies. Additionally, the study provides a typology of strategic options based on different levels of intensification and concentration/diversification.	Understanding the importance of diversifying and linking primary tourism products and stakeholders in Shimla is essential. The conceptual frameworks and strategic options provided by the study offer valuable tools for analyzing and planning new tourism product development. For instance, integrating orchards and rural products within an existing tourism destination like Shimla.
The antecedents of memorable tourism experiences: The development of a scale to measure the destination attributes associated with memorable experiences.	Kim, J. H. (2014).	Rigorous scale development, Literature review EFA & CFA	The study highlights the importance of providing memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) for success in the competitive tourism market. To aid destination managers, the paper develops a scale instrument to conceptualize destination attributes linked to MTEs.	By understanding and incorporating the identified 10-dimensional construct that affects MTEs, orchard attributes were matched to MTEs and a new scale was developed later.
The theory of planned behavior.	Ajzen, I. (1991).	Review of Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1987)	The research confirms that the Theory of Planned Behavior is effective in predicting behaviors based on attitudes, social norms, and perceived control. These factors explain much of the variation in actual behavior. However,	By applying this theory, we can better predict tourists' intentions to engage in orchard tourism based on their attitudes towards such experiences, social influences, and perceived ease or difficulty of participating. This understanding helps in designing targeted marketing strategies and improving the tourism experience. Although

			the exact links between these factors and specific beliefs are still unclear. While expectancy-value models partly address these links, better measurement methods are needed. Including past behavior in predictions helps test the theory's accuracy, showing it works well in predicting behavior.	some aspects of the theory, like the precise relationships between beliefs, need further exploration, its overall effectiveness in predicting behavior can guide efforts to attract and manage tourists in orchard settings.
Destination Competitiveness: Determinants and Indicators	Larry Dwyer & Chulwon Kim (2003)	The paper develops a model of destination competitiveness by integrating key elements from the general literature and tourism-specific research.	The model successfully identifies key indicators including both objective measures (e.g., infrastructure quality) and subjective measures (e.g., tourist satisfaction). The model allows for a comparison of competitiveness and highlights the relative strengths and weaknesses of destinations, though some limitations in the model and indicators are noted.	By providing a structured approach to evaluating and enhancing destination competitiveness, the model offers valuable insights for assessing orchard tourism destinations. It helps identify key success factors and indicators that can be applied to measure and improve the competitiveness of orchard-based tourism experiences. This is crucial for this research, as it allows to analyze how orchard destinations can be positioned more effectively in the tourism market.

2.9 Research gap

In the state of Himachal Pradesh, Orchard Tourism is a new concept both in terms of practice and theoretical context. The available research on Orchard Tourism or for that matter on farm tourism is negligible, however, the references may be sought from sustainable tourism literature or rural and special interest tourism studies which primarily feature adventure, religion, and eco-tourism.

While the concept of orchard tourism holds promise, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining its specific dimensions and prospects, particularly in the context of Shimla. The exploration of orchard tourism beyond conventional farming practices remains largely unexplored, creating a gap in the existing literature. Thus, an exclusive study is desired from a tourism perspective to understand the intentions and expectations of tourists keen on undertaking orchard tourism and also to find out the need and requirement of establishing such business from the potential operator's point of view, which in our case would be marginal and small farmers. To address this broad research gap effectively, it is essential to identify the specific gaps in the existing literature related to orchard tourism in Shimla.

Firstly, there is a limited understanding of growers' and visitor motivations and preferences. While some studies have investigated tourist motivations and preferences in the context of rural and ecotourism, there is a scarcity of research focusing specifically on orchard tourism. Understanding the factors that attract tourists to orchards, such as the natural landscapes, agricultural practices, or the appeal of fruit-picking activities, can help develop tailored marketing strategies and enhance visitor experiences.

Secondly, a few important things are missing in the research on orchard tourism in Shimla in terms of infrastructure and facilities tourists need, like transportation and places to stay. This is crucial for making the overall visitor experience better.

Involving the local community in decision-making and understanding how they can collaborate with the government, tour operators, and farmers in the context of tourism development lacks research. The third gap is about Community involvement and stakeholder collaboration.

In an attempt to introduce tourism into rural areas, it should not result in turning Orchards into another polluted and saturated spot. The impact of tourism activities on the environment needs to be minimized. There's not enough research on how to make orchard tourism in Shimla more environmentally friendly. Studies on managing waste in rural, conserving water, and protecting biodiversity in the village destinations have not been undertaken. This is crucial to maintaining the natural beauty that attracts tourists to these places (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2020).

This research aims to fill in the research gaps about orchard tourism in Shimla. At first, the need for Orchard tourism development is explored from the local farmer's perspective, then the availability and requirements of infrastructure development are assessed at these locations and finally, the motivations and expectations of potential tourists are matched to these resources to assess their visit intention. The findings will provide a vision and guidance for policymakers, tourism organizers, and local communities. They can use these insights and suggestions to explore the potential of infusing orchards into tourism, beyond conventional farming practices. The present research with in-depth interaction with orchardists and 2 separate surveys on farmers, operators and experts from relevant fields has helped attempt to explore this phenomenon in the present scenario from a tourism perspective.

CHAPTER-3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the methodological aspect of this research. Methodology holds a crucial position in any research proposal and serves as its foundation. The current research employs a scientifically derived methodology, aligned with the research questions and objectives. The research methodology is structured sequentially per the research's objectives to analyze both primary and secondary data collected qualitatively, while also utilizing appropriate statistical tools for their interpretation.

The chapter begins by introducing the research design. The reason to opt for research design is that, in social sciences research with qualitative data, it takes precedence over research methodology (Felix & Smith., 2019). Having established the research design, we explore the type of data and the breakdown of concepts based on our research questions and objectives. Following the research design section, discussions about measurements, sampling techniques, and the data collection process are given. Within the measurements section, the entities under measurement, the employed measurement tools, and the scales operationalized are mentioned. Subsequently, the chosen sampling technique and the sample size for the research are addressed. Afterward, the methods employed to gather data, and finally, the validity of variables and the reliability of scales are discussed.

3. Research design

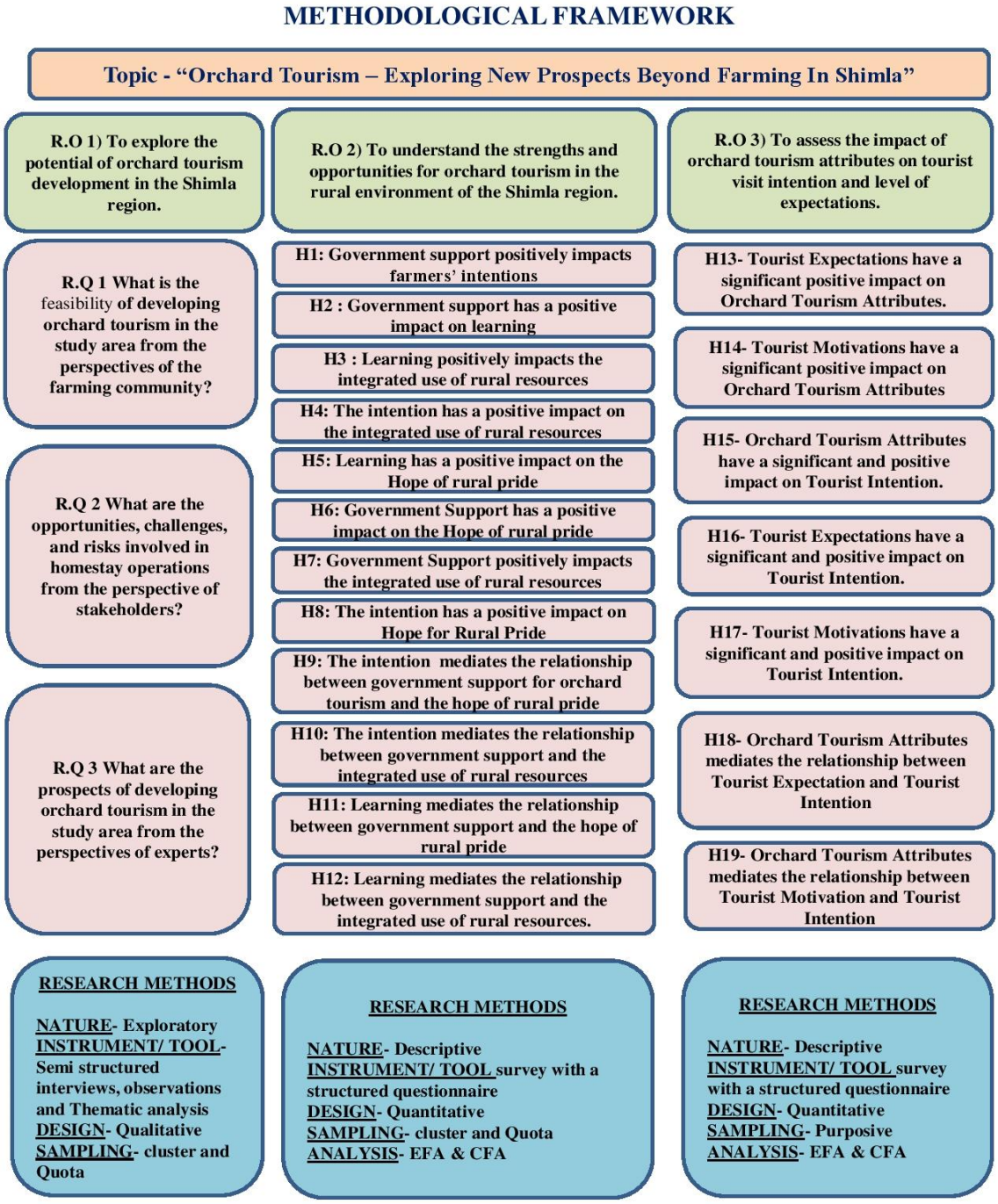
Kothari (2004) defines research design, stating that it involves making decisions about what, where, when, how much, and by what methods of research study. This forms the framework of a research design. A research design is how conditions are organized to gather and analyze data. This organization aims to balance the relevance of the research goal with efficiency in the process.

The current research can be briefly characterized as an exploratory cum descriptive investigation. This classification is necessitated by the presence of elements from both types of research. Categorizing it solely into one type would be unjust due to the intricate nature of the research problem at hand.

The research's essence was exploratory, aiming to uncover the latent possibilities of orchard tourism within the Shimla region. The results of this exploratory investigation are intended to offer insights into sustainable orchard tourism advancement within the studied locale. Employing a mixed methods strategy, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data was scrutinized to arrive at a comprehensive conclusion.

Figure 3.1

Methodological Framework for Developing Orchard Tourism in Shimla



Note: Developed by the Researcher.

Exploratory research is particularly suitable when the selected research topic is relatively novel or when acquiring data poses challenges. This type of research is adaptable and delves into various aspects of the subject, seeking answers to questions such as "what," "why," and "how." In instances like the present research, where the aim is to become acquainted with phenomena and acquire fresh insights, thereby forming a precise problem and constructing a formal hypothesis, exploratory research proves invaluable.

On the other hand, descriptive research also referred to as statistical research, has been primarily conducted to enhance comprehension of the subject matter. Given that the research problem incorporates elements of both types, rendering it distinctive, the appropriate label for it is an exploratory cum descriptive research. This research identified the following objectives, which were achieved sequentially using appropriate methods.

1) To explore the potential of orchard tourism development in the Shimla region.
2) To understand the strengths and opportunities for orchard tourism in the rural environment of the Shimla region
3) To assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations.

3.1 To explore the potential of orchard tourism development in the Shimla region

Discovering orchard tourism within the framework of Rural tourism was a challenge in itself. Earlier studies had outlined diverse typologies of Agri tourism, but we encountered limitations and omissions in those classifications. Situated in a mountainous region with a distinct cultural history, the research area held its complexities. The important components of Orchard Tourism are- orchards and tourism and the people associated with it on the demand and supply side. The initial inquiries revolved around the region, its horticultural and cultural values, as well as concerns regarding the diminishing farming prospects. Further questions delved into the identification of potential subtypes of orchard tourism uniformly across 4 districts.

To uncover these themes, open-ended interviews were conducted during September and October 2022, with a total of 48 interviews. Qualitative methods are not considered superior to, or substitutes for, quantitative methods, and vice versa. Instead, the choice of method depends on the research's nature, its questions, the area of research, and the participants involved. This research looked at what three key groups think about switching farmland to tourist attractions. First, we talked to farmers (36) who have been in farming for a while. The second set comprised existing operators identified as homestay owners (8). The third group consisted of experienced officials (4) who knew a lot about changes in land use for farming and tourism. To collect data, a semi-structured interview was conducted.

In-depth interviews and Thematic analysis

Administratively, the Shimla region comprises 4 Districts i.e., Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur, and Kinnaur. Cluster and Quota sampling methods were used to identify the target population and sample thereof. There are 17 tehsils in district Shimla, 7 in Solan, 9 in Sirmaur, and 5 in Kinnaur (Table 3.1). Out of these, rural tehsils with maximum horticulture production (3 from each district) were identified and chosen for interview locale. Cluster sampling is a probabilistic technique used for researching large populations by dividing them into naturally occurring, geographically dispersed clusters, which tend to be more homogeneous. This method was found the most suitable for sampling the farming populations of districts under research, with the clusters' quality determining result validity. After forming clusters, a quota of 3 farmers per unit (Tehsil) was created to obtain a balanced mix of different genders and age groups. Previous research shows that younger farmers who are willing to take risks and have less fertile soil are more likely to explore making money from their farms through agritourism activities (Meraner et al., 2018). Quota sampling is a non-probabilistic method where researchers create a sample representing a population based on specific traits. Quotas are established to ensure useful market research data collection, allowing generalization to the entire population. Gender issues have stepped into the spotlight in some agritourism studies. Hung et al., (2016) established that the success of agritourism depends on the number and quality of people working on farms and how big the farms are. The final sample is determined by the researcher's knowledge, following four steps:

subgroup division, proportion evaluation, maintaining proportions in sample selection, choosing an appropriate sample size, and conducting surveys based on defined quotas.

Thus, from the identified 12 tehsils, 3 respondents from each farming community were interviewed. In all 36 respondents represented this segment. In qualitative research, the sample size depends on the specific context and is influenced by the scientific approach used for the investigation. When planning qualitative research, it can be helpful to consider theoretical saturation as a guide. Practical research has shown that in some cases, a sample size of around 12 may be enough, especially when researching a relatively similar group of people (Boddy, 2016).

Table 3.1

District-wise list of Tehsils

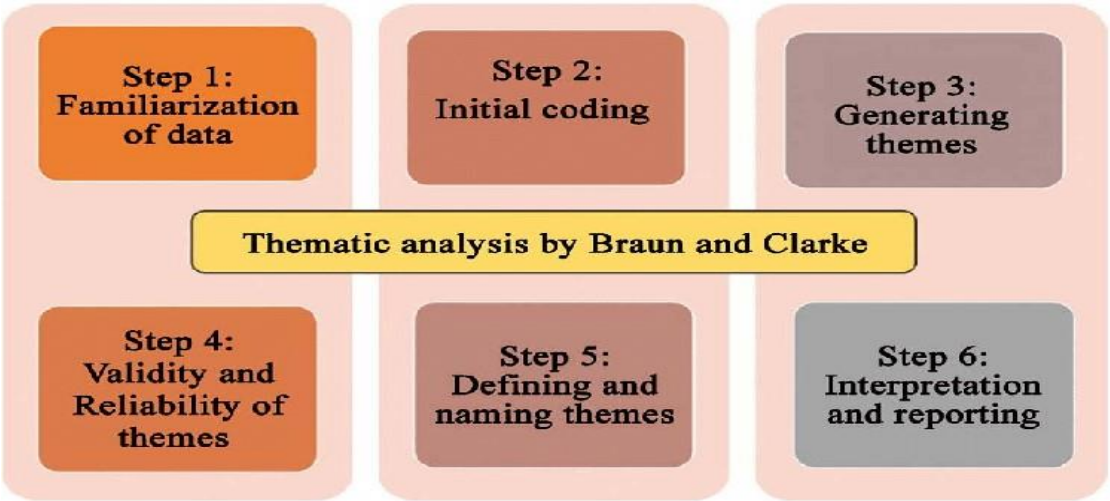
Shimla (17)	Solan (7)	Sirmaur (9)	Kinnaur (5)
Shimla Urban	**Solan**	**Nahan**	Nichar
Shimla Rural	**Kandaghat**	**Rajgarh**	**Kalpa**
Theog	**Kasauli**	**Pachhad**	**Sangla**
Rampur	Arki	Kamrau	**Moorang**
Rohru	Baddi	Poanta Sahib	Pooh
Chirgaon	Ramshehar	Sanhrah Renukaji	
Kumarsain	Nalagarh	Shillai	
Kotkhai		Dadahu	
Jubbal		Nohradhar	
Nerwa			
Suni			
Chaupal			
Nankhari			
Kupvi			
Tikkar			
Junga			
Dodrakwar			

Note – Adapted from Statistical Year Book Himachal Pradesh 2022-23

Another valuable research method utilized was participant observation, which played a significant role in our research. During visits, the researcher actively observed and engaged with participants. This approach allowed the researcher to cover the entire research area comprehensively, gain a deeper understanding of the prevailing trends and make connections that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. By combining participant observation with interviews and event participation, the research approach facilitated the exploration of the subject matter, uncovering meaningful insights and patterns. Thematic analysis stands as a technique to inspect qualitative data. It means going through a bunch of information to find, analyze, and describe patterns that keep coming up (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It's not just about describing information; it also calls for understanding while picking codes and shaping themes. Thematic analysis is a reliable research method when the aim is to understand what people think, feel, know, experience, or believe based on a batch of qualitative data. This could be data like transcripts of interviews, profiles on social media, or answers from surveys. This approach acts like a practice run and can greatly aid in forming a questionnaire. Many researchers, including Roman and Grudzie´n (2021), Bramwell (2015), Gale and Beeftink (2005) and Cao et al., (2022) have used this technique to research how tourism develops.

Figure- 3.2

Thematic analysis



Note: From Using thematic analysis in psychology by Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006).

To answer our first Research question, “What is the feasibility of developing orchard tourism in the research area from the perspectives of the farming community?” some open-ended questions were asked.

1) What is your name?
2) Share something about you: age, occupation, education, marital status, and family members.
3) How many members are there in your family and what is their occupation?
4) Are you satisfied with the current levels of income?
5) How much do you spend on your needs and what are those needs?
6) What status do you hold in society? Household income, category, and religion.
7) How much land do you own and what are its terrain and accessibility?
8) What are you growing in your orchards and for how long?
9) How are orchards contributing to your economy?
10) How much does it cost to maintain your orchards annually?
11) Have agriculture and horticulture changed over time? If yes, how?
12) What challenges are you facing in current farming practices?
13) What is the impact of new technologies on income and ease of operations?
14) What are your expectations for better living?
15) What can be a potential source of income in your region?
16) What are your expectations from tourism in your area?
17) How can you benefit from tourism?
18) What opportunities do you see for using orchards as a tourism resource?

19) Can there be any challenges to adopting tourism within your orchard? Social, environmental, and economic.

20) What can be the associated products in addition to an orchard?

From a stakeholder's standpoint, it becomes crucial to ascertain whether the proposed business holds the potential for growth and yield. Profitability stands as a fundamental requirement for any business venture. The evaluation of a destination's potential hinges on assessing the demand for tourism development in those areas and resource availability. In rural settings, the feasibility of large-scale commercial activities remains limited, necessitating the efficient utilization of local resources. Given the economic landscape of the local populace, it cannot be assumed that they can readily establish expansive hotels and resorts. For those seeking to provide lodging and meals in exchange for compensation, the optimal approach involves converting one's residence into a Homestay arrangement. With this perspective in mind, eight interviews were conducted (two from each district) involving Homestay owners, not only to gauge economic viability but also to comprehensively understand the advantages, disadvantages, and the spectrum of challenges associated with it. The themes extracted from these interviews help to explore the potential of synergizing homestays with orchards, leading to the emergence of a novel micro-entrepreneurial venture: Orchard Tourism.

To answer our second Research Question, “What are the opportunities, challenges, and risks involved in homestay operations from the perspective of stakeholders?”, the following set of questions were asked.

1) Can you briefly explain yourself?

2) When and how did you first learn about Homestay Tourism?

3) How long did it take for you to plan and start this business?

4) For how long have you running homestay operations?

5) What kind of investments do you have to make in terms of land, infrastructure, manpower, etc.?

6) How many rooms do you have for guests/ visitors?

7) Apart from rooms, what other services do you offer- food and beverage, souvenirs, fruits, and fruit products, tours to orchards and nearby places, fruit plucking, etc?

8) How many returns do you make/Is it a profitable venture and how?

9) Do you feel more people should start homestay operations to upgrade their quality of life?

10) Did you face any difficulties in the past or any present challenges?

11) What kind of support do you get from Government and what other provisions do you want?

12) What is the kind of clientele you get? What kind of expectations do they come with?

13) Do you get repeat visitors? What makes them revisit the place?

To assess the viability and workability of a novel concept, it's essential to subject it to validation by experts. The key constituents of Orchard Tourism are orchards, tourism, and the individuals linked to it from both the demand and supply sides. Consequently, we conducted interviews with four subject specialists hailing from diverse fields, each equipped with significant knowledge, expertise, and hands-on experience. These experts included a professor specializing in Agriculture and Horticulture Practices, who also holds expertise in Biotechnology, two sets of Professionals from the Hospitality and Training domain, and an Expert from the tourism sector.

R.Q 3) What are the prospects of developing orchard tourism in the research area from the perspectives of experts?

The researcher took time doing fieldwork, visiting each person interviewed and scheduling the right time and place. All interviews were one-on-one and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, and sometimes up to an hour for expert interviews. The interviews took place in two phases, from September to October 2022, talking to 36 farmers, 8 operators, and 4 government officials at their homes or workplaces. Once enough

information was gathered, the researcher stopped collecting data. We converted all the interview texts to Word format and carefully read through them to find important factors influencing farming practices, why some farmers stopped traditional agriculture, and why there's a push to change horticulture lands to tourism. The themes that emerged from the interviews were distinct. In selecting the final themes out of the explored ones, only those themes were selected that were common across all 4 districts in the Shimla region.

3.2 To accomplish the second objective of the research, **"To understand the strength and opportunities for orchard tourism in the rural environment of the Shimla region"** this research has adopted a descriptive approach thus combining both quantitative as well as qualitative methods. The research methodology has been carefully designed to guide the research's progression. The descriptive nature of this objective aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation. To achieve this, the chosen instrument involved a survey utilizing a structured questionnaire, facilitating systematic data collection from participants who in this case were small and marginal farmers of the research locale. The effectiveness of any survey hinges on the quality of its questionnaire design. This research design takes a quantitative approach, focusing on statistical analysis to quantify relationships and patterns within the collected data. The superlative and latent themes that emerged from thematic analysis in research objective 1 along with pertinent literature review were used as constructs and their items to develop a questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed keeping in mind the intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource, the existing strengths explored, and the opportunities desired by the farming community. Considerable effort has been dedicated to enhancing the questionnaire's relevance, moving away from a dull and overly comprehensive format.

The primary mode of data collection in the overall research is personal interviews or the completion of the questionnaire. While secondary data, sourced from diverse materials like books, journals, online theses, dissertations, and reports from entities such as UNWTO, WTTC, and Ministry of Tourism, substantially contributed to the research's introduction and literature review chapters, the focus for data collection and subsequent analysis remained on the primary data obtained through the questionnaire. It's noteworthy that the process of data collection, particularly concerning primary data,

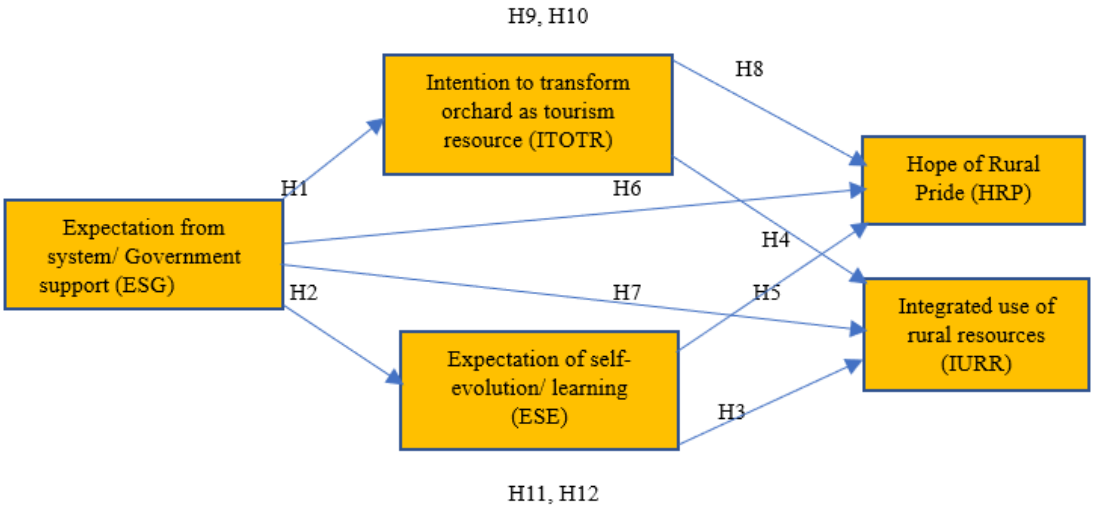
can prove to be quite strenuous for researchers. The Questionnaire has two sections. The first part of the questionnaire has 9 variables and their respective 41 items. Data was collected with the help of a five-point Likert scale. It constituted a scale from strongly agree with 5 points, agree with 4 points, neutral/ can't say with 3 points, disagree with 2 points and strongly disagree with 1 point against the questions. The second part of the questionnaire seeks information on the demographic profile of these farmers. This section focuses on the growers' Personal Profile, encompassing inquiries about their Age, gender, educational attainment, years engaged in farming, farm size and structure, yearly income, and family composition. Each of these variables is significant as they collectively contribute to a genuine understanding of the orchardist's profile. 3 academicians have validated the questionnaire. Pre-testing of this questionnaire was not needed since it was developed from qualitative analysis. Data was collected from March to May 2023 from villages of 4 districts- Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Kinnaur in person.

The process of data collection involves systematically collecting and measuring details on identified variables to address research questions, test hypotheses, and assess outcomes. While methods may vary, the importance of accurate and honest data collection remains consistent. Making sure research is honest and reliable depends on getting the data right, whether it's numbers or descriptions. This means choosing the right tools to collect the data whether they already exist, need a bit of change, or have to be created from scratch. Clear instructions are important to avoid mistakes. (Most et al., 2003) talk about two ways, "quality assurance" and "quality control," to make sure the data is good and the research's results are scientifically sound.

The research here adopts a cluster and quota sampling technique. This entails the selection of representative clusters or groups from the population of interest. Within these clusters, a quota approach is employed to ensure proportional inclusion of various participant characteristics.

Figure 3.3

Conceptual Model to assess the strength and opportunities for orchard tourism development in Rural Shimla



Note: Developed by the Researcher.

In Chapter 1, the scope and need of research, as well as the established objectives and the underlying rationale have been thoroughly recorded. With these research objectives as a foundation, hypotheses were subsequently formulated.

Hypotheses

Based on this conceptual model, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: Government support for orchard tourism positively impacts farmers' intention to transform orchards into a tourism resource.

H2: Government support for orchard tourism has a positive impact on learning.

H3: Learning positively impacts the integrated use of rural resources.

H4: The intention to transform orchards into a tourism resource has a positive impact on the integrated use of rural resources

H5: Learning has a positive impact on the Hope of rural pride.

H6: Government Support has a positive impact on the Hope of rural pride.

H7: Government Support positively impacts the integrated use of rural resources.

H8: The intention of transforming an orchard into a tourism resource has a positive impact on Hope for Rural Pride.

H9: The intention of transforming orchards into a tourism resource mediates Government support for orchard tourism and the hope of rural pride from orchard tourism.

H10: The intention of transforming an orchard into a tourism resource mediates Government support for orchard tourism and the integrated use of rural resources.

H11: Learning mediates government support for orchard tourism and the hope of rural pride from orchard tourism.

H12: Learning mediates government support for orchard tourism and the integrated use of rural resources.

Table- 3.2

Construction of measurement scale items and their literary source for hosts

	Indicators	**Sources**
Intention to transform orchards as a tourism resource	Scope of tourism business to household	Barbieri (2008), Mcghee & Kim (2004)
	Utilizing and getting value from existing resources	Tew and Barbieri (2012), Mcghee & Kim (2004), Nickerson et al., (2001), Barbieri (2008)
	Diversify market/ offering tourism activities	Barbieri (2008), Yasmin et al., (2023)
	Village homestay	Agyeiwaah et al., (2013), Dey et al., (2020), Han (2019), Mura (2015), Ogucha et al., (2015), Rasoolimanesh et al., (2016)
		Phillip et al., (2010)
Hope of Social Security	Improve the quality of life	Tew and Barbieri (2012), Petrović et al., (2017), Barbieri (2008)
	Employment for family members	Tew and Barbieri (2012), Nickerson et al., (2001), Mcghee & Kim (2004)
	Reduce migration for job	Barbieri (2008), Bhalla et al., (2016)

	Economic strengthening	Bhalla et al., (2016), Che et al., (2005), Lupi et al., (2017)
	off-season revenue generation	Tew and Barbieri (2012), Barbieri (2008)
	Infrastructure development	Petrović et al., (2017), Croutch & Ritchie (1999)
Hope of Rural Pride	Promote rural culture	Croutch & Ritchie (1999), Gyawali et al., (2022), Barbieri et al., (2019)
	Showcase rural lifestyle	Kim (2014), Croutch & Ritchie (1999), Barbieri et al., (2019)
	Continuance of horticulture	Barbieri (2008), Sharpley & Vass (2006), Barbieri (2010)
	Teach Leadership skills to the community	Park & Yoon (2011), Obeidat (2022)
	Promote gastronomic culture	Ellis et al., (2018), Chang & Mak (2018),
Hope of market for by-products	Increase direct-sale of fruit/ products	Tew and Barbieri (2012), Gyawali et al., (2022)
	Market for traditional dishes	Chang & Mak (2018), Ellis et al., (2018), Everett & Aitchison (2008)
	Dairy and animal by-products	Sgroi et al., (2018), Tew & Barbieri (2012)
Expectation for self-evolution	Gain new skills and knowledge	Ingram (2002), Sharpley & Vass (2006)
	Meet new people/ companionship	Nickerson et al., (2001), Ingram (2002), Mcghee & Kim (2004)
	Stronger social networking	Ingram (2002), Barbieri & Mahoney (2009), Abdul & Razak (2010)
Integrated use of rural resources	Rural trails	Beeton (2006), Kling (2017)
	Village shrines and built heritage	Park et al., (2019); Zhang et al., (2020)
	Festivals	Chang & Liu (2009), Ezeuduji (2015), Sola et al., (1994), Kim et al., (2007)
	Local artefacts	Matheson (2008), McCleary et al., (2005), Prince (2017)
	Volunteer tourism	Liu & Leung (2018), McIntosh & Zahra (2007), Wearing & McGehee (2013)
Fears	Social deterrents	Sood et al., (2017), Walter et al., (2018)
	Negative impact on culture	Ghaderi & Henderson (2012), Hwang et al., (2012)
	Negative impact on youths	Haddad et al., (2019)
	Compromise on Family Privacy	Ingram (2002), Obeidat (2022)
	Disturbance to farm activity	Ingram (2002)
	Negative Environment impacts	Archer et al., (2011), Mbaiwa (2003), McKercher & Prideaux (2011), Petrović et al (2017)

	Increased cost of living	Kontogeorgopoulos (2003), Marzuki (2009)
Challenges	Unfavorable weather condition	Yasmin et al., (2023), Pickson & He (2021)
	Technical scale economies	Singh et al., (2012), Pickson & He (2021)
	Labor Problem	Yasmin et al., (2023), Pickson & He (2021)
	Poor Market conditions	Singh et al., (2012), Yasmin et al., (2023), Pickson & He (2021), Gyawali et al., (2022)
	Time management	Singh et al., (2012)
	Clearance of dues	Singh et al., (2012)
Expectations of government support	Education/ technical support	Gyawali et al., (2022), Obeidat (2022)
	Systematic support/ policy making	Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022), Pickson & He (2021)
	Credit/ subsidy/ financial aid	Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022)
	Locals in decision-making	Cawley et al., (2007), Lin et al., (2011)
	Tourism management and planning	Sznajder, et al., (2009), Pedreira et al., (2013)
	Networking and advertisement	Kuchi & Kabir (2017), Sharpley & Vass (2006), Dubois et al., (2017)
Socio-demographic and orchard profile	Education, age, location (elevation) of orchards	Khanal and Mishra (2018), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Household income	McGhee & Kim (2004), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Acres you own/ size of farm	McGhee & Kim (2004), Yasmin et al., (2023)
	No years in farming	McGhee & Kim (2004), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Farm work	Brune et al., (2020), Choo & Petrick (2014), Kim et al., (2019)
	Labor/ no. of employees	McGhee & Kim (2004), Yasmin et al., (2023)

The sample size for large population/ infinite population is assessed using Cochran's formula:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 \; X \; P \; XQ}{e^2}$$

N = sample size for the population

Z = Z score (identified at 95% confidence level – 1.96)

P = Population proportion (assumed to be 50% - 0.5)

Q = 1-P

e = Margin of error (at 95 % confidence level margin of error +_5% i.e. 0.05)

Substituting the values,

$$N = \frac{1.96\ X\ 1.96\ X\ 0.5\ X\ (1-0.5)}{0.05\ X\ 0.05}$$

$$N = 384.16$$

Table –3.3

Orchardist Sample Size Calculation (District wise)

District	Total Population	Rural Population	Percentage	Farming Population	Percentage	% of the Total farming population (607006)	Desired Sample size (n) cluster wise	Actual Sample Size (n=437)	Sample Size Retained (n=410)
D1 Shimla	814010	612659	75.2%	249786	30.6%	41.15	158.0	178	167
D2 Solan	580320	478173	82.4%	141267	24.3%	23.27	89.3 Rounded off 89	103	95
D3 Sirmaur	529855	472690	89.2%	182958	34.5%	30.14	115.7 Rounded off 116	131	125
D4 Kinnaur	84121	84121	100%	32995	39.2%	5.4	20.7 Rounded off 21	25	23
Total				607006		100	384	437	410

Note: Adapted from Statistical Yearbook 2022-23

Since the analysis of this data was done using EFA and CFA, a few more facts are worth noticing. The sample size for EFA is ideally assumed to be in the ratio of 1: 10, thus for 41 items, a sample size of 410 is justified. However, De Vellis (2016) has stated that 5-10 subjects per item are desired till an overall sample size of 300 is attained and the ratio can be relaxed above 300 sample size. Comrey (1988) reports that a sample size of 200 is adequate if there are 40 items or less. For this research, 437 questionnaires

were filled, out of which 27 were incomplete/ not legible. Thus, data was extracted from the remaining 410 forms.

The researcher personally gathered data on-site, venturing into the rural remote corners of the research area. A bilingual questionnaire was prepared to ensure the rural population's easy understanding. For respondents with limited literacy, the researcher explained each question using easily understandable language.

3.3 The third objective of the research is **"To assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations".** The research approach is descriptive, aiming for a comprehensive understanding. The instrument used is a structured questionnaire administered through a survey among tourists visiting the Shimla region. The research takes a quantitative approach, intending to use statistical analysis to uncover patterns in the collected data. The questionnaire is carefully designed, considering the purpose of the research and focusing on rural and agritourism attributes.

There is an intricate connection between travel intention, tourist expectations, and destination attributes in influencing the tourism experience. The concept of tourist expectation encompasses the hopes and desires individuals hold before embarking on a journey, while travel intention refers to an individual's plan and desire to engage in travel activities in the future. Motivation, as a driving force that propels individuals towards specific activities, is examined alongside tourist expectations to offer a better understanding of the factors influencing visit intention. Destination attributes emerge as a key factor, serving as a blend of socio-cultural elements that tempt travelers to specific locations. The unique combination of attributes in orchard destinations holds particular importance, significantly shaping the overall image and perception of these places in the minds of potential tourists. The evolution of the mature tourism market, coupled with increased leisure time, influences travelers' decisions and shapes the success of various travel destinations.

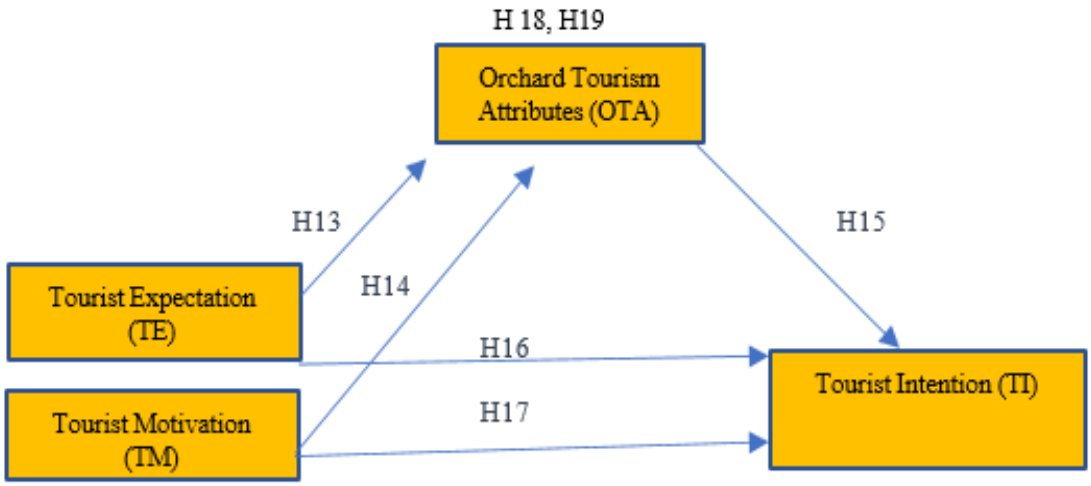
Tourism is inherently driven by the supply and demand dynamics. In this research, the researcher extensively explored the potential of orchard tourism generation within this specific locale. The first two objectives of this research have been dedicated to understanding this potential from the perspective of prospective suppliers.

Now, we shift our focus to the demand side, aiming to analyze whether there exists a demand for orchard tourism. This inquiry is particularly crucial due to the innovative and yet-to-be-formally-introduced nature of this concept. Given its novelty, capturing insights and perspectives on this matter has presented challenges. Thus, it becomes imperative to understand tourist expectations regarding a new destination. Additionally, we seek to investigate whether tourists intend to explore a distinct typology of tourism in a destination they might have previously visited.

Central to this investigation is the pivotal role of destination attributes. These attributes significantly influence tourists' intentions and decisions. While established destinations already have well-defined travel motivations, the scenario is different for emerging places like this one. Here, comprehending tourists' expectations becomes a prerequisite for understanding their subsequent intentions.

Figure 3.4

Conceptual model to assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations



Note: Developed by the Researcher.

A structured Questionnaire was developed keeping in mind the Orchard tourism attributes identified in the previous objectives, the expectation of tourists from farm-based tourist destinations and future intentions. The Questionnaire has two sections. The first part of the questionnaire has constructs of Orchard Tourism attributes, Tourist Expectations, motivations and Intentions with their respective items. This initial

segment comprises 44 items categorized under four Constructs. Participants responded using a five-point Likert scale, where the range was from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" about the questions.

The subsequent part of the questionnaire is designed to gather demographic information about the surveyed tourists. This data collection process is methodical, involving the systematic compilation and measurement of pertinent variables. Its purpose is to provide insights into research inquiries, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes effectively. This questionnaire as well has been validated by 2 academicians and an industry expert.

Pre-testing of this questionnaire was done in July 2023 (N=43) to assess the clarity, relevance, and effectiveness of the questionnaire. The results were evaluated by the validating academicians, and suggestions were incorporated. The respondents were approached randomly at various tourism locations and invited to complete the questionnaire voluntarily.

Later, the purposive sampling technique was used to survey tourists visiting multiple destinations like Shimla, Solan, Kinnaur, and Sirmaur. Here, to achieve the research's objectives, the researcher used her knowledge and expertise to select specific participants through a non-probability sampling method. Kothari (2004) describes purposive sampling as a method where researchers choose individuals or groups for the sample based on their specific goals and opinions. This approach was adopted to ensure that each location is adequately represented in the survey and to accommodate the potential differences in characteristics, preferences, and behaviors among tourists in different regions.

Final data was collected in person and online using a Google survey form. Tourists and travelers who had visited various destinations of the research area were circulated online form to capture their views on this new dimension of tourism.

HYPOTHESIS

H13- Tourist Expectations have a ‘significant positive impact’ on Orchard Tourism Attributes.

H14- Tourist Motivations have a 'significant positive impact' on Orchard Tourism Attributes.

H15- Orchard Tourism Attributes have a 'significant and positive impact' on Tourist Intention.

H16- Tourist Expectations have a 'significant and positive impact' on Tourist Intention.

H17- Tourist Motivations have a 'significant and positive impact' on Tourist Intention.

H18- Orchard Tourism Attributes Mediates Tourist Expectation and Tourist Intention.

H19- Orchard Tourism Attributes Mediates Tourist Motivation and Tourist Intention.

Table 3.4

Construction of measurement scale items and their literary source for tourists

	Indicators	**Source**
Expectation	Hedonism	Kim et al., (2012), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Novelty	Kim et al., (2012), Narangajavana et al., (2017), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Refreshment	Kim et al., (2012), Ahmad et al., (2020), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Cultural immersion	Kim et al., (2012), Narangajavana et al., (2017), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
Motivation		
	Meaningfulness	Kim et al., (2012), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Knowledge	Kim et al., (2012), Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Wang et al., (2016)
Orchard Tourism Attributes	Local culture	Kim and Eves (2012), Wang et al., (2016), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Activities and special events	Kim and Eves (2012), Meng et al., (2008), Wang et al., (2016), Ahmad et al., (2020)

	Physiography	Kim and Eves (2012), Meng et al., (2008), Wang et al., (2016), Ahmad et al., (2020), Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	Hospitality and quality of service	Kim and Eves (2012), Meng et al., (2008), Wang et al., (2016), Ahmad et al., (2020)
	Gastronomic indulgence	Kim and Eves (2012)
Intention		Ahmad et al., (2020), Songshan et al., (2018), Matzler et al., (2016)

Sample size: The data was analyzed using EFA and CFA, with an adequate sample size of 515. As discussed previously in objective 2, the sample size for a large population/ infinite population is assessed using Cochran's formula (384) and as per scales given by De Vellis (2016); and Comrey (1988).

Table 3.5

Tourist sample size calculation (District wise)

District	Tourist Arrivals	% of Total (4 Districts)	% of Total HP Tourists	Proportionate Tourist sample Desired (n=385)	Actual Tourist Sample (n=515)
Shimla	256269	2565269 / 6085739 x 100 = 42.14%	2565269 / 15100277 x 100 = 16.99%	385 x 0.4214 =162	215
Solan	1754554	1754554 / 6085739 x 100 = 28.83%	1754554 / 15100277 x 100 = 11.61%	385 x 0.2883 =111	150
Simaur	1383705	1383705 / 6085739 x 100 = 22.74%	1383705 / 15100277 x 100 = 9.16%	385 x 0.2274 =88	114
Kinnaur	382211	382211 / 6085739 x 100 = 6.29%	382211 / 15100277 x 100 = 2.53%	385 x 0.0629 =24	36
Total	6085739	100%	6085739 / 15100277 x 100 = 40.29%	385	515

Note- Adapted from Statistical Yearbook 2022-23

3.4 Potential Biases and Limitations in Data Collection

While every effort was made to ensure the data collection process was rigorous, several potential biases and limitations must be acknowledged:

1. **Geographical limitation**: The mountainous terrain of Shimla posed a significant challenge in the data collection process. Coupled with the limited accessibility of some orchard sites, it was difficult to reach certain participants, especially those located in remote or higher-altitude areas. Travel time and transportation constraints were also factors that delayed data collection.

2. **Sampling Bias**: The sample may not fully represent the broader population of interest. The participants were selected from specific rural orchard locations; the findings may not be generalizable to urban areas or other types of tourism

3. **Response Bias**: Participants may have provided socially desirable responses rather than truthful answers, especially on sensitive topics such as challenges faced by orchardists or their opinions on government policies. However, no over-reporting of positive behaviors or under-reporting of negative aspects impacted the accuracy of the findings.

4. **Cultural or Regional Limitations**: Given the focus on orchard tourism in Shimla, the data collected may not be fully applicable to other regions or types of agriculture. The findings might be influenced by the specific cultural, social, or economic context of the region, and may not be generalizable to other types of tourism or farming practices.

5. **Researcher Bias**: Although a lot of caution was exercised in data collection, there may be a potential bias introduced by personal views or preconceptions related to the local context. Being familiar with the region and its agricultural practices, certain perspectives or interpretations that align with personal experiences or beliefs might have been favored.

CHAPTER-4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1.1 Understanding the Potential of Orchard Tourism Development Using Thematic Analysis

The objectives of the present research were first approached with the help of exploring the potential of Orchard tourism development in rural areas of the Shimla region. This was carried out with the help of thematic analysis. This thematic analysis also worked as a pilot survey for this research. For thematic analysis, interviews of 48 respondents were conducted. In doing so, firstly the views and experiences of farmers who have been in the farming sector were explored the second set comprised existing operators identified as homestay owners. The last group of interviewees were officials with several years of experience who were fully acquainted with contexts of horticulture land use changes and tourism. A semi-structured interview was used to collect data. The thematic analysis serves as a valuable research method when seeking insights into individuals' perspectives, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values by examining qualitative data sets such as interview transcripts, social media profiles, or survey responses. In the interviews with respondents from the farming community, the need to transform orchards into tourism resources was assessed with the availability of resources. Simultaneously, their intention to transform this change was observed. From the stakeholder's perspective, it is important to know if the proposed business has the potential to grow and yield some results. This was done to find the possibility of merging homestays with orchards to result in a new micro-entrepreneurship of Orchard Tourism. To check the feasibility and practicality of this new concept, an Expert's opinion was also considered. Therefore, 4 Experts were interviewed from different backgrounds with substantial knowledge, expertise and experience.

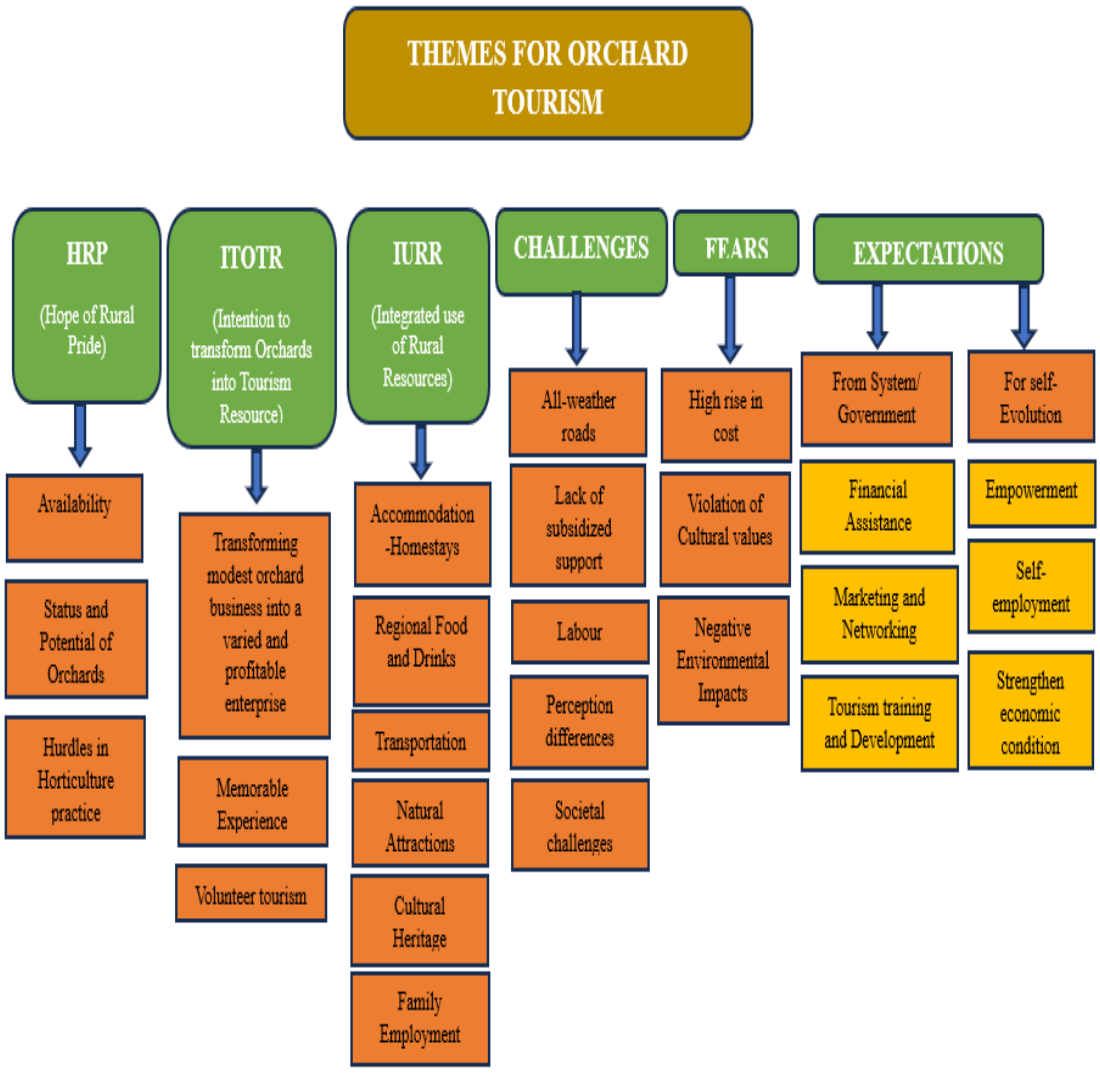
4.1.2 Identified themes and their relationship with experiences

How an event is grouped under a certain theme depends on the variety of experiences it provides, as stated by Pine and Gilmore in 2011. In rural areas, even basic elements of tourism are viewed as capable of offering meaningful experiences. Experiences are now seen as the primary source of value, surpassing commodities, goods, and services.

Based on the interviews made during the initial phase of this research, there emerged various themes. Most of these themes were common in all the four districts of the region. These themes were clubbed with the help of identified themes of Agritourism (Table 4.1.1). In Agri tourism, various activities such as utilizing local accommodation and transportation, participating in farm activities, and local events, engaging in volunteerism, and similar endeavors become tools for crafting meaningful experiences. Contrary to the common themes, there were examples of themes that were absent in one part of the region and were thus excluded.

Figure 4.1

Identified Themes for Orchard Tourism



Note: Developed by the Researcher based on Primary data collected through interviews

I. Hope of Rural Pride:

Availability – The Orchards and farming emerged as the most influential themes from the narratives of these growers. Farming remains a critical component of the rural lifestyle in this region. Agriculture is often a family enterprise, and there is a higher likelihood that the younger generation will choose to become the next generation of farmers (Brookfield & Parsons., 2007). Horticulture was uniformly available and most of the population was dependent on it. This region yields the maximum horticulture produce. Alongside, Livestock was also available throughout the rural Shimla region.

Status and Potential of Orchards - Residents not only relied on farms for income but also found deep satisfaction in their horticultural endeavors. The community took pride in their profession, and even small landholdings have proven to be economically rewarding in the past. These farms not only sustained the previous generation but also saw the current generation actively participating in farming, despite having a high educational background. An elder respondent (G9) shared his son's perspective, emphasizing the limited opportunities for government jobs in neighboring states. He expressed the sentiment that continuing the family profession allowed for a closer-knit family life and questioned whether any job could offer comparable earnings and the ability to save a substantial amount each month. Importantly, living within their own culture and society was considered a significant aspect of a fulfillling life. Local communities were proud of their profession.

Hurdles in horticulture practice- Respondents said that lifestyle and orchard management have changed over time. They found new machines and techniques better in terms of efficiency. Orchardists are facing growing challenges due to rising expenses in fertilizers and pesticides, as well as increased costs for farming equipment and uncertainties related to weather conditions. The traditional orchards are in their declining productivity phase and are in desperate need of replacement. Horticulture can’t suffice as the sole source of income due to small-scale production by individual farmers. The biggest challenge in orchard management turns out to be nature itself. With so many difficulties, Orchards are not a profitable venture for these small growers anymore.

“With the last generation, the apple is also gone…. there is hardly any yield. I clear all my dues after the season (apple), thankfully they are all known people. Right from fertilizers and pesticides, cartons, labor and the transport agent and a big chunk of miscellaneous items. You know my gross earnings never cross over my dues”. As reported by respondent (G2), a marginal grower from Kumarsain tehsil of District Shimla.

II. Intention to Transform the Orchards into a Tourism Resource

“Tourism can adjust to the increasing cost of maintaining Orchards and economically sustain our households. Tourists are most welcome to work on the farms,” said a younger respondent (G6) from Deori, Kotkhai.

Residents are hopeful that tourist activities will not only generate additional income from the orchards but also provide new use for land and other resources. In the future, a grower (G18) from Kasauli envisions transforming their orchard into a unique tourism destination. She is assured that by Opening the gates to visitors, the orchard can become a vibrant hub of activity. They can be offered guided tours that share the farm's history and the delicate balance of nature. Tourists can get hands-on experiences with fruit harvesting and creating lasting memories. During the horticulture off-season, there are a lot of maintenance activities for farming enthusiasts like pruning, spraying, fertigation, grafting etc. Another progressive grower (G31) from Sangla-Kinnaur even suggested conducting knowledge tours to show new varieties of High-Density Plantations. Orchard tourism will not only revitalize the farm but also create enduring memories for the visitors to come.

The prospect of expanding a modest orchard business into a more varied enterprise served as a compelling incentive. During an interview with a forward-thinking local farmer (G13) from Mahog-Chail (Solan), he recounted his venture into homestay operations in an already popular tourist destination. Initially, they accommodated seasonal tourists who couldn't secure hotel bookings during peak periods. Over time, their location evolved into a sought-after destination in its own right, prompting the expansion of guest rooms by three brothers. They serve as an inspiration for fellow villagers to establish their homestay units.

III. Integrated use of Rural Resources

Integrated tourism, particularly in the context of rural settings, extends beyond the conventional approach by combining both vertical and horizontal connections among stakeholders. This involves incorporating locally produced services into rural tourism to promote sustainability. The resources integral to this concept are cultural, social, environmental, and economic, as highlighted by Cawley et al., in their work on Integrated Rural Tourism in 2007. A notable exemplification of integrated tourism was witnessed at a property managed by a former Naval officer. This establishment has successfully incorporated local youth, particularly women, into both accommodation services and orchard operations.

Homestays & Culture: Catalyst for orchard tourism- While exploring the area, we noticed that old wooden houses with slate roofs were being abandoned, and new concrete houses were being built. These houses in villages have many unused rooms. There was a mixed response on allowing tourists to stay in their homes, even if the rooms are rarely used. Although Camping in orchards or farms is also a popular option, safety concerns limit where tourists can set up tents. Any well-maintained house in rural areas of the State that is easily reachable, such as those within farmhouses, orchards, tea gardens, etc., mainly meets the criteria outlined in the Scheme for Homestays (DoT & CA, 2008).

While analyzing the availability of guest houses and hotels in the near vicinity, it was observed that there is a dearth of rented accommodation in the rural areas. The forest department manages a total of 80 rest houses according to the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department in 2021. Within Shimla itself, there are 45 rest houses including circuit houses, with 38 of them located in rural areas (Public Works Department, 2021). Primarily intended for individuals with official agendas, these guest houses are typically supervised by caretakers. Additionally, HPTDC offers accommodation on the Highway axis, but it is not available in remote areas. Consequently, homestays emerge as the most suitable option, catering not only to potential hosts but also to tourists seeking lodging in less accessible locations (Chauhan, 2022).

Operators have noted a noticeable change in tourists' travel and accommodation preferences, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a

discernible shift towards less frequented destinations. In contrast to commercial hotels and resorts, homestay accommodations offer travelers the opportunity to genuinely experience the authentic aspects of a location, including its land, people, culture, and cuisine. Another fundamental requirement is food and drinks. Tourists view food and beverages not as mere necessities but also acknowledge their cultural significance. A lot of emphasis is laid on traditional food and raw ingredients. “House specials” are offered to people with gastronomic delight which vary from Siddu, lappi, chile, bari, sukha meat to elaborate Dhams. Guests appreciate homemade pure ghee (clarified butter) which is almost offered with all the delicacies. Apart from fresh fruits and dried fruits of the region, fruit products like jams, chutneys, juices, ciders etc. are also in great demand. Local red rice, Kidney beans and Black gram pulses are known for their distinct sweet starchy flavor. Occasionally, local millet-based meals are prepared by the residents but due to the unavailability of ingredients, it’s hardly available on the menus for visitors.

Another necessity projected by homestay owners is transportation. The predominant expected mode of transportation is often taxis and cabs, but this doesn't negate the potential for growth in the transport sector and a reduction in opportunities for sustainable tourism. Research indicates that incorporating public transport is a key aspect of sustainable tourism planning (Schiefelbusch et al., 2007). Sustainable transportation is closely connected to walkability and the utilization of local transport systems. At least five homestay operators have affirmed their recognition of walking trails in the vicinity as popular visitor activities. This has addressed a concern projected by an orchardist (G5),

“I live in a small orchard in Nautor (wasteland owned by the government; given with the right to utilize) which is approximately 20 minutes walking distance from the road head. Will city people walk this much to stay in nature?”

Homestay initiatives in the research region have not only created employment opportunities but have also been instrumental in offering jobs to family members. Interestingly, a substantial number of women operators actively oversee the day-to-day operations.

The interaction between guests and hosts stands as a prime example of cross-cultural exchange. Various cultural resources are present both within households and in the surrounding areas, including natural attractions, pilgrimage sites, significant places, architectural heritage, local festivals, events, arts, and crafts, traditional souvenirs, folk music, and dance and even the local attire worn by the residents. These elements collectively contribute to the rich cultural tapestry of the region, offering a diverse array of experiences for residents and visitors alike. Events like Kullu Dusshera are already enlisted in the international festival which represents the culture of Himachal on a Global platform. Similar fairs and festivals which are region-specific are held from time to time. Lavi and Faag at Rampur, Renuka fair at Sirmaur, Sippi and Shand at Shimla, and Shoolini fair at Solan are some prominent ones apart from 'Bishu' and 'Jaatar'. Visitors buy local shawls, caps, jackets, scarves (Dhatu) and Poole (woolen ankle socks). This wealth of cultural resources enhances the overall character and appeal of the community and provides a multifaceted lens through which individuals can engage with and appreciate the cultural heritage of the area.

Tourism, with its unique potential for generating income in economically disadvantaged areas, has been extensively acknowledged (Ashley et al., 2000). Notably, homestay programs stand out for their significant contributions to community development, as evidenced by studies (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). These programs have been associated with various reported benefits, such as the strengthening of social networks (Ibrahim & Razzak, 2010), the empowerment of women (Gu & Wong, 2006), and the infusion of financial capital into local economies (Mapjabil et al., 2015).

Sirmaur offers an authentic glimpse into the rural life of Himachal Pradesh, maintaining its status as a relatively unexplored and less frequented destination on the tourist map. The majority of tourists pass through on their way to Baru Sahib, while adventure seekers often embark on hikes to Churdhar. The region boasts farms, meandering river streams, and a tranquil natural ambiance that provides a refreshing breath of air. In this picturesque setting, a notable farmstay venture, skillfully managed by a merchant engineer and his wife, serves as an enlightening example of diversifying orchards into a tourism product. They stand among the few operators who have embraced volunteer tourism, an experience predominantly encountered by foreign visitors as it remains a relatively unfamiliar concept for domestic tourists.

IV. Challenges in transforming orchard into a tourism product

Converting orchards into a viable tourism product poses several challenges. Firstly, the development of all-weather roads is crucial, especially in hilly regions like Himachal Pradesh, where progress significantly relies on improved infrastructure. For instance, Kinnaur is already a popular destination amongst hikers and trekkers, but there is more in terms of pilgrimage, religion and culture one can experience staying here. Due to extreme cold winters tourism is seasonal but if paired with orchards and farms, it may get extended further.

Additionally, there are economic hurdles to adopting tourism, as there is often a lack of subsidized support. The high cost of infrastructure presents another obstacle. Agritourism; like any business venture, demands initial capital investment for skill development, resource organization, and promotional activities. Unfortunately, many farmers in developing countries face financial vulnerabilities (Lybbert & Sumner, 2012), making it challenging for them to invest in new income-generating activities such as agritourism.

Homestay operators shared their challenges, emphasizing operational and organizational issues. Running homestays on their premises spared them the need to finance land but incurred costs for infrastructure development. Those with operational farms faced decisions about converting orchards into tech-education or comprehensive recreation styles, despite a willingness to adopt new practices. Labor, wages, and location posed common problems, with societal challenges (untouchability and caste system) hindering the hiring of local workers. Even if the operator wants to employ local people from another caste, they have to face non-cooperation from their immediate society and others find it a stigma to work for someone else. Thus, the operator (O2) ends up doing daily chores herself and for the guest. Just to maintain the quality of her place, she had to take intermittent breaks. She felt that many times, homestay owners compromise with the quality and hygiene if they don't have enough workforce, especially in remote and distant places. Many operators have registered with the Department of Tourism for marketing, but the outdated list since 2019 and high digital platform costs presented difficulties. Ensuring guest satisfaction, especially post-COVID-19, demanded high health standards, while seasonality and perception differences with locals impacted business. Limited subsidies, lack of appreciation pre-

2008 Homestay Policy, and challenges in integration between horticulture and tourism departments were also highlighted. The need for education and training on environmental laws for sustainable tourism development was emphasized.

V. Fears

Some growers from the elder generation express concern about the introduction of tourism in villages, fearing potential negative effects. These concerns include an anticipated rise in the cost of living similar to that in cities, attributed to the influx of tourists. Moreover, there is suspicion regarding the violation of cultural values and the creation of an unhealthy atmosphere for the younger population. Additionally, there is a prevalent fear of negative environmental impacts associated with the growth of tourism in the area.

A homestay operator (O2) expressed concerns about "over tourism" at well-known sites and emphasized the importance of preserving forest and water resources. Drawing from her experience working abroad, she highlighted the advanced technologies and environmental sensitivity she observed. At her place, she promotes organic farming and actively participates in sustainable tourism development. She suggests specific actions for the region, including implementing policy regulations, educating locals on waste management and recycling, conserving natural resources, encouraging the preservation of traditional houses, food, dress, and culture, promoting rainwater harvesting, and adopting a zero-tolerance approach towards the felling of trees.

VI. Expectations from the System and Government and Expectations for Self-Evolution

During discussions with orchardists about the potential for orchard tourism, an expectation from the Government to support the community was highlighted. There is a recognition of the need to instill leadership and empowerment within the local community. Farmers express a desire for assistance in tourism development, accompanied by financial aid, to encourage their involvement in decision-making processes. As economic situations get better, more and more farmers find inspiration to adopt agritourism as a way to boost and broaden their family income (Tew & Barbieri, 2012). This trend is especially evident among farmers facing agricultural crises and challenges in rural areas (Barbieri & Mahoney, 2009; Nickerson et al., 2001). Notably,

women exhibit a greater motivation than men to participate in orchard tourism, viewing it as an avenue for self-employment or business creation. These insights shed light on the evolving perspectives and considerations within the farming community regarding the potential benefits of orchard tourism.

"Entertainment Farming," as referred to by Kabir (2017), involves building strong public relations and skills. However, many owners faced challenges due to a lack of management skills, particularly in handling financial resources, accounting, and budgeting. Another aspect that called attention was networking and marketing.

EXPERT REMARKS

- Dr. Harcharan Singh Dhaliwal (Ex Vice Chancellor – Baru Sahib University) said that the Government should promote agritourism including farms and orchards with the development of roads, conveyance networks and accommodation facilities. The College of Agriculture at the mentioned University is training farmers, women and youth especially in apple and Kiwi cultivation. Suitable arrangements are required at the government end to promote local produce as well.

- Mr. Mukul Dimri (Principal- IHMC & NT Kufri, Shimla) said, “Orchard tourism has great scope in Himachal Pradesh. The institute runs various courses on capacity building (IDIPT- Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism) for community-based tourism and forest departments in collaboration with the Indo-German Bilateral Project. The onus lies on the Government to promote orchard tourism in the state through advertisement and policy regulation”. In the past also, the researcher has been part of these training programs herself.

- Mrs. Kirti Puri & Mr. Sanjeev Puri (HOD IHMC & NT Kufri Shimla)- Mrs. Kirti Puri thinks that framing a separate policy would provide systematic support to small and marginal farmers. Mr. Puri feels that tourism could be promoted and extended using Homestay, B & B and experiential stay. Roads must be improved.

- Mr. Ratti Ram (DTDO Solan and Sirmaur) – "Based on my experience, I find tourism can lead to grand success in agro farms and orchard-based tourism. New innovative and technological enhancements implemented at farms could be a source of big attraction to the visitors. Right publicity and marketing will enhance its potential".

Table 4.1.1

Identified Themes for Orchard Tourism with literary sources

Theme	Sub-themes	Literature Referred
Hope of Rural Pride (HRP)	Availability of orchards	Agriculture statistics; 2022
	Status and Potential of Orchards	Brookfield & Parsons (2007), Ainley (2014), Barbieri (2010), Brandth and Haugen (2011), Ingram (2002), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Hurdles in horticulture practices	Yasmin et al., (2023), Pickson & He (2021), Singh et al., (2012), Gyawali et al., (2022)
Intention to transform orchards into tourism resources (ITOTR)	Transforming/ Diversifying modest orchard business into a varied and profitable enterprise	Ainley (2014), Barbieri (2010), Ingram (2002), Mc.Gehee &Kim, Nickerson et al., (2001), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Memorable experience	Ingram (2002), Ainley (2014), Kim (2014)
	Volunteer tourism	Liu & Leung (2018), McIntosh & Zahra (2007), Wearing & McGehee (2013)
Integrated use of Rural resources (IURR)	Accommodation – Village Homestays	Agyeiwaah et al., (2013), Dey et al., (2020), Han (2019), Mura (2015), Ogucha et al., (2015), Rasoolimanesh et al., (2016), H.P. Homestay policy (2008)
		Phillip et al., (2010)
	Regional food and drinks	Ainley (2014), Che (2009), Ellis et al., (2018), Chang & Mak (2018),
	Transportation	Allis & Fraga (2017); Schiefelbusch, Jain, Schafer, & Muller (2007)
	Natural attractions	Che (2009), Sznajder, et al., (2009), Ministério do Turismo, (2010)
	Cultural heritage	Croutch & Ritchie (1999), Gyawali et al., (2022), Barbieri et al., (2019), Kim (2014)
	Family Employment	Ainley (2014), Brandth and Haugen (2007), Nickerson et al., (2001)
Challenges	All-weather roads	
	Lack of subsidized support	Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022)
	Labor	Brookfield (2008), Yasmin et al., (2023), Pickson & He (2021)
	Perception differences	Ingram (2002), Sood et al., (2017), Walter et al., (2018)
	Societal challenges	Sood et al., (2017), Walter et al., (2018)
Fears	High rise in cost	Kontogeorgopoulos (2003), Marzuki (2009)
	Violation of cultural values	Ghaderi & Henderson (2012), Hwang et al., (2012)

	Negative environmental impacts	Archer et al., (2011), Mbaiwa (2003), McKercher & Prideaux (2011), Petrović et al., (2017)
Expectations from the system/ Government	Financial assistance	Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022)
	Marketing and Networking	Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022)
	Tourism training and development	Gyawali et al., (2022), Razak (2017), Obeidat (2022),
Expectations for self-evolution	Empowerment	Nickerson et al., (2001), Ingram (2002), Mcghee & Kim (2004)
	Self-employment	Brandth and Haugen (2007), Ollenburg and Buckley (2007), Tew and Barbieri (2012)
	Strengthen economic condition	Nickerson et al., (2001), Ollenburg and Buckley (2007), Tew and Barbieri (2012)

4.2.1 Understanding the strengths and opportunities for orchard tourism development

In the second stage, the research focuses on understanding the strengths and opportunities for orchard tourism in the rural Shimla region, using a descriptive approach with both quantitative and qualitative methods. A structured questionnaire was designed based on themes from thematic analysis and literature review, targeting small farmers. Data collection primarily involved personal interviews and questionnaire completion, with an emphasis on primary data. The questionnaire consists of two sections: one with Likert-scale questions related to orchard tourism, and the other gathering demographic information about farmers. Three academicians validated the questionnaire and did not require pre-testing. Data was collected from March to May 2023 in villages across four districts. The process emphasizes accuracy, research integrity, and the use of quality assurance and control. The research adopts cluster and quota sampling techniques for representative participant inclusion.

4.2.2 EFA and CFA

Exploratory factor analysis is used to reduce data by grouping closely correlated variables and creating condensed composite factors or latent variables. This method is frequently applied in theory development, creating psychometric scales, and simplifying overall data.

At first Principal component analysis along with Varimax rotation was used to conduct Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The analysis showed a strong Measure of Sampling Adequacy with KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) at a value of .907. This indicates that the

data is well-suited for factor analysis. The Bartlett test of sphericity also gave a statistically significant result (chi-square/df 2924.154/154 at $p < .001$), confirming that the correlations between variables are appropriate for factor analysis. The majority of communalities exceed .50, indicating that a considerable portion of the variance in the variables can be explained by the extracted factors. Only one item, IURR4, exhibits a communality value below .50 but is retained due to its factor loading of .585.

Five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 are identified, implying that these factors are meaningful in explaining the variance in the data. The combined percentage of total variance explained by these factors is more than 63%.

Factor 1 includes items referring to the “Hope of rural pride”. The item HRP3-"Teach leadership skills to the local community" has a factor loading of 0.672, indicating a moderate association with the underlying construct. The item HRP4- "Motivate younger generation of the community to continue horticultural practices in rural regions" exhibits a factor loading of 0.743, indicating a good relationship with the "Hope for rural pride" construct. The item HRP5- "Help in promoting our rich gastronomic tradition" shows a factor loading of 0.663, also suggesting a moderate association with the "Hope for rural pride" construct. These loadings suggest that each item is associated with and contributes to the construct.

Factor 2 gathers items ITOTR 1, 2 and 3 which represent the Intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource. The item ITOTR1- "Provide Scope of tourism business to our household" has a factor loading of 0.727, indicating a good association with the underlying construct. The item ITOTR 2- "Provide a scope of getting the value of other related resources" exhibits a factor loading of 0.665, indicating a moderate association with the construct. The item ITOTR 3- "Act as a resource for offering tourism activities" shows a factor loading of 0.781, suggesting a good association with the construct.

Factor 3 Under the construct "Expectation from the Government/Government Support," four items were assessed. The item "Systematic support by forming separate policies or boards for the development of Orchard Tourism ESG1" has a factor loading of 0.823, indicating a strong association with the underlying construct. The item "Credit/ subsidy/financial aid to help us set up Orchard Tourism business ESG2" exhibits a factor loading of 0.781, indicating a good association with the construct. The item

"Education and training support to start this venture ESG3" shows a factor loading of 0.705, suggesting a good association with the construct. The item "Help in promoting and marketing Orchard Tourism ESG4" has a factor loading of 0.677, indicating a moderate association with the construct. These findings imply that the identified items are important to understanding the expectations and support anticipated from the government in the context of developing Orchard Tourism.

Factor 4 includes items IURR 1,2,3 and 4 which represent “Integrated use of rural resources”. For this construct, factor loadings were obtained for four items as follows: “Developing my orchard as a resource for volunteer tourism activities (IURR1)” which exhibited a substantial loading of .629, indicating a strong association with the underlying factor. Similarly, “using rural trails as a tourism resource (IURR2)” demonstrated a significant loading of .585. “Transforming heritage monuments as tourism resources (IURR3)” had a factor loading of .523, which suggests a moderate relationship with the latent factor. Finally, “transforming fairs and festivals as tourism resources (IURR4)” displayed a loading of .568. This also indicates a noteworthy relationship with the underlying construct. These findings with IURR1 having the highest impact, followed by IURR4, IURR2, and IURR3, suggest that all items contribute meaningfully to the latent factor of integrated use of rural resources.

Finally, factor 5 includes items ESE 1,2 3 referring to “Expectation for self-evolution/ Learning”. The findings suggest that all three items contribute significantly to the latent factor of expectation for self-evolution/learning. Specifically, ESE2 ("Will help us gain new skills and knowledge") has the highest factor loading (.782), indicating a particularly strong association with the underlying construct. ESE3 ("Will provide stronger social networking") also exhibits a substantial loading (.736), suggesting a meaningful relationship, while ESE1 ("Will help us meet new and interesting people") demonstrates a moderate but notable association (.630).

After eliminating 3 items (HRP1, HRP2and ITOTR 4)), the results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented. HRP1 didn't load well which is about the promotion of rich rural culture through tourist activities in this area. Similarly, HRP2 which deals with showcasing rural lifestyle to promote tourist activities in Shimla region did not load at all. Many times, if respondents interpret the item differently, it might not align with the intended factor. The participants in the research area don’t have experience or

opinions related to hosting tourist activities, leading to a lack of variability in responses for these particular items. ITOTR 4 is about the intention to transform orchards into tourism resources by providing an opportunity to convert houses into homestays. This item cross-loaded to another construct and thus lacked variability in responses affecting the factor loading.

The analysis post-deletion demonstrates a strong KMO with a value of .882, indicating the suitability of data for factor analysis. The Bartlett test of sphericity yields statistical significance of chi-square/ df 2406.452/136 at $p < .001$, confirming the appropriateness of variable correlations for factor analysis. Communalities above .50 suggest that a significant part of the variation in the variables can be explained by the factors we identified.

At this stage, the reliability of the identified constructs was checked using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For each factor, Cronbach's alpha was above the recommended limit of .70, except for "Expectation for self-evolution/Learning," which had a value of .685. For the factor "Hope of rural pride," Cronbach's alpha was .729, showing that the items related to Rural Pride have a good level of consistency among them (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The Cronbach's alpha for “Intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource” was .707, reflecting a good degree of internal reliability for the items related to individuals' intentions toward orchard tourism. The construct “Expectation from the Government/Government Support” demonstrated a high value of internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .830. This suggests that the items assessing government support for rural initiatives form a reliable and cohesive measure. The Cronbach's alpha for the “Integrated use of Rural Resource” construct was .708, indicating a good level of internal reliability for the items related to the integrated utilization of rural resources. The construct "Expectation for self-evolution/Learning" demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of .685, indicating a relatively low level of internal consistency for the items assessing individuals' learning experiences. Nevertheless, upon examination of Composite reliability, a value exceeding .70 was observed. As a result, reliability was affirmed.

Table 4.2.1

EFA Results of Constructs of Strengths and Opportunities for Orchard Tourism in the Rural Shimla Region

	Construct names				
Items	Orchard Tourism Intention	Rural Pride	Govt. Support	Integrated use of Rural Resource	Learning
Provide Scope of tourism business to our household (ITOTR1)	.727				
Provide a scope of getting the value of other related resources (ITOTR2)	.665				
Act as a resource for offering tourism activities (ITOTR3)	.781				
Teach leadership skills to the local community (HRP3)		.672			
Motivate younger generation of the community to continue horticultural practices in rural regions (HRP4)		.743			
Help in promoting our rich gastronomic tradition (HRP5)		.663			
Systematic support by forming separate policies or boards for the development of Orchard Tourism (ESG1)			.823		
Credit/ subsidy/ financial aid to help us set up Orchard Tourism business (ESG2)			.781		
Education and training support to start this venture (ESG3)			.705		
Help in promoting and marketing Orchard Tourism (ESG4)			.677		
Developing my orchard as a resource for volunteer tourism activities (IURR1)				.629	
Using rural trails as a tourism resource (IURR2)				.585	
Transforming heritage monuments as tourism resources (IURR3)				.523	
Transforming fairs and festivals as tourism resources (IURR4)				.568	
It will help us meet new and interesting people (ESE1)					.630
It will help us gain new skills and knowledge (ESE2)					.782
Will provide stronger social networking (ESE3)					.736
Cronbach's Alpha	.707	.729	.830	.708	.685
Variance explained	34.115	9.976	5.628	5.187	4.798
Eigen Values	6.823	1.995	1.126	1.072	1.037
KMO = .882; Chi-Square = 2406.452; df = 136; Sig. <.001					

4.2.3 Descriptive Analysis

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Population - The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic composition of the sample population. The socioeconomic and geographic findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of the diverse backgrounds of the participants in the research.

The sample population consisted of 410 individuals, with 259 (63.2%) identified as male and 151 (36.8%) as female. Most of the participants were between 18 and 35 years old, making up 70.0% of the group. The next largest age group was 36 to 55 years old, comprising 25.1% of the participants. A very small proportion of participants were either below 18 years (2.7%) or above 55 years (2.2%). Participants exhibited a diverse range of educational backgrounds, with the largest proportion holding post-graduate degrees (31.5%), followed closely by graduation (30.0%). The sample included individuals with various levels of education, ranging from no formal education (3.2%) to doctorate degrees (0.5%). Concerning orchard size, the majority of participants owned orchards ranging from 1 to 2 acres (49.0%). Smaller proportions were associated with orchards less than 1 acre (29.8%), 2.1 to 5 acres (13.9%), and 5.1 to 10 acres (3.4%), while a few participants owned orchards exceeding 10 acres (3.9%). The vast majority of the sample identified as Hindu (93.4%), with smaller percentages affiliating with Buddhism (4.1%), and other religions (2.5%). The sample represented a diverse set of categories, with the highest percentage belonging to the General category (48.8%), followed by Schedule Caste (25.9%) and Schedule Tribe (19.5%). Other Backward Classes and Others constituted smaller proportions at 5.6% and 0.2%, respectively. The majority of participants were either married (45.9%) or unmarried (52.7%), with smaller percentages identifying as divorced (0.5%) or widowed (1.0%). The maximum number of respondents have been engaged in farming for 5 to 10 years (51.5%), followed by those with less experience than 5 years (25.6%). Further, a smaller percentage of participants are practicing farming for 11-15 years (10.7%), and over 15 years (12.2%). These findings suggest a different number of farming experiences within the sample. The majority of participants reported an income between 2 to 5 lakhs (55.4%), followed by those with an income below 2 lakhs (24.4%). These results also align with the per capita income of the state which is a little above 2 lakhs at current prices (Statistical Yearbook 2022-23). A smaller percentage reported higher income levels ranging from 6 to 8 lakhs (16.8%), and over 8 lakhs (3.4%). These results suggest economic diversity within the sample population. There is variation in the family size of the sample population, with the majority having 2 to 5 family members (59.5%). Families consisting of 6 to 8 members (31.0%) and more than 8 members (9.5%) were in smaller proportions. This diversity in family size may have implications for resource distribution and management. A substantial portion of participants had orchards situated at elevations between 5001 to 7000 feet (49.5%), followed by those at elevations below

5000 feet (28.8%). A significant population reported orchards at elevations exceeding 7000 feet (21.7%). These findings reveal the geographical diversity of the sample and have implications for agricultural practices and crop varieties. The district-wise distribution of the sample has implications for regional variations in farming practices, agro-climatic conditions, and access to resources.

Table – 4.2.2

Descriptive Analysis of Sample Population of Orchardists (N=410)

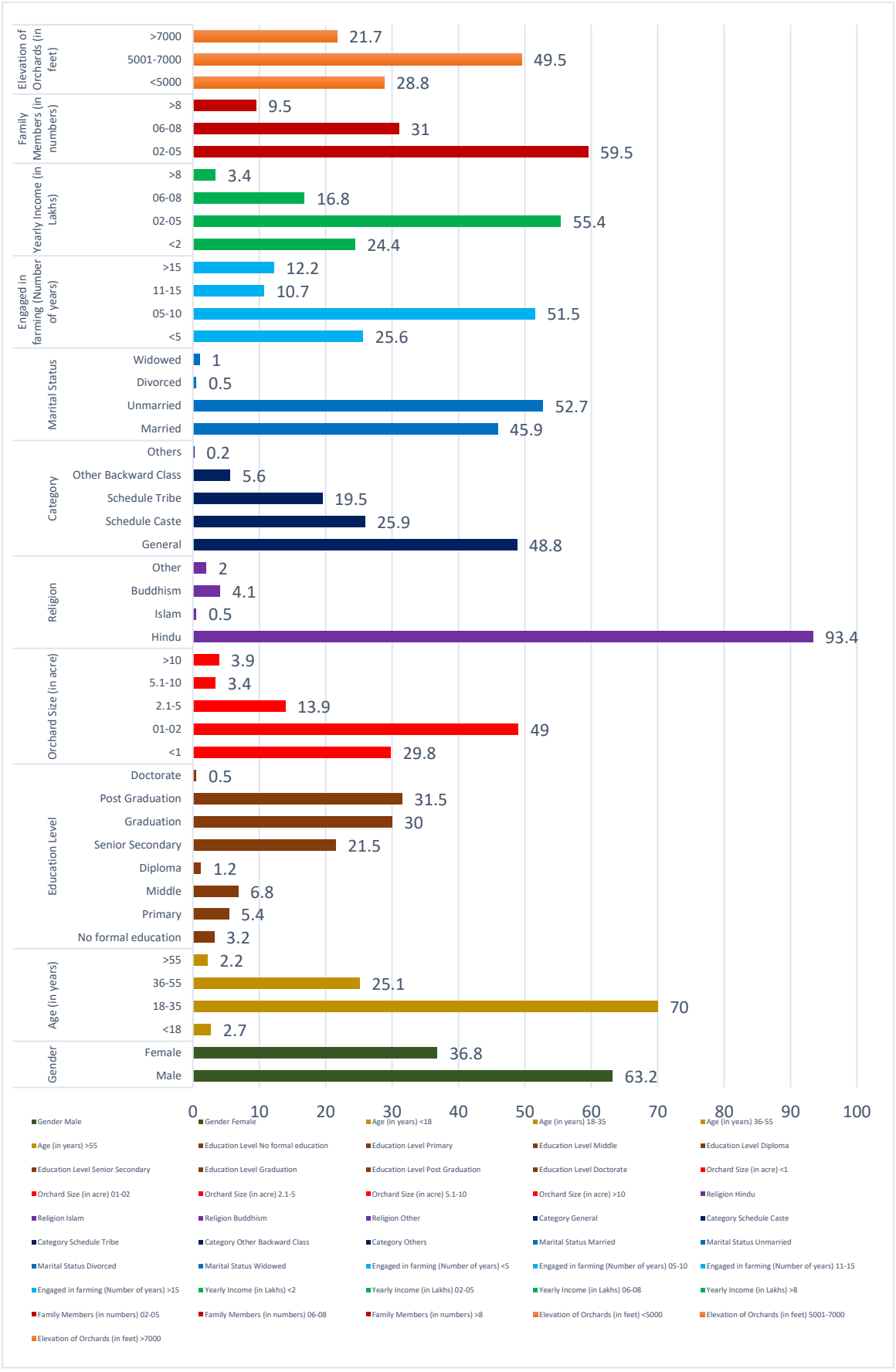
Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	259	63.2
	Female	151	36.8
Age (in years)	<18	11	2.7
	18-35	287	70.0
	36-55	103	25.1
	>55	9	2.2
Education Level	No formal education	13	3.2
	Primary	22	5.4
	Middle	28	6.8
	Diploma	5	1.2
	Senior Secondary	88	21.5
	Graduation	123	30.0
	Post Graduation	129	31.5
	Doctorate	2	0.5
Orchard Size (in acre)	<1	122	29.8
	1-2	201	49.0
	2.1-5	57	13.9
	5.1-10	14	3.4
	>10	16	3.9
Religion	Hindu	383	93.4
	Islam	2	0.5

	Buddhism	17	4.1
	Other	8	2.0
Category	General	200	48.8
	Schedule Caste	106	25.9
	Schedule Tribe	80	19.5
	Other Backward Class	23	5.6
	Others	1	0.2
Marital Status	Married	188	45.9
	Unmarried	216	52.7
	Divorced	2	0.5
	Widowed	4	1.0
Engaged in farming (Number of years)	<5	105	25.6
	5-10	211	51.5
	11-15	44	10.7
	>15	50	12.2
Yearly Income (in Lakhs)	<2	100	24.4
	2-5	227	55.4
	6-8	69	16.8
	>8	14	3.4
Family Members (in numbers)	2-5	244	59.5
	6-8	127	31.0
	>8	39	9.5
Elevation of Orchards (in feet)	<5000	118	28.8
	5001-7000	203	49.5
	>7000	89	21.7

Note: Primary data collected through questionnaires

Figure 4.2

Descriptive Analysis of Sample Population of Orchardists (N=410)



4.2.4 Descriptive analysis of unobserved constructs

Intention to transform Orchards into Tourism resources: The idea of turning orchards into tourism resources, called the ITOTR construct, is based on four items (ITOTR1, ITOTR2, ITOTR3, and ITOTR4). ITOTR1 has an average score of 4.0829, showing a high intention to transform orchards into tourism resources. The standard deviation of 0.96792 means there is a moderate amount of difference in responses. ITOTR2 has an average score of 3.8268, indicating a slightly lower but still positive intention for transformation. The standard deviation of 0.85459 suggests a moderate amount of difference in how people responded. ITOTR3 has an average score of 4.0415, showing a high intention for transformation, with a standard deviation of 0.95919 suggesting some differences in responses. However, ITOTR4 has a lower average score of 3.7122, indicating a comparatively lower intention for transformation, with a higher standard deviation of 1.10349 showing more differences in responses. The total ITOTR score (ITOTR), with a mean of 3.9159 and a standard deviation of 0.71991, suggests an overall positive intention among participants to transform orchards into tourism resources. The lower standard deviation indicates a relatively lower variability in responses compared to the individual items.

Table- 4.2.3

Descriptive Statistics for ITOTR construct

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITOTR1	410	1.00	5.00	4.0829	.96792
ITOTR2	410	1.00	5.00	3.8268	.85459
ITOTR3	410	1.00	5.00	4.0415	.95919
ITOTR4	410	1.00	5.00	3.7122	1.10349
ITOTR	410	1.00	5.00	3.9159	.71991

The HRP construct represents Hope for Rural Pride. It comprises five individual items (HRP1, HRP2, HRP3, HRP4, and HRP5). These findings provide a detailed understanding of participating orchardists' sentiments that may contribute to these perceptions. HRP1 has a high average (Mean) of 3.9976 with a standard deviation (SD)

of 1.06626 suggesting that there is some variability in responses. Similarly, HRP2 has an average of 3.9854 indicating a high level of hope and pride. The SD value is 0.88164 indicating slightly lower variability in participants' responses compared to HRP1. HRP3 exhibits a lower mean of 3.8902 and SD of 0.92250, indicating positive sentiment but low variability in participant responses. HRP4 has an average of 3.8659, a positive level of hope and pride. The standard deviation of 0.90587 indicates a lower degree of response variability. HRP5 has a mean score of 3.8439, which is slightly lower than the overall mean. The SD value at 1.00611 suggests greater variability in participant responses for this item. The total HRP score (HRP) has a mean of 3.9166 and a standard deviation of 0.69632, suggesting an overall positive sentiment of hope for rural pride. The lower standard deviation indicates a more consistent trend across the items compared to individual items.

Table- 4.2.4

Descriptive Statistics for HRP Construct

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
HRP1	410	1.00	5.00	3.9976	1.06626
HRP2	410	1.00	5.00	3.9854	.88164
HRP3	410	1.00	5.00	3.8902	.92250
HRP4	410	1.00	5.00	3.8659	.90587
HRP5	410	1.00	5.00	3.8439	1.00611
HRP	410	1.00	5.00	3.9166	.69632

Descriptive statistics for the IURR (Intention to Use Rural Resources) construct, based on responses from a sample of 410 participants, are presented in Table 4.2.5. IURR1 has a mean of 3.9756, indicating a relatively high intention to use rural resources. The SD value at 0.93264 indicates that there is a moderate amount of difference or variation in the way people respond. IURR2 reflects an average of 3.8268, suggesting a positive but slightly lower intention to use rural resources. The lower SD of 0.81954 indicates a slightly lower variability in participant responses compared to IURR1. IURR3 exhibits a mean of 3.8951, indicating a positive sentiment but slightly lower than the mean of

IURR1. The SD value of 0.95176 suggests some variability in participant responses. IURR4 has an average of 3.9927, suggesting a positive intention to use rural resources. The SD of 0.93264 indicates that there is a moderate amount of difference or variation in the way people respond. The total IURR score (IURR), with an average of 3.9226 and a smaller standard deviation of 0.66520, shows that, overall, participants have a positive intention to use rural resources. The lower variability in the total score indicates a more consistent trend across the items compared to individual items.

Table- 4.2.5

Descriptive Statistics for IURR construct

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IURR1	410	1.00	5.00	3.9756	.93264
IURR2	410	1.00	5.00	3.8268	.81954
IURR3	410	1.00	5.00	3.8951	.95176
IURR4	410	1.00	5.00	3.9927	.93424
IURR	410	1.00	5.00	3.9226	.66520

The ESG construct, representing Expectations from Government, is comprised of four individual items (ESG1, ESG2, ESG3, and ESG4). The results give us a clear picture of participants' expectations from the government, offering insights into the specific aspects contributing to these expectations. ESG1 has a mean of 4.0268, indicative of high expectations from the government. The SD value of 0.98485 indicates a medium amount of difference in how people responded. ESG2 reflects an average of 3.9293, suggesting a low positive expectation from the government. The SD of 0.98764 indicates a lower variation in participant replies as compared to ESG1. ESG3 exhibits a mean of 3.8366, indicating a low positive sentiment. The higher SD of 1.02302 suggests greater variability in participant responses. ESG4 has a mean of 3.8073, suggesting a positive expectation from the government. The SD of 0.97622 suggests that there is a moderate amount of variation in the responses.

Table- 4.2.6

Descriptive Statistics for ESG Construct

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ESG1	410	1.00	5.00	4.0268	.98485
ESG2	410	1.00	5.00	3.9293	.98764
ESG3	410	1.00	5.00	3.8366	1.02302
ESG4	410	1.00	5.00	3.8073	.97622
ESG	410	1.00	5.00	3.90	.993

The ESE construct, representing Expectation for Self-Evolution, is comprised of three individual items (ESE1, ESE2, and ESE3). Descriptive statistics provide insights into participants' expectations for their personal development. ESE1 has a mean score of 3.9439, indicating a relatively high expectation for self-evolution. The standard deviation of 0.89512 indicates there is a moderate amount of variation in how people respond. ESE2 reflects a mean score of 3.9073, suggesting a positive but slightly lower expectation for self-evolution. The standard deviation of 0.87407 indicates a slightly lower variability in participant responses compared to ESE1. ESE3 exhibits an average score of 3.8341, indicating a positive but lower sentiment than the mean of ESE1 and ESE2. The higher standard deviation of 0.94432 suggests more variation in participant responses. The total ESE score (ESE), with a mean of 3.8951 and a lower standard deviation of 0.70901, suggests an overall positive expectation among participants for their self-evolution. The lower variability in the total score indicates a more consistent trend across the items compared to individual items.

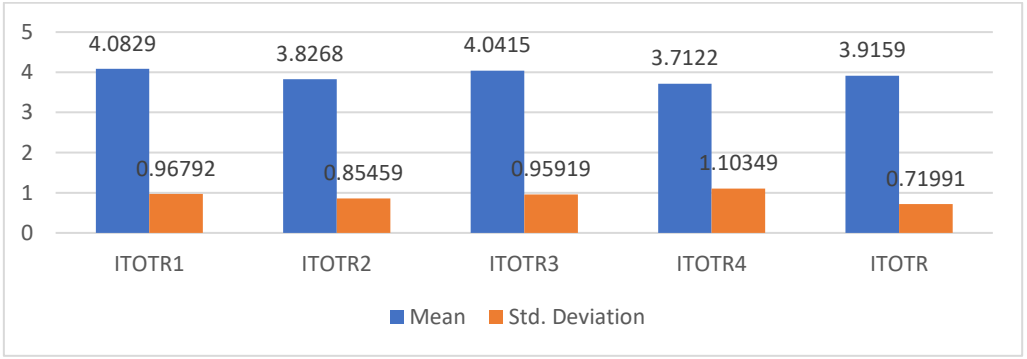
Table- 4.2.7

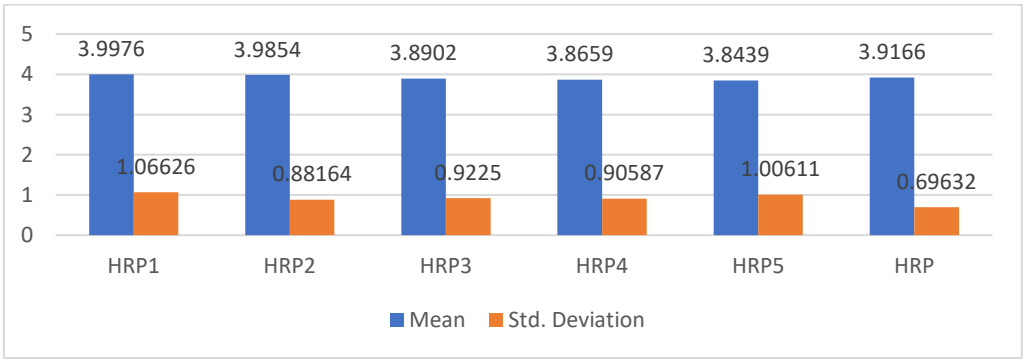
Descriptive Statistics for ESE Construct

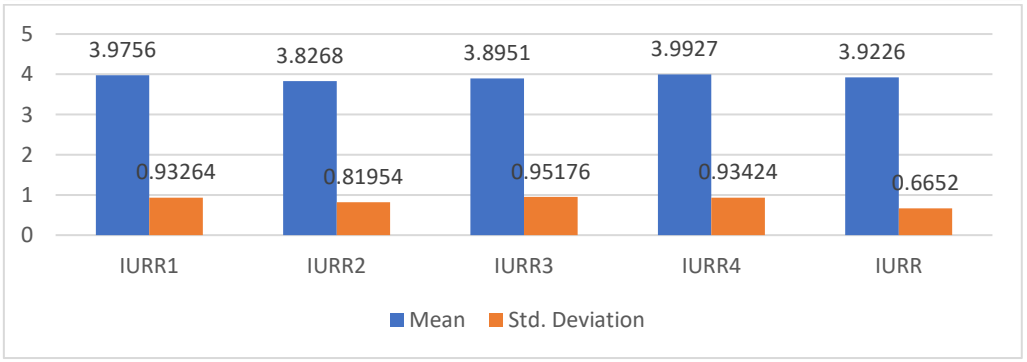
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ESE1	410	1.00	5.00	3.9439	.89512
ESE2	410	1.00	5.00	3.9073	.87407
ESE3	410	1.00	5.00	3.8341	.94432
ESE	410	1.00	5.00	3.8951	.70901

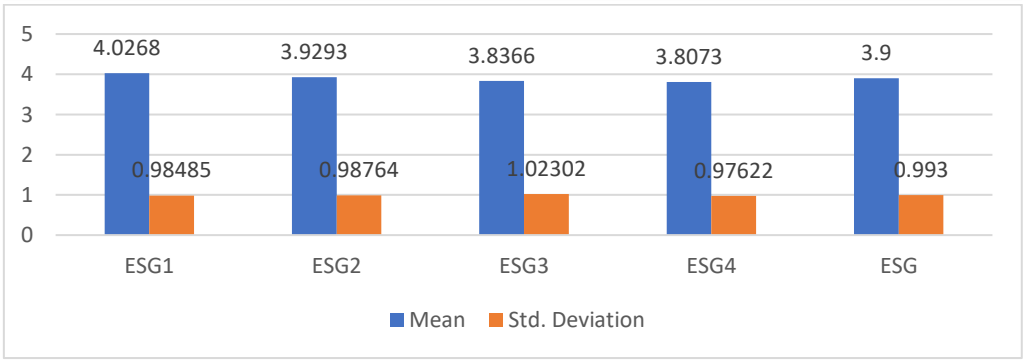
Figure 4.3

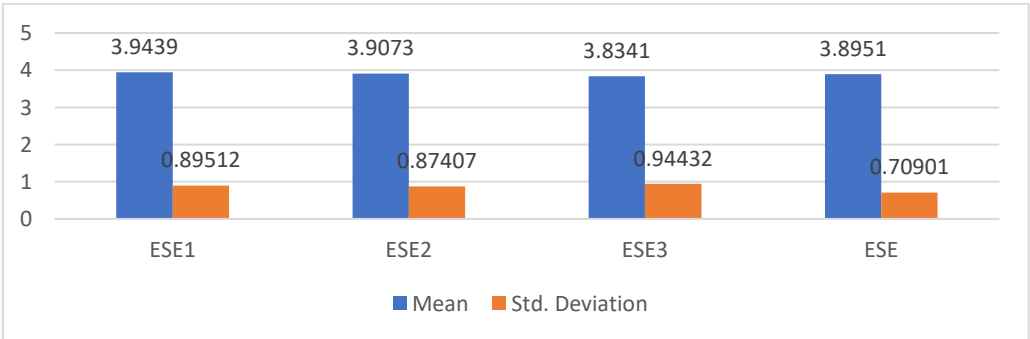
Mean and Std. Deviation of Constructs- ITOTR, HRP, IURR, ESG and ESE











4.2.5 Screening Outliers in the Data

To identify and address outliers in the dataset, Z scores were computed for each variable using SPSS. The analysis revealed no statistically significant outliers, as all Z score values were below 3.

4.2.6 Normality distribution of data

The assessment of univariate distribution normality involved the computation of skewness and kurtosis. A positively skewed distribution is characterized by a greater concentration of values on the left, while a negatively skewed distribution has more values on the right. Leptokurtic, or positively skewed kurtosis, signifies a pointy-tailed distribution, whereas platykurtic, or negatively skewed kurtosis, denotes a flat distribution. In addition to skewness and kurtosis, normality can be examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnoff test, Shapiro-Wilk test, and Levene's test for homogeneity of variance. In the context of large samples, it is advised to refrain from employing significance tests of normality. As suggested by Field (2013, pp. 181-185), the issue of normality is less pertinent in large samples. A dataset is considered severely non-normal if skewness exceeds >3, while kurtosis is deemed severely normal if the value surpasses > 10 (Kline, 2016, pp. 74-77). The assessment of results shows acceptable values of Skewness and Kurtosis. Hence, the data is significantly normal.

Harman's single-factor test is a straightforward method within Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) used to ascertain if a singular factor is evident across all indicators. The absence of concerns related to common method bias is indicated when the total variance is below 0.50, equivalent to 50%. The results show that the first component explains the most variation (34.115%), followed by subsequent components. Since the % of the variance for the first factor falls below 50%, we can conclude that there is no common method bias (CMB) and the data collected is suitable for further analysis.

4.2.7 Measurement Model

CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) with AMOS was used to check the measurement models. Factor loadings for each item and different fit indices like CMIN/df, GFI, CFI, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA were examined to evaluate how well the model fits. All the values were in the acceptable range as recommended by Ullman (2001), Hu & Bentler

(1998), and Bentler (1990). The five-factor model representing Intention to transform orchards into tourism resources, Expectation from government, Expectation for self-evolution/ learning, Hope of rural pride and Integrated use of rural resources-demonstrated a good fit to the data, as indicated by the values in Table 4.2.8: CMIN/df = [2.558], GFI = [.925], CFI = [.926], TLI = [.908], SRMR = [.047], and RMSEA = [.062].

Table - 4.2.8

Model Fit Statistics of Constructs of Strengths and Opportunities for Orchard Tourism in the Rural Shimla Region

Fit Indices	Recommended value	Obtained values	Sources
P	Insignificant		Bagozzi and Yi (1988)
CMIN/df (Chi-square/df)	3-5	2.558	3-5 Schumacker and Lomax (2004)
GFI	>.90	.925	Hair et al (2010)
CFI	>.90	.926	Bentler (1990)
TLI	>.90	.908	Bentler (1990)
SRMR	<.08	.047	Hu and Bentler (1998)
RMSEA	<.08	.062	Hu and Bentler (1998)

4.2.8 Assessment of Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct reliability looks at how well a variable or a group of variables consistently measure what they're supposed to (Straub & Gefen, 2004). The two measures used to assess reliability are Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), a benchmark of 0.7 is recommended for both. In our research, Cronbach's alpha for each measure was found to be over 0.70. Only one factor ESE – Expectation for self-evolution/ Learning has an alpha value of 0.685, which can be approximated to 0.7.

The formula for Composite reliability takes into account the factor loading for an item (standardized) (lambda) and the error variance for that item (e). It helps us understand how well the indicator variables (items) consistently reflect the underlying concept.

$$CR = \frac{(\sum \lambda i)^2}{(\sum \lambda i)^2 + (\sum \epsilon i)}$$

If Composite Reliability is above 0.70, it means that the indicator variables are reliably measuring the latent variable, sharing variance among them. In our research, the Composite Reliability scores ranged from 0.688 to 0.812. These values are similar to the recommended benchmark of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). This suggests that the reliability of each measure has been confirmed, as shown in Table 4.2.9

Convergent validity

Construct validity checks how well the chosen items truly measure a concept, using two types of validities: convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity looks at how much various measures of a concept, theoretically connected, are truly related (Straub & Gefen, 2004). This makes sure that indicators measuring the same idea come together to measure the main concept, making multiple-item concepts focused on one dimension and getting rid of unreliable indicators (Bollen, 1989). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) helps check convergent validity by showing how much of the indicators' variation is clarified by the hidden variable. If the AVE is more than 0.50, it gives empirical confirmation for convergent validity, suggesting that the hidden variable explains more than half of the variation in the related indicators (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). To calculate the AVE, we add up the squares of the factor loadings and then divide that sum by the number of items in the unobserved latent variable.

$$AVE = \frac{\sum \lambda_i^2}{\sum \lambda_i^2 + \sum_i \mathrm{var}(\varepsilon_i)}$$

Where lambda is the factor loading of the item *i* and *e* is the variance of the item *i.*

However, Hair et al., (2017) suggested a more liberal measure, that if the average variance extracted is above 0.4 and the composite reliability is more than 0.6, it means

the convergent validity of the construct is still considered good (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In the assessment of results, three latent variables had AVE slightly below 0.5- IURR (0.462), ESE (0.424) and HRP (0.464). The composite reliability of these constructs was over 0.6, thus they were retained in the research.

Table – 4.2.9

Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity of orchard tourism constructs and their indicators

Items	Loadings	Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Orchard Tourism Intention		.707	0.771	0.530
Provide Scope of tourism business to our household (ITOTR1)	.727			
Provide a scope of getting the value of other related resources (ITOTR2)	.665			
Act as a resource for offering tourism activities (ITOTR3)	.781			
Rural Pride		.729	0.722	0.464
Teach leadership skills to the local community (HRP3)	.672			
Motivate younger generation of the community to continue horticultural practices in rural regions (HRP4)	.743			
Help in promoting our rich gastronomic tradition (HRP5)	.663			
Govt. Support		.830	0.812	0.520
Systematic support by forming separate policies or boards for the development of Orchard Tourism (ESG1)	.823			
Credit/ subsidy/ financial aid to help us set up Orchard Tourism business (ESG2)	.781			
Education and training support to start this venture (ESG3)	.705			

Help in promoting and marketing Orchard Tourism (ESG4)	.677			
Integrated use of Rural Resource		.708	0.772	0.462
Developing my orchard as a resource for volunteer tourism activities (IURR1)	.629			
Using rural trails as a tourism resource (IURR2)	.585			
Transforming heritage monuments as tourism resources (IURR3)	.523			
Transforming fairs and festivals as tourism resources (IURR4)	.568			
Learning		.685	0.688	0.424
It will help us meet new and interesting people (ESE1)	.630			
It will help us gain new skills and knowledge (ESE2)	.782			
Will provide stronger social networking (ESE3)	.736			

4.2.9 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity, also known as divergent validity, measures the extent to which different constructs in a research study are distinct and not highly correlated (Anderson et al., 1988). In AMOS, there are two commonly used ways to check discriminant validity: the Fornell & Larcker Criterion (1981) and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio. According to the Fornell & Larcker Criterion, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each latent variable should be more than the squared correlation between that variable and any other in the model. So, the square root of the AVE of each latent variable (LV) should be more than its correlations with any other LV in the evaluation. In this model, there are five constructs- ITOTR, HRP, ESG, ESE, and IURR. While the Discriminant validity assessed for ITOTR (0.728) and HRP (0.681) are lower than their correlation with other latent variables, the values for ESG, ESE, and IURR are higher as desired.

Table – 4.2.10

Discriminant validity using Fornell and Larcker (1981)

	ITOTR	HRP	ESG	IURR	ESE
ITOTR	***0.728***				
HRP	0.696	***0.681***			
ESG	0.481	0.517	***0.721***		
IURR	0.75	0.793	0.6	***0.679***	
ESE	0.419	0.489	0.685	0.551	***0.651***

While this method has been popular, recent research questions its sensitivity. Another method, suggested by Henseler et al., (2015), is the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT). This method looks at the ratio of correlations between different traits to correlations within the same trait. It's a modern and dependable way to check discriminant validity. If the HTMT value is less than 0.85, it means there is clear discriminant validity between two reflective constructs. The assessment shows the values of the HTMT ratio below the benchmark of .85, thus establishing the Discriminant validity of our research.

Table-4.2.11

Discriminant validity using HTMT ratio

	HRP	ESE	IURR	ITOTR	ESG
HRP					
ESE	0.488				
IURR	0.793	0.551			
ITOTR	0.696	0.419	0.7510		
ESG	0.517	0.685	0.600	0.481	

To check the possibility of multicollinearity, data was analyzed using SPSS and the values of tolerance and VIF were computed. The threshold value of tolerance is greater than 0.2 for all three variables – ITOTR, ESG, and ESE when assessed with dependent variables HRP and IURR. Also, VIF values were below 5 as the criteria desires. Thus, there is no issue of multicollinearity amongst the constructs.

4.2.10 Structural Model Analysis

A Structural Equation Model (SEM) was created with AMOS to test the relationships. A model is considered good if the CMIN/df value is less than 5, and if the values of 'Goodness of Fit (GFI)', 'Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)', and 'Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI)' are all above 0.90. Additionally, the Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) should be less than 0.05, and the Root Mean Square Approximation (RMSEA) should be between 0.05 and 0.08. For our structural model, the fit indices fall within the acceptable range: CMIN/df = 2.696, GFI = 0.920, CFI = 0.918, TLI = 0.900, SRMR = 0.05, and RMSEA = 0.064.

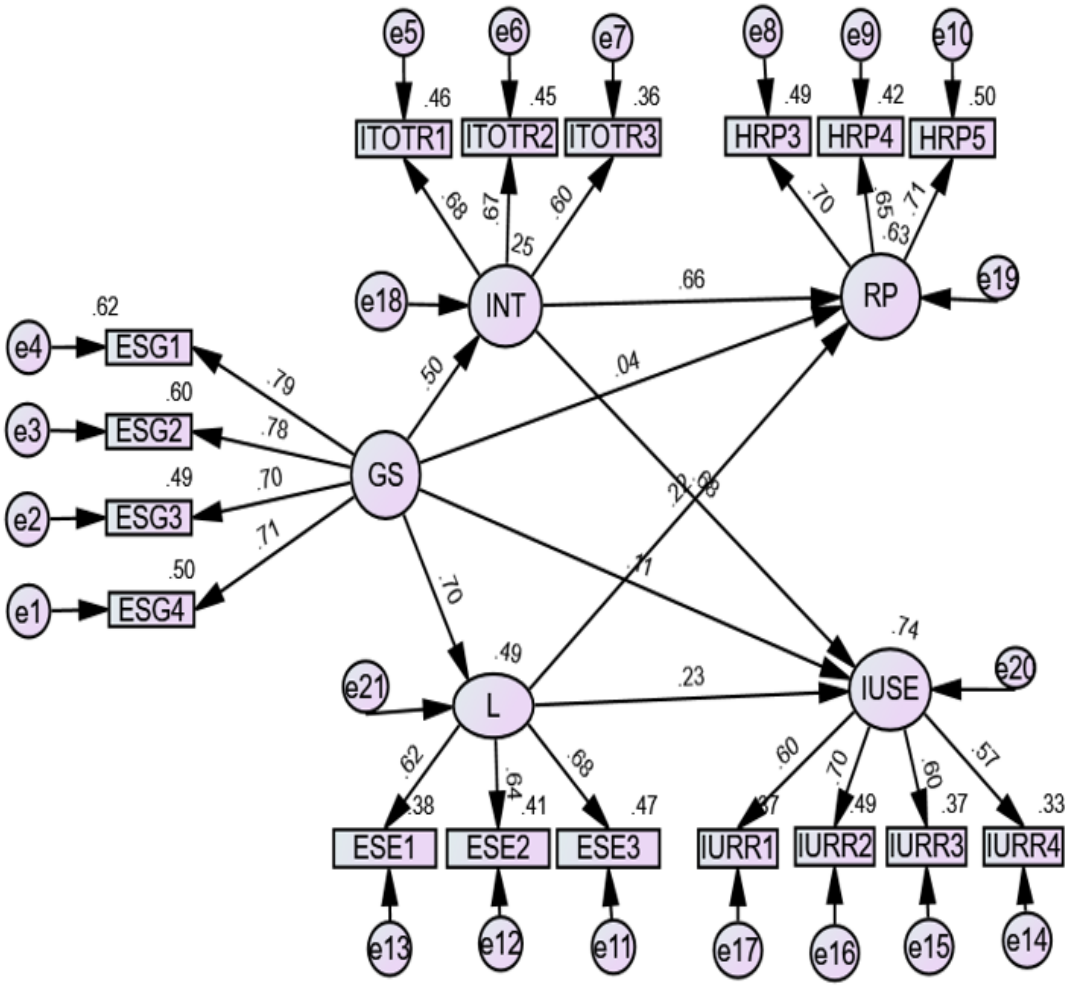
The squared multiple correlation was 0.25 for Intention which shows a 25% variance in Intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource is accounted for by Expectation from Government. Also squared multiple correlations for Learning or Expectation for self-evolution is 0.49 which means 49% variance in Learning is accounted for by Expectation from Government. The squared multiple correlation for Rural Pride was 0.63 and that of Integrated use was 0.74 which represents 63% and 74% Variance in the respective variables caused by Expectation from the Government, Intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource and Expectation for self-evolution.

The research assessed the impact of Government support on Intention, Learning, Rural pride and Integrated use. Also, the impact of Intention on rural pride and Integrated use and the impact of Learning on Rural pride and integrated use were assessed. The effect of Government support on Intention was both positive and significant (b=0.504, t=7.207, p=.000), which supports our first hypothesis, H1. Similarly, the impact of Government support on Learning was also positive and significant (b=0.697, t=9.207, p=.000), supporting our second hypothesis, H2. Further, the impact of Government support on Rural Pride was also positive but not significant (b=.039, t=.401, p<.689). Thus, hypothesis H6 was not supported. The impact of Government support on Integrated use was assessed and found to be positive but insignificant (b=.106, t=1.120, p=.263). Thus, hypothesis H7 was also not supported. The impact of Intention on Rural Pride was both positive and significant (b=0.665, t=7.698, p=.000), supporting hypothesis H8. Next, the impact of Intention on Integrated use was observed and found to be both positive and significant (b=.678, t=7.308, p=.000) supporting hypothesis H4.

There is a positive and significant impact of Learning on Rural pride (b=.221, t=2.315, p=.021), supporting hypothesis H5. Lastly, the impact of Learning on Integrated use was found to be both positive and significant (b=.227, t=2.458, p=.014). Hypothesis 3 was thus supported.

Figure 4.4

Structural Model of Constructs of Strengths and Opportunities for Orchard Tourism in the Rural Shimla Region



Note: GS- Government support, INT- Intention, L- Learning, RP- Rural Pride, IUSE- Integrated Use

Table –4.2.12

Hypotheses Results of Constructs of Strengths and Opportunities for Orchard Tourism in the Rural Shimla Region

Hypothesised Relationship	Standardized Estimates	P value (<.05)	T value (>1.96)	Conclusion
H1 Government→Intention	.504	***	7.207	H1Supported
H2 Government→Learning	.697	***	9.207	H2Supported
H3 Learning→Integrated Use	.227	.014	2.458	H3Supported
H4 Intention→Integrated Use	.678	***	7.308	H4Supported
H5 Learning→Rural Pride	.221	.021	2.315	H5Supported
H6 Government support→Rural Pride	.039	.689	.401	H6Notsupported
H7 Government support→Integrated Use	.106	.263	1.120	H7Notsupported
H8 Intention→Rural Pride	.665	***	7.698	H8Supported

Note: *** P=.000

4.2.11 Mediation Analysis

The research assessed the mediating roles of Intention (Intention to transform the orchards into tourism resources- ITOTR) and Learning (Expectation for self-evolution/ Learning- ESE) between Government Support (Expectation from Government- ESG) and Rural Pride (Hope for rural pride- HRP) using Estimands function in AMOS- SEM. Simultaneously, the mediating roles of Intention (Intention to transform the orchards into tourism resources- ITOTR) and Learning (Expectation for self-evolution/ Learning- ESE) between Government support (Expectation from Government- ESG) and Integrated use (Integrated use of rural resources – IURR) was assessed. The results revealed a 'significant indirect effect' of Government support on Rural Pride through Intention (b= .314, t= 4.486, p=.000), supporting hypothesis H9. The indirect effect of Government support on Rural Pride through Learning was insignificant (b= .144, t= .582, p=.065) thus not supporting hypothesis H10. Analyzing the mediating role of Intention, the research found a significant mediating role of Intention on the linkage between Government support and Integrated Use (b=.264, t=4.125, p=.000) supporting the hypothesis H11. Furthermore, the indirect effect of Government support on

Integrated use in the presence of Learning was found to be insignificant (b=.122, t=.572, p=.066). Hence, hypothesis H12 was not supported. Further, the direct effect of Government support on Rural Pride in the presence of the mediators was found to be insignificant (b=.037, p=.689). We can conclude that Intention shows full mediation in the relationship between Government support and Rural Pride but Learning doesn't mediate between Government support and Rural Pride. Similarly, the direct effect of Government support on Integrated use in the presence of mediators was assessed and found to be insignificant (b=.082, p=.263). There is full Mediation between Government support and Integrated Use in the presence of Intention but Learning does not mediate between Government support and Integrated use. The analysis summary of mediators is presented in Table 4.2.13

Table – 4.2.13

Mediation Analysis of Constructs of Strengths and Opportunities for Orchard Tourism in the Rural Shimla Region

Relationship	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Confidence Interval		p-value	conclusion
Govt Support→Intention→Rural Pride (H9)	.037 (P=.689)	.314	.199	.477	.000	Full Mediation
Govt Support→Learning→Rural Pride (H10)		.144	-.010	.463	.065	No Mediation
Govt Support→Intention→Integrated use (H11)	.082 (P=.263)	.264	.163	.419	.000	Full Mediation
Govt Support→Learning→Integrated Use (H12)		.122	-.009	.398	.066	No Mediation

4.3.1 To assess the impact of orchard tourism attributes on tourist visit intention and level of expectations.

Understanding the intricate interplay between various factors influencing tourist behavior is essential for crafting meaningful experiences. This part of the research examines the multifaceted dimensions of orchard tourism, specifically the impact of tourist motivation and expectations on their visit intention. Both tourist motivation and expectations stand as independent variables. The research introduces a mediating variable, namely orchard tourism attributes, to understand the underlying mechanisms that link the independent and dependent variables. By employing a structured questionnaire tailored for tourists who would like to engage in orchard tourism, an attempt has been made to find out the factors that will mediate the journey from motivation and expectations to the ultimate decision to visit an orchard.

To analyze these dynamics, this research employs both 'Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)' and 'Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)' as robust statistical tools. The statistical software used is SPSS and SPSS AMOS.

4.3.2 Reliability and Validity

Reliability analysis of the questionnaire was done by computing Cronbach's alpha. A construct is said to be reliable if the alpha value is more than .70 (Hair et al., 2013). The results revealed acceptable reliability for each of the constructs in the pilot study. Results are summarized in Table 4.3.1

Table 4.3.1

Reliability Statistics of Orchard Tourism Attributes, Tourist Motivation, Expectation and Intention (N=43)

Constructs		Cronbach alpha
Orchard Tourism Attributes (.967)		
	Local culture	.911
	Activities and special events	.921
	Physiography	.898
	Hospitality and quality of service	.837
	Gastronomic Indulgence	.850
Expectations (.970)		
	Hedonism	.895
	Novelty	.878
	Refreshment	.932
	Cultural immersion	.892
Motivation (.920)	Meaningfulness	.916
	Knowledge	.876
Intention (.910)		

Note: Pilot test; Primary data collected through questionnaires

After the pilot survey, data was collected from the last week of July to the second week of October 2023 from 4 districts- Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Kinnaur in person and online.

4.3.3 EFA and CFA

Exploratory factor analysis serves as a method for data reduction by grouping highly correlated variables, resulting in a condensed set of composite factors or latent variables. This technique is commonly employed in theory development, psychometric scale creation, and overall data simplification. Following the removal of five non-

loading items (TE1, TE13, OTA14, OTA15, and OTA16), the EFA outcomes are presented.

The analysis reveals a robust 'Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)- the measure of Sampling Adequacy', boasting a value of .972. It indicates that the data is appropriate for factor analysis. The Bartlett test of sphericity attains statistical significance at $p < .001$, affirming the adequacy of variable correlations for factor analysis. All communalities surpass .50, which signifies that a large portion of the changes in the variables can be explained by the extracted factors.

Four factors with eigenvalues of more than 1 are extracted, suggesting that these factors are meaningful in explaining the variance in the data. The cumulative percentage of total variance explained by these factors exceeds 65%. The non-redundant residue is calculated at 14%, indicating that the extracted factors effectively account for most of the shared variance among variables.

Factor loadings exceeded .50, indicating a strong loading of variables onto their respective factors. Through principal component analysis and varimax rotation, a 4-factor model emerged, maintaining sync with the proposed theoretical model. Factor loadings are presented in Table 4.3.2

Table 4.3.2

EFA Results of Constructs of Orchard Tourism Attributes, Tourist Expectation, Motivation and Intention

Items	1	2	3	4
Provide an opportunity to get indulged (TE2)	.589			
Be Enjoyable (TE3)	.777			
Be exciting (TE4)	.760			
Provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience (TE5)	.642			
Be unique (TE6)	.644			
Be different from previous experiences (TE7)	.634			
Offer something new (TE8)	.662			
Be liberating (TE9)	.669			

Offer a sense of freedom (TE10)	.629		
Be refreshing (TE11)	.763		
Be revitalizing (TE12)	.775		
Provide an opportunity to experience the local culture closely (TE14)	.530		
Be offered at a destination where local people are friendly (TE15)	.544		
Give a sense of doing something meaningful (M1)			.558
Give a sense of doing something important (M2)			.649
Offer opportunities to learn about myself (M3)			.640
Be exploratory (M4)			.571
Be educational (M5)			.627
Be related to the new culture (M6)			.630
Experience the local way of life (OTA1)		.604	
Learn about the community's history (OTA2)		.624	
Closely experience the local culture (OTA3)		.690	
Appreciate regional heritage monuments (OTA4)		.650	
Participate in different kinds of recreational activities (nature trails, farm tours) (OTA5)		.693	
Enjoy activities in which I cannot usually participate during my mundane life, such as fruit cultivation, and dairy farming (OTA6)		.639	
Enjoy special events at the destination (culinary workshop, demonstrations) (OTA7)		.637	
Attend festivals and events that I have been interested in (OTA8)		.677	
Enjoy leisure time in different ecology zones (OTA9)		.716	
Enjoy leisure time in well-preserved areas (OTA10)		.675	
Enjoy awe-inspiring landscapes (OTA11)		.660	

Experience the friendly nature of local people in the rural area (OTA12)		.705		
Gather information about the location from the local people (OTA13)		.693		
Discover dairy and other by-products. (OTA17)		.553		
I plan to visit an orchard-based tourism resource (home/ orchard stay) in the future (TI1)				.701
I may visit orchard-based tourism resources in the future (TI2)				.734
I hope to visit an orchard-based tourism resource in the future (TI3)				.622
I have already considered spending my holiday at an orchard-based tourism resource TI4				.735
I intend to invest money and time in visiting an orchard-based tourism resource (TI5)				.780
I can imagine spending my holiday in an orchard (TI6)				.693
Cronbach's Alpha	.944	.948	.896	.852
Variance explained	51.7	5.85	4.64	3.46
Eigen Values	20.7	2.34	1.85	1.38
KMO = .972; Chi-Square/df = 16931/741 at p < .001				

4.3.4 Descriptive Statistics

Description of Tourist Population

Gender

The distribution of gender in the sample was described using a frequency table. The sample of tourists consisted of 327 males (63.5%) and 188 (36.5%) female respondents (N=515).

Table-4.3.3

Descriptive Statistics for gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	327	63.5
Female	188	36.5

Age

The sample respondents consisted of the highest number of young tourists (N=224; 43.5%) in the age category of 18-25 years, followed by 36-45 years (N=110; 21.4%), 95 respondents (18.4%) in the category of 46-55 years. 58 tourists (11.3) were aged between 26-35 years and only 28 (5.4%) were above 55 years of age.

Table-4.3.4

Descriptive Statistics for age

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percent
18-25	224	43.5
26-35	58	11.3
36-45	110	21.4
46-55	95	18.4
Above 55	28	5.4

Education

A total of 515 participants were included in the research. The distribution of education levels among the participants is summarized in Table 4.3.5. Most participants (47.2%) reported having a post-graduation, followed by (41.4%) graduation-level education and a doctorate (8.7%). Only a small number of participants reported having primary (0.2%) or secondary (2.5%) education.

Table 4.3.5

Descriptive Statistics for Education

Education	Frequency	Percent
Doctorate	45	8.7
Post-Graduation	243	47.2
Graduation	213	41.4
Secondary	13	2.5
Primary	1	0.2

Marital status.

The descriptive statistics for the variable "Marital status" indicated that the sample consisted of 515 participants with valid data. Nearly half of the participants (49.9%) reported being married, while a similar percentage (49.5%) reported being unmarried. Only a small percentage of participants (0.6%) indicated that they were divorced.

Table 4.3.6

Descriptive Statistics for Marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Divorced	3	.6
Married	257	49.9
Unmarried	255	49.5

Profession

The research comprised 515 individuals in total, and Table 4.3.7 provides a summary of their reported professions. The majority of participants (46.8%) identified as students, while 37.3% reported being employed. Smaller percentages were distributed

among other categories, such as self-employed (9.1%), retired (3.9%) and a very small proportion (2.9%) indicated homemaker.

Table 4.3.7

Descriptive Statistics for Profession

Profession	Frequency	Percent
Employed	192	37.3
Homemaker	15	2.9
Retired	20	3.9
Self-employed	47	9.1
Student	240	46.8

Annual Income

The descriptive statistics for the variable “Annual income” indicate that the majority of participants (43.1%) reported an annual income of less than 5 lakh, followed by 5-10 lakh (15.1%), more than 25 lakh (14.4%) and 10-15 lakh (12.2%). Smaller percentages were distributed among the other income categories.

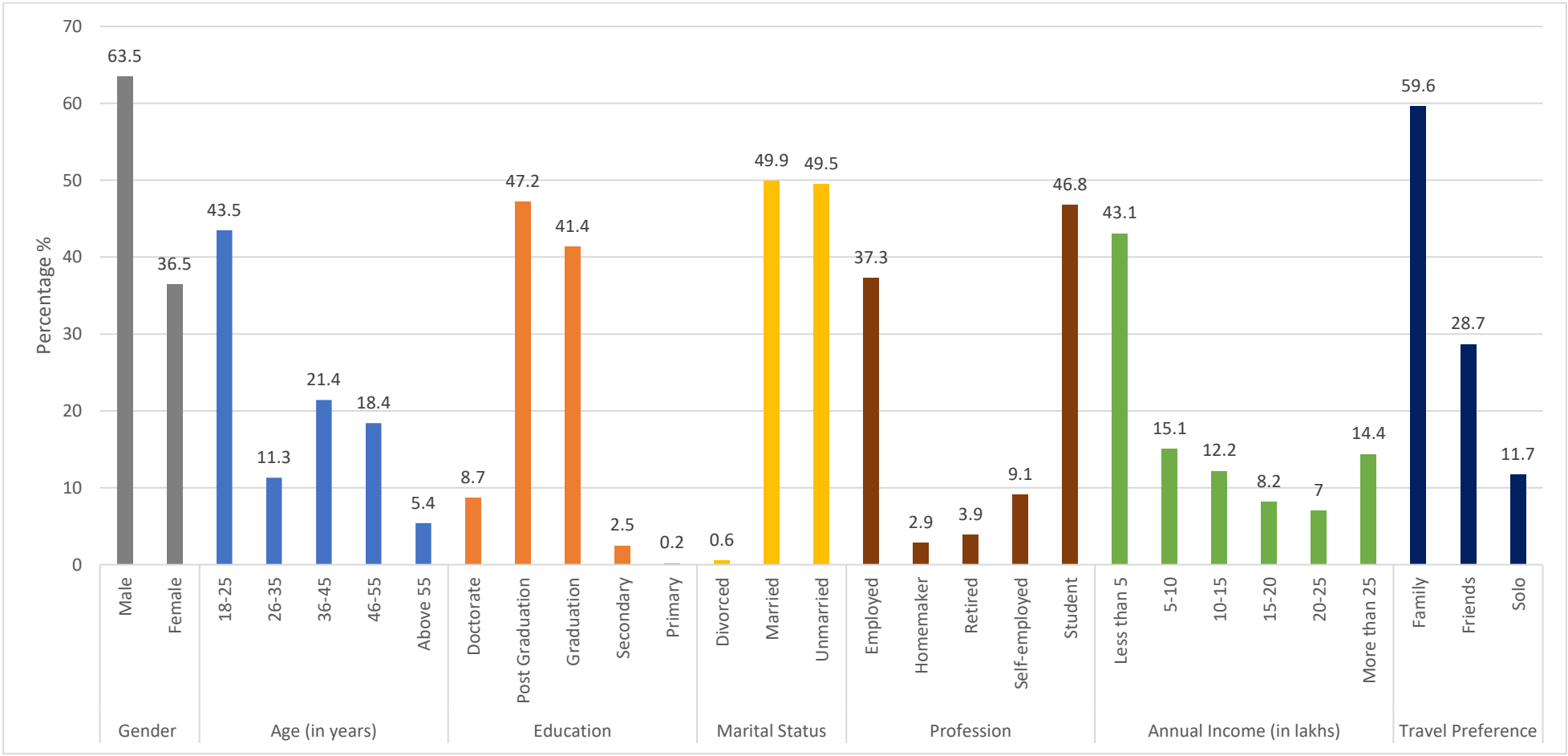
Table 4.3.8

Descriptive Statistics for Annual Income

Annual Income (in lakhs)	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5	222	43.1
5-10	78	15.1
10-15	63	12.2
15-20	42	8.2
20-25	36	7.0
More than 25	74	14.4

Figure 4.5

Descriptive Analysis of Tourist Population (N=515)



Travel preference

The majority of participants (59.6%) reported a preference for traveling with family, followed by friends (28.7%). A smaller percentage of participants (11.7%) indicated a preference for solo travel. The survey comprised 515 participants in total and Table 4.3.9 provides a summary of their reported travel preferences.

Table 4.3.9

Descriptive Statistics for Travel Preference

Travel Preference	Frequency	Percent
Family	307	59.6
Friends	148	28.7
Solo	60	11.7

4.3.5 Orchard Tourism Attributes

The overall mean score for Orchard Tourism Attributes is 4.36 (SD=0.683), according to descriptive data. This indicates that travelers have a favorable opinion of OTA. OTA 16 had the highest mean value, signifying that the tourists visiting orchards would like to explore the variety of fruits and fruit products. Table 4.3.10 presents the number of valid responses (N), minimum and maximum values, mean, and standard deviation for each of the 17 Orchard Tourism Attributes (OTA) items.

Table 4.3.10

Descriptive Statistics for OTA construct

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
OTA1	515	1	5	4.40	.868
OTA2	515	1	5	4.23	.907
OTA3	515	1	5	4.39	.867
OTA4	515	1	5	4.38	.843
OTA5	515	1	5	4.41	.855

OTA6	515	1	5	4.38	.883
OTA7	515	1	5	4.32	.908
OTA8	515	1	5	4.43	.837
OTA9	515	1	5	4.43	.834
OTA10	515	1	5	4.38	.886
OTA11	515	1	5	4.43	.860
OTA12	515	1	5	4.41	.802
OTA13	515	1	5	4.26	.882
OTA14	515	1	5	4.16	.963
OTA15	515	1	5	4.46	.844
OTA16	515	1	5	4.54	.766
OTA17	515	1	5	4.26	.945

4.3.6 Tourist Expectation

The Tourist Expectation (TE) items' mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, and total TE, with a mean of 4.44, are all displayed in Table 4.3.11 along with other descriptive statistics. Respondents reported high expectations across various aspects of tourism, as indicated by the means ranging from 4.28 to 4.63. The standard deviations, which range from 0.65004 to 0.908, suggest moderate to low variability in responses, indicating a relatively consistent level of expectation among participants.

Table 4.3.11

Descriptive Statistics for TE construct

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TE1	515	1	5	4.28	.884
TE2	515	1	5	4.36	.799
TE3	515	1	5	4.63	.777
TE4	515	1	5	4.55	.817
TE5	515	1	5	4.41	.908
TE6	515	1	5	4.49	.787

TE7	515	1	5	4.41	.865
TE8	515	1	5	4.50	.792
TE9	515	1	5	4.28	.899
TE10	515	1	5	4.32	.904
TE11	515	1	5	4.60	.774
TE12	515	1	5	4.48	.809
TE13	515	1	5	4.48	.819
TE14	515	1	5	4.45	.820
TE15	515	1	5	4.44	.829

4.3.7 Tourist Motivation

Respondents reported high motivation levels across various aspects, as indicated by the means ranging from 4.23 to 4.36. The data indicates a constant level of motivation among participants, as indicated by the standard deviation of 0.78441, which indicates relatively little variability in replies. For each Tourist Motivation (M) item, the table displays descriptive statistics such as the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, and the number of valid replies (N).

Table 4.3.12

Descriptive Statistics for M construct

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
M1	515	1	5	4.36	.909
M2	515	1	5	4.23	.948
M3	515	1	5	4.28	.960
M4	515	1	5	4.33	.889
M5	515	1	5	4.33	.929
M6	515	1	5	4.32	.950

4.3.8 Tourist Intention

The total mean score for tourist intention is 4.11 (SD=0.760), according to descriptive statistics. A positive intention for Orchard Tourism amongst the tourists is indicated here. TI 3 had the highest mean value, indicating that tourists are hopeful to visit an orchard-based tourism resource in future. The standard deviation of 1.138 for the responses to item TI4 is rather high, suggesting that participants' opinions about whether or not to spend their vacation at an orchard-based tourist resource varied considerably. The standard deviation of 1.045 for item TI5 suggests a high level of variability in participants' intentions to invest both money and time in visiting an orchard-based tourism resource. The responses to item TI6 also show a moderate standard deviation of 0.909, indicating a less consistent level of imagination among participants regarding spending their holiday in an orchard. The results are presented in Table 4.3.13.

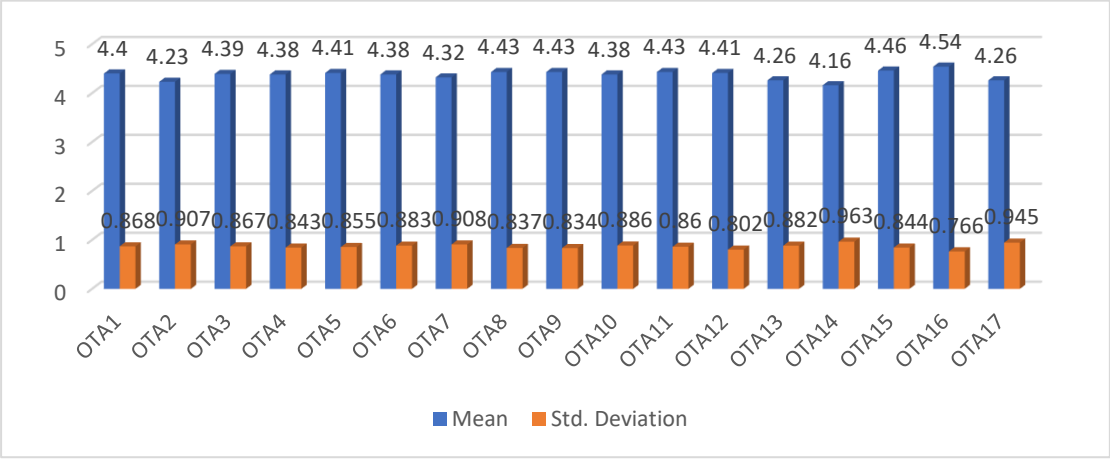
Table 4.3.13

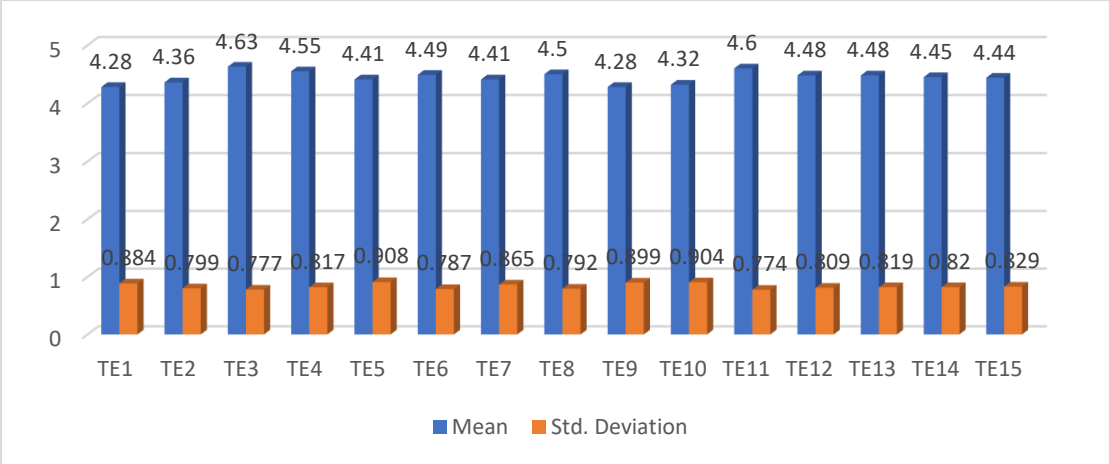
Descriptive Statistics for TI construct

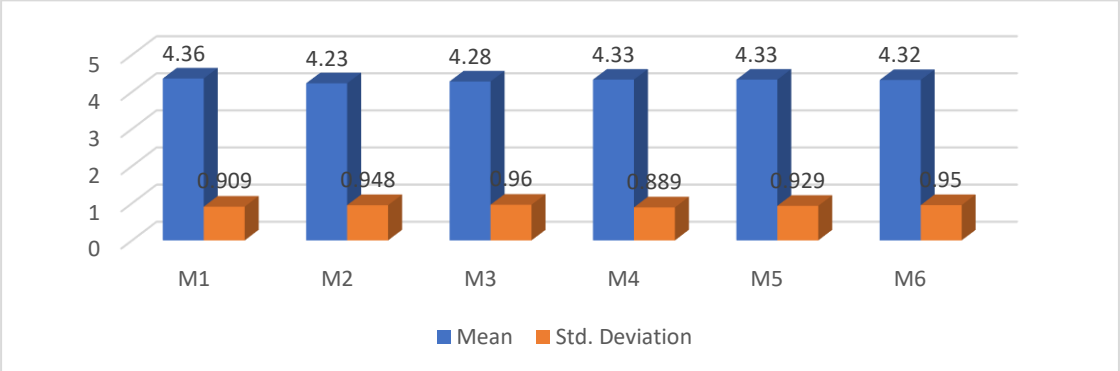
Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TI1	515	1	5	4.26	.905
TI2	515	1	5	4.21	.853
TI3	515	1	5	4.29	.850
TI4	515	1	5	3.76	1.138
TI5	515	1	5	3.94	1.045
TI6	515	1	5	4.23	.909

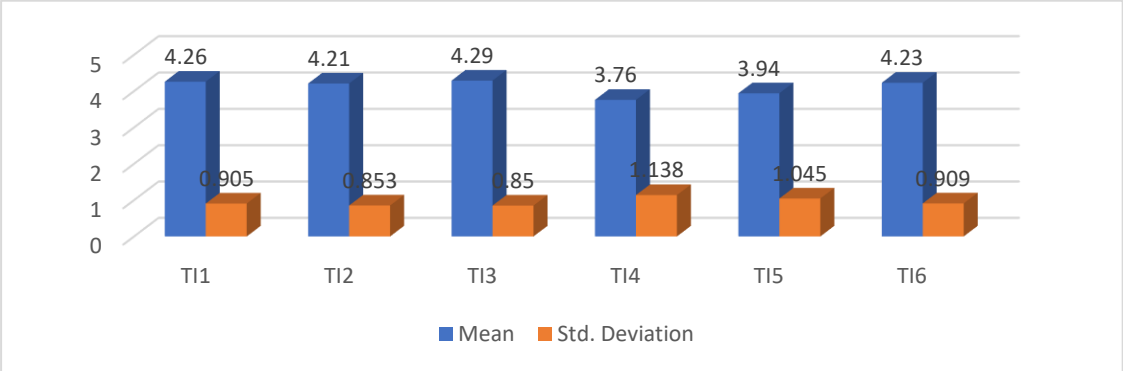
Figure 4.6

Mean and Std. Deviation of Constructs- OTA, TE, M, and TI









Data screening

4.3.9 Elimination of Outliers

To eliminate the outliers from the dataset, a Z score was calculated for all the variables in SPSS. No significant outliers were detected as all the values were below 3. Only two items reported values above 1 TE4- 1.138 and TE5- 1.045. Rest all other items had a value below 1. Further to test the theory, the Mahalanobis test was performed. Together with the two P values (P1 & P2), the statistics show the squared distance from the data set's centroid. The observations with P1 and P2 values less than 0.001 should be removed. All the responses were retained for further analysis.

Assumption checks for inferential statistics

4.3.10 Normality distribution of data

The normality assessment is done by measuring Skewness for every item. If the absolute value of skewness is 1.0 or less, it means the data is probably normally distributed. But when using a method of Maximum Likelihood Estimator (MLE) in software like AMOS to analyze data, it can still work well even if the skewness is a bit higher, as long as the sample size is big (>200) and the value of the critical region is not more than 8.0. Thus, analysis with absolute Skewness up to +/-3 is acceptable in MLE. All the values were observed to be well within this range.

Another method for assessing normality is by looking at the Kurtosis statistics. Like Skewness, Kurtosis also shows acceptable robust values while using MLE. As per Collier (2020), the acceptable range for Kurtosis is -10 to +10. The assessment of results shows acceptable values of Kurtosis. Hence, the data is significantly normal.

Table 4.3.14

Assessment of normality distribution of data

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
TE2	-1.367	2.270
TE4	-2.277	5.685
TE5	-1.698	2.728

TE6	-1.861	4.198
TE7	-1.661	2.855
TE8	-1.945	4.493
TE9	-1.330	1.822
TE10	-1.421	1.900
TE11	-2.439	6.785
TE12	-1.843	3.829
TE15	-1.772	3.594
M1	-1.528	2.223
M2	-1.233	1.257
M3	-1.319	1.293
OTA1	-1.645	2.790
OTA3	-1.532	2.214
OTA4	-1.595	2.812
OTA5	-1.703	3.216
OTA7	-1.509	2.277
OTA8	-1.648	2.825
OTA9	-1.774	3.603
OTA10	-1.690	3.010
OTA12	-1.606	2.988
OTA13	-1.374	2.167
OTA14	-1.195	1.256
OTA15	-1.985	4.470
TI1	-1.323	1.782
TI2	-1.021	.871
TI5	-.881	.242
TI6	-1.242	1.402

Harman's Test

Over the last few years, a lot of focus has shifted towards common method bias (CMB) in measurement model analysis. The term "CMB" describes the inflation (or, in rare circumstances, deflation) of the genuine correlation between the research's observable variables. A simple test in EFA to see if one single factor emerges with all the indicators is Harman's single-factor test. If the total variance is smaller than .50, which is 50%, common technique bias is not evident. To assess model fit, the identical test is run in CFA with all the indicators specifically placed into one factor. When one construct model has an acceptable model fit, method bias is evident. Fuller et al., (2016) proved that Harman's single-factor test is sensitive enough to identify any underlying issue if common technique bias is significant enough to skew findings. The analysis done using CFA revealed inflated values of all model fit statistics than observed from the original measurement model, overruling the possibility of common method bias.

4.3.11 Model Fit Statistics

AMOS was used for the Confirmatory Factor test (CFA) to evaluate the measurement models. The factor loadings for every item were looked at during the CFA. The overall goodness of fit of the model was assessed using several fit indices, such as RMSEA, TLI, SRMR, GFI, CFI, and CMIN/df. To improve the model fit,14 items were removed from the final model (TE1, TE3, TE13, TE14, M4, M5, M6, OTA2, OTA6, OTA11, OTA16, OTA17, TI3, TI4). Each value was within the range that was generally agreed upon by Bentler (1990), Hu and Bentler (1998), and Ullman (2001). The four-factor model representing Tourist expectation, Motivation, Orchard Tourism Attributes and Tourist Intention demonstrated a satisfactory fit to the data, as indicated by the values in Table 4.3.15: CMIN/df = [2.549], GFI = [.882], CFI = [.950], TLI = [.944], SRMR = [.033], and RMSEA = [.055].

Table 4.3.15

Model Fit Statistics

Fit Indices	Recommended value	Obtained values	Sources
P	Insignificant		Bagozzi and Yi (1988)
CMIN/df (Chi-square/df)	3-5	2.549	3-5 Schumacker and Lomax (2004)
GFI	>.90	.882	Hair et al (2010)
CFI	>.90	.950	Bentler (1990)
TLI	>.90	.944	Bentler (1990)
SRMR	<.08	.033	Hu and Bentler (1998)
RMSEA	<.08	.055	Hu and Bentler (1998)

4.3.12 Convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability evaluation

According to Straub & Gefen (2004), construct reliability evaluates how well a variable or combination of variables consistently measures what it intends to. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are used to evaluate it. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) proposed a 0.7 threshold for Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability. Every construct's Cronbach alpha was found to be greater than .70. Composite reliability is assessed using the formula

$$CR = \frac{(\sum \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum \lambda_i)^2 + (\sum \epsilon_i)}$$

Where 'lambda' is the standardized factor loading for the item, *i* and *e* is the respective error variance for item *i.*

The indicator variables' internal consistency loading on the latent variable is measured by the composite reliability. When the Composite reliability is higher than 0.7, it indicates that there is shared variance among the indicator variables weighing on the

latent variable. The composite reliability ranged from 0.843 to 0.947, which is significantly higher than the 0.70 benchmark (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, every construct has its construct reliability determined, as shown in Table 4.3.16

A test's convergent validity is determined by how well it correlates with other tests measuring the same or comparable constructs. It assesses the degree to which constructs that ought to be related to one another conceptually actually are. Each item's convergent validity was determined using the Average Variance Extracted method (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). AVE is assessed using the formula

$$AVE = \frac{\sum \lambda_i^2}{\sum \lambda_i^2 + \sum_i \mathrm{var}(\varepsilon_i)}$$

Where lambda represents the factor loading of item *i* and *e* shows the variance of item *i.*

The AVE values were above 0.50 the benchmark established by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Thus, the scale used has required convergent validity (Table 4.3.16)

Table – 4.3.16

Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Items	Loading	Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Tourist Expectation		**0.944**	**0.944**	**0.606**
Provide an opportunity to get indulged (TE2)	.750			
Be exciting (TE4)	.793			
Provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience (TE5)	.704			
Be unique (TE6)	.801			
Be different from previous experiences (TE7)	.808			
Offer something new (TE8)	.818			
Be liberating (TE9)	.783			
Offer a sense of freedom (TE10)	.756			
Be refreshing (TE11)	.795			

Be revitalizing (TE12)	.784			
Be offered at a destination where local people are friendly (TE15)	.765			
Motivation		**0.896**	**0.890**	**0.730**
Give a sense of doing something meaningful (M1)	.882			
Give a sense of doing something important (M2)	.854			
Offer opportunities to learn about myself (M3)	.827			
Orchard Tourism Attribute		**0.948**	**0.947**	**0.602**
Experience the local way of life (OTA1)	.751			
Closely experience the local culture (OTA3)	.807			
Appreciate regional heritage monuments (OTA4)	.732			
Participate in different kinds of recreational activities (nature trails, farm tours) (OTA5)	.779			
Enjoy special events at the destination (culinary workshop, demonstrations) (OTA7)	.745			
Attend festivals and events that I have been interested in (OTA8)	.779			
Enjoy leisure time in different ecology zones (OTA9)	.751			
Enjoy leisure time in well-preserved areas (OTA10)	.776			
Experience the friendly nature of local people in the rural area (OTA12)	.832			
Gather information about the location from the local people (OTA13)	.827			
Experience highly customized service (OTA14)	.773			
Enjoy the local food (OTA15)	.752			
Tourist Intention		**0.852**	**0.843**	**0.573**
I plan to visit an orchard-based tourism resource (home/ orchard stay) in the future (TI1)	.808			

I may visit orchard-based tourism resources in the future (TI2)	.781
I intend to invest money and time in visiting an orchard-based tourism resource (TI5)	.716
I can imagine spending my holiday in an orchard (TI6)	.719

The degree to which one test is unrelated to other tests that assess other constructs is known as discriminant validity. Convergent and discriminant validity are evaluated together. Divergent validity is another name for discriminant validity in some disciplines. Initially, the research's discriminant validity was evaluated according to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria. The values for OTA and TE construct are lower than their correlation with other latent variables, the values for M and TI are higher as desired.

Table 4.3.17

Discriminant Validity using Fornell and Larcker (1981)

	OTA	TE	M	TI
OTA	***0.775***			
TE	0.804	***0.778***		
M	0.739	0.846	***0.854***	
TI	0.715	0.677	0.666	***0.756***

Subsequently, using the Heterotrait- Monotrait ratio (HTMT), none of the ratios was above the necessary 0.85 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015). Discriminant validity was thus proven. The results of Heterotrait- Monotrait ratios are presented in Table 4.3.18

Table 4.3.18

Discriminant Validity using HTMT ratio

	OTA	TE	M	TI
OTA				
TE	0.79			
M	0.72	0.83		
TI	0.69	0.66	0.64	

4.3.13 Multicollinearity Diagnostic

To check the possibility of multicollinearity, data was analyzed using SPSS and the values of tolerance and VIF were computed. The threshold value of tolerance is greater than 0.2 and VIF should be less than 5. The computed values are presented in Table 4.3.19 and were found within the desired range, thus negating the chances of multicollinearity amongst the constructs.

Table 4.3.19

Collinearity Statistics

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
TE	.245	4.084
M	.293	3.412
OTA	.342	2.928

Note: TI is the dependent variable

4.3.14 Structural Model Analysis

With the identified constructs of Orchard Tourism Attributes, Expectations, and Motivation along with Tourist Intention, a comprehensive model was created to analyze how these factors may influence tourist visit intention. A structural equation modeling (SEM) approach was used which can simultaneously handle multiple independent and dependent variables.

Structural Equation Model (SEM) for Orchard Tourism in Shimla:

1. Latent Variable 1: Orchard Tourism Attributes

    - Indicators: Items related to Local culture, Activities and special events, Physiography, Hospitality and quality of service, and Gastronomic Indulgence.

2. Latent Variable 2: Tourist Expectations

    - Indicators: Items related to Hedonism, Novelty, Refreshment, Meaningfulness, Cultural immersion, and Knowledge.

3. Latent Variable 3: Motivation

    - Indicators: Items related to Meaningfulness and knowledge

4. Latent Variable 4: Tourist Intention

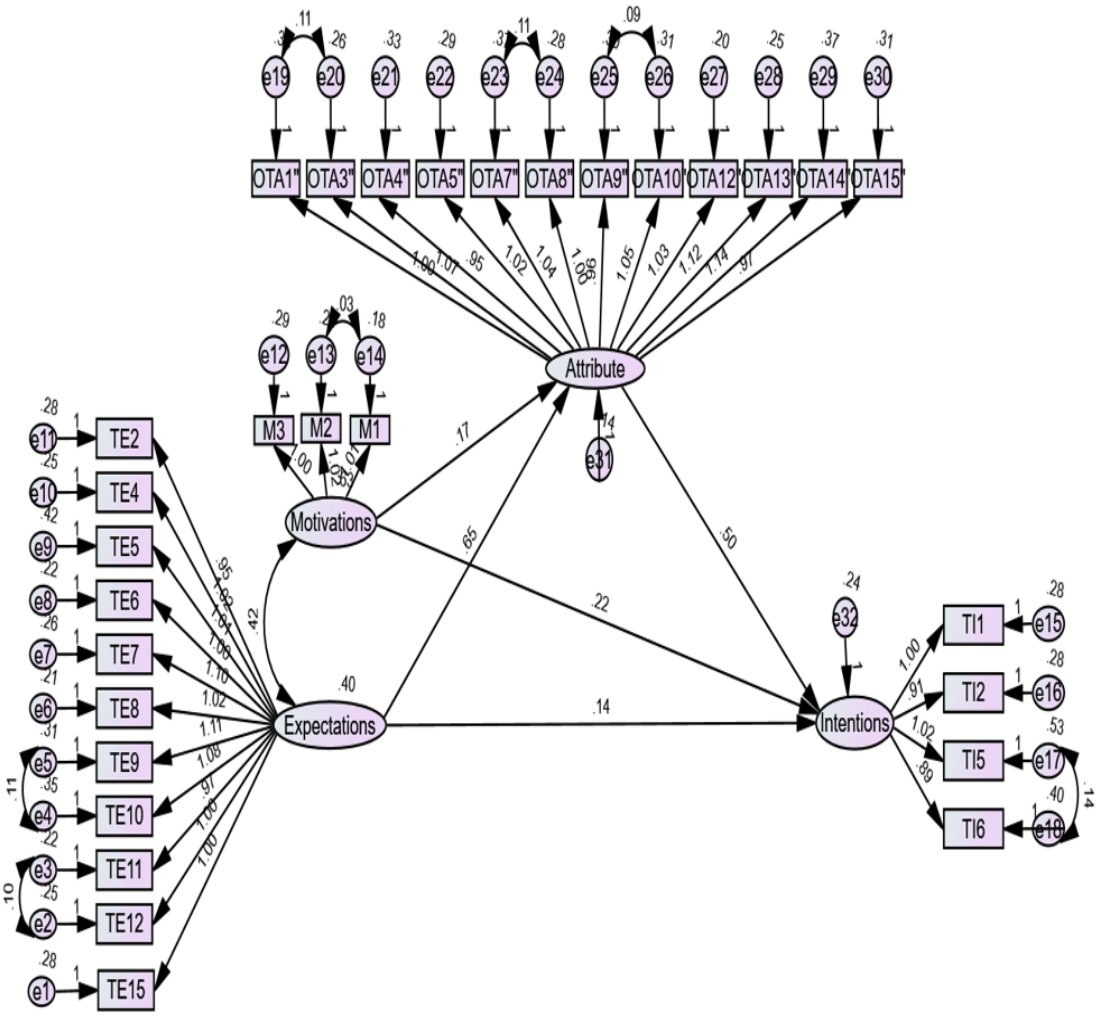
    - Indicators: items related to tourist intention

The relationship between the constructs is evaluated, and the measurement indicators for every variable are included in a complete structural model. This model is more reliable as it takes into account each indicator separately. An independent construct is not influenced by any other construct in the model and has a structural relationship that affects another construct. A covariance must be added between two independent constructs.

To test the correlations, a structural equation model (SEM) produced by AMOS was used. A model is considered to be good if the values are in the respective ranges as specified – 'CMIN/df value' is less than 5, the 'Tucker-Lewis (1973) index (TLI)', the 'confirmatory fit index (CFI)' given by Bentler, 1990 and the 'goodness of fit (GFI) indices' as per Hair et al. (2010), is greater than.90. Moreover, according to Hair et al. (2010), the root mean square approximation (RMSEA) ranges from 0.05 to 0.08 and the root mean square residual (RMR) should be less than 0.05. The structural model's fit indices are as follows: CMIN/df (Chi-square/df) = 2.549; TLI = 0.94; GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.03 and RMSEA = 0.5.

Figure 4.7

Structural Model Showing Impact of Tourist Motivation and Expectation on Tourist Intention through Orchard Tourism Attributes in the Rural Shimla Region



66% variance in Attributes is accounted by Expectation and Motivation as 'The squared multiple correlation' was 0.659. Also squared multiple correlations for Intention was 0.556 which means 56% variance in Intention is accounted for by Expectation, Motivation and Attributes.

The research assessed the impact of Expectation and Motivation on Attributes and Intention and also the impact of Attributes on Intention. The impact of Expectations on Attributes was both positive and significant (b= 0.629, t=8.249, p= .000) supporting

hypothesis H13. The impact of Motivation on Attributes was both positive and significant (b=0.207, t=2.940, p=.003), supporting hypothesis H14. Further, the impact of attributes on Intention was also positive and significant (b=.443, t=6.104. p=.000). Thus, hypothesis H15 was supported. Similarly, the impact of Expectation on Intention was assessed and found to be positive but insignificant (b=.122, t=1.259, p=.208). Thus, hypothesis H16 was not supported. Finally, a positive and significant impact of Motivation was observed on Intention (b=.236, t=2.689, p=.007) supporting hypothesis H17.

Table – 4.3.20

Hypotheses results

Hypothesized Relationship	Standardized Estimates	P value (<.05)	T value (>1.96)	Conclusion
Expectation→ Attributes H13	.629	.000	8.249	supported
Motivation→ Attributes H14	.207	.003	2.940	supported
Attributes→ Intention H15	.443	.000	6.104	supported
Expectation→ Intention H16	.122	.208	1.259	Not supported
Motivation→ Intention H17	.236	.007	2.689	supported

4.3.15 Mediation Analysis

The research evaluated the role of Attributes as a mediator in the interaction between

a) Motivation and Intention.

b) Expectations and Intention

The total indirect effect of Motivation on Intention is calculated as the indirect effect of motivation on Attributes (.170) (P=.027) and attributes on Intention (.497) (P=.000) as 0.170 X .497=.08449=.085. Thus, we can conclude that 'Motivation has a significant indirect effect on Intention through Attributes'.

For the lower confidence level, the confidence interval produced by Bootstrap is.012, and for the upper confidence level, it is.181. The fact that the confidence interval did not cross 0 proves the significance of the indirect effect.

The total indirect effect of Expectation on Intention is calculated as an indirect effect of Expectation on Attributes (.646) (P=.000) and Attributes on Intention (.497) (P=.000) as .646 X .497=.32106=.321. Thus, we can conclude that Expectation has a significant indirect effect on Intention through Attributes.

The confidence interval generated by Bootstrap for lower confidence levels is .200 and that for upper confidence levels is .491. Since this confidence interval did not cross zero, it ascertains that the indirect effect is significant.

The direct effect of Motivation on Intention is .217 (P=.040), thus there is a significant direct impact of Motivation on Intention.

The direct effect of expectation on intention is .140 (P=.365), suggesting an insignificant direct effect of Expectation on Intention.

Since the total effect of the mediation of Attributes between Motivation and Intention is significant, it establishes partial Mediation between the two constructs, supporting hypothesis H18. Also, the direct effect of Expectation on Intention is insignificant but the indirect effect is significant, which establishes full mediation of Attributes between Expectation and Intention. Thus, hypothesis H19 is supported.

Table 4.3.21

Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Motivation→Attributes →Intention (H18)	.217 (.040)	.085	.012	.181	.021	Partial Mediation (H18 supported)
Expectation→Attributes →Intention (H19)	.140 (.365)	.321	.200	.491	.000	Full Mediation (H19 supported)

CHAPTER-5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The main aim of this research was to address the two prominently evolving problems - over-tourism and horticultural losses in the renowned hill station of Shimla. Three primary objectives guided this research, each contributing to an enhanced understanding of the prospects of merging orchards and tourism to overcome the threats posed by the aforementioned problems.

The Orchard Tourism Product Production System is shaped by fruit varieties, tourism offerings, and infrastructural development. It is deeply influenced by geographical factors such as topography, climate, soil conditions, and accessibility. This form of tourism flourishes in regions where temperate and subtropical fruit cultivation is viable, attracting visitors interested in agricultural experiences, farm stays, and nature-based activities. Each district in the Shimla region can contribute uniquely to this system. Shimla district, known for apple and stone fruit cultivation, has key orchard tourism hubs like Kotkhai, Rohru, and Narkanda, where visitors can engage in apple picking, farm stays, and seasonal festivals. Solan district, with its mixed horticulture, offers peaches, pears, citrus fruits, kiwis, and mushrooms, unique experiences in Kasauli and Parwanoo, benefiting from its proximity to Chandigarh. Sirmaur district specializes in citrus and strawberry cultivation at Nahan and Paonta Sahib. Rajgarh is known as the peach bowl of the state. Meanwhile, Kinnaur district, with its high-altitude orchards, features premium apple farms in Kalpa and Sangla, attracting visitors through trekking experiences and traditional fruit drying methods, appealing particularly to adventure and cultural tourists.

The research begins with an investigation of the potential of orchard tourism in the rural Shimla region. Detailed interviews and thematic analysis were used and significant findings were organized into six major themes. The inseparable aspects of orchards and farming in the lives of this rural community emerged as the first theme which was titled “Hope of Rural Pride”. Orchards form the backbone of the community and the residents take pride in their occupation. Although they face issues in small-scale farming such

as high input costs and declining profits, the community remains connected to its agricultural roots. The second theme emerged as farmer's ‘intention to transform orchards into a tourism resource’. They expressed hope that tourism can help cover the rising costs associated with orchard maintenance and contribute to household income. Specialized tourist activities such as guided tours or volunteering in fruit harvesting etc. could be customized to tourist preferences. Integrating different aspects of culture, society, and environment with tourism, the third theme is tagged ‘Integrated use of rural resources. Homestays were recognized as integral components, capable of providing authentic rural experiences and creating employment opportunities for the local people. With the prospects come challenges and difficulties to operationalize the concept. The fourth theme highlights the ‘challenges’ foreseen by these residents in adopting orchard tourism. The lack of all-weather roads, economic constraints, and operational barriers for homestay operators are identified. Thus, it is imperative to address these challenges to unlock the full potential of orchard tourism. The fifth theme explores the fears expressed by some growers, particularly from the elder generation, regarding the potential negative effects of tourism. Concerns include a rise in the cost of living, violation of cultural values, and negative environmental impacts. Balancing tourism development with environmental preservation and cultural sensitivity is crucial. The final theme puts forth the expectations of orchardists from the government and the broader system. There is a call for government support, financial aid, and leadership empowerment within the local community to facilitate orchard tourism development. The evolving perspectives within the farming community, especially among women, regarding the potential benefits of orchard tourism are stated.

Next, the research focused on understanding the Strengths and Opportunities of orchard tourism in the rural environment of Shimla, employing ‘Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)’ and ‘Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)’. This helped to identify and assess key factors influencing the development of orchard tourism. The research involved a sample of 410 participants, predominantly male, with diverse demographic characteristics. The EFA revealed five significant factors: "Hope of rural pride," "Intention to transform the orchard into a tourism resource," "Expectation from Government/Government Support," "Integrated use of rural resources," and "Expectation for self-evolution/Learning." The research eliminated certain items due to poor factor loading or cross-loading issues. Descriptive analysis provided insights into

the demographic characteristics of the sample population, including age, education, orchard size, religion, family size, farming experience and income. These demographics contribute to a nuanced understanding of the diverse backgrounds of the participants. The CFA confirmed the validity of the measurement model, indicating a good fit for the five-factor structure. The research assessed construct reliability (Cronbach alpha and composite), and validity (convergent and discriminant), ensuring the robustness of the measurement model. Additionally, checks for multicollinearity indicated no issues among the constructs. The structural model analysis explored relationships between factors, revealing positive and significant impacts. Government support positively influenced participants' intention and learning, with subsequent effects on rural pride and integrated use of rural resources. The research also conducted a mediation analysis, revealing that intention fully mediated the relationship between government support and rural pride, as well as between government support and integrated use. However, learning did not mediate these relationships.

Next, understanding the nuanced preferences and motivation levels of tourists was crucial for enhancing the overall tourism experience and ensuring long-term success. Here, the research focuses on understanding the interplay between tourist motivation, expectations, orchard tourism attributes, and the ultimate decision to visit an orchard. The research again employs Factor Analysis (EFA) and (CFA) to analyze the data gathered through a structured questionnaire. The demographic analysis reveals that the sample includes a majority of young, educated, and married participants, with a preference for family travel and varying annual income levels. Descriptive statistics for Orchard Tourism Attributes, Tourist Expectations, Tourist Motivation, and Tourist Intention indicate generally positive perceptions and consistent levels among participants. Data screening involves the elimination of outliers, assumption checks for inferential statistics (normality distribution), and Harman's Test to address common method bias. Confirmatory Factor Analysis is employed to assess the measurement models, and a structural model is created using AMOS to explore relationships between constructs. The structural model demonstrates a satisfactory fit to the data, supported by various fit indices. Reliability and validity are established, ensuring that the measurement instruments reliably measure the intended constructs. The absence of multicollinearity is confirmed through tolerance and VIF values. The structural model reveals significant positive impacts of Tourist Expectations and Motivation on Orchard

Tourism Attributes and, in turn, a positive impact of Attributes on Tourist Intention. While Expectations have an indirect effect on Intention through Attributes, Motivation directly influences Intention. The research confirms both partial and full mediation effects, supporting the proposed hypotheses.

5.2 Conclusion

This research establishes orchard tourism as a viable strategy to address over-tourism in Shimla's urban centers while offering a sustainable economic alternative for orchardists facing rising input costs and declining farm profits. The study explores the opportunities, challenges, and aspirations linked to orchard tourism in Shimla, emphasizing the strong connection between local communities and horticulture. While factors like rural pride, intention to transform orchards, and integrated use of rural resources emerge as key strengths, government support and learning opportunities present further potential for growth. However, addressing infrastructure gaps, financial constraints, and environmental concerns remains crucial for successful implementation.

Using a mixed-method approach (EFA, CFA, and SEM), the study identifies the intention to transform orchards into tourism resources as a key predictor of orchard tourism success. The high mean score (3.9159) suggests an overall positive inclination toward adopting orchard tourism. The findings confirm that government support significantly enhances intention ($\beta = 0.504$, $p < .001$) and learning ($\beta = 0.697$, $p < .001$) but does not directly impact rural pride or integrated orchard use. Instead, intention serves as the key driver, positively influencing both integrated use ($\beta = 0.678$, $p < .001$) and rural pride ($\beta = 0.665$, $p < .001$). These findings project the need for policy interventions, financial aid, and capacity-building programs to strengthen orchard tourism. By enhancing intention, learning opportunities, and local pride, orchard tourism can promote sustainable rural development and smart resource utilization.

Additionally, the study examines tourist motivation, expectations, and their impact on orchard tourism attributes and intention. Tourists hold a positive perception of orchard tourism, with both expectation ($\beta = 0.629$, $p < .001$) and motivation ($\beta = 0.207$, $p = .003$) significantly influencing the perceived attributes of orchard tourism, which in turn strongly drives tourist intention ($\beta = 0.443$, $p < .001$). While motivation directly

impacts intention (β = 0.236, p = .007), expectation does not (β = 0.122, p = .208), indicating that personal motivation plays a greater role in tourists' decision-making.

Mediation analysis reveals that expectations lead to higher tourist intention only when they enhance the perceived attributes of orchard tourism (full mediation), whereas motivation influences intention both directly and through attributes (partial mediation). This highlights the importance of destination marketing strategies that improve tourism attributes, ensure high-quality experiences and target motivated travelers. Aligning promotional content with real experiences is essential to bridge the expectation-intention gap and sustaining interest in orchard-based tourism.

Demographic insights reveal that orchard tourism appeals predominantly to young, male, and lower-income tourists, most of whom prefer traveling with family and friends. This suggests that marketing strategies should focus on this specific demographic. Tourists express high expectations and strong motivation to explore diverse fruit varieties and related experiences. However, mixed responses on willingness to spend time and money indicate that some tourists may have reservations about the cost-benefit aspect of orchard tourism.

Despite its potential, orchard tourism faces challenges such as poor infrastructure, inadequate road connectivity, and financial limitations. Environmental concerns, including waste management, land-use conflicts, and cultural commodification, must also be addressed. Policymakers must prioritize infrastructure development, provide financial assistance, and integrate sustainable practices to ensure orchard tourism's long-term success.

The research objectives were systematically addressed, with conclusions drawn in alignment with both theoretical expectations and emerging tourism trends.

5.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research:

There remains ample scope for further research. Acknowledging the limitations of the research paves the road for future research. Future studies could investigate further the undermentioned areas to refine our understanding and address any gaps in the current research:

1. Limited Geographical Scope – The research primarily focuses on Himachal Pradesh, with a specific emphasis on Shimla region. This may limit the application of findings to other places with different geographical and cultural contexts.

2. Cross-Sectional Approach – This research uses a transverse approach but conducting a longitudinal study to track changes and trends in orchard tourism over time could generate meaningful results. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the industry's scope and sustainability.

3. Tourist Behavior Analysis: An investigation of tourist behavior and preferences in examining factors influencing their choice of orchard tourism and the specific experiences they seek can be undertaken. This can guide the development of tailored tourism packages.

4. Infrastructure and Policy Gaps – The research highlights the absence of specific policies on orchard tourism. Simultaneously, it advocates for the development and implementation of policies specifically addressing orchard tourism. However, a more in-depth policy analysis and comparative research of policies in similar fields could provide additional information on the policy gaps and opportunities.

5. Environmental Impact: Although environmental concerns are mentioned, a detailed analysis of the specific environmental impacts of orchard tourism, such as water usage, waste management, and pesticide usage, could enhance the research's completeness.

6. Impact of Tour Operators on Orchard Tourism Growth: Future Empirical studies can assess how structured tour packages, travel agency partnerships, and influencer marketing influence tourist inflow.

5.4 Broader Implications for Other Regions and Industries

The findings from this study on orchard tourism in Shimla can be applied to other regions and industries, contributing to rural development, agritourism, and local economies.

1. Implications for Other Regions in India

While the study focuses on Shimla, its insights can be adapted to similar horticultural regions with necessary modifications based on local conditions.

Apple-growing areas of Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, and Arunachal Pradesh can develop farm stays, fruit-picking experiences, and seasonal festivals to attract tourists. Similar models can be implemented for Grape vineyards in Nashik, Maharashtra (wine tourism) Citrus orchards in Nagpur and Punjab (fruit-picking tours) Mango farms in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (farm visits and processing workshops).

2. Impact on Other Industries

Orchard tourism connects agriculture, hospitality, and local business, benefiting multiple sectors. It provides an extra source of income for farmers and promotes sustainable farming practices. The homestay model in Shimla can be used in eco-tourism, wellness tourism, and cultural tourism to boost rural livelihoods. Promoting local fruit-based products (e.g., juices, jams, dried fruits) alongside orchard tourism can create new business opportunities.

3. Global Relevance

Shimla's orchard tourism model aligns with successful international examples such as Washington (USA) & Canada where farm tourism is linked with wine and organic food industries. In France (Alsace Wine Region) tourism is combined with heritage and culinary experiences, an approach that could be adopted in Himachal.

5.5 Recommendations

Recommendations for Local Vendors

- Local vendors can benefit from orchard tourism by offering fresh and processed fruit-based products, such as jams, juices, and dried fruit, directly to tourists.
- The promotion of traditional local handicrafts and souvenirs related to orchards and culture can add value to the tourist experience.
- Training programs in packaging, branding, and online sales should be

introduced to enhance market reach and competitiveness.

Recommendations for Homestay Operators

- Homestays should focus on improving infrastructure, hygiene, and service quality to cater to tourists seeking rural and farm experiences.
- Collaborations with orchard owners can create guided orchard tours, farm-to-table dining experiences, and fruit-picking activities.
- Capacity-building initiatives, such as hospitality training and storytelling techniques, should be introduced to enhance guest engagement.

Recommendations for the Horticulture Department

- Steps should be taken to protect orchard heritage, educate people about orchard practices, and promote traditional local products.
- There is a need for rigorous technical assistance to small-scale farmers, encouraging the adoption of modern horticulture practices like high-density plantation (HDP).
- Financial assistance and training programs should be introduced to help orchardists transition toward tourism-oriented business models.

Recommendations for the Tourism Department/ Government

- Given the shifting trends in tourism, there is a need for a re-evaluation of policies and a more integrated approach, with coordination between the Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Development, and Tourism Departments to develop the necessary infrastructure.
- Community involvement and collaboration can be strengthened through workshops and initiatives that strengthen local ownership of orchard tourism projects.
- Establish farmer-tourism cooperatives to manage visitor experiences collectively, ensuring equitable distribution of benefits.

- Awareness campaigns should highlight orchard tourism as a sustainable travel option, emphasizing its environmental, cultural, and economic benefits.
- Digital marketing strategies, partnerships with travel agencies, and social media promotions should be leveraged to position orchard tourism as a unique experience.
- Infrastructure Development such as Improving Road connectivity to remote orchards, and establishing basic tourist amenities such as signage, parking, and public conveniences.
- Sustainable Development Initiatives and introduce waste management strategies in rural areas.

Recommendations for Tourists

- Respect for Local Culture and Environment: Tourists should be encouraged to respect local customs, traditions, and orchard practices while visiting. This includes seeking permission before entering private orchards and following sustainable travel practices.
- Eco-Friendly Tourism Practices: Visitors should minimize waste, avoid littering, and opt for eco-friendly accommodations and activities that promote sustainability in rural areas.
- Support Local Communities: Choosing locally owned homestays, purchasing regional handicrafts, and dining at traditional eateries can contribute directly to the local economy.
- Seasonal Visit Planning: Visitors should plan their trips based on the orchard calendar, such as apple harvesting season (August–October) or blossom season (April–May), to maximize their experience.
- Sharing Experiences to Promote Orchard Tourism: Tourists can contribute to the promotion of orchard tourism by sharing their experiences on social media, travel blogs, and review platforms, helping attract more responsible travelers.
- Volunteering in Orchard Operations: Visitors should adhere to orchard

guidelines, avoid damaging plants or trees, and follow instructions given by farm owners to ensure a smooth and respectful experience.

5.6 Future Outlook: Orchard Tourism by 2030

The global agritourism market is experiencing substantial growth, driven by increasing demand for unique travel experiences, sustainable tourism, and a desire to reconnect with rural cultures. Reports indicate that the market size was estimated at USD 8.10 billion in 2024 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.9% from 2025 to 2030, reaching USD 15.78 billion by 2030. This growth reflects a broader trend towards experiential travel and a growing interest in sustainable and authentic tourism experiences. (grandviewresearch.com, 2024)

Orchard Tourism is still in a Nascent Stage and predicting its exact trajectory by 2030 would require longitudinal data and government policy commitments that are currently evolving. The study has identified critical areas such as infrastructure development, policy support, marketing strategies, and community engagement, which are fundamental to shaping the future growth of orchard tourism.

By 2030, orchard tourism in Shimla can become a key driver of rural tourism and self-reliance with proper support, marketing, and community participation.

1. Policy and Government Support

Orchard tourism is expected to be formally recognized in tourism and agriculture policies. Collaboration between Horticulture, Tourism, and Rural Development Departments will improve infrastructure and funding.

2. Digital and Market Expansion

Online booking platforms, social media, and virtual tours will boost visibility. Seasonal festivals, guided orchard tours, and farm-to-table experiences will attract more visitors.

3. Economic Benefits for Locals

Farmers will receive training, financial aid, and marketing support to run orchard-based tourism businesses. Partnerships with hotels, travel agencies, and eco-tourism firms will create jobs and boost the local economy.

4. Diversification of Experiences

New activities like orchard trekking, volunteered farming, and rural life experiences will enhance visitor appeal. Multiple farming inputs and activities will make orchard tourism a year-round attraction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdul-Razak, M., & Kruse, S. (2017). The adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers to climate change in the Northern Region of Ghana. *Climate Risk Management*, *17*, 104-122.

Acharya, B. P., & Halpenny, E. A. (2013). Homestays as an alternative tourism product for sustainable community development: A case study of women-managed tourism product in rural Nepal. *Tourism Planning & Development*, *10*(4), 367-387. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.779313

Adam, K. (2001). Entertainment Farming & Agri-Tourism: National Centre for Appropriate Technology.

Adam, K. L. (2004). Entertainment farming and agri-tourism. *The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), Arkansas, USA*.

Addinsall, C., Scherrer, P., Weiler, B., & Glencross, K. (2017). An ecologically and socially inclusive model of agritourism to support smallholder livelihoods in the South Pacific. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *22*(3), 301-315. https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2016.1250793

*Agricultural_Statistics_at_a_Glance_2022*_https://desagri.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Agricultural-Statistics-at-a-Glance-2022.pdf

Agriculture Census https://agcensus.gov.in/

Agyeiwaah, E., Akyeampong, O., & Amenumey, E. K. (2013). International tourists' motivations to choose homestay: Do their socio-demographics have any influence? *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *13*(1), 16-26.

Ahmad, A., Jamaludin, A., Zuraimi, N. S. M., & Valeri, M. (2021). Visit intention and destination image in post-COVID-19 crisis recovery. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *24*(17), 2392-2397.

Ahmad, W., Kim, W. G., Anwer, Z., & Zhuang, W. (2020). Schwartz personal values, theory of planned behavior and environmental consciousness: How tourists'

visiting intentions towards eco-friendly destinations are shaped?. *Journal of Business Research*, *110*, 228-236.

Ainley, S. (2014). A phenomenological study of agritourism entrepreneurship on Ontario family farms. *Tourism Planning & Development*, *11*(3), 317-329.

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *50*(2), 179-211.

Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1975). A Bayesian analysis of attribution processes. *Psychological bulletin*, *82*(2), 261.

Al Abri, I., Gulseven, O., & Yousuf, J. B. (2023). Estimating the recreational value of a rural mountain area in the presence of heterogeneous agricultural density on Al-Jabal Al-Akhdar Oman. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, *42*, 100639.

Alsahafi, R., Alzahrani, A., & Mehmood, R. (2023). Smarter sustainable tourism: data-driven multi-perspective parameter discovery for autonomous design and operations. *Sustainability*, *15*(5), 4166. https://doi.org/10.3390/su15054166

Ammirato, S., Felicetti, A. M., Raso, C., Pansera, B. A., & Violi, A. (2020). Agritourism and sustainability: What we can learn from a systematic literature review. *Sustainability*, *12*(22), 9575. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12229575

Andéhn, M., & L'Espoir Decosta, J. P. (2021). Authenticity and product geography in the making of the agritourism destination. *Journal of Travel Research*, *60*(6), 1282-1300. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520940796

Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological bulletin*, *103*(3), 411.

Archer, B., Cooper, C., & Ruhanen, L. (2012). The positive and negative impacts of tourism. In *Global tourism* (pp. 79-102). Routledge.

Arroyo, C. G., Barbieri, C., & Rich, S. R. (2013). Defining agritourism: A comparative study of stakeholders' perceptions in Missouri and North Carolina. *Tourism Management*, *37*, 39-47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.12.007

Ashley, C., Boyd, C., & Goodwin, H. (2000). Pro-poor tourism: Putting poverty at the heart of the tourism agenda.

Assaf, A. G., & Josiassen, A. (2012). Identifying and ranking the determinants of tourism performance: A global investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, *51*(4), 388-399. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287511426337

Awasthi, O. P., Singh, A. K., & Verma, M. K. (2013). *Orchard Tourism as an Enterpriserises*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282367839

Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *16*, 74-94.

Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of tourism research*, *26*(4), 868-897.

Barbieri, C. (2009, March). A comparison of agritourism and other farm entrepreneurs: Implications for future tourism and sociological research on agritourism. In *Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium. Sagamore Resort, Bolton Landing, NY. (March 2008)*.

Barbieri, C. (2010). An importance-performance analysis of the motivations behind agritourism and other farm enterprise developments in Canada. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, *5*(1).

Barbieri, C. (2020). Agritourism research: A perspective article. *Tourism Review*, *75*(1), 149-152. https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-05-2019-0152

Barbieri, C., & Mahoney, E. (2009). Why is diversification an attractive farm adjustment strategy? Insights from Texas farmers and ranchers. *Journal of rural studies*, *25*(1), 58-66. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2008.06.001

Barbieri, C., & Streifeneder, T. (2019). Agritourism advances around the globe: A commentary from the editors. *Open Agriculture*, *4*(1), 712-714. https://doi.org/10.1515/opag-2019-0068

Barrett, C. B., Carter, M. R., & Timmer, C. P. (2010). A century-long perspective on agricultural development. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, *92*(2), 447-468. https://doi.org/10.1093/ajae/aaq005

Beeton, S. (2006). Sustainable tourism in practice: Trails and tourism. Critical management issues of multi-use trails. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, *3*(1), 47-64.

Bentler, P. (1990). Quantitative methods in psychology. *Psychol. Bull*, *107*, 238-246.

Benur, A. M., & Bramwell, B. (2015). Tourism product development and product diversification in destinations. *Tourism management*, *50*, 213-224. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.02.005

Bernardo, D., Valentin, L., & Leatherman, J. (2004, August). Agritourism: if we build it, will they come. In *Risk and Profit Conference, Manhattan, KS* (pp. 19-20).

Beus, C. E. (2008). *Agritourism: cultivating tourists on the farm*. Washington State University Extension.

Bhalla, P., Coghlan, A., & Bhattacharya, P. (2016). Homestays' contribution to community-based ecotourism in the Himalayan region of India. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *41*(2), 213-228.

Bhatta, K., & Ohe, Y. (2020). A review of quantitative studies in agritourism: The implications for developing countries. *Tourism and Hospitality*, *1*(1), 23-40. https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp1010003

Blossom Holidays Himachal https://namasteindiatrip.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/blossom-holidays-himachal-explore-himachal/

Boddy, C. R. (2016). Sample size for qualitative research. *Qualitative market research: An international journal*, *19*(4), 426-432. https://doi.org/10.1108/QMR-06-2016-0053

Bollen, K. A. (1989). *Structural equations with latent variables* (Vol. 210). John Wiley & Sons.

Bramwell, B. (1994). Rural tourism and sustainable rural tourism. *Journal of Sustainable tourism*, *2*(1-2), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669589409510679

Bramwell, B. (2015). Theoretical activity in sustainable tourism research. *Annals of Tourism research*, *54*, 204-218.

Brandth, B., & Haugen, M. S. (2007). Gendered work in family farm tourism. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *38*(3), 379-394.

Brandth, B., & Haugen, M. S. (2011). Farm diversification into tourism–implications for social identity?. *Journal of rural studies*, *27*(1), 35-44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2010.09.002

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Brookfield, H. (2008). Family farms are still around: time to invert the old agrarian question. *Geography Compass*, *2*(1), 108-126.

Brookfield, H., & Parsons, H. (2007). *Family farms: survival and prospect: A world-wide analysis*. Routledge.

Brundtland, G. H. (1987). What is sustainable development. *Our common future*, *8*(9).

Brune, S., Knollenberg, W., Stevenson, K. T., Barbieri, C., & Schroeder-Moreno, M. (2021). The influence of agritourism experiences on consumer behavior toward local food. *Journal of Travel Research*, *60*(6), 1318-1332.

Busby, G., & Rendle, S. (2000). The transition from tourism on farms to farm tourism. *Tourism management*, *21*(6), 635-642. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(00)00011-X

Business Economics (2019). https://businesseconomics.in/growth-agricultural-tourism-india

Butler, R. W. (1990). Alternative tourism: Pious hope or Trojan horse?. *Journal of travel research*, *28*(3), 40-45.

Butler, R. W. (1999). Le tourisme durable: Un état de la question. *Tourism Geographies*, *1*(1), 7-25. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616689908721291

Butler, R. W. (1999). Sustainable tourism: A state-of-the-art review. *Tourism geographies*, *1*(1), 7-25.

Cao, A., Shi, F., & Bai, B. (2022). A comparative review of hospitality and tourism innovation research in academic and trade journals. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *34*(10), 3790-3813.

Carril, V. P., Vila, N. A., & de Carlos Villamarín, P. (2015). Assessing visitor satisfaction with a pioneering agritourism project: vegetable tourism in the Parc Agrari del Baix Llobregat (Barcelona). *www. pasosonline. org*, *13*(4), 741.

Cawley, M., Marsat, J. B., & Gillmor, D. A. (2007). Promoting integrated rural tourism: comparative perspectives on institutional networking in France and Ireland. *Tourism Geographies*, *9*(4), 405-420. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616680701647626

Census. (2011). Retrieved 12 1, 2021, from www.census2011.co.in: https://www.census2011.co.in/census/district/239-shimla.html

Chang, L. Y., & Liu, W. (2009). Temple fairs in Taiwan: Environmental strategies and competitive advantage for cultural tourism. *Tourism management*, *30*(6), 900-904.

Chang, R. C., & Mak, A. H. (2018). Understanding gastronomic image from tourists' perspective: A repertory grid approach. *Tourism Management*, *68*, 89-100.

Chase, L. C., Stewart, M., Schilling, B., Smith, B., & Walk, M. (2018). Agritourism: Toward a conceptual framework for industry analysis. *Journal of Agriculture,*

Food Systems, and Community Development, 8(1), 13–19. https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2018.081.016

Chauhan Rohit. (2022). *Developing Sustainable Rural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh: A Case Research of Shimla District*.

Chauhan, R., & Jishtu, H. (2022). Why do Tourists Visit a Himalayan Destination? Motivation, Barrier and Facilities Preference. *American Journal of Economics and Business Innovation*, *1*(2), 1-10.

Che, D., Veeck, A., & Veeck, G. (2005). Sustaining production and strengthening the agritourism product: Linkages among Michigan agritourism destinations. *Agriculture and Human values*, *22*, 225-234.

Chi, X., Lee, S. K., Ahn, Y. joo, & Kiatkawsin, K. (2020). Tourist-perceived quality and loyalty intentions towards rural tourism in China. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, *12*(9). https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093614

Choo, H., & Petrick, J. F. (2014). Social interactions and intentions to revisit for agritourism service encounters. *Tourism management*, *40*, 372-381.

Choo, S., Lee, K., & Park, J. (2017). Development of rural accommodation selection criteria: The case of South Korea. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, *17*, 246-260.

Christou, L. (2012). Is it possible to combine mass tourism with alternative forms of tourism: The case of Spain, Greece, Slovenia and Croatia. *Journal of Business Administration Online*, *11*(1), 1-8.

Ciolac, R., Iancu, T., Brad, I., Popescu, G., Marin, D., & Adamov, T. (2020). Agritourism activity A "smart chance" for mountain rural environment's sustainability. *Sustainability*, *12*(15), 6237. https://doi.org/10.3390/SU12156237

Cochran, W. G. (1977). Sampling Techniques, 3d ed Wiley. *New York*.

Cohen, E. (1979). A phenomenology of tourist experiences. *Sociology*, *13*(2), 179-201.

Collier, J. (2020). *Applied structural equation modeling using AMOS: Basic to advanced techniques*. Routledge.

Colton, J. W., & Bissix, G. (2005). Developing agritourism in Nova Scotia: Issues and challenges. *Journal of sustainable agriculture*, *27*(1), 91-112. https://doi.org/10.1300/J064v27n01_06

Comrey, A. L. (1988). Factor-analytic methods of scale development in personality and clinical psychology. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, *56*(5), 754.

Crespi-Vallbona, M., & Plana-Farran, M. (2022). Fruiturisme: The Boost of Fruit Tourism in Catalan Rural Areas. *Tourism Planning & Development, 20(6),* 1160–1181. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2022.2122072

Crompton, J. L. (1979). Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of tourism research*, *6*(4), 408-424.

Crouch, G. I., & Ritchie, J. B. (1999). Tourism, competitiveness, and societal prosperity. *Journal of business research*, *44*(3), 137-152.

Cui, J., Li, R., Zhang, L., & Jing, Y. (2021). Spatially Illustrating Leisure Agriculture: Empirical Evidence from Picking Orchards in China. *Land, 10*(6), 631. https://doi.org/10.3390/land10060631

Department of Agriculture and Farmers welfare https://agriwelfare.gov.in/en/Agri#:~:text=Agriculture%20Census%20in%20India%20is,of%20Agricultural%20Statistics%20in%20India.

Department of Agriculture-Himachal Pradesh https://agriculture.hp.gov.in/en/agro-climatic-zone/

Deslandes, D. D. (2003). *Assessing consumer perceptions of destinations: A necessary first step in the destination branding process*. The Florida State University.

Dey, B., Mathew, J., & Chee-Hua, C. (2020). Influence of destination attractiveness factors and travel motivations on rural homestay choice: the moderating role of need for uniqueness. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *14*(4), 639-666.

Di Domenico, M., & Miller, G. (2012). Farming and tourism enterprise: Experiential authenticity in the diversification of independent small-scale family farming. *Tourism Management*, *33*(2), 285-294. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.03.007

Dimitrovski, D., Leković, M., & Joukes, V. (2019). A bibliometric analysis of Crossref agritourism literature indexed in Web of Science. *Hotel and Tourism Management*, *7*(2), 25-37.

DoT & CA. (2008). Himachal Pradesh Homestay Scheme. Retrieved November 08, 2020, from https://himachaltourism.gov.in: https://himachaltourism.gov.in/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/Himachal-Pradesh-Home-Stay-Scheme-2008.pdf

DoT & CA. (2019). The Himachal Pradesh tourism policy, 2019. Shimla: Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh. Retrieved 10 07, 2021, from https://himachaltourism.gov.in/wpcontent/uploads/2019/09/Himachal-Pradesh-Tourism-Policy-2019.pdf

DoT & CA. (2021). Himachal Tourism. Retrieved 10 01, 2021, from https://himachaltourism.gov.in/accommodationresult/?cat_id=&district=1&tehsil=1&submit=

Duarte Alonso, A., Bressan, A., Kiat Kok, S., & O'Brien, S. (2021). Filling up the sustainability glass: wineries' initiatives towards sustainable wine tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *47*(5–6), 512–526. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1885801

Duarte Alonso, A., Sakellarios, N., & Pritchard, M. (2015). The theory of planned behavior in the context of cultural heritage tourism. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, *10*(4), 399-416. https://doi.org/10.1080/1743873X.2015.1044992

Dubois, C., Cawley, M., & Schmitz, S. (2017). The tourist on the farm: A 'muddled' image. *Tourism Management*, *59*, 298-311.

Dwyer, L., & Kim, C. (2003). Destination competitiveness: determinants and indicators. *Current issues in tourism*, *6*(5), 369-414.

Ei, T., & Karamanis, K. (2017). The evolution of alternative forms of Tourism: a theoretical background. *Business & Entrepreneurship Journal, 6*(1), 1-4.

Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). What is food tourism?. *Tourism management*, *68*, 250-263.

Everett, S., & Aitchison, C. (2008). The role of food tourism in sustaining regional identity: A case study of Cornwall, South West England. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, *16*(2), 150-167.

Ezeuduji, I. O. (2015). Strategic event-based rural tourism development for sub-Saharan Africa. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *18*(3), 212-228.

Fayos-Sola, E., Marin, A., & Meffert, C. (1994). The strategic role of tourism trade fairs in the new age of tourism. *Tourism Management*, *15*(1), 9-16.

Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. sage.

Flanigan, S., Blackstock, K., & Hunter, C. (2014). Agritourism from the perspective of providers and visitors: A typology-based study. *Tourism Management*, *40*, 394-405. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.07.004

Flanigan, S., Blackstock, K., & Hunter, C. (2015). Generating public and private benefits through understanding what drives different types of agritourism. *Journal of rural studies*, *41*, 129-141. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JRURSTUD.2015.08.002

Fleischer, A., & Tchetchik, A. (2005). Does rural tourism benefit from agriculture?. *Tourism management*, *26*(4), 493-501. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2003.10.003

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error: Algebra and statistics.

Foster, A. D., & Rosenzweig, M. R. (2010). Microeconomics of technology adoption. *Annu. Rev. Econ.*, *2*(1), 395-424.

Foster, A., & Rosenzweig, M. R. (2010, October). Barriers to farm profitability in India: mechanization, scale and credit markets. In *Conference Agriculture for Development-Revisited, University of California at Berkeley. October* (Vol. 24, pp. 1-2). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265080073

Fuller, C. M., Simmering, M. J., Atinc, G., Atinc, Y., & Babin, B. J. (2016). Common methods variance detection in business research. *Journal of business research*, *69*(8), 3192-3198. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.12.008

Gale, T., & Beeftink, K. (2005, April). Exploring differences between positivistic and post-positivistic philosophy: An interpretivistic case study of tourist expectations & satisfaction. In *Proceedings of the 2005 northeastern recreation research symposium* (pp. 345-354).

Gautam, V. (2012). An empirical investigation of consumers' preferences about tourism services in indian context with special reference to state of Himachal Pradesh. *Tourism Management*, *33*(6), 1591-1592. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.12.014

Ghadami, M., Dittmann, A., Pazhuhan, M., & Aligholizadeh Firouzjaie, N. (2022). Factors affecting the change of agricultural land use to tourism: A case study on the southern coasts of the Caspian Sea, Iran. *Agriculture*, *12*(1), 90. https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture12010090

Ghaderi, Z., & Henderson, J. C. (2012). Sustainable rural tourism in Iran: A perspective from Hawraman Village. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *2*, 47-54.

Godtman Kling, K., Fredman, P., & Wall-Reinius, S. (2017). Trails for tourism and outdoor recreation: A systematic literature review. *Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, *65*(4), 488-508.

Gonsalves, P. S. (1987). Alternative tourism—the evolution of a concept and establishment of a network. *Tourism recreation research*, *12*(2), 9-12.

Government of India (GoI) (2020). Agricultural Situation in India, 2020. Directorate of Economics and Statistics Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmer Welfare Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.grandviewresearch.com, 2024

Gu, M., & Wong, P. P. (2006). Residents' perception of tourism impacts: A case research of homestay operators in Dachangshan Dao, North-East China. *Tourism Geographies*, *8*(3), 253–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616680600765222

Guttentag, D. (2015). Airbnb: disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *18*(12), 1192–1217. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.827159

Gyawali, P., Bhandari, S., & Shrestha, J. (2022). Horti-tourism; an approach for strengthening farmers' economy in the post-covid situation. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Research*, *7*, 100278. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2022.100278

Haddad, R., Harahsheh, S., & Boluk, K. (2019). The negative sociocultural impacts of tourism on Bedouin communities of Petra, Jordan. *E-review of Tourism Research*, *16*(5).

Hair Jr Joseph, F., Black William, C., Babin Barry, J., & Anderson Rolph, E. (2009). Multivariate data analysis 7th ed. *Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall*, *3*, 256-291.

Hair Jr, J. F., Matthews, L. M., Matthews, R. L., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). PLS-SEM or CB-SEM: updated guidelines on which method to use. *International Journal of Multivariate Data Analysis*, *1*(2), 107-123.

Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2013). Partial least squares structural equation modeling: Rigorous applications, better results and higher acceptance. *Long range planning*, *46*(1-2), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2013.01.001

Han B., Research on the sustainable development of Joyous Farmers' House. Shaanxi Agriculture Science, 2013, 5, 224-225

Han, J. (2019). Vacationers in the countryside: Traveling for tranquility?. *Tourism Management*, *70*, 299-310.

Hasan, A. A., Biswas, C., Roy, M., Akter, S., & Kuri, B. C. (2020). The applicability of theory of planned behavior to predict domestic tourist behavioral intention: the case of Bangladesh. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, *31*(3), 1019-1026. https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.3

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *43*(1), 115–135. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8

Himachal Pradesh Forest Department. (2021). List of forest rest houses. Retrieved 12 03, 2021, from https://hpforest.nic.in/: https://hpforest.nic.in/pages/display/NGY2NXNhjHc0c2RmYQ==-list-offorest-rest-houses

Hjalager, A. M. (1996). Tourism and the environment: The innovation connection. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *4*(4), 201–218. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669589608667268

Hjalager, A. M., Kwiatkowski, G., & Østervig Larsen, M. (2018). Innovation gaps in Scandinavian rural tourism. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *18*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2017.1287002

Horner, S., & Swarbrooke, J. (2020). *Consumer behavior in tourism*. Routledge.

HPTDC 2023 https://himachaltourism.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Tourist-Statistics.pdf

Hsu, C., & Crotts, J. C. (2006). Segmenting mainland Chinese residents based on experience, intention and desire to visit Hong Kong. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *8*(4), 279–287. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.575

https://www.cntraveler.com/story/the-biggest-travel-trends-to-expect-in-2025?

Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1998). Fit indices in covariance structure modeling: Sensitivity to under parameterized model misspecification. *Psychological methods*, *3*(4), 424.

Huang, S., & van der Veen, R. (2019). The moderation of gender and generation in the effects of perceived destination image on tourist attitude and visit intention: A study of potential Chinese visitors to Australia. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, *25*(3), 375-389.

Huang, W. J., Beeco, J. A., Hallo, J. C., & Norman, W. C. (2016). Bundling attractions for rural tourism development. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *24*(10), 1387–1402. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2015.1115510

Hung, W. T., Ding, H. Y., & Lin, S. T. (2016). Determinants of performance for agritourism farms: An alternative approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *19*(13), 1281-1287. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2015.1037254

Hwang, D., Stewart, W. P., & Ko, D. W. (2012). Community behavior and sustainable rural tourism development. *Journal of Travel research*, *51*(3), 328-341.

Ibrahim, Y., & Razzaq, A. R. A. (2010). Homestay program and rural community development in Malaysia. *Journal of Ritsumeikan Social Sciences and Humanities*, *2*(1), 7-24.

Ingram, G. (2002). Motivations of farm tourism hosts and guests in the South West Tapestry Region, Western Australia: A phenomenological study. *Indo-Pacific journal of phenomenology*, *2*(1), 1-12.

Iso-Ahola, S. E., & Allen, J. R. (1982). The dynamics of leisure motivation: The effects of outcome on leisure needs. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *53*(2), 141-149.

Jang, S. C. (Shawn), & Namkung, Y. (2009). Perceived quality, emotions, and behavioral intentions: Application of an extended Mehrabian-Russell model to restaurants. *Journal of Business Research*, *62*(4), 451–460. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.01.038

Khaidi, S. M., Abu, N., & Muhammad, N. (2019, November). Tourism demand forecasting–a review on the variables and models. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1366, No. 1, p. 012111). IOP Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1366/1/012111

Khanal, A. R., & Mishra, A. K. (2014). Agritourism and off-farm work: survival strategies for small farms. *Agricultural economics*, *45*(S1), 65-76.

Kim, H., Cheng, C. K., & O'Leary, J. T. (2007). Understanding participation patterns and trends in tourism cultural attractions. *Tourism management*, *28*(5), 1366-1371.

Kim, J. H. (2014). The antecedents of memorable tourism experiences: The development of a scale to measure the destination attributes associated with memorable experiences. *Tourism Management*, *44*, 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.02.007

Kim, J. H. (2022). Destination Attributes Affecting Negative Memory: Scale Development and Validation. *Journal of Travel Research*, *61*(2), 331–345. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520977725

Kim, J. H., Ritchie, J. R. B., & McCormick, B. (2012). Development of a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, *51*(1), 12–25. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287510385467

Kim, J. H., Wang, Y., & Song, H. (2021). Understanding the causes of negative tourism experiences. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *24*(3), 304-320.

Kim, K., Jogaratnam, G., & Noh, J. (2006). Travel decisions of students at a US university: Segmenting the international market. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, *12*(4), 345–357. https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766706067606

Kim, S., Lee, S. K., Lee, D., Jeong, J., & Moon, J. (2019). The effect of agritourism experience on consumers' future food purchase patterns. *Tourism Management*, *70*, 144-152.

Kim, Y. G., & Eves, A. (2012). Construction and validation of a scale to measure tourist motivation to consume local food. *Tourism management*, *33*(6), 1458-1467.

Kline, R. B. (2023). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*. Guilford publications

Kontogeorgopoulos, N. (2003). Keeping up with the Joneses: Tourists, travelers, and the quest for cultural authenticity in southern Thailand. *Tourist studies*, *3*(2), 171-203.

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.

Kuchi, V. S., Salma, Z., & Kabir, J. (2017). Horti-Tourism: A value added approach for economically strengthening farmers. *International Journal of Pure Applied Bioscience*, *5*(3), 793-795. https://doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.5014

Lack, K. J. (1997). *Agri-tourism development in British Columbia*. Canada: Simon Fraser University.

Lam, S. Y., Lee, V. H., Ooi, K. B., & Phusavat, K. (2012). A structural equation model of TQM, market orientation and service quality: Evidence from a developing nation. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, *22*(3), 281-309.

Lamie, R. D., Chase, L., Chiodo, E., Dickes, L., Flanigan, S., Schmidt, C., & Streifeneder, T (2021). Agritourism around the globe: Definitions, authenticity, and potential controversy. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, 10*(2), 573–577. https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2021.102.002

Lane, B. (2009). Rural tourism: An overview. *The SAGE handbook of tourism studies*, 354-370.

Lanier, P., & Berman, J. (1993). Bed-and-breakfast inns come of age. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, *34*(2), 15-23.

Lew, A. A. (1987). A framework of tourist attraction research. *Annals of tourism research*, *14*(4), 553-575.

Li, Y., Lau, C., & Su, P. (2020). Heritage tourism stakeholder conflict: A case of a World Heritage Site in China. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *18*(3), 267-287.

Lin, Y. C., Pearson, T. E., & Cai, L. A. (2011). Food as a form of destination identity: A tourism destination brand perspective. *Tourism and hospitality research*, *11*(1), 30-48.

Liu, J., Wang, C., Fang, S., & Zhang, T. (2019). Scale development for tourist trust toward a tourism destination. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *31*, 383-397. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2019.07.001

Liu, T. M., & Leung, K. K. (2019). Volunteer tourism, endangered species conservation, and aboriginal culture shock. *Biodiversity and Conservation*, *28*, 115-12

López, E. P., & García, F. C. (2006). Agrotourism, sustainable tourism and ultraperipheral areas: The case of Canary Islands. *PASOS Revista de turismo y patrimonio cultural*, *4*(1), 85-97.

Lupi, C., Giaccio, V., Mastronardi, L., Giannelli, A., & Scardera, A. (2017). Exploring the features of agritourism and its contribution to rural development in Italy. *Land use policy*, *64*, 383-390.

Lybbert, T. J., & Sumner, D. A. (2012). Agricultural technologies for climate change in developing countries: Policy options for innovation and technology diffusion. *Food policy*, *37*(1), 114-123. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2011.11.001

MacDonald, R., & Jolliffe, L. (2003). Cultural rural tourism: Evidence from Canada. *Annals of tourism research*, *30*(2), 307-322. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(02)00061-0

Mace, D. (2005). Factors motivating agritourism entrepreneurs. In *Risk and Profit Conference, Manhattan, Kansas. Available at http://www. agmanager/info/events/risk_profit/2005/Mace. pdf (accessed on March 2011)*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242119414

Maetzold, J. A. (2002). Nature-based tourism & agritourism trends: unlimited opportunities. *Accessed on August*, *26*, 2004.

Malkanthi, S. H., & Routray, J. K. (2012). Visitor satisfaction in agritourism and its implications for agritourism farmers in Sri Lanka. *International Journal of Agricultural Management*, *2*(1), 17-30.

Manila Declaration on World Tourism (PDF). World Tourism Conference. Manila, Philippines. 10 October 1980. pp. 1–4. Archived from the original (PDF) on 20 November 2012)

Mapjabil, J., Ismail, S. C., Ab Rahman, B., Masron, T., Ismail, R., & Zainol, R. M. (2015). Homestays-Community programme or alternative accommodation? A re-evaluation of concept and execution. *Geografia*, *11*(12).

Marzuki, A. (2009). Impacts of tourism development. *Anatolia*, *20*(2), 450-455.

Matheson, C. M. (2008). Music, emotion and authenticity: A study of Celtic music festival consumers. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *6*(1), 57-74.

Matzler, K., Strobl, A., Stokburger-Sauer, N., Bobovnicky, A., & Bauer, F. (2016). Brand personality and culture: The role of cultural differences on the impact of brand personality perceptions on tourists' visit intentions. *Tourism Management*, *52*, 507-520.

Mbaiwa, J. E. (2003). The socio-economic and environmental impacts of tourism development on the Okavango Delta, north-western Botswana. *Journal of arid environments*, *54*(2), 447-467.

McCleary, K. W., Weaver, P. A., & Meng, F. (2005). Dance as a tourism activity: Demographics, demand characteristics, motivation, and segmentation. *Tourism Analysis*, *10*(3), 277-290.

McGehee, N. G., & Kim, K. (2004). Motivation for agri-tourism entrepreneurship. *Journal of travel research*, *43*(2), 161-170.

McIntosh, A. J., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism?. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, *15*(5), 541-556.

McKercher, B., & Prideaux, B. (2011). Are tourism impacts low on personal environmental agendas?. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *19*(3), 325-345.

Meng, B., Chua, B. L., Ryu, H. B., & Han, H. (2020). Volunteer tourism (VT) traveler behavior: Merging norm activation model and theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *28*(12), 1947-1969. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1778010

Meng, F., Tepanon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2008). Measuring tourist satisfaction by attribute and motivation: The case of a nature-based resort. *Journal of vacation marketing*, *14*(1), 41-56.

Meraner, M., Pölling, B., & Finger, R. (2018). Diversification in peri-urban agriculture: A case study in the Ruhr metropolitan region. *Journal of land use science*, *13*(3), 284-300. https://doi.org/10.1080/1747423X.2018.1529830

Mitchell, M., & Hall, D. R. (2005). *Rural tourism as sustainable business: key themes and issues* (pp. 3-16). na.

Morgan, N. J., Pritchard, A., & Piggott, R. (2003). Destination branding and the role of the stakeholders: The case of New Zealand. *Journal of vacation Marketing*, *9*(3), 285-299.

Morrison, A. M., Pearce, P. L., Moscardo, G., Nadkarni, N., & O'Leary, J. T. (1996). Specialist accommodation: Definition, markets served, and roles in tourism development. *Journal of travel research*, *35*(1), 18-26.

Moscardo, G., Morrison, A. M., & Pearce, P. L. (1996). Specialist accommodation and ecologically-sustainable tourism. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, *4*(1), 29-52. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669589608667257

Most, M. M., Craddick, S., Crawford, S., Redican, S., Rhodes, D., Rukenbrod, F., ... & Dash-Sodium Collaborative Research Group. (2003). Dietary quality assurance

processes of the DASH-Sodium controlled diet study. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, *103*(10), 1339-1346. https://doi.org/10.1053/S0002-8223(03)01080-0

Moutinho, L. (1987). Consumer behavior in tourism. *European journal of marketing*, *21*(10), 5-44.

Mura, P. (2015). Perceptions of authenticity in a Malaysian homestay–A narrative analysis. *Tourism Management*, *51*, 225-233.

Nagaraju, L. G., & Chandrashekara, B. (2014). Emergence of Tourism in Sustainable Growth of India. *International Journal*, *1*(3), 30-36.

Naidoo, P., & Sharpley, R. (2016). Local perceptions of the relative contributions of enclave tourism and agritourism to community well-being: The case of Mauritius. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *5*(1), 16-25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.11.002

Narangajavana, Y., Fiol, L. J. C., Tena, M. Á. M., Artola, R. M. R., & García, J. S. (2017). The influence of social media in creating expectations. An empirical study for a tourist destination. *Annals of tourism research*, *65*, 60-70.

Nickerson, N. P., Black, R. J., & McCool, S. F. (2001). Agritourism: Motivations behind farm/ranch business diversification. *Journal of Travel research*, *40*(1), 19-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/004728750104000104

Nilsson, P. Å. (2002). Staying on farms: An ideological background. *Annals of tourism research*, *29*(1), 7-24.

Novelli, M., & Robinson, M. (2005). Niche tourism: An introduction. *Niche tourism: Contemporary issues, trends and cases*, 1-9.

Nunnally, J., & Bernstein, I. (1994). Psychometric Theory 3rd edition (MacGraw-Hill, New York).

Obeidat, B. (2022). Assessing agritourism potential in a Jordanian village based on farmer-specific and location-based factors. *Cogent Engineering*, *9*(1), 2119531.

OECD. (1994). Development. Committee on Tourism. Secretariat. (1994). *Tourism Strategies and Rural Development*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Ogucha, E. B., Riungu, G. K., Kiama, F. K., & Mukolwe, E. (2017). The influence of homestay facilities on tourist satisfaction in the Lake Victoria Kenya Tourism Circuit. In *Ecotourism in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 203-226). Routledge.

Ohe, Y., & Ciani, A. (1998). The activity and characteristics of agri-tourism farms: a study of Umbria, Italy.

Ollenburg, C., & Buckley, R. (2007). Stated economic and social motivations of farm tourism operators. *Journal of Travel Research*, *45*(4), 444-452.

Oregon Agritourism Handbook 2018 Retrieved http://industry.traveloregon.com resources/toolkits/welcome-Oregon-agritourism-toolkit https://pandurangtaware.com/what-is-agri-tourism-all-about/

Pandurang, T. (2010). Agri Tourism: New Revenue Stream for Farmers thru Rural-Urban Reunion. *Financing Agriculture*, *42*(5), 20-21.

Park, D. B., & Yoon, Y. S. (2011). Developing sustainable rural tourism evaluation indicators. *International journal of tourism research*, *13*(5), 401-415.

Park, D. B., Lee, H. J., & Yoon, Y. S. (2014). Understanding the benefit sought by rural tourists and accommodation preferences: A South Korea case. *International journal of tourism research*, *16*(3), 291-302. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.1929

Park, E., Choi, B. K., & Lee, T. J. (2019). The role and dimensions of authenticity in heritage tourism. *Tourism Management*, *74*, 99-109.

Pavić, L., Pažek, K., & Pavlovič, M. (2018). Agritourism. between agriculture and tourism. a review. *Modern Management Tools and Economy of Tourism Sector in Present Era*, 243.

Pearce, P. L., & Lee, U. Il. (2005). Developing the travel career approach to tourist motivation. *Journal of Travel Research*, *43*(3), 226–237. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287504272020

Pedreira, B. D. C., Santos, R. D., & Pocidonio, E. A. L. (2013). Indicators to select agri-touristic areas: the performance of agricultural, touristic and environmental conservation attributes.

People, Shanghai built more than 100 agritourist attractions, 2010, Retrieved on January 20, 2014, from: http://travel. people.com.cn/GB/11129006.html.2010-0301

Petrović, M. D., Vujko, A., Gajić, T., Vuković, D. B., Radovanović, M., Jovanović, J. M., & Vuković, N. (2017). Tourism as an approach to sustainable rural development in post-socialist countries: A comparative study of Serbia and Slovenia. *Sustainability*, *10*(1), 54.

Phelan, C., & Sharpley, R. (2010). Agritourism and the farmer as rural entrepreneur: A UK analysis.

Phillip, S., Hunter, C., & Blackstock, K. (2010). A typology for defining agritourism. *Tourism Management*, *31*(6), 754–758. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.08.001

Pickson, R. B., & He, G. (2021). Smallholder farmers' perceptions, adaptation constraints, and determinants of adaptive capacity to climate change in Chengdu. *Sage Open*, *11*(3), 21582440211032638.

Pina, I. P. A., & Delfa, M. T. D. (2005). Rural tourism demand by type of accommodation. *Tourism Management*, *26*(6), 951–959. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.06.013

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2011). *The experience economy*. Harvard Business Press.

Polo Peña, A. I., Frías Jamilena, D. M., Rodríguez Molina, M. Á., & Rey Pino, J. M. (2016). Online Marketing Strategy and Market Segmentation in the Spanish Rural Accommodation Sector. *Journal of Travel Research*, *55*(3), 362–379. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514546224

Prince, S. (2017). Craft-art in the Danish countryside: Reconciling a lifestyle, livelihood and artistic career through rural tourism. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *15*(4), 339-358.

Public Works Department. (2021). Detail of Rest Houses /Circuit Houses in District. Retrieved 12 02, 2021, from https://hppwd.hp.gov.in: https://hppwd.hp.gov.in/shimla-0

Quella, L., Chase, L., Conner, D., Reynolds, T., Wang, W., & Singh-Knights, D. (2021). Visitors and values: A qualitative analysis of agritourism operator motivations across the U.S. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, *10*(3), 287–301. https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2021.103.010

RAD, S. T. (2011). An application of a women-oriented agro-tourism rural development model in improving local economy. *African Journal of Business Management*, *5*(22), 9714. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266039315

Rasoolimanesh, S. M., Dahalan, N., & Jaafar, M. (2016). Tourists' perceived value and satisfaction in a community-based homestay in the Lenggong Valley World Heritage Site. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *26*, 72-81.

Rauniyar, S., Awasthi, M. K., Kapoor, S., & Mishra, A. K. (2021). Agritourism: structured literature review and bibliometric analysis. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *46*(1), 52–70. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2020.1753913

Ribeiro, M. L., Vasconcelos, M. L., & Rocha, F. (2019). Monitoring performance indicators in the Portuguese hospitality sector. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *31*(2), 790–811. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-03-2017-0178

Roberts, L., & Hall, D. (2004). *Consuming the countryside: Marketing for "rural tourism." Journal of Vacation Marketing, 10(3), 253-263. doi:10.1177/135676670401000305*

Rogerson, C. M. (2012). Strengthening agriculture-tourism linkages in the developing world: Opportunities, barriers and current initiatives. *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, *7*(4), 616-623.

Roman, M., & Grudzień, P. (2021). The essence of agritourism and its profitability during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. *Agriculture*, *11*(5), 458.

Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1842342

Ryan, C. (1995). *Researching tourist satisfaction: issues, concepts, problems* (pp. xviii+-318).

Schiefelbusch, M., Jain, A., Schäfer, T., & Müller, D. (2007). Transport and tourism: roadmap to integrated planning developing and assessing integrated travel chains. *Journal of Transport Geography*, *15*(2), 94–103. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2006.12.009

Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. (2004). *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling*. psychology press.

Sgroi, F., Donia, E., & Mineo, A. M. (2018). Agritourism and local development: A methodology for assessing the role of public contributions in the creation of competitive advantage. *Land Use Policy*, *77*, 676-682.

Sharpley, R. (2009). *Tourism development and the environment: Beyond sustainability?*. Routledge.

Sharpley, R., & Vass, A. (2006). Tourism, farming and diversification: An attitudinal study. *Tourism management*, *27*(5), 1040-1052. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2005.10.025

Sidali, K. L., Spiller, A., & Schulze, B. (Eds.). (2011). *Food, agri-culture and tourism: Linking local gastronomy and rural tourism: Interdisciplinary perspectives*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Singh, N., Sharma, D. P., & Chand, H. (2016). Impact of climate change on apple production in India: A review. *Current World Environment*, *11*(1), 251.

Singh, N., Sharma, P. L., Rana, A., Thakur, A. K., & Lodhiyal, L. S. (2018). Apple Production in Himachal Pradesh: SWOT analysis and Identified Issues for sector Development-A case research. *Journal of American Science. Vol*, *14*, 55-59.

Singh, R., Vaidya, C. S., & Saraswat, S. P. (2012). *Impact of high density apple plantation under horticulture in Himachal Pradesh* (pp. 1-126). Agro Economic Research Centre, HP University.

Singh, S., Raman, N. L. M., & Hansra, B. S. (2017). Perspectives of Agritourism in Himachal Pradesh: A new dimension in hill agricultural diversification.

Smith, I., & Felix, M. S. (2019). *A practical guide to dissertation and thesis writing*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Sood, J., Lynch, P., & Anastasiadou, C. (2017). Community non-participation in homestays in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, India. *Tourism management*, *60*, 332-347.

Srikatanyoo, N., & Campiranon, K. (2010). Agritourist needs and motivations: The Chiang Mai case. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *27*(2), 166-178. https://doi.org/10.1080/10548400903579795

Statistical Year Book Himachal Pradesh 2022-23 Department of Economic & Statistics Himachal Pradesh, Shimla

Straub, D., Boudreau, M. C., & Gefen, D. (2004). Validation guidelines for IS positivist research. *Communications of the Association for Information systems*, *13*(1), 24. https://doi.org/10.17705/1cais.01324

Streifeneder, T. (2016). Agriculture first: Assessing European policies and scientific typologies to define authentic agritourism and differentiate it from countryside tourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *20*, 251-264. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TMP.2016.10.003

Su, M. M., Wall, G., Wang, Y., & Jin, M. (2019). Livelihood sustainability in a rural tourism destination-Hetu Town, Anhui Province, China. Tourism Management, 71, 272–281. https:// doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.10.019

Suhartanto, D., Dean, D., T. Chen, B., & Kusdibyo, L. (2020). Tourist experience with agritourism attractions: what leads to loyalty? *Tourism Recreation Research*, *45*(3), 364–375. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2020.1736251

Sznajder, M., Przezbórska, L., & Scrimgeour, F. (2009). *Agritourism pillars* (pp. 179-181).

Tew, C., & Barbieri, C. (2012). The perceived benefits of agritourism: The provider's perspective. *Tourism Management*, *33*(1), 215–224. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.02.005

Thakur, J., & Monga, N. (2022). Experience and satisfaction of tourists over agritourism in Himachal Pradesh. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 3219-3227.

Thorat, A., Vanneman, R., Desai, S., & Dubey, A. (2017). Escaping and Falling into Poverty in India Today. *World Development*, *93*, 413–426. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.01.004

Topçu, E. D. (2007). Agri-tourism: As a new element of country planning. *Basılmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara*.

Tourism & Sustainable Development Goals – Tourism for SDGs". Retrieved 10 January 2021

Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030, Highlights. World Tourism Organization. 18 December 2017. doi:10.18111/9789284419340. ISBN 978-92-844-1934-0

Truong, V. D., Hall, C. M., & Garry, T. (2014). Tourism and poverty alleviation: Perceptions and experiences of poor people in Sapa, Vietnam. *Journal of*

Sustainable Tourism, *22*(7), 1071–1089. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.871019

Tung, V. W. S., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (2011). Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *38*(4), 1367–1386. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009

Turner, L., & Reisinger, Y. (1999). Importance and expectations of destination attributes for Japanese tourists to Hawaii and the gold coast compared. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *4*(2), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/10941669908722039

Ullman, J. B., Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2001). Using multivariate statistics. *Structural equation modeling*, *4*, 653-771.

UN. (2017). Sustainable Tourism. Retrieved July 03, 2021, from sustainabledevelopment.un.org: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabletourism#

UNEP 2005 WTO. (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable-A Guide for Policy Makers (English version).

UNTWO https://www.unwto.org/news/international-tourism-to-reach-pre-pandemic-levels-in-2024

Urry, J. (1990). The consumption' of tourism. *Sociology*, *24*(1), 23-35.

Valencia, J. P., Cerio, C. T., & Biares, R. R. (2022). Tourists' motives and activity preferences to farm tourism sites in the Philippines: application of push and pull theory. *Cogent Social Sciences*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2104706

Walter, P., Regmi, K. D., & Khanal, P. R. (2018). Host learning in community-based ecotourism in Nepal: The case of Sirubari and Ghalegaun homestays. *Tourism management perspectives*, *26*, 49-58.

Wang, C., Hao, Y. Empirical analysis of tourist satisfaction of leisure farms: evidence from Qing Jing Farms, Taiwan. *Humanit Soc Sci Commun* **10**, 384 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-01901-w

Wang, C., Qu, H., & Hsu, M. K. (2016). Toward an integrated model of tourist expectation formation and gender difference. *Tourism Management*, *54*, 58–71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.10.009

Wang, L., Fu, C. F., Wong, P. P., & Zhang, Q. (2022). The Impact of Tourists' Perceptions of Space-launch Tourism: An Extension of the Theory of Planned Behavior Approach. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, *18*(3), 549–568. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2021.1900972

Wearing, S., & McGehee, N. G. (2013). Volunteer tourism: A review. *Tourism management*, *38*, 120-130.

Wicks, B. E., & Merrett, C. D. (2003). Agritourism: An economic opportunity for Illinois. *Rural Research Report*, *14*(9), 1-8.

Wilson, J. B., Thilmany, D., & Watson, P. (2006). The role of agritourism in Western states: Place-specific and policy factors influencing recreational income for producers. *Review of Regional Studies*, *36*(3), 381-399.

Wojciechowska, J. (2011). Twenty Years of Polish Agritourism: The Past and the Future. *Turyzm*, *21*(1-2), 67-72. www.agroturystyka.pl

Wojciechowska, J. (2022). Rural tourism and agritourism in Poland–development processes and evolution of terminology. *Journal of Geography, Politics and Society*, *12*(4), 12-22.

WTTC Economic Impact Research 2020: https://www.wttc.org/Research/Economic-Impact

Yang, Z., Cai, J., & Sliuzas, R. (2010). Agro-tourism enterprises as a form of multi-functional urban agriculture for peri-urban development in China. *Habitat International*, *34*(4), 374–385. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2009.11.002

Yasmin, B., Roy, A., Mandal, M. H., Siddique, G., & Ghosh, S. (2023). Challenges and Prospects of Apple Cultivation in Himachal Pradesh. *Space and Culture, India*, *10*(4), 52-67.

Zhang, G., Chen, X., Law, R., & Zhang, M. (2020). Sustainability of heritage tourism: A structural perspective from cultural identity and consumption intention. *Sustainability*, *12*(21), 9199.

Zhao, L., & Xia, X. (2020). Tourism and poverty reduction: Empirical evidence from China. *Tourism Economics*, *26*(2), 233-256. doi:0.1177/1354816619863266

INDEX

Amsl	Above mean sea level
COVID 19	Corona Virus Disease 19
DoTCA	Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation
DTDO	District Tourist Development Officer
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDP	High-Density Plantation
HPTDC	Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation
IHMC&NT	Institute of Hotel Management, Catering and Nutrition Technology
SDG	Sustainable Developmental Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

Appendix-I
Development of Orchard Tourism/ उद्यान पर्यटन का विकास

This questionnaire is designed for farmers owning the orchards in Shimla region (Shimla, Solan, Sirmaur and Kinnaur) to tap their views relating to the development of orchard tourism in this region. Read the statements and tick (✓) the answers based on the meaning of numbers from 5 to 1/ यह प्रश्नावली शिमला क्षेत्र (शिमला, सोलन, सिरमौर और किन्नौर) में बागों के मालिकों के लिए तैयार की गई है ताकि इस क्षेत्र में बाग पर्यटन के विकास से संबंधित उनके विचारों का पता लगाया जा सके। कथनों को पढ़ें और 5 से 1 तक की संख्याओं के अर्थ के आधार पर उत्तरों पर निशान (✓) लगाएं

5: Strongly Agree/ पूरी तरह सहमत
4: Agree/ सहमत
3: Neutral/ तटस्थ
2: Disagree/ असहमत
1: Strongly Disagree/ पूरी तरह से असहमत

Intention/ Motivation to transform orchard as tourism resource/ बाग को पर्यटन संसाधन के रूप में बदलने का इरादा/प्रेरणा					
I am ready to use my orchard for tourism activities because it would/ मैं अपने बगीचे को पर्यटन गतिविधियों के लिए उपयोग करने के लिए तैयार हूं क्योंकि यह					
1. Provide Scope of tourism business to our household/ यह हमारे घर के लिए पर्यटन व्यवसाय का दायरा प्रदान करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
2. Provide a scope of getting value of other related resources/ अन्य संबंधित संसाधनों के मूल्य प्राप्त करने की गुंजाइश प्रदान करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
3. Act as a resource for offering tourism activities/ पर्यटन गतिविधियों की पेशकश के लिए एक संसाधन के रूप में कार्य करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
4. Provide an opportunity to transform our house into a homestay/ हमारे घर को होमस्टे में बदलने का अवसर प्रदान करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
Hope of social security/ सामाजिक सुरक्षा की आस					
Tourism activities in this area would / इस क्षेत्र में पर्यटन गतिविधियां यदि शुरू की जाएं तो					
1. help us in upgrading quality of our life/ हमारे जीवन की गुणवत्ता को उन्नत करने में हमारी मदद होगी	5	4	3	2	1
2. Provide employment opportunities to the family members/ परिवार के सदस्यों को रोजगार के अवसर प्रदान हो जयेगे	5	4	3	2	1
3. strengthen our house hold economic condition/ हमारी घरेलू आर्थिक स्थिति मजबूत होगी	5	4	3	2	1
4. help us generate revenue during horticultural off season/ बागवानी बंद मौसम के दौरान राजस्व उत्पन्न करने में हमारी मदद करेंगे	5	4	3	2	1
5. reduce migration for job to cities/ शहरों में नौकरी के लिए पलायन कम होगा	5	4	3	2	1
6. help in creating infrastructure development (Roads, school, medical facilities, postal and banking)/ बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास (सड़क, स्कूल, चिकित्सा सुविधाएं, डाक और बैंकिंग) में मदद होगी	5	4	3	2	1
Hope of rural pride/ ग्रामीण गौरव की आशा					
Tourist activities in our area would/ हमारे क्षेत्र में पर्यटक गतिविधियाँ यदि होती है					
1. help to promote our rich rural culture/ तो यह हमारी समृद्ध ग्रामीण संस्कृति को बढ़ावा देने में मदद करेंगे	5	4	3	2	1
2. help to showcase the rural lifestyle of Himachal Pradesh/ तो यह हिमाचल प्रदेश की ग्रामीण जीवन शैली को प्रदर्शित करने में मदद करेंगे	5	4	3	2	1
3. Teach leadership skills to the local community/ स्थानीय समुदाय को नेतृत्व कौशल सीखने में मदद मिलेगी	5	4	3	2	1
4. motivate younger generation of the community to continue horticulture practices in rural regions/ ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में बागवानी प्रथाओं को जारी रखने के लिए समुदाय की युवा पीढ़ी को प्रेरित करेंगे	5	4	3	2	1

5.	help in promoting our rich gastronomic tradition/ यह हमारी समृद्ध खाद्य परंपरा को बढ़ावा देने में मदद करेंगे	5	4	3	2	1
Hope of market for by products- horticulture and Dairy/ उत्पादों के लिए बाजार की उम्मीद- बागवानी और डेयरी						
Tourist activities in our area would help us / हमारे क्षेत्र में पर्यटक गतिविधियों से हमें						
6.	In providing market for traditional/ ethnic food/ पारंपरिकभोजन के लिए बाजार प्रदान करने में मदद मिलेगी	5	4	3	2	1
7.	In offering fruit and fruit products directly to our guest/ हमारे अतिथि को सीधे फल और फल उत्पादों की पेशकश करने में मदद मिलेगी	5	4	3	2	1
8.	To sell dairy and animal by products/ डेयरी और पशु उत्पादों को बेचने के लिए मदद मिलेगी	5	4	3	2	1
Integrated use of rural resources/ ग्रामीण संसाधनों का एकीकृत उपयोग						
With the growth of tourism in village area I hope/ क्षेत्र में पर्यटन के विकास के साथ मुझे उम्मीद है						
1.	of developing my orchard as resource for volunteer tourism activities/ हम स्वयंसेवी पर्यटन गतिविधियों के लिए संसाधन के रूप में बाग को विकसित बनने में सक्षम होंगे	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Of using rural trails as tourism resource/ पर्यटन संसाधन के रूप में ग्रामीण पगडंडियां का उपयोग करने में सक्षम होंगे	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Of transforming heritage monuments as tourism resource/ विरासत स्मारकों को पर्यटन संसाधन में रूपांतरण करने में सक्षम होंगे	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Of transforming fairs and festivals as tourism resource/ मेलों और त्योहारों को पर्यटन संसाधन के रूप में पेश करने में सक्षम होंगे	5	4	3	2	1
Expectation from the system/ government/ व्यवस्था/सरकार से उम्मीद						
I hope our government will provide/ मुझे उम्मीद है कि हमारी सरकार हमें प्रदान करेगी						
1.	systematic support by forming separate policy or board for development of Orchard Tourism/ ऑर्चर्ड टूरिज्म के विकास के लिए अलग नीति या बोर्ड बनाकर व्यवस्थित समर्थन	5	4	3	2	1
2.	credit/ subsidy/ financial aid to help us set up Orchard Tourism business/ ऑर्चर्ड पर्यटन व्यवसाय स्थापित करने में हमारी मदद करने के लिए सब्सिडी/वित्तीय सहायता	5	4	3	2	1
3.	education and training support to start this venture/ इस उद्यम को शुरू करने के लिए शिक्षा और प्रशिक्षण सहायता	5	4	3	2	1
4.	help in promoting and marketing Orchard Tourism/ ऑर्चर्ड टूरिज्म को बढ़ावा देने और विपणन में मदद	5	4	3	2	1
Expectation for self-evolution/ आत्म-विकास की अपेक्षा						
Tourism development in our area/ हमारे क्षेत्र में पर्यटन विकास						
1.	will help us meet new and interesting people/ हमें नए और दिलचस्प लोगों से मिलने में मदद करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
2.	will help us gain new skills and knowledge/ हमें नए कौशल और ज्ञान प्राप्त करने में मदद करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
3.	will provide stronger social networking/ मजबूत सामाजिक नेटवर्किंग प्रदान करेगा	5	4	3	2	1
Existing challenges/ मौजूदा चुनौतियां						
In relation to the current practices of farming, we can say that we are facing/ खेती की वर्तमान प्रथाओं के संबंध में, हम कह सकते हैं कि हम सामना कर रहे हैं						
1.	unfavourable weather conditions/ प्रतिकूल मौसम की स्थिति	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Increasing costs as compared to benefits/ लाभ की तुलना में बढ़ती लागत	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Arrangement of labor/ श्रम की व्यवस्था	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Poor market for the culled fruits/ मारे गए फल के लिए खराब बाजार	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Management of time/ समय का प्रबंधन	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Clearance of dues from the sellers/ विक्रेताओं से बकाया राशि का भुगतान	5	4	3	2	1

					Fears/पर्यटन से डर
With the development of tourism in this area, I fear of/ इस क्षेत्र में पर्यटन के विकास के साथ, मुझे डर है					
1. Disturbing of orchard work/ बाग के काम में बाधा	5	4	3	2	1
2. Wrong impact on culture/ संस्कृति पर गलत प्रभाव	5	4	3	2	1
3. Negative impact on family privacy/ परिवार की गोपनीयता पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव	5	4	3	2	1
4. Negative environmental impacts/ नकारात्मक पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव	5	4	3	2	1
5. Increased cost of living/ जीवन यापन की बढ़ी लागत	5	4	3	2	1
6. Negative impacts on youth/ युवाओं पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव	5	4	3	2	1

Socio-demographic profile

Demographic profile (Please tick (✓) a single appropriate choice)

Gender/ लिंग	☐ Male/ पुरुष	☐ Female/ महिला	☐ LGBTQ	
Size of orchardबाग का आकार	☐ <1 Acre (1.6 Bigha)/ <1 एकड़ (1.6 बीघा)	☐ 1-2 Acre/ 1-2 एकड़	☐ 2.1- 5 Acre/ 2.1- 5 एकड़	
	☐ 5.1-10 Acre/ 5.1-10 एकड़	☐ >10 Acre/ >10 एकड़		
Age (in years) आयु (वर्षों में)	☐ <18	☐ 18-35	☐ 36-55	☐ >55
Education	☐ No formal education/ कोई औपचारिक शिक्षा नहीं	☐ Primary school/ प्राथमिक विद्यालय	☐ Middle school/ मध्य विद्यालय	
शिक्षा	☐ Diploma डिप्लोमा	☐ Senior Secondary वरिष्ठ माध्यमिक	☐ Graduation स्नातक	
	☐ Post-graduation स्नातकोत्तर	☐ Doctorate डॉक्टर की उपाधि		
Religion/ धर्म	☐ Hinduism/ हिंदू धर्म	☐ Islam/ इस्लामी	☐ Buddhism/ बौद्ध धर्म	
	☐ Other अन्य			
Category/ वर्ग	☐ Generalसामान्य	☐ Scheduled casteअनुसूचित जाति		
	☐ Scheduled Tribe/ अनुसूचित जनजाति			
	☐ Other Backward Class/ अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग	☐ Other / अन्य		
Marital Status/ वैवाहिक स्थिति	☐ Married/ शादीशुदा	☐ Unmarried/ अविवाहित	☐ Divorced/ तलाकशुदा	
	Widowed/ विधवा			
No. of years you engaged in farming/ वर्षों से आप खेती में लगे हुए हैं	☐ Less than 5 years5 साल से कम	☐ 5-10 years 5-10 साल	☐ 11-15 years11-15 साल	
Household yearly income/ घरेलू वार्षिक आय	☐ < 2 lakhs<2 लाख	☐ 2-5 lakhs2-5 लाख	☐ 6- 8 Lakhs6- 8 लाख	
	☐ More than 8 Lakhs8लाख या उससे अधिक			
Number of family members/ परिवार के सदस्यों की संख्या	☐ 2-5 members/ 2-5 सदस्य	☐ 6-8 members/ 6-8 सदस्य	☐ More than 8 से अधिक	
Elevationबाग की ऊंचाई	☐ Low (<5000 feet) कम (<5000 फीट)	☐ Middle (5001- 7000 feet) मध्य (5001- 7000 फीट)	☐ High (> 7000 feet) ऊंचा (>7000 फीट)	

Village/ गांव_____ Panchayat/ पंचायत _____ Tehsil: तहसील_____

Block/ खंड _____ District/ जिला _____

Optional

Name: नाम_____ Contact No. संपर्क नंबर_____

Appendix-II
Development of Orchard Tourism

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. We are conducting a study to understand tourists' preferences for developing orchard tourism in this region. Your valuable insights will help us shape the future of orchard tourism in this region and enhance the overall experience for visitors like yourself.

Please read each statement carefully and choose the response that best represents your opinion or preference. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer according to your personal experiences and preferences.

Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your honest feedback is greatly appreciated and will play a vital role in shaping the future development of orchard tourism in Shimla.

Read the statements and tick (✓) the answers based on the meaning of numbers from 5 to 1

5: Strongly Agree
4: Agree
3: Neutral
2: Disagree
1: Strongly Disagree

Tourist Expectations					
I am interested in a tourism experience that must					
1.1. Be thrilling	5	4	3	2	1
1.2. Provide an opportunity to get indulged	5	4	3	2	1
1.3. Be Enjoyable	5	4	3	2	1
1.4. Be exciting	5	4	3	2	1
2.1. Provide a once-in-a-lifetime experience	5	4	3	2	1
2.2. Be unique	5	4	3	2	1
2.3. Be different from previous experiences	5	4	3	2	1
2.4. Offer something new	5	4	3	2	1
3.1. Be liberating	5	4	3	2	1
3.2. Offer a sense of freedom	5	4	3	2	1
3.3. Be refreshing	5	4	3	2	1
3.4. Be revitalizing	5	4	3	2	1
4.1. Give good impressions about the local people	5	4	3	2	1
4.2. Provide an opportunity to experience the local culture closely	5	4	3	2	1
4.3. Be offered at a destination where local people are friendly	5	4	3	2	1
Tourist Motivation					
1.1 Give a sense of doing something meaningful	5	4	3	2	1
1.2 Give a sense of doing something important	5	4	3	2	1
1.3 Offer opportunities to learn about myself	5	4	3	2	1
2.1 Be exploratory	5	4	3	2	1
2.2 Be educational	5	4	3	2	1
2.3 Be related to the new culture	5	4	3	2	1
Orchard tourism attributes					
I would be interested in visiting an orchard to					
1.1. Experience the local way of life.	5	4	3	2	1
1.2. Learn about the community's history.	5	4	3	2	1
1.3. Closely experience the local culture.	5	4	3	2	1
1.4. Appreciate regional heritage monuments.	5	4	3	2	1
2.1. Participate in different kinds of recreational activities (nature trails, farm tours)	5	4	3	2	1

2.2. Enjoy activities in which I cannot usually participate during my mundane life, such as fruit cultivation, and dairy farming.	5	4	3	2	1
2.3. Enjoy special events at the destination (culinary workshop, demonstrations)	5	4	3	2	1
2.4. Attend festivals and events that I have been interested in.	5	4	3	2	1
3.1. Enjoy leisure time in different ecology zones.	5	4	3	2	1
3.2. Enjoy leisure time in well-preserved areas.	5	4	3	2	1
3.3. Enjoy awe-inspiring landscapes.	5	4	3	2	1
4.1. Experience the friendly nature of local people in the rural area.	5	4	3	2	1
4.2. Gather information about the location from the local people.	5	4	3	2	1
4.3. Experience highly customized service.	5	4	3	2	1
5.1. Enjoy the local food.	5	4	3	2	1
5.2. Explore the variety of fruits and fruit products.	5	4	3	2	1
5.3. Discover dairy and other by-products.	5	4	3	2	1
	Tourist intention				
1. I plan to visit an orchard-based tourism resource (home/ orchard stay) in the future.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I may visit orchard-based tourism resources in the future.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I hope to visit an orchard-based tourism resource in the future.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I have already considered spending my holiday at an orchard-based tourism resource	5	4	3	2	1
5. I intend to invest money and time in visiting an orchard-based tourism resource.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I can imagine spending my holiday in an orchard.	5	4	3	2	1

Socio-demographic profile

Demographic profile (Please tick (✓) a single appropriate choice)

Gender	☐ Male	☐ Female	☐ LGBTQ
Age (in years)	☐ 18-25 ☐ 46-55	☐ 26-35 ☐ >55	☐ 36-45
Nationality			
Education	☐ Primary ☐ Master's degree	☐ Secondary ☐ Doctorate	☐ Bachelor's degree
Religion	☐ Hinduism ☐ Christianity	☐ Islam ☐ Other	☐ Buddhism
Marital Status	☐ Unmarried ☐ Widowed	☐ Married	☐ Divorced
Profession	☐ Student ☐ Homemaker	☐ Employed ☐ Retired	☐ Self-employed
Annual income	☐ < 5 Lakh ☐ 15-20 Lakhs	☐ 5-10 Lakhs ☐ 20-25 Lakhs	☐ 10-15 Lakhs ☐ >25 Lakhs
Travel preference	☐ Solo	☐ Friends	☐ Family

*Optional

Name: _____ Contact No._____

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

S. No.	Title of paper with author names	Name of journal/conference	Published Date	Issn no/ vol no, issue no	Indexing in Scopus/ Web of Science/UGC-CARE list (*please mention*)
1.	Experience and Satisfaction of Tourists Over Agritourism In Himachal Pradesh Jyoti Thakur and Dr. Nikhil Monga	Journal of Positive School Psychology	2022	Vol 6, No.5	N. A
2.	Role of homestay in reviving tourism in Shimla Jyoti Thakur and Dr. Nikhil Monga	PUSA Journal of Hospitality and Applied Sciences, 2022•acspublisher.com	15/11/2022	Vol 8, No.2	N. A
3.	Motivations of farmstay hosts and guests: phenomenological research Jyoti Thakur & Dr. Uma Pandey	PUSA Journal of Hospitality and Applied Sciences, 2023•acspublisher.com.	04/03/2023	Vol 9, No.1	N. A
4.	Examining Tourists' Motivations for Participating in Orchard Tourism in Shimla: An Analysis through the Lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior Jyoti Thakur, Dr Uma Pandey, Muhammad Shakeel	International Journal of Work Innovation (Paper Accepted & Available online)	https://www.Inderscience.Com/info/ingenral/forthcoming.php?jcode=ijwi		Scopus (Inderscience)
5.	Challenges and constraints in adopting modern horticulture practices in apple orchards: A small scale farmer's perspective Jyoti Thakur & Dr. Uma Pandey	Journal of Extension Education	01/03/2025	Vol 35, Issue 3; 2023	UGC Care Journal

LIST OF CONFERENCES

S. No.	Title of paper with author names	Name of Conference	Date
1.	Role of homestay in reviving tourism in Shimla Jyoti Thakur & Dr. Nikhil Monga	Presented at 2nd International Conference on Hospitality and Tourism -Revival Strategies, IHMC&NT, Pusa, New Delhi	24-26 August 2022
2.	Motivations of farm stay hosts and guests: phenomenological research Jyoti Thakur & Dr. Uma Pandey	Paper presented at 4th International Conference on "Sustainable Developmental Goals and Management Practices- SDGMP 2023" LPU Jalandhar	3-4 February 2023
3.	Challenges and constraints in adopting modern horticulture practices in apple orchards: A small scale farmer's perspective Jyoti Thakur & Dr. Uma Pandey	Paper presented at 6th International Conference on Advances in Agriculture Technology and Allied Sciences (ICAATAS 2023) Telangana	19-21 June,2023

LIST OF WORKSHOPS/COURSES

S.no	Name of The Workshop/courses	Organized By	Date
1.	Short-term course on Digital Marketing for Business Development	LPU, Jalandhar	23 January-07 February, 2021
2.	Short-term course on research methodology and Data Analysis	LPU, Jalandhar	06-15 January, 2022
3.	Short-term course on scale development and Standardization	LPU, Jalandhar	04-09 April, 2022