

AGROSYM

BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS



*XV International Scientific Agriculture Symposium
"Agrosym 2024"
Jahorina, October 10-13, 2024*

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“AGROSYM 2024”**



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PREFACE

Dear colleagues,

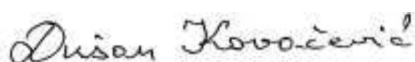
It is with great pleasure that I introduce the *Book of Proceedings* for the 15th International Scientific Agricultural Symposium “AGROSYM 2024.” I trust that you will find it a valuable resource in your work. This year, around 800 contributions have been accepted for inclusion in the *Book of Abstracts*. The themes of AGROSYM 2024 span the full spectrum of agricultural sciences, divided into seven key sessions: 1) Plant Production, 2) Plant Protection and Food Safety, 3) Organic Agriculture, 4) Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management, 5) Animal Husbandry, 6) Rural Development and Agro-Economy, and 7) Forestry and Agroforestry.

There is growing consensus among scholars and practitioners that technological innovations have the potential to boost agricultural production, enhance supply stability, and reduce the environmental impact of farming. Technology has been especially pivotal in increasing the productivity of annual crops such as maize, rice, soybeans, wheat, and cotton. However, with trees having longer growth cycles, breeding programs for these crops require more time. New plant breeding techniques promise improvements in productivity, but they have sparked an ongoing academic debate regarding their advantages and drawbacks.

While much of the focus in the past has been on the production side of agriculture (e.g., productivity and efficiency), there is an increasing emphasis today on the consumption side and the intermediate stages of the food chain, such as processing and distribution. This shift is driving the transition toward a “farm-to-fork” approach. Globally, consumers are sending clearer signals about their preferences for higher quality, healthier, safer, and more flavorful products. In response, many agri-food companies are exploring innovative ways to gain greater control over production processes and ensure the quality and safety of final products. Furthermore, changes in investment strategies hold the potential to reduce the environmental and social costs of agriculture. It has become increasingly clear to investors that companies that prioritize sustainability and social responsibility tend to yield better long-term returns.

Agri-food systems are at the heart of global discussions surrounding sustainable development and the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. These systems are deeply connected to numerous global challenges, including climate change, poverty, food insecurity, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and ecosystem degradation. A key goal of the sustainable agriculture movement is to create farming systems that mitigate or eliminate the environmental harms associated with industrial agriculture. Additionally, it is critical to improve the resilience of food systems to crises, shocks, and pandemics.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the authors, reviewers, and colleagues who contributed to the editing of the *Book of Abstracts*. Special thanks are due to our co-organizers and partners for their unwavering collaboration and comprehensive support throughout this endeavor.



East Sarajevo, 10 October 2024
Prof. Dušan Kovačević, PhD

Editor in Chief, President of the Scientific Committee of AGROSYM 2024

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THE POWER OF RURAL TOURISM: INSIGHTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY IMPACT STUDIES

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Abstract

This paper explores the multifaceted impacts of rural tourism on local communities, synthesizing insights from various empirical studies. Rural tourism is increasingly recognized as a catalyst for economic development, cultural preservation, and social cohesion, particularly in areas with limited traditional development opportunities. Through a comprehensive literature review and analysis of case studies, this paper highlights the economic benefits of rural tourism, such as income generation and employment, which contribute to economic resilience and improved public services. Additionally, the paper examines the role of tourism in preserving local culture and heritage, fostering intercultural exchange, and reinforcing community identity. However, the social impacts of tourism are complex, with potential for both community strengthening and social tension. Environmental impacts are also discussed, noting the balance needed between conservation efforts and the risk of environmental degradation. The concept of community-based tourism (CBT) is evaluated as a model for enhancing the positive impacts of rural tourism, emphasizing the importance of local ownership, participation, and benefit-sharing. The role of policy and governance in facilitating sustainable tourism development is underscored, advocating for multi-stakeholder collaboration. This paper aims to contribute to the discourse on rural tourism by providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and community stakeholders. The findings suggest that while rural tourism has significant potential to drive sustainable development, its success largely depends on context-specific factors, effective governance, and genuine community engagement.

Keywords: *Rural tourism, community impact, community-based tourism, sustainable development, literature review.*

Introduction

Rural tourism has emerged as a significant area of interest within tourism studies, driven by the global shift towards sustainable and community-focused travel. Research indicates that rural tourism can serve as a catalyst for economic development, cultural preservation, and social cohesion in rural communities. The intricate dynamics between tourism and local communities have been explored extensively, revealing both positive and negative impacts. For instance, rural tourism can generate income and employment, fostering economic resilience in areas that may lack other development opportunities. This income generation is crucial for the sustainability of rural areas, often leading to improved infrastructure and services, which in turn can enhance the quality of life for local residents.

Economic benefits are among the most frequently cited positive impacts of rural tourism. Studies by Jaafar et al. (2013) and Liu et al. (2023) highlight how tourism can diversify rural economies traditionally dependent on agriculture. These studies suggest that the influx of

tourists provides local businesses with new markets, thus promoting entrepreneurial activities. Moreover, the economic upliftment often translates into better public services and amenities, contributing to the overall development of the region. However, the extent of these benefits can vary significantly based on factors such as the level of tourism development, the local economic structure, and community involvement. In addition to economic impacts, rural tourism plays a vital role in the preservation and promotion of local culture and heritage. Researchers like Tang and Xu (2023) emphasized that tourism can help in maintaining traditional crafts, folklore, and festivals, which might otherwise decline. Cultural tourism not only preserves heritage but also provides a platform for intercultural exchange, enhancing mutual understanding and respect between visitors and locals. This cultural exchange can foster a sense of pride among residents, reinforcing their cultural identity. Social impacts of rural tourism are multifaceted and complex. While tourism can strengthen community bonds by encouraging collective participation in tourism-related activities, it can also lead to social tensions. The literature by Isaza and Salas (2024) underscored the potential for tourism to disrupt social structures, particularly if the benefits are unevenly distributed or if there is inadequate local involvement in tourism planning and management. Effective community engagement and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms are essential to mitigate these negative social impacts and ensure that tourism development is inclusive and sustainable. Environmental impacts are another critical aspect of rural tourism, with both positive and negative outcomes documented. On one hand, tourism can promote environmental awareness and conservation efforts, as noted by Weyland et al. (2021). On the other hand, increased tourist activity can lead to environmental degradation if not properly managed. The balance between promoting tourism and preserving natural resources is a recurrent theme in the literature, emphasizing the need for sustainable tourism practices. Studies advocate for strategies such as ecotourism, which aims to minimize environmental footprints while maximizing socio-economic benefits.

Community-based tourism (CBT) has been proposed as a model to enhance the positive impacts of rural tourism. CBT emphasizes local ownership, participation, and benefit-sharing, aligning tourism development with community needs and aspirations. Research by Mora et al. (2019) suggested that CBT can empower communities, foster inclusive growth, and ensure that tourism revenues are reinvested locally. However, the success of CBT initiatives depends on factors such as community capacity, governance structures, and external support, indicating that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. The role of policy and governance in shaping the outcomes of rural tourism is also highlighted in the literature. Government policies and frameworks play a crucial role in facilitating sustainable tourism development. Study by Ghaderi et al. (2018) argued that supportive policies, infrastructure investments, and capacity-building programs are essential for harnessing the potential of rural tourism. Additionally, multi-stakeholder collaboration involving governments, local communities, private sector, and NGOs is vital for integrated and sustainable tourism development. While the literature provides extensive insights into the impacts of rural tourism, there is a growing need for empirical studies that examine these impacts within specific contexts. Local community impact studies offer valuable insights into how tourism affects different communities in varied settings. These studies can reveal the nuanced ways in which tourism interacts with local socio-economic and environmental conditions, providing a more comprehensive understanding of its impacts.

The aim of this paper is to explore the multifaceted impacts of rural tourism on local communities through an empirical investigation. By synthesizing findings from various case studies, this research seeks to identify patterns and draw conclusions about the effectiveness of rural tourism as a tool for sustainable development. Ultimately, the paper aims to

contribute to the ongoing discourse on rural tourism by providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and community stakeholders.

Material and methods

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to investigate the impact of rural tourism on local communities. By synthesizing findings from various studies, this review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the economic, social, and environmental effects of rural tourism. The SLR method ensures a structured and replicable process, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings.

The literature search was conducted using several academic databases, including Web of Science, Scopus, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. The following keywords and phrases were used to identify relevant studies: "rural tourism," "community impact," "economic effects," "social effects," "environmental effects," "local development," and "sustainable tourism". To ensure the quality and relevance of the literature included in this review, the following inclusion criteria were applied: peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals, studies focusing on rural tourism and its impact on local communities, publications in English to ensure accessibility and understanding, and studies published between 2000 and 2023 to capture contemporary insights and trends. On the other side, the following exclusion criteria were included: non-peer-reviewed articles, such as opinion pieces, editorials, and book reviews, studies not directly related to rural tourism or local community impacts, publications in languages other than English, and studies published before 2000 unless they provided seminal insights. Data from the selected studies were extracted using a standardized form to ensure consistency. Key information extracted included: author(s) and publication year, geographic location of the study, methodology used (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), main findings related to economic, social, and environmental impacts, and recommendations for future research or policy implications. The extracted data were then synthesized using a thematic analysis approach. Themes were identified based on recurring patterns and findings across the studies. This thematic synthesis allowed for the identification of common trends, gaps, and contradictions in the literature.

To assess the quality of the included studies, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklists were used. The CASP tool evaluates studies based on several criteria, including clarity of research aims, appropriateness of methodology, rigor in data collection and analysis, and the relevance and coherence of findings. Studies were rated as high, medium, or low quality, and only those rated as high or medium were included in the final synthesis.

Results and discussion

A total of 50 studies were included in the systematic literature review after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The geographic distribution, methodologies used, and main findings of these studies are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. General information extracted from the included scientific papers

Geographic Location	Number of Studies	Methodology	Main Findings
Europe	18	Qualitative (10), Quantitative (5), Mixed Methods (3)	Economic benefits, community cohesion, environmental conservation
Asia	12	Qualitative (6), Quantitative (4), Mixed Methods (2)	Poverty alleviation, cultural preservation, resource management
North America	10	Qualitative (5), Quantitative (3), Mixed Methods (2)	Job creation, infrastructure development, environmental degradation
South America	5	Qualitative (3), Quantitative (1), Mixed Methods (1)	Economic diversification, social inequality, conservation challenges
Africa	3	Qualitative (2), Quantitative (1)	Economic empowerment, social inclusion, environmental sustainability
Oceania	2	Qualitative (1), Quantitative (1)	Community resilience, economic stability, ecological impact

The results of systematic literature review showed that rural tourism significantly contributed to local economies through job creation, increased income, and economic diversification. In Europe, several studies highlighted the role of rural tourism in enhancing local economies by creating employment opportunities and supporting local businesses. For instance, in rural Spain and Italy, tourism initiatives have led to increased income for local artisans and farmers (Maroto-Martos et al., 2020; Giaccio et al., 2018).

Table 2. Mostly defined economic impacts of rural tourism from the extracted research papers

Region	Key Economic Benefits	Example Studies
Europe	Job creation, income increase, business support	Maroto-Martos et al. (2020)
Asia	Poverty alleviation, economic diversification	Su et al. (2019)
North America	Job creation, infrastructure development	Rocket and Ramsey (2017)

According to the extracted papers, social impacts of rural tourism included community cohesion, cultural preservation, and social inclusion. Many studies, particularly from Asia and Africa, have emphasized the role of rural tourism in preserving cultural heritage and fostering social cohesion. For example, in India, rural tourism has facilitated the preservation of traditional crafts and rituals (Choudhury et al., 2018).

Table 3. Mostly defined social impacts of rural tourism from the extracted research papers

Region	Key Social Benefits	Example Studies
Asia	Cultural preservation, social cohesion	Nair and Hamzah (2015)
Africa	Social inclusion, cultural heritage protection	Haywood et al. (2020)
Europe	Community cohesion, social capital	Demirović et al. (2019)

The environmental impacts of rural tourism are diverse, ranging from positive conservation efforts to negative ecological degradation. In North America and Oceania, studies have shown both the potential for rural tourism to support environmental conservation and the risks of environmental degradation due to increased tourist activity.

Table 4. Mostly defined environmental impacts of rural tourism from the extracted research papers

Region	Key Environmental Benefits	Example Studies
North America	Environmental degradation, conservation	Raza et al. (2017)
Oceania	Conservation efforts, ecological impact	Abascal et al. (2016)
Europe	Environmental conservation	Demirović et al. (2018)

The economic benefits of rural tourism are evident across different regions, with significant positive impacts on local economies. Job creation and income generation are the most frequently reported benefits, highlighting the potential of rural tourism as a tool for economic development. However, the extent of these benefits varies based on the region's existing economic conditions and the scale of tourism activities. Social impacts are also substantial, with rural tourism playing a critical role in preserving cultural heritage and fostering social cohesion. The review indicates that community involvement and participation are key factors in achieving positive social outcomes. In regions like Asia and Africa, where traditional cultures are rich and diverse, rural tourism has been instrumental in maintaining cultural practices and enhancing community bonds. Finally, environmental impacts present a more complex picture, with both positive and negative outcomes reported. While rural tourism can promote environmental conservation by generating funds and awareness for conservation projects, it can also lead to environmental degradation if not managed sustainably. The balance between promoting tourism and preserving the environment is crucial, requiring effective policies and community involvement.

Conclusions

This study set out to explore the multifaceted impacts of rural tourism on local communities through a comprehensive empirical investigation. By synthesizing findings from a diverse range of case studies, we have identified several patterns that highlight the effectiveness of rural tourism as a tool for sustainable development. Our research indicates that rural tourism can significantly contribute to economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental conservation within local communities. Economic benefits are evident through increased income opportunities, job creation, and the stimulation of local businesses. Socially, rural tourism fosters a sense of pride and community identity while promoting cultural exchange and preserving local traditions. Environmentally, responsible tourism practices have been shown to enhance the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity. However, the literature review also revealed challenges that need to be addressed to maximize the benefits of rural tourism. These include the need for improved infrastructure, the risk of cultural commodification, and the potential environmental impact of increased tourist activity. Effective management and strategic planning are crucial to mitigating these challenges.

Based on our findings, we offer several evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and community stakeholders. Policymakers should prioritize sustainable tourism policies that balance economic, social, and environmental goals. Practitioners are encouraged to adopt best practices in tourism management, emphasizing community involvement and environmental stewardship. Community stakeholders should actively participate in tourism planning and development to ensure that their needs and perspectives are adequately represented.

In conclusion, rural tourism holds significant potential as a catalyst for sustainable development in local communities. By leveraging its benefits and addressing its challenges, rural tourism can create a more resilient and prosperous future for rural areas. This research

contributes to the ongoing discourse on rural tourism and provides a foundation for further studies to build upon, ensuring that rural tourism continues to evolve as a viable and sustainable development strategy.

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