# DRIVERS OF PARTICIPATION OF RURAL RESIDENTS IN AGRITOURISM: AN APPLICATION OF THE STIMULUS-ORGANISM-RESPONSE (S-O-R) THEORY

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**Abstract -** Local residents are essential contributors to the development of agritourism in rural regions. This study examines external factors influencing residents' participation in agritourism through the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. To achieve its research objective, the study collected data from a survey of 185 residents participating in agritourism in Binh Thuy district (Can Tho, Vietnam), and employed the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method for data analysis. The results revealed that social capital and government initiatives (Stimuli) positively affected residents' perceived benefits of agritourism (Organism), which in turn, encouraged their participation in agritourism (Response). Based on the findings, policies and managerial implications are proposed, focusing on implementing supportive government policies and enhancing community cooperation to encourage greater resident participation and, in that way, contribute to the sustainable development of agritourism.

**Key words -** Agritourism; residents; participation; S-O-R theory; Vietnam

## 1. Introduction

Agritourism encompasses various tourism activities linked to agriculture, held on farms or in agricultural settings for leisure, recreation, or educational purposes [1, 2]. Common agritourism activities include farm visits, seasonal harvest events, and purchasing agricultural products directly from producers, as well as agricultural activities, whether staged or authentic, that take place on farms for entertainment or educational purposes [1]. They provide tourists with direct experiences at farms and rural areas, allowing them to engage in production activities or enjoy the natural rural environment [3].

Agritourism includes diverse elements, such as farm tours, agricultural production processes, and the use of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources [4]. It helps farmers reduce households' dependence on weather and mitigates the impact of market fluctuations [5]. In addition, agritourism adds value to farms and rural communities [6]. More specifically, it increases farm income, diversifies revenue streams, generates cash flow throughout the year, and provides financial support for sustaining traditional agricultural practices and lifestyles [7, 8]. Agritourism creates employment opportunities for household members such as farmers' spouses [9, 10]. In addition to economic and social benefits, it helps protect rural traditions and cultures and promote awareness of sustainable agriculture [7, 8, 10]. It also supports agricultural entrepreneurship by encouraging startups to provide agritourism-related services and products [11].

Local residents are essential contributors to the sustainable development of agritourism. They not only provide agritourism services such as accommodation, food, and tour guiding but also serve as custodians and promoters of local cultural values [7]. Through their involvement, host residents contribute to creating authentic and distinctive experiences that attract tourists to their region. Additionally, engaging residents in agritourism empowers them to become proactive agents in the development process, enhancing a sense of trust, pride, and ownership in their local identity. Their involvement ensures the sustainable development of agritourism, providing long-term benefits for both the community and the environment [11].

Due to the importance of residents as a key stakeholder in agritourism development, researchers have been interested in examining factors that enhance residents' participation in agritourism worldwide and in Vietnam [12-18]. Using logit, probit, or regression models, they found that residents' participation in agritourism was affected by several internal factors such as farm's characteristics, farm location, and farm operator's characteristics (education, income, employment) [12, 13, 14], perceived positive tourism impacts [13, 15], farmers' willingness to share land resources [16], participation in the planning phase [17]. In addition, external factors including government subsidies (measured by government payment indicator) [18] or government support policy (measured by yes or no question) [13], social capital (measured by yes or no questions related to membership and relationships), and Internet access (measured by yes or no question) [13] were also revealed to have significant impact on farmers' decision to join agritourism [13]. However, the scales used in these studies to measure influencing factors were simplistic and provided limited information.

Despite the abundance of empirical evidence, the reviewed studies lack a theoretical framework to explain the mechanisms underlying participation. The absence of theories has limited the depth of analysis. This theoretical gap suggests an opportunity to strengthen future research

by grounding analyses in established behavioral or development theories.

To address this gap, the current study aims to examine how external factors, including social capital and government initiatives, influence host residents' participation in agritourism by applying the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory. Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanism underlying resident participation by extending the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory in the agritourism context. It also seeks to explore the potential mediating role of benefit perceptions in explaining how external factors affect residents' participation. Practically, the findings could provide valuable insights for developing community-focused strategies and policies that encourage local participation in sustainable agritourism.

## 2. Theoretical background and model development

### *2.1. Residents' participation in agritourism*

The concept of resident participation can be examined from various aspects. From a decision-making viewpoint, local participation entails the engagement of community members in tourism management, enabling them to voice their opinions and contribute to the development, implementation, and dissemination of outcomes from the tourism development process, so that they can benefit from the industry [19, 20]. This form of participation cultivates residents' sense of responsibility and ownership [21]. Additionally, local participation reduces negative social consequences and increases the advantages associated with tourism development projects, thereby promoting sustainable development and conservation initiatives [22]. In light of these roles and benefits, residents' participation in agritourism is defined as the involvement of local community members in the development, management, and implementation of agritourism activities to ensure that they benefit from tourism-related initiatives.

### *2.2. Underpinning theory*

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory was chosen to provide a theoretical framework for examining the underlying mechanism of conceptual connections in this study. S-O-R is one of the commonly used theories to explain individual's behaviors in psychology, sociology, environmental studies, and tourism [23]. It considers the interrelationships of three key elements: Stimulus (external or environmental factor), Organism (internal state), and Response (behavioral reaction) [24]. The theory explains that external factors (S) can stimulate the internal or perceptual states of the individual (O), which leads to the individual's behavioral responses (R) [23].

In tourism research, it has been widely employed to explain how various destination-related stimuli influence tourist behaviors, such as intentions to visit destinations presented through virtual reality [25], tourists' travel and visit intentions [26, 27], and revisit intentions [28, 29]. Its strength lies in its ability to systematically capture the underlying psychological mechanisms–namely, the internal cognitive and affective states–that mediate the relationship between external factors and behavioral responses. Despite its extensive application to tourist behaviors, the S-O-R theory has been under-utilized in research on residents' behaviors, with only a few studies focusing on residents' pro-environmental actions [30] and support for tourism development [27, 31].

Given its proven effectiveness in tourism research and its strength in linking external conditions to internal evaluations and subsequent actions, this study adopts the S-O-R framework to examine how external stimuli influence residents' participation in agritourism. Recognizing the context of emerging agritourism development in rural areas, the study prioritizes external support factors as the primary stimuli to reflect the external determinants most pertinent to resident engagement. Specifically, Stimulus (S) refers to external enablers that shape residents' decision-making processes, including (1) social capital, represented by trust-based social relationships and community networks, and (2) government initiatives, such as supportive financial policies, investments, and infrastructure. The Organism (O) represents residents' internal cognitive evaluations, operationalized as their perceived benefits of agritourism. Finally, the Response (R) corresponds to residents' participatory behaviors in agritourism development. Within the context of agritourism in this study, the S-O-R theory is employed as a theoretical lens to examine how external support (Stimulus)–including government initiatives and social capital–elicits residents' perceptions of agritourism benefits (Organism), which in turn drive their participation in agritourism (Response). By aligning each construct with a component of the S-O-R model, this study strengthens the theoretical foundation of the research. The integration of this framework helps explain residents' participation with stronger theoretical justification, rather than relying only on empirical observation. Moreover, it provides a relevant and effective approach for analyzing how rural communities engage in agritourism development, thereby addressing the lack of a solid theoretical foundation in previous studies.

### *2.3. Research hypotheses and model development*

Although previous studies have identified a broader range of factors influencing local participation in tourism development, this study focuses on three key factors: perceived benefits, social capital, and government initiatives. This selection is informed by both theoretical and contextual considerations. Theoretically, these factors have been commonly found as primary drivers of community participation in tourism literature, reflecting the economic, social, and institutional aspects critical to participation. Contextually, these factors are particularly relevant given the characteristics of Binh Thuy, where agritourism is developing with strong government support and community involvement. A detailed description of the research location is provided in the Methods section. Focusing on these three factors also ensures a parsimonious research model and enhances the robustness of the analysis.

Based on the S-O-R theory and the current literature, the hypotheses of relationships among resident participation and its antecedents are established.

*2.3.1. Social capital*

Social capital, including relationships, social networks, and trust within the community, is an important external stimulus that influences residents' perceptions and behaviors in tourism development. When individuals perceive support from the community and strong social relationships, they are more motivated to participate and benefit from these activities [32]. For instance, social capital was found to positively affect farmers' decision to join agritourism [14]. For tourism to truly benefit local communities, they need strong social connections, trust, and cooperation [33]. As a result, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*Hypothesis H1: Social capital positively affects residents' perceived benefits of agritourism.*

*2.3.2. Government initiatives*

Government initiatives refer to programs and policies implemented by the government to promote tourism development [34]. They represent another crucial external stimulus within the S-O-R framework. These initiatives can include financial support, investment incentives, infrastructure development, or training to create favorable conditions for tourism growth. When local communities receive government support, they view tourism as beneficial and participate more actively. Chiang and Huang [35] found that local government support positively affected residents' perceived impacts of tourism. Therefore, in the context of agritourism, the effect of government initiatives is hypothesized as follows:

*Hypothesis H2: Government initiatives positively influence residents' perceived benefits of agritourism.*

*2.3.3. Perceived benefits*

Perceived benefits are a commonly used construct in tourism research to measure the positive impacts of tourism through the perceptions of residents or tourists. Previous tourism studies found that perceived benefits of tourism encouraged resident support for tourism, for example, in Floyd County (Virginia, U.S.) [36] or Tucker County (West Virginia, U.S.) [37]. Moreover, the positive effect of perceived tourism benefits on resident participation was discovered in the Khmer festival tourism context in Vietnam [38] and at World Heritage sites in Malaysia [26, 39]. Therefore, based on these evidences, a similar relationship in agritourism is proposed:

*Hypothesis H3: Perceived benefits of agritourism positively influence the participation of residents in agritourism.*

In the S-O-R framework adopted in this study, perceived benefits were conceptualized as internal cognitive evaluations that mediate the relationship between external stimuli and behavioral responses. Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

*Hypothesis H4a: Residents' perceived benefits of agritourism mediate the relationship between social capital and residents' participation in agritourism.*

*Hypothesis H4b: Residents' perceived benefits of agritourism mediate the relationship between government initiatives and residents' participation in agritourism.*

The theoretical model illustrates the relationships among proposed constructs in Figure 1 below:

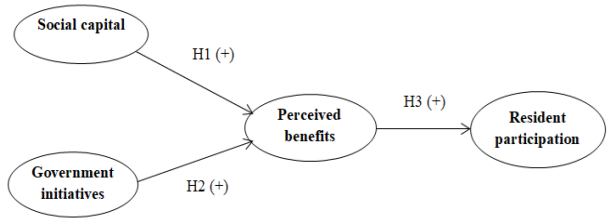


***Figure 1. Proposed theoretical model***

*Source: authors' own elaboration, 2024*

## 3. Research methods

### *3.1. Data collection*

Data collection was conducted in Binh Thuy district, Can Tho City, Vietnam. This place is renowned for its rich natural and cultural resources, including fertile orchards, expansive flower gardens, vibrant aquaculture farms, and historical landmarks such as Binh Thuy Ancient House and Long Tuyen Cultural Village. These assets create a diverse and attractive landscape for visitors seeking authentic rural experiences. In recent years, Binh Thuy has actively promoted tourism development, focusing on rural and community-based tourism. Agritourism activities such as farm tours, fruit picking, and traditional food workshops have been expanded, supported by local government initiatives and investments in rural infrastructure. This development positions Binh Thuy as a promising model for sustainable agritourism in the Mekong Delta.

The survey took place over three months, from September to November 2024. The research team compiled a list of 72 households comprising 296 adult individuals involved in agritourism activities in Binh Thuy district, as provided by local authorities. These individuals included managers of agritourism cooperatives, agritourism guides, guides of traditional craft villages associated with agriculture, homestay providers, local food suppliers, traditional music performers, and providers of agricultural experience services. Only one representative was selected if multiple household members participated in the same activity. However, if household members engaged in different agritourism activities, all were surveyed. This method helped capture the actual roles and decision-making responsibilities of each household member, recognizing that decisions for different activities may be made by different individuals within the same family.

Participants completed the survey questionnaire on-site. In total, 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 185 valid responses were retained after data screening. This final sample size of 185 was sufficient for data analysis as it exceeds the minimum sample of 155 estimated by using the inverse square root method with a minimum path

coefficient of between 0.11-0.2 and a 5% significance level as recommended by Hair et al. [40]

The measurement scales of proposed constructs were first derived from existing measures in the literature. Then, they were adjusted to suit the local research context based on the discussion with four local tourism experts and representatives of ten households involved in agritourism activities in Binh Thuy District. As a result, four items measuring government initiatives were derived from [34]; three items of social capital were adapted from [41] and [42]. The scale of perceived benefits of agritourism consisted of three items that were modified from [36] and [39]. Moreover, the measures of resident participation in agritourism were adapted from [43]. As prior studies often employed overly simple measures, such as yes/no questions or single indicators, which restricted the richness of the data, a five-point Likert scale (from 1 - Strongly disagree to 5 - Strongly agree) was utilized in this study to measure the proposed constructs and to enhance the depth and reliability of the collected data. Table 2 below summarizes the measurement items used in the survey questionnaire.

### *3.2. Data analysis*

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method was chosen to test the proposed research hypotheses for two main reasons. First, it was suitable for examining correlations among multiple constructs [40] that appeared in the newly developed model in this study. Second, PLS-SEM is well-suited for studies with small sample sizes [40], which makes it appropriate for this research.

The measurement model was assessed using three key criteria: Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations. The Composite Reliability (CR) measures the scale's reliability, and a scale is reliable if this indicator is greater than 0.7 [40]. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) assessed the scale's validity, requiring a minimum value of 0.5 to ensure sufficient convergent validity [40]. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) matrix. HTMT values below the maximum threshold of 0.90 indicate satisfactory discriminant validity [44]. For the structural model analysis, key evaluation criteria included the significance of path coefficients (β) to examine relationships between constructs, the coefficient of determination ($R^2$), and the $Q^2_{predict}$ to evaluate the explanatory power and the predictive relevance of the model, respectively [40].

## 4. Results and discussion

### *4.1. Summary of the sample*

Among the 185 survey participants, 60% were male and 40% were female. The majority (61.7%) aged 25 to 44 represent the primary workforce. More than half of the respondents (59%) had an education level up to high school. Regarding farming experience, 81.2% had less than ten years of experience (Table 1).

***Table 1.*** *Profile of the survey participants*

| Characteristic | | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Female | 74 | 40.0 |
| | Male | 111 | **60.0** |
| **Age** | From 18 to 25 | 28 | 15.1 |
| | From 25 to 34 | 53 | **28.7** |
| | From 35 to 44 | 61 | **33.0** |
| | From 45 to 54 | 25 | 13.5 |
| | 55 and more | 18 | 9.7 |
| **Highest educational level** | Below high school | 48 | **26.0** |
| | High school | 61 | **33.0** |
| | Vocational/ Diploma | 23 | 12.4 |
| | Bachelor's degree | 50 | 27.0 |
| | Postgraduate's degree | 3 | 1.6 |
| **Farming experience** | Less than 3 years | 48 | **26.0** |
| | 3 to < 5 years | 51 | **27.6** |
| | 5 to < 10 years | 51 | **27.6** |
| | 10 to < 15 years | 22 | 11.8 |
| | 15 years and more | 13 | 7.0 |
| **Total** | | **185** | **100** |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

### *4.2. Evaluation of measurement model*

All measurement scales for the proposed constructs were integrated into an entire measurement model and assessed for reliability and validity. The results show that all scales are reliable, as the CR values ranged from 0.838 to 0.925, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. The outer loading values of all observed variables are greater than 0.7, confirming their significance in measuring the corresponding latent constructs. Moreover, the AVE values for all scales exceed the 0.50 threshold (ranging from 0.619 to 0.805), demonstrating that the proposed scales meet the criteria for convergent validity (Table 2).

***Table 2.*** *Scale reliability and validity*

| Scale | Standard loading | CR | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Government initiatives (GI)*** | | ***0.867*** | ***0.619*** |
| GI1- Government financial policies are effective in supporting the development of agritourism. | 0.764 | | |
| GI2- Investment-related policies help boost agritourism. | 0.789 | | |
| GI3- Administrative procedures are convenient for agritourism development. | 0.815 | | |
| GI4- Facilities (Internet, water, electricity) are favorable for agritourism. | 0.780 | | |
| ***Social capital (SC)*** | | ***0.895*** | ***0.739*** |
| SC1- Our collaboration within the community is effective. | 0.885 | | |
| SC2- I often engage in | 0.830 | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| community activities. | | | |
| SC3- I maintain good relationships with businesses and organizations. | 0.863 | | |
| ***Perceived benefits of agritourism (PBA)*** | | ***0.925*** | ***0.805*** |
| PBA1- Agritourism provides a stable income for my family. | 0.896 | | |
| PBA2- Agritourism helps preserve and promote local traditional cultural values. | 0.900 | | |
| PBA3- Agritourism improves the quality of life for my family and local communities. | 0.896 | | |
| ***Resident participation in agritourism (RPA)*** | | ***0.838*** | ***0.633*** |
| RPA1- I actively take part in local agritourism activities. | 0.774 | | |
| RPA2- I share my opinions on improving the quality of agritourism activities. | 0.798 | | |
| RPA3- I work with the government and organizations to develop agritourism. | 0.814 | | |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

Table 3 indicates that all HTMT values in the matrix remain below the 0.90 threshold. These results confirm that the proposed constructs exhibit acceptable discriminant validity.

***Table 3.*** *Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT)*

| Factor | GI | PBA | RPA | SC |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GI** | | | | |
| **PBA** | **0.685** | | | |
| **RPA** | 0.574 | **0.899** | | |
| **SC** | 0.103 | 0.437 | **0.329** | |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

### *4.3. Evaluation of structural model*

First, the structural model was tested for collinearity using the inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The results show that VIF values range from 1.000 to 1.004, significantly below the threshold of 3 (Table 5). These findings demonstrate that collinearity among the exogenous constructs is not an issue in the structural model.

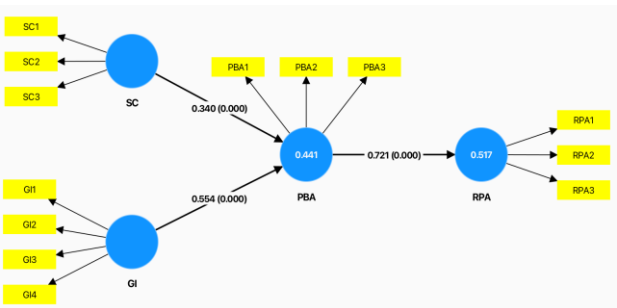


***Figure 2.*** *Model of determinants of resident participation in agritourism*

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

Then, the model's explanatory power was assessed using the $R^2$ value [40]. As shown in Figure 2, the $R^2$ values for perceived benefits (PBA) and resident participation (RPA) are 0.441 and 0.517, respectively. This indicates that two independent variables explain 44.1% of the variance in PBA, while the model explains 51.7% of the variance in RPA.

Concerning the model's predictive power, the results in Table 4 indicate that all items measuring resident participation and perceived benefits of agritourism have $Q^2_{predict}$ values greater than zero, indicating predictive relevance. Moreover, the RMSE values obtained from the PLS-SEM analysis are lower than those from the Linear Model estimations across all six items. This suggests that prediction errors are minimized in the PLS-SEM approach. Based on these findings, the model demonstrates robust predictive power, as proposed by Hair et al. [40].

***Table 4.*** *Predictive power of the model*

| Items | $Q^2_{predict}$ | RMSE | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | PLS-SEM | Linear model |
| PBA1 | 0.303 | 0.732 | 0.749 |
| PBA2 | 0.354 | 0.705 | 0.716 |
| PBA3 | 0.372 | 0.661 | 0.679 |
| RPA1 | 0.162 | 0.865 | 0.881 |
| RPA2 | 0.134 | 0.859 | 0.885 |
| RPA3 | 0.124 | 0.772 | 0.797 |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

Lastly, the relationships among the four constructs in the structural model were analyzed using the bootstrapping technique with 5,000 resamples. As shown in Table 5, all three path coefficients have p-values below 0.05 and standardized coefficient values greater than zero, indicating that all path relationships are significantly positive. The t-values exceed the critical threshold of 1.96, confirming that the relationships among constructs are significant.

***Table 5.*** *Hypothesis testing*

| *Hypothesis* | *Relationship* | *Path coefficient* | *t-value* | *p-value* | *Inner VIF* | *Conclusion* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *H1* | *PBA → RPA* | *0.721* | *21.936* | *0.000* | *1.000* | *Supported* |
| *H2* | *SC → PBA* | *0.340* | *6.628* | *0.000* | *1.004* | *Supported* |
| *H3* | *GI → PBA* | *0.554* | *12.617* | *0.000* | *1.004* | *Supported* |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

*Note: PBA = Perceived benefits of agritourism; RPA = Resident participation in agritourism; SC = Social capital; GI = Government Initiatives*

More specifically, the results revealed that social capital ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 6.628$, $p < 0.05$) and government initiatives ($\beta = 0.554$, $t = 12.617$, $p < 0.05$) positively influence residents' perceived benefits of agritourism. Therefore, H1 and H2 are supported respectively. These findings confirm that social capital and government initiatives stimulate the cognitive perceptions of local residents about the benefits of agritourism, as mentioned in the S-O-R theory, through the connection between

Stimuli and Organism. The positive effect of social capital on perceived agritourism benefits suggests that strong community relationships, trust, and collaboration among stakeholders enhance the perceived benefits of agritourism. This result aligns with the previous studies [14, 33].

Similarly, the impact of government initiatives on perceived agritourism benefits was found to be positive, reflecting that increased government support, policies, and incentives contribute to enhancing the perceived impacts of agritourism. This suggests that when governments actively promote agritourism through funding and infrastructure development, local residents recognize greater economic, social, and cultural benefits from agritourism activities. This result is consistent with what was found in [35].

Compared to social capital (with $\beta = 0.34$), the impact of government initiatives on perceived benefits is more substantial (with $\beta = 0.554 > 0.34$). This finding confirms the importance and significance of government assistance in shaping positive impacts of agritourism for residents and, in that way, enhancing local participation in agritourism development.

In addition, perceived benefits of agritourism have a positive and substantial effect on resident participation in agritourism ($\beta = 0.721$, $t = 21.936$, $p < 0.05$). As a result, H3 is confirmed. This is the most significant relationship in the model, suggesting that when residents feel they receive benefits, they actively participate in agritourism activities. The finding provides empirical evidence to support the relationship in the S-O-R theory that the internal cognitive state or Organism (i.e., benefit perceptions) results in Response (i.e., participation in agritourism). The finding is consistent with previous research [30, 38, 39].

### *4.4. Analysis of mediation impact of perceived benefits*

***Table 6.*** *Analysis of indirect effects*

| Hypothesis | Standardized indirect effect | p-value | 95% CI | Conclusion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| SC → RPA | 0.245 | 0.000 | 0.164; 0.321 | H4a supported |
| GI → RPA | 0.400 | 0.000 | 0.321; 0.467 | H4b supported |

*Source: authors' data analysis, 2024*

*Note: SC = Social capital; GI = Government Initiatives; PBA = Perceived benefits of agritourism; RPA = Resident participation in agritourism; CI = Confidence Interval*

The results in Table 6 indicate that the indirect effect of social capital and government initiatives on resident participation in agritourism was significant due to the p-values being less than 0.05. The findings suggest that social capital and government initiatives indirectly influence resident participation in agritourism through their perceived agritourism benefits. In other words, it can be argued that the intervention of perceived benefits of agritourism can explain the positive effect of situational factors on resident participation in agritourism.

## 5. Conclusion and implications

### *5.1. Summary of findings*

The findings of this empirical study explain the relationships between social capital, government initiatives, perceived benefits, and residents' participation in agritourism. The results show that strong community relationships (or social capital) and government support (or initiatives) are crucial in shaping residents' perceptions of agritourism. When local people feel supported by their community and local authorities, they are more likely to see agritourism as beneficial. In turn, recognizing these benefits increases their participation in agritourism development.

### *5.2. Theoretical implications*

Theoretically, this study provides insight into mechanisms driving resident participation in tourism within an agritourism context. Its most significant theoretical contribution lies in the development of a novel model that explains how external destination-related factors influence residents' participation in agritourism. The findings clarify the crucial role of government support and community relationships in encouraging host residents' participatory decisions. In addition, the study demonstrates the importance of benefit perception as a key mediating factor that fosters resident participation. Furthermore, the study provides empirical evidence demonstrating that the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory is a suitable framework for explaining the effect of destination-based factors on residents' participatory behaviors in tourism, particularly in agritourism - a context where it has rarely been applied. Therefore, this research extends the application of the theory and offers new insights into the mechanisms driving resident participation in this specific context.

### *5.3. Practical implications*

From a practical perspective, the findings offer several implications for local authorities, policy-makers, and community leaders. Beyond general policy support, local governments should design targeted programs such as agribusiness incubators to assist residents in developing agritourism startups. These incubators could provide seed funding, mentorship, and hands-on support throughout the business development process. In addition, local authorities could prioritize the development of agribusiness hubs, which are centralized areas where various agritourism activities, such as farm tours, local product sales, and traditional food experiences, are offered in a single location. These hubs would make it more convenient for visitors to access multiple services and create greater economic benefits by encouraging collaboration among local businesses.

Given the crucial role of social capital, innovative initiatives such as community-based agritourism cooperatives can be encouraged, where residents jointly manage marketing, booking platforms, and revenue sharing to build stronger trust and collaboration. Instead of relying on general knowledge-sharing workshops, peer-to-peer mentorship programs can be developed to offer personalized support.

Moreover, to strengthen residents' perceptions of the benefits and encourage their participation, awareness campaigns should feature interactive activities such as roadshows and on-site demonstration farms, where people can directly observe real examples of successful agritourism initiatives. Additionally, sharing success stories through short documentaries and social media series can create stronger emotional connections and inspire more residents to get involved in agritourism.

Over the long term, government policies should promote responsible tourism, environmental protection, and cultural heritage conservation to ensure that agritourism development benefits both current and future generations. Collaboration among key stakeholders, including local authorities, businesses, residents, and community organizations, is essential for building sustainable agritourism initiatives. For instance, partnerships with tour operators, hotels, and restaurants can create new opportunities for local farmers to market their products and services more effectively.

### *5.4. Research limitation and future research direction*

This study adopts a simplified S-O-R framework by focusing on two external stimuli: government initiatives and social capital. While this approach allows for investigating key external factors relevant to agritourism development at the selected research location, it does not capture the potential impact of other stimuli or emotional responses in the organism stage.

Therefore, future research should extend the model by addressing emotional responses and incorporating other environmental factors as stimuli, such as market-related influences, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes driving resident participation in agritourism.

Additionally, the results of this study were based on data collected from a single research location, which may limit the broader applicability of the findings. Therefore, future studies should consider expanding the geographical scope to include other agritourism destinations, allowing for comparisons and enhancing the generalizability of both the findings and the theoretical model.

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