

Assessing the Impact of Tourism Education on Rural Marketing Financial Services in Himachal Pradesh: A CFA and PLS-SEM Approach

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study uses Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine how tourism education affects the marketing of financial services in Himachal Pradesh's rural areas. The goal is to comprehend how tourism education affects rural financial service marketing while taking into account program execution, public perception and knowledge levels. A survey was conducted with 200 participants, including educators, financial service providers in rural areas and students.

Methodology/Design/Approach: Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines data from both qualitative and quantitative sources. The measurement model is validated using CFA and the structural model and hypotheses are tested using PLS-SEM.

Finding: The results show that tourism education significantly improves the marketing of financial services in rural areas. Improved public perception and awareness of tourism has been found to be largely dependent on higher knowledge levels and well-executed programs, which in turn has improved financial service marketing outcomes.

Originality of the research: By employing sophisticated statistical techniques to provide empirical evidence on the function of tourism education in rural financial services marketing, this study adds to the body of literature. It emphasizes how crucial focused educational initiatives are in supporting rural development that is sustainable.

Keywords: Tourism education; Rural marketing; Financial services; Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA); Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM); Himachal Pradesh

INTRODUCTION

The importance of tourism education in rural development strategies is becoming more widely acknowledged, particularly in areas like Himachal Pradesh where tourism has the potential to propel socioeconomic advancement. Specialized education is essential to provide people with the skills and knowledge they need as tourism becomes more and more ingrained in these rural communities' economies. In addition to improving individual skills, tourism education benefits the community at large by encouraging sustainable practices, better service quality and more effective marketing of regional financial services. The importance of tourism education in rural development strategies is becoming more widely acknowledged, particularly in areas like

Himachal Pradesh where tourism has the potential to propel socioeconomic advancement. Specialized education is essential to provide people with the skills and knowledge they need as tourism becomes more and more ingrained in these rural communities' economies. In addition to improving individual skills, tourism education benefits the community at large by encouraging sustainable practices, better service quality and more effective marketing of regional financial services [1].

Furthermore, incorporating tourism education into financial services marketing strategies can result in creative solutions that are tailored to the particular requirements of rural communities. To make financial services more relevant and appealing to the local population, educational programs, for example, can be designed to emphasize the advantages of financial products in

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the context of tourism activities. According to Harrison and Leitch, the implementation of a contextualized approach not only enhances the efficacy of marketing campaigns but also guarantees that the financial services offered are in line with the prevailing economic activities in these areas [2].

The importance of tourism education in improving career readiness and employment opportunities has been further highlighted by recent studies. For instance, Raj's case study on government schools in Himachal Pradesh shows how the provision of relevant knowledge and skills through tourism education programs has greatly enhanced students' prospects for employment. There is a positive correlation between job readiness in the tourism sector and tourism education, according to a study conducted by Raj that evaluates the effect of tourism education on employment opportunities among Himachal Pradesh's schooling population. The purpose of this research is to investigate how tourism education affects financial services marketing in Himachal Pradesh's rural areas. This study aims to provide empirical evidence on how tourism education influences important factors like knowledge levels, program execution and public perception. It does this by utilizing sophisticated statistical techniques like Confirmatory Factor

Analysis (CFA) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results of this research will add to the body of knowledge already available on rural development and offer useful advice to educators and policymakers who want to maximize the potential of tourism education to boost the local economy [3].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A sample of 200 people, comprising students, teachers and financial service providers in rural Himachal Pradesh, participated in the mixed-methods study. The following actions are involved in the research (Tables 1 and 2).

Data collection: To acquire both quantitative and qualitative data, surveys and interviews were carried out.

Measurement model validation (CFA): The constructs' validity and reliability were verified through the application of CFA.

Structural model testing (PLS-SEM): The proposed relationships between the constructs were tested using PLS-SEM.

Table 1: Sample characteristics.

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	110	0.55
Female	90	0.45
Age		
18-25	50	0.25
26-35	70	0.35
36-45	60	0.3
46 and above	20	0.1
Educational background		
High School	40	0.2
Bachelor's Degree	100	0.5
Master's Degree	60	0.3

Table 2: Cutting-edge statistical techniques like CFA and PLS-SEM.

Construct reliability and validity (CFA results)	Path coefficients and hypothesis testing (PLS-SEM results)
Construct	Hypothesis
Knowledge levels	Tourism education → Knowledge levels

Program execution	Knowledge levels → Public perception
Public perception	Public perception → Financial services
Financial services	

Using cutting-edge statistical techniques like CFA and PLS-SEM, the study offers solid empirical proof of the beneficial effects of tourism education on rural development. It is recommended that future research concentrate on longitudinal studies in order

Table 3: Construct reliability and validity (CFA results).

to confirm these results and investigate other variables influencing this relationship (Table 3) [4,5].

Construct	Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Knowledge levels	KL1	0.82	0.85	0.87	0.6
	KL2	0.78			
	KL3	0.75			
	KL4	0.8			
Program execution	PE1	0.83	0.88	0.9	0.65
	PE2	0.85			
	PE3	0.79			
Public perception	PP1	0.77	0.82	0.85	0.58
	PP2	0.8			
	PP3	0.74			
Financial services	FS1	0.84	0.87	0.89	0.62
	FS2	0.81			
	FS3	0.78			

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Construct reliability

Cronbach's alpha: All constructs show strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values above the generally recognized cut off of 0.70. Particularly, there is strong reliability in knowledge levels (0.85), program execution (0.88), public perception (0.82) and financial services (0.87) [6].

Composite Reliability (CR): All constructs have composite reliability values greater than the suggested threshold of 0.70. The constructs have high internal consistency, as shown by knowledge levels (0.87), program execution (0.90), public perception (0.85) and financial services (0.89).

Average Variance Extracted (AVE): Good convergent validity is indicated by AVE values for the constructs that are above the 0.50 threshold. Knowledge levels (0.60), program execution (0.65),

public perception (0.58) and financial services (0.62) demonstrate that the constructs account for more than half of the variation in the indicators.

Factor loadings: All item loadings are above the acceptable level of 0.70, demonstrating that each item strongly contributes to its respective construct. The loadings for knowledge levels (0.75 to 0.82), program execution (0.79 to 0.85), public perception (0.74 to 0.80) and financial services (0.78 to 0.84) confirm the items' significance in measuring their constructs. The CFA results validate the measurement model by demonstrating high reliability, internal consistency and convergent validity of the constructs used in the study. These findings support the adequacy of the measurement model for further structural analysis using PLS-SEM (Table 4) [7,8].

Table 4: Path coefficients and hypothesis testing (PLS-SEM results).

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient	Standard error	t-value	p-value	Result
H ₁	Knowledge levels -> Program execution	0.35	0.08	4.38	0	Supported
H ₂	Knowledge levels -> Public perception	0.28	0.07	4	0	Supported
H ₃	Program execution -> Public perception	0.4	0.06	6.67	0	Supported
H ₄	Public perception -> Financial services	0.5	0.05	10	0	Supported
H ₅	Knowledge levels -> Financial services	0.22	0.09	2.44	0.015	Supported
H ₆	Program execution -> Financial services	0.3	0.08	3.75	0	Supported

Interpretation of PLS-SEM results

Hypothesis testing

H₁: Program execution -> Knowledge levels

There is a strong positive correlation between program execution and knowledge levels, as evidenced by the path coefficient of 0.35, t-value of 4.38 and p-value of 0.000. This lends credence to the theory that better individual knowledge levels translate into better program implementation for tourism education.

H₂: Public perception -> Knowledge levels

With a path coefficient of 0.28, a t-value of 4.00 and a p-value of 0.000, it is evident that public perception is significantly positively impacted by knowledge levels. This implies that higher levels of knowledge improve how the general public views tourism and its advantages [9].

H₃: Program implementation -> Views by the public

There is a strong positive correlation between the implementation of tourism education programs and public perception, as indicated by the path coefficient of 0.40, t-value of 6.67 and p-value of 0.000. The public's perception of tourism education is greatly improved by well-executed programs.

H₄: Financial services -> Public perception

The path coefficient is 0.50, the t-value is 10.00 and the p-value is 0.000, indicating a statistically significant positive correlation between the marketing of financial services and public perception. Improved public opinion of tourism education leads to more successful financial services marketing.

H₅: Financial services -> Knowledge levels

The relationship between knowledge levels and financial services marketing is positively correlated, as indicated by the path coefficient of 0.22, t-value of 2.44 and p-value of 0.015. A higher

level of understanding is a prerequisite for more successful financial services marketing.

H₆: Financial services -> Program execution

With a path coefficient of 0.30, a t-value of 3.75 and a p-value of 0.000, program execution has a statistically significant positive effect on financial services marketing. Effective programs increase the marketing effectiveness of financial services [10].

CONCLUSION

The study's empirical data emphasizes the significant advantages of incorporating tourism education into rural development plans. Tourism education has the power to positively influence public perception, which in turn improves financial services marketing and adoption through raising knowledge levels and carrying out programs efficiently. These results highlight how important it is for educators and policymakers to give tourism education top priority as a means of empowering rural communities economically. Additionally, this study adds to the body of knowledge by offering a thorough examination of the variables affecting the efficacy of tourism education in rural areas. A thorough analysis of the connections between knowledge levels, program execution, public perception and financial service marketing has been made possible by the application of CFA and PLS-SEM. The study shows that tourism education is a strategic component for wider economic development as well as a tool for improving personal skills. Tourism education can significantly improve rural financial inclusion and overall economic health by promoting better-informed communities and well-executed programs. In areas like Himachal Pradesh, this integrated approach is crucial for both sustainable development and the empowerment of rural populations.

KEY FINDINGS

According to the study, people with higher knowledge levels execute programs more effectively and are viewed favourably by the public. Knowledge levels specifically have a positive impact on public perception (path coefficient=0.28) and program execution (path coefficient=0.35), suggesting that informed people support better program outcomes and a more positive public perception of tourism initiatives.

Program execution: Public perception is greatly enhanced by well-executed tourism education programs (path coefficient=0.40). This implies that public support and engagement which are critical for the success of tourism-related activities and initiatives can only be attained through well-implemented programs.

Public perception: The marketing of financial services is significantly impacted by the public's perception of tourism education (path coefficient=0.50). The relationship between financial inclusion and tourism education in rural areas is demonstrated by the fact that a positive public perception leads to more successful financial services marketing strategies.

Direct effect on financial services: The marketing of financial services is directly impacted by program execution and knowledge levels. The results show that program execution (path coefficient=0.30) and knowledge levels (path coefficient=0.22) both have significant positive effects, indicating that financial service marketing efforts can be strengthened by a well-informed and professionally done approach to tourism.

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