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Agritourism: Alternative for sustainable rural development

Agroturismo: Alternativa de desarrollo rural sostenible

Agroturismo: alternativa para o desenvolvimento rural sustentável

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Abstract

Agritourism is regarded as one type of rural tourism and can be defined a sustainable activity that is developed in rural areas where has necessary features to offer such as touristic services which allow tourists to have a lively experience on culture, rural traditions. Be involved directly and have the chance to do daily rural chores by giving spaces for leisure and enjoyment and being in contact with nature.

The aim of this review was to analyze and provide relevant scientific information about agritourism as an alternative for sustainable rural development. To this end, a systematic review was carried out and keywords like "agroturismo" in Spanish and "agrotourism", "agritourism" in English were researched and subsequently, at a first step a 55- article were assessed and which have been published from 1994 to 2020.

Findings demonstrate in most countries, there are local agrotourism business initiatives that aim to promote the sustainability of economic and environmental activities, and are seen as a strategy to mitigate rural-to-urban migration, develop economic sustainability, generate employment and local identity. A better understanding of this process, rural development, agriculture and tourism have become an alternative that combines two elements, thus contributing to the social and economic development of the area; it protects the environment and generates employment opportunities, highlighting local women.

KeyWords: Agritourism; rural development; business; review; sustainable.

Resumen

El agroturismo es un tipo de turismo rural y una actividad sostenible que se desarrolla en lugares rurales que cuenten con las características necesarias para brindar servicios turísticos que permitan al turista tener una experiencia vivencial de la cultura, la vida, tradiciones rurales, involucrándose de manera directa con las actividades rurales que cotidianamente se desarrollan, brindando espacios de ocio y disfrute del contacto con la naturaleza.

El objetivo de esta revisión fue analizar y proporcionar información científica relevante acerca del agroturismo como alternativa de desarrollo rural sostenible. Para ello, se realizó una revisión sistemática realizada en español e inglés utilizando los descriptores: "agroturismo", "agrotourism", "agritourism", y posteriormente, un análisis cualitativo de los documentos obtenidos en la primera

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parte, siendo los registros obtenidos 55 tras la combinación de las diferentes palabras clave, y publicados entre los años 1994-2020. Los resultados de esta revisión permiten concluir que, en la mayoría de países existen iniciativas locales de negocios agroturísticos que tienen como objetivo promover la sostenibilidad de las actividades económicas y ambientales, y es vista como estrategia para mitigar la migración rural hacia la urbana, desarrollar sostenibilidad económica, generar empleo e identidad local. Asimismo, en el proceso de desarrollo rural se convierte en una alternativa que combina dos elementos la agricultura y el turismo, contribuyendo así, al área social y económica de la zona; protege al medio ambiente y genera oportunidades de empleo sobre todo a las mujeres de la localidad.

Palabras claves: Agroturismo; desarrollo rural; negocios; revision; sostenible.

Resumo

O Agroturismo é uma modalidade de turismo rural e uma atividade sustentável que se realiza em espaços rurais que possuem as características necessárias para prestar serviços turísticos que permitem ao turista ter uma experiência vivencial de cultura, vida, tradições rurais, envolvendo-se diretamente com as atividades rurais que são desenvolvidas diariamente, proporcionando espaços de lazer e fruição do contato com a natureza.

O objetivo desta revisão foi analisar e fornecer informações científicas relevantes sobre o agroturismo como alternativa para o desenvolvimento rural sustentável. Para tanto, foi realizada uma revisão sistemática em espanhol e inglês utilizando os descritores: “agroturismo”, “agroturismo”, “agroturismo” e, posteriormente, uma análise qualitativa dos documentos obtidos na primeira parte, sendo os registros obtidos 55 após a combinação das diferentes palavras-chave, e publicado entre os anos 1994-2020. Os resultados desta revisão permitem concluir que, na maioria dos países, existem iniciativas locais de agroturismo que visam promover a sustentabilidade das atividades econômicas e ambientais, e é visto como uma estratégia para mitigar a migração rural para urbana, desenvolver a sustentabilidade econômicas, geram empregos e identidade local. Da mesma forma, no processo de desenvolvimento rural torna-se uma alternativa que combina dois elementos: a agricultura e o turismo, contribuindo assim para a área social e econômica da região; protege o meio ambiente e cria oportunidades de emprego, especialmente para as mulheres locais.

Palavras-chave: Agroturismo; desenvolvimento Rural; o negócio; Reveja; sustentável.

Introduction

Tourism is widely believed to see as a way for local development, in that sense, agriculture is the main economic activity in rural areas. In what follows, the interaction between agriculture and tourism tends to broadly improve developing countries' economies (Eshun & Tichaawa, 2020; Kharaishvili et al., 2019). Despite the problem of deagrarianization (employment decline) in rural areas due to the development of industries and technologies used in agriculture. It is important to state this research respect the word uses for each author.

By developing tourist activity in rural areas, people have the possibility of generating a satisfactory level of income and conditions for a better quality of life (Brščić et al., 2010), demonstrating a positive impact on creation and innovation by offering a tourist product and service (Hjalager, 1996). Furthermore, in Greece, agritourism is not part of rural development policies (Kizos & Iosifides, 2007: 59-74), and governments cannot subsidize it, so the European Union deeply encourages participation to add value to their crops through agritourism (Clemens, 2004:8).

On the other hand, agritourism, is a sustainable venture develop in a family profile which work with maximum utilization of the available resources. Considering the main aim to be able to charm foreigners, national and local tourists, as well as creating and providing fresh business and job opportunities (Mateo Burbano, Vite Cevallos, & Carvajal Romero, 2020).

It also combines agricultural production and the enjoyment of leisure activities, tourist services, rural and cultural environment in a rural area suitable for this purpose, thus attracting families, seniors and couples, which demand more natural products and contact with nature, allowing revaluation of agricultural activity, which together with tourism improves the sector competitiveness and thus contributes to the local economy (Anthopoulou, 2000: 359-360; Parra & Calero, 2006: 86-87).

For this reason, the aim of the study is to analyze and provide relevant scientific information about agritourism as an alternative for sustainable rural development at the national and international level. The first section clarifies the definition of agritourism, then the data on the case studies were presented, and then data were chosen and analyzed.

Understanding agritourism

Sasu y Epuran (2016:119), noted that agritourism is a type of rural tourism, where tourist carry out activities in a rural environment. This one provides a significant picture and a very different lively experience from the conventional type. Supporting by facilities related to agrotourism activities (Hjalager, 1996: 104). People who love nature and look for time to enjoy a relaxing moment and farming habits are its agriculture niche market (Iosim, 2013). Likewise, combination of different green fields such as public parks, recreational services, historical gardens, farms, rural fields among others, shows the increasing of the niche market to offer a new tourist experience (Aldous, 2017). As the means to study this definition, Barbieri y Mshenga (2008) defines it as *“any practice developed on a working farm to attract visitors”* (p. 151). Malkanthi y Routry (2011) considered it *“any activity, enterprise or business which is designed to increase farm and community income through combining the essential elements of the tourism and agriculture industries”* (p. 48; Kubickova & Campbell, 2020).

This type of tourist makes accessible to two type of visitors: elderly ones with different types of lifestyle and coming from big urban cities; teenagers are the other customer type who are directly taken there for schools to teach what in indoors could not meaningfully learn, naming them farm-school. Agrotourism is acknowledged to be an effective alternative to get rid of stress and physical and mental fatigue which everyone can be affected due to working hours and family issues (Martínez-Roldán & Goytia-Goyenechea, 2020).

Responding to the challenges of migration, agritourism has become a sustainable activity for rural economies. Local people use the soil in an appropriate way so migration turns in a non-option to leave their own place looking for better lifestyle conditions (Dax, Zhang, & Chen, 2019), as long as a farmer always profit from agricultural production (Fleischer & Tchetchik, 2005).

Based on demand and supply, agritourist products can be defined as direct and indirect. On one hand, to ask only for a stay and the hosts display how agricultural activities are, indirect product is applying. On the other hand, as tourists participate in agricultural chores on the field having a real farmer experience is consider a direct one. (Flanigan, Blackstock, & Hunter, 2014:399). Cropping organic and healthy food which engage different type of tourist are turned into main activities. Rural environment, local traditions and rural lifestyle culture are noted such inner elements for the

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development of the agritourism product and service (Ploeg & Renting, 2004:235; Yang et al., 2010:381).

Developing tourist activities in non-urban regions integrate private enterprises, towns and women cooperative labor who earn in family income and financial autonomy. This last aspect gives an added value because of creating household utensils such souvenirs (Iakovidou, 1997:44,47; McGehee, Kim, & Jennings, 2007:281).

One way to diversify touristic products is to promote new alternatives to use the current resources, for example agritourism. This could be a key source of income and employment for agricultural communities (Rhiney, Walker, & Tomlinson, 2015:97), by prevailing agricultural activity that offers authentic local services based on a social identity in the farmers involved.

The competition between farmers leads them to autonomy and economic independence, thus emerging the "neo-peasant", which meets modern demands using survival strategies of the former farmer, so that activities such as milk production add a special and symbolic value developing an ancestral link and heritage (Brandth & Haugen, 2011:42-43).

Thus, lively systematic experience such accommodation, ecological products, festivals and others may be used through cultural, natural and environmental resources. Hence, agricultural services can be turned into lucrative value market where quality improvement and greater demand for foreign tourist aim at the full agritourism internationalization. Therefore, a proper management is required to get better results (Kim, 2010:3). There are, however, other conceptualizations about agrotourism and rural tourism. In European policies both are consider as synonymous (Pulina, Giovanna Dettori, & Paba, 2006:1007). For Europe Union, rural tourism is developed in rural areas and agrotourism is carried out on farms and places where landlords and stockbreeders manage them (Martínez-Roldán & Goytia-Goyenechea, 2020).

Agritourism is a way to develop a sustainable tourism in rural areas and farms. Visitors can get used to landscape, cultural sources, local souvenirs, local food and daily chores, ethnic features. In the meantime, visitors show respect to the environment and local traditions. In addition, productive, cultural and developmental forces can be increased and contribute to the environmentally sustainable, economic and social development of the rural area.

Tourism as a fast-growing industry has enabled many developing countries to integrate culture, landscape, agricultural products and heritage as part of their strategy to attract tourists to these

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countries. This industry has boosted globalization, becoming a fundamental way to interact and connect worldly places. Keeping the growth of rural economies is one great challenge to face for agrotourism. The other one is to ensure the long-term protection of the social and natural environment (Faganel, 2011).

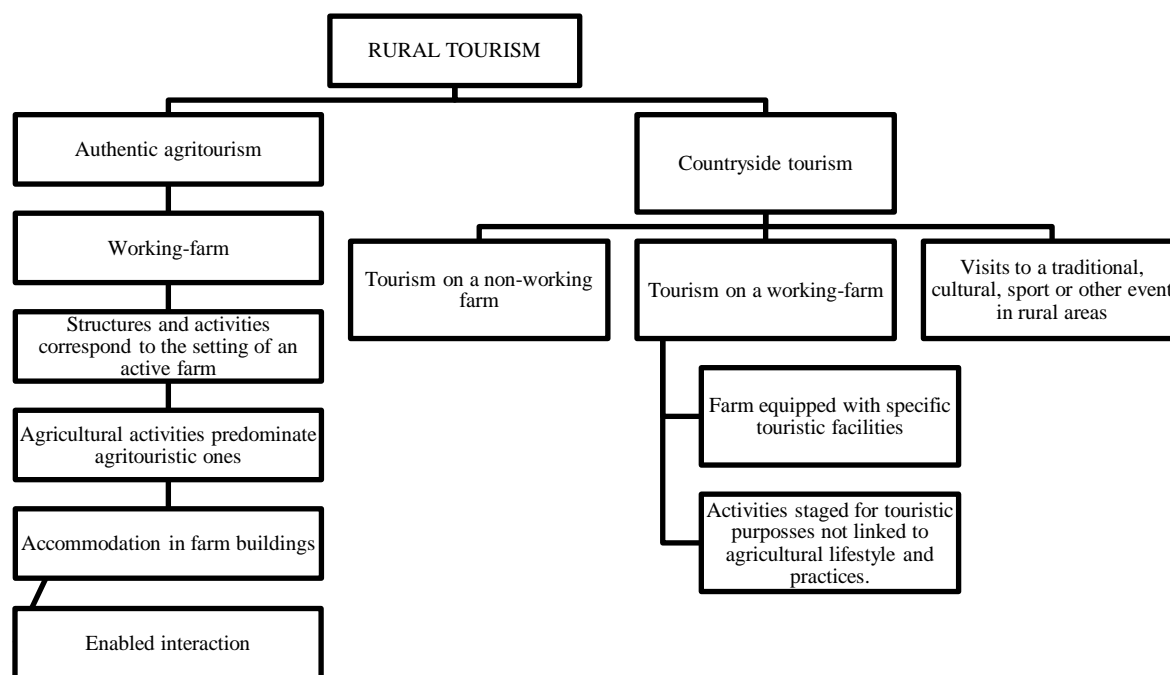
Agritourism is a tourist activity in which agricultural business are used as a tourist attraction. Agricultural resources become services such appreciation of scenic attributes, diversity of agricultural production activities and technology, and experience community culture (Ferniza, 2017). The typology is due to agricultural activities and non-agricultural activities. Most importantly, activities imply agricultural festivals, horseback riding, vegetable and fruit tours, etc; all this giving by nature attributes (Budiasa, 2013; Ismail et al., 2020).

In economic terms, agritourism promotes job creation, direct accommodation and extended services, as well as higher profits by selling local products directly to tourists (Barbieri, 2013). In the same way, this preserves local customs, increases local pride, raises the social status of farmers and enhance women's social position (McGehee y Kim, 2004; Nickerson, Black and McCool, 2001). From an environmental perspective, there is a wide range of opportunities to protect local habits, reduce the use of agrochemicals in favor of organic practices as well as preserve natural resources like water (Barbieri, 2013; Choo and Petrick, 2014).

For Streifeneder (2016), the word agritourism is the one. He considers it as a type of rural tourism which implies two concepts: authentic agritourism and countryside tourism. The first one has five features: working-farm, structures and activities correspond to the setting of an active farm, agricultural activities predominate agritourist ones, accommodation in farm buildings and enabled interaction. Countryside tourism is defined on three features: tourism on a non-working farm, visits to a traditional, cultural, sport or other event in rural areas and tourism on a working-farm, this last one is based on farm equipped with specific touristic facilities and activities staged for touristic purposes not linked to agricultural lifestyle and practices

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Figure 1: Classification of rural tourism



Source: Streifeneder (2016)

Agritourism is considered as a non-profit business for some farmers and formal enterprises, but it is just only in terms of feasibility (Busby & Rendle, 2000: 640). Other activities related to massive tourism as seen as negative impacts brought about by affecting organic production (Kuo et al., 2006). Hence the need for prompt action to ensure better soil conservation in the face of new trade flows (Forsyth, 1995:877, 894).

Agritourist businesses

National and local governments encourage residents to start and get into tourism business. Because this is a well- acknowledged to boost rural economies (Henderson, 2009). In Italy, there is a legal regulation that covers agritourism. This implies the support for developing a touristic market which allow make and sell their agricultural products. This contributes to the hospitality and restoration supply chain which is provided in areas where agritourism is developed, promoting this way a social agriculture (Galasso et al., 2016). This is a strategy of participation in farms that seeks social integration, whose reward is self-recognition (FAO, 2014).

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Table 1: Worldly Agritouristic Businesses

Researchers	Geographical research	Key findings and other conclusions
(Garcia-ramon et al., 1995)	Spain: Catalonia and Galicia	Agricultural tourism is a valuable alternative for women. It allows the combination of chores responsibilities with tourist activity and represents an income source that supports continuous small-scale agriculture and the conservation of the rural environment.
(Aikaterini et al., 2001)	Lesbos, Greece	Even if the agrotourism program appears successful as far as income improvement and willingness to stay in agriculture is involved, most of the agrotourist holdings in Lesvos operate in the margin of mass tourism with the same 'customers' and the same product, without connections with agricultural production, local products promotion, or environmental and cultural landscape conservation.
(Pulina et al., 2006)	Sardinia island, Italy	By using an econometric approach in terms of trend factors of the Sardinian businesses over an extended period from 1986 to 2003, there is evidence exists indicating that agrotourism is entering a stagnation stage, so it must be a tourism planning process which private and public sector level sponsor Sardinia as a diversified heritage destination characterised by its rich and unique culture, history, traditions and environmental amenities along the coastline as well as in inner rural areas.
(Kizos & Iosifides, 2007)	Greece: Lesbos, Magnesia y Lefkada	It reveals the contradictory character of agrotourism development in Greece. Highlighting the divergence between official objectives and basic characteristics of the sector's development trajectory in Greece.
(Henderson, 2009)	Singapore	There is an increasing agrotourism activity in Singapore. Even though, it is an urban city. It has a singular location related to tourism connected with rural landscapes and a touristic potential which private and public sector are trying to promote.
(Faganel, 2011)	Developing Sustainable Agrotourism in Central	Agrotourism's main challenge is to keep rural economies growing and at the same time preserve

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	and East European Countries	natural and social environments in a long-term period.
(Tew & Barbieri, 2012)	Missouri, The United States	73,5% from 164 agritourism farms showed a major capture families with children because of a large variety of recreational activities, ranging from petting zoos, maze and hay rides. Thus, it contribute directly to farm sales, many crops instead of one.
(Farmaki, 2012)	The Case of Troods, Cyprus.	The study shows there are different types of rural tourist. The ones, who were asked, expressed different levels of interaction with the rural environment and varying interest in rural activities.
(Gil Arroyo <i>et al.</i> , 2013)	Missouri, North Caroline – The United States	Agritourism must be carried out on working agricultural facilities and it must show entertainment and education. Agritourism typology may not be conceptualized as universal term, however, it may be restricted to geographical contexts such as Texan dude ranches or Californian vineyards.
(Choo & Petrick, 2014)	Texas, The United States	The study proposes that social interactions with service providers, local residents, companion tourists, and other customers influence satisfaction, which in turn affects revisit intentions. For this, it is important to understand agritourists' behavior in order to design Marketing strategies for this niche.
(Mazlan & Shukor Juraimi, 2014)	Malaysia	The study addresses problems which agritourism in Malaysia faces such as: community participation and language barrier.
(Liang, 2017)	Taiwan	Agritourism activities with a service-dominant logic (SDL) by stakeholders let assess tourists' behavior and their active participation in agritourism and lead to an increase in tourists' intention to revisit and actual purchase of agricultural products and enhance the experience of tourists learning agricultural knowledge.
(Kourgialas <i>et al.</i> , 2018)	Corinto, Greece	70% of 74 agrotourism businesses owners have been self-financed; only one in 10 owners indicates that agriculture has been their main economic income, so 80% say they are satisfied with their

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		enterprises, since this economic factor is not only their motivation, but it is also social, interest and altruistic ones.
(Canovi, 2019)	Langhe, Italy	Winery owners resist their engagement in agritourism diversification. The paper draws on social identity theory to explain how owners' identities affect tourism diversification. The owners actively construct a producer identity and that this identity is simultaneously regulated by various institutional forces (e.g. local winemaking community)
(S. Kim <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	Seoul, Gyeonggi, Incheon- Korea	The study suggests that agricultural festivals must be included as a marketing strategy to promote agritouristic destinies. So sponsors can use agritourism as a market channel in order to generate an emotional attachment. Social networking and other media online can be applied.
(Sudiro, 2019)	Mangunan Dlingo Bantul Garden, Yogyakarta	The research explains about sustainable development of agrotourism in Mangunan Garden. This was inspired by improving farmers' incomes and the quality of life in rural society.
(Sathe & Randhave, 2019)	Maharashtra, a case study of village inn agro tourism (Wardha)	Due to the efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Agri-tourism Development Corporation (ATDC), MART (Maharashtra State Agro-tourism & Rural Tourism Co-operative Federation Ltd.), Konkan Bhumi Krushi Paryatan Sanstha, in Maharashtra many farmers are getting substantial amount of guidance and promotion for their agro-tourism projects. The agro-tourism destination Village inn Agro-tourism at Wardha is one such Agrotourism destination which is skillfully managed to achieve sustainable development.
(Little & Blau, 2019)	Mastatal, Costa Rica.	Community-based agrotourism has enabled agency, increased local revenue, diversified jobs, increased food security and decreased the depletion of natural resources. The practices of intergenerational and business-to-business knowledge transfer have increased social capital, expanded economic opportunities and reduced competition in the

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		community by reinforcing the concept of mutual mission and success.
(Rachmawati & Haryati, 2019)	Serang, Purbalingga, Indonesia	Strawberry fruit agrotourism introduces its potential by promoting it. Suggestions for this research are to enhance good cooperation from the tourism service government and Village Owned Enterprises (BUMDES) to develop strawberry agro-tourism by implementing and implementing planned programs.
(Martínez-Roldán & Goytia-Goyenechea, 2020)	The Marsh of the lower course of the Guadalquivir river, Seville, Spain	Even though, the place has all the touristic potential resource, one main problem in the place is the lack of a specific agrotourism policy. Therefore, the lack of interaction between farmers and the appropriate training.
(Mateo Burbano, Vite Cevallos, & Carvajal Romero, 2020)	Río Bonito Parish, Province of El Oro in Ecuador	This non-experimental cross-sectional investigation was applied and information was collected through the survey, which was applied to 344 inhabitants of sample size. Input to propose an agrotourism route that will take advantage of each space in the town to promote socio-economic growth, becoming a successful agrotourism candidate in the region for its diversity biological
(Eshun & Tichaawa, 2020)	Africa: Ghana	Using a mixed-methodological approach, semi-structured questionnaires were administered to 120 people selected from the four selected communities. The key findings from the study revealed that cocoa agrotours is a potential avenue to alleviate rural poverty and economic hardships in the country. It must however not be seen as a panacea to rural poverty alleviation. It requires efforts by locals, private and government are needed towards product development, diversification and marketing in the agrotourism niche market.
(Ismail <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	Rose Picking en Gunung Sari.	Rose picking agro-tourism development plays a significant role in increasing the welfare of famers or rural community. The results showed that the farmers managing the agro-tourism picking roses had gone through the processes of knowledge, persuasion, decisions, implementation, and confirmation before adopting innovation. The factors that influence the farmer implementer in adopting innovation in the development of rose

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picking agro-tourism are the age and frequency of farmers participating in counseling.

Source: Authors

Agritourism and sustainable rural development

Agritourism plays an important role and combines both primary industry (agriculture) and services industry (tourism). In a wider context, this combination let everybody earn. Given that is a very important strategy for the economic development. The key contribution of this type of tourism is in overall revenues, cash flow and farm profitability. Leading to alternative incomes by products and other agricultural activities (Malkanthi y Routry, 2011).

Local people and farmers see tourism and agriculture as a force which drives and boost a local economy to improve the quality of life (Torres, 2003:564). Regardless of such concept, agritourism must be planned by taking into account agricultural development itself; and this must be developed for the community (Dax et al., 2019).

In rural development process, this turns into an alternative which combines two main elements: agriculture and tourism. As contributing in social and economic context, protecting the environment and giving labor opportunities specially to local women (Akpınar, Talay, Ceylan, & Gündüz, 2004:477-483; Yuan et al., 2017: 743). Further, it contributes to local economy given that lots of products are sold to hotels and restaurants; and its complementary services such handcrafts, manuals allow job creation and gives alternatives incomes in the area involved (Tsartas 2003; Kizos & Iosifides, 2007; Marin, 2015: 163).

In European countries, houses and farms in rural areas were offered as tourist accommodation so they turned into farm tourism for vacation. This is, par excellence, a potential market called rural vacation, very attractive to families seeking for an ecological environment (Embacher, 1994:75). In short, becoming in local revenue sources and help to the conservation of landscapes and environmental management. This way, buildings in rural areas are protected and let leisure time be used in other activities (Sonnino, 2004).

On one hand, agritourism is also developed in the mountains. Focus on natural and organic trend by developing sustainable activities which must impact in a good way on people's health and environment related to economic, social and cultural aspects in our society (Ciolac et al., 2019). On the other hand, strategy must be based on strengthening ties of cooperation with products and

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services by showing identity and its value through edu-entertainment which teach in situ tourist and family (Che, Veeck, & Veeck, 2005:232-233).

Due to poverty, there is a high farmers' suicide rate in South Asia. Every year, there is bad evidence in Nepal. In particular, agriculture is very important in Nepal; it satisfies hardworking farmers' daily needs. Increase market flow, give job opportunities, persuade people and inspire agricultural communities in order to raise awareness on environmentally friendly behavior and preserve biodiversity on farms through touristic activities (Khanal & Shrestha, 2019).

On the whole, agrotourism, what the author calls it, plays a good role on sustainable rural development because it cares about natural sources and people. It helps the environment and people's values. Therefore, local people and visitors enjoy positive interactions and shared experiences (Anthopoulou et al., 1998). So, connection between agrotourism and environmental protection is generally positive (Aikaterini et al., 2001).

Methodology

Based on two steps: First of all, there was a systematic literature review. SCOPUS, WEB OF SCIENCE and GOOGLE SCHOLAR were the database. English key words like "agrotourism" and "agritourism"; and Spanish word such "agroturismo" were revised. Secondly, a qualitative analysis was applied to the documents obtained from the first step. 55 papers were revised after the selection of key words, these were published between 1994 and 2020. Each scientific article and review one were assessed according to the title proposed.

Conclusions

Lastly, agritourism is regarded as one type of rural tourism and can be defined a sustainable activity that is developed in rural areas where has necessary features to offer such as touristic services which allow tourists to have a lively experience on culture, rural traditions. Be involved directly and have the chance to do daily rural chores by giving spaces for leisure and enjoyment and being in contact with nature.

Hence, there are many initiatives on local agritourism business in many countries. The aim is to promote sustainability in economic and environmental activities. Therefore, it is seen such strategy

to mitigate migration from rural areas to urban ones by developing economic sustainability, enhancing job creation and affirming local identity.

All in all, in rural development process, this turns into an alternative which combines two main elements: agriculture and tourism. As contributing in social and economic context, protecting the environment and giving labor opportunities especially to local women.

Conflicts of interests

The authors affirm that there are no conflicts of interest.

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