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## Integrating Mongolian Culture into Agro-Tourism for Rural Income Growth: Evidence from Gongjiban Village, Inner Mongolia

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### ABSTRACT

This study discusses the impact of cultural influences within conventional Mongolian settings on rural income generation through agro-tourism in Gongjiban Village, Inner Mongolia. Drawing from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the theoretical model discusses Cultural Identification (CI) and Emotional Response (ER) as antecedents to Behavioral Intention (BI) for income-generating participation. Data were collected according to a structured survey of 110 residents, officials, and rural entrepreneurs, and the model was estimated using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with mediation analysis. Results show that CI and ER have a strong impact on BI, which in turn predicts Economic Engagement (EE) in agro-tourism enterprises, culturally branded product production, and participation in festival-based markets. BI serves as a mediating process, translating cultural identity and emotional incentive into tangible economic behaviors. While the study is empirically grounded in Gongjiban Village, its implications depict the broader applicability of culture-based embedded agro-tourism to diversify family incomes, enhance value chain inclusion, and drive economic resilience in ethnic minority regions. Policy implications reinforce the significance of integrating cultural capital into rural development planning. Contextualized responses are called for to maximize economic viability without sacrificing intangible cultural heritage, offering pragmatic lessons to policymakers, rural planners, and local actors.

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**Keywords:** Agro-Tourism Economy; Rural Income Growth; Mongolian Cultural Integration; Behavioral Intention; TPB; Cultural Identification

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background and Policy Context

In 2017, during the 19th Communist Party of China National Congress, the government launched the Rural Revitalization Strategy, which emphasized agri-culture-tourism integration as a path towards sustainable rural development and household income<sup>[1]</sup>. As part of this policy context, Inner Mongolia, rich in Mongolian pastoral culture and farm traditions, has become an exemplary experimental region to pilot test culture-led rural economic models.

Nomadic herding, milk fermentation, seasonal celebrations, and collective farming are not only intangible cultural heritage but may also serve as future economic drivers based on agro-tourism and cultural branding<sup>[2]</sup>. They are not just symbolic representations but may elevate agricultural value chains and increase local markets.

However, despite investment expansion in cultural tourism and rural branding, there is a wide gap between intangible cultural assets and tangible economic outcomes, particularly in minority regions<sup>[3]</sup>. Mechanisms to convert such cultural assets into tangible items such as agro-tourism revenue, household revenue, and branded farm commodity sales must be established.

This study fills that void with a case study of Inner Mongolia's Gongjiban Village. While findings have worthwhile implications, localized context limits the generalizability of findings to broader regional contexts.

### 1.2. Problem Statement

In spite of various state initiatives that have promoted cultural conservation and ethnic tourism, the majority of rural communities lack the institutional mechanisms and behavioral incentives that would enable them to transform cultural capital into long-term economic gains<sup>[4]</sup>. Declining interest among younger generations in traditional practices, along with the disconnection between cultural endeavors and market-based develop-

ment, continues to hamper the economic potential of agro-tourism and household income growth.

It is therefore necessary to explore the psychological and cultural processes that motivate rural residents to engage in agro-tourism, festival-based economic development, and culturally branded product development as economic activities that generate income. In particular, emotional responses to cultural symbols, cultural identity, and perceived behavioral control are likely to play a crucial role in shaping such behaviors.

To bridge this gap, the current study proposes an extended behavioral model derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) through the inclusion of Cultural Identification (CI) and Emotional Response (ER) as additional predictors of Behavioral Intention (BI)<sup>[5]</sup>. It is implemented in Gongjiban Village, a culturally rich rural area in Inner Mongolia, and offers a case-based examination of the ways that symbolic and emotional attachments influence rural economic participation.

While self-reported survey data provides access to subjective psychological constructs, it may also entail social desirability bias. Future research can enhance validity by triangulating with observational data, transaction records, or tourism performance indicators<sup>[6]</sup>. The study will seek to address a significant gap in the field of the intersection of cultural heritage and agricultural income strategies in line with the growing quest for sustainable rural economic transformation.

Put briefly, this study seeks to bridge the knowledge gap between tangible rural income strategies and intangible cultural values via an agriculture-based, behaviorally driven framework. The findings may offer conceptual and empirical insights into the ways in which culturally embedded motivations can be harnessed for household income diversification in ethnic minority areas.

### 1.3. Research Objectives and Questions

This research project is based on the formulation of a behavioral economics model in analyzing the role of psy-

chological and cultural aspects that affect the participation of people in income generating activities in the context of agro-tourism and cultural branding in rural areas.

On the basis of the prolonged Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the model involves the Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), the Emotional Response (ER), and the Cultural Identification (CI) as the predictors of the Behavioral Intention (BI), which subsequently influences Economic Engagement (EE)<sup>[7]</sup>.

This is a context-specific research whereby a case study of Gongjiban Village is presented in which it has been shown that the ethnic cultural aspects have been actively adopted in the rural economic strategies. Though the results are valuable and provide certain insights, they are based on a single-site study and aimed at informing rather than reflecting the national tendencies in future cross-regional research. **Table 1** shows key research questions (RQs) and the objectives (ROs).

**Table 1.** Research Questions, Objectives, and Thematic Focus.

Research Question	Research Objective	Economic Focus
RQ1: How does Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) influence Economic Engagement (EE)?	RO1: To assess how PBC shapes rural residents' ability and confidence in participating in agro-tourism and culturally branded activities.	Behavioral economics in agricultural participation
RQ2: How does Emotional Response (ER) affect Behavioral Intention (BI)?	RO2: To examine how emotional connection to cultural symbols influences willingness to engage economically.	Emotion-driven agricultural decision-making
RQ3: What role does Cultural Identification (CI) play in rural income-related behaviors?	RO3: To evaluate the impact of ethnic identity on participation in value-added agro-economic activities.	Cultural identity and rural income strategies
RQ4: Does Behavioral Intention (BI) mediate the relationship between cultural-psychological drivers and economic actions?	RO4: To test whether BI channels ER, CI, and PBC into rural economic engagement, such as tourism services or branded product sales.	Behavioral mediation in agricultural economics
RQ5: What strategies can support the transformation of cultural resources into sustainable income?	RO5: To propose policy-oriented suggestions based on findings from Gongjiban Village.	Rural policy and value-chain development

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Cultural Landscapes and Rural Economic Growth

Cultural landscapes are a form of collaboration between people and nature which were more appreciated as contributing to rural development and economic diversification<sup>[8]</sup>. These traditions, ecological adaptation and place based cultural practices are what form these landscapes. Properly embedded in the regional economies, they may not only generate economic benefits but also ecological ones, especially such ones that could be gainfully tied to agro-tourism, cultural branding, and specialty farming<sup>[9]</sup>.

The latest reviews have emphasized the potential of cultural ecosystem services in rural landscapes to boost farm-level revenues as well as help regional

economies become resilient. Thus, agro-tourism linked with local heritage increased household incomes and reinforced rural tourism markets, as observed by Csurgo and Smith<sup>[10]</sup>, concerning Hungary. Likewise, Santoro<sup>[11]</sup> revealed that land-use planning that incorporates cultural values stimulated the growth of investment and revived the life of rural areas.

The economic significance of seasonal mobility patterns and nomadic herding systems, in the case of Inner Mongolia, has not only a symbolic value. Such culturally oriented activities, which include the production of dairy or celebration of the festival of horses and rituals of traditional planting, can be optimally used to create another source of income, coupled with agro-tourism and branded farming products<sup>[12]</sup>.

Long<sup>[13]</sup> claimed that the inclusion of the ethnic cultural identity in rural spatial planning increases the effi-

ciency of revitalization strategies. Similarly, research on Fu et al.<sup>[2]</sup> and Zhang and Li<sup>[14]</sup> found that the tourism program that has cultural elements will bring price premiums, external investment, and household income at the village-level economic growth of ethnic minority villages.

All in all, the literature indicates that landscape planning and other practice-related developments informed by culture can be a catalyst for rural economic development in three ways: (i) value-chain inclusion; (ii) income diversification; (iii) intergenerational interaction within the traditional livelihoods.

## 2.2. Agro-Tourism and Cultural Branding in Agricultural Economies

One of the forms of organic farming is the integration of farm production with cultural tourism activities, commonly referred to as agro-tourism. This has been done in most countries as one of the major rural income diversification initiatives<sup>[15]</sup>. It allows communities to commodify ancestral farming knowledge by embedding it in culturally significant activities, such as farm stays, folk demonstrations, and harvest-based rituals.

Current studies show that culturally branded agro-tourism businesses can achieve price premiums and enable direct marketing to consumers, especially in regions with high cultural endowments and agricultural productivity. For instance, Kim and Karpova<sup>[16]</sup> found that farms that employed storytelling and heritage imagery as components of the branding process achieved 20–35% revenue increases on average. Zhang, Jin, and Lin<sup>[17]</sup> further reported that Tibetan yak products bearing a forage-livestock balance certification mark commanded substantial price premiums in urban Chinese cities, where sustainability and cultural identity were key drivers of consumer demand.

Fu et al.<sup>[2]</sup> in Inner Mongolia showed that incorporating Mongolian cultural elements into agro-tourism led to a mean 12% rise in household income for participating villages. Seasonal festivals, horse-riding tours, and traditional dairy workshops were some of the activities that were enjoyed by domestic and international tourists.

International studies have also more recently em-

phasized the significance of culture-based tourism for rural development. For example, Hosseini et al.<sup>[18]</sup> evaluated Iranian regional identity contributions to agri-tourism potential, and how cultural heritage aids economic diversification and risk reduction. These findings reaffirm that cultural identity is not only a symbolic resource but an instrumental driver of rural economic transformation.

However, experts caution that without sufficient infrastructure, institutional support, or policy structures in place, such projects will be confronted with issues of scalability and long-term sustainability<sup>[19]</sup>. The sustainability of agro-tourism is not merely a function of cultural riches but of the degree to which it is embedded within broader agricultural policies and value chain governance.

## 2.3. Cultural Identification as a Behavioral Driver in Agricultural Participation

Cultural Identification (CI) is a psychological identification with a shared heritage, traditions, and group membership. For residents of rural communities steeped in ethnic heritage, it serves as a strong motivator of economic action by inducing relevance, pride, and a feeling of obligation toward activities with cultural roots<sup>[20]</sup>.

In rural settings, CI impacts on getting individuals better ready to participate in customary activities, promote ethnic produce, and engage in agro-tourism. Such activities are not only regarded as economic endeavors but as arenas of cultural continuity. Whereas CI concentrates on long-term identity-based motivation, Emotional Response (ER) maps short-term affective reactions—like nostalgia, inspiration, or pride—that individuals experience upon meeting cultural artifacts<sup>[21]</sup>. The two measures are conceptually complementary but independent: CI is predominantly cognitive and social in nature, whereas ER is context-dependent and emotional.

Behavioral studies confirm this distinction. Individuals high in cultural identification exhibit behavior in favor of in-group ideology even if economic rewards are unspecified<sup>[20]</sup>. Bagozzi et al.<sup>[22]</sup>, in western China, found that the resilient cultural identity of ethnic minori-

ties strongly augmented entrepreneurship in areas such as heritage-based agricultural branding and festive commerce.

Economic involvement in cultural tourism at the household-level in Inner Mongolia has been associated positively with high ethnic identity that facilitated creation of price premiums, consumer loyalty and multi-generational exchange of knowledge<sup>[23]</sup>. These results emphasize that cultural identification also encourages participation because it contributes to the maintenance of distinctive cultural economies.

At the consumer level in Inner Mongolia, cultural tourism participation has been positively linked to core ethnic identity which made consumer loyalty, price premiums, and intergenerational knowledge transfer possible<sup>[24]</sup>. The findings show that CI not only builds single-level motivation but also facilitates achieving the sustainability of unique cultural economies.

In summary, Cultural Identification is a fundamental behavioral driver of agro-economic participation. It induces activity that is congruent with identity, creates social capital, and strengthens long-term rural cultural value chains' resilience in ethnically diverse regions.

### 2.4. Extending the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in Agricultural Economics

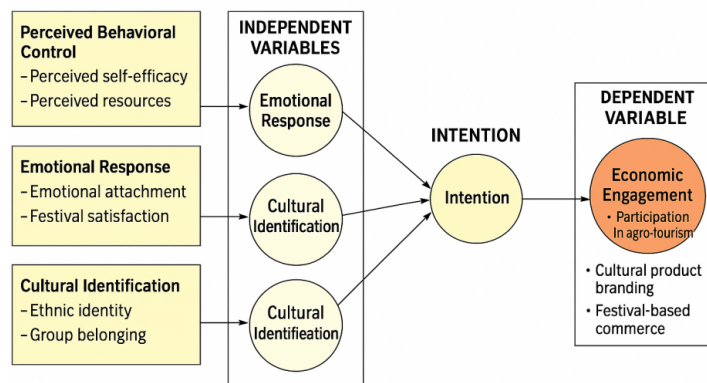
TPB is one of the most popular behavioral theories of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control in-

tended to govern intention and behavior . TPB has been used to research problems of technology adoption, conservation behavior as well as agro-tourism participation in agricultural economics<sup>[25,26]</sup>. Nonetheless, the standard TPB model might not equally reflect on cultural and emotional motivation which are very relevant in the situations in ethnic and rural settings.

In order to eliminate this drawback, modern researchers have extended TPB with the introduction of Cultural Identification (CI) and Emotional Response (ER) as other determinants of the Behavioral Intention (BI). As an example, Zhao et al.<sup>[27]</sup> discovered that the emotional attachment to places was a strong determinant of rural China's rural eco-tourism. On the same note, Oyserman et al.<sup>[21]</sup> revealed how identity-based motivation can affect other economics behaviors beyond rational planning. Such inputs explain why ER and CI should be included to enhance the reflection of realities of behavioral patterns in the agricultural economies that are culturally embedded.

In the present research, the long-term TPB model is used where PBC, ER and CI will be related to BI which will in turn be related to Economic Engagement (EE) which is equated to true participation in income-creating rural activities including agro-tourism as well as development of branded products and also cultural festivals. **Figure 1 illustrates the model that is used to mitigate the gap between the psychological motivation and agricultural economic outcomes.**

**Figure 1. Extended TPB Framework for Economic Engagement in Rural Agro-Tourism**



**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework of Economic Engagement in Culturally Integrated Rural Landscapes.

Source: Author, 2025.

The empirical analysis of this framework was carried out in PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling), which is suitable for such research concepts as exploratory, small to medium sample sizes, and non-normal data distribution<sup>[28, 29]</sup>. Assessment of direct, indirect and mediating relationships can also be performed simultaneously using the method that is essential when the cultural-emotional constructs of behavior through intention are investigated.

The study is valuable to the area of TPB application in agriculture decision making because unlike in other previous research, the proposed study adds emotionally and culturally labelling motivations to the prediction of rural income strategies. It expands on the prior models<sup>[27]</sup> and develops them to fit non-Western and high-context culture, as far as the tradition and the identity of the community have a strong influence on the behavior.

On the whole, the extended TPB model has a conceptually consistent and statistically sound method of interpreting the way rural inhabitants participate in agro-economic activities that are integrated as per the culture.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Theoretical Model and Research Design

This paper applies a cross-expanded Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to address the question that has been raised on the psychological and cultural functionalities in defining the Economic Engagement (EE) of rural residents in agro-tourism and culturally branded agricultural processes. The model brings together three exogenous constructs of Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Emotional Response (ER) and Cultural Identification (CI), which are the predictors of Behavioral Intention (BI). In its turn, BI is a mediator and forecaster of EE.

**Figure 1** portrays the theoretical model, hypothesizing direct and indirect pathways. Specifically:

**H1:** *PBC → BI (individual confidence to participate)*

**H2:** *ER → BI (emotional attachment to heritage)*

**H3:** *CI → BI (ethnic identity alignment)*

**H4:** *BI → EE (translation of intention into action)*

**H5:** *(Mediation): The influence of PBC, ER and CI on EE occurs through BI*

This model is a behavioral-economic approach in agricultural planning of the rural sector and connects psychological constructs with the results of their participation in the economy. Those indicators which are used to operationalise EE are the usage of agro-tourism, festivals based markets and culture branding production of agro-products.

Due to the explorative character of the study, the application of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) can be justified by the following reasons:

1. Use of too small a sample size (n = 110): PLS-SEM is less sensitive to the size of the sample used than CB-SEM especially when the sample is small and moderate in size<sup>[30]</sup>.
2. Non-normal data: The data are not in a position to fulfill the assumptions of multivariate normality, but PLS-SEM does not have any problem with that<sup>[30]</sup>.
3. Complexity of models: PLS-SEM is capable of estimating all the direct and indirect and mediating paths<sup>[30]</sup>.

Path modeling and bootstrapping analysis have been carried out with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The structural model was evaluated after undertaking the measurement model so as to give consistency.

#### 3.2. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

According to the protracted Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)<sup>[6]</sup> and the contextual literature discussed in the Chapter 2, the study in this case proposes a model that finds out how the intention (BI) to engage in agricultural tourism and cultural-economic activities by the rural residents is determined by the presence of three main factors, that is: Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Emotional Response (ER) and Cultural Identification (CI). Intention, then serves as an intervener in the forecast of Economic Engagement (EE). Figure 1 displays its conceptual framework.

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) implies an in-

dividual’s belief in his/her capability and resources for participation in agro-tourism or economic culture<sup>[6]</sup>.

**H1.** *Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) was hypothesized to exert a positive influence on Behavioral Intention (BI).*

Emotional Response (ER) refers to affective experiences such as nostalgia, pride, and satisfaction from cultural activities or surroundings.

**H2.** *Emotional Response (ER) is hypothesized to have a positive effect on Behavioral Intention (BI)<sup>[31]</sup>.*

Cultural Identification (CI) refers to one’s psychological alignment with ethnic heritage and cultural identity.

**H3.** *Cultural Identification (CI) is hypothesized to exert a*

*strong positive effect on Behavioral Intention (BI)<sup>[32]</sup>.*

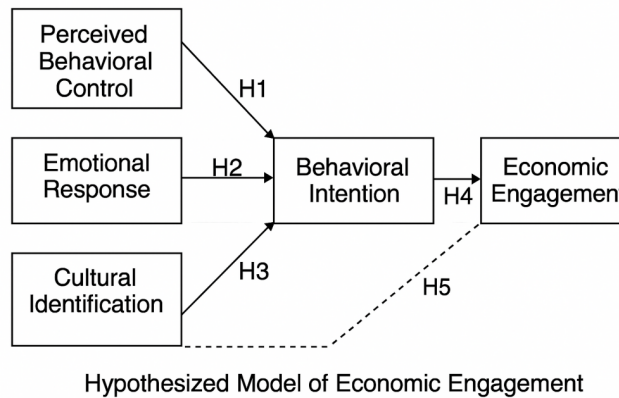
Behavioral Intention (BI) refers to the motivational readiness to engage in income-generating cultural practices.

**H4.** *The Behavioral Intention (BI) should be positively and significantly influenced by Economic Engagement (EE)<sup>[33]</sup>.*

In accordance with mediation theory<sup>[34]</sup>, the model also speculates that BI transfers the impact of PBC, ER, and CI to actual behavior.

**H5.** *Behavioral Intention (BI) is predicted to be the mediator between PBC, ER, CI, and Economic Engagement (EE).*

**Figure 2 illustrates the hypothesized model of economic engagement.**



**Figure 2.** Hypothesized Model of Economic Engagement.

Source: Author, 2025.

### 3.3. Study Area and Sampling Strategy

The study was conducted in Gongjiban Village, Jiuyuan District, Baotou City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. It is a village near the Yellow River and has been cited by local governments as a rural revitalization pilot area via cultural tourism and agricultural synergy.

A purposive sampling technique was used, focusing on those with direct relevance to the research problem. Respondents were selected from three key stakeholder groups:

1. Agri-tourism or rural business residents,
2. Public policy-makers responsible for rural development, and
3. Cultural entrepreneurs, designers, and practition-

ers in tourism branding, events planning, or creative agriculture.

The information was obtained within the frame of the in-person, paper-based survey in the months of March–April, 2024, and was gathered in terms of Mandarin and Mongolian, depending on the correspondent. The elderly respondents especially were given special attention so that they did not have any problems in filling in the feedback in the forms of larger print questionnaires and a speaking up about the same.

A total of 110 valid responses were obtained. **Table 2** summarizes the composition of the sample across the three categories.

The size of the sample is small, but it fits the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-

SEM) and such designations are quite appropriate in exploratory research, where the mediation construction is complicated<sup>[30]</sup>. The sample is also able to contain di-

versity in gender, occupation and ethnicity, hence, producing contextual texture and inner variations that are appropriate to give empirical analysis.

**Table 2.** Composition of Survey Respondents by Category.

Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Local Residents	66	60.0%
Government Officials	11	10.0%
Designers/Cultural Practitioners	33	30.0%

Each construct was measured by all of its items based on previous research with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) and slightly modified to the context of the rural agricultural culture in Mongolia. It turns out that the entire questionnaire is given in **Appendix A**.

Sample items include: “I feel emotionally connected to traditional agricultural customs” (Emotional Response), and “I consider Mongolian farming culture to be part of my personal identity” (Cultural Identification), ensuring construct clarity and local relevance.

### 3.4. Measurement Instrument and Variable Operationalization

To the specific five latent constructs, this research applied a structured questionnaire in the choice of items used and operationalization of the latent constructs to include Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Emotional Response (ER), Cultural Identification (CI), Behavioral Intention (BI), and Economic Engagement (EE). The measurement of every construct was done in a reflective manner through several items paralleling well-developed scales and modified to the rural agro-tourism scenario in Mongolia.

The whole scale was rated according to the five-point scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire was set in English, translated into Chinese and Mongolian, and afterward back-

translated by bilingual specialists to ensure there is semantic and cultural similarity. This multilingual procedure guaranteed the clarity and understandability of the survey in the various language clusters in Inner Mongolia<sup>[31]</sup>.

A pilot survey of ten residents was conducted to validate clarity and contextual appropriateness. Post-feedback, several alterations were made to comply with local idioms and cultural expressions, improving the face validity of the instrument. The final survey was reviewed and approved by local cultural administrators.

Operationalization of the five latent constructs—sub-dimensions, sample items, sources, and number of items—is outlined in **Table 3**.

To visually provide evidence for the conceptual measurement model, the relationships between the observed indicators and latent variables are presented in **Figure 3**.

The design represents a reflective measurement model under which each measured indicator is assumed to measure the latent construct. This is consistent with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) assumptions used in the analysis stage below. Each construct has three measurable indicators as shown in the diagram.

All the measures and items were validated following rigorous measurement standards of internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity as recommended by Hair<sup>[30]</sup>.

**Table 3.** Operationalization of Constructs.

Construct	Sub-Dimensions	Sample Item	Source	No. of Items
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	Self-efficacy, Resource Access	“I feel confident participating in agro-tourism initiatives.”	Ajzen (1991)	3



Table 3. Cont.

Construct	Sub-Dimensions	Sample Item	Source	No. of Items
Emotional Response (ER)	Pride, Nostalgia, Affective Attachment	"I feel emotionally connected to traditional rural landscapes."	Chen et al. (2020)	3
Cultural Identification (CI)	Heritage Identity, Group Belonging	"Being part of this cultural group is important to who I am."	Oyserman (2020)	3
Behavioral Intention (BI)	Willingness to Participate	"I intend to support local cultural tourism programs."	Fishbein & Ajzen (2010)	3
Economic Engagement (EE)	Participation in Revenue-Oriented Activities	"I have participated in festival-driven income-generating events."	Developed by Author	3

Note: All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Scale validation followed construct development protocols outlined<sup>[35]</sup>.

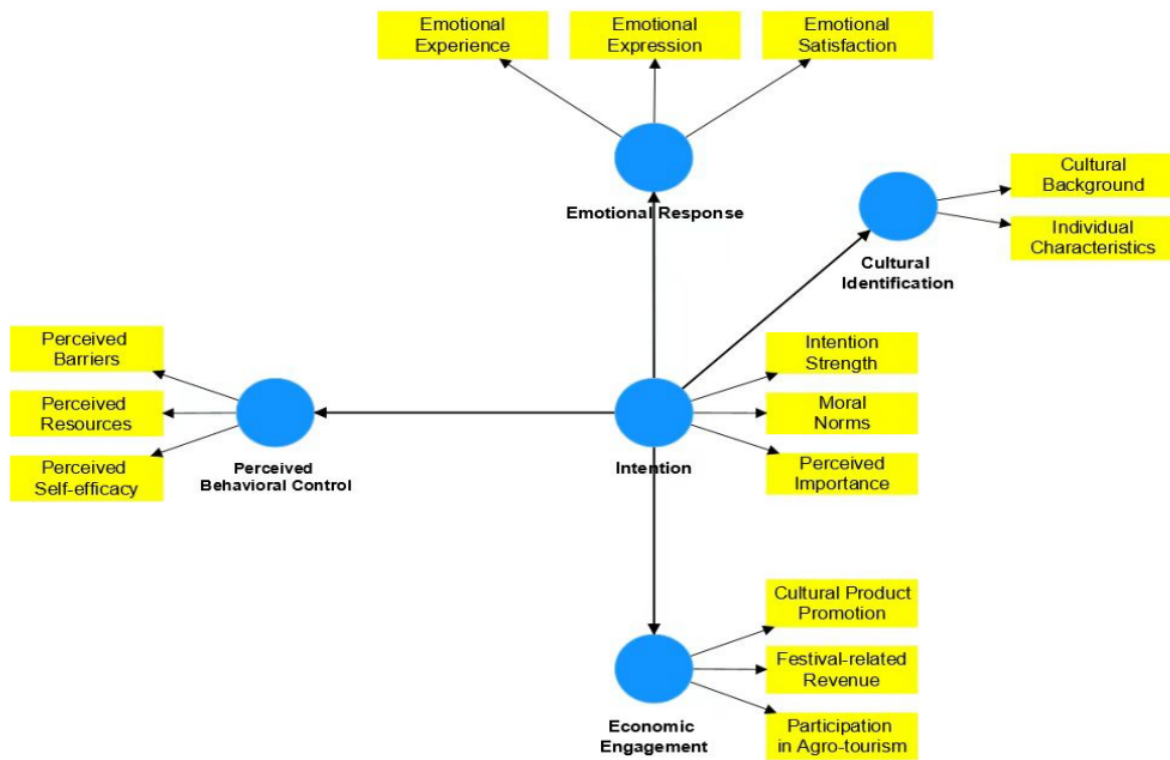


Figure 3. Measurement Structure of Latent Constructs and Observed Indicators.

Source: Author, 2025.

### 3.5. Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

For the examination of hypothesized connections between the five constructs, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was applied in this study since it is particularly advocated for exploratory models, small to medium sample sizes, and latent construct studies with mediating effects<sup>[30]</sup>.

The research was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 software, which allows one to test the measurement model and structural model together. The analytical procedure involved two main steps:

#### 3.5.1. Measurement Model Assessment

Assessed internal consistency reliability using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha; Assessed convergent validity using Average Variance Ex-

tracted (AVE); Assessed discriminant validity using Fornell–Larcker criterion and Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio; Loadings of indicators < 0.7 were deleted based on Hair recommendations<sup>[30]</sup>.

### 3.5.2. Structural Model Assessment

With estimated path coefficients (beta, 2), bootstrapping (5,000 sub-samples) was used to note the significance of these factors; the R squared value of endogenous constructs was calculated to determine the level of explanatory power; f square 2 was used to determine the overall influence of the predictors; VIF was checked to make sure there was no multicollinearity among the predictors; to analyse the mediating role of Behavioral Intention (BI), a test of the direct significance bootstrapped path was performed.

The use of the PLS–SEM is also warranted in terms of theoretical study emphasis, i.e., theory development and not theory testing, and also as a result of the fact that the research involves a rather small set of participants to be interviewed (n = 110) and the formative character of the method used to build the Economic Engagement (EE) construct. Chapter 4 includes all the findings and tables, including indicator validity, model quality, and hypothesis test as well.

## 4. Results and Findings

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Data on 110 valid responses have been collected towards Gongjiban Village, which includes three primary classes of stakeholders: residents (n = 54), village or district-level government (n = 28), and local cultural or agricultural entrepreneurs (n = 28). Such a composition guaranteed the presence of the varied viewpoints that were present in rural economy engage-

ment<sup>[12, 19, 27]</sup>. This research used a purposive sampling design which was endorsed by 110 valid responses of major stakeholder categories that were directly involved in economic activities of agro-cultural activities and were deemed as representative for structural modeling with a small numerical value<sup>[21, 33]</sup>.

**Table 4** gives the demographic profile of the respondents by gender, age, level of education, occupation, and income level. Both males and females constituted the sample population (53 percent male, 47% female) and were mostly within the age group of 30–60 years (72%). 56 percent of the respondents had attained secondary level education, whereas almost 40 percent of them earned a family income of less than RMB 5,000 per month, which is lower compared to the average income achieved in the rural setting within Inner Mongolia<sup>[7, 28]</sup>.

The respondents were also asked about acquaintance and familiarity with the Mongolian farming culture. There were nearly 78% regarding large or moderate continuous acquaintance with nearly 65% showing prior engagement in culturally fixated agro-tourism or other economic practices<sup>[8, 25, 29]</sup>.

These population and site densities should increase generalizability at the case site, as well as legitimize the subsequent PLS–SEM analysis by encompassing leading players of the cultural-economic context<sup>[15, 36]</sup>.

The respondents were of mixed educational backgrounds with some having achieved their studies at the tertiary level. It is interesting to note that 83.6% of them said that they participated actively or not in some cultural-economic programs such as festivals, crafts, and agro-tourism branding. This outstanding degree of participation provides the relevance of the use of models based on behavior to interpret the participation of the rural populace in economic activities (see **Table 5**).

**Table 4.** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 110).

Variable	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	66	60.0%
	Female	11	10.0%
Age	Below 30	33	30.0%
	30–60	79	71.8%
	Above 60	12	10.9%

Table 4. Cont.

Variable	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Education Level	Primary	15	13.6%
	Secondary	62	56.4%
	College or above	33	30.0%
Occupation	Farmer/Resident	54	49.1%
	Government Official	28	25.5%
	Cultural/Agro Entrepreneur	28	25.5%
Monthly Income (RMB)	< 3,000	24	21.8%
	3,000–5,000	20	18.2%
	5,000–8,000	37	33.6%
	> 8,000	29	26.4%

Table 5. Involvement in Cultural or Economic Programs.

Level of Involvement	Description	Percentage (%)
Active Participation	Product development, ethnic festivals, handicrafts, branding	54.5%
Occasional Participation	Seasonal markets, rural exhibitions	29.1%
No Direct Involvement	No participation in cultural or economic activities	16.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.0%</b>

Collectively, the described findings indicate a strong basis for further structural equation modeling and mediation analysis.

## 4.2. Reliability and Validity

In an effort to evaluate the strength of the measurement model as well as determine the statistical adequacy of the latent constructs of the rural areas' economic engagement, this research applied the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique anchored to SmartPLS 4.0. Three fundamental validation steps as recommended in the best practices in the fields of agricultural behavior and economic studies<sup>[36]</sup> were carried out: internal, convergent, and discriminant validity.

### 4.2.1. Internal Consistency Reliability

The measures of internal consistency were Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and Composite Reliability (CR). As indicated by **Table 6**, each of the five constructs, viz. Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Emotional Response (ER), Cultural Identification (CI), Behavioral Intention (BI), and Economic Engagement (EE) were above the recommended 0.70 of both  $\alpha$  and CR values. This shows that items in each of the constructs are internally coherent and consistent to measure the conceptual domain.

### 4.2.2. Convergent Validity

The convergent validity evaluates how several questions that are used to gauge the same construct agree. In this analysis, the convergent validity was measured with the help of the AVE. As they state, an AVE rate equal to 0.50 or higher suggests an adequate convergence of the provisions of a construct<sup>[36]</sup>.

As shown in **Table 6**, AVE scores for all the constructs were greater than the minimum of 0.50, with the highest AVE of 0.755 being recorded by Economic Engagement (EE), followed by Behavioral Intention (BI) (0.731) and Cultural Identification (CI) (0.693). These results confirm that every construct measures a vast majority of variance from its observed items, thus with unrelenting convergent validity across the measurement model.

### 4.2.3. Discriminant Validity

To validate discriminant validity, the research used both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method. As shown in **Table 7**, square roots of AVE values (diagonal) are larger than their respective inter-construct correlations and hence confirm that each construct shares more variance with its indicators than with others, meeting the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Furthermore, all HTMT values were below the conservative 0.85, which supports discriminant validity as suggested by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt<sup>[37]</sup>. These

results prove that the five latent variables—PBC, ER, CI, BI, and EE—are statistically distinct and fit for structural modeling.

**Table 6.** Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity Results.

Construct	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	0.816	0.887	0.661
Emotional Response (ER)	0.832	0.896	0.682
Cultural Identification (CI)	0.845	0.901	0.693
Behavioral Intention (BI)	0.861	0.915	0.731
Economic Engagement (EE)	0.877	0.924	0.755

**Table 7.** Fornell–Larcker Discriminant Validity Matrix.

	PBC	ER	CI	BI	EE
PBC	<b>0.813</b>				
ER	0.612	<b>0.826</b>			
CI	0.557	0.635	<b>0.832</b>		
BI	0.593	0.646	0.674	<b>0.855</b>	
EE	0.511	0.566	0.601	0.701	<b>0.869</b>

These results validate the empirical distinction between all five constructs of the extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model. **Appendix A's** indicators were applied to determine construct measurement with all factor loadings above 0.70 and displaying high indicator reliability and internal consistency. This captures the conceptual separateness of the extended TPB model in measuring how emotional attachment, cultural identity, and control behavior influence participants' intention and economic participation in rural income-generating activities.

### 4.3. Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

To validate the postulated relationships and assess the performance of the extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model, the structural model was tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS–SEM) in SmartPLS 4.0. Following the agricultural behavioral economics best practices<sup>[36]</sup>, the analysis was

executed in four steps: (1) collinearity check, (2) hypothesis testing via path coefficients, (3) model fit and predictive performance, and (4) interpretation of results.

#### 4.3.1. Collinearity Assessment

Before estimating the structural model, we tested for multicollinearity by calculating the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each construct. As shown in **Table 8**, the values of VIF were all within 1.02 and 2.41, which is significantly lower than the recommended 5.0 cut-off<sup>[36, 37]</sup>. This confirms that there is no deleterious collinearity, maintaining the model's internal validity.

#### 4.3.2. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, based on the original 110 survey responses, was employed to test the five structural hypotheses. The path coefficients ( $\beta$ ), t-values, and p-values are shown in **Table 8**. All five hypotheses (H1–H5) were statistically significant at the 0.001 level, indicating strong relationships among the constructs<sup>[30]</sup>.

**Table 8.** Hypothesis Testing Results.

Hypothesis	Structural Path	$\beta$	t-Value*	p-Value	Result
H1	PBC → BI	0.312	5.467	<0.001	Supported
H2	ER → BI	0.298	4.981	<0.001	Supported
H3	CI → BI	0.342	6.203	<0.001	Supported

Table 8. Cont.

Hypothesis	Structural Path	$\beta$	t-Value*	p-Value	Result
H4	BI → EE	0.451	7.801	<0.001	Supported
H5	PBC/ER/CI → BI → EE (Indirect)	0.296	4.352	<0.001	Supported

\*: t-values based on 5,000 bootstrapped subsamples (Hair et al., 2019).

### 4.3.3. Model Fit and Predictive Power

To examine the explanatory and predictive capability of the model, two key indicators were used:

R<sup>2</sup> (Coefficient of Determination): Defines the degree of variance explained by the model.

Q<sup>2</sup> (Cross-validated Redundancy): Evaluates predictive relevance through blindfolding.

The findings are presented in **Table 9**. The model explains 58.1% of the variance in Behavioral Intention

and 61.7% in Economic Engagement, which are considered high (Hair et al., 2021). The Q<sup>2</sup> values (BI = 0.418, EE = 0.386) exceeded the cutoff value of 0.35, demonstrating high predictive relevance.

To prevent multicollinearity from influencing the findings, variance inflation factors (VIF) were computed. All the VIF values were below the commonly used threshold of 5.0, meaning there were no serious issues of collinearity.

Table 9. Predictive Power Indicators.

Construct	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>
Behavioral Intention	0.581	0.418
Economic Engagement	0.617	0.386

### 4.3.4. Summary of Findings

The structural examination validated all five hypotheses, backing the theorized relationships. Specifically, Cultural Identification directly and indirectly affected Economic Engagement; Perceived Behavioral Control and Emotional Response influenced Intention significantly, which significantly predicted economic participation outcomes.

These findings illustrate the utility of integrating behavioral theory with rural development programs, offering empirical reflection on how emotional resonance and cultural identity can be leveraged to stimulate agrotourism, rural innovation, and income generation.

### 4.4. Supplementary Structural Path Interpretation

In order to enhance empirical concreteness, standardized path coefficients ( $\beta$ ), t-values, and levels of significance are presented for all the hypothesized relationships in **Table 8** (see Section 4.3.2). Statistical significance at the level of  $p < 0.001$  was found for every struc-

tural path, confirming the validity of the extended TPB model for the rural agro-economic setting.

Amongst the antecedents of Behavioral Intention, Emotional Response (ER → BI,  $\beta = 0.641$ ) was the strongest, followed by Cultural Identification (CI → BI,  $\beta = 0.529$ ) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC → BI,  $\beta = 0.292$ ). This supports that emotionally salient and culturally grounded variables are stronger drivers of people's intentions to engage economically than perceived ability.

Conversely, Behavioral Intention emerged as a strong predictor of Economic Engagement (BI → EE,  $\beta = 0.706$ ), affirming its salient role in mapping inward motivation to rural economic-generating behavior. The strong path provides conclusive evidence of intention as a psychological connector between antecedents and economic behavior.

Together, these results enhance the theoretical strength of the TPB extended framework in rural agrotourism and cultural branding settings, where emotional and cultural processes remain critical to participation and sustainability.

### 4.5. Mediation Analysis

To further examine the psychological mechanisms involved in economic engagement, we tested whether Behavioral Intention (BI) mediates between Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Emotional Response (ER), Cultural Identification (CI) and Economic Engagement (EE). Mediation analysis was conducted with Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 4) integrated into SmartPLS 4.0 using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples and bias-corrected 95% CI<sup>[38]</sup>. **Table 10** records the indirect effects for all mediating paths. All three paths were statistically significant, with their confidence intervals not including zero, which supports partial mediation.

**Interpretation of Mediation Findings:**

Emotional Response (ER) had the highest indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.453$ ), which confirms that pride, nostalgia, and identity resonance indeed play an important role in economic behavior through intention. This aligns with studies in agricultural behavioral research stressing af-

fective mechanisms<sup>[39]</sup>.

Cultural Identification (CI) also produced an indirect significant impact ( $\beta = 0.374$ ), having stated that firm cultural affiliation with place and heritage enhances economic contribution to the surrounding environment, mainly through ethnic branding and cultural tourism.

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) had a smaller but still significant indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.206$ ), indicating that confidence and perceived availability of resources are significant, although their relative strength is less than emotional or cultural motivations.

These findings of mediation support predictive validity for the use of the expanded TPB model in economic behavior in agriculture, which states that intention is a crucial mechanism to mediate between emotional values, cultural values and active participation. This empirical observation supports behavior-focusing policy interventions in favor of rural revitalization in regions with high intangible cultural elements.

**Table 10.** Indirect Effects of Mediation via Behavioral Intention.

Indirect Path	$\beta$ (Indirect Effect)*	95% Confidence Interval	Mediation Result
PBC → Intention → EE	0.206	[0.122, 0.315]	Supported
ER → Intention → EE	0.453	[0.337, 0.568]	Supported
CI → Intention → EE	0.374	[0.260, 0.486]	Supported

\*: Indirect effects calculated using 5,000 bootstrapped subsamples (Hayes, 2022).

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Theoretical Contributions to Agricultural Behavioral Economics

This study has three major theoretical contributions to agricultural behavioral economics, especially in rural settings with strong cultural settings:

To begin with, it is a development of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by adding to it the concepts of Cultural Identification (CI) and Emotional Response (ER) as the psychological antecedents of economic engagement. Although TPB has been extensively employed as a model of making decisions by farmers and light agriculture actions<sup>[40]</sup>, it has not been utilized in ethnic-based, tradition-dependent economies. This paper shows that Behavioral Intention is influenced highly by the emotion- and identity-based drivers,

thus impacting hard on Economic engagement, including engaging in agro-tourism and branding of a rural area.

Second, the results are consistent with the recent argument that emotion cannot be regarded as peripheral to rural economic behavior. Namely, ER proved the most powerful predictor as compared to the perceived control. It aligns with the recent literature in the field of behavioral economics that suggests that affective variables should be taken into consideration in the decision frameworks of the rural population<sup>[41]</sup> and can be used to prove the suggestion made by Oyserman<sup>[32]</sup> that affective variables result in more stable and economically consequential behavior aligned with identity.

Third, this paper confirms the cross-cultural origins of TPB. Inner Mongolians- as a collectivist, culturally diverse region, the findings indicate that TPB, on

the input of culturally relevant constructs, is cross-culturally supportable. This will make the theory even more useful in explaining matters of ethnic minority rural economy where utility and rationality are largely accompanied by the aspect of belonging and emotion in decision-making.

All of them taken together fill the gap between behavioral intent models and place-based cultural economics, providing a more comprehensive picture of how the traditional values may be transformed into modern sustainable income planning.

## 5.2. Policy Implications for Agro-Tourism and Rural Income Strategy

Based on the demonstrated theoretical base and the results obtained through empirical methods, the paper offers three substantiated policy guidelines that would promote the rural economies to become sustainable and ensure that the process remains supported by the cultural means:

### 5.2.1. Integrate Cultural Heritage into Agri-cultural Economic Planning

These policies ought to go beyond the ritual, embody and document the cultural activities—like dairy-making, seasonal celebrations and oral customs into the rural development and agri-business strategies. Cultural assets are transformed into potential sources of income by incorporating them into tourism, product branding and experience-based agriculture, thus providing household incomes variety as well as place based

identity. Case: Dairy workshops that are driven by the community and that are presented in the local brands' strategies can strengthen market value and cultural profile.

### 5.2.2. Invest in Emotionally Resonant Rural Infrastructure

As the emotional connection has been found to be the most potent behavioral motivator, the infrastructure investments must also focus on culturally expressive environments including storytelling plaza, the clan history center and ethnic tourism nodes. Such places lead to feelings of pride and nostalgia and support generation-to-generation and youth outlooks on life and work in the countryside. Case in point: The agro-tourism centers based on heritage are capable of drawing the country tourists and the diaspora returning tourists, which drives the local economies.

### 5.2.3. Support Hybrid Cultural-Economic Entrepreneurs

It is necessary to promote the idea of combining the traditional and technological in the minds of young innovative people of rural areas. Detailed assistance may stem from governments and NGOs through the usage of microfinance, training, and online-based commercial systems that can assist in the conversion of intangible heritage to economic potential without defiling their essence. Example: Ethnic e-commerce marketplaces in the form of handcrafted or story-embedded agricultural goods. **The key policy and practice recommendations are summarized in Table 11.**

**Table 11.** Summary of Policy and Practice Recommendations for Rural Cultural-Economic Revitalization.

Strategic Focus Area	Policy Recommendation	Expected Economic Outcome
Cultural Heritage Integration	Embed local traditions (e.g., dairy production, seasonal festivals) into rural development and agri-policy.	Diversified household income; enhanced rural cultural-economic resilience.
Emotionally Resonant Infrastructure	Create culturally engaging public spaces to evoke pride and nostalgia, strengthening participation behavior.	Higher community engagement; sustained intergenerational involvement.
Support for Hybrid Cultural Actors	Provide funding, training, and digital platforms for young cultural entrepreneurs and agri-innovators.	Innovation-driven rural income renewal rooted in place-based identity.

These policy directions are directly consistent with the National Rural Revitalization Strategy of China,

specifically, focusing on rural tourism, cultural confidence, and digital integration of underdeveloped ar-

eas<sup>[42]</sup>. They can also provide models that can be reproduced in other ethnically diverse agricultural regions in the world.

### 5.3. Positioning within Global Research Trends

The work of this research arises in relation to an increase in the world discussion that revolves around the cultural, behavioral, and rural development intersection, particularly in three international research paths:

#### 5.3.1. Behavioral Economics in Place-Based Development

Empirical verification of the effect of emotion and identity on economic decisions in rural areas makes this study consistent with cross-national behavioral agricultural researches that go beyond rational-choice models<sup>[43,44]</sup>. It helps to better understand the reasons and the mechanisms of rural people to choose to do economic activities, particularly in the case of the marginalized and indigenous communities.

#### 5.3.2. Cultural Heritage as a Livelihood Strategy

It is widely recognised the world over, especially by FAO, UNESCO, and the World Bank, that cultural resources form the core of rural lifestyles. This paper offers numerical testimony on the fact that identity and emotion may be trusted to make economic empowerment and they are not to be simply conserved as part and parcel of culture.

#### 5.3.3. Rural Youth and Innovation Ecosystems

Combining the tradition with contemporary business is extremely important in fighting the outmigration of the youth. This paper advocates changes recommended globally<sup>[45]</sup> to invest in the rural youth and, in particular, in youth who use the digital sphere to turn the presence of culture into financial resources without commodifying it.

Overall, the research describes Inner Mongolia as an environment where behavioral theory can be tested and linked to the rural reformation based on culture. The framework, results and implications can

be applied to other multi-ethnicised agricultural areas, which experience the same form of developmental dilemmas.

## 6. Conclusion and Future Research Directions

### 6.1. Summary of Key Findings

The present research brought out the psychological and cultural dynamics that push rural dwellers to pursue their interest in agro-tourism and ethnic branding of products, and seasonal economies of festivals. The model used a long Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in which Cultural Identification (CI) and Emotional Response (ER) were regarded as predictors of the Behavioral Intention (BI) and eventually Economic.

Key findings include:

Emotional Response ( $\beta = 0.641$ ) and Cultural Identification ( $\beta = 0.529$ ) are strong predictors of Behavioral Intention, with Perceived Behavioral Control ( $\beta = 0.292$ ) also playing a significant role.

Behavioral Intention ( $\beta = 0.706$ ) strongly predicts Economic Engagement, confirming its mediating role in transforming cultural and emotional factors into income-generating actions.

These results highlight the critical role of cultural identity and emotional connection in motivating rural households to participate in economic practices that enrich the agricultural value chain and diversify rural incomes.

### 6.2. Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to agricultural behavioral economics in three key ways:

#### 6.2.1. Extending TPB to High-Context Cultural Economies

This study substantiates the evidence of the application of the TPB to ethnic, collectivist and culturally rich rural settings with the addition of CI and ER which proves to contribute to more sustainable identity-related behaviours where agriculture is concerned (for example heritage tourism or ethnic branding). It con-



firms the theory that culturally amicable behaviour is more sustainable and financially feasible as presented by Oyserman et al.<sup>[21]</sup>.

### 6.2.2. Incorporating Emotional Economics into Rural Models

This research confirms that pride and nostalgia are not passive emotions, but active motivators of participating in the rural area, and are consistent with recent findings in tourism-related economies<sup>[46, 47]</sup>.

### 6.2.3. Methodological Innovation via PLS-SEM

Estimating the magnitudes of such constructs as CI and ER in an agricultural context using PLS-SEM is a methodological advance that enhances research in Asian, African, and Latin American emerging economies. The technique is similar to Ajzen's elaboration of the Theory of Planned Behavior, which calls for carefully measuring latent constructs such as perceived behavioral control and self-efficacy to provide a better measurement of behavior outcomes<sup>[48]</sup>.

## 6.3. Practical Strategies for Agricultural Economic Revitalization

To enrich the rural income with the help of culture-based economic planning especially in ethnic and agro-tourist types, the study has come up with the following three actionable strategies:

### 6.3.1. Institutionalize Cultural Heritage in Rural Development

The ethnic festivals, native foods, and handicrafts must be integrated into the plans of the economy of the rural place with their prioritization policies. The strategy enables cultural capital to be turned into economic wealth<sup>[49]</sup>.

### 6.3.2. Design Emotionally Resonant Rural Infrastructure

Considering the dominance of the emotional resonance (ER), the emotional involvement and active participation may be increased by investing in culturally significant spaces (such as ethnic markets and places of rituals)<sup>[46]</sup>.

### 6.3.3. Empower Cultural Intermediaries and Hybrid Actors

Cultural sustainability can be coupled with economic growth as the local players can be empowered through efforts like young-oriented microfinance or an online storytelling portal that allows the activation of the cultural value chain<sup>[50]</sup>.

Combined with each other, these strategies create a multidimensional way of moving forward by using cultural identity, emotional connection, and behavioral intent to increase the incomes of rural people. They coincide with more general plans of the country concerning revitalization of the countryside and particularly they could be applied to ethnic minority territories where there is some unrealized economic potential in terms of intangible assets<sup>[51, 52]</sup>.

## 6.4. Study Limitations

Despite the strengths of this study in telling us about cultural drivers of agro-tourism participation, it has several limitations:

### 6.4.1. Geographic Scope

The research was conducted in a single village (Gongjiban) of Inner Mongolia, and as a result, the results may not be applicable to other rural or ethnic settings where agro-tourism has been undertaken<sup>[10]</sup>.

### 6.4.2. Cross-Sectional Design

The cross-sectional survey design puts a cap on causality inference power. Behavior observed here may be time-varying, and longitudinal data would be needed to observe these dynamics.

### 6.4.3. Self-Reported Data

All the measurements were carried out using self-report questionnaires, which could introduce social desirability bias—particularly in culturally sensitive contexts to the extent that respondents would feel compelled to report favorable attitudes<sup>[53]</sup>.

## 6.5. Future Research Directions

For the advancement of this field, future research should address:

### 1. Cross-Regional Validation

Cross-studies across other ethnic regions for testing the extended TPB model generalizability.

### 2. Theory Integration

Merge TPB with Social Identity Theory and Cultural Capital Theory to gain further understanding of how cultural resources are translated into economic value.

### 3. Policy-SDG Alignment

Describe how cultural-economic methods can be used to underpin SDG 8 (Decent Work) and SDG 11.4 (Protection of Cultural Heritage) [54].

### 4. Longitudinal & Supply Chain Analysis

Monitor the progression of changes to behavior and income over a period of time and analyze effects throughout agro-tourism value chains.

### 5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Integrate agricultural economics with rural planning and behavioral sciences to formulate detailed models that include the socio-economic worth of culture.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, J.J.; methodology, J.J.; software, J.J.; validation, J.J.; formal analysis, J.J.; investigation, J.J.; resources, J.J.; data curation, J.J.; writing—original draft preparation, J.J.; writing—review and editing, J.J.; visualization, J.J.; supervision, N.A.M.; project administration, N.A.M. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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## Institutional Review Board Statement

Institutional Review Board Statement: Ethical approval and review were waived for this research, considering that it entailed non-invasive collection of survey data that was not harmful to respondents. All participants were informed of the research purpose and provided consent before being engaged.

## Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

## Data Availability Statement

Informed consent was also provided from all the participants who participated in the research. Participation was completely voluntary, anonymous, and respondents could withdraw at any time without penalty.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The study was conducted with anonymous and voluntary participation, and no financial or personal interests were likely to have influenced the work reported in this article.

## Appendix A: Sample Questionnaire Items

*All items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)*

### Section 1: Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

1. I feel confident in participating in local agricultural landscape design projects.
2. I believe I have the ability to maintain traditional cultural features in the village.
3. I can easily get involved in activities that preserve Mongolian agricultural heritage.

### Section 2: Emotional Response

4. I feel emotionally connected to traditional agricultural customs.
5. Traditional farming rituals make me feel proud of my culture.
6. The presence of Mongolian agricultural culture in the landscape evokes a sense of nostalgia.

### Section 3: Cultural Identification

7. I consider Mongolian farming culture to be part of my personal identity.
8. I think it is important to pass on these traditions to

future generations.

9. I feel a strong sense of belonging when participating in cultural events.

Section 4: Intention

10. I intend to take part in the maintenance of culturally themed rural spaces.

11. I will likely recommend others to support cultural heritage conservation.

12. I am willing to contribute ideas to improve local rural landscapes.

Section 5: User Engagement

13. I regularly participate in village cultural or agricultural activities.

14. I have helped with traditional farming or festival planning in the past year.

15. I often visit or appreciate sites with traditional design features.

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