

THESIS

Givaamaa Nyambuu

Rural Development Engineering

Gödöllő

2023



Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Szent István Campus

Rural Development Engineering Program

Possibilities of developing the lifestyle of nomadic herders as an agrotourism in Mongolia

Primary Advisor, Associate Professor: Dr. Demszky Alma Mira

Author: Givaamaa Nyambuu, VB49DS

Institute: Institute of Rural Development and Sustainable Economy

Department: Department of Rural and Regional Development

Gödöllő

2023

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1.Introduction | 5 |
| 1.1 Background..... | 5 |
| 1.2 Research aim and methodology | 5 |
| 1.3 Research questions..... | 6 |
| 2 Literature Review | 7 |
| 2.1 Agrotourism..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Agrotourism activities | 9 |
| 2.3 Mongolian context..... | 12 |
| 2.4 The nomadic lifestyle in Mongolia | 14 |
| 2.4.1 Mongolian traditional dwelling and animal husbandry | 16 |
| 2.4.2 Mongolian food and clothing | 16 |
| 2.4.3 Mongolian traditional games | 17 |
| 2.4.4 Mongolian three manly sports and national festivals | 18 |
| 2.4.5 The benefits of nomadic lifestyle | 18 |
| 2.4.6 Nomadism and a zero-waste lifestyle and learning from nomadic life | 18 |
| 2.4.7 Importance of learning from nomads to protect environment..... | 20 |
| 2.5 Domestic tourism..... | 21 |
| 3. Research methodology | 25 |
| 3.1 Research strategy | 25 |
| 3.2 Research design | 25 |
| 3.3 Data sources..... | 25 |
| 3.4 Questionnaire and interview question design | 26 |
| 3.5 Procedure and timeline | 27 |
| 3.6 Data analysis..... | 28 |
| 4. Results | 29 |
| 4.1 Questionnaire analysis | 29 |
| 4.2 Interview analysis | 38 |
| 4.3 Research overview..... | 49 |
| 4.4 Findings..... | 51 |
| 4.4.1 Importance of agrotourism..... | 51 |
| 5. Conclusions and recommendations | 55 |
| 5.1 Overview | 55 |
| 5.1 Recommendations..... | 55 |
| 5.2 Research limitations..... | 56 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 6. Summary | 57 |
| Acknowledgement..... | 59 |
| 7. References | 60 |
| Annex 1 – Research Questionnaire Used | 64 |
| List of Tables..... | 71 |
| List of Figures | 71 |
| Appendix 1: Declaration..... | 72 |
| Appendix 2 | 73 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Tens of thousands of years ago, humans began living as nomads. Mongolia is one of the few countries that retains its nomadic culture and heritage for future generations. For Mongolians, nomadism means that a herdsman worships the benefit of his livestock and lives following the rhythm of his livestock.

One of the most important things in a nomad's life is a nomad's accommodation "Ger". Animal husbandry is the source of livelihood for nomads and the basis of their existence. Five types of livestock (horse, camel, cow, sheep, and goat) and reindeer which the basis of the Mongolian traditional nomadic economy.

Nomads are more individualistic and self-sufficient because they solve problems independently. Everyone realized that the most suitable surviving place is rural living after the pandemic around the world.

As the world evolves and develops, human influence on nature has increased, and natural resources decreased and the climate has changed. Therefore, environmental concerns have become a priority, and a zero-waste lifestyle has become a new trend around the world. This lifestyle is not just a popular concept nowadays. Mongolian nomadic herders have traditionally lived a classic minimalist life without waste. What makes a nomad's life unique are the things they don't have. Since nature has already prepared all the things that people need, not wanting more is the principle of a nomadic lifestyle.

There is a way for the development of agrotourism in Mongolia based on the livelihood of herders to create new chances to watch and participate in their daily activities and give tourists the chance to live a day as a herder since tourism is one of the main economic sectors.

Agrotourism is a business based on agriculture open to the public. On the other hand, it is a new type of travel and product service that packages the daily activities of agriculture according to the demands of tourists. Agrotourism is a type of travel like geographical tourism, nature tourism, and catering tourism. There are also definitions based on agriculture tourism including agriculture events, farm life, and traditional heritages. Agrotourism is based on three main factors. It includes:

- Environment
- Pure natural products
- Traditional culture and agriculture

Given this nature, travelers in agrotourism activities, it is possible to offer a variety of services for tourists. Therefore, in Mongolia, the development approach to agriculture is representing the need to introduce this type of travel. Agrotourism has grown rapidly in many countries worldwide. However, for all this success, little is known about the concrete implementation, actual extent, and effectiveness of public and private agrotourism support measures aimed at keeping up farming and promoting agrotourism. (Giulia Grillini, 2022).

1.2 Research aim and methodology

The purpose of this study is to develop an agrotourism product model based on the livelihood of herders to attract visitors, create new opportunities to observe and participate in their daily activities and allow travelers to experience a day as a herder. Furthermore, to introduce agrotourism to the people of Mongolia, study the

possibilities of developing agrotourism in Mongolia, promote this type of travel, and collaborate with stakeholders another goal of this study. Agrotourism is an innovative agricultural activity relating to tourism. In addition, it has great economic, social, and environmental importance. For example, creating additional sources of income, creating new jobs, increasing the range of local products and services, etc. There is a vast potential for the development of agrotourism in Mongolia.

This study will use a qualitative approach to research, particularly documentary analysis and interview methods. Two nomadic herder families were involved in the interview to explore possibilities of developing economically, socially, environmentally friendly, and sustainable agritourism based on the livelihood of the nomadic people in Mongolia. The model settlement is Erdene Soum of Central province.

1.3 Research questions

To fulfill the aims described above, the research will focus on a key question: How can the agrotourism model be developed in Mongolia?

Following research sub-questions will be explored to answer the main question.

- What is agrotourism?
- Why is agrotourism suitable for the Mongolian nomadic lifestyle context?
- What are potential benefits and challenges of agrotourism in Mongolian conditions?
- What are behaviours of domestic travellers?

- How can agrotourism product be developed in Mongolia?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Agrotourism

Agrotourism, ecotourism and rural tourism are types of tourism that emerged in the last century, becoming increasingly crucial sectors of the tourism industry around the world (Cactus Tourism Journal, 2017). As rural areas are endowed with many historic, natural and social qualities, it is common that tourism develops in conjunction and combination with farming activities. (Habitat international, 2010). This type of tourism is relatively well developed in the United States, Europe and some Asian countries where agriculture is highly developed.

Mongolia has more developed livestock husbandry and a nomadic culture than these countries, so it is possible to develop agrotourism in a slightly different way. The Mongolian government developed and approved a National Tourism Development Program in 2015. (Government Order No. 324 of 2015 annex to the resolution). Although the program includes some concepts of agritourism, it is still a new concept in Mongolia.

The issues of organic production, sustainable tourism development, rural tourism, agrotourism, and eco-tourism are increasingly discussed in the scientific literature they have a positive effect on rural development. (International Journal of Management, n.d).

In recent decades, international studies have contributed to improving the understanding of how agrotourism is practiced. However, studies are conducted on a range of definitions based on different combinations of key features which have been synthesized in the recent classification (Philip, Hunter, & Blackstock, 2010). Several definitions of this form of tourism, emphasizing different characteristics, can be found in the literature on the subject. Peebles (Peebles, Tour. Soc. 1995, 86) suggests that agrotourism simply means tourism on agricultural farms while Tew and Barbieri (Tew, C.; Barbieri, C.) defines the activity as visiting an operating agricultural farm or another form of agricultural or horticultural activity or agribusiness for recognition, pleasure, education or recreational involvement in the agricultural and natural resources or heritage.

In principle, agrotourism is a form of tourism closely attached to agriculture and working agricultural farms, where plant production and livestock farming constitute some of the attractions (Majewski, J. Agroturystyka to Te'z Biznes, 2000).

The definitions of agrotourism and rural tourism have many standard and similar features. The distinction between these two forms of tourism is important and particularly noticeable in terms of the attractions offered and the accommodation conditions. In the case of agrotourism, guest rooms will be located on an active farm (Fleischer, A.; Tchetchik, A.; Bar-Nahum, Z.; Talev, E, 2018) while local accommodation including small hotels or motels can be considered in rural tourism. The definitions of agrotourism are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of definitions used in the literature for agrotourism and related labels

| Author | Definition |
|--------|------------|
|--------|------------|

| | |
|--|--|
| Lakovidou (1997) | Tourism activities are undertaken in non-urban regions by individuals whose main employment is in the primary or secondary sector of the economy. |
| Sharpley (1997) | Tourism products that are directly connected with the agrarian environment, agrarian products, or agrarian stays. |
| Wall (2000) | Provision of touristic opportunities on working farms. |
| Sonnino (2004) | Activities or hospitality performed by agricultural entrepreneurs and then family members that must remain connected and complementary to farming activities. |
| Marques (2006) | A specific type of rural tourism in which the hosting house must be integrated into an agricultural estate, inhabited by the proprietor, allows visitors to participate in agricultural or complementary activities on the property. |
| McGehee (2007) | Rural enterprises incorporate both a working farm environment and a commercial tourism component. |
| Kizos and Losifides (2007) | Tourist activities of small-scale, family or co-operative in origin, being developed in rural areas by people employed in agriculture. |
| Barbieri and Mshenga (2008) | Any practice developed on a working farm with the purpose of attracting visitors. |
| Tew and Barbieri (2012) | Any activity in which a visitor to the farm or other agricultural setting contemplates the farm landscape or participates in an agricultural process for recreation or leisure purposes |
| Carla Barbieri, Claudia Gil Arroyo and Samantha Rozier Rich (2013) | Farming-related activities carried out on a working farm or other agricultural settings for entertainment or education purposes |

Source: (Roman, M. and Grudzień, P. (2021) 'The Essence of Agritourism and Its Profitability during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic', *Agriculture*, 11(5), p. 458.)

The researchers describe agrotourism in a very similar way. Each definition of agrotourism mentions farms as a place of business and activity (McGehee, N.G; Kim, K, 2004).

The researchers describe agrotourism in a very similar way. Each definition of agrotourism mentions farms as a place of business and activity (McGehee, N.G; Kim, K, 2004).

The first discussion is related to "travel" as a definitional element of agrotourism since the term "tourism" is included in many labels (e.g., "farm tourism, ecotourism", etc.). Although there are several definitions, the World Tourism Organization states tourism as "the activities of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited" (WTO, 2001, p. 13).

For the study, agrotourism is considered a part of rural tourism related to leisure for people on an active farm, which offers various types of recreational and tourist services in its area and beyond during the tourist season or throughout the calendar year (Roman, M; Prus, P., 2020). Farmers provide their guests with guest accommodation in an agrotourism farm and additional attractions related to the performance of duties on the operating farm (Clarke, J. 1999).

2.2 Agrotourism activities

The spectrum of agrotourism marketing activities is complex. Lisa C. Chase et al (2018) created this great illustration of Agrotourism. The researchers describe five main categories of marketing activities, divided into on-farm and off-farm, and becoming less directly related to selling products from individual farms as one moves further from the center.

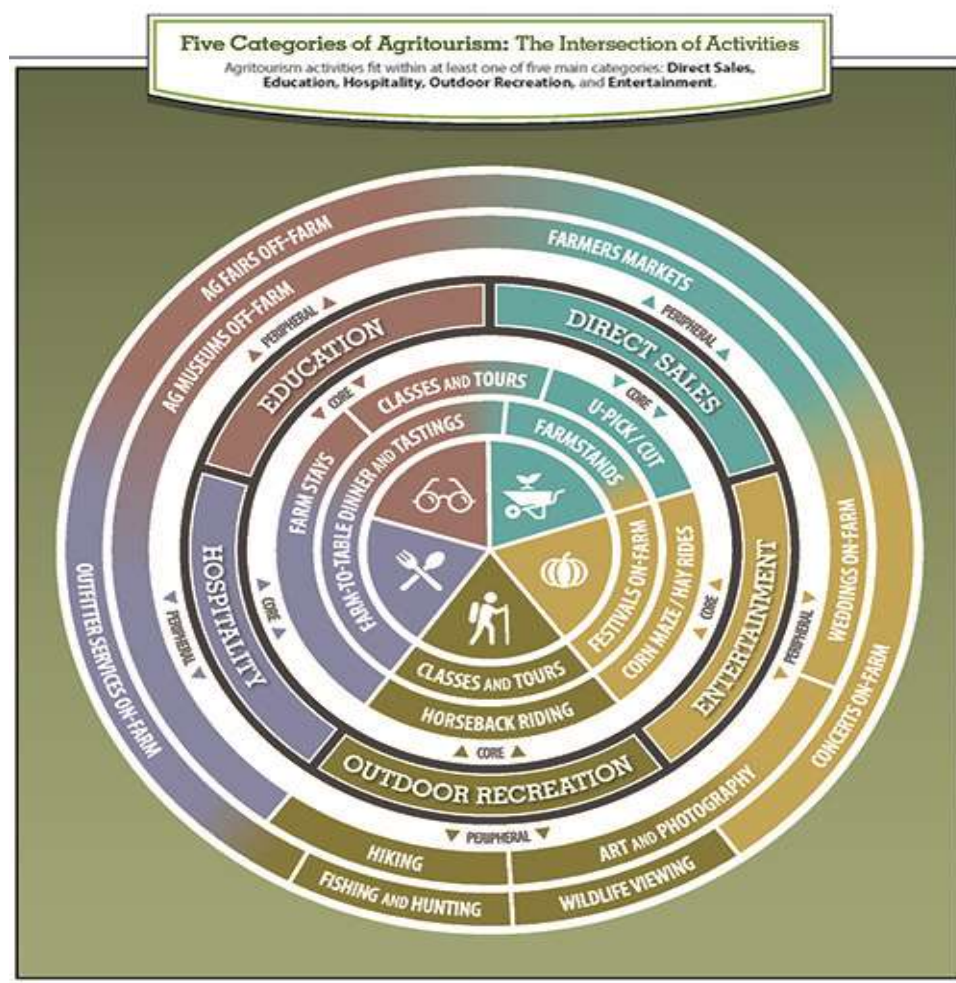


Figure 1: Five Categories of Agritourism including Direct Sales, Education, Hospitality, Outdoor Recreation, and Entertainment, and Examples of Core vs. Peripheral Activities Source: Chase, L. et al. (2018) 'Agritourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Industry Analysis'; origin Oregon State University

To create a widely accepted conceptual framework for understanding agrotourism, Figure 1 shows two suggested tiers of core and peripheral activities, where core activities are generally accepted as agritourism while peripheral activities may be controversial. Under this conception of agritourism, an activity is defined as being either core or peripheral based on location or the relative degree to which that activity is connected to agriculture.

Core activities take place on a working farm or ranch and have deep connections to agricultural production and/or the marketing of a farm's products. These include direct farm sales of agricultural products sold on the farm through farmstands and U-pick. Also included in core activities are experiences that take place on the farm and are deeply connected to agricultural production, such as farm tours, farm-to-table meals, overnight farm stays, and agricultural festivals on farms.

In contrast, peripheral activities lack a deep connection to agricultural production, even though they may take place on a working farm or ranch. For example, the farm may serve as the venue (or setting) for events, such as weddings, concerts, hiking, and biking. Another type of peripheral activity is one that is closely connected to agriculture but does not take place on a working farm or ranch, such as farmers' markets and agricultural fairs. The question of whether these peripheral activities should be considered agritourism has become controversial in certain circumstances. These are questions that deserve careful consideration since measurement, policy, and programming are significantly impacted by the answers.

Researchers have defined agrotourism in similar ways worldwide. The concept of agrotourism in countries located on the same continent is similar. As for the historical background of agrotourism, it is considered to originate from the European continent, especially in Italy. As small-scale farming became less profitable in Italy in the 1950s to 1970s, farms were abandoned when farmers left to search for work in urban areas. An agriturismo law was passed in 1985 to regulate and encourage Italian farm stays. Estimates place today's number of agrotourism locations in Italy between 9,000 and 23,000, and their success has led many other European Union countries to enact similar national policies to help increase farm income and create jobs in rural communities.

Depending on which continent the country is in and where the researcher lives, agrotourism is defined differently. In this study, I intended to illustrate the agrotourism activities by continent based on studies. The agritourism activities by continent are presented in Figure 2.

| AGROTOURISM DEVELOPED | | |
|--|---|--|
|  EUROPE |  NORTH AMERICA |  AUSTRALIA |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vineyard and wineries • Animal feeding • Farm-to-table dining • Cheese making and festivals • Equine agrotourism • U-Picks • Farm stays and tours • On-farm markets • Christmas tree farms • Corn mazes • Floriculture and bee farms • Demonstration farms • Fee and lease pond fishing • Education activities on farms • Farm work experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U-Picks • On-farm markets • Pumpkin Patches • Corn mazes • Vineyard and wineries • Floriculture farms • Demonstration farms • Christmas tree farms • Farm stays and tours • Farm-to-table dining • Snowmobiling and biking • Equine agrotourism • Weddings and parties • Photography • Entertainment activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vineyard and wineries • U-Picks • On-farm markets • Petting zoos • Corn mazes • Education activities on farms • Demonstration farms • Group farm tours and classes • Farm stays and camping • Farm-to-table dining • Farm and ranch work experience • Horseback riding • Swimming and relaxing |




| AGROTOURISM DEVELOPING | | |
|---|---|---|
|  SOUTH AMERICA |  AFRICA |  ASIA |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic farm tour • Visiting cocoa plantations • U-Picks • On-farm markets • Pumpkin Patches • Exploring tropical plantations • Spice farms and fruit farms • Tropical floriculture farms • Demonstration farms • Farm stays and tours • Maize and rice harvesting • Staying soybean fields • Learn local cultivation process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social events • Nature trails • Wild life viewing and photography • Off-road vehicles • Bird watching • U-Picks • On-farm markets • Fishing and hunting • Floriculture farms • Demonstration farms • Animal rides • Farm stays and tours • Farm-to-table dining | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milking the cow • Animal feeding • Rice planting and harvesting • Tea picking and making dried persimmons • Cooking activities • Partake in silk related activities • Demonstration farms • Horseback riding • Hunting leases • Making ceramics • Fishing • Petting zoos • Picnicking and camping |

Figure 2: Agrotourism activities by continent *Source: Own work, 2023*

2.3 Mongolian context

Mongolia is located in the northwestern part of East Asia, with the Mongolian Altai Mountain range in the west, the vast plains in the east, the forest area connected to the Siberian taiga in the north, and the Gobi Great Sand Dune, the fourth largest in the world, in the east with wide species of flora and fauna. It is also a country with unique, traditional art and culture, and ancient ruins of horsemen, which have developed in harmony with the history of the Mongolian Empire and the culture of nomads, dating back to the time of Chinggis Khan.

Tourism in Mongolia can be determined by keywords such as dinosaurs, great nature, ancient history, nomadic culture, etc. It is a tourist area that can be a place of freedom and comfort for people who are tired of city life. In Mongolia, the tourism industry is the third most important industry in terms of contribution to the economy, after mining and agriculture. According to the data of the National Statistics Committee, Mongolia received 577 thousand foreign tourists in 2019, which was a historical peak.

In Mongolia's long-term development policy, "Vision 2050" the issue of strengthening national pride, or "unified national value", is one of the main goals. Agrotourism will strengthen the pride of the Mongolian people in their country, while foreign tourists will be able to enjoy the wonders of Mongolia. It is important to re-evaluate the charm of Mongolia by experiencing nature and nomadic culture. The fact that Mongolia landlocked between the great powers of Russia and China, can open its doors to the world through tourism, and expand its borders to all corners of the world is important for achieving the goals of "Vision 2050".

"Tourism Law" (2000), " Green Development Policy Mongolia" (2014-2030), " National Tourism Development Program" (2016-2025), "Vision 2050" a long-term vision of Mongolia for the development of tourism in Mongolia; development policy and planning documents such as " State Tourism Development Policy" (2019-2026), and " 2020-2024 Action Program of the Government of Mongolia" have been approved and are being successfully implemented. In 2015, " National Tourism Development Program" (2016-2025) was developed based on the suggestions of domestic and foreign academics and international experience, under the popular concept of sustainable development, to solve the pressing problems of the development of the tourism industry, to make it one of the leading sectors in the economy, and to improve international competitiveness.

Section 4.2.4 of the " National Tourism Development program" (2016-2025) states "development of agrotourism based on traditional agriculture heritage and culture". It can be said that there are hardly any documents or definitions that describe agrotourism more precisely in Mongolia. Therefore, agrotourism is a relatively new concept in Mongolia. Most citizens do not know what agrotourism is. There are very few research works on agrotourism in Mongolia. I believe that this research will contribute to the development of agrotourism in Mongolia.

Mongolia is one of the few countries that remains a nomadic lifestyle and unique heritage of passing and bequeathing to the next generation. Tourists attract great pastoral traditional forms of nomadic with the appropriate climate characteristics of the nature, geography, and harsh climate of Mongolia. However, by synonymous there no tourist programs can be present Nomadic Lifestyle of Mongolia to be shown to domestic and foreign tourists.

This research aims to create a new model to attract new visitors based on nomadic herder's livelihoods, to participate in and observe their daily work, and to allow the visitors to consider one and three days as a herder themselves in the Erdene settlement of Tuv province in Mongolia. This development of ethnic and

cultural tourism as part of agrotourism retained the traditional setting of livestock herders' modern migration as providing foreign and domestic travelers can learn with the advantage of a nomadic lifestyle and is considered to be a source of revenue to the herders. The new kinds of lifestyle, the evolving tourist behavior and continuously changing customer preferences coupled with the widespread concern about the environment, industrial heritage, and sustainable development are all factors that led to the expansion of these niche market types of tourism.

Problems of tourism in Mongolia

The Mongolian government has been actively developing tourism-related infrastructure in recent years, but currently, there are limited areas where foreign tourists can travel safely and peacefully. There is also no independent government agency responsible for tourism, and tourism has always been a component of other ministries and agencies. The number of responsible staff is very few. If tourism is decided as one of the three pillars of economic development, a suitable system is essential. At present, preparations are being made to update the legislation related to tourism, and we hope that it will be approved and implemented as a contribution to the development of the tourism industry.

Although Mongolia has many tourism resources, information about them doesn't reach both domestic and foreign countries. Due to the expansion of the paved road network and the increasing interest in the historical monuments of their country, the interest of Mongolians in domestic tourism has not decreased even during the Covid-19 pandemic and is expected to develop rapidly in the future. However, it is difficult to say that the environment and conditions for receiving tourists are fully equipped. For example, Khuvsgul Lake, one of the most popular tourist areas, has proven that there is a high risk hindering the eco and sustainable development of tourism, such as the protection of specially protected areas, lack of toilets, car parks, and parking spots.

There are fears that fragile tourism resources will be destroyed due to the expected increase in the number of tourists after the Covid 19 pandemic if urgent measures are not taken not only for tourists but also to protect our rare and precious national treasures. In particular, I assume the best solution is to reduce the crowding of domestic travelers and to make an equal distribution that is less harmful to nature.

Mongolia is a country with a unique culture of nomadic, beautiful natural resources, and a country with pull potential for tourism development. However, to develop the tourism sector, there is a need to solve problems such as using tourism resources effectively, developing and implementing marketing strategies, and creating an infrastructure environment (roads, transport, overnight accommodation, service, information centers, etc.). There are several main policy documents including the government of Mongolia's "Vision 2050", "Three Pillar Development Policy", "Tourism Development National Program", and "State Tourism Development Policy 2019-2026". Although the policy documents such as "Policy on Tourism Development" define the development of the tourism industry as one of the most important issues for stimulating the local economy, the order of priorities is not clear. Although the tourism sector is considered an important sector in the documents of the government of Mongolia, in the "Tourism Competitiveness Survey" 2019 issued by the World Economic Forum, the tourism development index of Mongolia is 3.5 points and ranked 93 out of 140 countries. According to JICA's research on the tourism industry in the past, Mongolia has the full potential to develop tourism using its resources such as vast land, beautiful nature, and unique culture, however, due to infrastructure problems and the inability to fully utilize its tourism resources are hindering the development. As a result, the contribution

to economic growth is limited. There is a lack of government support for the implementation of rural tourism development.

Providing environmental and ethical education to domestic tourists is another important issue. Last few years, due to the sharp increase in domestic tourism, there are many problems such as littering and defecating in the fields. Due to the sudden increase after Covid in 2019, the number of tourists, and the capacity of the place are not enough, but in addition to the infrastructure problem, the inappropriate behavior of domestic tourists is also a pressing problem.

2.4 The nomadic lifestyle in Mongolia

Nomadism is not a new concept. Ethnic groups such as Turkish, Magyar, Mongolian, and Iranians who live in the plains of Euro-Asia continued to live in a nomadic lifestyle specializing in animal husbandry for many centuries.

Among the nomadic states mentioned in ancient historical similarities between the Magyar -Mongol ethnic groups, which are separated by 8000 km. However, the Magyar ethnic group gradually settled in new areas in the Carpathian Basin at the end of the 9th century, while the Mongolian ethnic groups still live a nomadic life in central Asia. (History of Magyar and Mongolia, Obrushanski Barbala, 1999).



Nomads living in khangai (forest) area



Nomads living in gobi (desert)



Nomads living in the steppe area



Nomads living in the mountain

Figure 3: Four different landscapes in rural area of Mongolia *Source: Pictures by Bayar Balgantseren, Mongolian photographer. (Own work 2023)*

Over a long period of history, there were many nomadic tribes and people who created the nomadic civilization of central Asia, some of them disappeared and others moved to settled civilizations. Nowadays, it can be said that only the Mongolian people have retained the ancient classical model of nomadic civilization. Mongolia is a country that has not been affected by industrial activities and is located on the border between the great desert of Central Asia and the Great Taiga of Siberia. Therefore, to the abundance of beautiful areas with extreme natural conditions, Mongolia is one of the few places in the world that has preserved its natural beauty due to its sparse population.

For Mongolians, nomadism means that a herdsman worships the benefit of his livestock and lives following the rhythm of his livestock. An independent form of civilization based on three related chains of people, animals, and nature, in which animals follow the rhythm of nature, keep their breed characteristics, grow and reproduce, nature preserves its native appearance thanks to its migration, and creates the conditions for the stable existence of this pattern of civilization. If one of the three fundamental elements that make up this chain changes its basic shape nomadic citizenship can't survive.



The migration of Khangai nomads



The migration of Gobi nomads



The migration of steppe nomads



The migration of mountain nomads

Figure 4: Migration characteristics of Mongolian nomads depending on their geographical location

Source: Pictures by Bayar Balgantseren, Mongolian photographer. (Own work 2023)

2.4.1 Mongolian traditional dwelling and animal husbandry

The most important thing in a nomad's life is a nomad's accommodation "Ger". The weight of Ger is only 250-270 kg, so it can be loaded with a few camels or yaks, and two or three people can be built in a few hours. The felt wall can exchange air 500 times per hour. The nomadic house is suitable for use in all four seasons of the year, it is the most common house that is a major cultural heritage of Mongolia, and it was registered as a UNESCO heritage in 2013.



Figure 5: Mongolian ger Source: Sonin new agency <https://sonin.mn/news/peconomy/74730>, MONTSAME, Mongolian national news agency

Animal husbandry is the source of livelihood for nomads and the basis of their existence. Five types of livestock (horse, camel, cow, sheep, and goat) which the basis of the Mongolian traditional nomadic economy. As a result of long-term natural selection in the extreme and ecological conditions of the mainland, as a result of the selective breeding of the people through many centuries of animal husbandry, local Mongolian animals have adapted to the harsh natural and climate conditions and have preserved special biological characteristics. Mongolian cattle have a tradition of being grazed in the four seasons of the year, multiplying and giving benefits.

2.4.2 Mongolian food and clothing

The way of preparing food of any nation is inextricably linked with the nation, ethnic culture, customs, nature, weather, livestock and resources, and economy. It has a developing pattern that may be passed down to new generations. The basic food of nomadic Mongolians consists of two main products: meat and dairy products, and some wild herbs and fruits are used.

As a Mongolian nation with an ancient history and culture, the method of food preparation, culinary culture, and eating habits have many years of history and traditions and have their unique features. Herders have learned through their own life experience which kind of food and drink is the best for making which animal's milk, and have accumulated unique rich experience in making dairy products adapted to the unique climate and nomadic living conditions of their region.

The Airag is fermented milk in a leather bucket (made from cow skin). Nomadic Mongolians have been using the Airag for their food since ancient times. It is a nutritious drink. 40% of the protein content of cow's milk is albumin and globulin. It contains highly digestible protein, which is almost equivalent to the competition of a mother's breast milk and one liter of fermented milk can meet the daily requirements of vitamin C needed by the human body. Herders can make over 140 types of dairy products at the household production level. Traditional food has been developed as a result of knowing the nutritional value of each of its main components, drying, fermenting, and storage properties.

Mongolian ethnic clothing is one of the simplest and most convincing cultural indicators that define the unique characteristics of the Mongolian nation. Nomadic herder's robes are closely related to Mongolian climate, livestock farming, lifestyle, cherished values, respected culture, and social order. The clothes and accessories that express the unique appearance of Mongolian many ethnic groups stand out because of their unusual appearance and craftsmanship while retaining the name of the tribe and incorporating the appropriate symbols.

Mongolian national costume is divided into western, eastern, and central, and consists of costumes of about 20 ethnic groups. Mongolian clothing consists of hats, robes, coats, jackets, vests, underwear, and shoes. The main material of the robe is silk and cotton. They use sheep skins for winter robes. The most of other clothes are made with raw materials from livestock. Nomadic people make their clothes for four seasons by themselves.

The nomads prepare their vehicles (horses, camels, yaks, and carts) firewood or manure, and buckets for water and move to the new place early in the morning. In a new place, they build a house (ger) according to the traditions of the nomads, make a fire, make milk tea, and offer a sample of tea and food to the sky. In the new land, everything is beautiful, and people and animals are happy and peaceful. Every household migrates at least 4-5 times a year, depending on the season.

Every nomadic family's production starts from processing milk and dairy products, animal hides and wool, tying leather halters (for horses) making saddles, using animal skins and woolen threads to make straps and felt, spinning yarn, making coats, hats, and pants, shoes, and socks. It has traditionally been engaged in production that meets all its needs, such as making traditional different buckets (for collecting manure, for water and yogurt, etc.) and building fences. Nomadic people tend to have household-based production rather than centralized production. It is more economically efficient and easy to do a lot of work beyond the household together with the neighboring families.²

2.4.3 Mongolian traditional games

Nomadic citizenship, one of the main parts of the Mongolian culture rooted in the way of life and work is folk games. The Mongolian traditional game is unique in that prepares young children for the life of nomadic herders. In particular, the three main games that were established long ago and developed throughout Mongolia to the level of modern sports games are very wonderful. Also, puzzle (Onison Togloom) toys that use mental capacity are rare games in the world. Nomadic toys are made from unprocessed animal and natural raw materials. There are more than 150 types of toys made with just livestock bones. An ancient traditional game using animal ankle bones is still played by Mongolians still attached to the ankle. Mainly sheep and goat ankles are used and there are used and there are more than 80 types. There are also ankle sprains. As can be

seen from these, Mongolian nomads' accommodation (Ger), its furniture, tools, clothes, and toys have a wonderful quality that can be used in many ways according to the situation. The only example is the Mongolian robe (Deel) is an outer garment but can be used as a blanket.

2.4.4 Mongolian three manly sports and national festivals

The Naadam, a traditional holiday on July 11-13, is celebrated as the National Independence Day. Mongolian wrestling is a traditional Mongolian sport and is considered one of the most important skills of the "Three manly skills". The remaining 2 skills are archery and horse racing. Mongolians have a long holiday during the Naadam days and, most people go on country trips away from the crowd of the city. In rural areas in Mongolia, the Naadam festival is fantastic. The herdsman town is crowded with visitors on festival days. Nomadic herders brush their horses and compete in the festival.

The Lunar New Year is traditionally celebrated as the white moon. Every year during these days, the youths visit their grandparents, parents, and elderly relatives. For Mongolians, the Lunar New Year is a time to respect others and it is the most important holiday to express love and gratitude. To understand and experience the traditional culture and customs of the nomads must visit during the Lunar New Year in the nomadic herder family.

2.4.5 The benefits of nomadic lifestyle

Nomads are more individualistic and mature as individuals because they solve problems independently. Economic freedom is not about having enough money, but about not depending on it. In other words, during epidemics, food shortages, natural disasters, and wars, no matter how much money you have, life becomes difficult. However, nomadic pastoralists can grow their vegetables or gather edible wild plants, catch fish from the river, pick up fruits from the mountains to eat, raise their livestock, and produce their food from them and, can survive in the harsh and extreme climate of nature.

Due to the influence of settled culture, we have become too dependent on trade and services. If the shops close, there will be no food, if the service stop, the convenience will be lost, if the inflation increases everyone will panic. Buildings connected to the central line will become uninhabitable as soon as the electricity and water are cut off. However, Mongolian herders lived a peaceful and normal life even during the pandemic situation. Only nomads are independent and free people who have the material and psychological preparation to live at the dead end of the mountain for several months without being dependent on anyone.

Everyone has realized that the most suitable surviving place is rural living after the pandemic around the world. It is seen as a new trend of today's self-sufficiency. Especially after Covid 19, during the Ukraine and Russian war situation, and, even the Turkish earthquake. The nomadic dwelling (Ger) is the safety accommodation for natural disasters such as earthquakes.

2.4.6 Nomadism and a zero-waste lifestyle and learning from nomadic life

As the world evolves and develops, human influence on nature increases and natural resources decrease. Therefore, environmental concerns have become a priority, and a zero-waste lifestyle has become a new trend around the world. Using as little as possible, not generating waste, and not throwing away have

become one of some important steps to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including the 12th goal, "Promoting responsible consumption".

This zero-waste lifestyle is not just a popular concept nowadays. Mongolian nomadic herders have traditionally lived a classic minimalist life without waste. An example of this is the tradition of cleaning and tidying the place where they used to live, without leaving a single piece of garbage when moving around in the four seasons of the year. Mongolian nomads use organic and fresh milk, dairy products, meat, intestines, hides, and wool of their five types of livestock, as well as their manure for making a fire. Livestock does not only provide food. In addition to making warm blankets with wool and produce felt, which most importantly, keeps the dwelling warm and dry.

The nomads have almost no property other than livestock in Mongolia. Nomadic herders have adapted to the harsh climate, they have developed unique customs, cultures, and lifestyles and they have used food according to the season and family scale. Many idioms testify to this, such as "eating too much is poison", "do not eat twice a day, and don't do a night without eating anything...". The health of the nomads was associated with a high culture of eating, and it was believed that it would be good to avoid leaving food behind. In addition to preparing for the family, the custom of sharing with neighbors when making huge food has long been established among Mongolian nomads. Therefore, a waste-free lifestyle is not far from Mongolians, it is not something new, and very convenient for us to learn from our traditional culture and implement it. Food waste can be reduced by smart and calculated buying, sharing, and proper food storage. In this way, everyone should contribute to reducing environmental problems and reducing food inequality. According to the United Nations Development Goals 2030, per capita food waste at the retail and consumer levels will be halved. (UNSDG 12.3)

Providing knowledge and experience about zero waste and food waste, including making healthy food choices and producing less waste, is another goal of developing agrotourism based on the daily lifestyle of nomads. What makes a nomad's life unique are the things they don't have. There are no refrigerators, running water, toilets, air conditioning, electric stoves, heating systems, or sound amplifiers. They keep their butter in sheepskin bags and store their cheese in animal skin bags. The main fuel is manure which is from livestock. Therefore, Mongolian nomadic herders carry only the essentials and do not produce waste, which is the most environment-friendly way of life. As nature has already prepared all the things that people need, not wanting more is the principle of a nomadic lifestyle. If something is necessary, take it from nature and use it. Nothing is stored or collected unless necessary. A nomadic herder's livelihood has its own set of characteristics, including a tribal social structure, reliance on animal husbandry, and a seasonal lifestyle. (Census of Pastoral Nomads, 2008).

Getting away from the city buildings, visiting a nomadic herder family, observing five types of grazing animals, milking them, eating organic food, picking up wild berries, enjoying the sight of twinkling stars in the sky, and colorful wildflowers only in the countryside of Mongolia will be a great adventure for both domestic and foreign tourists.

From a traveler's perspective, there are a lot of benefits. The opportunity to live in harmony with nature, experience a nomadic way of life including traditional cuisine and organic products, understand the identity of Mongolia, as well as the significance of the relationship between humans and the environment in our lives, are among the lessons that travelers can learn from nomadic herder families. Besides of health

benefits of fresh air, making memories is a wonderful benefit of activities like horse riding, camel riding, yak riding, milking cows, and caring for sheep and goats. These provide visitors with wholesome entertainment to share with their families or peers and people can learn a lot through leisure, entertainment, and educational activities.

Additionally, residing in a Mongolian ger is a distinctive experience for visitors from other countries. It would be an extreme event, particularly during the winter. Travelers experience the freedom of the wild environment and the nature of Mongolians more when they are in the countryside than when they are in the cities. They will particularly have the chance to learn how waste-free, eco-friendly, autonomous, and minimalist lifestyles are practiced by nomadic people. Additionally, they will acquire experience by consuming natural and organic foods.

Therefore, it is important to develop agrotourism based on nomadic livelihood to allow the youths of Mongolia and the world to feel and experience the blessings of this mother earth.

2.4.7 Importance of learning from nomads to protect environment

Mongolia's nomadic civilization is superior to other civilizations, which is made up of families, neighbors, clans, tribes, and nations and the heart of humanism which is transparent, honest, hard work and struggle, education morals, and customs with sides. The belief of Mongolian nomads to love the blue sky, the earth, the golden sun, the silver moon, the lovely mountains, rivers, springs, and the earth with the love of their soul and worship, "The wisdom of worshipping the blue sky" was Genghis Khan's formula of success. "Under the power of eternal heaven" (m.m newspaper 2015, 008) is attracting the attention of researchers nowadays.

Since the wisdom of giving and taking from nature is the main philosophy of the nomads, there are a lot of abstinence actions, such as polluting the river, leaving stakes in the ground, cutting down the rocks of the hills, picking young plants, and cutting young trees, and praying for love and protection for the nature. Mother Nature responds to all this with kindness. However, in the past few centuries, overpopulation, industrialization, and the absolute consumption of fuel and energy have eroded the natural environment, the groundwater and minerals have been sucked up, the mountains and soil are becoming fragile, and wind storms are increasing. As global warming increases, the cooling system of our planet is destroyed. The snow and ice of the North and South Poles are melting rapidly, and the oceans are swallowing the land.

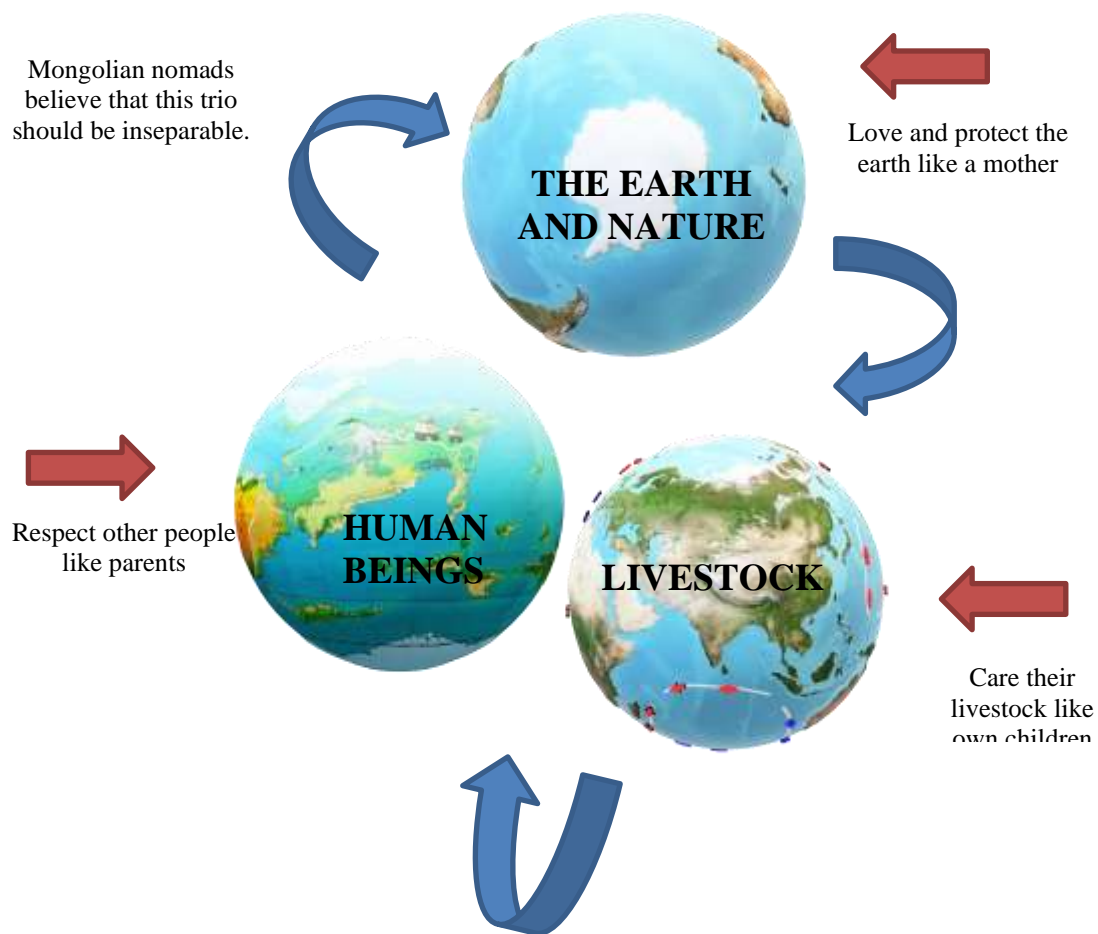


Figure 6: The main philosophy of the Mongolian nomads *Source: Own work, 2023*

Nomadic civilization is not only the basis of human existence forever, but also profound philosophy that will limit their greed and save them from destruction. Another important feature of nomadic citizenship and nomadic lifestyle is that their customs regulate the values of social relations no less than the laws of the state. The reason is that social philosophy develops in harmony with this uniqueness. The fact that Mongolians carefully study this and take it into account in social practice, especially in legislative activities, is as important for development as material production and information technology. Most importantly, it is time for us to realize that the development of a new and rational model of the development of the 21st century for the development of nomadic citizenship and its practical implementation in social life is an urgent task of research and practical activities.

2.5 Domestic tourism

Domestic tourism in Mongolia has been developing rapidly in recent years. Acquainting yourself with the wonderful nature, history, and culture of the country is important for developing the patriotism of the

Mongolian people. In recent years, Mongolians, who mostly spend summer vacations in the countryside, have increased their domestic travel, which is a great impetus for the development of domestic tourism. Domestic tourism contributes to the local economy, particularly the redistribution of tourism benefits from urban to rural areas, and tourism is more responsible for sustainable development and poverty reduction than international tourism (Oyunchimeg, Gantuya 2021b).

According to the World Tourism Organization [WTO] survey, the world in 2018, 9 billion domestic tourist trips were made worldwide which is more than international tourists (1.6 billion) was immediately 6 times higher (WTO, 2020a). Although the figure for domestic travelers, an economic contribution is large, the tourism organizations and governments continue to ignore domestic travel. Domestic travelers don't travel across borders, don't require visas, and don't exchange foreign currency; therefore, it is difficult to estimate the actual number of travelers.

Tourism researchers in volume, costs, and economics of international tourism impact, research focuses on domestic tourism has led to a lack of research. Especially in domestic travel in developing countries, there is a lack of research on tourism information, statistics, implemented policies and regulations marketing and development strategies. (Oyunchimeg, Gantuya, 2020a). Domestic tourism increases local jobs, develops infrastructure, and adheres to sustainable principles that support the local economy. Kwenye & Freymund (2016) states the importance of developing domestic tourism and creating new tourism products, jobs, and services that attract people, and being proud of their country, ethnicity, and local county. When people travel to their homeland, they should be proud of their ethnicity, environment, historical and cultural heritage, the sense of belonging. (Amartuvshin, 2009).

Domestic travelers are more local than foreign tourists in the local settlements where produced food, products, handcrafts, and services are purchased. It is one of the factors supporting local economic development. (Scheyvens, 2002). Positive effects of domestic tourism by Kang (2014) impact on the balanced distribution of tourism revenue by geographic region and ethnicity people of the same origin have an important influence on mutual understanding and nation building determined to be. Tourism is labor-intensive, requiring a large number of people to provide the same service (Kwenye, Freymund, 2016).

Furthermore, domestic tourism is a trip, it is important to reduce the seasonality of the tourism industry during hotel and tourist accommodation facilities at affordable prices in the domestic market provides services. In Asian countries, the share of the wealthy middle class in society is increasing in the amount of income people spend on leisure products is domestic and increasing regional tourism demand (Rindrasih, et al., 2019). Countries such as China and Indonesia have large populations and developing economies and the governments of the countries use various channels of information and communication domestically marketing campaigns for tourism development are being conducted extensively.

Mongolia's domestic tourism market has received little notice from the government, the general public, and educational research institutions, and it has been a neglected part of the market that has been overshadowed by international tourism until now. (Amartuvshin, 2009). In the last 30 years, Mongolian tourism stakeholders have paid more attention to the number and income of foreign tourists. Today, the demand for domestic tourism is increasing year by year in line with the increase in income, the standard of living, and the use of cars by households, and it is beginning to show its positive and negative effects on the economy, environment, and society. Mongolians love to travel in their homeland, and seeing new places has always been

an integral part of life for Mongolians living in the vast territory of Central Asia. Mongolians have close relationships with family and relatives, which is the motivation for traveling to visit friends and relatives. Like other countries, the demand for domestic tourism in Mongolia is determined by individual income, employment, work schedule, (Oyunchimeg, 2022), seasonality, holiday traditions, and the number of paid holidays (Amartuvshin, 2009).

Domestic tourism as we know it today is thought to have started during the socialist era. During the socialist era, government involvement and the healthcare system played a significant role in people's travel behavior and decision-making. (Amartuvshin 2009). Traveling around the country, relaxing, and going on vacations were common phenomena among socialist youth organizations, and vacation was understood as spending free time at a resort during the summer (Amartuvshin 2009). Excursions were trips made by members of youth organizations and students to gain knowledge about geography, geology, flora and fauna, and physical exercise. As a result, many resorts were established to meet the growing urban population's demand for recreation and leisure.

Every year in July, the Naadam festival, which consists of three manly games of wrestling, horse racing, and archery, defines the primary patterns of recreation and travel for Mongolians. Nomadic herders would hitch their horses and travel long distances for days to attend the festival. The main motivation for Mongolians to travel is to go to school graduation anniversaries, relatives' festivals, parents' birthplace, and the place where they were born.

The number of domestic tourists and their contribution to the economy are currently unknown due to the lack of a common standard for measuring and counting domestic tourism. O'Gorman & Thomson (2007). Although domestic travel is increasing, there is uncertainty about the quantity, travel patterns, and behavior of tourists. It is important to study the motivations and reasons for travel, as well as the travel experience, satisfaction, and variables influencing tourist behavior among the growing number of domestic tourists. (Katsikari et al., 2020). Understanding domestic visitor demands is crucial for the introduction of novel products and services, the development of marketing strategies, and the formulation of destination development policies. (Baloglu & Uysal 1996). Mongolia needs to look into the behavior of domestic visitors and create a new tourism brand product for them, agritourism.

This study will contribute to the development of an agritourism product model for domestic tourism based on the everyday lives of nomadic herders. In this manner, it will be feasible to enter the foreign market at a later stage.

Domestic tourism and the Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has done enormous damage to the world's society and economy, with the tourism industry bearing a lot of the severity of the damage. The goal of countries is to quickly restore tourism activities, so steps have been taken to lower travel expenses, make extensive use of digital information technology, revive domestic tourism that stays within national borders, and revive markets in neighboring nations and regions. According to the World Tourist Council (WTC, 2020), it will take 36 months for the global tourism sector to recover to pre-pandemic levels. Therefore, domestic tourism is more realistic to revive the tourism business in the short term.

Domestic tourists' behavior differs from that of international tourists and must be closely studied. India, China, the United States, Brazil, Russia, Australia, and Indonesia, which are heavily dependent on the tourism industry, are developing domestic tourism to revive their industries (WHA, 2020). To revive domestic tourism, we used multi-channel marketing tools to promote people's travel with incentives and discounts, provide financial incentives, and improve information to restore people's travel confidence. Understanding domestic tourist behavior is crucial for increasing demand, offering new products and services, and creating marketing communications.

Global tourism Perspectives after Covid 2019

The impact of the Covid-2019 pandemic on global tourism is not only changing the economy but also changing people's lifestyles and relationships. In this age of massive change that happens once in a century to humanity, tourism needs to be re-evaluated. What experts have in common is that globalization will never stop and human curiosity will never fade away, so tourism will continue to grow. Due to the impact of the Covid 2019 epidemic, the tourism situation has fundamentally changed, and it is said that it will develop in a completely new way. Due to the Covid 2019 pandemic, people have been restricted from traveling for long periods. Being close to each other, and creating clusters, have become more interested in clean air, rural areas, and taking care of their health tranquility than ever before. Therefore, the following should be considered when developing tourism in the future.

- If comfort and safety are not ensured, it would be difficult to increase the number of elderly tourists.
- In recent years, popular tourist destinations have become overcrowded. To avoid overcrowding, the number of tourists visiting popular places may decrease.
- Citizens of most countries tend to choose safe and close domestic travel instead of traveling abroad.
- There is an increasing trend of leisure and resort travel or special-themed tours such as agrotourism rather than mass tourism.

3. Research methodology

This chapter describes the research strategy, its application, data collection, outcome, and analysis procedures in this research. The advantages and the limitations of the chosen research approach and design are also included in this chapter.

3.1 Research strategy

The purpose of this thesis was to provide a better understanding of agritourism in the Mongolian context and develop agritourism products and models.

Due to the interpretative stance adopted in this research and the nature of the research question qualitative method was used to explore the features, benefits, and challenges of agritourism and find out the way to develop an agritourism model in the Mongolian context. Based on the study, conclusions and recommendations were drawn for the Mongolian context.

For this thesis, the main research question is: How can agrotourism model be developed in Mongolia?

Following research sub-questions will be explored to answer the main question.

- What is agrotourism?
- Why is agrotourism suitable for Mongolian nomadic lifestyle context?
- What are potential benefits and challenges of agrotourism in Mongolian condition?
- What are behaviours of domestic travellers?
- How can agrotourism product be developed in Mongolia?

3.2 Research design

The research work is based on the following primary research designs and methodologies to identify the possibilities of developing agrotourism based on nomadic pastoralists' lifestyles.

- Research original literature and sources to establish the present condition and travel trends of domestic tourist.
- One of the quantitative research approaches is the questionnaire methods.
- Analysis of the target community. (Erdene Soum, Central region)
- The individual interview method, is one of the qualitative research methods.

3.3 Data sources

The initial data sources in the qualitative approach are documents, interviews, and observation. Yin (2018) identifies six sources of evidence including documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts that can be used in case studies. In this thesis, data were collected from documentary sources including national reports, international organizations' data, research articles, and journals on the field. As one of the key sources of data, using documentary sources had some advantages including cost and time-effective manners which can cover a long period, many events and settings, and can

be reviewed repeatedly (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2018). Documentary analysis was based on original literature and books from the internet by using the online library and scientific articles in Mongolian.

In this study, two nomadic herder families were involved in the interview to explore possibilities of developing economically, socially, environmentally friendly, and sustainable agritourism based on the livelihood of the nomadic people in Mongolia.

3.4 Questionnaire and interview question design

The purpose of the research questionnaire is to study the travel patterns of domestic tourists in Mongolia and to determine travel behavior, traveling conditions, and satisfaction. The importance of the research is to develop domestic tourism, discover opportunities for tourist companies and tour operators to create travel products and services that meet the needs of domestic tourists, and determine the trends in the preferences of domestic tourists.

The following objectives have been proposed as part of the research on domestic tourists' behavior. It includes:

- To determine the current state of domestic tourism, travel trends, and market conditions by studying literature and sources, and determining their behavior in the post-Covid-19 pandemic.
- Investigating the travel behavior, travel attitude, and satisfaction of domestic tourists using a quantitative research questionnaire to collect primary data.

As a result of the research, the future trends of the behavior of domestic tourists traveling to Mongolia will be determined, and agrotourism, a new form of tourism in Mongolia, will be developed, opportunities and possibilities will be identified and a model will be proposed.

This research to identify the possibility of developing agrotourism based on the lifestyle of nomadic pastoralists is based on the semi-standardized and individual interview method, which is one of the qualitative research methods. A semi-standardized, individual interview method is a technique used to gain a deeper understanding of the subject's views, attitudes, behaviors, and reasons. (Bryman, 2012). This method is widely used by social scientists to identify qualitative rather than quantitative results about the subject under study. Interviews involve people with in-depth knowledge of the issue under discussion and experience with the target group. Before those people are included in the survey, pre-designed and filtered questions are asked to ensure that they are the target audience. (Bryman, 2012). The individual interviews are conducted in a designated standard room with the help of a professional moderator to reveal the views of the research participants freely and without any influence. The following principles were followed by the researcher during individual and semi-standardized interviews. It includes:

- Using scientifically based, publicly understandable, and integrated methodology;
- Strictly protect the confidentiality of data of research participants;
- The rationale, purpose, and direction of the research should be clear to the stakeholders, such as the interviewing researcher, the research participants, and the researcher who will analyze the data;
- The research data should be true and consistent with the research objectives;
- Research results should be clear, understandable, and useful;
- The survey was conducted by developing questions within the framework of basic requirements.

3.5 Procedure and timeline

The questionnaire: The main purpose of the research questionnaire is to analyze domestic tourist travel trends in Mongolia to access travel behavior, traveling circumstances, and satisfaction. The poll was created as an internet-based questionnaire in Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar. Domestic travelers in Ulaanbaatar were asked 21 questions for this survey. There were 10 close-ended questions and 11 multi choice- and linear scale questions. This survey assessed 402 residents during a week in April.

The individual interviews: The scope of this qualitative study was based on three main groups. It includes:

- Open discussion with older people who have been engaged in nomadic animal husbandry all their lives;
- Interview one member from two selected herding households who live in the target area (Erdene Soum);
- To make individual interviews with experts in charge of tourism in Erdene soum administration, representatives of citizens, and management staff.

The target community, Erdene soum of Tuv province in Mongolia was selected as the target area, and within the scope of the research, three target groups were interviewed and open-ended research questions were developed. It includes:

- Within the framework of nomadic civilization, three well-known people who have lived a nomadic life in rural areas of Mongolia all their lives were selected and interviewed. The interview was conducted with 12 open-ended questions, and without limiting the questions as much as possible, we learned how to enrich the characteristics of nomadic herdsman, ways of life, and the good quality of life in combination with the present, and discover the possibility of passing it on to future generations.
- The interview was conducted with 12 pre-prepared open-ended questions with representatives of the Erdene soum administration office.
- To learn about the lifestyle of modern nomadic herders, their ability to live harmoniously in a market society, their desire to cooperate with others, increase their household income, and their desire to develop as individuals. An interview was conducted with 25 pre-prepared open-ended questions with two households.

All of these interview-based qualitative studies were conducted online, and each interview was recorded and documented. Given that interview research, the primary method of qualitative research is more open-ended and flexible than quantitative research; questions were pre-designed to elicit in-depth discussion and reinforcement from the expert. The quality of research data depends on the design of in-depth interview questions; the format of the questions, and the way the interview is conducted. Open interview questions consist of demographic questions, experience or behavior questions, opinion questions, and knowledge questions. A total of 8 people were interviewed. 4 interviews were with nomadic herders, 2 interviews were with members of selected nomadic herder households, and the remaining 2 interviews were conducted with representatives of the local government. All interviews were conducted online using Messenger, and the duration of one interview lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour. 6 of 8 participants were women and others were men.

3.6 Data analysis

The target local community was Erdene Soum, in Mongolia's Central Province, and three target groups (Elder nomadic herders, nomadic families, chairman of local community) were interviewed within the scope of the research, as well as open-ended research questions during April 2023. Demographic inquiries, experience or behavior questions, opinion questions, and knowledge questions are all part of open interview questions. Eight people were interviewed in total. All of these qualitative investigations based on interviews were conducted online, and each interview was recorded and documented.

Domestic tourism contributes greatly to the country's economic growth, there is a lack of research on this market, and the relevant government and organizations conducting research are not particularly concerned. Microeconomic factors such as household income, consumption, and expenditure and macro-economic factors including market competition, marketing promotion, price, government regulation, inflation, unemployment, and tax policy influence domestic tourism. In demand and requirements of domestic tourists' development of compatible products and services domestic travelers' motivation, behavior, interest, travel experience, satisfaction, and desire there is a need to study. However, the increase in the number of domestic tourists exceeds the carrying capacity of tourist spots and causes an increase in garbage and the deterioration of the environment. It is possible to reduce the negative impact on the environment if domestic tourists are promoted and raise their awareness of nature conservation ethics.

Due to the increase in foreign investment in the mining sector and the government's economic development policy, as people's living standards and household incomes increase, middle-class families can travel within the country by owning private cars. The construction of paved roads leading to specially protected areas and provincial centers has significantly increased the number of domestic tourists. According to Amartuvshin (2009), the research and information about domestic tourism are very limited and is due to the lack of standards and systems for data collection. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism's (MoIE) annual data on visitors to specially protected areas are the only official source of domestic tourist numbers. Mongolians have been traveling to their homeland throughout time.

Improvements in the paved road network connecting the provinces and easier access to remote Protected Areas have spurred an increase in domestic travel. Urbanization, traffic congestion, extreme climate, and air pollution are other factors that drive people to travel. Due to the extreme climate of the mainland, Mongolians experience harsh, cold, and long winters. One of the reasons Mongolians travel is to escape from the city's traffic and pollution and to celebrate the arrival of warm weather. During the national Naadam festival celebrated in July every year, Mongolians take a long vacation, visit their friends and relatives, attend school graduation anniversary meetings, worship their sacred water, go to the spring, etc. travel a lot to places.

4. Results

4.1 Questionnaire analysis

Research on Mongolia's domestic tourism market is rare and annual real statistics about how many domestic travelers travel to Mongolia for what purpose. There are no studies and statements and the main reason for the lack is that ministries, public organizations, and associations of domestic travel research, policy, and planning in this area have been neglected for many years. In addition to statistics, no research has been conducted on the behavior of domestic travelers, travel motivations, patterns, and satisfaction. Therefore, this questionnaire tries to determine the behavior of domestic tourists with 21 closed questions.

The survey was developed as an internet-based questionnaire (google forms), which was disseminated via a web link, directly through email, or by messengers in the capital city of Mongolia (Ulaanbaatar). The survey was shared and distributed on Facebook groups and pages in Ulaanbaatar city. The survey was also completed on the pages and groups of organizations, communities, students, and entrepreneurs. In taking this survey, researcher tried to include all levels of society. This survey was conducted with 21 questions from domestic travelers residing in Ulaanbaatar. 10 of the questions were close-ended and 11 were open-ended questions. During the 7 days study period (6th and 12th of April), many of the citizens that voluntarily forwarded the Internet survey via social media could not accurately estimate how many people received it through these means. At the end of the period, this survey was taken by 402 citizens in Ulaanbaatar. There were different numbers of responses to the questions with a response rate of between 384-402 responses. It means some participants haven't answered some questions.

The information gathered for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Additional statistical analysis will be carried out to investigate ongoing research questions.

Demographics. The first objective of this study is to determine the demographic characteristics of domestic travelers traveling in Mongolia, i.e., gender and age group, education, profession, and income, and to determine the composition of travelers. The demographic data collected from the questionnaire was compared to the demographic data for the capital population according to the Census 2020, National statistics office of Mongolia. Four of the close-ended questions included the age, gender, education, and employment of the respondents. Age is one of the most common demographic questions asked in the survey. Respondents' knowledge and experience with the survey's focus are frequently determined by their age. The question was answered by 395 of the 402 respondents. The following graphic shows the age of the respondents.

1. Your age
395 responses

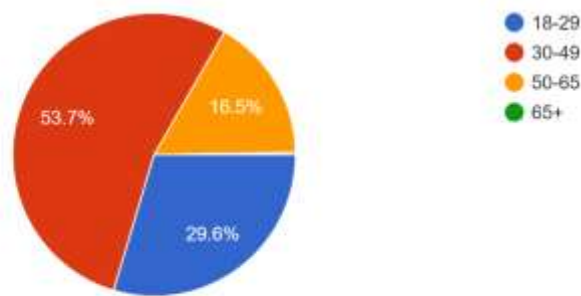


Figure 7: Age of the respondents *Source: Own work 2023*

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 53.7% (212 respondents), were 30-49 years old, 29.6% (117 respondents) were 18-29 years old, and 16.5% (65 respondents) were 50-65 years old. One respondent (0.2%) was over the age of 65.

Capturing a respondent's gender is another common demographic question. The gender of a person may influence how they respond to survey questions. This question was answered by 397 of the 402 respondents. The following graphic shows the gender of the respondents.

2. Your gender
397 responses

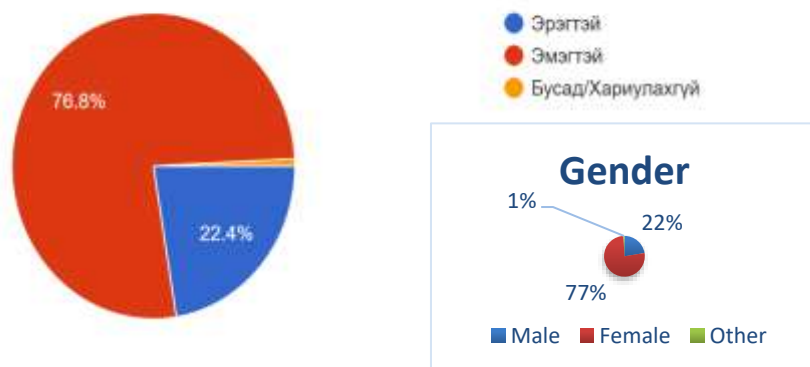


Figure 8: Gender of the respondents *Source: Own work, 2023*

The vast majority of respondents, 76.8% (305 respondents), were female and 22.4% (89 respondents) were male, and the remaining 0.8% (3 respondents) didn't intend to respond or were of another gender.

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, the age survey of Mongolia's population is as follows. The population of Mongolia was 3,296,866 at the 2020 census.

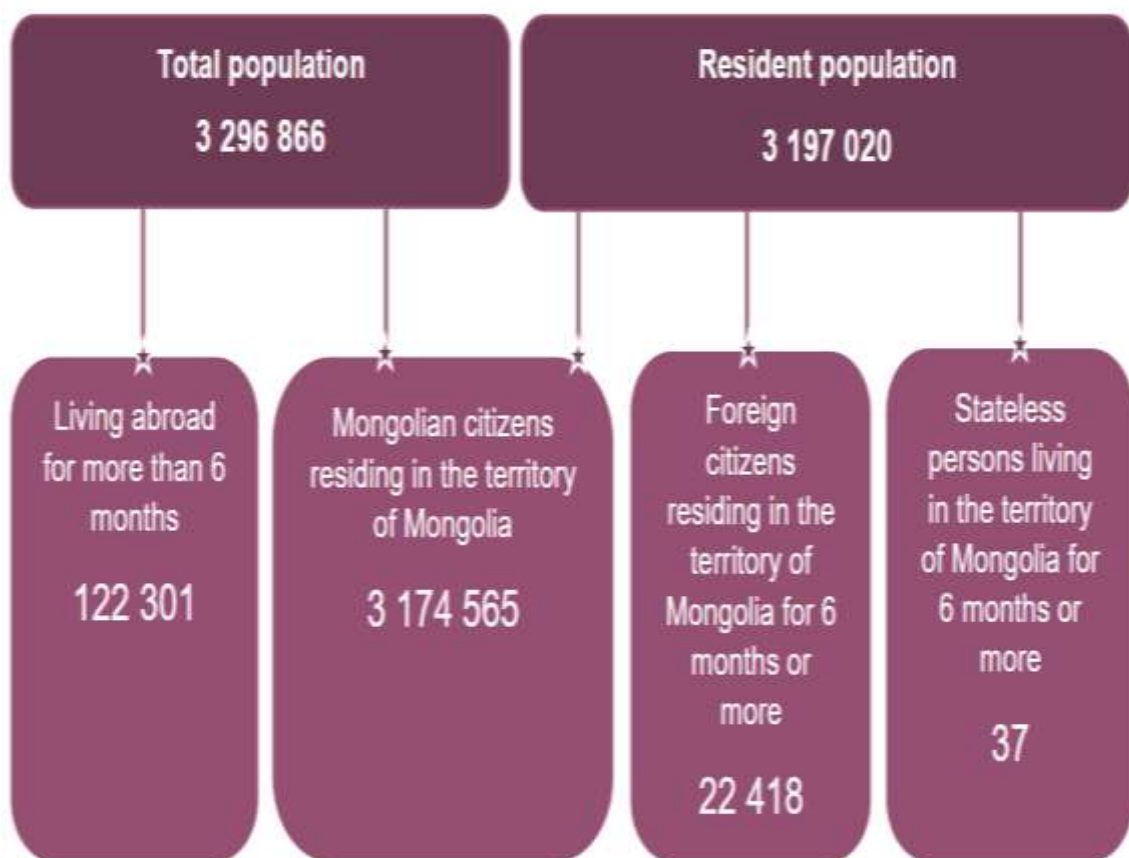


Figure 9: Population of Mongolia Source: 2020 Population and Housing Census of Mongolia, National Statistics Office

The population of Mongolia is still young, as 31.5 % of the overall population was aged under 14 years, 64.4% was aged 15-64, and 4.1% was aged 65 years and over. (Census 2020, Mongolia). As can be seen, the majority of the population is between the age of 15 and 64, so, naturally, the majority of respondents are in this age range. The median age of the population of Mongolia was 27.9 years.

The sex ratio was 96.6%, which decreased by 1.5 points since the 2010 census. Due to the relatively higher mortality rate of men, the sex ratio trends to decrease in the age groups of 30 years and older. (Census 2020, Mongolia. The demographic data collected from the survey were compared to the demographic data of the National Statistics Office of Mongolia, according to the Census 2020 survey.) The overwhelming majority (76.8%) of respondents were female and 22.4 were male. This higher rate of female respondents might be related to the national gender ratio. On the other hand, it may be related to the fact that Mongolian women are more proactive than men.

Education is a core demographic question that provides insight into the type of work a participant may be doing. Knowing the educational background of respondents is useful as it can influence the way they answer questions. This is because someone who is only a student may have a different income level, professional

experience, and even life perspective than someone who went on to higher education. This question was answered by 397 of the 402 respondents. The following graph shows the education of the respondents.

3. Your education

397 responses

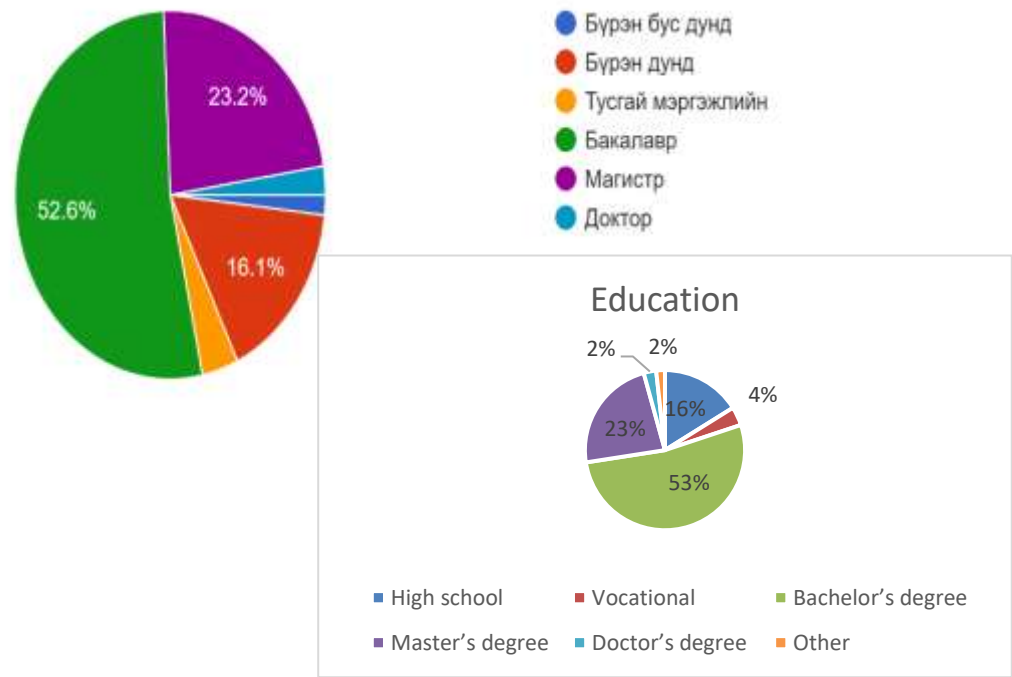
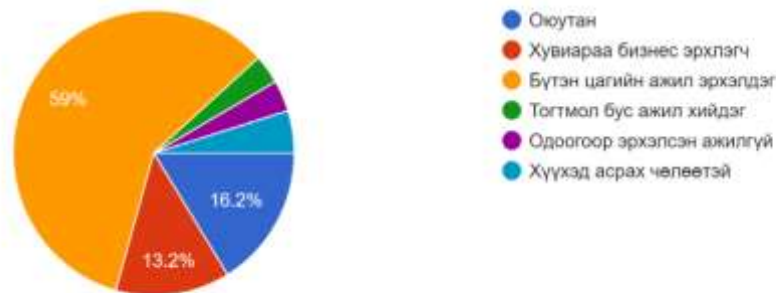


Figure 10: Education of the respondents *Source: Own work 2023*

52.6% (209 respondents) of the respondents reported having a bachelor's degree, 23.2% (92 respondents) have a master's, 16.1% (64) graduated from high school, and the remaining percent is divided into secondary school education, technical and vocational education, and doctor.

4. Your employment

395 responses



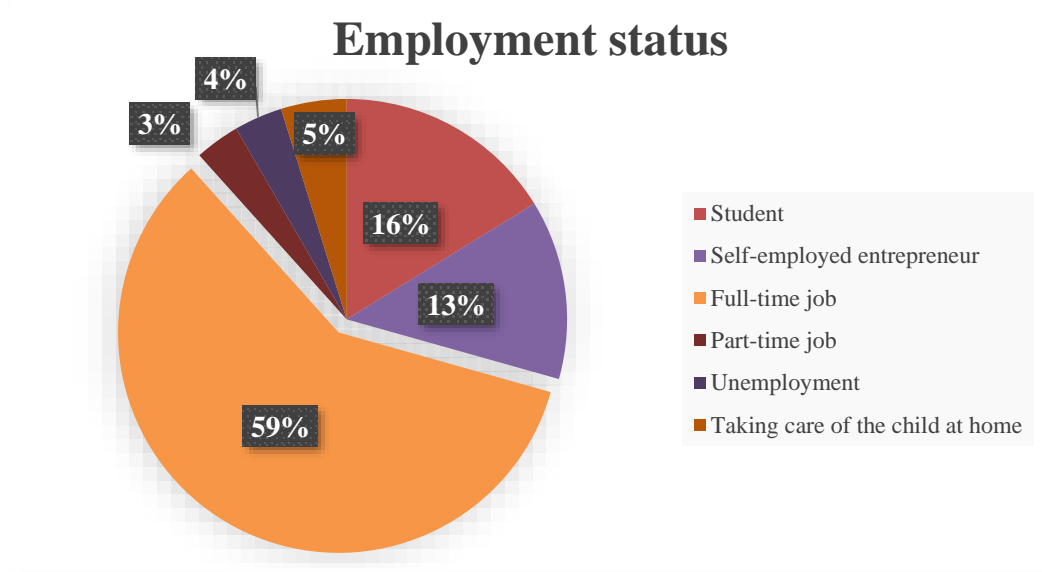


Figure 11: Employment status of the respondents *Source: Own work 2023*

It is useful to know the participant's employment status because it affects their purchasing capacity. Household income is the most important feature for making traveling decisions for domestic tourists of Mongolia. Therefore, respondents' employment status is one of the essential questions of this survey. This question was answered by 395 of the 402 respondents. The following graph shows the employment status of the respondents. In Mongolia, most of the people who responded to a survey about travel had full-time jobs (59%), while some owned their businesses (13.2%), and a smaller number worked part-time (3.3%). This means that 75.5% of all respondents were employed and could afford to travel. Students also responded to the survey, accounting for 16.2% (64) of the respondents. They were also able to travel because it is common for their parents to go with them. Students were interested in traveling and liked to go with their friends and family.

The 2020 Population and Housing Census showed that many people in Mongolia use mobile phones (87.8%) and the Internet (64.7%). Since 2010, the number of mobile phone users has increased by 17.8%, while the number of internet users has gone up by 34.1%. This is likely because of globalization and the spread of technology. Mongolia has introduced 3G and 4G networks, which have also helped more people to use mobile phones and the internet.

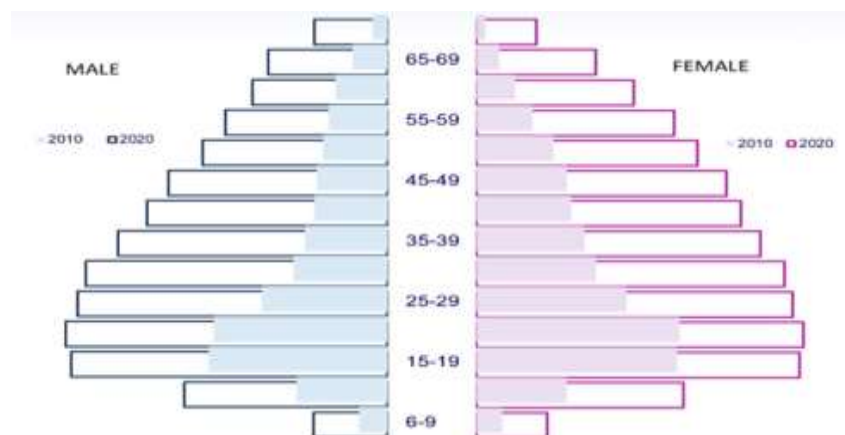


Figure 12: Population Pyramid of internet users, 2010 and 2020 *Source: 2020 Population and Housing Census of Mongolia, National Statistics Office*

Based on the figure provided, it is clear that individuals between the ages of 15 and 49 use the Internet more frequently than other age groups. The survey also found that a large majority of respondents, specifically 84.3% (333 respondents), use Facebook on the internet. Instagram is used by 12.2% (48 respondents), while other social media networks are used by the remaining respondents. It is important to note that 395 out of 402 respondents answered this question. A visual representation of the respondents' use of social media can be seen in the accompanying graph.

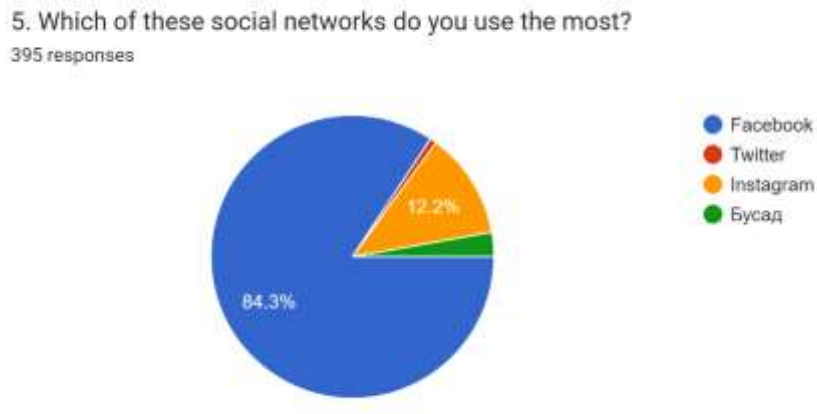


Figure 13: Social media usage of the respondents

Note: Green color shows other (2.8%) Source: Own work 2023

Research participants use social networks to search for the trips they are interested in on the pages of domestic travel companies. For Mongolians, Facebook has the potential to promote their business activities. Facebook has become the most cost-effective, fast, and convenient marketing tool to build relationships with customers. The most-used social network platforms are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in Mongolia. Nomadic herders also use Facebook frequently, so domestic tourists and nomadic herders can exchange information through it. Advertising to Mongolians through email and phone is ineffective because they usually delete them without reading.

Summarizing the questions from 6 to 11 of this study to determine the behavior of domestic travelers, the following results were obtained. The study investigated the reasons why domestic travelers travel to Mongolia and their travel motivations.

According to the answers of the survey participants, the average traveling period for domestic tourists is up to 7 days. But the duration of the trip depends on the location of the area. Judging from the responses of the survey participants, Mongolians usually travel to their homeland 1-2 times a year with their families in the summer. The 12th question of the survey aimed to determine the travel purpose of domestic travelers and the following results were obtained. This multiple-choice question was answered by 393 of the 402 respondents. The following graph shows the purposes of domestic travelers

12. What is the purpose of your trip? (Multiple Choices)

393 responses

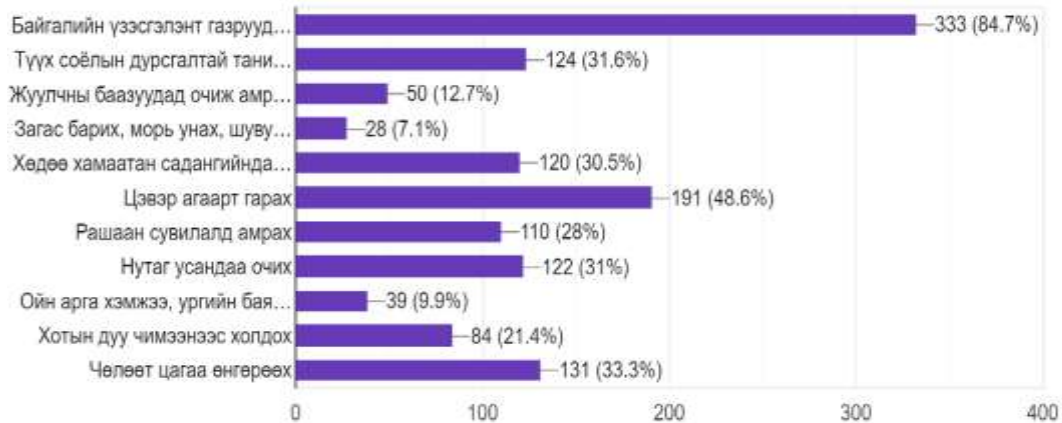


Figure 14: Purposes of respondents' trips In English below the graph *Source: Own work 2023*

12. What is the purpose of your trip?

- To travel to the natural landmarks - 333 (84.7%)
- To familiarize with historical and cultural monuments and temples – 124 (31.6%)
- To stay at the tourist camp and relax- 50 (12.7%)
- To go fishing, horseback riding, bird observing, etc – 28 (7.1%)
- To visit relatives who live in the countryside- 120 (30.5%)
- To get out into the fresh air- 191 (48.6%)
- Natural Spa Relaxation- 110 (28%)
- To go to the hometown – 122 (31%)
- To participate in the anniversary events- 39 (9.9%)
- To go away from the noise of the city- 84 (21.4%)
- To spend leisure time – 131 (33.3%)

The majority of the survey participants provided reasons for their domestic travels, citing the allure of the country's scenery, landscape, and natural landmarks. The responses indicated that many people enjoy traveling to locations with natural beauty, such as mountains, and water bodies like rivers, lakes, and ponds.

The following table summarizes the travel motivation of domestic tourists.

Table 2: Motivation of domestic tourists

| PUSH MOTIVES | PULL MOTIVES |
|--|--|
| Urban pollution, traffic jams, and crowd | To travel around the country and see beautiful scenery |

| | |
|--|---|
| Escape from the stress, get fresh air | As it is not financially possible to travel abroad, travel domestically |
| Travel for relaxing at will in vast expanses | To see travel photos and posts on social networks and make traveling decision |
| Have a good time with friends and family | The newly paved roads are convenient for traveling, the time was shortened |
| Know their own culture and learn | There is a lot of information about places to travel |
| Travel to places that have never been visited before | To stay in nature and see new animals |
| Fear of missing out (a trending travel destination; fear of being left behind) | To get convenient service in tourist camps |
| Create a trip to remember, visit a new place | To go to their birthplace and that of his parents |
| After the pandemic, became willing to travel to the rural area | Visiting relatives' herding families in rural areas and learning about nomadic life |

Source: Own work 2023

Linear scale questions were used from 13 to 21 to investigate the travel patterns of domestic tourists, including transportation, accommodation, travel duration, food and drinks, activities during the trip, shopping behavior, and factors influencing travel decisions. The majority of the respondents preferred traveling in their vehicle rather than using organized tours or public transportation, with the type of accommodation varying depending on the type of tour. Staying with relatives or in tents was also popular among domestic tourists. Food was found to be a significant aspect of the trip for Mongolian travelers, with the quality of food affecting their mood. Domestic tourists, during the trip, like to consume traditional food and drink. The variety and quality of food depend on the cost of the trip. Local products, such as organic food and handicrafts, were popular purchases among domestic tourists.

The researcher found questions 16 and 17 to be the most important and interesting, and the results are presented in a graph. They were linear scale questions. The 16th question was answered by 388 of the 402 respondents. The following graph shows the result.

Please rate the following questions on a scale of 1 to 5.

1- Totally disagree

2- Disagree

3- None of them

4- Agree

5- Completely agree

16. When a farmer visits his relatives, he helps them with their daily chores.

388 responses

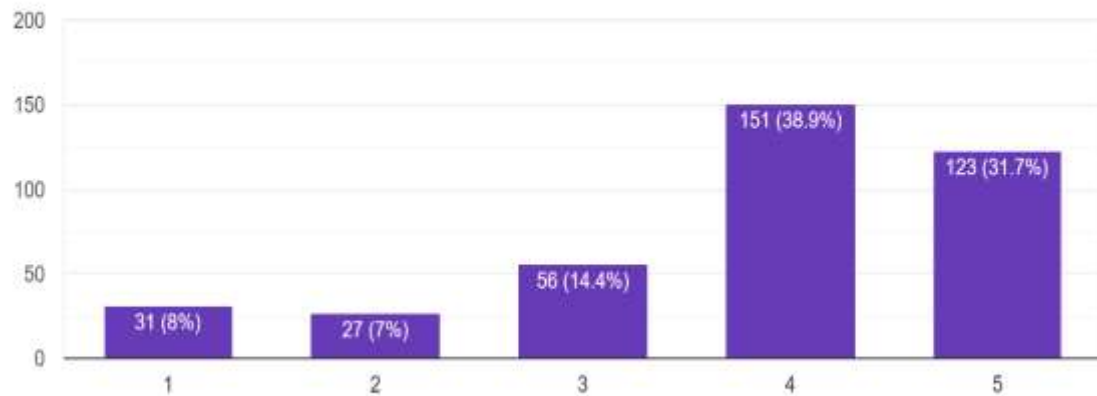


Figure 15: The purpose is to discover the interest of the travelers in learning through helping with the daily work and life of the nomads *Source: Own work 2023*

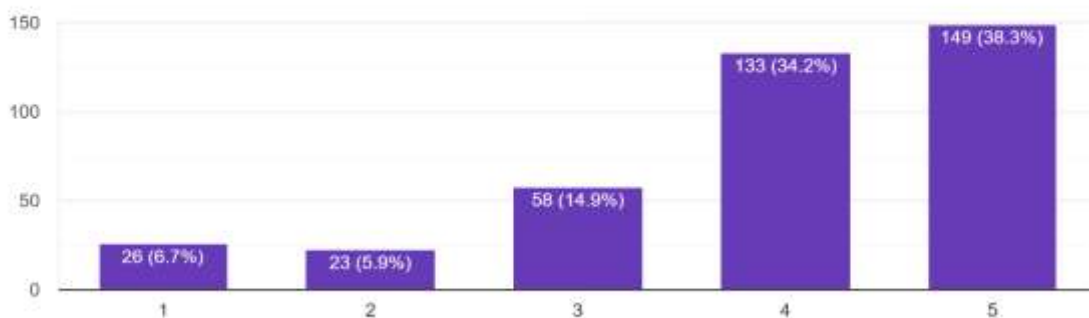
Out of the 402 participants, 388 answered the 16th question, with 38.9% (151 respondents) agreeing and 31.7% (123 respondents) completely agreeing to help and learn from nomads. This suggests that a large majority (70.6%) of domestic travelers enjoy assisting nomadic families with their daily work when visiting them. Additionally, the 17th question was answered by 389 of the participants, and the corresponding results are shown in a graph.

Figure 16: Determination of the interest of domestic travelers in staying with a nomadic family

Source: Own work 2023

17. If I could stay in a rural herdsman's family for 1-3 days to get to know the culture and customs of the nomads, help them with their daily work, gain exp... offer an interesting trip, I would gladly accept it.

389 responses



The survey found that 38.3% (149 respondents) completely agreed and 34.2% (133 respondents) agreed with the statement regarding their willingness to learn about the nomadic lifestyle and culture that has been passed down from their ancestors. This result is in line with the researcher's expectations and indicates that there is a significant demand for the development of agrotourism based on the nomadic way of life in Mongolia. The researcher believes that if there is demand, businesses can flourish, and it is important to have support from the local government and state in terms of supply.

4.2 Interview analysis

The most intriguing things that we young people need to pay attention to and learn from discussions with senior people who have herded animals include learning more about nomadic Mongolian culture, heritage, and values, as well as how to protect and pass them on to future generations. According to the elderly nomadic herders, their experience is divided into four categories and evaluated accordingly. It includes the following:

1. The personality of Mongolian people
2. Traditional knowledge of climate and geography of nomadic pastoralists
3. Mongolians' traditional methods and wisdom of animal husbandry
4. Mongolian knowledge related to the behavior and psychology of five types (livestock) of animals: cattle (including yaks), sheep, goats, camels, and horses.

Personality of Mongolian people

The interviewees shared their concerns about the changing personality of Mongolian people in modern times. They explained that the traditions of Mongolians reflect a collective spirit of mutual respect for ethics, customs, and religion that is open to all. This may explain why Mongolians are known for being hospitable, kind, innocent, and helpful. In rural areas, the norms for interpersonal relationships revolve around listening to elders and respecting their words of respected elders. Family members, especially parents, and siblings, are also highly commendable. The mayor of a sum or bag significantly influences decision-making in rural areas. Traditional social interactions and attitudes are more prevalent in rural areas, which tend to have a less negative impact on human behavior and relationships than in urban areas.

D.Sodnomphil (age 70) said, "*...In rural areas, family, relatives, people from the same area, and neighbors have the closest and most friendly relations, but you know that even if a stranger comes, we welcome and host them in the same friendly way...*". Their behavior is characterized by warmth, openness, friendliness, and an ethical and fair approach. However, older herders have noticed a change in recent years, with increasing familiarity, selfishness, rudeness, and uncivilized communication among rural people, especially the younger generation.

Nomadic herders' traditional knowledge of climate and geography

Mongolians deeply revere the natural world and keenly understand their environment. They rely on traditional methods to predict weather patterns, such as observing the characteristics of the sun, moon, stars, wind, and fog. For example, a red horizon at sunset means a beautiful day is coming, while the wind blowing in the face indicates unpleasant weather. My grandmother also taught me this method. Also, analyzing the state

of the sky by observing the positions of animals, such as five types of animals (horses, goats, camels, cows, and sheep), beasts, antelopes, winged birds, insects, etc., became widespread among Mongolians. For instance, if the sky is terrible, a colt or calf galloping with it indicates that the atmosphere will be good; a swallow flying above the sky indicates discomfort; a swallow flying below the sky indicates distress; a wolf building its nest early suggests the arrival of spring; etc. For instance, a sense of drowsiness, bodily aches, joint pain, etc., are symptoms that the weather will be unpleasant. Mongolians can also forecast the appearance of the sky based on the nature of objects and smoke as well as the characteristics of the surrounding landscape. For instance, when there is no wind, the sky will be beautiful if the chimney smoke rises straight up. However, if the salt is wet, the pipes are clogged, and the chewing gum is crunching, the belts and straps of the ger tighten and vibrate, signaling a terrible sky and impending rain.

These elders also repeat this teaching. Therefore, these older adults, who have been herding animals all their lives, have experienced the rigors of life, so they have learned all this knowledge from life experience and their parents, and now they are teaching us through it. T.Majaachimuu (age 79) said, *"...Unfortunately, recently, young people have become less interested in their heritage and listening to older people. Most of them are more concerned with the bad news coming out of the nation and the rest of the globe than with their histories, cultures, and heritage..."*

She thanked me for asking her about a subject that most people are not interested in nowadays. According to them, our ancestors' weather forecasting knowledge was excellent, but we have inherited only a small part. It is customary to forecast the upcoming year and season and modify their moving time based on the peculiarities of the ice and the time that animals enter the lair. To pass on the knowledge that has been selected to be accurate through the abundant experience of working life to the next generation, there is a tradition of discussing it in proverbs that are understandable, easy to memorize, and have a teaching quality that can be used in everyday work. For example:

- Don't think of the happiness of growth as happiness; don't think of the morning sun as the sun.
- Heavy rains don't last long, yet Drizzles last long
- Thunderstorm without rain, a flirty woman without a husband

This has become a noble traditional custom to protect the land and the earth with love and keep it in its original form. All of the above can be summed up by saying that the Mongols, from very early times, have correctly recognized the natural world and climate phenomena and adjusted their work to it. On the other hand, it proves that Mongolians worshiped and protected the sky and the earth with love, constantly communicated with mother earth every day, and lived in harmony for thousands of years.

Mongolian traditional methods and wisdom of animal husbandry

Mongolian traditional methods and wisdom of animal husbandry. Mongolian cattle's health and milk production is carefully adjusted for both the animal and the owner. Herders have created a breed of animals that can provide food, drink, wear, and use and are adapted to their region. Since ancient times, Mongolians have cherished having a livestock market, so five types of animals are fed together. For example, when there is heavy snow, large animals (horse, camel, cow) give way to small animals (sheep, goats), cows do not sow their manure, so sheep sleep on the feet of the goats at night, goats with cold beaks spend the night warm under the shelter of the sheep, etc. In this way, herders have been able to raise local cattle that are fully adapted to the

country, nature, and climate, do not require a lot of capital and effort, and grow naturally during four grazing seasons. The pastoral work of herding Mongolian herders unites their power and creates many unique forms of cooperation, removing selfish thoughts from Mongolians' minds. In this way, the unique way of working together made many forms such as good neighbors, same river people, etc., which were aimed at saving human resources and facilitating hard work and became the joy of joint work.

Herding families did not have as many animals as they do now, so it is common for several families to move together and take turns tending their animals. The following list briefly describes the structure of Herder's campsite:

- A herder's family who herds their animals. Such a campsite has many family members and animals to raise and breed livestock
- Campsites and families consisting of a few households with the same number of animals these families are suitable for working together
- Campsites and families consisting of several households with different numbers of animals. These families are mostly relatives.

There is also the concept of "Saakhalt ail ". This means that families are close neighbors even if they are not together. O.Munkhbat (age 60) said, *"Saakhalt ail is an excellent custom to milk the animals, a unique way of working together to save the workforce during milking. When neighbors need to milk their livestock, they let another family care for their lambs while milking to save labor."*

Additionally, the herdsman mentioned another form of cooperation among herders: the community that shares the same river. This community collaborates on mare raising, sheep shearing, felting, lambing, and more. The celebration of collective work is carried out strictly according to traditional procedures. This ritual has evolved into a joyful celebration that fulfills the wishes of every herder, from the city to the family to the individuals living along the river. "This traditional method of herding used by nomadic herders is comparable to modern collective herding. All of this suggests that a population's distinctive traditions and practices are linked to the lifestyle they lead and the activities they engage in. Searching for grass sorghum and pure water and raising five different species of animals in herds necessitated some seasonal migration.

This migration is related to factors such as the difference between the land, the season, the availability of pastures, the number of animals, the condition of drinking water, the diseases of people and animals, and the need for salt. According to the research of foreign and domestic scientists who have studied the migratory habits of Mongolians, they migrate about ten times in the Khangai area and 10-14 times in the Gobi area.

(Dr. Ts.Natsagdorj, 2018. History of Nomadic Civilizations)

Mongolian knowledge related to the behavior and psychology of five types (livestock) of animals: cattle (including yaks), sheep, goats, camels, and horses

In herding five types (livestock) of animals: cattle (including yaks), sheep, goats, camels, and horses, Mongolians have gradually come to know the behavior and psychology of their animals. Although the intelligence of animals cannot be compared to that of humans, the Mongolian horse does not leave its owner on the field, and if there is no space on the race track, he does not step on a child who has fallen. Mongolians, who know many behaviors, such as how a ferocious animal hears its owner's voice and becomes tamed when it sees the goods, have always loved their livestock as "intelligent animals ."A child riding a racehorse sings

memorable tunes such as "Giin goo" and "Zee hoo" through the narrow throat, calming the horse's mood and lightening its feet. Every Mongolian herdsman sings and takes the rejected newborns to their mother, but there is a custom ceremony to accept the abandoned or orphaned newborns. In this way, there are stories everywhere about how clever people could control and put any animal's behavior to good use. In addition, it is customary to encourage any mother animal's instinct of maternal affection for her young by bringing abandoned or rejected offspring to the forsaken mother or another mother.

Numerous methods were employed in an attempt to address the issue at hand. One of the strategies involved bringing the dog right next to the rejected cub. Another approach was to transport the mother and her newborn to a rural area and tether them there. If the mother had passed away, several alternatives were explored, such as having another calf nurse from her, using the skin of the deceased calf to stimulate milk production, or applying milk directly to the surrogate calf. Another intriguing yet effective method involved applying salt to the surrogate calf, prompting the mother to lick and nurse it closely.

Mongolian nomadic civilization that has carried much of human history is the foundation of numerous revolutions, maintains the umbilical linkages between the natural world and humanity, and is a mission from the gods of the blue sky.

The perspectives of elderly herders on modern nomadic herding practices (from interviews)

Nowadays, everyone wants to live in the capital city. *"...When we were young, in other words, during socialism, there was a big difference between the city and the countryside, the culture and level of consumption of the people in the city was relatively different from that of the people in the countryside, but today people's consumption has become the same in the city and the countryside.* (T.Majaachimuu, age 79)

The main difference between urban and rural people lies in the difference in people's thinking, level of household consumption, culture, social relations, understanding of norms, habits, and the environment of social control. The culture of the rural people is different from that of the urban people. Although the traditional cultural influence is being lost, compared to urban people, the preserved culture prevails. *"...In addition to the celebrations associated with the traditional nomadic life, such as the hair cutting ceremony for the child, building a new "ger" (a traditional dwelling of Mongolian nomads) carries the meaning and symbol of blessing for relatively many people, and it has been preserved today because it has become an integral part of the family life..."* the O.Munkhbat said. Also, the festival of the five types of animals, branding of foals, and the treatment of young animals have been handed down unchanged because the Mongolians believe it will bring animal growth and milk. When it comes to this event, though, different locations do it differently, some don't do it at all, and some have other names. It is concluded that more than passing down traditional customs from generation to generation is required in rural areas. One-third of today's herders can fully inherit their tribe's traditions, rituals, and values, while the remainder inherits only half.

In terms of traditional clothes, today's herders use traditional clothing only on special occasions and primarily wear European clothing on a daily basis. This is especially noticeable among young herders. *"...Coat, jacket, t-shirt, sneakers, boots, shoes, and pants have become a daily dress style for rural children and young women, especially because they are easy on the body and don't get tangled in the legs..."* D.Sodnomphil said.

Today's best culture of nomadic pastoralists is national food and drink, national games, storytelling, knowledge, religious rituals, making clothes, and national competitions. However, the number of people who

do not know national musical instruments, national dances, folk songs, and national literacy is increasing. In other words, they concluded that traditions had been lost in many types of cultural heritage, and it is difficult for rural people to master their national culture. "The number of nomadic herders who move occasionally has decreased, they have stopped milking their small animals (sheep, goat) and milked their large animals (cows) once a day, and they are riding motorcycles more than riding horses." (All three people who got interviewed agreed).

On the one hand, this has the advantage of facilitating their work. Still, on the other hand, it has a negative impact not only on the income of the herdsman's family but also on traditional animal husbandry. Judging from these, many changes manifest urban life's effects on nomadic herders' traditional lifestyle. The conventional domestic use of mobile livestock has changed. For example, in the past, herders were careful not to injure the legs of their animals and used stirrup straps that they had prepared. Still, today's herder families often buy and use halters made of unbreakable synthetic material from the Soum Center store. However, among herders, some herders learn how to tie a rope, how to knit a sheep's wool, how to make a coat, how to use wool to make felt, etc. Livestock equipment is hardly used; even families from Khangai (forest and mountain area) and Gobi people no longer use animals for transportation, and camels and oxcarts are used for moving only in areas where it is difficult to move by vehicles. Each family has several motorcycles, a porter (car) to carry, a car that goes to the city, and a tractor for harvesting hay. It's rare to find a home without a color TV, but it's common for most households to choose a small screen that's cheap and suitable for moving. Local elders criticize that the culture of nomadic life is to clean the abandoned site of a ger, fill the holes, and clean the garbage when moving. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of individuals within the community to preserve their traditions and the local and central governments. Historical traditions and nomadic civilizations must be considered at every decision-making level to organize and manage them appropriately. As a researcher, developing agritourism based on a nomadic lifestyle will be an intriguing and valuable educational tool to impart this knowledge and experience to the younger generation.

Finally, they warned that to preserve their historical traditions and nomadic civilization in today's globalized world, nomadic Mongolians must teach and educate the next generation. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of individuals within the community to preserve their traditions and the local and central governments. Historical traditions and nomadic civilizations must be considered at every decision-making level to organize and manage them appropriately. As a researcher, developing agritourism based on a nomadic lifestyle will be an intriguing and valuable educational tool to impart this knowledge and experience to the younger generation.

Analysys of Erdene soum

The Erdene Soum (small rural community) was founded in 1924. Administratively and territorially belongs to the Tuv province in Mongolia, and the center of a soum is 72 km from the capital city of Ulaanbaatar and 97 km from the province center. It borders the other 5 soum of Tuv Province, the Nalaikh district of Ulaanbaatar city, and the Mandal soum of Selenge Province respectively. Erdene soum is divided into 5 groups, and as of 2022, 3941 people are living in 1263 households. (National Statistics Office, 2022). Population structure: male in 2029, female in 1912, gender ratio 106.1 (Census 2020, Mongolia). It is in the top 5 in Tuv province in terms of population and 1st in terms of land area excluding the center of the province.

Geographical features: It has a mountainous surface 1500-2800 meters above sea level. It belongs to the temperate zone of the northern part of the territory of Mongolia and is located in the central part of the Khentii Mountains and the Great Forest, dominated by steppes, forests, and taiga. 53.7 percent of Soum's territory is pastures and hay crops, and 43.5 percent is forest taiga. Dense forests of coniferous and deciduous trees.

Natural attraction areas: In Erdene, of Tuv Province, there are two natural spas, and it is a region with many natural beauty spots and tourism has been actively developing recently. It has been the focus of tourists' attention in recent years, there are many tourist attractions such as the Chinggis Khan statue complex, a tourist camp showing life in the 13th century, Gunji Temple, Frog Rock, and Manzushir Monastery.

As of the end of 2022, there are 769 herder families and 1051 herders, with a total of 214,755 heads of 5 types of livestock. (National Statistics Office, 2022)

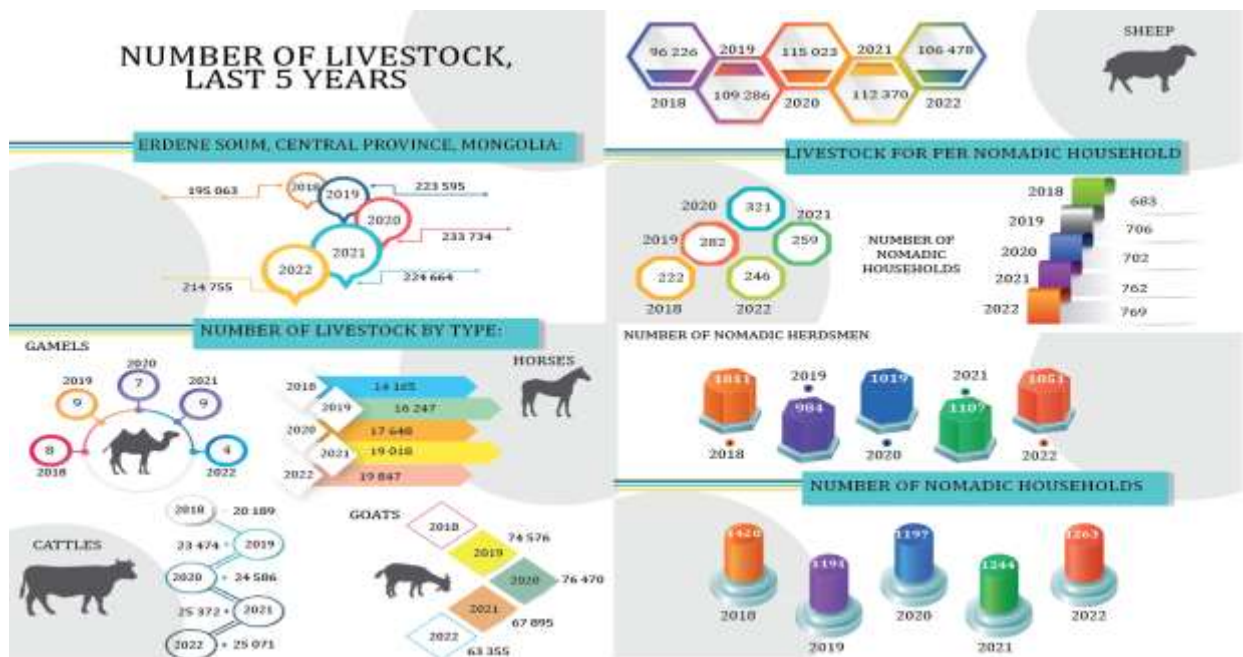


Figure 17: The number of livestock in Erdene soum, the structure of animals, the number of herding families, and the number of animals per herding family for the last 5 years were compiled *Source: Data (National Statistics Office, Mongolia), and Figure (own work 2023)*

For the researcher, the main reason for choosing this rural area is that it is close to the capital city, and has many natural beauty spots, and the knowledge of nomadic herders about tourism is much better than in other rural areas. However, the concept of agrotourism is a completely new concept for this local community. Administrative officials had no idea about this. From the interview with Z. Daariimaa, the chairman of Erdene soum citizens' representatives' meeting, the experiences that will stimulate the development of agrotourism are highlighted:

Erdene soum has a cooperation agreement with Yahiko Village, Niigata state of Japan. "...In 2016, the head of the Yahiko village education committee and the head of the general department of the village governor's office visited Erdene soum. In 2018, the governor of Yahiko village, the head of the general department of the governor's office, the principal of the middle school, and 6 middle school students came, and

the secondary school students visited the Mongolian nomadic family and spent the night..." (Z.Daariimaa, the chairman, Erdene soum)

To study this in detail, a day about Mongolia was organized in Yahiko village within the framework of cooperation between the two villages. (2018) They made Mongolian houses interesting to the villagers and promoted Mongolian culture by renting Mongolian folk costumes and performing fiddlers. On this occasion, middle school students who visited Mongolia presented their visit to Erdene.

When asked about this, she said, *"...As far as I remember, the governor of our district, 2 employees of the governor's office, and 6 elementary and secondary school students visited Yahiko village. Elementary and secondary school students visited a Japanese family and spent the night, and organized a Mongolia's day during this time..."* (Z.Daariimaa, the chairman, Erdene soum). The following answer was given to the question of whether this cooperation will continue in the future. *"...Because the results of the training and internship are poor, there are many difficulties in implementing and developing the things learned through the "Exchange Program" and the training in Japan. There have also been cases where people who participated in training in Japan as agricultural trainees returned to their area and stopped working in the agricultural sector. The problem is how to continue the cooperation effectively and continuously in the future..."* (Z.Daariimaa, the chairman, Erdene soum).

"...The governors of our soum will gladly accept proposals for the development of agrotourism based on the livelihood of nomadic herders. In the future, after implementing this initiative and gaining experience in receiving domestic tourists, I can see that there is an opportunity and way to continue cooperation with Japan. I believe that you will make us understand this knowledge better and cooperate with us in the future and connect with professional organizations and qualified experts..." (Z.Daariimaa, the chairman, Erdene soum).

The following conclusions were drawn from the interview. The management staff of rural communities in Mongolia (Mongolian communities are similar) have problems such as lack of knowledge and education about tourism, lack of personnel for marketing and promotion, lack of budget for tourism, and lack of marketing and promotion strategy and plan.

From this qualitative study, it is clear that tourists are satisfied with the natural beauty of the rural area, but a wider choice is lacking. This is not due to the lack of tourism resources, but to the fact that "tourism resources" are not processed into "tourism products" and the information about the products is not sufficiently disseminated. Therefore, it has been conveyed that the agritourism model will be created and cooperated with the local people of Erdene soum and the state administration.

For Erdene soum, the basis for domestic development of agritourism based on nomadic culture, and for receiving tourists from Japan in the first instance, has already been established. The September 17, 2018 edition of Sanjo Shinbun, a local newspaper in Niigata state, published an article entitled "4 Nights and 5 Days Tour of Central Province, Erdene Soum of Mongolia", and the following is a quote from Yahiko village chief Kobayashi Toyohiko.

"The establishment of friendship with Erdene soum has three main reasons. Specifically, Mongolia is a country whose economy is developing based on its abundant mineral resources such as rare metals, and if regular flights are made to Niigata Airport in the far distance, it can increase the number of tourists from Mongolia, as well as the main goal is to involve the children of Yahiko village in foreign relations and cooperation."

Mongolia can be reached by a 4-hour flight from Niigata Airport. Niigata region will be the gateway to Mongolia, so it will be easier to cooperate. "After Mongolia becomes an economically capable country, the local demand for relations and cooperation with Mongolia is likely to increase, so it is important to establish relations and cooperate as early as possible."

In addition, "Takashima Mongolian Village" was established with houses, restaurants, and hot springs in the plains reminiscent of Mongolia. Also, comments from secondary school students who visited Mongolia are published in Japan, and they wrote, "The experience of seeing with my own eyes, smelling, hearing the sounds, eating the food, and touching it became a precious treasure for me." shows that it is significant. We hope that the exchange of children who will carry the next generation will contribute to sustainable local cooperation in the long term.

Z. Daariimaa said, *"...I would like to put forward a proposal for local cooperation to solve some of the problems facing Mongolia's tourism sector, and then contribute to the study of the possibility of further implementation..."*

In future, the "Children's Forum for the Future of the Globe in Mongolia" initiative is proposed with the concept of sustainable development of tourism. The "Children's Conference for the Future of the World in Mongolia" initiative from Japan can be used as a concept to make the people understand the importance of the project to send children and youth to Mongolia and increase the number of people willing to participate in it. It is necessary to accumulate operational experience over a long period in the development of communication exchange events as a cooperation project. Therefore, the need to develop agritourism to promote the culture of nomads in the rural areas of Mongolia is naturally emerging.

Members of the two households were selected from the target area (Tuv province, Erdene soum).

1. Mendsaikhan Ulziibayar (nomadic herder #1), is 39 years old, female, and lives with her husband and 4 children.
2. Chinbat Zevgee (nomadic herder #2), is 56 years old, male, and lives with her wife. He has 2 children.

In the demographic study of nomadic herders, it was determined that the average number of family members in herder households is 4, the average age is 36, and the average age of the head of the household is 45. (Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017). Members of the two households selected from the target area (Tuv province, Erdene soum) were openly interviewed with a total of 25 questions and some additional questions.

From these, 8 questions with a high probability of having a positive impact on the development of agrotourism based on nomadic life in Mongolia were selected and included in the qualitative research. It includes:

1. Where do you usually get domestic and international information? Do you use social media such as Facebook and Instagram?

Only twenty years ago, the sources of information for nomadic pastoralists were neighbors, visitors, and people they met on the pasture while tending livestock. Today, every household has a television and everyone has a mobile phone, so they can get as much information as urban people do. Their most commonly used social network is Facebook. Members of both households surveyed also reported using Facebook daily. It reveals that Facebook can be a potential marketing method for the development of agritourism. Moreover, 333 of the 402 people (or 84.3%) who participated in the research on the behavior of domestic travelers answered that they use Facebook more often compared to other social platforms. Here, it is shown that a possible way to promote

their agritourism business for nomads is via Facebook. By world standards, mobile phones have become indispensable for nomads. 82.6% of herders over 15 years of age use mobile phones, of which 41.3% use smartphones. Also, 80.7% or four out of five households have a color television. (Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017). However, nomads who live in isolated areas that are too far away from cities without mobile phone networks still get information through traditional methods and therefore there is a lack of information. But they keep their nomadic culture intact and live a more peaceful and stress-free life than others.

29.5% of herder households with mobile phones do not obtain any information from their mobile phones. 62.5% of the 70.5% of households getting news and information from their mobile phones get weather news more often than other information, and 28.8% get price news of livestock products. 16.2% of nomadic herders use the Internet, 91.9% use mobile phones, and 8.1% use laptops. (Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017). If we look at the structure of Internet usage in order of use, there are entertainment and current news such as using Facebook, chatting, searching for information, and watching music videos and movies. Today, nomadic herders have the opportunity to promote their business activities, services, and products using Facebook and Instagram. This is the easiest and cheapest way to help their business. The number of Facebook users in Mongolia is increasing day by day. Therefore, marketing tools are ready for nomads to start their livelihood-based agritourism businesses. Furthermore, by opening a Facebook business page, it is possible to run paid advertisements.

2. What is your household income? Is it enough for your family?

The main source of income for nomadic herder families is income from livestock products. The number of livestock, which is the main source of income for their households, is considered the main indicator for measuring the livelihood of herding households and is defined as follows (Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017).

Table 3: The nomadic household income

| HOUSEHOLD INCOME | CATEGORY OF NUMBER OF LIVESTOCK |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Low | Less than 300 heads |
| Average | 301-500 head |
| Above average | 501-800 head |
| High | Over 801 head |

Note: In Mongolia, the word “head” is used as a unit of the number of livestock

Source: Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017

The herders who participated in the interview believe that the number of people living in a herding household will affect the family's livelihood. As can be seen from the table, it is considered sufficient when the number of livestock is more than 500. Households with 4 members and less than 350 livestock have insufficient income. *"...We will pay for children's education with the income from the sale of meat and raw materials of livestock. There is no such thing as a monthly salary for us. However, if the livestock raw materials are expensive, even*

if there are 200 livestock for a family of four, it will be enough. The price of raw materials from livestock affects our lives the most..." (U.Mendsaikhan, Nomadic herder-1)

Since nomadic herders have no fixed monthly income and their income is seasonal, if they do not manage their household budget wisely, there is a high possibility that sometimes they will run out of money. *"...Herders are not people who take risks like people in the city center when running out of money. Everything we need is available at once. We can get everything we need from nature and animals..."* (U.Mendsaikhan, Nomadic herder-1).

When determining the income of nomadic herders' households, it is most appropriate to determine it by year, as seasonal fluctuations are very different. Based on the analysis of foreign and domestic livestock herders, data from commercial bank herder's loan research, representatives of herders, and interviews with local government officials, the average annual income of a middle-class herder household is 15.5 million MNT or (4200 USD). (Basic Socio-Economic Survey of Herder Households, 2017). About 50 percent of the annual income comes from goat cashmere in the spring season, while the rest comes from the other 3 seasons. The main source of income of the two nomadic households that participated in the study consists of 5-6 types of income. It includes:

- Goat cashmere
- Sheep wool
- Selling meat and live livestock
- Animal skin, leather
- Dairy products, Airag (fermented horse milk)
- Allowances provided by the government - Child allowance (30\$, monthly per child).

When generally categorizing the expenses of nomadic herders, it includes clothing, transportation fee, food, education, animal feed, health, and communication.

(...Most of our household expenses are for fuel. In addition to moving several times a year, we use cars and motorcycles for everything. The recent increase in fuel prices also has a big impact. The expense for school children is high. Because a ger (Mongolian traditional accommodation) is built in the central area where the children's school locates, the cost for the school children is the same as one family. We, who spend the least money on food and drink, get everything we eat from our animals...) (Z.Chinbat, nomadic herder-2)

Livestock products leave the producer household at a low price and go to enterprises, producers, and end consumers at a high price. This is because between them there are players, as we call them money-changers, and the amount of profit they take is relatively large. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the value chain of livestock products from household producers, and nomadic herders, to consumers. However, it has become an important issue to create a value chain of livestock products according to local or regional characteristics.

3. How do you process the milk, and raw materials from livestock including wool, cashmere, and skins? Are there any opportunities to earn additional income by making products with them?

When asked about the possibility of increasing household income, nomadic herder-2 answered, *"...It is possible to earn income from natural resources such as picking wild fruits, onions, and nuts, harvesting and*

processing wood, and picking up dung. However, it is also seasonal, so it does not contribute to livelihoods that much...".

Nomadic herder-1, *"... I use the skins of lamb and baby goat and sew sheepskin coats and sell them. I sew my children's clothes myself. There was no thought of making a souvenir. If I do, it might be possible..."*. These herders can earn from handicrafts and sewing, but they don't have time and there are not enough people in their families to help them. Because these works require manual handcraft skills and talent and also require a lot of time. On the other hand, it is difficult to sell products in this type of household production.

4. Have you ever explored ways to increase your household income? What opportunities are there?

Both herders who participated in the study said that they think about how to increase their household income and discuss it with their families. Nomadic herder-2 plans to increase the family income by increasing the number of livestock, while nomadic herder-1, on the contrary, plans to reduce the number of livestock, improve the quality and breed, increase dairy processing, and rent out the extra Ger to tourists in the summer. It is evident from their plans that herder-1 get more information and think differently and wants to keep up with modern development because she is young. Also, two members of a Japanese family have been visiting them every year since 2011. They come every summer for a few days to rest. Their main goal is for Mongolian organic food and feel freedom. She also mentioned in the interview that her husband's friends came with some Korean tourists several times to drink Airag (fermented horse milk) and eat khorkhog (Mongolian traditional barbeque). In the Mongolian countryside, it is a common phenomenon to treat and feed strangers when they visit herder families. Nomadic herders are very hospitable and friendly people, so it is common for them to be surprised when asked to pay for food and services, and it is not rare for some elderly people to get angry when they are offered money. But in recent years, young herders near the center have had a different mindset. They are interested in turning anything into a business, which can be the basis for the development of agrotourism. During the interviews, comparing the older and younger nomadic herders, the younger nomads are looking for opportunities for regular income in addition to livestock productivity and seasonal income. Therefore, they are ready to improve their quality of life by developing agritourism. The most important issue is the local government should engage them through cooperating with tourism associations, non-governmental organizations, and training centers operating in this field. If these young herders succeed in starting an agritourism business, then young people who are unemployed and without income in urban areas will want to go to their communities and become herders.

Do nomadic herders travel to other places for relaxation? Do you travel throughout your country?

"...The life of nomads is a journey itself. We travel every day, and we do adventure trips..." (Z.Chinbat, nomadic herder-2). *"...In rural areas, lack of people who stay as a herder, and there is a lack of opportunities to travel to other areas. If we are not there, some of our animals will suffer and we lose milk and dairy products. However we travel to big cities and other places for a short time..."* (U.Mendsaikhana, Nomadic herder-1). Nomadic herders are always on the move depending on the season, weather, and nature. Therefore, they have very little interest in traveling to other places, not like urban people. But if their siblings and relatives live in

other areas, they travel to visit them. Recently, herders have been going to other provinces and urban areas to exchange experiences with other local herders and participate in herders' meetings. Nomadic herder-2 stated *"...In the city, it's very difficult with all the noise, pollution and traffic and also there are no living animals and plants to observe, and the air is almost suffocating-bad. When I go to the city, I want to go home as soon as possible..."*, and *"...The countryside is so beautiful, living close to nature is the happiness of being born as a human being, modern people are too far away from nature..."*.

5. Have you ever heard of agrotourism? Do you know this type of tourism is an opportunity to increase your household income?

Although the nomads who participated in the study had no idea about agrotourism, they had a lot of knowledge about mass tourism. They also talked about how they used to host their relatives from the city during the entire summer. Nomadic herder-1 said, *"...In autumn, we are full of guests. Since we make airag very well, a lot of travelers come from the city to drink it. Some even bring foreign tourists with them..."*. Judging from her speech, the basis of the agrotourism business is ready if the herders realize that agrotourism will not only improve their quality of life, but also make a valuable contribution to local development, and the income of other people living in the locality can be doubled, and the most important thing is to preserve the heritage for future generations. In addition, nomadic herders present their livestock products and dairy products to visitors. It was evident from their interview that if they were made to understand the benefits and value of organic products, and if they were taught and guided to understand that there is a double opportunity to sell these products as a brand in cooperation with a few families, they were ready to cooperate.

6. If domestic tourists want to stay in your extra Ger or your house for a few days, obtain experience of nomadic life, through helping with your daily work and learning from you, would you agree?

Mongolians are naturally hospitable people. It was passed down from nomadic civilizations. It is customary for nomadic herders to meet a migrating family, even if they don't know them, with food and drink. Both nomadic herders expressed their willingness to accept tourists.

7. If you have some young people who would like to help you with your daily work and get a small amount of salary for a short period and learn about nomadic life, do you accept it?

It seems that both households are willing to receive help from assistant herders, but they are currently not available to actively search for them. They answered that if someone were to offer their assistance, even for a short period, both households will be happy to accept the help. Agrotourism could indeed be a potential solution to the problem of finding assistant herders for households. By opening up their nomadic livelihood to visitors, they could attract tourists who are interested in experiencing rural life and agriculture.

4.3 Research overview

The world has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war in the last three years, causing an economic crisis that has had a great impact on the tourism industry, especially on international

travel. To revive the industry in the short term, countries around the world are using tactics such as domestic tourism, regional travel tourism, and agricultural tourism with the participation of local communities. Governments and tourism organizations are starting to recognize the importance of domestic tourism and are making efforts to promote it.

In Mongolia, 70 percent of domestic travelers are females between the ages of 30 and 50. The age of the travelers varies depending on the type of tour offered by travel companies. Science, botany, and archeology tours are popular among travelers over 40 years old, while entertainment package tours with famous influencers and comedy club artists appeal to those aged 25-35. Those over 35 prefer group travel, while those under 35 like to travel with family and friends. Travel bookings have become popular recently, and traveling alone is no longer an issue for young people in Mongolia. People in upper-middle-income and financially viable social classes travel more.

Mongolians travel to escape urban crowds, air pollution, and traffic jams, and to visit remote rural areas for fresh air. The desire to travel freely, to visit new places, and to spend time with friends and family are also motivating factors. Domestic tourists make decisions based on short-term and emotional considerations and often rely on word of mouth and referrals from friends and family members. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram are important sources of information for domestic travel destinations. The demand for domestic tourism is expected to continue to grow, and it is important to plan and develop sustainable and environmentally responsible travel destinations that meet the demands of domestic tourists. In particular, establishing new travel destinations that meet the demands of domestic tourists, such as developing agrotourism with the participation of local people. The relevant tourism organizations need to pay attention to the following points. It includes:

- Calculate the actual number of domestic tourists and calculate income and expenses to have a standardized and universally followed method;
- Market, behavior, and travel pattern satisfaction research of domestic travelers using quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis;
- Public tourism education, responsible and litter-free travel campaigns, social advertising intensively increase, and the ethics of travelers' introduction and enforcement of rules;
- Enterprises and organizations organizing domestic travel and individuals in training such as registered visitor services and occupational safety to include;
- Increasing the entrance fee to natural landmarks, increasing the fines for polluting the environment by littering;
- Establishing parking areas, and proper toilets in the tourist areas and improving the cleaning of the area as well;

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Importance of agrotourism

Agrotourism offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to combine aspects of the tourism and agriculture industries to provide a variety of economic, educational, environmental, and social benefits to tourists, producers, and communities. Agrotourism provides communities with the opportunity to expand their local tax bases and create new job opportunities. Agrotourism also provides local producers with an additional source of income as well as a channel for direct marketing to consumers. It benefits the tourism industry by increasing the number of visitors and the length of their stay in a given area. Agrotourism helps to maintain agricultural lands, gives the general public educational opportunities, and enables states to create commercial ventures. While agrotourism may generate new revenue streams, it also raises new legal issues for agricultural product producers and landowners.

Agrotourism is a rural business with a diverse set of stakeholders, including inbound and outbound tour operators, small and medium-sized farmers, cultivation or agriculture entrepreneurs, tour guides, locals, and so on. Agrotourism, as opposed to mass tourism, attracts domestic and international tourists looking to relax and get away from the hustle and bustle of city life. As a rural business, agrotourism benefits both local producers and local communities because tourists offer money to spend on experiencing rural life. This money supplemented the additional income of people living in rural areas. Consequently, it qualifies as a sustainable rural business. Figure 3 shows the benefits of agrotourism development in rural areas in Mongolia.



Figure 18: The benefits of agrotourism development in rural areas in Mongolia *Source: Own work 2023*

Tourism policies and priorities of Mongolia

Mongolia has an area of 1564100 km² (16 times larger than Hungary), a total population of about 3.3 million (2019 NSC), (3 times less than Hungary), and is the second most sparsely populated country in the world, bordered by China and Russia. GDP in 2019 is 37 trillion 281 billion MNT (about 14 billion USD, 2019 WB), and GDP per capita is 11 million 680 thousand MNT (4340 USD, 2019 WB). 65% of GDP is in the capital city. For the economy of Mongolia, mining products account for more than 80% of exports and more than 90% of exports to China. Considering the GDP per capita in 2019 by each sector, the service sector (48%) was the leader, followed by industry (41%), and agriculture (11%).

"Vision 2050", the long-term development policy of Mongolia, is a long-term development policy that summarizes the achievements of the past 30 years and defines development goals for the next 30 years. The policy documents are included Integrated National Values, Human Development, Quality of Life, Economy, Good Governance, Green Development, Peaceful and Secure Society, Regions Local Development, and Ulaanbaatar and the satellite city consists of 9 basic goals. Tourism development is included in eight of them those regional and local development goals, Mongolia is divided into 6 regions, and the development goals of each region are defined. It is characterized by setting the target period every 10 years, clearly reflecting the projects, measures, and budgets of each province, and the local development policy has been made visible to the eyes of the local people.

In Chapter 4 of the main directions of development for 2021-2025, the development of tourism is mentioned as the third of the economic priorities, and it is defined as "developing tourism with national characteristics and improving competitiveness in the international tourism market." Also, with the framework of regional and local development of the 8th chapter, the development of tourism was emphasized after the development of infrastructure. The goals below are defined and implemented in the "Investment Program of Mongolia 2021-2025", which is an appendix to the five-year main direction regarding measures, budget, investment, and responsible organizations. It includes:

- To improve tourism products, services, quality, and standards, increase competitiveness and increase the number of tourists to one million.
- Build Genghis Khan Genius of the Millennium Complex, protect the monuments of Mongolia's secret bureau, promote them internationally and organize works to connect them with infrastructure in stages, and develop historical tourism.
- Sustainable tourism development projects will be implemented in rural areas to increase the income of local citizens, enterprises, and organizations.

The three-pillar development policy was approved by the State Great Khural (Parliament) of Mongolia in February 2018. In 2018-2020, the policy documents aim to strengthen the state system, improve economic competitiveness and improve the standard of living of citizens through a unified policy. It adopted a policy to accelerate economic development based on three fields: Food-agriculture-light industry, mining-heavy industry, and, trade-tourism-infrastructure. For the tourism industry, the goal was to "improve tourism infrastructure and competitiveness at the regional level, and develop special interest tourism with the participation of local citizens based on local characteristics." It was generally implemented in 2020. According to the research conducted by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the following results have been achieved for the tourism sector.

- The long-term policy document "Vision 2050" provides for the development of regional tourism products and services based on geographical features, nature, history, cultural heritage, and nomadism.
- A legal framework has been created to include tour operators, tourist camps, and hotel services serving foreign tourists in the direction of supporting exports and small and medium-sized entrepreneurs and including them in VAT.
- More than 30% of the current year's budget has been allocated and regularly organized to introduce products and services that increase Mongolia's value, position, and the value of Mongolian people to the world.
- Cooperating with neighboring countries, organizing meetings of tourism ministers of Mongolia, China, and Russia, and exchanging ideas on creating joint travel products and routes.
- A travel brand book and accommodation instructions were developed and approved, laying the foundation for the development of sustainable and responsible tourism, especially in protected areas.
- Planning to expand and develop history tourism in the eastern region, nature-rural tourism in the central region, ethnic and adventure tourism in the western region, and paleontology in the Gobi region.
- The number is increasing every year by supporting the construction of temporary accommodation points and service complexes along the main route of the trip.
- Tourism organizations are participating in the annual international tourism fair by advertising on behalf of Mongolia under unified content.
- The policy supports the establishment of professional training and production center for the training of tourism service workers, and the government has organized training to empower local industry experts by increasing the joint participation of the private sector in personnel training and training activities.

In August 2019, the government's policy on tourism development in 2019-2026 was approved. The government analyzed the reality of tourism in Mongolia and put forward a policy vision that "Mongolia will become an international center of nomadic culture and historical tourism". It aims to develop eco-friendly and sustainable tourism based on local people and improve Mongolia's competitiveness in the international tourism market. Subsequently, the government put forward the policy objectives to implement. In this:

- Improving the legal framework of the tourism industry
- Development of tourism infrastructure
- Intensification of foreign advertising and marketing
- Improvement of hygiene, service quality, and standards
- Improving and powering human resource skills
- Development of e-tourism

The policy will be implemented in two phases, the I phase, which is 2019-2022, is planned to intensify the development of the tourism sector, and the II phase, which is 2023-2026, is planned to ensure the growth of the tourism sector. As part of the implementation of the 77 policy objectives, including revising the law on tourism, providing low-interest loans to support tourism, creating a tourism fund for the development of

tourism, introducing electronic visas, casino, and horse racing betting, etc. However, there is no mention of the necessary financial resources for their implementation. Mongolia has relatively many advantages in terms of tourism resources. Especially, there are 4 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and 11 Intangible Cultural Heritage Sites.

The current situation of tourism industry in Mongolia

In 2019, the tourism sector developed to the extent of 7.2 percent of GDP. 83.69 percent of Mongolian export depends on mining products. (2019). The fact that the Government of Mongolia has made tourism one of the three pillars of national development is a sign of its high desire to change this economic structure. Mining resources will eventually run out. However, tourism resources can be sustainable if properly preserved and protected. That is why the value of the tourism industry in Mongolia lies in this. Mongolia's tourism sector doesn't exceed 3.3 % of GDP (427 million USD, 2019). On the other hand, according to the analysis of International Monetary Fund (IMF) research, tourism is not only defined as one of the leading sectors in the diversification of the industry but the development of the tourism sector can contribute to macroeconomic stability.

As of 2019, Mongolia was ranked 93rd out of 140 countries in the World Tourism Industry. Competitiveness Index compiled by the World Economic Forum, indicates that Mongolia's competitiveness is still weak. Therefore, it's believed that the development of agrotourism based on nomadic culture, which is the basis of sustainable tourism in Mongolia, should be the priority. Mongolia considers its country's nomadic husbandry and history, and culture as important resources, and in addition to developing tourism based on them, the policy concept includes the creation of sustainable tourism development that is environmentally friendly and based on public participation. Therefore, this research will be based on the policy concepts of Mongolia, and develop a model of agrotourism based on the livelihood and tradition of nomads.

The target settlement is Erdene sum, Central province of Mongolia, which is located 77 km from the capital city, where half of the Mongolian population lives, and is located along the Millennium Road. (One of the biggest main roads in Mongolia). This model can be implemented in other rural areas of Mongolia in the future, and I am sure that will be a sustainable tourism product that will contribute to the development of Mongolia, attracting not only domestic tourists but also foreign tourists.

Overall, promoting herders' lifestyles and work as a tourism product can have many benefits for local communities, including economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation. Overall, providing visitors with the opportunity to experience the daily life of authentic and routines, tourists can gain a deeper understanding of the herding way of life and the important role it plays in many communities. By developing agritourism based on the livelihood of nomads, local communities can benefit from increased income and opportunities for personal and educational growth. Additionally, tourists can gain a unique and authentic cultural experience, while also contributing to the local economy and supporting sustainable tourism practices. Mongolia can create a unique and authentic brand that attracts travelers seeking meaningful and transformative experiences.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Overview

In conclusion, it is recommended to develop nomadic herders' lifestyle in Mongolia and work as a tourism product, which can improve the quality of life, education, and personal development of local people. In another hand, it can be a profitable and sustainable way to promote local animal husbandry and improve the quality of life for local communities. To achieve this, the nomadic herder families showcase their daily life to tourists, including seasonal activities such as calving, shearing, and hay harvesting. It is also suggested to incorporate other activities, such as demonstrating livestock husbandry practices, showcasing traditional Mongolian clothing, dairy processing, leather processing, and unique rituals such as weddings, and hair-cutting ceremonies and tourists can learn about the unique practices of nomadic herders and their communities, as well as contribute to the preservation of their culture. Agrotourism should be developed in combination with eco-tourism, allowing visitors to see how pastoralists work and live together with modern development. This can be the foundation for developing a brand product that can be diversified based on the characteristics of the region and ethnicity. Overall, developing nomadic herders' lifestyles and working as an agrotourism product can generate a stable income for herders and promote local animal husbandry, creating a unique and sustainable tourism destination.

5.2 Recommendations

Here are some proposals to consider:

Develop cultural tours: Create guided tours that allow tourists to experience the daily life of herders, including milking animals, making dairy products, and preparing traditional meals. This will give visitors a better understanding of nomadic life and the importance of animal husbandry in their culture.

Offer eco-friendly accommodations: Many tourists are looking for unique and sustainable travel experiences. Local communities can provide eco-friendly accommodations such as traditional yurts or tents to attract visitors interested in an authentic cultural experience.

Promote seasonal activities: Highlight the unique seasonal activities and traditions of herders, such as horseback riding, sheep shearing, and wool spinning. This will provide tourists with a chance to participate in local activities and immerse themselves in the culture.

Handicrafts: Visitors can learn traditional skills such as felting, weaving, and leather crafting, and purchase products directly from the local artisans. This not only provides a unique and authentic cultural experience for the tourist, but it can also generate income for the herders.

Culinary Experiences: Visitors can learn about and taste traditional Mongolian food and drink, including Airag (fermented mare's milk), Khuushuur (fried dumplings), and salted milk tea.

Traditional sports: Mongolia has a long history of traditional sports such as archery, horse racing, and wrestling. Herders can organize competitions or teach tourists how to play these sports.

Create educational programs: Offer educational programs for tourists, such as workshops on traditional wool spinning, felt-making, and cheese-making. This will allow visitors to learn more about the herders' way of life and their role in animal husbandry. Tourism can also provide opportunities for education and research on

nomadic lifestyles, traditional knowledge, and environmental conservation. Offering visitors the chance to experience the daily life of herders can be an interesting and unique opportunity for travelers, ethnographers, anthropologists, and academics alike. This type of experience can provide an authentic insight into the lifestyle and practices of herders, which can be of particular interest to those who study nomadic civilizations.

Collaborate with local businesses: Partner with local businesses to offer unique experiences such as traditional cooking classes, handicraft workshops, and cultural performances. This will not only benefit herders but also the wider community by promoting local businesses and creating job opportunities.

Community Development: Agrotourism can provide economic opportunities for local communities and support the preservation of cultural and natural resources. This can include the improvement of the quality of life of local people and the development of infrastructure such as roads, schools, and healthcare facilities.

Relationship between agrotourism and eco-tourism: Visitors can explore the natural beauty of Mongolia's vast landscapes, including national parks, mountains, and lakes, and participate in activities such as hiking, fishing, and bird watching. Mongolia is home to many unique and rare species, such as the snow leopard and the wild horse. Nomadic herders can guide tourists on horseback or by camel through the local landscape, pointing out flora and fauna of interest and explaining the history and culture of the area.

5.3 Research limitations

There are two main limitations in this current study. First, it is difficult to find enough sources and previous research since agrotourism and domestic traveling in Mongolia is absolutely under-researched. Moreover, time was relatively limited for conducting the research. If the more time was allowed, the researcher would conduct more interviews with herders, domestic tourists, in particularly, young travellers, and local and government authorities on tourism.

Additionally, the survey used a questionnaire to gather data only from domestic tourists and interviewed with nomadic herders. Tour operators, travel companies, and business owners were not interviewed. This was a major limitation of the study. For future research, it is recommended to conduct a more detailed study of the tourist market through quantitative and qualitative research, including interviews with tour operators, travel companies, and business owners.

6. Summary

This study aims to develop an agrotourism product model based on the livelihood of Mongolian herders to attract domestic and international tourists, to provide opportunities to observe and participate in their daily lives and to experience a day as a herder. Additionally, it focuses on introducing agritourism to the people of Mongolia, studying the possibilities of developing agrotourism in Mongolia, promoting this type of travel, and collaborating with stakeholders.

Agrotourism is a business and an innovative agricultural activity relating to tourism. In other words, it is a new type of travel and product service that packages the daily activities of agriculture according to the demands of tourists. Mongolia is one of the very few nations which holds its nomadic lifestyle. Therefore, the nomadic lifestyle is main attraction to international as well as domestic tourists since the younger generation in Mongolia has been off their tradition and nomadic lifestyle nowadays.

The research goal is to prove that there is a way for the development of agrotourism in Mongolia based on the livelihood of herders to create chances to observe and participate in their daily activities and give tourists experience to live a day as a herder since tourism is one of the main economic sectors. This study applied qualitative and quantitative approach to research, particularly documentary analysis, interview and survey methods. Two nomadic herder families and local authority in Erdene soum were involved in the interview to explore possibilities of developing economically, socially, environmentally friendly, and sustainable agritourism based on the livelihood of the nomadic people in Mongolia. Moreover, 402 respondents participated in survey which is for identifying domestic travellers' behaviour and awareness of people on agritourism.

Research target area, Erdene Soum of Central province (small rural community), was founded in 1924 and is the nearest community to the capital city of Mongolia. The center of a soum is 72 km from the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, and 97 km from the province center.

The researcher suggest that it is possible to develop agrotourism model for domestic travellers in Erdene soum first due to the following reasons. First of all, it is close to the capital city, and has many natural beauty spots, and the knowledge of nomadic herders about

tourism is much better than in other rural areas. Moreover, the basis for domestic development of agritourism based on nomadic culture, and for receiving tourists from Japan in the first instance, has already been established. However, the concept of agrotourism is a completely new concept for this local community. During the interview, herders and the local authority informed their high interest in developing agrotourism in the province and willingness to learn more about the concept. Therefore, it is important to provide local people with the knowledge about agrotourism.

From the survey analysis, it is clear that concept of agrotourism is not familiar to the people. The analysis also show that majority of people are willing to receive an offer of an exciting trip where they could stay with a herder family for a few days to gain some experience from the culture, customs, and traditions of the nomads, through helping with their daily work. It suggests that there is a strong possibility to develop agrotourism in Mongolia which is connected with lifestyle of nomadic herders.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Farkas Tibor, Professor, and Head of Department of Rural and Regional Development, MATE, for his scholarly guidance, valuable advice and kind attention.

My respectful acknowledgment goes to my supervisor, Dr. Demszky Alma Mira, for her supervision constant guidance, benevolent encouragement and friendly critique throughout the preparation, guidance and advice carried me through all the stages of writing my thesis.

I express my gratitude to Lecturer Dr. Kovács Gyöngyi extremely interesting lecture about Rural and Agritourism. She engaged me by teaching this subject. Also, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all professors who organized field trips.

I would also like to thank one of my colleagues, Ledianë Durmishi, for her attitude and care has helped me to complete this thesis on time.

My sincere thanks to the Mongolian-aged nomadic people, local government representatives, and nomadic herders for patiently answering my questions during my interview.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their support and care throughout my research work.

7. References

1. ¹Amartuvshin, D. (2009). From community to holiday camps: the emergence of tourist economy in Mongolia", In Singh, S. (Ed)
2. Barbieri., Mahoney., Butler (2008). Understanding the nature and extent of farm and ranch diversification in North America. *Rural Sociol.* 2008, 73, 205–229. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)][[Green Version](#)]
3. Barbieri, C.; Mshenga, P.M, (2008). The role of the firm and owner characteristics on the performance of agritourism farms. *Sociol. Rural.* 2008, 48, 166–183. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
4. Busby., Rendle (2000). The transition from tourism on farms to farm tourism. *Tour. Manag.* 2000, 21, 635–642. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
5. Chase, L. *et al.* (2018) ‘Agritourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Industry Analysis’, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, pp. 1–7. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2018.081.016>.
6. Chen Che., Bonhak Koo., Jiatong Wang., Antonio Ariza-Montes., Alejandro Vega-Muñoz., Heesup Han (2021), Promoting Rural Tourism in Inner Mongolia: Attributes, Satisfaction, and Behaviors among Sustainable Tourists. *International journal of Environmental Research and Public health*, Italy. Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
7. Clarke, (1999). Marketing structures for farm tourism: Beyond the individual provider of rural tourism. *J. Sustain. Tour.* 1999, 7, 26–47. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
8. Claudia Gil Arroyo., Carla Barbieri., Samantha Rozier Rich (2013). Defining agritourism: A comparative study of stakeholders’ perceptions in Missouri and North Carolina. *University of Missouri, USA. Tourism Management* 37, (2013) 39-47. Retrieved on 06 February 2023.
9. Chudy-Hyski., Hyski (2018).The role of tourism in multifunctional development of mountain rural areas. *Infrastruct. Ecol. Rural Areas* 2018, 3, 611–621. [[Google Scholar](#)]
10. Fatemeh Shekari., Mahmood Ziaee., Abolhassan Faghihi., Mahmoud Jomehpour (2022). Nomadic livelihood resilience through tourism. *Allameh Tabatab’i University, Iran*. Retrieved on 20 March 2023.
11. Fransisco Situmorang., Erwin Trisnajaya Karthana, (2021). Redesign Rural Tourism Product Based Digital Nomadism Postpandemic COVID-19 in Bali. *Udayana University, Jurnal Kepariwisataa*n. Retrieved on 20 March 2023.
12. Fleischer., Tchetchik., Bar-Nahum.; Talev, (2018). Is agriculture important to agritourism. *European Review of Agricultural Economics*, Volume 45, Issue 2, April 2018, Pages 273–296, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/erae/jbx039>.
13. George., Rilla (2011). Marketing strategies for agritourism operations, *University of California*. Available at <https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8444.pdf>
14. Iakovidou, O, (1997). Agrotourism in Greece: The case of women agrotourism co-operatives of Ambelakia. *Medit* 1997, 1, 44–47. [[Google Scholar](#)]
15. Ion Petroman., Cornelia Petroman (2010). Agritourism and its forms. 1 *University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Banat Timisoara*. Retrieved on 26 January 2023.

16. José Luis Ruiz-Real., Juan Uribe-Toril., Jaime de Pablo Valenciano., Juan Carlos Gázquez-Abad, (2019). Rural tourism and development, University of Almeria, Journal of hospitality and tourism research. Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
17. Kizos, T.; Iosifides, T. (2007). The contradictions of agrotourism development in Greece: Evidence from three case studies. *South Eur. Soc. Politics* 2007, 12, 59–77. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Lisa C. Chase, University of Vermont., Mary Stewart, Oregon State University., Brian Schilling c Rutgers University., Becky Smith, Mississippi State University., Michelle Walk Michigan State University (2018). Agritourism, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. Retrieved on 18 March 2023.
19. Lorek, P (2018). Sustainable innovation as an important factor of firm development. *Ekonomia i Środowisko* 2018, 1, 32–40. [[Google Scholar](#)]
20. Maria-Irina Ana, (2017). Ecotourism, Agrotourism and rural tourism in the EU, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania. *Cactus Tourism Journal* Vol. 15, Issue 2, 2017. Retrieved on 03 January 2023.
21. Majewski, J. *Agroturystyka to Te'z Biznes* (2000). Agritourism is Also a Business; Fundacja Wspomagania Wsi: Warszawa, Poland, 2000
22. Marques, H. (2006). Searching for complementarities between agriculture and tourism—the demarcated wine-producing regions of northern Portugal. *Tour. Econ.* 2006, 12, 147–155. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
23. McGehee, N.G. (2007). An agritourism systems model: A Weberian perspective. *J. Sustain. Tour.* 2007, 15, 111–124. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
24. McGehee, N.G.; Kim, K.; Jennings, G.R. (2007). Gender and motivation for agritourism entrepreneurship. *Tour. Manag.* 2007, 28, 280–289. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
25. McGehee., Kim (2004). Motivation for agritourism entrepreneurship. *J. Travel Res.* 2004, 43, 161–170. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)].
26. Md.Tariqul Islam., Aswajit Boro ., (2019). Promotion of culinary tourism as a destination attraction of Mongolia. School of Hotel Management and Tourism, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India.
27. Muyan Tang1., Hongzhang Xu, (2023). Cultural integration and rural tourism development. Australian National University, Central University of Economics, Beijing, China. Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
28. Oyunchimeg, L & Gantuya, N. (2021b). “Mongolian Domestic Tourists’ Motivation and Revisit Intention: Mediating Effect of Perceived Benefit and Perceived Value” *Central European Journal of Geography and Sustainable Development*, 3(1), 32-48.
29. Oyunchimeg, L. & Gantuya, N. (2021a). Understanding of Travel Motivations of Domestic Tourists. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 22(12), 1-22.
30. O’Gorman, K. & Thompson, K. (2007). Tourism and culture in Mongolia: the case of Ulaanbaatar Naadam. In Butler, R., and Hinch, T. (Ed), *Tourism in Indigenous People*, London: Routledge, 193–210.
31. Pamela Palmi., Greta Enrica Lezzi, (2020). Evidence from Italian Agritourism, , University of Salento, *International journal of Environmental Research and Public health*, Italy. Retrieved on 08 February 2023.
32. Peebles, M.S. (1995) Cultivating the tourist/farm tourism. *Tour. J. Tour. Soc.* 1995, 86

33. Roman., Grudzień., (2021) 'The Essence of Agritourism and Its Profitability during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic', *Agriculture*, 11(5), p. 458. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture11050458>.
34. Roman., Roman., Prus (2020). Innovations in Agritourism: Evidence from a Region in Poland. *Sustainability* 2020, 12, 4858. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
35. Rosner., Stanny (2017). Socio-Economic Development of Rural Areas in Poland; The European Fund for the Development of Polish Villages Foundation: Warszawa, Poland; Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development, Polish Academy of Sciences: Warszawa, Poland, 2017. [[Google Scholar](#)].
36. Ruhanen, L.; Moyle (2019). New directions in sustainable tourism research. *Tour. Rev.* 2019, 74, 138 – 149. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Salvatore Ammirato., Alberto Michele Felicetti., Cinzia Raso., Bruno Antonio Pansera., , Antonio Violi, (2020). Agritourism and Sustainability, *International journal of management*, volume 11, issue 4. Retrieved on 08 January 2023.
38. Sharon Phillip., Colin Hunter., Kirsty Blackstock (2010). A typology for defining agritourism. *Tourism Management*, 31(6), 754-758. University of Aberdeen, UK. Retrieved on 08 February 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.08.001>
39. Sadowski., Wojcieszak (2019). Geographic differentiation of agritourism activities in Poland vs. cultural and natural attractiveness of destinations at district level. *PLoS ONE* 2019, 14, e0222576. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)].
40. Sharpley, R.; Sharpley, J. (1997). *Rural Tourism: An Introduction*; Thomson Business Press: London, UK, 1997. [[Google Scholar](#)]
41. Siti Nurlaela., Bambang Mursito., M. Fajar Shodiq., Pramono Had., Rahmawati Rahmawati (2021). Economic Empowerment of Agrotourism. Universitas Islam Batik Surakarta, Indonesia. Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
42. Sudhanshu Joshi., Manu Sharma., Rajnish Kler (2020). Modeling Circular Economy Dimensions in Agri-Tourism Clusters. Doon University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India. *International Journal of Mathematical, Engineering and Management Sciences*. Retrieved on 25 January 2023.
43. Shree Kumar Maharjan1., Dharma Raj Dangol, (2018). Agritourism Education and Research in Nepal. Hiroshima University, Japan., Natural History Museum, Tribhuvan University, Nepal. *Agricultural Research & Technology Open Access Journal*. Retrieved on 07 February 2023.
44. Sonnino, R. For a (2004). 'Piece of Bread'? Interpreting sustainable development through agritourism in Southern Tuscany. *Sociol. Rural.* 2004, 44, 285–300. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)]
45. Tew, C.; Barbieri, C. (2012). The perceived benefits of agritourism: The provider's perspective. *Tour. Manag.* 2012, 33, 215–224
46. Theodoropoulou, (2020). The influence of agritourism on the human and social environment: The cases of Trikala and Ikaria in Greece. In *Proceedings of the 6th European IFSA Symposium, Workshop 2*, Vila Real, Portugal, 4–7 April 2004; pp. 127–138. Available at: http://ifsa.boku.ac.at/cms/fileadmin/Proceeding2004/2004_Proceed.pdf
47. Wall, G. (2000). Agrotourism. In *Encyclopaedia of Tourism*; Jafari, J., Ed.; Routledge: London, UK, 2000. [[Google Scholar](#)]

48. Yevhen O. Romanenko., Viktoriia O. Boiko., Serhii M. Shevchuk., Valentyna V. Barabanova., Nataliia V. Karpinska, (2020). Rural development by stimulating agrotourism activities. Lesya Ukrainka Eastern European National University, Lutsk, Ukraine. Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
49. Zawadka (2019). Agritourism as a way of spending free time of urban families with children. Ann. Pol. Assoc. Agric. Agribus. Econ. 2019, 21, 532–541. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[CrossRef](#)].
50. Zhenshan Yang., Jianming Cai., Richard Sluizas, (2010). Agrotourism enterprises as a form of multi-functional urban agriculture for peri-urban development in China. Habitat international, [volume](#) 34, October 2010, Pages 374-385. Retrieved on 06 January 2023.

Other sources

1. B.Bayar, (2021). Classic Noamdic Lifestyle in the world; <https://joinme.mn/media/1330>
2. Government Order No. 324 of 2015 annex to the resolution Mongolia
3. J.Khishigbayar., B.Batkishig (2013). My motherland-nature, climate. Book published by Interpress publishing company, Mongolia.
4. Ministry of Environment and Tourism, (2020). Annual report of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Accessed on 12 May 2020. <https://www.mne.mn/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/-tailan.pdf>.
5. Ministry of Environment and Tourism Mongolia, Tourism research II (2021). Retrieved on 10 January 2023.
6. Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030, Great Khural of Mongolia Resolution, 2016; https://archive.un-page.org/files/public/20160205_mongolia_sdv_2030.pdf
7. N.Baatar, (2015). Mongolian Nomadic Civilization; <https://sonin.mn/news/culture/47685>
8. Revision of the Law on Tourism, 2022, <https://lawforum.parliament.mn/project/345/>
9. Tourism Law of Mongolia, 2000; <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail/8929>
10. United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2020a), UNWTO Briefing Note Tourism and COVID-19, Understanding Domestic Tourism and Seizing its Opportunities. Accessed on 21 January 2022. <https://www.eunwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284422111>
11. “Vision -2050” Long-term Development Policy of Mongolia, Annex 1 to Resolution 52, 2020; Available at https://cabinet.gov.mn/wp-content/uploads/2050_VISION_LONG-TERM-DEVELOPMENT-POLICY.pdf
12. WTO, <https://www.wto.org/en>

Annex 1 – Research Questionnaire Used

Form of customer questionnaire

| Part 1. Profile questions about respondents | | | Number of respondents | Explanation *Mandatory |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | What is your age group? | | 395 | * |
| | 1 | 18-29 | 117 | |
| | 2 | 30-49 | 212 | |
| | 3 | 50-65 | 65 | |
| | 4 | Older than 65 | 1 | |
| 2 | What is your gender? | | 397 | * |
| | 1 | Male | 89 | |
| | 2 | Female | 305 | |
| | 3 | Other/No response | 3 | |
| 3 | Your education levels. | | 397 | * |
| | 1 | High school | 64 | |
| | 2 | Vocational | 15 | |
| | 3 | Bachelor’s degree | 209 | |
| | 4 | Master’s degree | 92 | |
| | 5 | Doctor’s degree | 10 | |
| | 6 | Other | 7 | |
| 4 | What is your employment status? | | 395 | * |
| | 1 | Student | 64 | |
| | 2 | Self-employed entrepreneur | 52 | |
| | 3 | Full-time job | 233 | |
| | 4 | Part-time job | 13 | |
| | 5 | Unemployment | 14 | |
| | 6 | Taking care of the child at home | 19 | |
| Screening questions: | | | | |
| 5 | What social networks do you usually use? | | 395 | One choice |
| | 1 | Facebook | 333 | |
| | 2 | Instagram | 48 | |
| | 3 | Twitter | 3 | |
| | 4 | Other | 11 | |
| 6 | Do you like traveling in your country? | | 395 | One choice |
| | 1 | Yes | 391 | |
| | 2 | No | 4 | |
| 7 | What season do you usually travel? | | 397 | One choice |
| | 1 | Spring | 6 | |
| | 2 | Summer | 364 | |
| | 3 | Autumn | 24 | |
| | 4 | Winter | 3 | |
| 8 | How often do you travel a year to your country? | | 394 | |
| | 1 | 1-2 times | 369 | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|------------|-------------------------|
| | 2 | 3-4 times | 20 | One choice |
| | 3 | More than 5 | 5 | |
| 9 | How long is a single trip? | | 395 | One choice |
| | 1 | Up to 7 days | 237 | |
| | 2 | 7-14 days | 134 | |
| | 3 | 15-21 days | 20 | |
| | 4 | Over 21 | 4 | |
| 10 | Who do you usually travel with? | | 396 | One choice |
| | 1 | Family | 298 | |
| | 2 | Friends | 67 | |
| | 3 | Colleagues | 26 | |
| | 4 | Myself | 5 | |
| Part 2. Domestic tourists' attitudes and behavior | | | | |
| 11 | What kind of travel do you usually do? | | 386 | Multiple choices |
| | 1 | Mass tourism | 155 | |
| | 2 | Special interest tourism | 110 | |
| | 3 | Historical tourism | 58 | |
| | 4 | Adventure and extreme tourism | 118 | |
| | 5 | Agrotourism (Agricultural tourism) | 35 | |
| 12 | What is the purpose of your trip? | | 393 | Multiple choices |
| | 1 | To travel to the natural beauty | 333 | |
| | 2 | Familiarity with historical and cultural monuments and temples | 124 | |
| | 3 | Stay at the tourist camp and relax | 50 | |
| | 4 | Fishing, horseback riding, bird observing, etc. | 28 | |
| | 5 | Visiting relatives who live in the countryside | 120 | |
| | 6 | Get out into the fresh air | 191 | |
| | 7 | Natural Spa Relaxation | 110 | |
| | 8 | Go to the motherland | 122 | |
| | 9 | Participation in anniversary events | 39 | |
| | 10 | Go away from the noise of the city | 84 | |
| | 11 | Spending leisure | 131 | |
| 13 | When traveling in my home country, I prefer to travel independently rather than join an organized tour. | | 392 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | | 8 | |
| | 2-Disagree | | 20 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | | 46 | |
| | 4-Agree | | 178 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | | 140 | |
| 14 | Hotels are usually expensive and rare in rural areas; I take tents with me. | | 387 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | | 33 | |
| | 2-Disagree | | 25 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | | 60 | |
| | 4-Agree | | 164 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | | 105 | |
| | While traveling I usually buy local products. | | 389 | |

| | | |
|----|----------------------|----|
| 15 | 1- Strongly disagree | 20 |
| | 2-Disagree | 14 |

| | | | |
|----|---|------------|-------------------------|
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 56 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 4-Agree | 172 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 127 | |
| 16 | When I visit my relatives who live in the countryside, I usually help them with their work. | 388 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 31 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 27 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 56 | |
| | 4-Agree | 151 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 123 | |
| 17 | If I receive an offer of an exciting trip where I could stay with a herder family for a few days to gain some experience from the culture, customs, and traditions of the nomads, through helping with their daily work, I would gladly accept it. | 389 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 26 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 23 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 58 | |
| | 4-Agree | 133 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 149 | |
| 18 | When I travel, I usually share something related to my trip on my social media such as Facebook and Instagram. | 385 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 57 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 58 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 70 | |
| | 4-Agree | 132 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 68 | |
| 19 | The income of my household is enough for my domestic travel. | 377 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 67 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 78 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 79 | |
| | 4-Agree | 109 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 44 | |
| 20 | The most important three things of travel are accommodation, food, and adventure. | 384 | Linear scale evaluation |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 21 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 16 | |
| | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 53 | |
| | 4-Agree | 159 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 135 | |
| | I am satisfied when I travel to my country. | 389 | Linear scale |
| | 1- Strongly disagree | 18 | |
| | 2-Disagree | 3 | |

| | | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----|------------|
| 21 | 3-Neither agree nor disagree | 48 | evaluation |
| | 4-Agree | 139 | |
| | 5-Strongly agree | 181 | |

Interview questions with nomadic herder families

| No | Interview questions |
|---|--|
| Part 1. Introduction part | |
| 1 | Could you introduce yourself and your family, please? |
| 2 | When did you start managing animal husbandry and share with me your life story? |
| 3 | How many families do you have in the neighborhood? |
| 4 | How many types of livestock are raised? Which is raised more and why? |
| Part 2. Lifestyle of nomadic herders | |
| 1 | According to you, which season of the year is the most difficult for nomads? And which is the best season? |
| 2 | How many times do you migrate a year? Do you migrate traditionally or by vehicle? |
| 3 | What is the importance of migrating frequently? |
| 4 | Is it difficult to move many times? Are there many things to package? |
| 5 | What do you think is the value of traditional animal husbandry? |
| 6 | What problems do you face in managing traditional animal husbandry? |
| Part 3. The importance and benefits of nomadic life. | |
| 1 | In my opinion, herders are the people who have best preserved their heritage and customs inherited from their ancestors. Do you agree with me? What are your thoughts on how to pass it on to the next generation in the future? |
| 2 | How often do you receive guests from cities? What seasons do they usually come? Why? |
| 3 | Do you invite guests to your home? If yes, why, and if no, why? |
| 4 | How are technological advancements used in everyday life? Do the technologies make your work easier, what are their pros and cons? |
| 5 | Have you learned the techniques of traditional animal husbandry, protecting the environment, and predicting the weather? Do you use them in your daily life? |
| Part 4. Opportunities to improve the quality of life of nomadic herders | |
| 1 | Do you attend social work in your community? What are the opportunities for herders to cooperate? Do you cooperate? |
| 2 | Do the local government and the state support herders? |
| 3 | Where do you usually get domestic and international information? Do you use social media such as Facebook, or Instagram? |
| 4 | What is your household income? Is it enough for your family? |
| 5 | How do you process the milk, and raw materials from livestock including wool, cashmere, and skins? Are there any opportunities to earn additional income by making products with them? |
| 6 | Have you ever explored ways to increase your household income? What opportunities are there? |
| 7 | How often do you go to the shop? What do you usually buy? Does your family have any fixed assets? |
| 8 | Do nomadic herders travel to other places for relaxation? Do you travel throughout your country? |

| | |
|---|---|
| 9 | Have you ever heard of agrotourism? Do you know this type of tourism is an opportunity to increase your household income? |
|---|---|

Interview questions with elderly people who herded cattle all their lives

| № | Interview questions |
|---|--|
| Part 1. Introduction part | |
| 1 | Please introduce yourself and tell us about where and how your childhood was spent and about your parents. |
| 2 | Have you ever gone to school? How did your parents teach you the science of life, and how do you apply those in your life? Tell us about the beliefs of protecting neighborhoods, and the minimalist lifestyle of nomads. |
| 3 | Please tell us about your youth and independent animal husbandry, how many years you have been farming, and about your livestock. (How many and what types etc.) During this period, where did you mainly live? |
| Part 2. Lifestyle of nomadic herders | |
| 1 | Why do nomadic herders migrate often? What are the benefits of it? When I was a child, in my homeland we used to migrate by yaks and oxcarts. Is it still now or not? |
| 2 | Families who live in Gobi, migrate by camels but in mountain areas, we migrate by yaks. Is it depending from landscape or livestock? |
| 3 | Is the tradition of bringing milk tea and food to a migrant family, when someone sees them regardless of whether they know or not. Is it still there or not? |
| 4 | What is the typical personality of Mongolian people? |
| 5 | Please tell us about the nomads' lifestyle, such as clothing, food, accommodation, etc. |
| 6 | What dairy products can you make? Is the process of dairy by traditional method still the same nowadays? Do the young herders milk their cattle? (When I was a child, we milked castles twice a day and we had a lot of things to do there.) |
| Part 3. Preserve the culture, heritage, and values of nomads and inherit them on to future generations. | |
| 1 | What is the best thing about living a nomadic life? How many children do you have and do any of your children become herdsman? If not, why? |
| 2 | What are the abilities of nomadic pastoralists? |
| 3 | Herders are the people who have best preserved their heritage and customs inherited from their ancestors. Do you agree with me? What are your thoughts on how to pass it on to the next generation in the future? |
| 4 | Will the nomadic lifestyle be preserved in the future? What are you most worried about? What do you most want to tell the young generation? |

Interview questions with representatives of the administration office of Erdene soum

| № | Interview questions |
|---|---|
| Part 1. Introduction part | |
| 1 | Please introduce yourself and what position you have recently. |
| 2 | What is the level of development of your community? Please tell us about the development indicators and economic, social, environmental situation and quality of life of local people. |
| 3 | In your opinion, what are the characteristics and values of your community? |
| Part 2. The social background of local community (Erdene soum) | |
| 1 | What kind of social work does the local government organize in the field of local development, and what is the participation of local people? Are there any opportunities for local people and enterprises to cooperate? What is the active participation and initiative of local citizens? |
| 2 | What kind of support is there from the state government? Do the youths settle in there? What is the cause of migration? |
| Part 3. Opportunities of developing agrotourism. | |
| 1 | How developed is tourism in your area? |
| 2 | Have you heard about agrotourism? Could you define agrotourism in your way? |
| 3 | One way to develop agrotourism in Mongolia is a trip based on the livelihood of nomadic herders. Do you agree with that? |
| 4 | If someone such as NGO or company is offered to create this agrotourism model of agrotourism in your community first In Mongolia, would you cooperate? |
| 5 | How to convey new information to nomadic herders? Does the local government organize training such as personal development, finance, management, and marketing or experience learning from heritage and organic production, etc? |
| 6 | Are domestic and international rural development projects being implemented in your community? Are there any residents who cooperate and share their ideas and implement some projects? |
| 7 | How do you determine the obstacles to rural development and development opportunities? |
| 8 | What is your opinion on the relationship between rural development and tourism? How do you envision the future of your community? |

5.

6. List of Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1: Overview of definitions used in the literature for agrotourism and related labels..... | 7 |
| Table 2: Motivation of domestic tourists..... | 35 |
| Table 3: The nomadic household income..... | 46 |

7. List of Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Five Categories of Agritourism including Direct Sales, Education, Hospitality, Outdoor Recreation, and Entertainment, and Examples of Core vs. Peripheral Activities | 9 |
| Figure 2: Agrotourism activities by continent <i>Source: Own work, 2023</i> | 11 |
| Figure 3: Four different landscapes in rural area of Mongolia | 14 |
| Figure 4: Migration characteristics of Mongolian nomads depending on their geographical location..... | 15 |
| Figure 5: Mongolian ger..... | 16 |
| Figure 6: The main philosophy of the Mongolian nomads..... | 21 |
| Figure 7: Age of the respondents..... | 30 |
| Figure 8: Gender of the respondents..... | 30 |
| Figure 9: Population of Mongolia | 31 |
| Figure 10: Education of the respondents | 32 |
| Figure 11: Employment status of the respondents | 33 |
| Figure 12: Population Pyramid of internet users, 2010 and 2020..... | 33 |
| Figure 13: Social media usage of the respondents..... | 34 |
| Figure 14: Purposes of respondents' trips In English below the graph | 35 |
| Figure 15: The purpose is to discover the interest of the travelers in learning through helping with the daily work and life of the nomads | 37 |
| Figure 16: Determination of the interest of domestic travelers in staying with a nomadic family | 37 |
| Figure 17: The number of livestock in Erdene soum, the structure of animals, the number of herding families, and the number of animals per herding family for the last 5 years were compiled | 43 |
| Figure 18: The benefits of agrotourism development in rural areas in Mongolia | 51 |

Appendices

Appendix 1: Declaration

STUDENT DECLARATION

Signed below, Givaamaa Nyambu, student of the Szent István Campus of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Science, at the MSc Course of Rural Development Engineering declare that the present Thesis is my own work and I have used the cited and quoted literature in accordance with the relevant legal and ethical rules. I understand that the one-page-summary of my thesis will be uploaded on the website of the Campus/Institute/Course and my Thesis will be available at the Host Department/Institute and in the repository of the University in accordance with the relevant legal and ethical rules.

Confidential data are presented in the thesis: **no**

Date: 02.05.2023



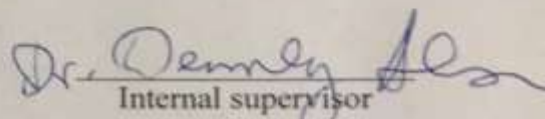
STATEMENT ON CONSULTATION PRACTICES

As a supervisor of Nyambuu Givaamaa, VB49DS (Student's NEPTUN ID), I here declare that the master's thesis has been reviewed by me, the student was informed about the requirement of literary sources management and its legal and ethical rules.

I recommend the master's thesis to be defended in a final exam.

The document contains state secrets or professional secrets: yes no*

Place and date: Gyöngyös 2023 year 05 month 02 day


Internal supervisor

Student

Appendix 2

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Thesis title: Developing agrotourism as a lifestyle of nomadic herders in Mongolia

Author name: Nyambuu Givaamaa

Course, level of education: MSc. Rural Development and Engineering

Host Department/Institute: Institute of Sustainable Development and Economics

Primary thesis advisor: Dr. Demszky Alma Mira, Associate Professor

Department of Rural and Regional Development/ Institute of Sustainable Development and Economics

After the production of cars and oil, the tourism industry is one of the biggest in the world. In Mongolia, it ranks third in terms of commercial importance behind mining and animal husbandry. Although Mongolia is one of the few nations to preserve its nomadic heritage and customs for future generations, the Mongolian young generation has lost experience and understanding of traditional customs, heritage, and livestock husbandry, as well as nomadic living because of urbanization.

Therefore, it is essential to promote agrotourism for both domestic and international tourists. The majority of foreign visitors are attracted to Mongolia by the traditional nomadic form of pastoralism, which is appropriate for the country's environment, geography, climate, wild nature, and organic and distinctive cuisine. However, there is a notable shortage of tourism products and models that represent the nomadic lifestyle of Mongolia to foreign and domestic travelers.

The goal of this study is to develop an agrotourism model based on the way of life of herders to attract tourists, create new chances to observe and participate in their daily activities and provide visitors the opportunity to live a day in the shoes of a herder. It is anticipated that this development, which is founded on ethnic and cultural tourism, will not only boost the income of nomadic households but also advance rural communities and Mongolia as a whole. Additionally, it will help the younger generation experience and comprehend their identity as Mongolians. This will also have an impact on raising nomad herders' incomes, increasing dairy and meat production, boosting local communities quality of life, and forging partnerships with stakeholders.

In this study, two nomadic herder families were involved in the interview to explore possibilities of developing economically, socially, environmentally friendly, and sustainable agritourism based on the livelihood of the nomadic people in Mongolia.

Keywords: Agrotourism, tourism products, Mongolia, nomadic lifestyle, herders