

**CHRIST**(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Megha C T, Registration Number: 2190064, PhD Scholar at the Department of Commerce, School of Commerce, Finance and Accountancy, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 15 May 2026 at 10.00 am in Room No. 628, 6th Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Agritourism in Kerala: Destination Attractions, Tourists Experience and Behavioural Intentions**
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Registrar (Academics)

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 05 May 2026

ABSTRACT

Agriculture occupies a predominant position in the economic development of India. Nowadays, in Kerala state, agriculture and tourism activities are blended in a way that does not harm farming. Agritourism refers to tourism activities that take place on farms or other agricultural settings, allowing tourists to understand rural traditions and lifestyles. Kerala has evolved as a ground-breaker by bridging its agricultural heritage with responsible tourism. There are some natural, cultural or man-made attractions that attract tourists to agritourism destinations, such as destination aesthetics, local culinary and activities, etc. Such destination attractions form the motivation to choose a tourist destination. Engaging with authentic rural experiences creates an environment that increases overall satisfaction. This study seeks to investigate agritourism in Kerala by examining the key destination attractions, post-visit reflections of tourists on their agritourism experiences and exploring the future behavioural intentions of tourists who have visited agritourism destinations in Kerala. In addition to that, this study formulates a research model for the agritourism industry in Kerala that elucidates the influence of destination attractions, tourists' experience and behavioural intentions, with the visitor's familiarity serving as a moderator. Data collected through primary sources, and the sample consists of 599 tourists who had visited agritourism sites in Kerala, using purposive sampling via online platforms. The statistical procedures used in the analysis were moderated mediation using structural equation modelling, One-way ANOVA, independent sample t-test and chi-square test. Findings reveal that the tourists recognised eight key destination attractions that motivated them to visit the agritourism destinations in Kerala. The repeat visit tourists' reports reduced perceived attractiveness. The post-visit responses in terms of value for money, satisfaction, trust and positive memories and the behavioural intentions in terms of repeat visits and word of mouth vary significantly across different demographic conditions. First-time visitors reported stronger experiences and higher behavioural intention, and frequent visitors showed weaker reflections and lower intentions.

Keywords: *Destination attractions, loyalty, destination exploration, agritourism, tourists, Kerala*

Publications:

1. **Megha, C. T., & Almeida, S. M.** (2024). Farm food and beverage: An attractive element of gastronomy in agritourism. In *Gastronomic sustainability solutions for community and tourism resilience* (Chap. 8). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-4135-3.ch008>
2. **Megha, C. T., & Almeida, S. M.** (2025). Blossoming fields: Harnessing artificial intelligence for smart agritourism. In *Cases on AI-driven solutions to environmental challenges* (Chap. 8). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-7483-2.ch008>
3. **Megha, C. T.** (2025, August 22). Smart agritourism in India: Conceptualization and deployment of the TEAM app (Indian Patent Application No. 202541074332 A). Indian Patent Office.