

Perceived Service Quality towards Repetitive Visit among Dot Accredited Agri-Tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija: A Basis for Quality Service Strategic Plan

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8120322>

Received: 21 December 2024; Accepted: 25 December 2024; Published: 22 January 2025

ABSTRACT

The study assessed the service quality provided by the six DOT accredited Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija. This study is anchored from the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which categorizes service quality into five distinct dimensions: Responsiveness, Tangibles, Reliability, Assurance, and Empathy. The researchers used Likert-scale type questionnaires and analyzed the data through statistical data treatment such as frequency and percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson-R Correlation. The study used a quantitative descriptive correlational research design. This will benefit specifically the Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija in improving the quality of service that they will provide, which will likely result in higher intention to visit for visitors to return. The result of this study shows that the service quality of Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija in terms of responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy was verbally interpreted as strongly agree and with a verbal description of highly satisfied. The study revealed that there is significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents (generation, occupation, purpose of visit, and services availed) and the service quality of the Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija in terms of responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance and empathy. On the other hand, there is also significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of respondents (generation, occupation, type of tourist, and purpose of visit) and their repetitive visit intention in Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija in terms of satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, there is significant relationship between the service quality and repetitive visit intention to Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija. Moreover, the output of this study will provide quality service strategic plan to improve the quality service to be used by the management of six DOT accredited Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija.

Keywords: assessment, assurance, empathy, responsiveness, repetitive visits, tangibles

INTRODUCTION

Agritourism has indeed become a popular trend in contemporary travel due to its unique structure, offering travelers authentic experiences, educational opportunities, and the chance to participate in local agricultural activities such as farming, fishing, fruit and vegetable picking, and animal feeding. By engaging in these activities, visitors can gain a firsthand look at farm life, which helps them develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of rural customs and practices (Streifeneder & Dax, 2020). According to a recent study by Alar (2024), agritourism can be categorized based on the tourists' preferences. Hence, the result showed that tourists are most interested in health and food tourism farms, with a percentage of 30%, followed by educational and entertainment farms at 28%, natural and ecotourism farms at 23%, and lastly, recreational and sports tourism farms at 20%.

According to Flanigan (2019), as tourists seek authentic, enchanting experiences in rural settings, agritourism has seen a sharp increase globally. A lot of people nowadays think of ways to run away from their routinary city life and redeem calmness from nature, which resulted from seeking agritourism destinations. Fortune Business Insights says that in 2019, the agritourism market size was valued at USD 69.24 billion. When it comes to economic benefits, agritourism contributes significantly to farm income and rural development. Additionally, it

has brought an alternative source of income to the rural communities, at the same time helping solve the unemployment problems that were developing the local economy (Shokhan et al., 2023). In the Philippines, one of the key factors of rural development emerged from agritourism. As of December 02, 2023, the Department of Tourism has officially accredited 231 farm tourism sites across the Philippines. Region III- Central Luzon is known for its unique beauty, culturally rich, and wealth in agricultural activities. One of the provinces in this region with a large part of history is Nueva Ecija. According to the Region III Tourism Statistics for 2021 from the Department of Tourism, there's an increasing number of tourists visiting Nueva Ecija, from 68,387 in 2020 to 98,003 in 2021. As released by the Department of Tourism (DOT) in 2024, there are 26 agritourism farm sites accredited in the region, and six (6) of them are from Nueva Ecija, the "Rice Granary of the Philippines." Its tagline, "Nueva Ecija, Never Ending," depicts its never-ending opportunities in terms of opening its doors to tourism, never-ending places to show its tourists, and never-ending wonders that tourists can learn and discover. Vigilia (2020) indicated that this province owned tourist destinations that are highly appraised for their uniqueness, scenic landscape, and historical significance.

Research by Cereno (2024) emphasized the role of agritourism by attracting more tourists to visit, which leads to generating income, enhancing rural livelihood and preserving cultural heritage in the Philippines. In establishing and managing Agri-tourism farm sites, there are challenges that need to be addressed, such as market competition and the need for continuous adaptation to tourists' behavioral intentions (Ciolac et al., 2021). As the importance of tourism to economic growth is mentioned, the government needs to perform a critical role, especially when dividends to communities are available, including entrepreneurship, job opportunities, innovation, and poverty alleviation (Mnguni et al., 2020). Many agritourism farms have adopted sustainable methods, including farm-to-table meals and organic farming. However, there is still a noticeable gap in the consistency of service quality which could be a reason why tourists may not want to return. This issue is not new to the industry; similar challenges have been observed in various regions of the Philippines and even internationally. Despite being a promising agricultural destination, Nueva Ecija remains relatively unnoticed. As far as the researchers know, there are limited studies that explore tourist satisfaction in terms of service quality offered at Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija and how these influence the tourists' repetitive visits.

Perceived service quality is crucial to determining customer satisfaction and loyalty. This theoretical framework is grounded in the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which categorizes service quality into five distinct dimensions: Responsiveness, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy, and Reliability which is essential for evaluating service quality in tourism destinations. Cruz et al. (2018) emphasized that dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are crucial for ensuring customer satisfaction. Furthermore, studies by Fatma et al. (2024), When customers perceive the service as high-quality, they are more likely to feel that they are getting good value for their money, which enhances their overall satisfaction. However, there remains a lack of study specifically examining the correlation between perceived service quality and repetitive visits. Investigating this correlational relationship is important for gaining a deeper understanding of the main variables in this study.

This study examined perceived service quality when visiting the six DOT accredited Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it aims to provide actionable insights to assist Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija by enhancing their competitive edge through improved service quality. The research seeks to explore the relationship between perceived service quality and repetitive visits in terms of tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The tourism office will benefit greatly from these findings, which will help them better plan and improve activities at the six agritourism farm sites and other tourist destinations in Nueva Ecija. By increasing tourist satisfaction and repetitive visits, this study will also greatly help Nueva Ecija's agritourism farms. Furthermore, travelers themselves will gain from this study by measuring and eventually improving visitor satisfaction levels. It could spur economic growth in Nueva Ecija and result in the opening of establishments that serve the needs of tourists, including lodging, retail stores, and dining establishments. Lastly, by giving future researchers the baseline data they need for their research in this area, this study will act as a fundamental reference.

This study focused on the service quality and repetitive visits provided by the six Department of Tourism accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija. The study is limited to the demographic profile, including generation, sex, civil status, occupation, income level, number of visits, types of tourists, purpose of visit, and services availed. The variables of this study are limited to assessing the competitiveness of the service quality in

terms of responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, reliability, and empathy based on the SERVQUAL Method. Furthermore, to assess the revisit intention of the tourists in terms of their satisfaction and loyalty. The respondents are only focused on those who had visited the place at least once, tourists who are willing to participate and those who are 18 years old and above. This study examined the service quality towards repetitive visits provided by the DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija. Specifically, this study needs to be conducted to answer the following: (1) describe the respondent's demographic profile in terms of age, sex, civil status, occupation, income level, number of visits, type of tourist, purpose of visit and services availed; (2) determine the service quality of Agri-tourism farm site in terms of responsiveness, assurance, tangibility, empathy, and reliability; (3) assess the customer repetitive visits in terms of tourist satisfaction and loyalty; (4.1) test the significant relationship between demographic profile and service quality to Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija; (4.2) test the significant relationship between demographic profile and repetitive visit intention to Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija; (5) test the significant relationship between service quality and repetitive visit intention in terms of tourist satisfaction and loyalty; and (6) propose quality service strategies for Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija to enhance competitive advantage.

Assessment of Service Quality Management

According to a previous study, memorable experiences directly influence tourist satisfaction. The responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy dimensions can be used for agritourism to assess tourist satisfaction (Ocampo et al., 2023).

Responsiveness: One of the most important requirements for places that are close to nature is responsiveness. Visitors arriving

at the natural attraction should be greeted and accommodated by the personnel (Ziggers & Henseler, 2016). Moreover, Mitchell and Walker (2016) addressed that in enhancing the overall guest perceptions and experiences, there must be timely and effective responses from well-trained employees. According to Marinao (2017), the visitors' pleasure is a personal judgment based on their perceptions and evaluations of the service they received. The fundamental component of visitor pleasure is the prior visitor anticipation. After visiting the location, it can be asserted and represented through either an emotive or cognitive state, or both. The viewpoint will be considered as a favorable review outlining all the advantages they acquired or as a collection of opinions on how they obtained a high level of service.

Tangibles: A well-furnished reception desk or skilled staff might impact customers' impressions of tangible service attributes. Tangible dimension is defined as the physical quality of facilities, equipment, and personal appearance. All observable aspects of service quality require close attention since they affect customer loyalty and have the potential to increase revenue for the company (Sharifah Norhuda Syed Wahid, 2017). Reitsamer and Sperdin (2015) stated that the causes driving contemporary tourism are multidimensional in nature and that for a destination to be viewed favorably by visitors, it must provide a range of alluring goods and services. A guide or staff may also be a person who drives tours of visitors about a city or location, brings them to notable tourist attractions, and provides written information on the facts and unique aspects of the situation, according to Sharma's (2014) research. The trip can run anything from 10 to 15 minutes and many hours over the course of several days. The tour guide's knowledge of local history, customs, and way of life is highly valued because it is expected that he would provide tourists with accurate information. According to Izogo and Ogba (2015), professional organizations should focus a significant amount of their efforts on improving the exteriors of their physical offices, equipment, workforce, and communication materials. Intangibles have a significant role in consumer happiness. If they had complete access to the material resources that would be practical for their vacation experience, that would be convenient for them.

Reliability: The ability to deliver the promised service steadily and accurately. According to Arlen (2022), of the customers, 32% value most is reliability. Second, at 22%, is responsiveness, then assurance at 19%, empathy at 16%, and tangible at 11%. For service providers, reliability is termed as "just do it." Just complete that task by following up on the commitment made. The relationship of any service with its customers hinges on actionable delivery, as well as effective and efficient provision of the promised service (Ahmed et al., 2020), which makes the customer trust that the service is coming from the company (Hafiz & Alam, 2016). Yousapronpaiboon (2014)

argued that reliability is just delivering what companies have promised their customers. It is a very common dimension used in almost all of the service quality measuring models which showcased its relationship with satisfaction and retention of customers. In fact, many researchers highlighted that reliability was one of the most influential dimensions among others in meeting customer's expectations.

Assurance. According to Misrahi (2015), assurance will be attained with the proper balance of safety, security, and accessibility. It is possible to refer to the general contentment of tourists who have developed a certain level of ties to the places they have visited as significant milestones in the regeneration of those locations. By integrating additional softscapes, trees, and vegetation along the visitor's movement and destinations, as well as by offering full and modern tourist amenities, the comfort of exploring the area by car or foot must be guaranteed. According to Ujang et al. (2018), accessibility throughout the pedestrian network would encourage a more tourist-friendly environment by linking tourists to other city center attractions. Finding a free parking space is a typical issue in most metropolitan areas, and it is particularly problematic in well-known and busy locations like shopping centers, stadiums, and other busy areas or tourist attractions. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) included Intelligent Parking Service. A safe, effective, intelligent, and dependable system that can be utilized for parking facility administration, parking facility guidance, parking charge negotiation, and vacant parking facility search is urgently needed (Kharde, Pal, and Kawle 2016). LeJune (2017) said that each location should continuously consider tourist safety as part of their public relations efforts, regardless of how big or small the event may be. Travel safety is a significant factor in tourism, and using the right management and public relations strategies will convey the impression that your place is protected, which is crucial and something you should profit from. Famous landmarks and regions all across the world are currently dealing with dangerous circumstances. One of the strategies for enhancing tourist safety and security is the collaboration of public and private sectors as well as the intra-governmental cooperation in developing relevant laws, regulations, and technological advancements to create a secure environment for tourists. (Rasethunsa, 2023). Customers would be very happy with the experience if they felt safe secure, and had access to all the goods or services that would make them comfortable. According to Tan and Cruz (2014), in order to satisfy the tourist and recommend the destination, they value the ability and competence of the staff, and this will reassure the tourist that, for instance, if a problem occurs, the staff can solve it immediately which ensures that the tourist experience is satisfactory.

Empathy. According to the definition of empathy, it is "the capacity of a person to perceive the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of another, to share that other's emotional experience, and to respond to the observed experiences of another person." Research has shown that empathy has both cognitive and emotional components. From a cognitive standpoint, empathy is the ability of the customer service representative to adopt the client's point of view through comprehending their mind, ideas, and intentions. From an emotional point of view, empathy has to do with a person's capacity to engage in acts that benefit consumers, such as interpersonal care and emotional contagion. Additionally, the experience of imaginative travelers is a reliable indicator of their memory. According to Prayag et al. (2017), a tourist attraction's overall reputation influences how satisfied visitors are and whether they plan to suggest it to their friends, family, and other people who haven't been there yet. However, the absence of facilities designed specifically for the disabled has hampered its chances of achieving worldwide success. Everyone should be able to observe, investigate, and appreciate the national heritage without discrimination, including people with disabilities. The Heritage Act's inadequate provisions for accessible facilities have made it difficult for individuals with disabilities to appreciate and visit heritage places (Zahari et al., 2016). Additionally, empathy can foster more moral interactions between hosts and guests since it can lead to new avenues for inter-subjective understanding (Zamanillo & Cheer, 2019).

While the SERVQUAL model has been successfully used in agritourism, there are still gaps in the literature, particularly regarding socio-demographic differences in service quality perceptions.

Assessment of Tourists' Repetitive Visits

Together with the tourist experience, one of the most important components of agritourism marketing is satisfaction and loyalty (Dean & Suhartanto, 2019; Lv et al., 2020; Astor et al., 2020).

Satisfaction. The satisfaction of the consumers is the foundation of any company organization's success.

Today's businesses understand that maintaining a satisfied customer base is critical to their success and contributes to the growth of their company's market value. Additionally, Le June (2017) emphasized the importance of prioritizing tourist safety as part of public relations efforts for every event, regardless of its scale. Safety is a critical concern in tourism, and effective management and public relations strategies can reassure visitors about their well-being, enhancing overall satisfaction. Moreover, a business may gain a great deal from higher customer satisfaction, including goods, customer loyalty, customer life cycle extension, and positive public relations (Khadka, 2017). When customers are happy with the goods or services they obtain from them, they are more inclined to make additional purchases. In addition to making larger purchases, they also serve as a network to connect with other possible clients by exchanging experiences (Hague & Hague, 2016). Nevertheless, Marinao (2017) stated that visitor satisfaction hinges on personal judgments based on perceived service quality. Anticipation before visiting plays a pivotal role in shaping their emotional and cognitive responses afterward. Positive reviews often highlight the benefits received, while critical feedback may focus on areas where the service fell short.

Loyalty: Leon and Dixon (2023) defined loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy or patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same-brand-set purchasing despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior. Factors influencing loyalty include perceived value, service quality, customer satisfaction, brand trust, and the effectiveness of loyalty programs (Chanarpas, 2022; Chonsalasin et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction has emerged as a critical antecedent of loyalty in numerous studies. Satisfaction significantly impacts the likelihood of repeat patronage and recommendations to others. In the airline context, satisfaction with various aspects of the service, such as on-time performance, cabin comfort, and staff service quality, directly influences passengers' loyalty intentions (Shah et al., 2020). Loyalty programs are designed to reward repeat customers and encourage continued patronage. These programs play a role in building and sustaining customer loyalty by offering tangible benefits, such as free flights, upgrades, and other perks, which can enhance the perceived value of the airline (Sarpong, 2021). They further suggest that loyalty programs can foster a sense of belonging and community among members, strengthening their emotional attachment to the airline. A distinction is often made between behavioral loyalty, reflected in observable actions such as repeat purchasing, and attitudinal loyalty, which involves a psychological process leading to a favorable disposition towards the airline. True loyalty is said to encompass both dimensions, with attitudinal loyalty reinforcing behavioral loyalty, leading to more sustainable and profitable customer relationships (Lee & Chung, 2020). Studies show that the quality of food, in addition to service quality, determines customer loyalty. Customer retention is influenced by meal quality, as noted in the study conducted by Al-Tit (2015). According to the report, restaurants should understand the critical role that food quality plays in ensuring customer happiness and serving as a precondition for client retention. In the research of Palit et al. (2019), environmental ergonomics significantly improved customer convenience in a positive way. Customers are more inclined to stay loyal to the business and return when they feel pampered. Based on the research by Souki et al. (2020) global perceived quality had a direct impact on customers' feelings, contentment, and sense of value. The inclination for loyalty was positively impacted by this satisfaction.

METHODS

This study used quantitative descriptive correlational research to investigate the association between their repeated visits (dependent variable) and perceived service quality (independent variable). The study was carried out in Nueva Ecija at six DOT-accredited agritourism farm sites.

Visitors to these six agritourism farm sites were given questionnaires to complete in order to learn more about their opinions on the quality of the services they received and whether they planned to return. The study focused on visitors who had been to the farm at least once and were at least 18 years old. Repetitive visits and perceived service quality level were evaluated, and correlations were made using the data gathered.

A survey questionnaire was used by the researchers to gather information. The research tool was validated before it was used by a panel of experts that included members from academia and industry. After this validation, the questionnaire was first tested using responses from tourists who were not involved in the actual data collection process. Under the supervision of a university statistician, the researchers intended to perform a reliability test following the first data gathering. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to evaluate the questionnaire's internal reliability.

The researcher formally asked the management of six agritourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija for permission to gather the data needed for this study. The researcher obtained consent from the panelists and their research advisor before disseminating the questionnaire. Before starting the survey, the researcher made sure that the respondents fulfilled the requirements of the study. Throughout the data collection procedure, the researcher gave respondents directions on how to fill out the survey and addressed any points that needed clarification. Respondents included tourists who had visited and engaged in various activities at Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija and were aged 18 years and older. After the questionnaire was completed, the researcher gathered, verified, examined, and evaluated the information. The researcher used statistical methods such weighted mean, T-test, Pearson R correlation, frequency and percentage distributions, and rankings to interpret the survey results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data gathered from the study entitled “Service Quality Provided by the DOT Accredited Agri- Tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija: A Basis for Quality Service Strategies.” It also includes the results, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered from the answers to the survey questionnaires distributed in six Agri-tourism Fam Sites in Nueva Ecija. The data was presented in tabular form in accordance with the specific questions posed in the statement of the problem.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 frequency And Percentage Distribution of The Socio Demographic Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Generation		
Gen Z	61	50.8%
Millennial	40	33.3%
Gen X	19	15.8%
Sex		
Male	81	67.5%
Female	39	32.5%
Civil Status		
Single	82	68.3%
Married	38	31.7%
Occupation		
Employed	44	36.7%
Self-employed	21	17.5%
Unemployed	9	7.5%
Student	46	38.3%
Type of Tourist		
Inside of Nueva Ecija (Local)	103	85.5%
Outside of Nueva Ecija (Domestic)	17	14.2%
Number of Visits		
1-2 times	89	74.2%
3-4 times	24	20%
5 times and above	7	5.8%
Purpose of Visit		
Leisure/Relaxation	55	45.8%
Educational experience	65	54.2%
Services Availed		
Day tour	49	40.8%
Accommodation	9	7.5%
Training	49	40.8%
Local products	13	10.8%

Table 5 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the socio-demographic profile of the tourists visiting the six Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija.

The results show that the majority of the visitors in terms of generation in these 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites were in Generation Z with a frequency of 61 out of 120 and a percentage of 50.8%, and Millennial that have a frequency of 40 out of 120 with a percentage of 33.3% and the Generation X had the lowest frequency of 19 out of 120 with a percentage of 15.8%. This indicates that the majority of the visitors in Agri-tourism Farm sites were in the age of Gen Z (born between year 1997- 2006). Gen Z preferred hands-on opportunities to gain knowledge, valuing both education and experience learning, specifically in areas like sustainability and food production.

Agri-tourism provides interactive, educational experiences where visitors can gain learnings about farming, food production, and sustainable agriculture. According to the Farm Experience Network, a 2021 report, most Agri-tourism attractions offer tours, workshops, and farm-based activities that educate tourists about agriculture, conservation, and the importance of sustainable practices. Gen Z' are more likely to engage with experiences that provide practical, real-world knowledge; that's why this approach aligns well with the preference learning of the Gen Z's (Harris et al., 2021).

In terms of sex, it shows that the male respondents got the highest frequency of 81 out of 120 or 67.5 percent while the female respondents had the lowest frequency of 39 out of 150 or 32.5 percent. This indicates that the majority of the visitors to Agri-tourism farm sites were male. Males are more likely to travel due to fewer restrictions and are attracted to challenging adventures, which might explain why they are more likely to visit Agri-tourism farm site compared to females. According Siri (2020), it highlights that male tourists are primarily motivated by challenging activities and recreation when visiting a destination, while female tourists seek scenic views, leisure, and an escape from daily life.

In terms of the civil status, the majority were single with a frequency of 82 out of 120 or 68.3 percent while married had the frequency of 38 out of 120 or 31.7 percent. Due to the unique combination of relaxation, learning, and cultural experiences these sites provide, individuals, especially those without family responsibilities, tend to prefer visiting Agri- tourism farms for training. According to Mu (2019), Agri- tourism offers an escape from city life, giving visitors a chance to connect with rural environments and gain knowledge about the process of agriculture. These educational experiences can be specifically attractive to single tourists who are interested in gaining new skills or knowledge during their travels.

In terms of the occupation, the results show that majority of the visitors of these Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija were students with a frequency of 46 out of 120 or 38.3 percent to be followed by employed visitors (44 out of 120) with a percentage of 36.7%, next is self-employed (21 out of 120) with a percentage of 17.5% and visitors who are unemployed that has a frequency of 9 out of 120 or 7.5 percent. According to Petroman et al., (2016), Students like better visiting agritourism farms for training because they believe that the experiences surely offer many educational benefits. They gain knowledge and understanding about rural traditions and agricultural heritage, which helps preserve these practices and raise awareness about culture.

In terms of monthly income/allowance of the visitors of the Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija, the highest in frequency was the less than 10,000 that got 67 out of 120 with a percentage of 55.8. Monthly income/allowance of 10,000-29,999 had a frequency of 33 out of 120 or 27.5 percent, while the 30,000- 49,999 monthly income/allowance of the visitor had a frequency of 18 and percentage of 15% and those who has a monthly income/allowance of 50,000 and above had 2 out of 120 with a percentage of 1.7%.

In regions like China, Agri-tourism farms provide urban locals and low-income rural residents with opportunities to participate in agricultural activities that fosters cultural exchange and economic development. According to Mu (2019), Individuals with low income have a greater tendency to visit Agri-tourism farm sites for training due to various socio- economic and structural factors that make such opportunities attractive and reachable.

In terms of the type of tourist, the majority were local visitors within Nueva Ecija accounting to 85.8% of the respondents. In contrast, domestic visitors from outside Nueva Ecija represented only 14.2%. Local tourists were more prominent because Agri-tourism farm site is more accessible and familiar to them, as it is closer to their

home and provides a handy venue to explore.

Seyidov & Adamantine (2017), stated that local Agri-tourism destinations are more appealing than distant domestic spots because sociodemographic factors significantly influence tourist motivations and satisfaction levels, within cost and convenience. In addition, Liu et al., (2023), stated that the distance can discourage tourist from travelling to a destination due to some reasons like; long travel time, high cost of airfare, unpredictable risk and uncertainty.

Regarding the number of visits to Agritourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija, the data indicates that visitors who visited 1-2 times got the highest frequency of 89 out of 120 or 74.2 percent, tourist who visited the farm site had a frequency of 24 out of 120 or 20 percent, while visitors who visited 5 times and above had the lowest frequency of 7 out of 120 with a percentage of 5.8%. The data reveals that the majority of visitors in Agri- tourism farm site only 1-2 times, likely due to the higher costs associated with more frequent travel. According to Chen et al. (2019), in some scenic areas, the prices of the destination have increased significantly, which has created a bad image of “excessively high costs” for visitors in visiting the chosen destinations.

In terms of the purpose of the guest to visit Agri- tourism farm site, it shows that educational experience got the highest frequency of 65 out of 120 or 54.2 percent while for leisure/relaxation purpose got the lowest frequency of 55 or 45.8 percent. Visitors are often attracted to destinations where they can learn new things, as these experiences offer both educational and leisure benefits.

Visitors to Agri-tourism farm sites often have educational and learning purposes due to the multifaceted benefits these experiences offer. Agri-tourism provides a unique opportunity for visitors to engage with agricultural practices, understand the rural lifestyle, and gain hands-on experience in farming activities. Agri-tourism sites offer a variety of educational activities such as floral arrangement classes, cooking workshops, and demonstrations of traditional agricultural practices. These activities are designed to educate visitors about farming and rural life, making them a significant draw for those seeking learning experiences (Petroman et al., 2016).

Regarding the services availed by the visitors in Agri- tourism farm sites of Nueva Ecija, it shows that day tour and training both got the highest frequency of 49 out of 120 with a percentage of 40.8%, while the visitors who buys the local products from farm sites got a frequency of 13 with a percentage of 10.8% and the visitors who stay overnight to the Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija got a lowest frequency of 9 with a percentage of 7.5%.

A day tour in an Agri-tourism farm can provide a different range of experiences, such as learning about farming practices, crop cultivation, and livestock management, where the visitors can participate while supporting local economies and maintaining cultural heritage. This educational aspect is important for raising awareness about agriculture and its importance (Whitt et al., 2019) (Mu, 2019).

Assessment of Service Quality Management in DOT Accredited Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija

This section presents the result of service quality management in 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija in terms of responsiveness, Tangibles, reliability, assurance and empathy.

Table 2 Service Quality Management in Terms of Responsiveness

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 The Agri-tourism Farm Site has employees shift to help each other maintain speed and quality of service.	3.51	0.50	Strongly Agree	1
2 The Agri-tourism Farm Site provide prompt and quick service.	3.38	0.49	Strongly Agree	2
3 The Agri-tourism Farm Site gives extra effort to handle your special requests.	3.22	0.45	Agree	5
4 The Agri-tourism Farm Site are responsive in solving problems.	3.37	0.55	Strongly Agree	3

5	The Agri-tourism Farm Site helps customers choose the product offered.	3.33	0.50	Strongly Agree	4
Total Weighted Mean		3.36	0.31	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

The respondent's evaluation of the quality service competitiveness as to responsiveness obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.36 (SD=0.31) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." The item got the highest mean was "The Agri-tourism Farm Site has employees shift to help each other maintain speed and quality of service," with a mean of 3.51 (SD=0.50), translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was "The Agri-tourism Farm Site gives extra effort to handle your special requests," with a mean of 3.22 (SD=0.45) which was verbally described as "agree." This result indicates that, in general, the respondents felt the Agri-Tourism Farm Site is highly responsive to customer needs, responding quickly and effectively to various requests and expectations. According to Tustikbayev (2024), the rotational approach to labor organization provides flexibility, allowing farm sites to adapt to varying visitor numbers and service demands. To ensure smooth operations, shifting duty hours means that employees will work at different times throughout the day. Moreover, the employees collaborate and assist one another during their shifts, stepping in when others are busy or providing support in areas where help is needed. Grolleau et al., 2023 stated that farm operators can foster emotional harmony and reinforce positive guest experiences by handling special requests effectively, which are crucial for the success of farm tourism projects. This implies that visitors are receiving effort from the service of the Agri-tourism farm site to handle special requests. Unable to provide the special requests of the visitors may have an effect on visitors' experiences, which could result in lower satisfaction and unfavorable ratings.

Table 3 service Quality Management in Terms of Tangibles

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site is well managed.	3.50	0.55	Strongly Agree	2
2 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site provides an attractive nature-based ambiance.	3.61	0.55	Strongly Agree	1
3 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has clear and helpful directional signage around.	3.32	0.59	Strongly Agree	5
4 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site is uncrowded and pristine.	3.38	0.55	Strongly Agree	3
5 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site staff are presentable and can be easily identified because of their grooming and distinct uniform.	3.33	0.56	Strongly Agree	4
6 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site is hygienic and clean.	3.29	0.61	Strongly Agree	6
Total Weighted Mean	3.40	0.40	Strongly Agree	

The respondent's evaluation of the quality service competitiveness as to tangibles obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.40 (SD=0.40) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." The item that got the highest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site provides attractive nature-based ambiance," with a mean of 3.61 (SD=0.55), translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site is hygienic and clean," with a mean of 3.29 (SD=0.61) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." This result indicates that the 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija have an eco-friendly environment that gives relaxation to visitors. Valencia et al. (2022) stated in their study that physical attributes such as the availability of beautiful attractions and pleasurable activities are motivational factors that captivate visitors in Agri-tourism farm sites. Similarly, Azam et al. (2019) stated in their study that tangibles are anything a customer visually experiences, including staff, physical facilities, and products. The perception of cleanliness affects service quality and customer satisfaction. Therefore, maintaining a hygienic and clean farm site is crucial for ensuring high service quality in agricultural operations, particularly in dairy farming. Factors such as the physical environment's condition and staff behavior influence perceived cleanliness, which in turn impacts customer

satisfaction and behavior (Vos et al., 2018).

Table 4 service Quality Management in Terms of Reliability

Indicators		WM	SD	VD	Rank
1	The Agri-Tourism Farm Site serves you in the time promised.	3.34	0.49	Strongly Agree	2
2	The Agri-Tourism Farm Site quickly corrects anything that is wrong.	3.24	0.49	Strongly Agree	4
3	The Agri-Tourism Farm Site is dependable and consistent.	3.27	0.49	Strongly Agree	3
4	The Agri-Tourism Farm Site provides an accurate guest/customer check.	3.38	0.58	Strongly Agree	1
5	The Agri-Tourism Farm Site serves your request exactly as you ordered.	3.38	0.51	Strongly Agree	1
Total Weighted Mean		3.32	0.38	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

The respondent's evaluation on the quality service competitiveness as to reliability obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.32 (SD=0.38) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." There are two item that got the highest mean, this were "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site provides an accurate guest/customer check," and "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site serves your request exactly as you ordered," with a mean of 3.38 (SD=0.51) translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site quickly corrects anything that is wrong," with a mean of 3.24 (SD=0.49) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." This result indicates that the Agri-Tourism Farm Site is perceived as highly reliable, particularly in delivering accurate service and fulfilling customer requests as expected. However, the slightly lower score for correcting mistakes quickly indicates that speed of resolution may be a minor area for improvement. By streamlining the problem resolution process and ensuring that issues are addressed promptly, the farm can enhance its reputation for reliability and improve overall customer satisfaction. Past study has shown that customers want consistent and dependable results (Nawaz & Hassan, 2016). Furthermore, Chris Arlen (2022) emphasized that reliability is the ability to deliver the promised service steadily and accurately. Additionally, Yousapronpaibon (2014) stated that reliability is delivering what companies have promised. It is very common dimension used in almost all of the service quality

Table 5 service Quality Management in Terms of Assurance The respondent's evaluation on the quality service competitiveness as to assurance obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.33 (SD=0.36) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." There are two item that got the highest mean, this were "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site makes you feel comfortable and confident in your dealings with them," and "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has personnel who seem well trained, competent, and experienced," with a mean of 3.38 (SD=0.51) translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has personnel who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients, and methods of preparation," with a mean of 3.24 (SD=0.49) which was verbally described as "agree."

The results suggest that visitors feel that the staff at the farm site are highly capable and professional, which leads to a strong sense of assurance. The staff's training, competence, and experience contribute significantly to the farm site's ability to build trust and provide a high-quality customer experience. Khan and Khan (2023) in their study on service quality in tourism and hospitality, found that staff competence and confidence were strongly correlated with customer satisfaction and repeat visits. Tourists were more likely to recommend and revisit destinations where service personnel made them feel assured and well-treated.

Table 5 Service Quality Management in Terms of Assurance

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has employee who can answer your questions completely.	3.36	0.52	Strongly Agree	3
2 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site makes you feel comfortable and confident in your dealings with them.	3.41	0.59	Strongly Agree	1
3 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site makes you feel personally safe.	3.27	0.53	Strongly Agree	4
4 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has personnel who seem well trained, competent, and experienced.	3.41	0.59	Strongly Agree	1
5 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has personnel who are both able and willing to give you information about menu items, their ingredients, and methods of preparation.	3.13	0.48	Strongly Agree	5
6 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site seems to give employees support so that they can do their jobs well.	3.39	0.57	Agree	2
Total Weighted Mean	3.33	0.36	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

Table 6 service Quality Management in Terms of Empathy

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has employees who are sensitive to your individual needs and wants rather than always relying on policies and procedures.	3.27	0.44	Strongly Agree	3
2 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site makes you feel special.	3.23	0.51	Strongly Agree	4
3 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site anticipates your individual needs and wants.	3.34	0.54	Strongly Agree	2
4 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has employees who are sympathetic and reassuring if something is wrong.	3.17	0.52	Agree	5
5 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site seems to have customers' best interests at heart.	3.46	0.52	Strongly Agree	1
Total Weighted Mean	3.29	0.35	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

The respondent's evaluation on the quality service competitiveness as to empathy obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.29 (SD=0.35) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." The item got the highest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site seems to have customers' best interests at heart," with a mean of 3.46 (SD=0.52) translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was "The Agri-Tourism Farm Site has employees who are sympathetic and reassuring if something is wrong.," with a mean of 3.17 (SD=0.52) which was verbally described as "agree." This result the Agri-Tourism Farm Site is perceived positively in terms of empathy, particularly with regard to the general concern for customers' best interests. However, there is an opportunity to improve in how sympathetic and reassuring the employees are when addressing problems or customer complaints. Enhancing this aspect of service delivery could further strengthen the customer experience and increase loyalty, potentially making the site stand out more as a customer-centric and empathetic business in the Agri-tourism sector.

Visitors Repetitive Visits in DOT Accredited Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija

This section presents the results of the repetitive visits in DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija in terms of tourists' satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 7 tourists' Behavioral Intention (Satisfaction)

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 I am satisfied with my experience at the Agri- Tourism Site, which encourages me to visit again.	3.39	0.51	Strongly Agree	3
2 The Farm Site meets my expectations.	3.33	0.49	Strongly Agree	6
3 The staff is courteous and professional.	3.38	0.55	Strongly Agree	4
4 The Farm Site is clean and well- maintained.	3.41	0.57	Strongly Agree	2
5 The facilities and amenities at the Agri- Tourism Farm Site contribute to me satisfaction.	3.27	0.55	Strongly Agree	8
6 The Agri-Tourism Farm Site offers value for money.	3.11	0.53	Agree	9
7 My stays/visits at the Agri-Tourism Farm Site have been consistently enjoyable.	3.28	0.57	Strongly Agree	7
8 I feel that my preferences and requests are considered and well- accommodated which contributes to my satisfaction.	3.46	0.53	Strongly Agree	1
9 I am satisfied with the quality of service provided by the Agri-Tourism Farm Site	3.39	0.55	Strongly Agree	3
10 I would recommend this Farm Site to others.	3.37	0.52	Strongly Agree	5
Total Weighted Mean	3.34	0.37	Strongly Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

Table 7 illustrates the respondent's evaluation on the visitors' repetitive visits as to tourist satisfaction obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.34 (SD=0.37) which was verbally described as "strongly agree." The item got the highest mean was "I feel that my preferences and requests are considered and well- accommodated which contributes to my satisfaction," with a mean of 3.46 (SD=0.53) translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was " The Agri-Tourism Farm Site offers value for money," with a mean of 3.11 (SD=0.53) which was verbally described as "agree." This result indicates that the tourists are highly satisfied with the services provided at the Agri-tourism farm site. The study of Suanmali (2014) further explained the component of the tourism products consisting of attractions, accessibility, environment, and hospitality that are used as indicators for measuring tourists' satisfaction. The service management literature suggests that service quality is an antecedent to tourist satisfaction because the higher service quality indicates the higher tourist satisfaction (Chand and Ashish, 2014).

Table 8 tourists' Behavioral Intention (Loyalty)

Indicators	WM	SD	VD	Rank
1 I consistently prefer to visit the Agri-Tourism Farm Site rather than other tourist attractions.	3.26	0.53	Strongly Agree	3
2 I am a repeat guest at this Farm Site.	2.89	0.75	Agree	10
3 I am more likely to book future visits at Agri-Tourism Farm Site	3.24	0.58	Agree	4
4 I take advantage of the Farm Site's special offer or discounts.	3.18	0.58	Agree	7
5 I follow the Agri- Tourism Farm Site on social media platform.	2.98	0.64	Agree	9
6 I have a history of returning to Agri- Tourism Farm Site multiple times because of their excellent services.	3.13	0.59	Agree	8
7 I have referred others to visits this Farm Site.	3.21	0.56	Agree	5
8 I trust the Farm Site to consistently deliver quality service.	3.28	0.52	Strongly Agree	2

9	I would choose this Farm Site even if the price is slightly higher than competitors.	3.20	0.50	Agree	6
10	I feel a sense of belonging with this Agri-Tourism Farm Site.	3.40	0.59	Strongly Agree	1
Total Weighted Mean		3.18	0.39	Agree	

Legend: 3.25 - 4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.50 - 3.25 Agree; 1.75 - 2.49 Disagree; 1.00 - 1.74 Strongly Disagree

Table 8 illustrates the respondent’s evaluation on the tourist repetitive visits as to tourist loyalty obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.18 (SD=0.39) which was verbally described as "agree." The item got the highest mean was "I feel a sense of belonging with this Agri-Tourism Farm Site," with a mean of 3.40 (SD=0.59) translated as "strongly agree," while the item got the lowest mean was " I am a loyal patron at this Farm Site," with a mean of 3.13 (SD=0.59) which was verbally described as "agree." This result indicates that tourists are satisfied and somehow convinced to revisit the Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija multiple times because of the consistent services and positive experiences even if the price is slightly higher than other competitors. This finding is also evident in similar studies, stating that high service quality indirectly influences tourist loyalty by impacting their satisfaction (Sulkaisi et al., 2021). Aside from that, tourist loyalty involves the intention to return, willingness to recommend, and positive word-of-mouth behavior. Hence, the frequent repeat visits to a specific destination indicates loyalty, suggesting that the tourists’ expectations are satisfied (Sulkaisi et al., 2021).

Significant Relationship between Demographic Profile and Service Quality to Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija

Table 9 significant Relationship Between the Socio-Demographic Profile and Perceived Service Quality

		Responsiveness	Assurance	Tangibles	Empathy	Reliability
Generation	Pearson Correlation	-0.13	-.227*	-.230*	-.272**	-.186*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.156	0.013	0.012	0.003	0.042
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Sex	Pearson Correlation	0.048	.181*	0.161	0.046	0.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.605	0.048	0.079	0.617	0.185
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Civil Status	Pearson Correlation	0.046	-0.031	-0.023	-0.003	0.159
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.621	0.733	0.801	0.975	0.083
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Occupation on	Pearson Correlation	.184*	.240**	.289**	.283**	0.089
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.044	0.008	0.001	0.002	0.332
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Monthly Income	Pearson Correlation	0.018	0.067	-0.096	-0.039	0.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.846	0.468	0.295	0.671	0.792
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Type of Tourist	Pearson Correlation	0.071	0.089	0.019	0.018	0.07
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.032	0.562	0.332	0.574	0.078
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Number of Visit	Pearson Correlation	.196*	0.053	0.089	0.052	0.162
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.032	0.562	0.332	0.574	0.078
	N	120	120	120	120	120
Purpose of Visit	Pearson Correlation	0.136	.226*	.285**	.208*	0.142
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.137	0.013	0.002	0.022	0.121

	N	120	120	120	120	120
Service Aailed	Pearson Correlation	0.14	.191*	.243**	.206*	0.079
	Sig. (2- tailed)	0.126	0.037	0.007	0.024	0.392
	N	120	120	120	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 shows the significant relationship between socio-demographic and service quality to Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija.

Generation was negatively correlated with quality-of- service competitiveness as to assurance ($r=-.227$), tangibles ($r=-.230$), empathy ($r=-.272$) and reliability ($r=-.186$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that the younger than age the respondents are, they most likely have better perceive quality service competitiveness as to assurance, tangibles, empathy and reliability. In other words, younger people tend to rate the service more favorably than older individuals in these dimensions. In Petroman et. al (2015) the educational agritourism serves as an alternative form of mass tourism for unorganized areas. Students can have a better understanding of the life in the rural areas and this can make them want to keep the agriculture culture, perpetuate the traditions. They are given the opportunity to experiment new situations and establish an emotional and direct contact with nature. As for the teaching higher education staff, the benefits will consist in the introduction of the environmentally friendly agricultural products in the faculty, and in teaching the theoretical and practical knowledge needed for the new agricultural technology. Result suggests that as people get older, their perception of service quality in areas like trustworthiness, appearance, care, and reliability tends to decrease. Research by Möhlmann et al. (2015) indicated that younger customers are more likely to have high expectations and perceive service quality more positively, particularly when services are aligned with their needs and preferences. Möhlmann, M., et al. (2015). The Role of Customer Experience in the Relationship between Technology Use and Service Quality. Journal of Service Management.

Occupation was positively correlated with quality-of- service competitiveness as to responsiveness ($r=.184$), assurance ($r=.240$), tangibles ($r=.289$) and empathy ($r=.283$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those students, were most likely have better perceive quality service competitiveness as to responsiveness, assurance, tangibles and empathy. Result suggests that respondents who have utilized the service or product of Agri tourism farm sites are likely to feel that the service staff are knowledgeable, courteous, and capable of inspiring trust and confidence. For example, students who use educational services are likely to perceive the staff as more competent and trustworthy, which enhances their overall experience. Parasuraman et al. (1988) found that these dimensions are critical in influencing customer satisfaction and perceptions of service quality.

Purpose of visit was positively correlated with quality-of-service competitiveness as to assurance ($r=.226$), tangibles ($r=.285$) and empathy ($r=.208$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those respondents with educational experience purpose, were most likely have better perceived quality service competitiveness as to assurance, tangibles and empathy. Result suggests that respondents who visited for educational purpose tend to perceive the service quality more positively in terms of assurance (trust in the service), tangibles (physical aspects like facilities), and empathy (how much the service provider cares). Tangibles involve the physical aspects of the service environment, such as facilities and equipment. According to Guo et al. (2024), studies have shown that assurance significantly influences students' satisfaction and their conceptions of vocational education, highlighting its importance in educational experiences. Additionally, Aly (2022) stated that providing a secure and supportive learning environment is part of assurance.

Service aailed was positively correlated with quality-of-service competitiveness as to assurance ($r=.191$), tangibles ($r=.243$) and empathy ($r=.206$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those respondents who aailed products, were most likely have better perceived quality service competitiveness as to assurance, tangibles and empathy. Result suggests that respondents who buy products are likely to feel that the service staff are knowledgeable, courteous, and capable of inspiring trust and confidence.

For example, students who availed educational services are likely to perceive the staff as more competent and trustworthy, which enhances their overall experience. According to Petroman et. al (2015), the educational agritourism activities for the students with agricultural major envision a thorough understanding of the public function of agriculture and raising awareness or learning the way in which the agricultural products are produced and marketed. Parasuraman et al. (1988) found that these dimensions are critical in influencing customer satisfaction and perceptions of service quality. The correlations you report between service availed and quality dimensions align with these findings, indicating that when customers experience a service, they are likely to rate the service more favorably in these dimensions.

Significant Relationship between Demographic Profile and Repetitive Visit Intention among Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija

Table 10 significant Relationship Between the Socio-Demographic Profile and Repetitive Visit Intention

		Tourist Satisfaction	Tourist Loyalty
Generation	Pearson Correlation	-.260**	-0.037
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.004	0.687
	N	120	120
Sex	Pearson Correlation	-0.018	0.097
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.848	0.294
	N	120	120
Civil Status	Pearson Correlation	0.102	0.128
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.269	0.162
	N	120	120
Occupation	Pearson Correlation	.239**	-0.004
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.009	0.962
	N	120	120
Monthly Income	Pearson Correlation	-0.164	-0.015
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.074	0.873
	N	120	120
Type of Tourist	Pearson Correlation	-0.055	-.271**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.552	0.003
	N	120	120
Number of Visit	Pearson Correlation	0.074	0.167
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.421	0.069
	N	120	120
Purpose of Visit	Pearson Correlation	.259**	0.117
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.004	0.204
	N	120	120
Service Availed	Pearson Correlation	0.121	0.164
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.188	0.073
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 shows the significant relationship between perceived service quality and repetitive visits to Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija.

Generation was negatively correlated with repetitive visits as to tourist satisfaction ($r=-.260$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that the younger the respondents are, they tended to have better repetitive visits in terms of tourist satisfaction. Result suggests that younger tourists tend to return to destinations more often if they have a positive experience, likely because they have the time, flexibility, and

financial means to do so. They may also have a stronger desire for new and exciting experiences, leading them to revisit places they enjoyed. Their level of satisfaction with these places appears to be a driving factor for their decision to return. Xiang et al. (2015) found that younger tourists are not only more likely to be active on social media but are also more likely to revisit destinations if their social media interactions with peers reinforce a positive image of those destinations. Their study suggests that social media provides an avenue for younger travelers to express satisfaction and feel connected to the destinations they visit, fostering a sense of loyalty and increasing the likelihood of repetitive visits.

Occupation was positively correlated with repetitive visits as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.239$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those employed respondents most likely have better repetitive visits in terms of tourist satisfaction. Result suggests that the positive correlation between occupation and repetitive visits in terms of tourist satisfaction suggests that employed individuals are more likely to return to destinations they enjoyed due to factors like financial resources, vacation time, and a greater sense of psychological well-being. These individuals can afford to travel more frequently and revisit destinations, particularly when they are satisfied with their experience. The study suggests that participants belonged in middle class with average monthly income tend to participate as a tourist influenced by the motivation of curiosity and discovery of the destination Karakan et. al (2023). Other factor such as relaxation or revitalization of the body and mind were suggested in the study of Kasim et al. (2013), while in Pesonen’s (2012) study, it suggests that the most important motivation for travel was to get away from routine, experience romance and paying visit to family members.

Types of tourists was negatively correlated with repetitive visits tourists’ loyalty ($r=-.271$) The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those tourists inside Nueva Ecija were most likely have better repetitive visits as to tourist loyalty. Result suggests that the type of tourist visiting Nueva Ecija influenced the tourist loyalty. Local or tourist within Nueva Ecija tend to show stronger loyalty and are more likely to make repeat visits, while a diverse domestic or tourist outside Nueva Ecija is associated with lower loyalty and fewer repeat visits. The findings from Gao et al. (2023) suggest that local tourists are more likely to explore a destination as a regular place to visit and are more inclined to repeat visits, especially when they are encouraged through local promotions and loyalty programs.

Purpose of visit was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.259$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This meant that those respondents whose purpose is for educational experience were most likely have better repetitive visits as to tourist satisfaction. This result suggests that tourists who visit an Agri-tourism farm sites are more likely to return with an educational purpose and their overall satisfaction with the experience is likely higher. In the study of Correia et. al (2015) repeat visits to the same destination are influenced by the length of stay of their previous visits in terms of type of accommodation, travel companion and average spending on previous visit. Furthermore, tourist travelling with family and friends are more likely to choose familiar destinations. On another hand less satisfied tourist may repeat visitation in avoidance to take new decision but they are proven to more likely be loyal to the destination. Moreover, the educational agritourism is a kind of strategy in order to use a farm to attract tourists and students for educative purposes, either for fun or for active involvement in the farm activities or in the rural environment (Petroman, 2016)

Significant Relationship between Perceived Service Quality and Repetitive Visit Intention

Table 11 Significant Relationship Between Perceived Service Quality and Repetitive Visit Intention

Variables		Tourist Satisfaction	Tourist Loyalty
Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	.597**	.321**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0	0
	N	120	120
Tangibles	Pearson Correlation	.546**	.393**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0	0
	N	120	120

Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.634**	.542**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0	0
	N	120	120
Assurance	Pearson Correlation	.740**	.448**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0	0
	N	120	120
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	.756**	.596**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0	0
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 shows the quality-of-service competitiveness in terms of responsiveness was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.597$) and tourist loyalty ($r=.321$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This mean that the greater the quality-of-service competitiveness as to responsiveness, the better the repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. The result suggests that responsiveness—the ability of a service provider to quickly and effectively address tourists' needs, concerns, or requests—plays a critical role in enhancing tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. As a result, tourists are more likely to return to the destination (repetitive visits) when they perceive that their needs are met efficiently. Lashari et al. (2017) explored the role of service responsiveness in creating loyal customers in the hospitality industry. They concluded that responsive service was a key driver in fostering tourist loyalty, which is critical for securing repetitive visits. Tourists who feel their concerns are quickly addressed are more likely to feel loyal to the destination. Moreover, according to the study of Nguyen et. al., (2022), accommodating the tourists immediately affects the satisfaction of tourists and creates a deeper impression on them. This shows that the staff or the management of the destination value their customer's time and can foster lasting relationships.

The quality-of-service competitiveness in terms of assurance was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.546$) and tourist loyalty ($r=.393$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This mean that the greater the quality-of-service competitiveness as to assurance, the better the repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. The result suggests that service assurance is an important component in enhancing the overall tourist experience and can lead to several positive outcomes, including repeated visits and tourist loyalty. Ladhari et al. (2017) found that assurance contributes significantly to tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The more confident tourists feel in the competence of the staff and the service, the more satisfied and loyal they are to the destination.

The quality-of-service competitiveness in terms of tangibles was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.634$) and tourist loyalty ($r=.542$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This mean that the greater the quality-of-service competitiveness as to tangibles, the better the repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. The result suggests that the physical attributes of the service (tangibles) play a crucial role in determining whether tourists will be satisfied with their experience, will return to the destination (repetitive visits), and will remain loyal to the destination. Ladhari et al. (2017) emphasize that tangible elements of a service influence not only satisfaction but also the overall perception of the tourist experience, which in turn affects loyalty and repeat visits. Kim et al. (2013) found that physical evidence (such as cleanliness, facility maintenance, and staff professionalism) strongly impacts tourist loyalty. Tourists who are impressed by the physical attributes of a destination are more likely to feel loyal to the destination and return in the future.

The quality-of-service competitiveness in terms of empathy was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.740$) and tourist loyalty ($r=.448$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This mean that the greater the quality-of-service competitiveness as to empathy, the better the repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. The result suggests that empathy—the ability of service providers to show genuine concern, understanding, and personalized attention to tourists' needs—plays a critical role in

influencing tourists' decisions to return, their satisfaction with the destination, and their loyalty to the place. Ladhari et al. (2017) found that empathy is a crucial factor in determining tourist satisfaction. When tourists feel that the service provider cares about their needs and concerns, they are more likely to be satisfied with the service and their overall experience. Tourists who feel cared for and understood by service providers are more likely to be satisfied with their experiences, to return to the destination, and to develop loyalty towards the destination.

The quality-of-service competitiveness in terms of reliability was positively correlated with repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction ($r=.756$) and tourist loyalty ($r=.596$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected. This mean that the greater the quality-of-service competitiveness as to reliability, the better the repetitive visit as to tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty strongly suggest that reliability is a key determinant of tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and repetitive visits. Tourists value consistency and dependability in the services provided, and this reliability significantly enhances their experience, satisfaction, and likelihood to return. Reliability not only improves the tourist experience but also serves as a powerful tool for building customer loyalty and generating sustained growth for the destination. Parasuraman et al. (1988) identified reliability as one of the key dimensions of service quality. A reliable service leads to higher customer satisfaction because tourists know they can depend on the service to meet their needs consistently. According to the study of Sujatha et. al., (2019), responsiveness is one of the major aspects that form the destination image. Tourists feel helped in handling the situations and problems they encounter in a specific destination. Such actions are admired by visitors, who appreciate being treated with respect and being made to feel at home.

Proposed Quality Service Strategies for Agri-tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija, Philippines

Table 12 Proposed Strategy Plan for Agri-Tourism Farm Sites in Nueva Ecija

Area of Concern	Activities/Strategies	Person Involved	Resources Needed	Expected Outcome
Littleworth accommodate special requests.	Provide training for staff on personalized guest service, focusing on listening to special requests, going the extra mile, and effectively communicating about feasible solutions.	Farm Management/Owner Farm Staff Guests	Financial/Budget for training program	Improved guest satisfaction and staff confidence in handling special requests, leading to enhanced loyalty and positive feedback.
Poor Service Recovery	Train staff to go beyond answering questions by offering additional helpful information or suggesting solutions to guest needs.	Farm Management/Owner Farm Staff	Financial/Budget for training program	Special requests are less likely to be overlooked, and guests feel prioritized, reducing complaints and increasing satisfaction.
Inconsistent Cleanliness	Establish a cleaning schedule for public areas (e.g., restrooms, dining areas, farm paths), specifying cleaning frequency and tasks (e.g., wiping surfaces, checking bathrooms, clearing trash).	Farm Operator Farm Staff Guests	Sufficient cleaning tools/materials/equipment	Clear cleaning schedules reduce complaints about neglected areas, improving the farm's reputation.
Insufficient customer care and concern	Conduct a training workshop on empathy and active listening, including role-playing scenarios for handling customer complaints or minor service issues.	Farm Operator Farm Staff Guests	Financial/Budget for training program	Employees show greater empathy and concern in customer interactions, improving customer trust and satisfaction.

Unhelpful/Uninformed Personnel	Provide detailed training on products, services, and policies, ensuring staff can answer guest questions accurately. Implement a mentoring or buddy system for knowledge sharing and faster skill development.	Farm Management/Owner Farm Staff	Financial/Budget for training program; Human Resource Support	Knowledgeable staff provide faster, more effective responses, improving service efficiency. Mentoring boosts morale and supports less experienced staff.
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CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that the 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija, attract predominantly visitors that are in Generation Z. Most of them are male, with which are more likely to travel due to fewer restrictions and are attracted to challenging adventures compared to females. Single tourists are more interested in gaining new skills or knowledge during their travels. Visitors at Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija are mostly students, who have a monthly allowance of less than P10,000 that visited the farm sites at least twice for the purpose of having educational experience. Students like better-visiting agritourism farms for training because they believe that the experiences surely offer many educational benefits. They gain knowledge and understanding about rural traditions and agricultural heritage, which helps preserve these practices and raise awareness about culture. The fact that this are located within Nueva Ecija, due to its accessibility and convenience, this nature-based tourism destination is frequently visited by local tourists. Since most domestic travelers come from outside of Nueva Ecija, transportation expenses may account for a significant amount of their overall trip budget, particularly for those with limited resources.

In terms of responsiveness in service quality, it shows that visitors are very satisfied with the assistance provided by the staff. When it comes to the response of their staff, who are eager to assist tourists, particularly if they need to know something about the site, having a great relationship with them can improve their experience. Tangibles indicates that visitors of the 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites in Nueva Ecija are quite pleased with the lovely, tranquil natural surroundings. Keeping the tourist destination's natural beauty could attract more visitors. It also demonstrates that tourists are aware of how a place looks, especially in terms of cleanliness; they want to go somewhere that is both aesthetically pleasing and thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. In terms of the reliability of the service quality, it indicates that the Agri-tourism farm sites served exactly what they had promised to the tourists. In terms of Assurance, the Agri-tourism Farm sites assures that they are consistently delivering the quality of services they offer and the quality of the products they produce, which makes the tourist feel more satisfied. And for the empathy of service quality, tourists wanted to receive a sincere and authentic type of service where staff must offer different approaches to different tourists depending on their needs.

The result of the study shows that when the tourists are satisfied with the quality of service they have received, the more likely their intention to revisit the Agri-tourism farm site. Most of the respondents felt that they were satisfied with the services they received when the staff of the Agri-tourism farm sites considered and accommodated their requests and preferences. In terms of the tourist repeat visit intention, it indicates that to be able to have a higher tourist loyalty that gives revisit intention, the tourist must feel that sense of belongingness in the Agri-tourism farm site in which they will freely enjoy the destination without hesitation and judgment. Tourist become loyal when they felt the comfort and convenience like in their own home.

Generation Z, or simply the younger age of the tourists in Agri-tourism farm sites, will most likely experience the quality of service in terms of assurance, tangibles, empathy, and reliability. This could mean that these 6 DOT accredited Agri-tourism farm sites are providing a consistent level of service to the young generation. Students are most likely to experience the quality of service in terms of responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy. Tourists' educational purpose in visiting the Agri-tourism farm sites most likely to perceive service quality in terms of assurance, tangibles, and empathy. The services availed that are most likely to experience the service quality are assurance, tangibles, and empathy.

In terms of tourist satisfaction, there is a repetitive visit intention most likely to the young visitors in Agri-tourism farm sites. They are more satisfied with the services they received, that concludes to their intention in visiting again the farm site. At the same time, employed tourists are most likely to have a revisit intention in terms of satisfaction. Local tourists or tourists within Nueva Ecija tend to revisit the Farm site because of their tourist loyalty.

This study provides a valuable strategy plan for understanding and improving service quality in the Agri-tourism sector of Nueva Ecija. By focusing on the identified five dimensions of service quality (responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance and empathy) and implementing the proposed strategies, Agri-tourism farm sites can enhance their appeal, foster customer loyalty, and contribute to the sustainable development of the industry. The insights gained from this research not only benefit the farm operators but also enrich the overall experience for tourists, ensuring that Agri-tourism remains a vibrant and attractive option for visitors seeking unique and memorable experiences in the Philippines.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, praise and thanks to God, the Almighty, for His blessings throughout this research and for the wisdom He bestowed upon the researcher, as well as the strength, peace of mind, and good health required to complete this research for guiding the researcher through all of the trials and providing with the determination to pursue the research and make this study possible.

The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude for the ongoing support, invaluable advice, and encouragement provided by her adviser and panelists. She deeply appreciates the educational opportunities afforded to her, which have been instrumental in obtaining the necessary data for this research. Their guidance and assistance have played a crucial role in the success of this work, and the researcher is truly thankful for their dedication and contribution to her academic journey.

The researcher also wants to express her gratitude to her family and friends for their unwavering support and insightful comments. She is eternally appreciative of their love, prayers, concern, and the sacrifices they made for her upbringing and future preparation.

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