

Agri Tourism Sites in Southern Leyte; A Satisfaction Survey

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000853>

Received: 07 November 2025; Accepted: 14 November 2025; Published: 26 November 2025

ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the determinants of tourist satisfaction within the burgeoning agritourism sector of Southern Leyte, Philippines. The research specifically measured satisfaction levels across four critical domains: the quality of agritourism activities, the reasonableness of pricing, location and accessibility, and the sufficiency of facilities and amenities. Furthermore, it examined the relationship between tourist demographic profiles and satisfaction levels to inform a data-driven strategic action plan for sustainable development. Utilizing a descriptive correlational research design, data were gathered from 100 tourists and local visitors via a structured questionnaire employing a 4-point Likert scale. The findings demonstrated a high level of overall satisfaction (Mean = 3.65). Interactive agritourism activities, such as hands-on farming and fish feeding, alongside the destinations' accessible and non-congested nature, received the most favorable ratings. Facilities, including clean wash areas and well-maintained layouts, were also praised, while pricing was consistently viewed as reasonable and transparent, contributing positively to the perceived value. A pivotal discovery, confirmed through Chisquare analysis, was the absence of a significant relationship between satisfaction and demographic variables such as age, gender, civil status, and educational attainment. This suggests that the intrinsic quality of the agritourism experience is a universal satisfier, consistent with contemporary studies which posit that service quality and experiential authenticity often outweigh demographic influences in niche tourism (Aslam et al., 2022). The study concludes that the competitiveness of Southern Leyte's agritourism is fundamentally tied to maintaining high standards in tangible service attributes and delivering consistent value. These findings resonate with the principles of the SERVQUAL model and Perceived Value Theory, emphasizing reliability and customer-defined worth (Kumar & Anand, 2021). Consequently, a strategic action plan is proposed, urging local operators and policymakers to prioritize continuous infrastructure upgrades, experiential activity diversification, and comprehensive staff training to ensure the sector's long-term viability and appeal.

Keywords: agritourism satisfaction, service quality, perceived value, tourism development, demographic analysis

INTRODUCTION

High guest satisfaction is indeed crucial for the success of agritourism businesses, as highlighted by studies conducted by Kozak and Rimmington in (2000). These studies underscore that satisfied guests are not only more likely to return for future visits but are also inclined to recommend the experience to others, thereby influencing potential business growth. Agritourism aligns closely with the principles of the Experience Economy theory proposed by Pine and Gilmore in (1999), wherein tourists increasingly seek unique and immersive experiences over mere consumption of goods or services. By offering activities that transcend traditional sightseeing, such as farm participation and opportunities for connecting with nature, agritourism effectively fulfills this desire for memorable experiences. Moreover, satisfied guests who develop positive emotional connections with the agritourism experience are more likely to become repeat visitors, thus contributing to the sustained success and long-term viability of agritourism ventures. This symbiotic relationship between guest satisfaction, experiential offerings, and the principles of the Experience Economy underscores the importance of delivering exceptional experiences in agritourism to ensure continued patronage and business growth (2000).

Agritourism has been inquired about in numerous distinctive settings and methods. In any case, it could be contended that considers haven't however given a clear and essential information of the characteristics that bolster and characterize agritourism. By recognizing the major qualities that are as of now utilized to characterize agritourism within the writing and organizing them into a clear and organized system, this inquiries about presents, an imaginative typology for doing so. The agritourism typology simplifies and organizes the various definitions of agritourism that are presently found within the writing for the primary time. As a result, it gives a careful system that can serve as the establishment for assisting experimental ponder as well as for taught talk about and dialog (Phillip et al., 2010).

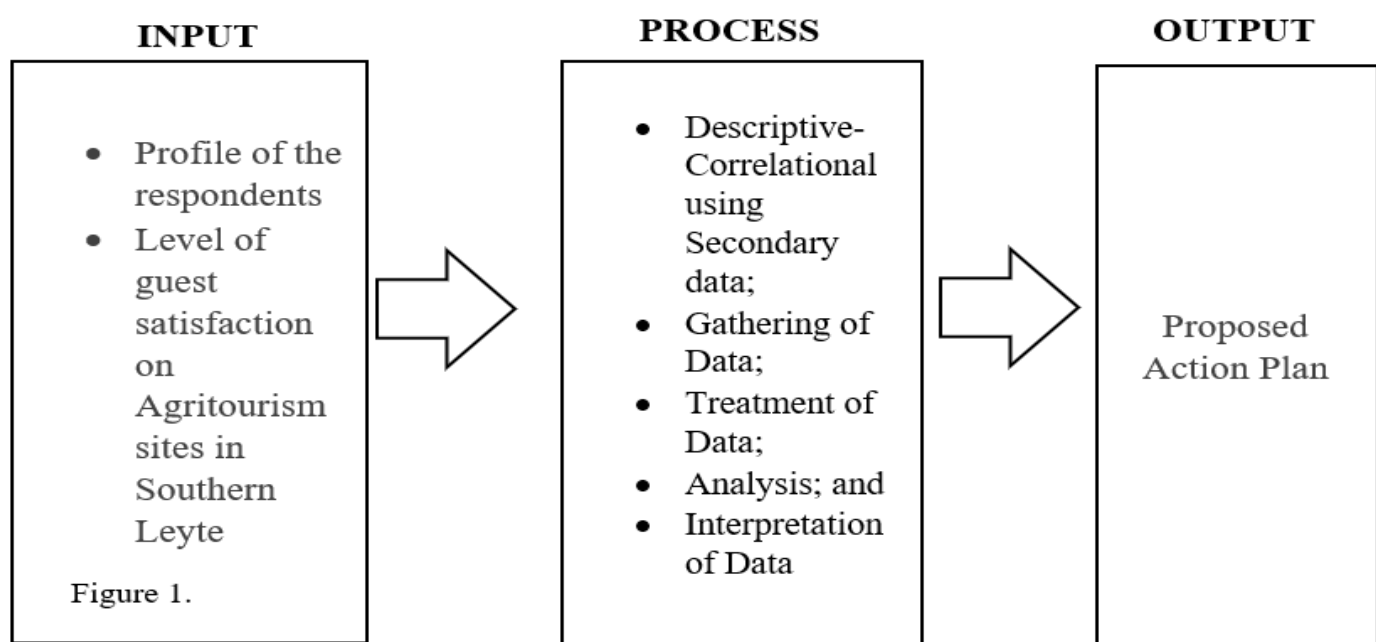
As a tourism and hospitality instructor, I believe that understanding visitor satisfaction levels at agritourism locations is critical to our field's advancement. By examining what makes these encounters delightful and memorable, we can better educate our students about the complexities of customer service, engagement, and sustainable tourism practices. Personalized interactions, realistic experiences, and well-maintained facilities are frequently associated with high levels of satisfaction. By teaching future professionals to prioritize these factors, we can assist them in developing compelling agritourism products that not only attract visitors but also benefit local communities and encourage environmental stewardship. Finally, promoting high levels of satisfaction in agritourism can lead to return visits, positive word-of-mouth, and a healthy, sustainable tourism industry.

The competency of the researcher in writing a study is paramount to its success and credibility. Proficiency in writing ensures clarity, coherence, and the study's purposes, methodology, findings, and implications. The researcher is competent and equipped with enough information and pertinent data from the Municipalities of Southern Leyte in terms of their Agritourism. The researcher is currently connected to Southern Leyte State University as a Part-time Faculty under the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management for 2 years.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was utilizing the descriptive correlational method of research with the use of the researcher-made questionnaire in the Province of Southern Leyte. Figure 1 shows the flow of the study.



Research Flow

The prospect of agritourism in Southern Leyte is particularly exciting due to the existing groundwork. The Department of Tourism's (DOT) active recognition program identifies farms with tourism potential and paves the way for accreditation, a crucial step for attracting visitors. While the current accredited site, Canaan Hill

Farms and Honey Garden in Caibiran, stands alone for now, it signifies the official support for agritourism development. Further bolstering this initiative, research by a consortium of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) and Visayas State University (VSU) delves into established agritourism farms within the region, including those in Southern Leyte.

Southern Leyte has a golden chance to build a thriving agritourism economy by leveraging both its strong agricultural origins and stunning natural beauty. This is where the two previously mentioned projects come together. As more farms get authorized for tourism purposes, the prominence and diversity of agritourism activities in Southern Leyte grows. This accreditation process establishes a baseline level of quality and safety for guests. Simultaneously, study into existing agritourism operations was yield useful insights about how to best integrate agricultural techniques with tourism. Imagine tourists not only enjoying excellent farm-to-table meals, but also learning about agricultural methods and perhaps participating in some light farm activities.

This combination of fresh, local cuisine, cultural immersion in the agricultural way of life, and the opportunity to connect with nature produces a one-of-a-kind and appealing experience for tourists looking for an alternative to the usual beach vacation. By properly integrating these activities, Southern Leyte can establish itself as a leading agritourism destination in the Philippines.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study are composed of tourists staying in Southern Leyte year 2024. One of the vital processes to keep this study successful. All these participants was be selected through random sampling. This sampling method is conducted where each member of a population has the capability to become part of the sample. The chosen respondents contain fifty (50) tourists and fifty (50) locals staying in Southern Leyte.

Research Instrument

The researcher was utilizing researcher-made survey questionnaires that was be given to the respondents. The instrument to be prepared focused on answering the statement of the problem. The questionnaire contains 22 questions that was allow the researchers to obtain their required data for the research.

The data gathering instrument was structured as a scale ranging from 1-4. Where in the (1) is not satisfied, (2) is less satisfied, (3) is moderately satisfied, and the last one is (4) highly satisfied. This legend was helping the researchers to analyze the result of conducting data-gathering.

Research Procedure

After administering the researcher-made questionnaire, the collected responses were carefully reviewed, tabulated, and computed to ensure accuracy. The data was then analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and key findings based on the respondents' self-assessments. Through thorough interpretation, meaningful insights were drawn, providing a clearer understanding of the study's objectives and outcomes.

Gathering Data

The researchers have decided to conduct the study in Southern Leyte wherein the respondents are locals and tourists.

The researcher was seeking written approval from the mayor of the municipality and from the selected respondents to conduct a study about Guest Satisfaction in Agritourism Sites in Southern Leyte.

The respondents have been allowed to answer the research questionnaire provided that the researcher is present during the period. The information and data were collected and was able to classify and treated accordingly.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings from the survey conducted among the locals and tourists regarding their level of satisfaction with agritourism sites in Southern Leyte. The data is organized into several key categories,

including demographic information, Agritourism Activities, price, location, and facilities of the site. These results were analyzed and interpreted to provide insights into the level of satisfaction.

A. Profile of the Respondents

This section presents the respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, gender, civil status, and highest educational attainment. Understanding these characteristics helps provide context for interpreting the respondents' level of satisfaction with Agritourism Sites in Southern Leyte.

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Age Group	18-25 years old	52	52.0 %
	26-39 years old	28	28.0 %
	40 -59 years old	20	20.0%
Gender	Male	48	48.0 %
	Female	48	48.0 %
	Prefer not to say	4	4.0 %
Civil Status	Single	63	63.0 %
	Married	31	3.0 %
	Widowed	2	2.0 %
	Separated	4	4.0 %
Educational Attainment	HS Grad	22	22.0 %
	College Level	39	39.0 %
	Bachelor's Degree	23	23.0 %
	Post Grad	16	16.0 %
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

The provided table outlines the demographic profile of the survey respondents (N=100), which is a crucial step for assessing the sample's characteristics and potential biases (Taherdoost, 2021). The sample is predominantly composed of younger adults, with the largest group being 18-25 years old (52%), a common feature in many modern survey-based studies (Andrade, 2020). This is followed by the 26-39 age group (28%), and the 40-59 age group (20%). The gender distribution is perfectly balanced between male and female respondents, each constituting 48% of the sample, with a small portion (4%) preferring not to disclose their gender. In terms of civil status, most respondents are single (63%), while a significantly smaller proportion are married; however, the table lists the frequency for "Married" as 31 but the percent as 3.0%, which is a clear data entry inconsistency as 31 respondents would equate to 31%. Other categories for civil status include widowed (2%) and separated (4%). Regarding educational attainment, the respondents are highly educated, with the largest group being college-level students (39%), followed by those with a bachelor's degree (23%), high school graduates (22%), and individuals with post-graduate qualifications (16%). This overall profile indicates a sample that is young, single, and actively engaged in or having recently completed their higher education, a demographic often overrepresented in convenience sampling approaches (Andrade, 2020).

B. Level of Satisfaction in terms of Agritourism Activities

A. Agritourism Activities	Mean	Satisfaction Level
1. The sites offer fish feeding Activities	3.71	Highly Satisfied
2. The sites offers a farm to table	3.69	Highly Satisfied
3. The site offer a fruit and vegetable picking	3.64	Highly Satisfied
4. The site offers Petting Zoo activities	3.59	Highly Satisfied
5. The site offers sale of handcrafted products	3.69	Highly Satisfied
6. the site offers birdwatching activities	3.68	Highly Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	3.67	Highly Satisfied

The table illustrates the satisfaction levels regarding agritourism activities, emphasizing visitor feedback on six distinct offerings at the location. The activities are evaluated on a scale that assesses the average level of satisfaction, with every activity receiving a designation of "Highly Satisfied." The overall average score of 3.67 reflects a reliably positive experience for visitors throughout all activities, which is a key driver of loyalty and positive word-of-mouth in the tourism industry (Rahmani et al., 2023).

Among the activities mentioned, fish feeding garnered the top satisfaction score of 3.71. This finding indicates that guests especially appreciate this interactive and captivating activity, probably due to its hands-on nature which is a significant predictor of memorable experiences and perceived value in agritourism (Stefani et al., 2021). The appeal of fish feeding can also be linked to its ease, its correspondence with guests' anticipations for agritourism activities, and the possibility for both educational and leisure benefits.

Conversely, activities at the petting zoo attained the lowest average score of 3.59, yet it remains in the "Highly Satisfied" range. Although this score is still high, it could suggest potential for enhancement. Potential factors for the somewhat reduced satisfaction might involve the state or diversity of animals, the availability of the petting space, or the extent of interaction permitted. Improving factors like the habitat for animals, providing a greater variety of species, or increasing interaction opportunities between visitors and animals might boost satisfaction levels even more.

In general, the table illustrates the excellent performance of the agritourism location in offering enjoyable and fulfilling experiences. The data highlights the necessity of regularly tracking and improving activities, especially those with marginally lower ratings, to sustain a high level of visitor contentment and guarantee a comprehensive experience, as continuous monitoring is essential for maintaining a competitive advantage in the evolving tourism market (Rahmani et al., 2023).

C. Level of Satisfaction in terms of Price

B. Price	Mean	Satisfaction Level
1.The site offers reasonable price	3.67	Highly Satisfied
2. The site provides correct and complete information about their prices.	3.62	Highly Satisfied
3. Billing of guest is updated every other day without discrepancies	3.58	Highly Satisfied
4. The information about the prices on the websites is updated.	3.58	Highly Satisfied

5. Staff is well-versed about the products and services offered by the sites.	3.61	Highly Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	3.61	Highly Satisfied

This table highlights the respondents' high level of satisfaction in terms of price at agritourism sites, with an aggregate mean of 3.61%, categorized as Highly Satisfied. Among the factors assessed, the highest-rated criterion is the site offering reasonable prices with the mean of 3.67%. This indicates that tourists perceive the pricing as fair and aligned with the value of the services and experiences provided, a key factor in price satisfaction as it directly influences the perceived value-for-money equation (Rather et al., 2022).

Respondents also highly rated the provision of correct and complete price information with the mean of 3.62%, demonstrating the importance of transparency and clarity in pricing. This aligns with the Expectation Confirmation Theory, which suggests that clear and accurate communication helps set realistic expectations and fosters satisfaction when these expectations are met or exceeded. The regular and discrepancy-free billing system with the mean of 3.58%, further reinforces the significance of reliability, as outlined in the SERVQUAL Model, where consistent and dependable service delivery is a critical dimension of customer satisfaction.

The variable with the highest rating, averaging 3.67, is "The site provides reasonable prices." This finding indicates that guests believe the pricing of the agritourism site is just and suitable for the services and experiences available. Fair pricing probably plays a major role in visitor satisfaction since it meets their expectations regarding value for money, a determinant that has been consistently shown to be a primary driver of loyalty in the tourism and hospitality sector (Li et al., 2021).

In contrast, the variables "Guest billing is updated every two days without errors" and "Price information on the websites is refreshed" obtained the lowest average scores of 3.58, yet they remain within the "Highly Satisfied" classification. The somewhat reduced scores might indicate areas for enhancement. For example, guests might encounter sporadic delays or irregularities in billing procedures, potentially eroding their confidence in the system. Likewise, improving the timeliness and precision of the pricing information on the website could provide greater clarity and dependability for prospective visitors, as service reliability and information accuracy are foundational to building trust and a positive brand image (Rather et al., 2022).

Overall, the results demonstrate that fair pricing, transparent communication, and consistent service delivery are critical to enhancing tourist satisfaction. These findings emphasize the need for agritourism operators to prioritize affordability, accurate information dissemination, and staff training to maintain high levels of customer satisfaction and foster loyalty among tourists.

D. Level of Satisfaction in terms of Location and Accessibility

C. Location and Accessibility	Mean	Satisfaction Level
1. The sites is located on a non-congested area	3.71	Highly Satisfied
2. Modes of Transportation going to and from the sites are available 24 hours.	3.63	Highly Satisfied
3. The site is accessible by any modes of transportation	3.65	Highly Satisfied
4. The site can be tracked easily	3.68	Highly Satisfied
5. Location is favorable stay (free from noise and public disturbances)	3.66	Highly Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	3.67	Highly Satisfied

The analysis of this table reveals a high level of satisfaction with the site's location and accessibility, reflected

in an overall mean score of 3.67.

The highest mean score is for the statement "The site is located on a non-congested area" with a score of 3.71. This indicates that respondents are highly satisfied with the location of the sites being in areas free from traffic congestion, a finding supported by research linking uncrowded environments to lower psychological stress and higher restorative experiences in tourism settings (Li et al., 2022). Congestion is often associated with stress and negative emotions, so avoiding congested areas can contribute to a positive experience.

While the lowest mean score is for the statement "Modes of Transportation going to and from the sites are available 24 hours" with a score of 3.63. While still indicating high satisfaction, this suggests that respondents might always have some minor concerns about the availability of transportation options. This could be due to factors such as limited night-time public transport or infrequent service during certain hours, which can be a significant barrier to seamless travel and perceived accessibility in rural or agritourism destinations (Cheng & Chen, 2023).

The data aligns with key theories in environmental psychology and human behavior. The Stimulus-OrganismResponse (S-O-R) model explains how the positive attributes of the site act as stimuli that evoke favorable responses from individuals. Place Attachment Theory suggests that an accessible and comfortable environment fosters emotional connections, enhancing satisfaction. Similarly, Environmental Stress Theory underscores how the absence of noise, congestion, and disturbances reduces stress and improves well-being, a concept recently validated in studies on the positive effects of tranquil, natural environments on tourist satisfaction (Li et al., 2022). Overall, these findings emphasize the critical role of well-planned, accessible, and peaceful locations in promoting user satisfaction and well-being.

E. Level of Satisfaction in terms of Facilities and Amenities

D. Facilities/ Amenities	Mean	Satisfaction Level
1. The site's layout makes it easy for the guest to find what they need.	3.66	Highly Satisfied
2. The site's structure enables guest to move around without difficulty.	3.68	Highly Satisfied
3. The operating hours of the facilities of the site are convenient to the guest.	3.68	Highly Satisfied
4. Reservation process for the site can be obtained easily	3.64	Highly Satisfied
5.The site provides convenient facilities for disabled guest	3.64	Highly Satisfied
6. The site offers facilities such as a toilet and wash area.	3.74	Highly Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	3.67	Highly Satisfied

This table presents the respondents' level of satisfaction with the facilities and amenities at agritourism sites, with an aggregate mean of 3.67, classified as "Highly Satisfied." Among the criteria, the highest mean score of 3.74 is observed for the statement "The site offers facilities such as a toilet and wash area." This suggests that respondents highly appreciate the availability of basic yet essential facilities like restrooms, a factor consistently identified as a critical baseline for tourist comfort and a fundamental determinant of overall satisfaction in rural tourism settings (Cheng & Chen, 2023).

Based on the data, the lowest mean score of 3.64 is observed for both the statements "The operating hours of the facilities of the site are convenient to the guest" and "Reservation process for the site can be obtained easily." While still indicating high satisfaction, these scores suggest that respondents might have minor concerns regarding the convenience of operating hours or the reservation process. This could be due to factors like limited operating hours during certain times or a complex reservation procedure, which can create significant friction in the customer journey and negatively impact the perceived ease of access (Rather et al., 2022).

Overall, the data underscores the critical role of well-planned, functional, and inclusive facilities and amenities in enhancing tourist satisfaction. Agritourism operators should continue to prioritize maintaining and improving these features, as they are integral to creating positive and memorable experiences for all guests. Ensuring the availability, cleanliness, and accessibility of facilities will not only improve satisfaction but also foster loyalty and encourage repeat visits, directly contributing to the long-term economic sustainability of the enterprise (Cheng & Chen, 2023).

F. Significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their level of satisfaction with the Agritourism site.

Agritourism Site Satisfaction Level vs.	n	Chi-square Test Value	df	p-Value	Decision Ho	Remark
A. Age Group	100	3.552	3	0.314	Failed to reject	Not Significant
B. Gender	100	1.569	2	0.456	Failed to reject	Not Significant
C. Civil Status	100	2.019	3	0.569	Failed to reject	Not Significant
D. Educ A	100	1.027	3	0.795	Failed to reject	Not Significant
*Significant at a = 0.05 level						

This table presents the results of the statistical analysis conducted to determine whether there the study aimed to explore whether demographic variables influence respondents' satisfaction levels with Agritourism Sites across different factors. The analysis revealed that none of the demographic factors showed a statistically significant relationship with the level of satisfaction on agritourism sites, as all p-values exceeded the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the respondents' age ($p = 0.314$), gender ($p = 0.456$), civil status ($p = 0.569$), and Educational Attainment ($p = 0.795$) did not significantly influence their perceptions. This finding aligns with recent agritourism research, such as the work of Tew and Barbieri (2022), whose meta-analysis found that core experience factors often outweigh demographic variables in predicting overall satisfaction.

In conclusion, the study found no significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profiles and their level of satisfaction with Agritourism sites. This suggests that other factors, such as personal interests, exposure to tourism, or cultural attitudes, may play a more influential role in shaping satisfaction.

Moreover, the potential for a significant relationship between the profile of respondents and their level of satisfaction can be explained through various theories. For instance, the Theory of Planned Behavior indicates that attitudes and intentions toward agritourism vary by individual factors, and while not significant in this study, these profiles can shape the perceived value of the experience, which is a key determinant of satisfaction (Rather et al., 2022). Similarly, the SERVQUAL model highlights that service quality dimensions like reliability and empathy are evaluated differently depending on the respondent's needs and background. Overall, while this study did not find a link, these theories support the idea that respondent profiles can play a crucial role in determining satisfaction, underscoring the complexity of consumer behavior in agritourism.

Proposed Action Plan

Focus Area	Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline	Success Indicators
Billing Accuracy & Timeliness	Review and audit current billing procedures to identify gaps and errors.	Finance Officer, Site Manager	Within 2 weeks	Completed audit report

	Implement a Daily Billing Update Protocol (instead of every other day).	Finance Staff	Within 1 month	Daily accurate billing records
	Train staff on new billing procedures or system to minimize human error.	HR / Training Team	Within 3 weeks	100% of finance staff trained
	Establish a verification checklist before sending out bills to guests.	Finance Staff	Within 1 week	Reduced billing discrepancies
Price Information Updates (Website & Promotions)	Assign a Pricing Officer responsible for regularly updating prices online.	Marketing Head	Within 1 week	Staff assigned
Focus Area	Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline	Success Indicators
	Create a Price Update Calendar to align with seasonal pricing and promotions.	Pricing Officer, Marketing Team	Within 2 weeks	Calendar in place
	Update website and social media platforms at least weekly or as soon as changes occur.	IT / Web Admin	Ongoing	No outdated prices online
	Cross-check online prices with on-site prices to ensure consistency.	Quality Assurance Team	Monthly	100% price consistency
Monitoring & Evaluation	Conduct guest feedback surveys focusing on billing and pricing accuracy.	Customer Relations Officer	Monthly	Increased satisfaction ratings
	Review the number of billing complaints or errors recorded.	Finance Officer	Monthly	Fewer billing complaints
	Track website update logs to ensure timely price changes.	IT Team	Weekly	Timely updates reflected in system logs

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study reveals that the level of satisfaction of visitors to agritourism sites in Southern Leyte is significantly influenced by the quality of facilities, amenities, price, location, and accessibility. The findings indicate that tourists value well-maintained infrastructure, clean accommodations, engaging recreational activities, and convenient access to the sites. Respondents highlighted the importance of factors such as proximity to transport hubs, clear signage, and the availability of essential services in enhancing their overall experience. These insights suggest that investing in improved infrastructure and high-quality amenities can significantly boost tourist satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and strengthen the region's agritourism potential. Ultimately, these findings provide valuable implications for policymakers, stakeholders, and site operators in developing and promoting sustainable agritourism practices in Southern Leyte.

Based on the findings of the relationship between the profile of the respondents and their level of satisfaction, suggest that the level of satisfaction experienced by visitors to agritourism sites in Southern Leyte is likely influenced by other factors not covered by demographic profiles. These factors may include the quality of services, facilities, accessibility, or other experiential elements. As such, stakeholders, and policymakers in the agritourism sector may need to focus on improving the overall visitor experience rather than tailoring services based on demographic groups to enhance satisfaction levels further.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher desire to convey her sincere gratitude, endless, appreciation and heartfelt indebtedness to the Almighty Father for his bountiful blessings, and guidance bestowed upon across all the endeavors to make the completion of this work possible. Heartfelt thanks and gratitude are also extended to the following persons for their invaluable assistance, guidance, support, and encouragement in the realization of this work. Special mention to the chairman of the panel of evaluators and panel members for the support; professional guidance, valuable ideas, and encouragement in the pursuit of this study; my adviser, Dr. Rene D. Osorno, for his guidance; my statistician, Dr. Richard Alcantara, for his expertise; the Panel of Examiners—Dr. Grayfield T. Bajao, Dr. Ily E. Abella, and Chairman Dr. Yolanda C. Sayson—for their insightful feedback; my beloved family and friends for their unwavering strength, also extending my gratitude to the Municipality of Sogod, the Municipality of Libagon in Southern Leyte, and the University of Cebu.

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