

Agritourism Experiential Learning: The Case of B.S. Tourism and B.S. Hospitality Management in a Philippine State University

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Abstract: Educational tourism in agriculture or agritourism is gaining popularity as experiential learning among the student market segment. While agritourism usually takes place in an agricultural environment and typically includes recreational and educational components, a current deficiency of study explains students' understanding of such a special-interest form of tourism. The present study examines the potential power of experiential consumption dimensions on explaining students' knowledge, demand, and interest for agritourism integration in teaching and learning. Using google forms, the proponents utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design to conveniently sample six hundred twenty-two students under the tourism and hospitality management curricular programs. From the empirical findings derived from descriptive statistics, students confirm their utmost awareness of agritourism's economic significance, particularly in providing job opportunities to farm household members. They also recognize the social relevance of agritourism to share agricultural heritage and rural lifestyles with visitors. On the environmental implication, the promotion of ecological conservations and increase of agricultural production are also appreciated. Picking fruits and vegetables, feeding animals, and tree planting emerge as the

most distinguished demands for agritourism experiences. Students express enthusiasm to participate in workshops and seminars, do volunteer work, have educational tours, and engage in community and outreach programs in an agritourism setting for experiential learning. Experiential activities using the farm's products as the core theme anchors could enhance students' interactions. The study findings can be relevant inputs for curriculum planners, teachers, farm owners, tourism developers, and policy-makers.

Key-Words: - Students, Agritourism, Experiential Learning, BS Tourism, BS Hospitality, State University

I. INTRODUCTION

Travelers' desires for agritourism could result in a \$62.98 billion market worldwide by 2027, based on a new study published by Allied Market Research [1]. The 2021 study estimated a global agritourism market with a compound annual growth rate of 13.4% from 2021 to 2027. Analysts point to the growing demand for family-oriented recreation, local food, and farm experiences. Add to those factors younger travelers' increased interest in the farm and rural activities. Agritourism is described as leisure, pleasure, or educational visit to a working agricultural area [2, 3]. Villa et al. [4] noted that the students should be aware of the agritourism industry because of its economic and sustainable benefits. The agritourism business has many distinct niches,

and it currently includes many micro-niche markets that complement other tourism sources [5].

As documented in the ASEAN Economic Integration Brief [6], the Philippines is one of the fastest developing economies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, having a standard growth rate of 6.3% from 2010–2016 and a 6.7% growth rate in 2017. It is an agricultural country with 47% of its agricultural land area; OECD [7] presented a sectoral expansion of 2.87% in the third quarter of 2019, comprising primarily crops and livestock, poultry, and fisheries [8]. With the Department of Tourism (DOT) statistics, the country's tourism policy and implementation arm, more than 170 farm sites have been accredited [9]. They are primarily concentrated in the Luzon area, the Philippines' most significant island in its northern part.

Agritourism is also perceived to offer a lot of promise to enhance and develop a country's economy. Farmers understand the importance of agritourism in providing various socio-cultural, environmental, and economic advantages to society [10]. If correctly organized, agritourism offers benefits such as revenue-generating, job possibilities, and ecological education [11]. According to some, agritourism may employ family members or serve as a farm succession plan [12, 13, 14]. Agritourism is also a way of increasing the incomes and economic viability of small farms and rural communities [15]. Therefore, it appears that marketing this sort of tourism is particularly suited in underdeveloped nations.

Furthermore, connecting tourism and agriculture can relieve poverty by combining in-demand labor-intensive products and services with the capabilities of disadvantaged communities [16]. He also added that the industry might also stimulate local agricultural development, which may increase tourist access to local foods. It is recognized as a form of niche tourism as it addresses a handful of visitors; it is perceived to have the potential to be regarded as part of schools' curriculum culture [17]. It can help educate those preparing for the agricultural field and those seeking knowledge of the rural areas and are interested in the traditional

rustic art and culture [17]. Furthermore, agritourism offers tourists educational opportunities that connect them to beautiful landscapes and local community history. These activities can also help educate the public about the industry's contribution to the local quality of life [18]. It is considered a type of niche tourism considering that it addresses a handful of visitors; it is perceived to have the potential to be regarded as part of schools' curriculum culture [17]. It can help educate those preparing for the agricultural field and those seeking knowledge of the rural areas and are interested in the traditional rustic art and culture [17].

Furthermore, agritourism offers tourists educational opportunities that connect them to beautiful landscapes and local community history. These activities can also help educate the public about the industry's contribution to the local quality of life [18]. Students gained the opportunity for self-examination and defining their professional identity within their agriculture majors through student exchange programs conducted with another memorandum of understanding (MOU) institution [19].

UNESCO [20] stresses the positive link amongst education and innovation as a leading agent of sustainable progress in green economies, where novelty, green skills, and the capacity to survive with transformation will be elemental forces of each economic sector. In this way, the great challenge of the 21st century for institutions of higher education is to train future professional students capable of acting in favor of S.D. [21]. This challenge is even more significant in higher education tourism institutions because the importance of sustainability is particularly a fundamental necessity in tourism [21]. Several programs aim to educate the citizens of tomorrow at a young age, given that early intervention is essential to learning trajectories [22] that determine future engagement in several settings, including agriculture. Ohe and Ciani [23] claimed that "educational tourism in agriculture has gained worldwide popularity as an emerging market segment of agritourism or rural tourism, along with rising demands for experience-oriented tourism."

Previous studies have consistently shown that agritourism operators are strongly motivated to educate visitors about the agricultural system [24, 25]. However, there are limited studies that explore students' interest in experiential learning of agritourism that can be an input in the curriculum [18].

II. PROBLEM FORMULATION

The proponents intend to investigate the knowledge, perceived importance, demand, and interest for agritourism experiential learning among college students taking B.S. Tourism Management and B.S. Hospitality Management programs. This study anticipates that the experiential benefits serve as the primary point or propelling force to enhance students' professional identity and support agritourism and career plans. Furthermore, as these students have a high potential to choose their careers in the agritourism sector and a growing market niche, the study's findings can be relevant inputs for curriculum planners, teachers, farm owners, and other relevant stakeholders. At present, agritourism as a significant or professional subject has not been included in the curricular programs of B.S. Tourism Management and B.S. Hospitality Management.

A. Literature Reviews

Agritourism and Education

Agritourism, otherwise known as farm tourism as defined by DOT, is a type of tourism activity situated in a rural farm setting comprising nursing farm animals, planting, harvesting, and processing farm products. It contains attractions, activities, services, amenities, and other site provisions to endorse recognition of the local culture, heritage, and traditions through individual contact with the residents [65]. Agritourism combines agriculture with tourism, making an ideal environment for eco-education, with the same criteria as educational tourism. Educational tourism in agriculture develops as emerging markets search for experience-based tourism [26]. Farm owners started to look for businesses outside agriculture to sustain their financial burden by offering recreation to farm visitors [27]. Agritourism utilizes the rural view, natural ecology, and environmental resources. It incorporates agriculture and forestry, fishery and ranching production, agricultural activities, farmland culture, plus farmland lifestyle. The Agricultural Marketing Resource Center (MRC) describes agritourism as experiencing a functional farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or

agribusiness venture for leisure, education, or farm activities [28]. The industry comprises food service, accommodations, and leisure resulting from farm diversification to incorporate leisure and recreational activities for visitors [29]. Agritourism or rural tourism offers farming learning experiences for knowledge creation about the environmental significance (land preservation, landscape formation, and biodiversity), cultural and social dimensions, and recreational and educational functions of agriculture with varied activities [30].

Numerous investigations indicated the relationship between educational tourism and agritourism citing cases in Japan [24], Poland [31], Nepal [32], and Indonesia [33] to describe agritourism demand by educational tour packages (educational activities and services) on agritourism farms in the existing tourism market. For example, in Japan, farmers crafted various activities at educational dairy farms to create greater appreciation through social learning ventures, which removed farmers from seclusion and offered the opportunity to build stronger connections to the community, leading to its sustainable development [34].

As a background, agritourism connects agriculture, recreation and leisure, and social renovation that integrates the supply and demand sides of farm-centered leisure and tourism through diversification, growth of the community, and environmental sustainability. Essential attributes include social skills and scenic, clean, and attractive farm activities necessary to transform farms into ideal destinations.

Approximately 24.5 million tourists participated in rural tourism events, resulting in USD 693 million in revenue in 2015. Towards the end of 2018, about 93 leisure farm areas in Taiwan attracted more than 27.6 million local visitors and 0.61 million international visitors and generated 3700 relevant jobs and 3.72 billion USD [35]. Resultantly, agritourism assists rural communities to develop economic effects (e.g., job opportunities, extra income, and retail growth), recreational effects (mental and physical health), and educational effects (village cultural and heritage teachings). In addition, educational or cultural activities in rural areas offer

rich experiences for learning agricultural approaches in farm product production (crops, fruits, vegetables), indicating that rural cultural heritage is a significant sector in agritourism [27].

The Philippines excels in both industries such as agriculture and tourism and contributes its potential to become an agritourism destination. Recognized as one of the Top 8 Agritourism Destinations in the World in 2018 and joining other countries such as Taiwan, Hawaii, Tuscany, Grenada, Mallorca, California, and Brazil, the country stands because of the many agritourism sites, huge plantations located across its vast archipelago, exotic tropical fruits and English-speaking population [36].

Experiential Learning

The usual teaching strategy involves teachers providing students with knowledge [37], but students have difficulty recognizing meanings [38]. Resultantly, researchers emphasize the need for incorporating participation and experiences in students' activities and education (Association for Experiential Education [39]. Hawkins and Weiss [40] and Bower [41] believe that crafting varied teaching strategies permit students for interactive learning, resulting in recognition, understanding, and developing relevant competencies.

Dewey, in 1938 developed the theoretical basis of learning-by-doing, followed by Kolb, Lewin, and Piaget [42]. Further arguments of Dale and McCarthy [43] reveal that learning methods are composed of passive and active learning. Passive learning comprises texts, pictures, exhibitions, and observations performed in the process. Active learning accounts for learning activities as drama experience, design experience, and other direct learning methods involving expertise with an objective. Finally, experiential learning is outlined as proposed by Jackson and Caffarella [44] of (1) learners' goals, (2) learning concepts, (3) learning activities and methods, and (4) assessment criteria.

Further, Boyatzis and Kolb [45] suggested the stages of experiential learning comprising of experiencing set→reflecting step→generalizing stage→applying stage. Consequently, these four stages can continuously progress at any given time,

thus affecting their future experience in a rising and twisted process [38]. Students derive these learning experiences through self-observation, reflection, and summarization, leading them to pursue the next desired experience.

The previous findings of Ettengerd [46] revealed that primary tourism students travel to destinations for observation, consumption of tourism products, and eventually evaluating the local marketing and management strategies. Schreck, Weibach, and Reitsma [47] confirmed that students taking hospitality and tourism might have skills deficiency at the start of their career, resulting from passive learning or the lack of functional activities to obtain competencies. Other researchers [48, 49, 50] also confirm the application of experiential learning theory to design curricula. Utilizing course modules help students promote employability in tourism [51] formed by the course contents and cooperation. These studies emphasized hands-on group cooperation, written tests, personal interviews, and how to write autobiographies, resumes, and cover letters. Arcadia, Novais, Cavlek, and Humpe [48] confirm the use of field trips in tourism education to promote students' motivation and to learn by traveling, which promote their in-depth knowledge, interpersonal skills, and professionalism with the destination (e.g., development of a niche market and deepening of the destination experience). In the UK, Pappalepore and Farrell [52] confirmed the deficiency of higher education to co-create curricula that empower students. They confirmed that students exist as co-creators of curricula by contributing to courses to develop more confidence, capacity, and responsibility [53, 54].

B. Methodology

The proponents derived primary data through a descriptive survey method where findings were obtained from evaluations or surveys. This research design collects information from a portion of a target population to describe preferences, practices, characteristics, commonalities, or differences [55]. Compared to an experimental or normative method, the descriptive process develops knowledge by describing practical situations, events, and objects [56]. This method represents the element of the

studied phenomenon or population. Hence it focuses more on the "what" of the research subject rather than the "why" of the research subject [57]. Descriptive statistics follow for data analysis. Following a convenience sampling technique, the proponents successfully retrieved a total of six hundred and twenty-two valid responses from selected students taking B.S. Tourism Management and B.S. Hospitality Management from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines using google forms from May to June 2021. Whereas probability samples yield results with clearer generalizability, convenience samples are far less expensive, more efficient, and simpler to execute [58].

The web-based questionnaire comprises five (5) parts: disclosing consent, respondents' demographic profile, awareness of students towards agritourism practices, agritourism demand, the importance of agritourism, and experiential learning activities. The researchers used a four-point Likert scale to gauge the responses. A Likert scale is a closed question that uses psychometric testing to assess beliefs, attitudes, and opinions. Nemoto and Beglar [59] state that Likert scale questionnaires should ideally be administered to other data-gathering approaches to understand the respondents' answers better.

III. PROBLEM SOLUTION

A. Demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1 presents the demographic profiles of student respondents. A total of six hundred twenty-two conveniently sampled students comprised the respondents of the study. They are currently taking B.S. Tourism and B.S. Hospitality Management program in various levels from a selected state university in the Philippines. Thus, the varying age ranges are justified. However, the youngest respondents are aged 18 years old while the oldest belongs to 26 years old.

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile		Frequency (N= 622)	Percentage
Age	18-20	363	58.36
	21-23	253	40.68
	24-26	6	0.96
Program	BSHM	318	51.13
	BSTM	304	48.87
Year Level	1 st	185	29.74
	2 nd	168	27.01
	3 rd	254	40.84
	4 th	15	2.41

Awareness of Agritourism

B. Students' awareness of agritourism

Table 2 presents the assessment of students' knowledge regarding agritourism. Findings suggest that students in both programs manifest a high level of awareness about agritourism, particularly on the aspect of its agricultural operation. At the same time, the least of their familiarity pertains to the current agritourism situation in the Philippines.

Table 2. Students' awareness of agritourism

Awareness Assessment Criteria	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
Agritourism is attracting visitors and tourists to farm areas for production, educational, and recreational purposes.	3.42	HA	3.18	MA	3.30	HA
Agritourism involves an agriculturally based operation.	3.56	HA	3.29	HA	3.43	HA
Agritourism provides recreational activities for visitors.	3.31	HA	3.14	MA	3.23	MA
Agritourism is a form of educational activity.	3.52	HA	3.23	MA	3.38	HA
The Philippines is one of the top Agritourism destinations in the world.	3.09	HA	2.93	MA	3.01	MA
Agritourism is a growing sector of tourism in the country.	3.14	HA	2.99	MA	3.07	MA
Grand Mean	3.34	HA	3.13	MA	3.23	MA

When compared, students taking BSTM have more excellent knowledge about agritourism. Therefore, it can be inferred that their current curricular programs orient them differently about agritourism as a niche form of tourism. In their research, Cheddar and Unal [60] found out that there was no statistically significant difference between students' level of participation in statements related to rural tourism and their class level. However, students' overall response concerning knowledge about the country's agricultural development suggests their limited exposure to destinations with agritourism value and the lack of

promotion. Advertising is an essential factor affecting the country's national and international tourism market [61]. In addition, the moratorium on educational field trips issued by the Commission on Higher Education in early 2017 must have contributed to students' lack of exposure to agritourism sites. Therefore, excellent education and skills development on farm tourism become crucial in providing marketable farm tourism products. Gurbuz et al. [61] emphasize the importance of having educational institutions that will train a qualified labor force for rural tourism in the country, give lessons about rural tourism in these institutions, and prepare the rural tourism component for the future. Chen et al. [62] reported that college students lack knowledge and perception about international agricultural issues. Further, Yamagishi et al. [63] attributed the low progress of the farm tourism sector in the Philippines despite implementing the national legislative measure, highlighting farm tourism as one of the drivers of the growth of Philippine tourism's vast agricultural landscape. Therefore, the government has to invest more in advertising and the promotion of agritourism in the country. At times, the term agritourism is described as challenging for marketing development and crafting this activity more accessible to the public [64]. However, in the Philippines, the farm tourism sector remains largely private-sector-driven, resulting in challenges in meeting its potential, confusion on whether the Department of Tourism or Department of Agriculture will oversee the development, and the limited standardization and accreditation. Further, other previous studies justify the insufficient knowledge of agritourism destinations in the country. For example, many travel agencies and tour operators typically do not offer farm tours as a stand-alone activity. Still, they merely include one to two farm visits in their traditional itinerary. Similarly, as most of the tourism destination sites in the provinces are sun-sea-sand attractions, the country is less famous for its agricultural areas [63].

C. Importance of agritourism

Table 3 presents the assessment of students' perceived importance of agritourism in economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions.

Table 3. Students' perception of the economic, socio-cultural and ecological importance of agritourism

Economic Importance Criteria	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	M	WM	VI	M
Agritourism contributes to the economic development of a country.	3.75	SA	3.65	SA	3.70	SA
Agritourism offers a path to economic development in rural areas.	3.72	SA	3.64	SA	3.68	SA
Agritourism revitalizes local economies.	3.66	SA	3.52	SA	3.59	SA
Agritourism provides job opportunities for farm household members.	3.80	SA	3.69	SA	3.75	SA
Agritourism enhances the quality of life of local people.	3.70	SA	3.62	SA	3.66	SA
Agritourism generates quality local products and produce.	3.77	SA	3.62	SA	3.70	SA
Average	3.74	SA	3.60	SA	3.67	SA

In the economic dimension, students expressed the greatest affirmation in the employment opportunities of agritourism to household members of the farm operator. It can be construed that family members are the typical human resources in an agritourism business venture. Off-farm employment is the most common strategy; most farms have a high capacity for off-farm employment, and seventy-five percent of U.S. farm households have at least one member working in an off-farm job, often as the primary source of family income [66, 67, 68]. However, the students least recognized the economic impact on the local economy. The proponents inferred that the positive financial results of tourism are often not as valuable as expected. Furthermore, tourism activity tends to cause some undesirable and often unexpected negative economic impacts on the community. Kumar et al. [69] reported that even though the economic effects of tourism are primarily beneficial, it can cause some adverse economic outcomes, such as leakage, decreasing traditional employment and seasonal unemployment, and the rising cost of living.

Environmental Importance Criteria	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	M	WM	VI	M
Agritourism helps preserve rural lifestyles and landscapes and offers the opportunity to provide "sustainable" or "green" tourism.	3.72	SA	3.62	SA	3.67	SA
Agritourism represents an opportunity to reduce food waste and reuse unsold products.	3.56	SA	3.50	SA	3.53	SA
Agritourism promotes environmental conservations.	3.71	SA	3.62	SA	3.67	SA
Agritourism includes diverse and integrated activities aiming to improve the environment and agricultural production.	3.72	SA	3.61	SA	3.67	SA
Agritourism combines agriculture and forestation and focuses on cultivating cash crops and improving soil quality and biodiversity, increasing the variety and quantity of agricultural products.	3.67	SA	3.58	SA	3.63	SA
Agritourism requires a rural locality with a pristine natural environment. In turn, it requires committed investment and business models to ensure that the local ecosystem is preserved in an attractive state.	3.58	SA	3.52	SA	3.55	SA
Agritourism seeks to minimize the environmental impacts by reducing environmental impacts, reusing resources, recycling all valuable materials, equipment and prioritizing the quality of services.	3.66	SA	3.57	SA	3.62	SA
Environmental sustainability is a responsible and sustainable form of agritourism.	3.75	SA	3.69	SA	3.72	SA
Average	3.67	SA	3.59	SA	3.63	SA

As to the environmental dimension, students emphasize the importance of agritourism to promote responsible and sustainable practices. However, its contribution in reducing food waste and reusing unsold products is the least meaningful to students. Tourism was one of the first fields that became aware of the importance of sustainability. Due to its continued concern for sustainability, it is ahead of many other industries. It has made a great leap forward to demonstrate its importance to it [70]. Many agritourism entrepreneurs are practicing greater sensitivity in exploiting natural resources to produce energy with zero environmental impact, considering that the natural environment supplements their agricultural products and services.

Moreover, agritourism is an opportunity to minimize food waste and reuse unsold products. Composting is typically done with leafy leftovers from the garden and the food leftovers being used to feed animals. In addition, the traditional agricultural products unsold through the usual channels are used in restaurant services or to create marketable foodstuffs (e.g., fruits turned into jam, vegetables preserved in oil [71].

Socio-cultural Importance Criteria	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	WM	VI		
Agritourism activities will provide opportunities to learn and know about their culture.	3.71	SA	3.63	SA	3.67	SA
Agritourism can aid in building community pride and confidence.	3.63	SA	3.54	SA	3.59	SA
Agritourism shares agricultural heritage and rural lifestyles with visitors.	3.75	SA	3.64	SA	3.70	SA
Agritourism will strengthen the community institution, socialization, networking, and leadership.	3.59	SA	3.55	SA	3.57	SA
It provides recreational facilities for residents, as well as tourists	3.65	SA	3.57	SA	3.61	SA
Average	3.67	SA	3.59	SA	3.63	SA

Legend: S.A.- Strongly Agree

The agritourism activities as opportunities to learn and know about local culture are the most appreciated socio-cultural value among the students. On the other hand, its impact on community institutions, socialization, networking, and leadership is the least acknowledged. Moreover, agritourism is responsible for safeguarding the cultural heritage of rural areas [72]. Therefore, it is mainly affirmed that agritourism represents a key factor for local development, for rural marginal locations where tourists' environmental and cultural heritage are enormously appreciated [73, 74].

Students in both programs confirm their utmost recognition of agritourism's economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impact. However, mean values indicate that the financial contributions of agritourism are the most recognized, followed by socio-cultural and ecological significance. Most scholars from different perspectives approve that agritourism is an appropriate strategy to meet the needs of rural visitors with those of rural communities, thus providing economic opportunities and social opportunities while minimizing undesirable impacts on the environment and other socio-cultural aspects [75, 76, 77].

D. Demand for agritourism products and services

Table 4 presents the demand of students for agritourism products and services.

Table 4. Students' demand for agritourism products and services

Agritourism Products and Services	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
Caring for animals — helping with feeding, herding, etc.	3.68	HI	3.58	HI	3.63	HI
Crafting of Bamboo, Rattan, and many more	3.33	HI	3.30	MI	3.32	HI
Crafting herbal remedies	3.27	HI	3.20	MI	3.22	MI
Cutting flowers, flower arranging	3.55	HI	3.38	MI	3.47	HI
Farm or ranch work experience	3.38	HI	3.28	HI	3.33	HI
Fly fishing or tying clinics	3.07	MI	3.03	MI	3.05	MI
Food preparation — cheese-making, canning, etc.	3.57	HI	3.54	HI	3.56	HI
Habitat improvement activities (e.g., native planting, tree planting)	3.62	HI	3.59	HI	3.61	HI
Hay-making — moving, raking, baling, stacking	2.91	MI	2.91	MI	2.91	MI
Picking or Harvesting fruits and vegetables	3.72	HI	3.63	HI	3.68	HI
Planting different produce	3.61	HI	3.53	HI	3.57	HI
Weed identification, seed saving	3.05	MI	3.00	MI	3.03	MI
Wine, beer, cider, or another tasting	3.60	HI	3.61	HI	3.61	HI
Average	3.41	HI	3.35	HI	3.38	HI

Legend: MI- Moderately Interested HI- Highly Interested

The BSTM students are more interested in engaging in agritourism activities than their BSHM counterparts approving seven. However, the average mean score denotes high demand for agritourism products and services among students. These findings are relevant for agritourism developers to assess diversity in tourists' tastes and preferences and define 'niche.' markets for different products and services [78]. With the diversification and development of the tourism market, college students become a source of tourists that can be considered. Students are deemed, future agritourism entrepreneurs. Understanding students' future career choices and their goals to work in agriculture-related professions can direct the host universities or destination managers to recognize better how to expand students' exchange programs [30].

Agritourism development and sustainability depend on supply and demand factors, and exploring those factors sheds light on the conditions for agritourism development from the supply and demand perspectives [26, 79]. Agritourism is an original form of rural tourism as it permits tourists to live a genuine and authentic pastoral experience on a functional farm, engaging in agricultural activities (e.g., harvesting, feeding, preserves preparation), being in with animals and nature, and enjoying the food produced and cooked on the farm

[80], thus making the encounter more experiential and engaging.

Picking fruits and vegetables, feeding animals, and tree planting emerge as the most distinguished demands for agritourism experiences. Tugade [81] reports that "farm operators typically sell organic fruits, vegetables, dairy, and poultry to visitors along with creative experiences like farming experience, animal feeding, and hands-on food preparation." Their primary facilities include a visitors' lounge in a farm setting, staging area, animal viewing zone, souvenir stores, walking trails, simple toilets, and restaurants. Students' full engagement will lead to their complete understanding of farming, thereby enhancing the socio-cultural impacts of farm tourism. Further, these results imply the need for an entrepreneur to shift from marketing a commodity to offering an experience by customizing a product to better-fit customer needs and differentiating a product from others in the marketplace [82]. Farm-stays need to be re-defined and re-configured to capture the importance of farms in the whole agricultural system and the essence of their multifunctional role as both food and service providers [83]. Findings in the study collaborate with that of Chen et al. [62] that agritourism or rural tourism does not only include farming experiences but also promotes appreciation of the environmental functions (e.g., land preservation, landscape formation, and biodiversity), cultural and social functions, and recreational and educational relevance of agriculture with multifunctional activities.

E. Agritourism experiential learning activities for curriculum integration

Table 5 presents the assessments of students' interest for varied experiential learning strategies incorporating agritourism.

Table 5. Experiential agritourism activities for curriculum integration

Experiential Activities in agritourism	BSTM		BSHM		Composite Value	
	WM	VI	WM	VI	WM	VI
Webinars about Agritourism	3.37	HI	3.41	HI	3.39	HI
Agritourism Trade Fairs and Shows	3.36	HI	3.40	HI	3.38	HI
Research work or thesis about Agritourism	3.28	HI	3.37	HI	3.33	HI
Case studies about operations management in Agritourism	3.32	HI	3.46	HI	3.39	MI
Feasibility Studies on Agritourism	3.29	HI	3.46	HI	3.38	HI
Virtual tour or Agritourism Destinations	3.45	HI	3.42	HI	3.44	HI
Internship in Agritourism	3.35	HI	3.41	HI	3.38	HI
Mentoring with Agritourism Entrepreneurs	3.36	HI	3.40	HI	3.38	HI
Organize in-campus and shows	3.33	HI	3.37	HI	3.35	HI
Educational tours to Agritourism sites	3.45	HI	3.46	HI	3.46	HI
College extension and outreach activities about Agritourism	3.46	HI	3.46	HI	3.46	HI
Technological training on Agritourism	3.37	HI	3.39	HI	3.38	HI
Workshops & Seminars on Agritourism	3.49	HI	3.47	HI	3.48	HI
Volunteer work in agritourism destination	3.37	HI	3.36	HI	3.47	HI
Grand Mean	3.38	HI	3.17	HI	3.28	HI

Legend: H.I.- Highly Interested

Students from both programs express a firm enthusiasm to participate in various experiential learning activities connected to their curriculum. Attending workshops and seminars, engaging in volunteer work, participating in educational tours, and participating in community and outreach programs in an agritourism setting obtain the highest mean scores when ranked. Students need experiential learning or actual lessons from the farmers regarding agritourism, agriculture, and food production. Yamagishi et al. [63] suggest the need to focus the curricular disciplines on farm entrepreneurship theory and application and its promotion as a tool in promoting local entrepreneurs, revitalizing rural economies, and repopulating rural communities. Academic programs have a relevant contribution to graduates' intentions to acquire their career goals; as such, it is compelling that agriculture programs are planned to empower students to venture after finishing their studies [84].

Within this context, it is evident that abilities and competencies for management with responsibility of tourism destinations and businesses for the sustainable future need to be developed for tourism management students who are the future industry leaders and managers. For this, S.T. (sustainable tourism) in higher education institutions is developed to learn about sustainable tourism theories and calls for students' changing mindsets and their active commitment on matters about more S.T. futures [85]. The current study findings manifest agritourism as an effective tool for educational tourism in an experiential context.

Several studies have indicated a link between educational tourism and agritourism with cases in Japan [24], Poland [31], Nepal [32], and Indonesia [33] to explain agritourism demand through educational tour packages (educational activities and services) on agritourism farms in the current tourism market. SEARCH [86] includes specific recommendations for agritourism in education and curriculum development in secondary and post-secondary schools.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study are reflective of the students' intense curiosity for experiential learning in agritourism. In addition, they demonstrate a high level of awareness on the agritourism operation, its relevance in the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental dimensions, and its products and services.

The students have conscious knowledge about the nature of agritourism, particularly its agricultural operation. However, their understanding of the overall agritourism development in the country is not that wide-ranging. Therefore, the current curricular programs in BSTM and BSHM may need to enhance the experiential components of students' knowledge to promote more outcomes-based learning.

The economic, environmental, and socio-cultural implications of agritourism among the student market segment are highly recognized. The relevance of setting up agritourism activities to reach sustainable development for rural areas is well understood by students. Agritourism can balance economic growth with cultural and natural resource conservation as an alternative form of sustainable development strategies. There is a need for more intensive agritourism development, including fragmentation of tourism promotion efforts among farmers and destination management organizations.

Students are a profitable market segment in agritourism as they desire to experience its products and services. Furthermore, the convergence of agriculture and tourism resulted in a specialized tourism form that promotes agricultural

consumption of products and services for leisure, recreation, and education. Therefore, agritourism destination managers may need to enhance their products and services to suit the growing demand of the student market segment.

Students show a high degree of willingness to take responsibility for learning by seeking out and engaging in experiential activities that highlight agritourism. They desire practical knowledge and applications extending beyond production approaches to complement academic studies in their discipline and field. Therefore, teachers need to creatively utilize an experiential learning approach through service learning, project-based learning, and educational tours. Creating a good learning approach stimulates students' autonomous learning as it allows students to perform tasks independently. Resultantly, there is a need to incorporate agritourism as a significant or professional subject in B.S. Tourism and B.S. Hospitality courses.

Agritourism promotion, development, and education of the present and future generations could create a proactive stance on farming as an economic and social propeller in progressing tourism and agricultural performance. The results of this inquiry can address the limited literature of agritourism in the Philippine context. This work could hasten agritourism development studies and promote capacities in evolving agritourism industry.

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