

Analysis of Agritourism Potential and Rural Development in Igbo-Etiti LGA of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study analyzed agritourism potential and rural development in Igbo-Etiti LGA of Enugu State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objective of the study included (a) to identify the agritourism centers (b) ascertain the reason for the tourists attraction and (c) to identify the potential barriers affecting agritourism in the area. The study employed a combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques in the collection of data from one hundred and sixty (160) and eighty (80), farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists respectively, using structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were employed to realize the objectives of the study. The results of the analysis showed that 68.75% and 56.25% were female agripreneurs and agritourists respectively, thus indicating dominance in agritourism business in the area. Equally, both the farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists were within the active age of 40 - 49 years with over 60% of them being married. About 93.75% of both the farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists could read and write. The average income of the farmers from sales and services per market day was ₦ 143,750.00 while the average expenses of the agritourists from purchases and payments per visit were ₦ 152,875.00. The main agritourism centers in the area were located in Aku, Ukehe, Ekwegbe and ohodo towns while their major food produce traded included yams, cassava, honey and grains. Friendliness of the host communities was the major tourists' attraction while fear of herdsmen, kidnappers and unknown gunmen constituted the major barrier to agritourism business. The main solution to the problems of agritourism in the area is the provision of adequate security. Based on the findings, it was recommended that an ideal investment atmosphere for agritourism investors be instituted in the area through tax reduction and provision of adequate security.

Key words: Agritourism, Agriculture, Rural development, Produce, communities

1.0 Introduction

Agriculture worldwide is facing rapid transformation in its activities especially in areas that before now were not considered as pure agricultural activities. Such activities as local fares like the Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi state, Nigeria, bull fighting, horse racing, field trips to farms for agricultural education, vacation on working farms are some of the examples. However, studies by Paniccia and Baiocco (2021), Baipai et al., (2024) and Stanovčić (2018), show that these neglected agricultural activities if managed very well, can be an additional source of income to the farmer. Agritourism is one such activity where people from outside visit a farm on vacation. Ideas of introducing agritourism as a tourism activity on agricultural lands and farms, developed roughly two decades ago as a result of the increasing demand for soft tourism that costs less but could give visitors a pleasurable experience with nature (Puig, 2024), (Lak and Khairabadi, 2022). According to the findings of Karabati et al., (2009), agritourism started in the year, 1800 in the United States and since then, the economies of several countries all over the world have been transformed favorably through agritourism activities. Starting from that time, agritourism has become one of the fastest growing tourism models globally (Busby & Rendle, 2000).

Agritourism has often been used interchangeably with farm tourism, rural tourism, farm based tourism, and agrotourism (Karampela et al., 2021; Barbieri 2010 and McGehee and Kim 2004). Barbieri and Mshenga (2009) referred to agritourism as any practice developed on a working farm to attract visitors or as any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching, cultural, natural activities and attractions. It is seen as any commercial enterprise that combines agriculture and tourism on a working farm, ranch or other agribusiness operation (Van Zyl and van Der Merwe 2021 and Pavić et. al., 2018). Thus to encourage participation in agriculture, there is the need to promote these activities through tourism. On the other hand, agripreneurs (people who apply entrepreneurial vision to agriculture), have been investing massively in this regard creating wealth and transforming agriculture all over the world.

Agritourism provides the opportunity to combine agriculture and aspects of tourism to provide a number of social, educational and financial benefits to communities, tourists and farmers (Petromana et al., 2016). Farmers are given the opportunity of generating additional income as there is a direct marketing of produce to consumers. It encourages the growth of the tourism industry by increasing the number of tourist to an area and the length of stay. This forms part of the view of Zawadka (2019) and Lamb (2008) that the agritourism industry offers nature-based attractions for visitors/tourists to agricultural areas or farmlands to gain knowledge about farm activities or for recreational purposes. Nurlaela et al. (2021) stated that agritourism can significantly contribute to economic empowerment in rural areas through job creation and income generation.

Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world because of its continued growth and diversification. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, (UNWTO, 2016), an ever increasing number of destinations worldwide have opened up to and invested in tourism, turning it into a key driver of socio-economic progress through the creation of jobs, export revenues and infrastructural development. According to studies by Dionizi and

Kercini (2025); Yusuf and Wulandari (2023) and Ait-Yahia, et al. (2021), agritourism aligns with key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as zero hunger, responsible consumption and production and climate action, by merging agriculture with tourism. Though agritourism was initially seen as a peripheral activity on farms for agricultural production, it is now reckoned as an important aspect of rural tourism that has the capability of enriching the economies of especially rural agricultural communities (Oladeji et al., 2020). Agritourism as a preferred tourism model is not surprising because of its responsiveness to environmental sustainability, sustainable agriculture, as well as social, historical, and cultural ramifications in rural areas (Bhatta and Ohe, 2020)

Some of the benefits of agritourism include mostly, the cheapness of the activity as the cost of accommodation, food, recreation are inexpensive due to its natural settings. City dwellers are increasingly developing interest in agriculture as a result of activities observed during farm visits. Recreational activities are provided to all people irrespective of their age, religion, tribe or groups. Agritourism centers provide an alternative area to reduce the stressful city life by coming home to nature. Fresh agricultural produce as well as organic foods tend to lure the city dwellers thus creating a viable economic atmosphere in the tourist centers. Small businesses are encouraged and economic activities are diversified thus assisting rural development.

To promote agritourism in Nigeria, the following issues need to be considered:

- a. Accommodation: Accommodation that is safe and clean is a must in the tourist centers. Foreign tourists and city dwellers look for these minimum facilities. Clean and safe drinking water as well as clean toilet facilities should be maintained at all times. Operators of these centers should be ready to provide these basic facilities all year round if the objective of establishing the center is to be achieved.
- b. Publicity: Most of the agritourism centers are located in remote inland areas which are sometimes difficult to locate. Most of these centers are not known simply because they have not been exposed by the relevant authorities and media organizations. Agritourism centers should collaborate with the state tourism board, the press, NGOs and other relevant organizations to facilitate the publicity. Details of agritourism centers/locations should be made available in a dedicated website and help line to provide necessary information to agritourists at all times. Leonte et al., (2016) stated that effective marketing strategies are essential for the efficiency and sustainable development of agritourism.
- c. Transport: One of the greatest challenges in reaching agritourism centers in Nigeria is arriving at these centers in peace. This is as a result of the poor network of roads as well as high cost of transportation. Poor transport facilities have been a major hindrance to agritourism development and this calls for serious government intervention. Construction of access roads to these centers will be a major booster to agritourism in Nigeria. Eshun and Tettey, (2014) opined that investing in essential infrastructure like roads, sanitation, and communication networks support agritourism operations.

- d. The safety of tourists: Most agritourism centers in Nigeria are located in very remote areas which lack medical facilities, good roads, telecommunication and sometimes threat from wild animals, kidnappers, unknown gunmen and thieves. Government presence is needed in terms of providing the basic social amenities as well as building police posts at strategic locations. Support of the local population is equally needed to prevent harassment and embarrassment of agritourists.
- e. Capacity building: Agripreneurs and farmers need to be well oriented on maintenance of facilities, hospitality and public relation which they may not be aware of.

However, the success of any agritourism center in Nigeria will depend on the attitude of the farmer in creating the needed atmosphere. The less exploitative the farmer is and the sincerity in entertaining the guest will go a long way in encouraging the tourists to come back and even recommend the place for other potential tourists. Secondly, the diversity in agriculture as a result of the natural endowment and the uniqueness of agricultural produce from one region to another are sources of attraction to tourists. The way of cultivation and the indigenous knowledge of host community create curiosity thus providing unlimited satisfaction to the city guest.

Little research has been done on agritourism in the study area even when the area has numerous agritourism potentials yet to be exploited. The findings of this work will go a long way in educating the government on ways of improving the industry and the agripreneurs, on ways to maximize profit.

Few years ago, agritourism in Nigeria was seen as a wasteful venture with no economic value. Recent studies (Nurlaela et al., 2021 and Oladeji, et al., 2020) have shown that in addition to generating revenue and creating jobs, agritourism centers are developing faster than expected. Thus this study will go a long way in stimulating more research in agritourism with the aim of developing other areas. The broad objective of this study is to carry out an analysis of agritourism potential and rural development in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. of Enugu state.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Describe the socio-economic characteristics of agritourism providers and tourists in the study area.
- ii. Identify the agritourism centers in the study area.
- iii. Ascertain reasons for the agritourism attraction in the area.
- iv. Identify the potential barriers affecting the operation of agritourism business in the area.
- v. Identify the measures to mitigate the constraints of agritourism.

2.0 Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

The study was carried out in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area (L.G.A.) of Enugu state, Nigeria. The area was purposively selected for this study because of its tourism potential, high concentration of the state's population, high concentration of farmers and a reasonable number of academic institutions as well as private establishments. Maduka University and Federal

polytechnic, ohodo are located in the area. The area is made up of 13 communities/towns; Aku, Ukehe, Ekwegbe, Ohodo, ozalla, Ohebe-Dim, Ochima, Idoha, Umuna, Ikolo, Udueme, Diogbe, and Umunko. It is bounded to the south by Udi L.G.A of Enugu state; to the east by Enugu east L.G.A; to the west by Uzo-Uwani L.G.A. and to the north by Nsukka L.G.A. The area is located between longitude $6^{\circ} 50' E$ and $7^{\circ} 55' E$ and latitude $5^{\circ} 50' N$ and $7^{\circ} 10' N$.

Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. is located in the tropical rain forest zone with a derived savannah. The major economic activity in the area is farming. Like many farming communities in the tropical rainforest south of Nigeria, it has a rich fertile soil which allows for a very diverse crop production such as yam, cassava, rice, cocoyam, pigeon pea, maize, groundnut, fruits and lots of tree crops (Jonah et al., 2023; Ekwere et al., 2023). The area is blessed with vast flat lands with gentle sloping hills dotted in some of the areas. There are about eight major potential tourism centers in the area including; Adada river, Eke Aku, Agu Eke Ebokwe, AguUkehe, Ogbede, AguEkwegbe, OrieOhodo and AforUmunko.

2.2 Sampling Procedure

Communities involved in major agritourism activities or have major agritourism centers in the area, were purposively selected for the study. These communities include; Aku, Ukehe, Ekwegbe and Ohodo. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were adopted in the selection of farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists from the agritourism centers in the study area. From each of the eight agritourism centers in the area, a total of 20 registered farmers/agripreneur and 10 agritourists were purposively selected for the study. This gave a total of 160 farmers/agripreneur and 80 agritourists. Only farmers/agripreneur that have registered with the ministry of agriculture and the local government and agritourists that are not residing in the area, and have come purposely to buy agricultural produce, recreation or to seek agricultural information were sampled for the study.

2.3 Data Collection

Primary and secondary information constitute the main sources of the data collected for this study. The primary data was drawn from farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists in the tourism centers through structured questionnaires administered to the respondents. The questionnaires were validated and pre-tested before administering to the respondents. Secondary information relevant to the study was obtained from journals, project reports and seminar papers.

2.4 Data Analyses

The objectives were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, mean and percentages were used in estimating the views of the respondents. A five point Likert type scale of the form; strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), was equally employed in collecting data for calculating the mean values. The Likert scale was adopted because of its simplicity. Mean values of 3 and above were accepted as they conform to the item under consideration while any value that is less than 3 was rejected because of nonconformity to the item.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Table 3.1 shows the percentage distribution of farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists according to socioeconomic characteristics. According to the table, 68.75% and 56.25% were female farmers/agripreneurs and female agritourists respectively; thus indicating that females are the major players in the business in Igbo Etiti L.G.A. This finding reveals that for agritourism to succeed in the area, women must be actively involved as they are the major stakeholders in the industry. The mean age of agripreneurs and agritourists were 42.66 and 42.41 respectively, indicating that they are relatively in their active and youthful age, this shows that agritourism may enhance youth participation in Agribusiness (Obot et al., 2022). About 68.75% and 62.50% of the agripreneurs and agritourists respectively were married and have a mean household size of 5, indicating that there are readily available family labours to assist in the business.

Equally, about 93.75% of both the agripreneurs and agritourists can read and write with majority of them having secondary education. Educated persons are in a better position to adopt new innovation than the uneducated ones. The mean agripreneurial experience was 11.23 years while the mean experience of the agritourists was 9.40 years.

This shows that both the agripreneur and agritourists have enough agritourism experience and can easily manage their trade efficiently. The major farm produce traded in the area include, palm oil, honey, yams, cassava, grains, melons and pepper. The varieties of crops that are produced and traded attract agritourists and agripreneurs. The average income of the farmer/agripreneur from sales/services per market day was ₦143,750.00 while the average expenses of the agritourist from purchases/payments per day were ₦152,875.00. The large volume of money that is involved every market day suggest that lots of investment opportunities are available in the agritourism centers. These findings is in line with the works of Nurlaela et al. (2021), Canovi and Lyon (2019), that agritourism can significantly contribute to economic empowerment in rural areas through job creation and income generation.

Table 3.2 shows the location and size of the main agritourism centers in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. The main agritourism centers in the area include Adada, (recreational and educational center) Agu Eke Ebokwe, AguUkehe, AguEkwegbe (farm settlements and educational center), Eke Aku, NkwoOgbede, Oriehodo and AforUmunko (farm produce collection and educational center). Several other smaller agritourism centers exist in the area, but are much smaller than the listed ones in table 3.2.

3.1 Adada River

Adada river is located between Aku town in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. and Nkpologu community in Uzu-uwani L.G.A. The river is located about 20 km from Nsukka town. The source of the river is Mgboko community in Aku, because the oozing out of water from the ground, which gather together to form the river is found in their thousands in the area. However unconfirmed reports claim that the river has its source in Lejja, in Nsukka L.G.A. of Enugu State while there is another claim that the source of the river is in Ohodo in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. of Enugu state. The river flows from the source in Aku, through Nkpologu to Ukpata then to Adaba to umulokpa before it finally empties into the Omabalariver in Anyamelu L.G.A. of Anambra State.

Adada River is the major source of water to Aku and Nkpologu and other neighboring communities. It is the main source of water for dry season farming in the area. Lots of crops are grown during the dry season at the banks of the river. Most of the fresh vegetables and grains supplied during the dry season to Nsukka, Enugu and other towns were grown at the banks of the Adada river.

Table 3.1a: Percentage distribution of farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists according to socioeconomic characteristics

Parameter	Farmers/agripreneurs (N=160)		Mean	Agritourists (N=80)		
	Frequency	Percentage		Freq.	Percentage	Mean
Gender						
Male	50	31.25		35	43.75	
Female	110	68.75		45	56.25	
Age (years)						
20 – 29	12	7.50		5	6.25	
30 – 39	33	20.63	42.66	21	26.25	42.41
40 – 49	65	40.62		28	35.00	
50 and above	50	31.25		26	32.50	
Marital Status						
Married	110	68.75		50	62.50	
Single	35	21.88		15	18.75	
Divorced	10	6.25		8	10.00	
Widowed/widower	5	3.12		7	8.75	
Household Size						
0 – 5	115	71.88		55	68.75	
6 – 10	32	20.00	5	15	18.75	5
11 – 15	7	4.37		7	8.75	
More than 15	6	3.75		3	3.75	
Level of Education						
No formal education	10	6.25		5	6.25	
Primary education	35	21.88		17	21.25	
Secondary education	53	33.12		25	31.25	
ND/NCE	35	21.88		23	28.75	
HND/B.Sc	24	15.00		6	7.50	
M.Sc./Ph.D	3	1.87		4	5.00	

Source: Field data 2025

Table 3.1b: Percentage distribution of farmers/agripreneurs and agritourists according to socioeconomic characteristics

Parameter	Farmers/agripreneurs (N=160)			Agritourists (N=80)		
	Freq.	Percentage	Mean	Freq.	Percentage	Mean
Experience (years)						
Less than 5	20	12.50	11.23	16	20.00	9.4
5 – 9	40	25.00		23	28.75	
10 - 14	53	33.13		32	40.00	
15 – 19	37	23.12		6	7.50	
More than 20	10	6.25		3	3.75	
Type of produce traded						
Yam and Cassava	40	25.00		13	16.25	
Grains, melon, pepper	25	15.63		20	25.00	
Fruits and Vegetables	30	18.75		15	18.75	
Bush meat	15	9.37		2	2.50	
Palmoil and Honey	37	23.12		25	31.25	
Others.	13	8.13		5	6.25	
Income from sales per market day (₦) (farmers/agripreneurs only)						
Less than 100,000	50	31.25	143,750.00			
101,000 – 200,000	54	33.75				
201,000 – 300,000	30	18.75				
301,000 – 400,000	16	10.00				
Above 401,000	10	6.25				
Expenses made from purchases per visit (₦) (Agritourists only)						
Less than 100,000	15	18.75	152,875.00			
101,000 – 150,000	30	37.50				
151,000 – 200,000	21	26.25				
201,000 – 250,000	9	11.25				
Above 250,000	5	6.25				

Source: Field data 2025

Table 3.2: Main Agritourism Centers in Igbo – Etiti L.G.A.

Centre	Location (Town)	Size	Description
Adada	Aku		River, suitable for fishing, banks for dry and rainy season cropping, source of water for homes/industries, source of electricity, recreational and educational center.
Agu Eke Ebokwe	Aku	7km ²	Farm settlement, fertile land suitable for cropping and rearing of animals, recreational and educational center.
Agu Ukehe	Ukehe	10km ²	Farm settlement, fertile land suitable for cropping and rearing of animals, recreational and educational center
Agu Ekwegbe	Ekwegbe	10km ²	Farm settlement, fertile land suitable for cropping and rearing of animals, recreational and educational center
Eke Aku	Aku	45,000M ²	Farm produce collection center, Market, town center, recreational and educational center
Nkwo Ogbede	Ukehe	50,00M ²	Farm produce collection center, market, town center, administrative headquarter of Igbo-Etiti L.G.A., recreational and educational center .
Orie Ohodo	Ohodo	30,000M ²	Farm produce collection center, Market, town center, recreational and educational center.
Afor Umunko	Umunko	30,000M ²	Farm produce collection center, Market, town center recreational and educational center

Source: Field data 2025

Recently, the Federal Government of Nigeria approved the construction of a dam over the river. The aim was for the river to supply water to Nsukka town, University of Nigeria, Aku town and other neighboring communities. Even though the construction work on the dam has been halted, the little work done has massively increased the width and depth of the river. As a matter of fact, the dammed area has increased the area of the river to over 200m², thus creating beautiful scenery and a breath- taking view of the area. Occasionally, fishermen in their canoes are seen

fishing. Weekends in the area are always very busy as people troop to the river for picnics and parties. During the week, several other people from academic institutions, government and private establishments, visit the area for academic and other purposes.

With the help of the government and private individuals, the area can be upgraded to meet international tourist standard. What is required is an access road to the area, basic amenities including power supply, a police post as well as lodging facilities to accommodate the tourists as they arrive. The benefit that will be derived from this will be huge as income will flow regularly to both government and agritourism providers.

3.2 Agu Eke Ebokwe

This area is part of Aku town and is entirely a farming community which is bounded in the South by Udi L.G.A, in the North by Nsukka L.G.A, in the West by Uzo-Uwani L.G.A. and in the East by Ukehe and Ochima, both in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. The area is inhabited by the Ebokwe people of Aku who are the original owners of the land. Other farmers and tourists from neighboring towns and communities visit the area on daily basis for farming or to buy crops. The soil is very fertile and various crops are produced in the area. Lots of timber and timber products are grown there.

The area does not have enough water. The main source of water is a well. The community equally lacks basic social amenities even though the community produces over 40 percent of the crops in the area. Access roads as well as schools, pipe borne water, health centers and electricity are urgently needed to encourage farmers to move their farm produce to the market and equally for agritourists to visit the area for commercial, educational and recreational purposes.

3.3 Agu Ukehe

This area is located in the Eastern part of Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. and is mainly dominated by farmers who reside there. The area has a common boundary with Enugu East L.G.A. in the East, Udi L.G.A. in the South, Nsukka L.G.A. in the North, Ekwegbe in the West, all in Enugu State. The area which is roughly 10km² in size is blessed with abundant fertile land that is suitable for commercial agriculture. Several springs and wells serve as the main sources of water in the area. Large quantities of crops are harvested there and the area is fast developing into a farm settlement. To encourage more farmers and agritourists into the area, access roads and basic social amenities including electricity, pipe borne water, health center and schools should be provided. Agu Ukehe in the future will be the major supplier of food crops to Enugu, Nsukka and neighboring cities as well as a major agritourist attraction in the state, when fully developed.

3.4 Agu Ekwegbe

This area has a common boundary with Agu Ukehe in the East, Ohodo in the West, Ukopi in the South (all in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A.) and Nsukka L.G.A. in the North. The area is a large stretch of rich fertile land suitable for commercial agriculture. Lots of people who live there are farmers producing various crops that are moved to the neighboring towns and cities. Agu Ekwegbe is fast developing and many government and private organizations are indicating interest in the area. Maduka University and Maduka University College are located there. A police training center has been constructed in the area and several other organizations have started construction.

The community has no electricity and pipe borne water. The sources of water include wells, springs and stream. The only stream in the area, IyiObala, does not have the capacity to provide

enough water to the area. In addition, because of the lack of access roads to these farming communities, the farmers take their farm produce to the nearest market by the use of motorbikes, barrows and head portage. These markets serve as collection point where farm produce are displayed for agritourist to buy. Among the major farm produce collection points in the area are; Eke Aku market, NkwoOgbede market, OrieOhodo market and AforUmunko market. Some tourists that may not be able to find their way to the farm communities make use of these markets to purchase whatever agricultural produce they want.

On every market day, agritourists in their thousands move to these farm collection point to buy up these farm produce. Several truckloads of these agricultural produce are moved out of the area on daily basis. Most of these markets which open only once every four days, have turned into daily markets because of the large volume of agricultural produce that are produced in the area. Some of the crops that are produced are very perishable and need to be moved as soon as possible to avoid waste.

The volumes of trade that take place daily in these markets are huge and as such are potential sources of revenue to the government. Even though lots of money is made by the farmers and the government daily, most of these markets are just open fields with little or no sheds. Available sheds are made of thatch roofs; the markets have no toilets, no pipe borne water, no health center and no electricity. Most of these places are dreaded during the rainy seasons as there are no shelters for both the farmers/agripreneurs and the agritourists. The building of a standard market with all the needed amenities in place will go a long way in encouraging the farmers with the assurance that his/her farm produce are secure.

Table 3.3 shows the mean score distribution of respondents according to tourist attraction in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. All the items considered have mean values greater than 3, and a grand mean of 4.38, indicating that all the eight items considered were the major things that attract tourists to the area. However, friendliness of the host communities, presence of federal and state institutions and the presence of active vigilante and forest guards are the top three tourist attraction in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. In their view, Baipaiet al. (2024) further stated that to sustain agritourism, players must foster fair and equitable relationship with local communities while stimulating economic growth and preserving agricultural heritage.

Table 3.4 shows the mean score distribution of respondents according to potential barriers affecting the operations of agritourism business in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. All the items under consideration, were considered as potential barriers to the operations of agritourism in the area as their mean score value were more than 3. However, fear of harmful herdsmen, kidnappers, and unknown gunmen, high cost of services provided by the host communities and high cost of transportation were the top three potential barriers to agritourism potential in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. This finding aligns with the works of Kunasekaran et al. (2012) and Eshunand Tettey (2014) that Infrastructure and marketing deficiencies were identified as key obstacles to agritourism growth in Cameron and Ghana.

Table 3.5 shows the mean score distribution of respondents according to strategies to mitigate the problems of agritourism in the area. All the items considered were identified as good

strategies to employ in order to reduce the problems of agritourism in the area. However, provision of adequate security, reduction of taxes for agritourists and agripreneurs, and provision of basic social amenities were the top three opinions of respondents as strategies to mitigate the problems of agritourism in the study area. According to Eshun and Tettey (2014), addressing these problems require adequate planning and investing in essential infrastructure like roads, sanitation, and communication networks, to support the growth and development of agritourism operations.

Table 3.3: Distribution of respondents according to tourist attraction

Item	SA(5)	A(4)	UD(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	Total	Mean
High number of agritourism centers in the area	775 (64.58)	240 (25.00)	9 (1.25)	36 (7.50)	4 (1.67)	1064 (100.0)	4.43
Area is centrally located	860 (71.67)	160 (16.67)	6 (0.83)	32 (6.67)	10 (4.16)	1068 (100.0)	4.45
Diverse natural and human Resources	615 (51.25)	296 (30.84)	15 (2.08)	54 (11.25)	11 (4.58)	991 (100.0)	4.13
Presence of Federal and state institutions in the area	890 (74.17)	132 (13.75)	3 (0.42)	40 (8.33)	8 (3.33)	1073 (100.0)	4.47
Close to major cities and Reduction of travel time	815 (67.92)	168 (17.50)	15 (2.08)	38 (7.92)	11 (4.58)	1047 (100.0)	4.36
Friendliness of host Communities	910 (75.83)	120 (12.50)	6 (0.83)	40 (8.34)	6 (2.50)	1082	4.51
Very cheap farm produce	770 (64.17)	200 (20.83)	9 (1.25)	42 (8.75)	12 (5.00)	1033 (100.0)	4.30
Presence of active vigilante and forest guards	840 (70.00)	148 (15.42)	18 (2.50)	38 (7.92)	10 (4.16)	1054 (100.0)	4.39
Grand mean							4.38

NB: Figures in parentheses are percentages. Strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)

Source: Field data 2025

Table 3.4: Distribution of the potential barriers affecting the operations of Agritourism business

Item	SA(5)	A(4)	UD(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	Total	Mean
Fear of herdsmen, kidnappers and unknown gunmen attack	905 (75.42)	152 (15.83)	15 (2.08)	14 (2.92)	9 (3.75)	1095 (100.0)	4.56
Poor amenities in the area	880 (73.33)	160 (16.67)	3 (0.42)	6 (1.25)	20 (8.33)	1069 (100.0)	4.45
High cost of farm produce	450 (37.50)	200 (20.83)	12 (1.67)	120 (16.67)	76 (23.33)	858 (100.0)	3.58
High cost of services provided by host communities	350 (29.17)	360 (37.50)	3 (0.42)	100 (20.83)	29 (12.08)	842 (100.0)	3.51
High taxes by government	715 (59.58)	272 (28.33)	3 (0.42)	38 (7.92)	9 (3.75)	1037 (100.0)	4.32
High cost of transportation	750 (62.50)	280 (29.17)	18 (2.50)	20 (4.17)	4 (1.66)	1072 (100.0)	4.47
Grand mean							4.14

NB: Figures in parentheses are percentages. Strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)

Source: Field data 2025

3.5 Limitations of the study

In doing a research of this nature, one must confront some limitations. Some of the farmers and agripreneurs could not be reached because of poor access road. High cost of transportation also made the research difficult as most vehicle drivers refused to go because of the bad road. In addition, some of our respondents refused to release vital information for security and other personal reasons.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Agritourism is an innovative strategy that transforms farms into tourism destinations or diversifies farming activities to offer entertainment, education, recreation, hospitality, and on-farm product sales. In Nigeria, agritourism is fast developing, presenting agritourists with unique experiences while offering rural communities an avenue for economic development. Agritourism encourages job creation, poverty reduction, growth of essential infrastructures such as electricity, roads, pipe borne water, hospitals etc. The dominance of women in the business suggests that they are major stakeholders and they should be encouraged in order to sustain the industry. Equally, as most of the agripreneurs are in their youthful age, educated with enough experience, implying that the industry has great prospects. Activities that attract tourists to the area should be seriously improved upon in order to attract more tourists. All barriers to a successful

Table 3.5: Distribution of respondents according to strategies to mitigate the problems of agritourism

Item	SA(5)	A(4)	UD(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	Total	Mean
Provision of basic social amenities in the area	805 (67.08)	200 (20.83)	9 (1.25)	40 (8.34)	6 (2.50)	1060 (100.0)	4.42
Provision of adequate security	900 (75.00)	192 (20.00)	6 (0.83)	18 (3.75)	1 (0.42)	1117 (100.0)	4.65
Improvement of agritourism centers in the area	660 (55.00)	280 (29.17)	9 (1.25)	50 (10.42)	10 (4.16)	1009 (100.0)	4.20
Reduction of taxes for Agritourist and agripreneur	780 (65.00)	252 (26.25)	3 (0.42)	26 (5.42)	7 (2.91)	1068 (100.0)	4.45
Integration of the agritourism centers for efficiency	500 (41.67)	260 (27.03)	15 (2.08)	86 (17.93)	27 (11.25)	888 (100.0)	3.70
Development of organizational strategies to check fraud and over charging	600 (50.00)	244 (25.42)	21 (2.92)	64 (13.33)	20 (8.33)	949 (100.0)	3.95
Grand mean							4.23

NB: Figures in parentheses are percentages. Strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)

Source: Field data 2025

agritourism business must be addressed completely to encourage more investors who may wish to join the industry. Cooperation of host communities and agritourists should be encouraged while the provision of adequate security in the area is made a priority. Adequate planning is required in encouraging the sustainability of agritourism enterprise. Agripreneur can enhance their trade and sustain their business by developing strategies that encourage innovation, collaboration, safety standards and aligning with policy regulations. Based on the findings of the study, the provisions of a conducive investment atmosphere for agritourism investors, was recommended. This may involve activities that will attract both local and foreign investments in agritourism business. These activities include provision of adequate security, reduction of taxes for both agripreneurs and agritourists and the provision of basic social amenities.

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