

Tourist's Profile of Agritourism in The Mekong Delta

Hanh Nguyen, Lan Ngo

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, VNU-HCM, Vietnam

Abstract

As the largest agricultural region and one of the seven tourist regions of Vietnam, the Mekong Delta has many favorable conditions for agricultural tourism. However, this potential has not been fully realized. The advantages of agritourism development are widely recognized, but many agritourism ventures are not as successful as they should be. The point is that farmers need to understand tourists and tourist products before they deliver their services. Most previous research has attended to farmer/landowners' and local communities' perceptions of and attitudes toward agritourism development rather than the nature of agritourists. Drawing from an on-site survey of 650 tourists at Mekong Delta agritourism sites, this study provides insight into potential visitors as well as those who already visit such destinations. This information can help providers of agritourism products to understand their customers better and offer more focused and effective marketing strategies.

Keywords: *agritourism, tourist profiles, market segmentation, Mekong Delta*



This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license.

INTRODUCTION

The Mekong Delta, encompassing thirteen provinces, is Vietnam's largest agricultural area. Recently, farmers in the Mekong Delta have adapted in response to climate change and other negative impacts, such as low farm income and urbanization, that challenge and endanger agriculture. According to many authors, when farmers cannot generate enough income through agriculture, they try to obtain alternatives to sustain themselves (Arroyo, 2012). Among those alternatives, agritourism—visiting agricultural settings for recreation—is an up-and-coming trend. Visitors increasingly demand the activity, and farmers increasingly supply it (Arroyo, 2012). Writers, too, have acknowledged the benefits associated with agritourism (Arroyo, 2012). It has been identified as a means to raise farm revenue when agriculture is less profitable, reduce economic dependence on agricultural activities, create employment opportunities, and promote the consumption of locally grown products (Arroyo, 2012; Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009; Speirs, 2003). Agritourism provides tourists with opportunities to improve family connectedness and restore their ties with rural communities (Arroyo, 2012). Agritourism also has potential social and environmental benefits (Hardesty, 2018). These include providing education, reviving rural traditions, enhancing and protecting natural environments, developing local infrastructure, and stemming mass migration from rural areas (Sznajder, Przeborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009).

As the largest agricultural region and one of the seven tourist regions of Vietnam, the Mekong Delta has favorable conditions for developing agritourism, such as a convenient location, a gentle river landscape, cultural diversity, and friendly and hospitable people (Bao Hoang Gia, 2021) and plentiful, diverse and unique resources (Ngo, Nguyen, and Tran, 2021). Recently, agritourism in the Mekong Delta has developed considerably, attracting more visitors (Ngo, Nguyen, and Tran, 2021). However, tourist activities there remain small-scale, unplanned, and undiversified. The industry has not focused on its brand (Bao Hoang Gia, 2021; Ngo, Nguyen, and Tran, 2021).

Though the development of agritourism is widely recognized (Sznajder, Przeborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009), many agritourism ventures are not as successful as they should be. The point is that farmers do not explore the demand for tourist products before they provide them and do not know whom they serve. Tourists are indispensable to agritourism (Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009). For any agritourism destination to succeed, organizers must understand tourists, their needs, and how to target them (Speirs, 2003). The services and facilities a tourism destination provides can then be adjusted to tourist profiles (Dropulić and Ružić, 2009).

Agritourists are the main target group for rural tourism and agritourism business. Most previous research on agritourism has attended to the attitudes and perceptions of the farmer/landowners and the local communities about development issues (Evans 1992; Kastenholz, Davis and Paul, 1999 cited in Speirs, 2003) rather than on the agritourists (Speirs, 2003). This article defines an agritourist as a tourist who spends time at agritourism destinations.

As with other types of tourism, even a well-organized agritourism farm may not yield satisfactory financial results without marketing (Sznajder, Przeborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009). Not knowing whom to serve and how to reach certain types of tourists are significant problems (Speirs, 2003). Modern agritourism requires advanced methods to segment the tourist population. Knowing the profile characteristics of target groups can help marketing strategists to tailor the product or service and promote it more effectively (Saayman and Slabbert, 2004). Businesses must understand customers' characteristics if they are to stay competitive.

Consumers and potential consumers can be segmented by age, sex, place of residence, income level, preferences, and especially lifestyle (Sznajder, Przeborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009). This would enlighten the supplied facilities and services, the utilised resources, and the way to promote agritourism destinations (Speirs, 2003). Understanding the demand for tourism will benefit tourists, farmers/landowners, developers and operators, and everyone involved in the agritourism industry (Speirs, 2003). To remedy the current shortcomings of agritourism in the Mekong Delta, understanding the characteristics of the target tourists is vital.

This study aims to reveal the customers who visit agritourism destinations in the Mekong Delta and potential agritourists as well, helping farmers and providers of agritourism products there to understand their customers better and focus their marketing strategies more effectively.

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The travel market (like many other markets) is formed from many sub-markets called market segments. Market segmentation is the process by which a market is divided into groups of purchasers with related conditions and needs (Ahmed, Barber, and d'Astous, 1998, cited in Speirs, 2003; Ashworth and Goodall, 1988). As the tourism industry is developing quickly and widely, it is no longer possible to serve the total market. It is necessary to segment markets and pay attention

to one or several portions (Kinnear et al., 1995, cited in Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Saayman, 2001). Market segments are constructed using profiles of tourists' characteristics (Gee, Makens, and Choy, 1997; Hall and Page, 1999, cited in Speirs, 2003). With a better understanding of the characteristics of tourists, marketers, providers of tourism products, and local authorities can maximize their opportunities in the market.

Segmenting tourist markets and profiling tourists are practices that are well researched in tourism literature. The table below indicates the main factors used in tourist profiles.

Table 1. Factors used in determining tourist profiles

Factors	Sub-factors	Sources
Demographic characteristics		Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Formica and Uysal, 1998; Mudambi and Baum, 1997; Rajasenani, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Speirs, 2003; Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009; Zhang and Marcussen, 2007
	Sex	Arroyo, 2012; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; IECE, 2016; Nasers, 2009; Rajasenani, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Age	Arroyo, 2012; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Formica and Uysal, 1998; IECE, 2016; Rajasenani, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Speirs, 2003
	Nationality	Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; IECE, 2016; Nasers, 2009; Rajasenani, Manaloor, and Abraham, 2012
	Language	Rajasenani, Manaloor, and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004
Socio-economic characteristics		Baloglu, 1997; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Heung, Qu and Chu, 2001; Morrison et al., 1996; Rajasenani, Manaloor, and Abraham, 2012; Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009; Tatham and Dornoff, 1971; Zhang and Marcussen, 2007
	Income	Arroyo, 2012; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Nasers, 2009; Rajasenani, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Marital Status	Formica and Uysal, 1998; IECE, 2016; Rajasenani, Manaloor, and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003

	Education	Arroyo, 2012; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Formica and Uysal, 1998; IECE, 2016; Nasers, 2009; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Occupation	IECE, 2016; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Location/ Residence	Nasers, 2009; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
Psychographic		Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009; Zhang and Marcussen, 2007
	Psychological profiles of consumers and lifestyles	Speirs, 2003
	Lifestyle information	Woodside and Pitts, 1976
	Vacation lifestyle	Perreault, Darden and Darden, 1977
	Motivation	Cha, McCleary, and Uysal, 1995; Formica and Uysal, 1998; IECE, 2016; Zhang and Marcussen, 2007
Travel characteristics/ Travel behaviour patterns		Baloglu, 1997; Dropulić and Ružić, 2009; Heung, Qu and Chu, 2001; IECE, 2016; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Speirs, 2003; Sznajder, Przeborska and Scrimgeour, 2009
	Reason for visit	Arroyo, 2012; IECE, 2016; Gee, Makens and Choy, 1997; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Frequency of travel	Gee, Makens and Choy, 1997; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Travel arrangements/Trip planning	IECE, 2016; Morrison et al., 1996; Rajasenana, Manaloor, and Abraham, 2012
	Vehicle	IECE, 2016; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Distance willing to travel	Arroyo, 2012; Nasers, 2009; Speirs, 2003

	Accommodation	IECE, 2016; Nasers, 2009; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004; Speirs, 2003
	Duration of stay	IECE, 2016; Rajasenana, Manaloor and Abraham, 2012; Saayman and Slabbert, 2004

Author synthesized from Speirs (2003); Saayman M. and Slabbert E. (2004); Dropulić M. and Ružić P. (2009); Nasers (2009); Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour, (2009); Rajasenana D., Manaloor V. and Abraham B. (2012); Arroyo (2012); and IECE (2016).

Based on the literature, two types of descriptive and explanatory variables were chosen to profile agritourists in the Mekong Delta. These were *socio-demographic characteristics* (i.e., gender, age, occupation, income, and place of residence) and *travel characteristics* (i.e., reason for visit, travel arrangements, length of stay, and accommodation).

While the business of agritourism appears to be prospering, the fact that the concept of agritourism is used differently has resulted in difficulties in understanding this emerging industry (Chase et al., 2018). Researchers in the tourism and recreation fields use a wide variety of labels to address agritourism (Arroyo, 2012). Accordingly, there is disagreement regarding the boundaries and characteristics of agritourism, including its setting, types of experiences, authenticity, and importance (Streifeneder, 2016, cited in Chase et al., 2018). Despite the lack of consensus, it appears agritourism includes five broad categories of activity: 1) on-farm and direct sales; 2) accommodation; 3) entertainment and special events; 4) outdoor recreation; and 5) educational activities (Hardesty, 2018).

On one hand, some definitions of agritourism indicate concrete activities directly connected to an agricultural process or landscape. Tew and Barbieri (2012) described agritourism as '[a]ny activity in which a visitor to the farm or other agricultural setting contemplates the farm landscape or participates in an agricultural process for recreation or leisure purposes' (p. 216, cited in Arroyo, 2012). On the other hand, there are definitions that imply more activities may be considered agritourism. One such description claims that agritourism encompasses 'farming-related activities carried out on a working farm or other agricultural settings for entertainment or education purposes' (Arroyo et al., 2013, p. 45, cited in Chase et al., 2018). The broader of the two approaches are used in this study. Agritourism is regarded as a tourism product directly related to the agricultural environment, agricultural products, or agricultural accommodation (Liang, 2017; Qiu and Fan, 2016; Scaglione and Mendola, 2017, cited in Chen and Lee, 2018).

On-site surveys are useful for obtaining information about the domestic tourism market (Keyser, 2002, cited in Speirs, 2003). Our research was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic when the borders of Vietnam were closed to international tourists. Therefore, the target population of the study was exclusively domestic tourists. We used a self-administered questionnaire to compile the socio-demographic and travel characteristics of agritourists at Mekong Delta agritourism sites in thirteen Mekong Delta provinces. We collected 650 questionnaires between April and August of 2020.

Data were analyzed using the statistical software program SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the distribution of participants' socio-demographic and travel characteristics. The

Pearson chi-square test was used to compare differences in travel characteristics by socio-demographic category.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of agritourists (N=650)

		F	%
Sex	Male	348	53.5
	Female	302	46.5
Age	25 years old and below	133	20.5
	26-45 years old	412	63.4
	> 45 years old	105	16.2
	<i>Mean 34.91</i>	<i>Min 14</i>	<i>Max 72</i>
Occupation	Officer	247	38.0
	Business	166	25.5
	Professional	93	14.3
	Student	105	16.2
	Retired or below working age	25	3.8
	Unemployed	14	2.2
Monthly income	No income	15	2.3
	< 3 million VND	92	14.2
	3-< 5 million VND	106	16.3
	5 - < 10 million VND	233	35.8
	10 - < 15 million VND	143	22.0
	15 million VND and more	61	9.4
Place of Residence	Northern provinces	42	6.5
	Central and central highland provinces	30	4.6
	Southeast provinces	37	5.7
	Ho Chi Minh City	161	24.8
	Mekong River Delta	380	58.5

Sex

Sex is an imperative demographic characteristic in social science as differences between men and women are socially meaningful. Of the 650 participants, 348 (53.5%) were male, and the rest (46.5%) were female. In Nasers' (2009) study of consumer trends and participation in agritourism activities, of the 415 respondents, 45.54% were male, and 54.46% were female. In Speirs' (2003) study of market segmentation profiles of potential and practicing agritourists, the majority of respondents were also female. Thus, the percentage of male tourists in this study (53.5%) is a little bit higher than found in previous literature.

Age

Like sex, age is an important demographic characteristic to consider. A person's age can affect how much time is available for travel and the type of activity they will take part in (Keyser, 2002, cited in Speirs, 2003). While classifying participants by gender is not difficult, age groups depend on the objectives and conditions of the study. Participants in this study fall into three age groups. The first category, participants twenty-five years of age and below, accounts for one-fifth of the total (20.5%). The middle group, comprised of participants from twenty-six to forty-five years old, represents the largest segment at 63.4%. The oldest group, participants forty-six and above, constitutes the smallest segment, 16.2% of the total. The mean age of the sample was 34.91. Thus, the agritourists of Mekong Delta are, on average, quite young; most are below the age of forty-six. This finding is in line with Speirs (2003), who found that almost 70% of agritourists were aged eighteen to thirty-four.

Occupation

Occupation is a major demographic characteristic but also hard to classify. In this study, respondents' occupations were categorized as *the office* (public service, clerk, and administrative jobs), *business, professional, student, retiree and below working age*, and *unemployed*. The two largest occupation groups were office and business jobs, 38% and 25.5%, respectively. The two intellectual groups, professionals and students, were similar in size (14.3% and 16.2%, respectively). The two smallest groups included participants who were either too old or too young to have jobs (3.8%) and unemployed people (2.2%). The results indicated that almost all the participants did have paid jobs.

Income

Tourism is widely recognized in the literature as being income elastic (Rudez, 2018). Income is one of the controlling factors in explaining tourism needs (Rudez, 2018; Vanhove, 2001, cited in Speirs, 2003). The average Vietnamese earned about 4.2 million per month in 2020.

In this study, respondents were divided into five groups, except for the 2.3% who had no income. The lowest income group was comprised of participants whose income was quite below the average. This group accounts for 14.2%. The group with average income made up 16.3%. The three groups with higher-than-average income covered two-thirds of the total. Of these, the largest group had an income from five to less than ten million, the second had an income from ten to less than fifteen million, and the highest income group accounted for 9.4%. Thus, most of the agritourists visiting Mekong Delta agritourism sites had a higher-than-average income. This result is similar to Nasers' (2009) finding that agritourists have an above-average income level. It is hard for people with average or low income to afford travel, as stated in Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour's research (2009). People must reach a certain income bracket to use agritourist services, and low income automatically excludes a group of potential consumers of agritourism services.

Place of Residence

Place of origin is also an important segmentation criterion (Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009). Participants were classified according to the five main geographic regions of

Vietnam. Respondents from northern provinces, who traveled the farthest distance, accounted for 6.5% of the total tourist population, a slightly larger group than participants from the southeast provinces (5.7%) and the central and central highland provinces (4.6%).¹ About one-fourth of the participants (24.8%) were from Ho Chi Minh City, and the remainder (58.5%) were from the Mekong Delta itself. This finding is consistent with Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour (2009), who observed that most agritourists come from cities.

In short, survey results suggest tourists who visit agritourism sites in the Mekong Delta are roughly equal parts men and women, quite young, hold diverse occupations, have higher-than-average income, and come mostly from nearby provinces.

Travel Characteristics

Travel behaviour patterns take many forms, as indicated in Table 1. Below are some characteristics measured in this survey.

Reason for visit

Table 3. Reason for visit

	F	%	% of cases
Pilgrimage	40	5.4	6.2
Study	123	16.8	18.9
Business	108	14.7	16.6
Leisure for pure rural air	104	14.2	16.0
Sightseeing, picnic	287	39.1	44.2
For agricultural activities	36	4.9	5.5
For farm life experiences	33	4.5	5.1
Other	3	0.4	0.5
Total	734	100	

Knowing the reason why people travel and why they choose the destinations is imperative. Tourism marketers will benefit when they can anticipate destination choices as well as the activities in which tourists will participate (Speirs, 2003).

As shown in Table 3, sightseeing and picnicking motivated the largest proportion of agritourists (44.2%). The three runner-up reasons were studied (18.9%), business (16.6%), and leisure for pure rural air (16.0%). Participants selected reasons specific to agritourism, namely agricultural activities, and farm life experiences, less often. Both categories came in at around five percent. Our findings were in accordance with Arroyo (2012), who found that while agritourism has grown, most residents (68.6%) had never visited a farm for agritourism purposes.

The *reason for the visit* question involved multiple response variables and thus was not suitable for statistical testing. However, descriptive results suggest some differences among respondent groups related to their purpose for agritourism. Differences among age groups are worthy of attention. The youngest group reported seeking farm experiences (8.1%) much more

¹ This research was carried out in 2020 when COVID-19 was still menaced, though at the time the survey was given, the pandemic was not serious in Vietnam.

than the oldest group (0.9%). This difference may reflect changes in the Vietnamese economy and social organization. A few decades ago, most Vietnamese were farmers. Consequently, older tourists may already be familiar with farm life and less interested in agricultural experiences. Younger ones, including students, may be intrigued by the novelty of rural life.

Occupation also may also relate to reasons for visiting agritourism sites. Students were more likely to want farm experiences (7.7%) than those who did not have a job (2.5%). As stated above, income probably plays a role as well. The lowest-income group sought specifically agritourism-related activities more (7.1%) than the highest-income group (1.6%, *see Table 3.1*).

Travel Arrangements

Table 4. Travel arrangement

	F	%
Individual, self-arranged	256	39.4
Organization, self-arranged	279	42.9
Booked tour for individuals	52	8.0
Booked tours for organizations	63	9.7
Total	650	100

Planning a trip involves a number of tasks, including but not limited to gathering information related to the trip, planning travel routes and places to sleep, specifying sites to visit, and creating a trip budget (Sznajder, Przezborska and Scrimgeour, 2009). Most of the participants arranged their own travel instead of depending on a travel agency as they might have in the past (Table 4). Self-guided tours are ideal for travelers whose main priorities are flexibility and spontaneity. Thanks to technology, making one's own travel plans is easier and more convenient than ever. Tourists use smart devices to search the internet for detailed information about the destination, best prices, and services. They can be well-informed even while on the move (Pradhan, Oh, and Lee, 2018).

In terms of individual or collective organizing for the trip, more than half (52.6%) of the participants traveled as part of a group (e.g., coworkers). Group trips are an important part of the agritourist business (Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour 2009). Thus, survey results suggest that group trips are a potential market for agritourism in Mekong Delta.

A chi-square test showed some differences in travel arrangements among participants with different demographic characteristics. For example, the younger the participants were, the more they were to arrange their own travel. The older tourists were, the more they chose to book tours ($p = 0.001$, *see Table 4.1*). As noted above, travelers who use smart devices enjoy benefits that those unfamiliar with them cannot (Pradhan, Oh, and Lee, 2018). Because youth tend to be more proficient with technology than the elderly, they may be more likely to take advantage of such support to make their own travel plans. With regard to the occupation ($p = 0.015$, *see Table 4.1*), groups of office workers and professionals tended to self-arrange by the organization (often their work institution), while students and those who did not have jobs (who, by definition, did not have work affiliation) tended to arrange their travel individually. Most booked tours were taken by business groups. This may have been because businesspeople tend to be busy and do not have time to make their itinerary themselves.

Length of Stay

Table 5. Length of stay

	F	%
Half a day	72	11.1
One day	314	48.3
More than one day	264	40.6
Total	650	100

Depending on the duration of their visit, agritourist clients can be grouped into segments, such as *momentary agritourists*, who spend up to three to four hours; *one-day agritourists*, who spend a whole day on the farm without staying overnight; and agritourists who spend all day on the farm and stay overnight (Sznajder, Przezborska and Scrimgeour, 2009). According to Table 5, fewer participants in this study stayed at the destination more than one day than stayed for one day or half of a day. Almost all the agritourists surveyed were from Mekong Delta and nearby Ho Chi Minh City, so they did not require accommodation. To stay longer, they would need to be enticed by attractive tourism products and services.

A chi-square test showed no significant differences among participants with different demographic characteristics except for monthly income. Participants with average incomes of three to less than five million VND had the highest rate of overnight stays and half-day stays. They were the least likely participants to stay one day ($p=0.006$, see Table 5.1).

Accommodation

Table 6. Accommodation

	F	%
Hotel	222	34.2
Motel	113	17.4
Relatives' or friends' houses	54	8.3
Homestay/farmstay	103	15.8
Religious places	7	1.1
No accommodation	151	23.2
Total	650	100

Accommodation is a pillar of agritourism essential to a tourist's satisfaction with a trip or holiday. Agritourists can choose farm stays, cottage stays, agri-hotels and motels, self-service beds, and agri-camping. Some agri-hotels provide special services (Sznajder, Przezborska and Scrimgeour, 2009).

As Table 6 shows, the most common accommodations chosen by respondents were hotels (34.2%), followed by motels (17.4%). Hotels are usually safe places with various extra services (Sznajder, Przezborska, and Scrimgeour, 2009), attracting a large proportion of tourists.

Among all the types of accommodation in the survey, only home- and farmstays can be explicitly considered agri-accommodation. Chi-square tests showed several differences among participants' use of agri-accommodation. The higher the age of the respondents, the more they tended to choose a home- or farmstay ($p=0.001$). Professionals chose home- or farmstays the most,

while office workers and students chose them the least ($p=0.000$). Concerning income, two of the highest income groups took this type of accommodation more often than the three lower income groups ($p=0.000$, see *Table 6.1*).

In summary, most tourists to Mekong Delta agritourism sites in this survey did not travel for purposes of agritourism and arranged their own trips. Most did not stay overnight, and those that did select a hotel or motel over a homestay or farmstay.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the literature on agritourism, adding to the limited research dealing with agritourist profiles, especially in the case of the Mekong Delta. The main findings from the survey follow, including a discussion of the participating tourists' demographic and travel characteristics.

Segmenting the agritourism market is imperative for various reasons. Once the need of the customers is explored, proper resources and amenities can be progressed. Better marketing can also be reached as a result of understanding who the tourists are and where to target them. Customer satisfaction will also increase (Speirs, 2003). The information obtained can be used by all stakeholders to aid in the continued development of agritourism in the Mekong Delta.

Regarding the tourists' demographic characteristics, slightly more male than female tourists visited the Mekong Delta; tourists tended to be young; most of them had jobs or were students; a large proportion of the participants had a higher-than-average monthly income, and most traveled to the Mekong Delta from nearby provinces. This tourist profile should serve as a guidepost to help destination managers and farmers make their tourism offerings as effective as possible. Significantly, Mekong Delta agritourism practitioners and providers should target a large market of tourists from distant provinces (e.g., the northern and central parts of the country).

A chi-square test showed some differences among participants with different demographic characteristics. Older and business groups preferred booked tours while other occupation groups arranged their own tours. Older tourists, professionals, and high-income groups were most likely to choose homestay or farmstay accommodation.

Concerning tourists' travel characteristics, most respondents to our survey did not travel for agritourism and most arranged their own travel. It can be inferred that, as most of the tourists came only a short distance, they did not have to seek overnight accommodation. Few chose to take advantage of the unique style of accommodation in the Mekong Delta (i.e., homestay/farmstay). These findings imply that agri-accommodation in the Mekong Delta is not yet attractive enough to compel visitors to stay. Mekong Delta agritourism providers should pay more attention to product development and marketing, thereby expanding the demand for agritourism in the Mekong Delta.

This study has some limitations. First, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey only addressed domestic tourists, while international tourists are considered a potential market for this type of tourism in the Mekong Delta. Second, the study covered some but not many of the tourists' profile factors. Third, the study investigated who the agritourists are but not what services and facilities they expect. Future research can address these limitations by addressing a wider target population, identifying additional tourist characteristics, and further exploring the potential demand for agritourism in Vietnam.

REFERENCES

- Arroyo, C. (2012) What is Agritourism? Reconciling farmers, residents, and extension faculty perspectives. Master's thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia.
- Bao Hoang Gia (2021) Some solutions for sustainable agricultural tourism development in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, paper presented at E3S Web Conference, Vol. 234. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202123400063>
- Chase, L. C., Stewart, M., Schilling, B., Smith, B., and Walk, M. (2018) Agritourism: Toward a conceptual framework for industry analysis, *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 13-19.
- Chen, Y. and Lee, C. (2018) Constructing an evaluation model of agricultural tourism production value with a Fuzzy AHP approach, (調查研究-方法與應用/第 41 期 2018 年 10 月, 頁, pp. 57-86.
- Dropulić, M. and Ružić, P. (2009) Profile of tourists as consumers of the cultural, entertainment and sports offerings in Istria, paper presented at Planning for the future, learning from the past: Contemporary development in tourism, travel and hospitality, Rhodes, Greece, 3-5 April 2009.
- Hardesty, S. (2018) Fostering agricultural sustainability through agritourism, paper presented at 166th EAAE Seminar: Sustainability in the agri-food sector. National University of Ireland, Galway.
- Institute for Research in Environment, Civil Engineering and Energy of Albania (IECE) (2016) Profile of domestic and international tourists in the CBC region.
- Nasers, M. (2009) Iowa agritourism consumer profile: demographics, preferences, and participation levels, Master's thesis, Iowa State University, Ames.
- Ngo T. P. L., Nguyen T. V. H. and Tran T. (2021) Agritourism in the Mekong Delta—Advantages, weaknesses and development solutions, *Journal of Scientific Information Political Theory*, Vol. 8, No. 78, pp. 48-55.
- Pradhan, M. K., Oh J., and Lee H. (2018) Understanding travelers' behavior for sustainable smart tourism: A technology readiness perspective, *Sustainability*, Vol. 10, No. 11, p. 4259. DOI:10.3390/su10114259
- Rajaseenan, D., Manaloor, V. and Abraham, B. (2012). Tourist profiles and characteristics vis-à-vis market segmentation of ecotourism destinations in Kerala, *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 3, No. 14, pp. 134-144.
- Rudez, H. (2018) The relationship between income and tourism demand: Old findings and new research, *Academica Turistica*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 67-72.
- Saayman, M. and Slabbert, E. (2004) A profile of tourists visiting the Kruger National Park, Koedoe—African Protected Area Conservation and Science, Vol. 47, No. 1.
- Speirs, L. (2003) Agritourism: Market segmentation profile of potential and practising agritourists, Master's thesis, University of Stellenbosch.
- Sznajder M., Przeborska, L. and Scrimgeour, F. (2009) Agritourism. CABI USA, Boston.

Appendix

Table 3.1. Reason for visit with different demographic characteristics

	Total	Pilgrimage	Study	Business	Leisure for pure rural air	Sightseeing , picnic	For agricultural activities	For farm life experiences	Other
Sex									
Male	388	21 (5.4)	67 (17.3)	61 (15.7)	54 (13.9)	143 (36.9)	22 (5.7)	19 (4.9)	1 (0.3)
Female	346	19 (5.5)	56 (16.2)	47 (13.6)	50 (14.5)	144 (41.6)	14 (4.0)	14 (4.0)	2 (0.6)
Age									
25 years old and below	173	2 (1.2)	46 (26.6)	8 (4.6)	25 (14.5)	67 (38.7)	10 (5.8)	14 (8.1)	1 (0.6)
26-45 years old	452	24 (5.3)	71 (15.7)	87 (19.2)	56 (12.4)	177 (39.2)	18 (4.0)	18 (4.0)	1 (0.2)
> 45 years old	109	14 (12.8)	6 (5.5)	13 (11.9)	23 (21.1)	43 (39.4)	8 (7.3)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.9)
Occupation									
Office	272	8 (2.9)	35 (12.9)	67 (24.6)	37 (13.6)	104 (38.2)	11 (4.0)	8 (2.9)	2 (0.7)
Business	174	20 (11.5)	15 (8.6)	24 (13.8)	22 (12.6)	77 (44.3)	7 (4.0)	8 (4.6)	1 (0.6)
Professional	106	5 (4.7)	26 (24.5)	15 (14.2)	20 (18.9)	28 (26.4)	7 (6.6)	5 (4.7)	0
Student	142	1 (0.7)	44 (31.0)	1 (0.7)	19 (13.4)	57 (40.1)	9 (6.3)	11 (7.7)	0
Retirees, below working-age, Unemployed	40	6 (15.0)	3 (7.5)	1 (2.5)	6 (15.0)	21 (52.5)	2 (5.0)	1 (2.5)	0
Monthly income									
< 3 million VND	140	5 (3.6)	40 (28.6)	1 (0.7)	17 (12.1)	59 (42.1)	8 (5.7)	10 (7.1)	0
3-< 5 million VND	123	9 (7.3)	21 (17.1)	9 (7.3)	15 (12.2)	57 (46.3)	7 (5.7)	4 (3.3)	1 (0.8)

Tourism and Sustainable Development Review Journal (TSDR), Vol. 3 (2), 9-25
Tourist's Profile of Agritourism in The Mekong Delta
Hanh Nguyen, Lan Ngo

5 - < 10 million VND	257	14 (5.4)	43 (16.7)	56 (21.8)	28 (10.9)	99 (38.5)	6 (2.3)	10 (3.9)	1 (0.4)
10 - < 15 million VND	153	8 (5.2)	18 (11.8)	29 (19.0)	32 (20.9)	46 (30.1)	11 (7.2)	8 (5.2)	1 (0.7)
15 million VND and more	61	4 (6.6)	1 (1.6)	13 (21.3)	12 (19.7)	26 (42.6)	4 (6.6)	1 (1.6)	0

Table 4.1. Travel arrangement with different demographic characteristics

	Total	Individual self-arranged	Organization self-arranged	Booked tour for individuals	Booked tour for organizations
Sex					
Male	348	134 (38.5)	144 (41.1)	30 (8.6)	40 (11.5)
Female	302	122 (40.4)	135 (44.7)	22 (7.3)	23 (7.6)
<i>p=0.33</i>					
Age					
25 years old and below	173	63 (47.4)	57 (42.9)	5 (3.8)	8 (6.0)
26 - 45 years old	452	157 (38.1)	182 (44.2)	28 (6.8)	45 (10.9)
> 45 years old	109	36 (34.3)	40 (38.1)	19 (18.1)	10 (9.5)
<i>p=0.001</i>					
Occupation					
Office	272	91 (36.8)	117 (47.4)	23 (9.3)	16 (6.5)
Business	174	67 (40.4)	58 (34.9)	13 (7.8)	28 (16.9)
Professional	106	32 (34.4)	44 (47.3)	6 (6.5)	11 (11.8)
Student	142	48 (45.7)	45 (42.9)	5 (4.8)	7 (6.7)
Retirees, below working-age, Unemployed	40	18 (46.2)	15 (38.5)	5 (12.8)	1 (2.6)
<i>p=0.015</i>					
Monthly income					
< 3 million VND	140	47 (43.9)	48 (44.9)	7 (6.5)	5 (4.7)
3-< 5 million VND	123	51 (48.1)	41 (38.7)	8 (7.5)	6 (5.7)
5 - < 10 million VND	257	83 (35.6)	104 (44.6)	15 (6.4)	31 (13.3)
10 - < 15 million VND	153	53 (37.1)	61 (42.7)	13 (9.1)	16 (11.2)
15 million VND and more	61	22 (36.1)	25 (41.0)	9 (14.8)	5 (8.2)
<i>p=0.133</i>					

Table 5.1: Length of stay with different demographic characteristics

	Total	Half a day	One day	More than one day
Sex				
Male	348	36 (10.3)	175 (50.3)	137 (39.4)
Female	302	36 (11.9)	139 (46.0)	127 (42.1)
<i>p=0.533</i>				
Age				
25 years old and below	173	19 (14.7)	61 (45.9)	53 (39.8)
26 - 45 years old	452	40 (9.7)	200 (48.5)	172 (41.7)
> 45 years old	109	13 (12.4)	53 (50.0)	39 (37.1)
<i>p=0.587</i>				
Occupation				
Officer	272	28 (11.3)	117 (47.4)	102 (41.3)
Business	174	16 (9.6)	90 (54.2)	60 (36.1)
Professionals	106	10 (10.8)	38 (40.9)	45 (48.4)
Student	142	13 (12.4)	48 (45.7)	44 (41.9)
Retirees, below working-age, Unemployed	40	5 (12.8)	21 (53.8)	13 (33.3)
<i>p=0.673</i>				
Monthly income				
< 3 million VND	140	12 (11.2)	57 (53.3)	38 (35.5)
3-< 5 million VND	123	20 (18.9)	32 (30.2)	54 (50.9)
5 - < 10 million VND	257	25 (10.7)	121 (51.9)	87 (37.3)
10 - < 15 million VND	153	11 (7.7)	73 (50.8)	26 (42.6)
15 million VND and more	61	4 (6.6)	31 (50.8)	26 (42.6)
<i>p=0.006</i>				

Table 6.1. Accommodation with different demographic characteristics

	Total	Hotel	Motel	Relatives' or friends' houses	Homestay/farmstay	Religious places	Non-accommodation
<i>p=0.633</i>							
Sex							
Male	348	123 (35.9)	64 (18.4)	27 (7.8)	48 (13.8)	4 (1.1)	80 (23.0)
Female	302	27 (32.1)	49 (16.2)	27 (8.9)	55 (18.2)	3 (1.0)	71 (23.5)
<i>p=0.001</i>							
Age							
25 years old and below	173	36 (27.1)	20 (15.0)	17 (12.8)	18 (13.5)	0	42 (31.6)
26-45 years old	452	154 (37.4)	81 (19.7)	25 (6.1)	64 (15.5)	3 (0.7)	85 (20.6)
> 45 years old	109	32 (30.5)	12 (11.4)	12 (11.4)	21 (20.0)	4 (3.8)	24 (22.9)
<i>p=0.000</i>							
Occupation							
Office	272	116 (47.0)	36 (14.6)	15 (6.1)	26 (10.5)	1 (0.4)	53 (21.5)
Business	174	50 (30.1)	34 (20.5)	15 (9.0)	32 (19.3)	5 (3.0)	30 (18.1)
Professional	106	25 (26.9)	18 (19.4)	5 (5.4)	25 (28.0)	0	19 (20.4)
Student	142	24 (22.9)	20 (19.0)	15 (14.3)	12 (11.4)	0	34 (32.4)
Retiree, below working-age, Unemployed	40	7 (17.9)	5 (12.8)	4 (10.3)	7 (17.9)	1 (2.6)	15 (38.5)
<i>p=0.000</i>							
Monthly income							
< 3 million VND	140	24 (22.4)	18 (16.8)	12 (11.2)	14 (13.1)	2 (1.9)	37 (34.6)
3- < 5 million VND	123	22 (20.8)	32 (30.2)	12 (11.3)	18 (17.0)	0	22 (20.8)
5 - < 10 million VND	257	101 (40.3)	37 (15.9)	15 (6.4)	28 (12.0)	3 (1.3)	49 (21.0)
10 - < 15 million VND	153	52 (36.4)	18 (12.6)	10 (7.0)	31 (21.7)	1 (0.7)	31 (21.7)
15 million VND and more	61	23 (37.7)	8 (13.1)	5 (8.2)	12 (19.7)	1 (1.6)	12 (19.7)
<i>p=0.000</i>							