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NERMA ČOLAKOVIĆ-PRGUDA

JASNA HASANBEGOVIĆ

IRMA ĐIDELIJA ČOLAKOVIĆ

LEJLA ŠKALJIĆ

NURAY DEMİR

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The status of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Nerma ČOLAKOVIĆ-PRGUDA[1], Jasna HASANBEGOVIĆ[2,*], Irma ĐIDELIJA ČOLAKOVIĆ[3], Lejla ŠKALJIĆ[3], Nuray DEMİR[4]

[1]Departmet of Economy, Faculty of Law, Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
[2]Department of Agriculture, Agromediterranean Faculty, Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
[3]Departmet of Economy, Faculty of Economy, Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
[4]Department of Agricultural Economy, Faculty of Agriculture, Ataturk University, Erzurum, Turkiye

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Abstract: Agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina has a lot of potential benefit for economic growth and sustainable development in rural regions, as it incorporates local culture and natural beauty into the tourism offerings of the region. Tourism creates opportunities to diversify the economy, retain traditions, improve local income, and protect natural resources. This study covered Međugorje, Ilijaš, Rostovo, Vlašić, Bosanska Krupa, Neum, Olovo, Gornji Vakuf, Sarajevo, and Donji Vakuf. Agritourism can provide authentic experiences like learning about traditional agriculture, fruit harvesting, tasting local products, and environmental preservation in destinations like Međugorje and Neum. Ilijaš and Gornji Vakuf have potential in organic production, while agricultural facilities in Vlašić may attract people seeking outdoor activities like hiking and skiing. Bosanska Krupa and Olovo have the potential to create one-of-a-kind agritourism experiences by leveraging their rich natural and cultural history. In addition to economic benefits, agritourism can help to preserve local culture and traditions. This is especially important in nations that are modernising and globalising. Agritourism allows tourists to gain a better understanding and respect for the local culture and traditions. The integration of agritourism within Bosnia and Herzegovina's larger tourist offering is potentially the key to success in rural economic development and sustainability. This requires investment in infrastructural development, local population education, and destination advertising in both domestic and international markets. This study aims to investigate how agritourism may be efficiently incorporated into the overall tourism system, with a focus on three important segments: products, services, and promotion. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to study existing practices and identify difficulties in Bosnia and Herzegovina's agritourism. More research on the demands of the target group, the economic impact of agritourism, and the sustainability of implemented techniques is recommended. Understanding market dynamics and consumer behaviour can aid in the development of strategies to assist the growth of agritourism. Integrating agritourism into a closed system of product and service offers has the potential to considerably boost the competitiveness of the sector. Investing in infrastructure, education, and coordinated promotion are critical elements to realise the full potential of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key words: Agritourism, economic growth, management, management of tourism potential

1. Introduction

Tourism in rural areas facilitates primary agricultural production of domestic, high-quality organic food, and the development of nonagricultural activities. Agritourism is crucial for the preservation of villages, historic buildings, and the environment. Other benefits include the development of the rural economy, attracting and retaining young people with employment opportunities. The use of surplus space in existing farm buildings benefits the local people and protect the historical and cultural values in villages (Demonja and Ružić, 2011).

The aim of this study was to understand the impact of agritourism of the rural environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We conducted an analysis of the rural areas and the development of agritourism in the region. Based on our findings, we propose a holistic and sustainable approach to agritourism for a positive impact on the Bosnian and Herzegovina economy. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a richness of natural resources and cultural attractions to suit visitors' diverse interests.

Tourism as an industry has proven to be an important driver of economic development in many countries, particularly those that rely on natural beauty, cultural legacy, or a favourable geographical location. From this perspective, sustainable tourism encourages the preservation of the environment and local cultures while

* Correspondence: jasna.hasanbegovic@unmo.ba

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simultaneously contributing to economic prosperity. The socioeconomic issues and the rural area make the agritourism business unique. The health of the environment is fundamentally important for carrying out activities and meeting the needs of tourists (Brščić, 2005). Agritourism has the potential to open new profitable markets, while ensuring new travel experiences for education, participation in agricultural activities, and enjoyment (Chiang, 2013).

The needs of modern tourists and their preference for how to spend free time has created new trends in the tourism market. The attractiveness of agritourism is reflected in the need for differentiated, richer content that takes place on agritourism estates throughout the year. With the emergence of new interests of modern tourists who are attracted by natural environments in rural areas, agritourism is becoming more and more important in the tourism offering of Croatia (Ćurić, 2010).

As a result, expanding tourism in a sustainable manner not only economically benefits local people but also helps to preserve natural resources for future generations. Responsible tourist management and community engagement are critical to accomplishing the sustainable development goals of the sector. Agritourism is becoming an increasingly important part of tourism, creating high-value, new experiences for tourists that are necessary in the context of modern tourism. The increasing importance and relevance of agritourism implies accommodation and food services, in addition to economic, cultural, and other activities that are related to the rural environment (Grgić et al. 2015).

Rural areas are the opposite of urban areas. This means they have a small population density, traditional agricultural activity, a rural identity, and numerous differences in landscape (Ružić, 2009).

Madhavan and Rastogi (2011) noted that despite the creation of numerous indicators for tracking progress in sustainable development within the tourism sector, it has become evident that these indicators are not effective in practice. Developing infrastructure projects, promoting local attractions, and providing unique experiences to attract visitors are all examples of ways to encourage tourism in rural regions. In addition to economic benefits, tourism can help to improve social cohesion and empower communities, allowing locals to actively shape their own future. However, it is critical to remember that tourist development should be sustainable and in line with the demands of the local population in order to avoid the negative consequences of overcrowding and conserve natural and cultural heritage. This is the only way tourism can truly drive rural development.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is spending more on agritourism to strengthen its tourism offering. Agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is possibly a new source of services and a link between tourism and agriculture. Because integrated services are provided, agricultural properties have a better chance of survival. Furthermore, this type of tourism plays an important role in the growth of tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is vital to note that agritourism can be defined based on the services it provides to tourists. In this context, there is agritourism that just provides accommodation services, those that provide catering services, and those that mix the two.

Broadly speaking, there are two groups of modern tourists: classic tourists and new tourists. Classic tourists look for seek sunshine, and additional facilities and attractions by the sea. New tourists look for adventure, drastic changes, and unfamiliar activities (Korlević and Krajnović, 1999). Jelinčić (2007) discuss the changes in demand in the rural tourism market, stating that tourists are looking for an active vacation that supports care for the environment and their health. At the same time, people travel more often but for shorter periods. In various tourist destinations, in addition to the consumption of products and services, tourists assess the quality of services based on their experiences that are often shared with others (Prebensen, 2007). Agritourism stems from the adventurous spirit of modern visitors that includes staying in a rural environment and tasting traditional dishes characteristic of the local climate and culture (Šegro and Tomičić, 1998).

Tourists can participate in rural activities such as agriculture, enjoyment of landscapes and agribiodiversity, and exploring the local culture (Herrera Catalino and Lizardo, 2004). Visitors to family farms are interested in convenience, a variety of activities, purchasing value-added products, and having greater access to information about the farm, products, and activities (McGehee, 2007).

According to statistics from numerous studies, agritourism has grown significantly in recent years. The increased need for authentic experiences, as well as travellers' growing interest in sustainable tourism, have contributed to the popularity of agritourism. In Europe, particularly in Italy, France, and Croatia, agritourism has come to represent relaxation, authenticity, and high-quality food. Agritourism promotes the long-term development of local communities by providing extra revenue streams for agriculture. This style of tourism preserves local customs, languages, and cultures, allowing visitors to learn about traditional ways of living. A healthy lifestyle, characterised by a connection to nature, local food, and outdoor activities, is becoming increasingly important to modern travellers. Activities such as hiking and cycling are attracting an increasing number of travellers looking to escape the urban lifestyle. Despite the obvious advantages, agritourism has several challenges.

The biggest challenge is a lack of infrastructure in rural regions, making travel difficult for tourists. In addition, many small producers lack the marketing and business management skills required to attract and keep guests. Finally, changing climatic conditions and economic crises can have a negative impact on agricultural productivity, hence affecting the availability of agritourism services.

The European Community (EC) (2002) emphases the economic contribution of this type of tourism, particularly in terms of rural workforce employment, development opportunities for areas with difficult community management, and ensuring the preservation of their natural and cultural heritage. However, member states are prohibited from determining who is part of this industry. To promote development, the EC takes part in activities aimed at developing tourism activities in regions and areas with difficult community management conditions through the European Fund for Regional Development, as well as agricultural tourism promotion activities funded by the European Fund for Guidelines and Guarantees in Agriculture. The European Federation of Rural Tourism (Ruraltour) has a significant impact on the development of rural tourism and agritourism throughout Europe. This federation consists of 28 professional organisations that are responsible for the promotion of rural tourism in 25 different countries. The federation also has an official website where visitors can examine the countries and, by clicking on a specific country, receive an overview of all the essential information about the offers available as well as direct access to the national organisation's homepage. It is also possible to review all of the products accessible under Europe's rural tourism framework, which includes agritourism.

Agritourism research in Bosnia and Herzegovina covers the study and development of ways to improve agritourism/rural tourism. The emphasis is on understanding the factors that drive the growth of rural tourism, including social and natural resources, the local population, and family agritourism organisations. The future of agritourism looks bright. Agritourism will increase as people become more conscious of the necessity of sustainable development and environmental preservation. Small producers can engage with tourists through innovative solutions such as internet platforms for promoting agritourism services. Furthermore, teaching local people about the value of tourism and marketing methods will help this industry thrive. This study examined the agritourism market, including its benefits, problems, and potential for future expansion. Agritourism is a major part of the tourism industry with enormous growth and development potential. Its advantages, as well as the ability to solve problems and adapt to new tourism trends, will be critical to future success. As public awareness of environmental conservation and the value of local products grows, agritourism is set to play an increasingly crucial role in building a sustainable tourism industry. In this regard, the support of government institutions, local communities, and farmers will allow for greater harmonisation between agriculture and tourism, thereby improving the agritourism offering.

2. Materials and methods

This study aims to evaluate the potential of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a focus on preserving local culture and community identity, stimulating the rural economy, fostering sustainable tourism development, and supporting the integration of small-scale rural farms. We investigate the key elements necessary for establishing a comprehensive rural tourism strategy and examine their impacts on social and natural resources.

To understand the influence of rural tourism development, the study analyzes its effects on local populations and family organisations across several regions. Data collection involved a detailed examination of agritourism organisations to identify primary requirements and challenges faced by stakeholders. Based on these findings, the study offers recommendations for branding local products and services and developing informational materials to enhance awareness and accessibility.

The initiative aims to strengthen community resilience by promoting agritourism, generating employment opportunities, improving infrastructure, and fostering local connections. Additionally, this study supports initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship and collaboration among protected areas, thereby enriching the agritourism offerings in the region.

The research was conducted in key locations including Međugorje, Ilijaš, Rostovo, Vlašić, Bosanska Krupa, Neum, Olovo, Gornji Vakuf, Sarajevo, and Donji Vakuf. The objectives included identifying tourism complexes, mapping attractive sites, and surveying owners and users of tourist facilities to gather valuable insights for future development. This provided critical information on tourism capacities across various sites, enabling a better understanding of regional tourism resources.

Furthermore, stakeholder surveys captured the needs, preferences, and suggestions of facility owners and visitors to improve the overall visitor experience. A comprehensive terrain assessment was also conducted to identify previously unrecognised areas with potential as tourist resources, broadening the scope of regional tourism development.

The collected data serve as a foundation for formulating strategic development plans, investing in tourism infrastructure, and designing targeted marketing campaigns to promote local attractions. These efforts are expected to generate long-term benefits, including economic growth, job creation, and improved quality

of life for local communities. Consequently, investing in research on regional tourism capacity is essential for ensuring sustainable tourism development and long-term economic prosperity.

The primary research methods included market analysis, surveys and interviews, resource assessments, and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. These approaches facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by agritourism organisations, providing valuable insights to inform strategic planning and policy formulation.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Market analysis

Each of the 10 localities included in this study are significant destinations with the potential to promote agritourism. Agritourism has tremendous potential to improve rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Međugorje, Ilijaš, Rostovo, Vlašić, Bosanska Krupa, Neum, Olovo, Gornji Vakuf, Sarajevo, and Donji Vakuf.

Međugorje is known for spiritual tourism, but it may also expand agritourism through wine, olive cultivation, and traditional specialities, with the potential of organising workshops and farm excursions. Ilijaš has a rich agricultural and animal husbandry legacy, with the prospect of creating rural farms that offer domestic products and services to visitors. The proximity to main roads in Rostovo can be used to promote local products and ecotourism, providing guests with rural experiences. Vlašić is recognised for mountain sports and traditional gastronomy. It can be improved by offering rural lodging and farms with ecological products. The nature and rivers of Bosanska Krupa may attract tourists interested in fishing, hiking, agritourism, and locally manufactured specialities. Neum, as Bosnia and Herzegovina's only coastal destination, can combine summer tourism with a variety of local agricultural products, including fish and olive oil. Olovo has the potential to become a centre for nature enthusiasts and healthy living if honey, medicinal herbs, and forest fruits production are encouraged. The Gornji Vakuf region has the potential to establish rural families and ecofarms that provide an authentic rural tourism experience. Sarajevo, as the capital, may promote agritourism through gastronomy excursions including local farms and products, as well as teaching about traditional farming methods.

The results of a SWOT analysis are shown in Table. The following is a summary of proposed strategies based on the SWOT analysis.

Strengths-opportunities (SO strategies):
Use the natural beauty and cultural heritage of Vlašić, Neum, and Međugorje to attract travellers seeking authentic and unconventional locations. Create teaching and promotion initiatives for sustainable agriculture and traditional food production practices to take advantage of rising sustainability awareness and community support (Table).

Strengths-threats (ST strategies):
Agritourism diversification offers a way to lessen seasonal dependence and the impact of seasonal concerns like unfavourable weather conditions. Create a plan for competitive positioning of agritourism offerings with respect to other destinations and types of tourism in order to reduce competition (Table).

Weaknesses-opportunities (WO strategies):
Invest in the education and training of the local population to address a shortage of education and skills while also capitalising on the rising demand for agritourism services.

Collaboration with government agencies and nongovernmental organisations to get support and funding for infrastructure initiatives that improve site accessibility (Table).

Weaknesses-threats (WT strategies):
Create a revenue and supply diversification strategy that minimises the effects of seasonal threats and a shortage of finance. Developing a network of collaboration among local economies to address the lack of infrastructure and external risks such as climate change.

Localities can use these TOWS (threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths) strategic tool to maximise their resources, decrease the impact of weaknesses, exploit opportunities, and confront threats in order to achieve sustainable agritourism development and contribute to their communities' economic prosperity (Table).

3.2. Analysis of results

The data show that the main activity of agritourism organisations was accommodation for guests (Figure 1). This was followed by guided farm excursions and tastings of local products, indicating that guests are increasingly interested in authentic experiences and learning about rural life and traditions. Agricultural activities were featured less frequently, but a large number of organisations still allow tourists to engage in activities such as fruit and vegetable harvesting. This can help to provide interactive and beneficial experiences for guests while also raising awareness of local agriculture and sustainable lifestyles.

Rural households are the most popular type of accommodation provided by agritourism organisations (Figure 2), indicating a focus on an authentic rural experience. Countryside holiday homes and chalets follow, implying that natural settings and rural landscapes appeal to guests seeking a tranquil and pleasant getaway.

The most popular motivation for respondents to engage in agritourism was a love of the rural way of life and nature (Figure 3), indicating an emotional connection

Table. SWOT analysis for the development of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

SWOT analysis	**Description**
Strengths	
Natural beauty	Each locality possesses rich natural landscapes, including mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests, which attract visitors and provide an ideal environment for outdoor activities.
Cultural heritage	Localities feature a rich cultural heritage, encompassing architecture, customs, folklore, and gastronomy, offering visitors an authentic experience.
Potential for sustainable agriculture	Many farms already practice sustainable agriculture, producing high-quality local products, including fruits, vegetables, meat, and dairy.
Weaknesses	
Lack of infrastructure	Insufficient infrastructure, such as roads, water supply, and electrical networks, hinders visitor access and limits the development of agritourism.
Lack of education and expertise	The scarcity of qualified personnel in rural areas presents challenges for managing agritourism activities and delivering high-quality services.
Limited financial resources	Restricted funding for infrastructure, marketing, and education slows the development of agritourism and reduces market competitiveness.
Seasonality	Agritourism is heavily seasonal, with visitor numbers peaking during the tourist season, leading to uneven income throughout the year.
Insufficient marketing	Inadequate promotion of agritourism destinations and services diminishes visibility and attractiveness.
Opportunities	
Increased awareness of sustainability	Growing attention to nature conservation and support for local communities can enhance visitor interest in agritourism and local products.
Tourist potential	Bosnia and Herzegovina is emerging as a popular destination for authentic and unconventional tourist experiences, providing opportunities for agritourism development.
Government and organizational support	Governmental and nongovernmental organizations offer support through funding, education, promotion, and infrastructure projects to foster agritourism growth.
Threats	
Competition	Rivalry with other destinations and tourism forms may pose a threat, particularly if visitor numbers remain insufficient.
Climate change	Climate variability can adversely impact agricultural production and natural resources, potentially threatening the sustainability of agritourism.

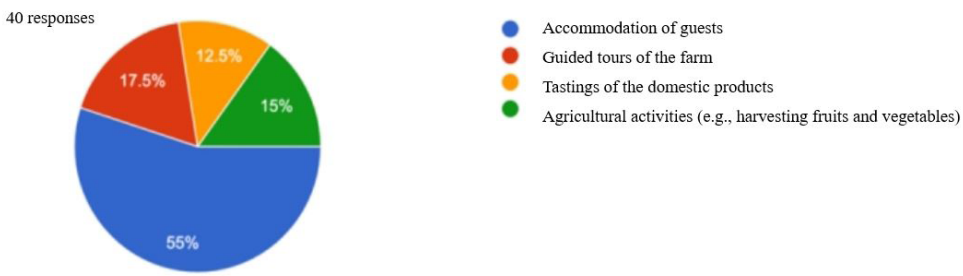

Figure 1. A summary of the responses to the question: What are the main activities of your agritourism organisation?

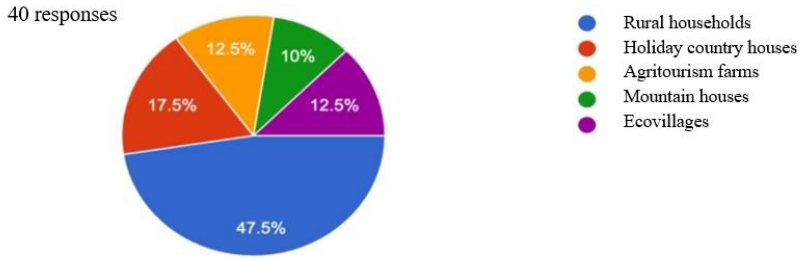

Figure 2. A summary of the responses to the question:
In what types of facilities do you provide services?



Figure 3. A summary of the responses to the question:
What is your motivation to engage in agritourism?

to the rural environment and nature. Furthermore, a large number of respondents emphasised the importance of revitalising rural areas and communities, indicating the need for sustaining the rural way of life and supporting the local economy as important issues. The possibility of diversifying income in the countryside was another major motivator, highlighting a concern in the economic stability and sustainability of rural economies. The desire to maintain tradition and local culture was often emphasised, indicating the significance of cultural identity and heritage in agritourism activities.

The majority of organisations (21 out of 40) reported that their agritourism activities and offerings are frequently visited, indicating that there is a considerable demand for their services and activities. Fewer organisations said that their activities or services were frequently (eight out of 40) or occasionally (nine out of 40) visited. This could suggest the seasonal nature of the business, changes in demand, or varied marketing methods used by organisations.

Many organisations (16 out of 40) regularly organise events or presentations as part of their agritourism offering. This shows their commitment to providing consistent and appealing activities for guests. Other organisations (15 out of 40) organise events or presentations on a regular basis, several times per year. This could be due to seasonal variations in demand or unique events that occur on specific dates or occasions. Fewer organisations (three out of 40) hold events or presentations on a yearly or less frequent basis. This could be due to certain conditions or resources that limit the frequency of incidents. Furthermore, six organisations claim that they adjust to the demands of their guests. This may involve organising events or presentations based on their requests or preferences.

The majority of organisations use both Facebook and Instagram, emphasising the relevance of social media in promoting agritourism operations (Figure 4). Google Ads is another major platform for paid advertising, and YouTube is used for video content. Email is used for direct communication with people, although TikTok and word of mouth are less popular but still useful for some organisations. This report shows the various digital platforms that agritourism organisations utilise for promotion. These can be valuable in building marketing strategies and optimising online visibility. Most organisations regularly use visitor feedback to improve the quality of their services. This highlights how crucial it is to hear what visitors have to say and modify services to suit their requirements and preferences. Although feedback can greatly enhance service quality, only a limited number of organisations consistently collect and apply it.

Most agritourism organisations use a combination of internet tools and techniques to track the success of their marketing campaigns (Figure 5). The most popular method is tracking website visitors, highlighting the need to have an online presence and managing website traffic. Additionally, the analysis of social network engagement is important, confirming the significance of using social platforms to interact with the audience. Though just a small number of organisations regularly use it, there is potential for advancement, particularly in the area of

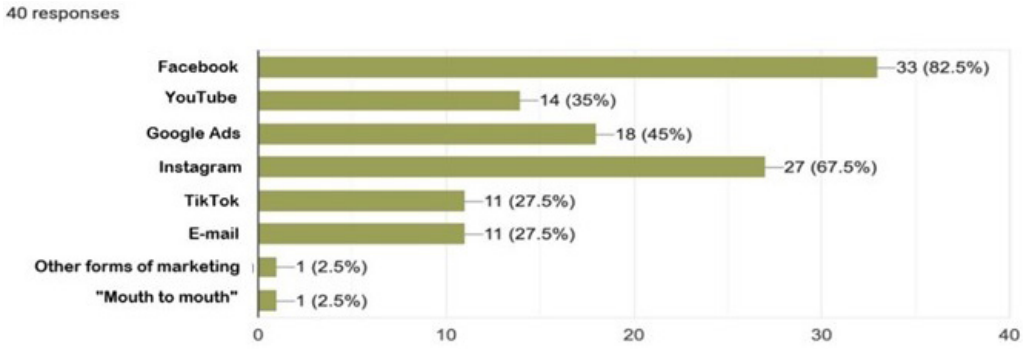

Figure 4. A summary of the responses to the question: Which digital channel are you currently using to promote your agritourism organisation?



Figure 5. A summary of the responses to the question: How do you monitor and analyse the results of your marketing campaigns?

guest feedback analysis. A more thorough examination of customer feedback may provide important information about the requirements and preferences of visitors and allow for service modifications as necessary. Additionally, the employment of analytical tools like Google Analytics is mentioned, highlighting the necessity of more thorough data analysis to comprehend user behaviour and spot chances to enhance marketing tactics.

These responses offer comprehensive information about the tactics used by an agritourism company to control its online image. It is clear that the companies pay attention and respond to customer evaluations on a variety of websites, including TripAdvisor, Booking.com, and Google evaluations. Frequent follow-up enables them to react promptly to favourable and unfavourable comments, indicating their dedication to enhancing the visitor experience.

These responses show that organisations have diverse approaches to updating material on their websites and social networks (Figure 6). While some organisations update their material on a daily or weekly basis to maintain a high level of engagement with their audience, others do it only once a month or even less frequently, sometimes due to a lack of resources or competing priorities.

The examination of these responses provides insight into the various ways of using email in the digital marketing strategy of agritourism facilities. Some do not use email. Others use email to notify subscribers about fresh material and send personalised offers and activities based on guest interests, as well as promoting brands, special offers, and new goods. Email is also used to provide regular event and offer updates, and collect feedback via questionnaires.

The most common activities or experiences that guests look for when visiting agritourism organisations are wellness and relaxation in a rural environment, leading a tour of the property or the surrounding area, activities for children, recreational activities, visiting the farm and getting to know the animals, tasting of domestic products, learning traditional skills, and participation in agricultural activities and workshops on ecology and sustainable living.

Lack of funding, lack of local government support, and seasonal variations in tourists are especially notable challenges in this nation's tourism industry. For instance, a lack of funding can restrict opportunities to invest in infrastructure and marketing, while a lack of local government support can make it challenging to secure the required permits and support for the growth of agritourism. Given the range of activities that agritourism organisations provide—some of which are more popular at particular seasons of the year—seasonal fluctuations in visitor numbers can be difficult to manage. To ensure sustainable business and the continued growth of the agritourism industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina, these issues necessitate innovative management techniques and



Figure 6. A summary of the responses to the question: How do you manage the online reputation of your agritourism organisation?

collaboration amongst various stakeholders, including the government, local communities, and agritourism organisations themselves.

The local community gave an average rating of 3.4 for the current status of rural tourism (Figure 7). According to this, the majority of organisations favour a positive view of the current state of affairs and evaluate it as average or better than average. However, there were above average (grade 5) and below average (grade 2) ratings from the local community, indicating that local communities have differing opinions about the state of rural tourism. These data can be used to identify areas that need improvement to support the expansion of rural tourism.

The responses indicate that there are varying views regarding the extent of assistance or encouragement provided by the local community to rural households in developing their tourism offerings. With an average rating of 3.4, most organisations perceive local community support as moderate, neither very low nor exceptionally high. However, some respondents assigned very high (score of 5) or very low (score of 2) ratings, reflecting differing experiences among agritourism organisations with respect to local support. Such variations can significantly influence the growth of rural tourism, as strong community support can facilitate business operations and promote the expansion of tourism offerings, as illustrated in Figure 7.

The analysis of replies on how rural tourism might aid the preservation of local culture and traditions shows some interesting themes. Promoting local customs, such as folklore and gastronomy, preserving traditional crafts through workshops and presentations, raising visitor awareness of the importance of cultural heritage preservation, integrating local artists and craftsmen into tourist offerings to promote traditional culture, and encouraging community participation in cultural event organisation were all of importance.

The most frequent ratings were 5, indicating that most respondents think infrastructure and access roads are crucial to enhancing rural communities' accessibility to tourists. While there are slight differences in the respondents' perceptions on the relevance of the topic, the fact that no score is less than 3 suggests that most of them acknowledge its significance. The majority of respondents, according to the results, believe that increasing accessibility to rural areas is essential to the growth of rural tourism, which should be a major factor in strategies for developing tourism in those areas as shown in Figure 8.

The average score for the quality of services and experiences for tourists to Bosnia and Herzegovina was high (Figure 8), indicating that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the rural tourism offering. Ratings of 5 were the most common, implying that the majority of respondents regard the quality of services and experiences as excellent. Ratings of 3 and 4 were less prevalent, implying that a smaller proportion of respondents may be dissatisfied with the services and experiences provided. There were no scores lower than 3, indicating that the majority of respondents were still satisfied with the quality of services and experiences in rural tourism in their area.

These results show that there are some crucial recommendations to consider for the future (Figure 9). Firstly, access roads and connectivity need to be improved. Recreational areas also need to be developed. Events and presentations need to be organised, tourism itineraries or packages should be created, and sustainable practices should be embraced. Finally, digital media and social networks should be leveraged for marketing.

There is a major emphasis on investing in agritourism promotion. This is critical for recruiting visitors and creating knowledge of Bosnia and Herzegovina's agritourism potential. Additionally, teaching locals about the advantages of agritourism can be useful because it may encourage more people to participate in this sort of tourism as hosts or service providers. The creation of new agritourism sites would also be helpful, particularly if they aimed to preserve traditional rural landscapes and traditions. Encouraging collaboration among agritourism organisations can help to create cooperative programmes and routes that will enhance the visitor experience. Furthermore, infrastructure expenses, such as improving access roads and public facilities in rural regions, could help the development of agritourism. This could include building or renovating accommodations, restaurants, and other tourism amenities to increase the comfort and quality of guest facilities (Figure 9).

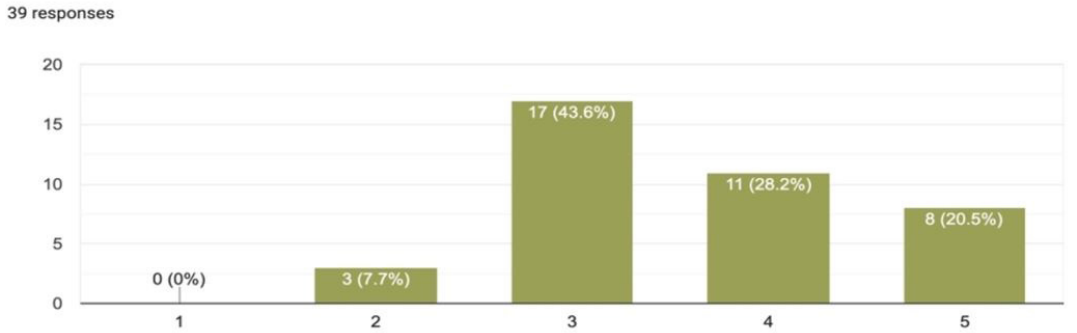

Figure 7. A summary of the responses to: Please rate the current state of rural tourism in your local community on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating very bad and 5 indicating very good.

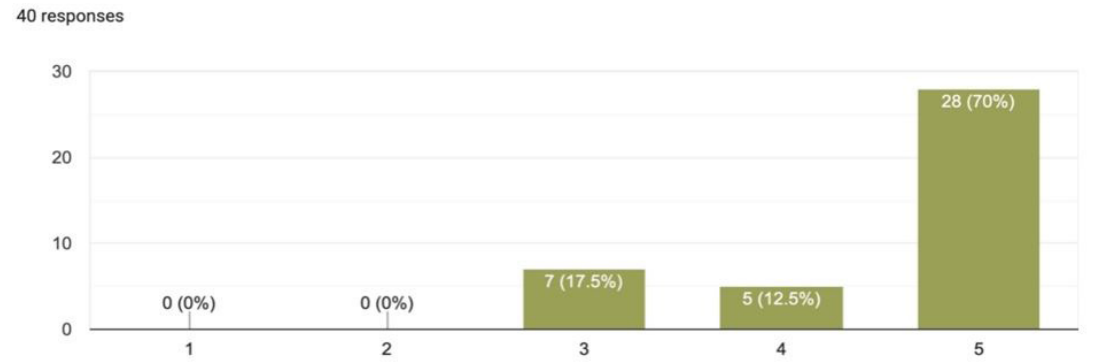

Figure 8. A summary of the responses to the question: How would you rate the quality of services and experiences for rural visitor in your area, with 1 indicating very bad and 5 indicating very good?

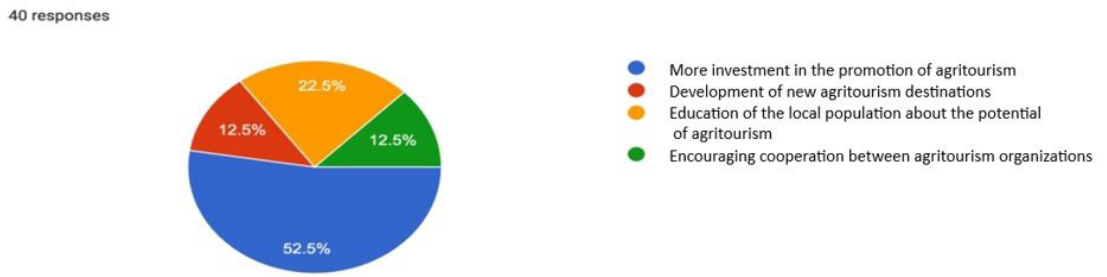

Figure 9. A summary of the responses to the question: What changes or initiatives would you like to see to improve the development of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

When analysing the responses of agritourism organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, we noticed several key strategies for the future development or expansion of their offering. These include diversifying their offerings, increasing accommodation capacity, improvement of marketing activities, and cooperation with other local stakeholders. To ensure the effective extension of Bosnia and Herzegovina's agritourism offering, these strategies must be carefully implemented and tailored to the individual circumstances and needs of tourists.

The average guest experience score with the agritourism organisations was 4.47 (Figure 10), indicating a high degree of satisfaction. This indicates that organisations are confident in the quality of services and experiences they give to guests, but they are also open to development and further expansion. It is critical to continue to listen to guest input and make improvements to achieve a continuously high level of satisfaction.

3.3. Analysis of the interviews

The analysis of the interviews provides a deeper insight into agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The interviews

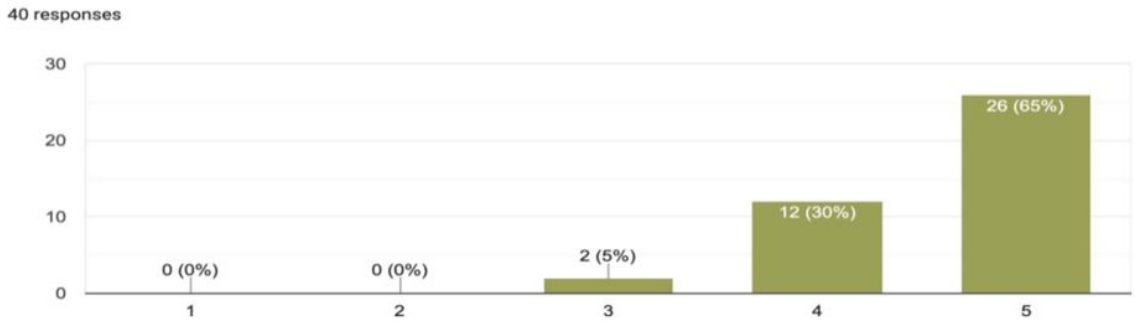

Figure 10. A summary of the responses to the question: How would you rate the overall visitor experience at your agritourism organisation rating on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)?

highlight the necessity of sustainability and environmental awareness among local manufacturers and service providers. The participants recognised the importance of preserving natural resources and traditional agricultural practices as critical components for the long-term survival of the sector. They felt that it is critical to protect the natural environment and cultural legacy in order to provide an authentic and sustainable agritourism experience. The interviewees discussed the primary challenges that local producers and service providers contend with in the field of agritourism. Lack of infrastructure, poor promotion, restricted access to financial resources, and a lack of support from local governments are major difficulties that the sector must address. Solving these challenges is critical for the continued growth of agritourism and increasing the competitiveness of the sector. The local community recognises Bosnia and Herzegovina's rich natural resources and cultural legacy as a significant advantage over other destinations for agritourism. These unique features can be used to promote future development and visibility of agritourism destinations, drawing more tourists and boosting rural economic growth. Agritourism promotion tactics stand out as an important aspect in recruiting tourists. Interviewees propose various techniques, such as digital marketing, organising local events, and collaborating with travel agents. The use of digital technologies for promotion and marketing is becoming increasingly vital in meeting current tourism trends and attracting the target audience. There is optimism about the future of agritourism, emphasising the importance of striking a balance between economic development and the preservation of natural and cultural resources. To maintain the long-term viability of the sector as well as the protection of the environment and cultural heritage, agritourism must be developed sustainably. According to the respondents, the emphasis should be on integrating the tourist offerings in order to attract and maintain both foreign and domestic tourists in a concrete and sustainable manner.

4. Conclusion

Agritourism is a significant part of tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the potential for further development and contributing to economic growth and sustainable development in rural areas. The purpose of this study was to look deeper into the potential for incorporating agritourism into a closed system of product supply, services, and promotion, with a focus on increasing market competitiveness. The use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods provided a more in-depth understanding of the situation of agritourism in the country. The findings of this study showed the enormous potential for agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is based on a diverse offering of natural beauty and cultural legacy. However, a lack of understanding of agritourism among local people, as well as infrastructure issues, pose substantial barriers to future development of the sector. Diversifying the offering to fulfil the many demands of visitors, enhancing marketing activities to raise knowledge of the agritourism offerings, and strengthening collaboration among agritourism organisations to jointly promote the sector are all suggestions for improvement. Diversifying the offerings could include a variety of accommodations and activities, such as farm-based family activities or wildlife adventures. Forming local tourist routes or participating in marketing efforts may help agritourism sites gain a wider audience. Digital marketing and an internet presence are also vital. Active websites, social media accounts, and collaboration with online booking platforms all help to speed up the booking process and increase market awareness. To give great service to clients, the staff at agritourism facilities must also be educated about local attractions, traditions, and products. Creating an authentic experience for guests might help to establish loyalty to the facility. Creating a recognisable brand and distinct personality for an agritourism facility is equally critical. Highlighting local products, traditional architecture, or authentic experiences attracts visitors' attention and distinguishes the facility in the marketplace.

Given the substantial potential of agritourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, future studies should concentrate on a more thorough examination of the target audience's demands, the financial impacts of agritourism, and the sustainability of implemented practices. The competitiveness of the industry and the realisation of its full potential in the future may depend on the incorporation of agritourism into a closed system of product, service, and promotion.

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