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Agritourism: Its Potentials in Davao Oriental

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ABSTRACT

This study established baseline information about the potential agritourism sites in the five (5) selected areas in Davao Oriental. Forty (40) outstanding farmer awardees were interviewed and their farms were documented through still photos and small format video footages to establish the characteristics of their farms in terms of attractiveness, amenities, activities, and accessibility. Potential agritourism farms had an area of 5-10 hectares while others had either below 1 hectare to less than 5 hectares; accessible to all types of land transportation and can be reached with an average of 1-10 minutes. Attractive features include plains, coastal, rivers, and upland terrains planted mainly with coconuts and other agricultural crops and farmers raised live stocks and poultry. Activities in the farms were mostly educational tours among students and other farmers who want to learn agricultural technologies and organic-based farming practices. Farm owners mainly derived their income from agricultural production hence; economic benefit from agritourism was not evident. Amenities were limited; however, the sites were mostly provided with drinking water and restrooms. Word-of-mouth was the major means of promoting the potential agritourism sites, thus mass and social media remained untapped communication channels in for promoting agritourism sites.

Keywords: accessibility, activities, amenities, attractiveness, safety

INTRODUCTION

The word "*agritourism*" is a mash-up of both "*agriculture*" and "tourism". Fundamentally, agritourism involves an agriculturally-based operation or activity that draws visitors to a farm, ranch or any natural site like pineapple plantations, orchid farms and bee farms for outdoor recreational activities, education, shopping or even lodging. Many people are now looking to escape the hustle and bustle of city life to get back to nature; resulting in agri-destinations gaining popularity among tourists (Carating, 2013).

Agritourism offers a path to economic development in rural areas. Besides, agritourism can also produce environmental and socio-cultural benefits. This can be achieved by strengthening the family farm institution and engaging in the preservation of rural heritage. In the environmental dimension, it produces positive environmental impacts, especially through wildlife habitat improvement and water conservation (Barbieri& Mahoney, 2013).

As a tropical country with an abundance of natural resources, biological diversity and a strong cultural heritage, the Philippines is well-positioned for agritourism. What is needed is to push for the promotion and tapping the country's agritourism potentials to provide additional opportunities of the majority of Filipinos especially the farmer's, farm owners, and producers. Many academic and tourism experts are tapping the potential of agritourism to alleviate poverty and promote agriculture.

Aside that it opens opportunities for livelihood, business, and employment generation, and education for non-farming sector, it also promotes local culture, heritage, and traditions through personal contact with local people (Esplanaj 2011). In its education benefit, it is a kind of study tour that will potentially promote the adoption of organic farming and sustainable agricultural production.

The potential of agritourism in the Philippines has been recognized since 1990 with the existence of farms owned and managed by private individuals. The following year, in order to institutionalize this industry, the Department of Tourism and the United Nations Development Program formulated the Tourism Master Plan (TMP) anchored on environmental sustainability. Initially, in 2002, the Department of Agriculture and DOT identified 10 agritourism sites in the country (Department of Agriculture, 2014). The leading province to develop agritourism is Batangas due to its vast agricultural areas and of variety of products (Bianca et.al, 2014). In Mindanao, one of the most visited agritourism farms is the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center (MBRRLC) in Kinuskusan, Bansalan, Davao del Sur. This farm is showcasing a package of productive agricultural practices and spiritual guidance to guests (Tacio, 2016).

Presently, the country ranked number eight agritourism destination as the government invested on this emerging sub-sector of tourism industry to uplift the country's agriculture and tourism status (DOT, 2005).

In Davao Oriental, the province was declared as Tourism Development Area (TDA) through R.A 10560 signed into law on April 17, 2013 cognizant to its great tourism potentials to include agritourism. To take off this new venture,the Provincial Tourism Office (PTO) was institutionalized via Provincial Ordinance No. 14-07-05-2014, as lead unit for tourism development in the locality.

However, since the conception of agritourism in the province, no scientific study conducted to establish its potentials and current status of development. Moreso, it was not certain whether the owners of these potential sites are willing to engage on such venture. Vital support for agritourism development in the locality is not also determined. Thus, this study served as benchmark to explore the potentials of agritourism to grab various opportunities from this novel industry however limited only on the profile and characteristics of the potential sites excluding some other components of a sustainable agritourism industry like support system and acceptability of the farm owners.

Findings of this study may benefit the three major sectors of agritourism namely the agriculture and tourism industries and rural communities. Specifically, both the local Agriculture and Tourism Offices may take the findings of the study as bases in proposing projects to improve agricultural production such as diversified farming, agricultural products value-adding, soil, and water conservation that are essential in the growth of tourist destinations which will redound to an expanded on-farm employment in the rural areas. The information presented by this study may supplement in crafting policies relevant in institutionalizing agritourism among Local Government Units (LGUs) in the Province of Davao Oriental.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in four (4) selected municipalities in Davao Oriental. The province has the biggest land area among the provinces of Region XI with a total of 5,164 square kilometers where its population mainly engaged in farming and fishing due to its fertile agricultural lands planted with coconuts, rice, corn, fruits like pomelo and durian. It is blessed with rich fishing ground hence, fishes are abundantly caught from its bays and seas (NEDA, 2004). Davao Oriental is known as the sunrise capital of the Philippines since it is situated between the vast Pacific Ocean and Davao Gulf. The province is composed of 10 municipalities and one city (PIA, 2015).

The selected study sites were the City of Mati, the capital of Davao Oriental, Municipalities of Banaybanay, Governor Generoso, San Isidro and Manay. The City of Mati is located in the southeastern most part of the Philippine Archipelago in the Island of Mindanao and bounded by the great Pacific Ocean and the Southern tip is the Celebes Sea while its lowland embraces the Pujada Bay. Banaybanay town is known as the gateway of the province which is a highly agricultural area covering 41,900 hectares mostly planted with rice hence, considered as the rice granary of the province. Going to the southernmost part of the province

is the municipality of Governor Generoso, known as the fishing capital of the province since it is bounded with the Davao Gulf and the Pacific where tuna fish are mostly caught. Likewise, the Municipality of San Isidro was included as one of the study sites where the place is largely engaged in agricultural production since out of the total land area of 27,542 hectares, 12,895.20 hectares are devoted to agriculture. Lastly, the Municipality of Manay in the 1st District of the Province was selected as among the study sites. It lies in the Eastern coast of Davao Oriental characterized by hills, mountains and rolling valleys in terms of topography where arid lands were dominantly planted with coconuts (NSCB, 2010).

The potential agritourism sites were selected based from the lists of owners of Agri enterprises in Davao Oriental identified by the City Agriculture Office (CAO) and Municipal Agriculture Offices (MAOs) as sampling frame. Thus, Purposive Sampling was used to identify the farm-owners who are successful farmers, recipients of programs of national government, and non-government agencies and LGUs, farmer-scientists (Magsasaka Siyentista) of PCAARRD-DOST and farmer-awardees of Department of Agriculture (D.A.). Convenience sampling was subsequently employed from the listed farm-owners to obtain the final respondents based on the accessibility of their farms, and willingness of the owners to provide data for the study. Thus, there were a total of forty (40) farm owner respondents.

The study employed descriptive survey design to get the profile of the potential agritourism sites. One-shot survey through researcher-made semi structured interview (SSI) questionnaires to the identified outstanding farmers was done to obtain data on the profile of their farms focused in identifying the potentials of their farms as agritourism sites. The profiling was centered on the characteristics of their farms as to accessibility, attraction, amenities, and activities. To validate the data derived from SSI, video, and photo documentations were conducted and were packaged into agritourism brochures and video documentaries.

Scenes documented in the farms were the locations, activities, products, means of production, processing activities, services they provide to visitors; interesting and attractive features of the farms, best practices, amenities, and facilities, and other features that are worth documenting for agritourism based on the criteria of Busby and Render (2000).

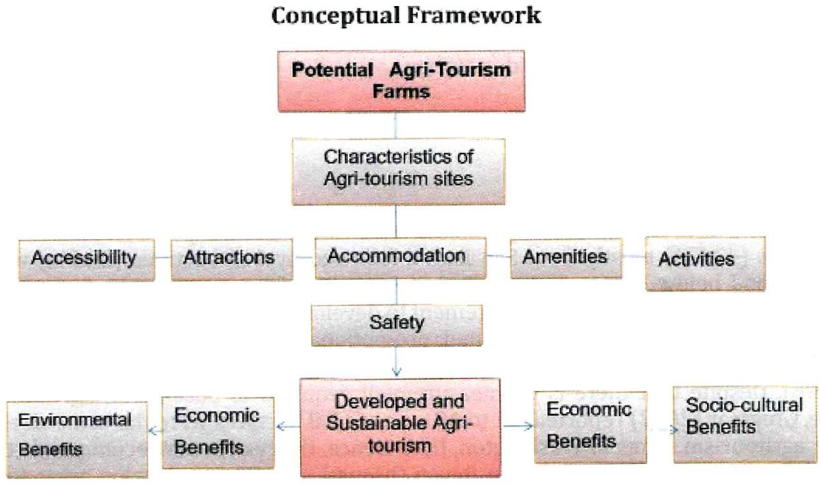

Figure.1 Conceptual framework showing the interdependence of the characteristics of potential sites for agri-tourism development thus will result to a developed and sustainable agritourism and produces benefits.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using frequency counts, means, and percentages on the profiles of the farm owners. Characteristics of the farms like accessibility, attractiveness, activities, amenities, and the communication channels to promote the sites were established from the profile of the farms and were validated from the video footages.

Results and discussion

Davao Oriental is located in southeastern part of the Philippines and endowed with the beauty and bounty of nature like pristine beaches, mountains, and agricultural products. Indeed, the province enshrined the only UNESCO World Heritage in Mindanao, the Mount Hamiguitan mountain ridge running north south along the Pujada Peninsula where aside from its biodiversity, it features a rare forest landscape pygmy forest. Thus, before its inscription to UNESCO, it was declared as a protected area known as Mt. Hamiguitan Protected Wildlife Sanctuary (UNESCO, 2014).

With its glamorizing features, the province ranked 3rd among the provinces in Davao Region in terms of total value of tourist's receipts amounting to Php 899.3 million in 2015. In 2014, tourists' arrival marked a total 277,542. The influx of tourists is flourishing as the place is now known as skim boarding and sunrise capital in the Philippines since international competition on skim boarding is annually held in one of its beaches, Dahican (DOT, 2018). Featuring on the agritourism side, this study presented a maiden attempt.

Characteristics of the Farms

1. Accessibility:

A. Farm Size

The farm sizes of the respondents were varied but many had an area of 5-10 hectares (42.5%) mostly from San Isidro, followed by 1-5 hectares (27.5%) while others had below 1 hectare and above 1 hectare (15%) respectively. Agritourism studies show no specific area requirement to develop a place to a tourism destination as long as events are well coordinated, promotional materials were developed, and farm businesses through regional planning were carefully considered (Kuehn et al., 1998). Despite that there is no measurement required to become an agritourism site, Gregmar (2012) reported, 31 to 40 acres or 5.8 hectares were the usual sizes of the agritourism farms in Washington, USA. Hence; the researcher recommends that the potential agritourism farms in Davao Oriental may further develop areas to be devoted for this venture despite within the current threshold to upscale and optimize income.

B. Estimated Time to Reach the Farm

Results show that majority (57%) farms can be reached within an average of 1 to 10 minutes where there were only 2 farms that can be found quite far and can be reached within an average of 31-40 minutes. These findings show that most of the potential agritourism sites were relatively near to the town centers where visitors can reach them in a short period of time.

C. Ways of reaching the Farms

The farms can be reached through walking and riding but some farms can be visited both riding and hiking since their exact locations were not passable by vehicles. This means that visitors can bring their own rides and at the same time may enjoy walking as a form of leisure and recreation.

D. Types of Transportation that can be used in Going to the Farms

The visitors can use motorcycles and four-wheeled vehicles in visiting the farms. Some farms can be reached through walking. The country was noted that most Agri-destinations are located in rural areas where transportation infrastructures are relatively underdeveloped. This could be partly attributed to the mountainous terrain and the scattered geography of the islands. The influx of tourists calls for better modes of transportation to bring them to and from them destinations. Such improvements include having accessible roads, installing road signage, and upgrading from gravel to asphalt concrete roads (Spire 2013). Easy transportation accesses are among the most important services or amenities that an agritourism site will provide. Other amenities include, on-site restrooms, adequate parking, learning about how products are grown or made.

E. Types of Roads

The potential agritourism sites were accessed with concrete roads but some had rough roads and all-weather roads. This means that the farms were generally accessible to visitors. Spire (2013) pointed out that roads and modes

of transportation should be improved with the influx of tourists to bring them to and from their destinations. Besides improvement of roads, other infrastructure may include the installation of road signage, and upgrading from gravel to asphalt concrete roads (Jensen et.al, 2006).

Table 1. Farm Profile of the potential agritourism sites based on accessibility

Farm Profile	Areas											
	Mati		Manay		S.I.		Gov.Gen.		Banaybanay			
Size of the Farm	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	Total	Mean %
Below 1 hectare	2	20	4	57%							6	15
1.1-5 hectares	5	50	2	29%			1	11	3	50.1	11	27.5
5.1-10 hectares	1	10	1	14%	10	83	3	78	2	33.4	17	42.5
Over 10 hectares	2	20		100%	2	17	1	11	1	16.7	6	15
Total											40	100
Estimated time to reach the farms												
1-10 minutes	7	70	4	57	7	58	1	11	4	66	23	57
11-20 minutes	2	20	2	29	2	17	3	78	2	34	11	28
21-30 minutes	1	10	1	14	1	8	1	11			4	10
31-40 minutes			0	0	2	17					2	5
40 minutes above				14								
Total											40	100
Ways in going to farm												
Walking	8		3		11		2		8		32	
Riding	6		3		1		5		6		21	
riding but some portion requires walking			4								4	
Types of transportation used												
Single motor	10		5		11		5		6		37	
4-wheels	6		4		8		4		6		24	
Walking	6		1		1		2				8	
Horse			1									
Types of Road												
Concrete	10		2		4		1		2		34	18
Rough road			2		7		3		4		66	13
All-weather road/ human trail			3		1		2					4

Note : Items with no Mean % generated multiple answers.

Attractiveness

A. Land Terrain

In terms of features that may attract the visitors, the study determined the terrain of the farms where many (18) of these areas were considered plain (18) while others were rolling and sloping (12). Only few (3) were categorized as cliff.

Different terrains provide visitors with an enjoyable experience like walking to discover varied land features (Jensen et.al., 2006).

B. Location

Potential agritourism farms were located in the upland areas (11), coastal and near the rivers (10) respectively. This means that in terms of agricultural production, these farms have sustainable sources of water. These rivers can also be an added attraction to visitors especially those who prefer to relax at the river banks or swim and take their baths.

C. Crops Planted

Although crops raised were varied, as expected, most of the crops grown in the farms were coconuts (35) followed by bananas (30) and fruits and cacao (21) respectively. Notably, Davao Oriental is the number one producer of coconuts in the region while cacao is one of the crops being promoted by the local government planted under coconut trees. Since vegetable gardens showcasing appropriate technologies were not significantly documented, the researcher recommends that high-valued vegetables adapted on the local condition may be produced.

Figure 2. Menzi Farms pummelo fruits packing area

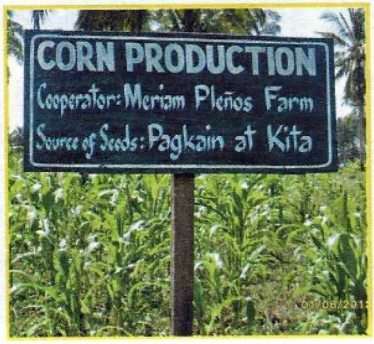

Figure 3. Corn farm of one of the outstanding corn farmers of D.A. in San Isidro Davao Oriental

Figure 4. Lanzones produced in one of the diversified farms in Manay, Davao Oriental

Figure 5. One of the farmer-scientists in the City of Mati is harvesting his cucumber

D. Live stocks raised

Most (22) of the farm-owners raised poultry either for consumption or commercial while many (18) were into goat raising and swine and cattle production (17) respectively. Other animals grown were carabao (10), sheep, and horse (2) respectively and rabbit (1). There were only five (5) respondents who were engaged into fishery. The finding shows that the potential sites had varied livestock's where visitors can either buy or take them as leisure during their visit. Farm-owners on the other hand can add value to their products besides creating many different activities incorporated into agritourism, including agricultural production and managing daily visits and special events, as well as marketing and customer service (McGehee, 2007).

Figure 6. A goat production project showcases by one of the farmers in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental

Figure 7. Piglets of one of the swine farms in Manay, Davao Oriental

Figure 8. An In-land fishery farm in Governor Generoso, Davao Oriental

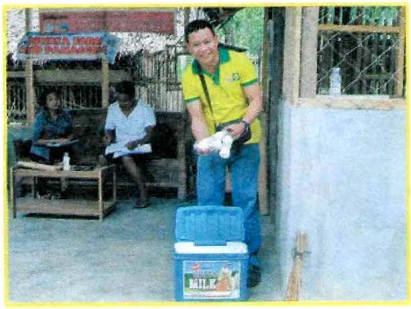

Figure 9. Bottles of fresh milk as one the products of goat production by one of the farms in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental

Farm Income

One of the economic benefits of agritourism is to provide additional income to farmers. Agritourism is a strategy that can bring additional incomes without excessive investments in farm infrastructure, labor, or equipment (Fisher et al., 2006) asserted that. Based on findings, the income of the famers was varied but considerable percentage (45%) had an income more than fifty thousand per year

followed by 40-50 thousand while 5 percent had an income below 10,000.00. This suggests that the main income of the farm-owners of potential agritourism sites still depend from agricultural production thus, income-sourcing from agritourism had not yet been tapped. If they had revenue from agritourism; they may have significantly increased

Table 2. Farm profile of the potential agritourism sites based on attractiveness

Farm Profile	Areas Mati	Manay	S.I.	Gov.Gen.	Banaybanay	
Size of the Farm	F	F	F	F	F	Total
Terrain						
Plain		4	10	4		18
Rolling/uneven	4	1		1	6	12
Cliff	3					3
Slope		2	5			7
Location of the Farm						
Upland	7	3		1		11
Coastal area	1	1	3	4	1	10
Near the city	1	1	2		1	5
Near the river	2	4			4	10
Crops raised						
Cacao	6	6	9	2	1	21
Rubber	1	1	3		1	6
Vegetables	5		4	2	2	13
Coconut	9	7	11	5	3	35
Fruits	9	7		5		21
Banana	8	7	8	3	4	30
Corn			3			5
Flowers			1			1
Coffee			2			2
Falcata					1	1
Rice					5	5

Farm Profile	AREAS Mati	Manay	S.I.	Gov.Gen.	Banaybanay	Total
Livestock/poultry raised						
Piggery	2	4	4	2	5	17
Goatery	5	4	7	1	1	18
Cattle	4	3	7	2	1	17
Poultry	5	7	7		3	22
Horse	2					2
Sheep		1	1			2
Carabao		3	4	2	1	10
Rabbit					1	1
Fishery	1	1	1		2	5

Cont. of Table 2

Farm Profile	Areas											
	Mati		Manay		S.I.		Gov.Gen.		Banaybanay			
Size of the Farm	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	Total	Mean %
Income per year												
Below 10,000	1	10			2	17			1	10	2	5
10,001-20,000	1	10			1	8			1	10	2	5
20,001-30,000	0	0	1	14	1	8	2	40	0	0	4	10
40,001-50,000	1	10	3	43	8	67	1	20	1	10	14	35
Over 50,000-	8	80	3	43			2	40	5	90	18	45

Note : Items with no Mean % generated multiple answers.

II. Activities

A. Visitors of Potential Agritourism Farms

Agritourism farms are expected to diversify their activities in such manner that their visitors can have choices of activities and leisure. Findings show that all (40) farm-owners were willing to accept visitors; others were accepting visitors at present. This finding supports the report of Troy et al. (2014) that respondents in Cabuyao, Laguna, Philippines agreed on the proposition of transforming their area into agritourism site, thus they are open on the possible effects on their cult1fFe that the development could bring them. Other farmers (36) also visited the farms of the outstanding farmers to learn their practices which they can replicate in their own farms. Notably the entry of few senior citizens (7) to have past time; families (20) were among those few who visited the farms. This finding was in contrast to the report of Ollenburg and Buckley (2007) that families are the main clients of agritourism farms.

B. Services Offered to Visitors

Potential agritourism farms had varied services that they offered to their visitors, however many of them catered educational tours (38) followed by leisure tours (18) while boating marked the least (I) service offered hence, this service opportunity needs to be enhanced. The varied the line of services, the vibrant is the enterprise as claimed by Busby and Rendle (2000; Privitera, 2013) that one of the basic functions of agritourism is education; an opportunity to provide “sustainable” or “green” tourism or “farm tourism”. It also includes educational tours, tasting events, agricultural museums, commodity festivals, wildlife, etc. All of these examples can be considered opportunities for consumers and farms to generate a meaningful exchange of values.

Ideally, to expand the opportunities of agritourism they have to provide diversity of agricultural experiences (Kuehn, 1998). In this case, other farm activities were not availed in full by the visitors as can Be gleaned that only two activities were patronized; other possible activities on-site like U-pick, horseback riding, swimming, climbing were untapped since farm owners did not cater them. Taking from the findings of Kuehn (1998), all agritourism farms in Oswego, New York were becoming successful since they offered various products, unique specialty items, and special activities (e.g., farm tours, educational classes, and farm festivals) for visitors.

C. Agricultural Extension Education

Farms that were remarkable were those adopted recommended technologies or innovated their own technologies, these farms catered mostly school tours of students and farmers (17). Students toured as part of their class lessons to identify crops (14) in the farms while farmers' tours were part of their agricultural technology training; they usually visited the nurseries or gardens (10) in the farms. This finding follows the extension education's philosophy to educate and extend resources which in this case, in some degree was undertaken by agritourism farms i.e., to educate the public apart from the formal higher educational institutions (Phillips, 2009).

D. Topics on Agricultural Extension Education

Those who catered educational tour usually presented integrated farming system (34) followed by organic farming (22) while only few tackled about fishery (3). The data signify that the sites can provide agricultural education on integrated farming especially on crops and live stocks but limited on fishery. It was so since it was found out that those farms that were engaged in agritourism were into organic production techniques and farm conservation practices (Schilling and Sullivan, 2014).

Table 3. Farm profile of the potential agritourism sites based on activities

Activities	Areas											
	Mati		Manay		S.I.		Gov.Gen.		Banaybanay		Total	Mean %
Accepting of Visitors	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Yes	10	100	7	100	12		5	100	6	100	40	100
No												
Visitors usually visit												
Different agency	10		7		12		5		5		39	
Student	9		4		3		4		6		26	
Farmers	8		7		11		5		6		36	
Investors	2										2	
Family			7		6		4		3		20	
Senior citizens							4		3		7	
Activities offered to the visitors												
Educational tour	10		7		12		4		5		38	
Leisure tour	5		7				5		1		18	

Cont. of Table 3

Activities	Areas										Total	Mean %
	Mati		Manay		S.I.		Gov.Gen.		Banaybanay			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
U-pick-U-harvest	2		2		1		1		1		7	
Agricultural participation process	7				1				3		11	
Boating	1										1	
Participation of agricultural processes			4		3						7	
Sightseeing			5				5				10	
Walking			9				2		1		12	
Fishing			1		1		2		3		7	
Climbing (big rock)			1									
Swimming							1				1	
Horseback riding					1						1	
Agricultural Education												
School/farmer' tour	9				4		4				17	
Garden/nursery tour	9		1								10	
Crops identification	9		4		1						14	
No answer			2				1				3	
Topics On Agricultural Education												
Integrated Farming	8		6		12		4		4		34	
Natural Farming	2										2	
Fishery	1		1						1		3	
Organic Farming	7		5		7				3		22	
No answer							1				1	

Note : Items with no Mean % generated multiple answers.

III. Profile of potential agritourism sites based on amenities

Amenities are facilities, services and all other little things that tourism destinations make difference and provide customers satisfied and impressed (Kuehn et. al., 1998). Finding shows that the potential agritourism sites had comfort rooms and water (11) respectively. Some (7) can provide foods especially breakfast (7). Few had lodging houses restaurant, and transportation for visitors (1) respectively. This means that the potential agritourism farms lack the amenities which are the basic considerations in indulging into this venture, hence this should be provided. Further, the scenario suggests that the farm-owners did not recognize entering into this business.

Table 4. Farm profile of the potential agritourism sites based on amenities

Accommodation/ amenities	Areas					Total
	Mati	Manay	S.I.	Gov.Gen.	Banaybanay	
Bed and Breakfast /food	1	0	3	3	0	7
Ranch work	0	4	0	0	0	4
Special dining	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lodging	0	0	0	2	0	2

IV. Means of Communication Used in Promoting the Potential Agritourism Sites

Typically, the respondents promote their farms through word-of-mouth (30), radio (13) TV (2), newspaper (1), brochures 2 and promotional fliers (1).

Consequently, since most of the farm-owners did not promote their areas, visitors can directly go to their places (25) which mean that those who were able to hear through word-of-mouth may visit the farms without any means of pre-visit arrangement. Despite this, there were few (16) who used cell phones in their promotion.

This finding suggests that one of the gaps of the potential sites is the use of promotion and of the recognition of the need to inform their clientele to market their places. It is therefore recommended that the farm should access mass and social media to widely promote their farms. These farms should evolve from mere word-of-mouth ass the most basic and inexpensive form of advertising. This must be coupled with delightful services like farm products, amenities, and activities to make it satisfactory to potential customers (Kuehn et al., 1998).

Table 5. Means of promoting the potential agritourism sites

Promotional channels	Areas					
	Mati	Manay	S.I.	Gov.Gen.	Banaybanay	Total
	F	F	F	F	F	
Radio	2		8	1	2	13
Word-of- mouth	7	7	2	7	7	30
Brochures	1				1	2
Promotional flyers	1				1	1
Internet	1			1	1	3
Television			1	1		2
Newspaper			1			1
Ways to visit the farm						
Through telephone/cell phone	4		6	5	1	16
Direct to the farm	8	7	3	1	6	25
Through writing			4			4
Through MAO				2		2

Photos of the Designed Farm Brochures as some outputs of the Study

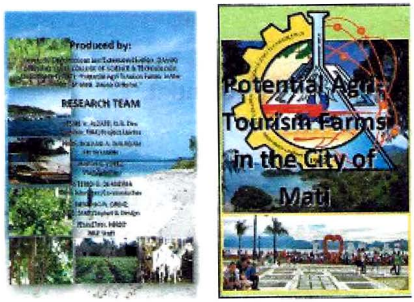

Figure 10. Leaflet on the potential agritourism sites in the City of Mati, Davao Oriental

Figure 11. Inside page of the leaflet of the potential farm tourism sites in the City of Mati that may serve as tourism guide material

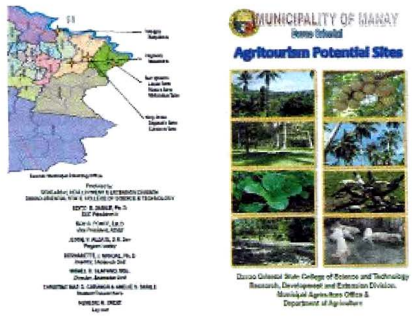

Figure 12. Farm tourism leaflet for Manay, Davao Oriental

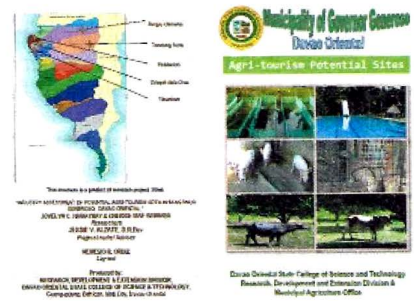

Figure 13. Farm tourism leaflet for Governor Generoso, Davao Oriental

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted as a preliminary assessment on the potential sites for agritourism in the province of Davao Oriental. Specifically, it measured the potentials of the sites in terms of activities, attractiveness, amenities, and accessibility of the farms. Five (5) municipalities were covered where the farmer-scientists and Gawad-saka awardees were situated as respondents of the study. Their farms were documented using still photos and small format video. The features of the farms were packaged into farm tourism brochures and video documentaries as farm tourism guides.

The findings of the study imply that the potential agritourism sites were relatively small land areas, located near the downtown centers, and mostly accessible to almost all kinds of transportations since some roads were concreted

while others were rough roads. The sites featured varied land terrains like lowland, coastal, upland, and some were located along the rivers where farm-owners raised various crops and livestock. These farms were mainly earning income from agricultural production, which implies that economic benefits from agritourism were minimal.

Activities were mainly educational and leisure tours mostly by students and other farmers to learn agricultural technologies and farm practices adopted by the farm-owners e.g., organic-based and natural farming which implies that activities were limited. There were few amenities for potential tourists however despite their farms were mostly provided with drinking water and restrooms, hence implies that tourists can hardly spend overnight in these farms. Communication means used to promote the farms were mainly through word-of-mouth thus, it implies that there was limited use of social media, mass media channels like radio, TV, and promotional printed materials.

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