

## Article

# Analyses of the Attitudes of Agricultural Holdings on the Development of Agritourism and the Impacts on the Economy, Society and Environment of Serbia

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**Abstract:** Agritourism as a special type of tourist migration is a very important link in the diversification of rural areas, connecting the geography, culture, tradition, and gastronomy of the local population, and placing products and services through the hospitality and tourism market. Thanks to this form of tourism, underdeveloped places are gaining in importance and attracting the attention of visitors who are oriented towards natural things, which in turn contributes to a better economic situation of the locality and the population. This paper aims to examine the attitudes of farm owners in the Republic of Serbia toward the impact of agritourism on the economy, living environment, social life, and culture. The data were collected by surveying the owners of agricultural holdings in the territory of the Republic of Serbia and statistically processed using factor analysis, descriptive statistics, and linear regression. Based on the obtained results, it has been established that the owners of agricultural farms are interested in the development of agritourism, and that their positive perception of the impact that agritourism has on the living environment and economy greatly contributes to that. To a lesser extent, a positive attitude was noted toward the importance of agrotourism for the local community and locals, where the positive aspects of agritourism were the education of visitors on agriculture, promotion of the local culture, agricultural and gastronomic products, and sustainable development and investment in infrastructure.

**Keywords:** agritourism; agricultural holdings; attitudes; environment; rural area; economy



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## 1. Introduction

Tourist activities in rural areas are a very promising direction, where agritourism has a very large impact on regional development, which contributes to the preservation of tradition, culture, and economic gain [1]. Rural areas are those in which a set of ecological and cultural public goods creates an image of the condition of a locality, while agro scenes as such give people a direct value such as food, and cultural and ecological benefits such as natural resources (forests, mountains, rivers, lakes, nature reserves, cultural monuments) [2–4]. However, another factor has a crucial role, and that is certainly the

structure of the population, because the producers themselves are usually not ready to pay for public goods, which is pronounced in the middle developed countries of Central and Eastern Europe, where Serbia is [2].

Technological progress and the development of civilization give rise to new needs of tourists themselves, where agritourism is an adequate approach to human needs that must be adapted in terms of sustainability, convenience, relaxation, and comfort. In other words, the development of a rural climate must promote agriculture and be sustainable for it, especially when it comes to tourist activities, aesthetics, and environment, and it also needs to be safe for natural resources [5].

Tourists are seeking new selective forms of tourism that will provide them with different experiences that connect them with nature in different ways, which is where agriculture finds its place [6]. This type of entertainment is especially attractive to the city population, which aims to travel in order to get acquainted with the lifestyle and work of farmers [7,8]. This type of tourist movement influences the creation of a positive image of agriculture of modern generations because educational activities often include the following: floriculture, food preparation classes—cooking in rural households and farms, preparation of natural herbal elixirs, and demonstrations of the traditional production of alcoholic beverages, beer, wine and brandy—and the experience of the reconstruction of traditional and historical villages [9]. Similarly, recreational rural tourism includes the following: plant art, organization of agricultural labyrinths, different types of food and drink tasting, picking fruits and vegetables, recognizing different plant and animal species, and learning about the tradition and culture of the region, their way of life, and authentic gastronomic offerings [9].

The Republic of Serbia is an agricultural country in which rural areas occupy 85% of the land, inhabited by 43% of the total population [10,11]. Censuses conducted in 2012 state that the total area of arable land is 3,861,477 hectares, on which there are 631,552 registered agricultural holdings [12]. The importance of agritourism development is clearly identified in the Tourism Development Strategy of Serbia from 2016 to 2025 [13]. Serbia, being a country with a lot of diversity in terms of culture, tradition, geographical location, and gastronomy, has a handful of ecological and tourist potential that appear as natural elements for the development of agritourism [14–16]. However, agritourism in Serbia has been present and researched only in recent years [14–17].

The subject of this paper are the attitudes of agricultural farms toward the impact and development of agritourism on economic and socio-cultural indicators and the environment in Serbia. The aim of this paper is to examine the attitudes of farm owners toward the impact of agritourism on economic and socio-cultural aspects and the environment, as well as to determine the factors influencing the residents' perception of the impact of agriculture and tourism and the effects of local participation on the support, popularization, and sustainable development of theregion.

The task of the paper is to answer the following research questions:

- What are the attitudes of farm owners toward the effects of agritourism on the region's economy?
- What are the attitudes of farm owners toward the socio-cultural impacts of agritourism on the population of the Republic of Serbia?
- What are the attitudes of the owners of agricultural farms in the Republic of Serbia toward the impact of agritourism on the environment?
- Do agricultural farms want to participate and support the development of agritourism?
- Do the attitudes of farm owners differ on the basis of sociodemographic characteristics?

The benefits of agritourism development are obvious [14–17], but the special significance of conducting this research in the Republic of Serbia is reflected in the data provided by Babić and Bogdanović [18], which were made on the basis of data from the Republic Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2012 [19]. They stated a low share of farms with activities in tourism, which is only 0.66% [18]. Therefore, the value of the obtained answers to the above-mentioned research questions is reflected in overcoming the potential

problems (negative factors) that will be determined from the attitudes of the respondents. Thus, these potential problems are viewed from the angle of the main subjects in the development of agritourism, namely, owners of agricultural farms.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Characteristics and Significance of Agritourism

An increasing number of tourists are looking for experiences where they can explore and enjoy nature and learn from it, such as in agritourism, where tourists visit rural areas and farms where they can recreate and have other daily and programmed activities [20,21].

Agritourism, as a part of rural tourism, provides the possibility of diversification of rural areas and additional income to local farms [22], with one of the main advantages being the improvement of food and gastronomic offerings, which increases the economic and social well-being of the region [23–26].

In agritourism, the participants are directly involved in the activity, as agritourism attractions provide them with the opportunity to get in touch with farmers and hosts, as well as to learn and enjoy unique agricultural activities [24]. According to Mackay et al. [22], in addition to the contents of the farm, agritourism should include other outdoor activities, such as visits to agricultural fields, tasting products from local stores, and visits to various cultural institutions. Mutual interactions between the food industry, agriculture, and tourism certainly exist [27,28], and that is where economic development stands out as the most important motive [21,22]. A highly developed agritourism industry in underdeveloped climates can help bring in more tourists and thus create new jobs and attract new investments, which will provide additional economic benefits to the region [29]. All the above certainly leads to new content and conservation of resources, as well as caring for the environment [21]. In this way, agritourism supports the rural economy [30]. It is for this reason that farmers in developed countries have diversified their business and thus provided a new source of income due to adverse weather conditions or other factors that often recur in the agricultural sector [22,25]. Adequate implementation of agritourism can significantly increase the income of agricultural farms with the development of the entrepreneurial spirit in underdeveloped areas [29].

### 2.2. Local Food as a Significant Part of Agritourism

When visiting certain tourist facilities in agricultural areas for recreation and/or education, tourists can drive the increased sales of local or domestic food [31]. In this way, the food system gains importance due to the support it provides to the producers, through decision-making, adequate promotion, farm diversification, or agri-environmental practices [32]. Agritourism can be a very important source of income in devastated areas, as local food connects consumers and producers [33–35]. In this case, the system of sustainability of local food mostly occurs through support to agricultural producers [36], given that agritourism has the potential to accelerate the purchase of local products [31] because food is an indispensable part of the tourist product [37]. Local food is crucial for the region, as it aims to connect producers and consumers, help preserve a particular area, and reduce distance, industrial processing, and intermediaries [38–40]. However, distance plays a key role in defining local food in terms of the proximity of the area; the place where the product is prepared; the distance of potential consumers, i.e., the connection to the place of sale; and proximity in terms of the freshness and authenticity of local food [41].

### 2.3. Diversification of Agritourism Development

An increasing number of rural areas across Europe have diversified their inclusion and exclusion of agricultural products and highlighted local traditions and heritage by seeking additional sources of income. For two decades, traditional food products and agritourism have been available as diversification options as a part of rural policy development [42]. The differences of the region in the production of traditional agricultural products, food products, and gastronomic products are reflected in the fact that their

preparation, production, and placement are of interest to foreign tourists [43] and the development of agritourism. Adequate use of local resources and products, and proper combination of agriculture and tourism as ancillary activities, can take advantage of high profitability, which provides additional income, especially in rural areas and in areas that have prerequisites for agritourism activities [44,45].

#### 2.4. Agritourism Development Issues

Nowadays, the agricultural sector is facing a growing number of problems caused by weak consumer purchasing power, rising production costs, globalization, industrialization, excessive migration to cities, and competition at the global level, which leads to diversification for more secure economic stability and survival in villages [46,47]. Subsidizing in agritourism is an important tool in the diversification and survival of people in rural areas [46,48]. The existence of an internal relationship between the producers and nature directly affects the level of income of the producers [2].

#### 2.5. Impacts of Agritourism

##### 2.5.1. Economic Impacts of the Development of Agritourism

Agritourism creates positive benefits for producers and the local community, whose economic benefit is reflected in the fact that it brings additional income to farms by serving tourists, which has a positive impact on diversification and agricultural activities [46,49,50]. According to Lobo et al. [51], agritourism contributes to the prosperity of the local economy, where the main result is demand for local products. Agritourism brings income not only to tourism companies, but also to souvenir producers, agricultural producers, and food and accommodations establishments [52], and thus contributes to reducing the poverty of the local population [53].

##### 2.5.2. Socio-Cultural Influences of the Development of Agritourism

When it comes to the social and cultural benefits of agritourism, it is the preservation of the rural lifestyle; the preservation of cultural identity, local traditions and customs, folklore [46], and local gastronomy; and learning about different lifestyles of local people that come into focus, especially in multi-ethnic areas. The possibility of employing the local population is a very important advantage of agritourism, especially for younger generations, and it is certainly a solution for preventing migration of the local population to larger cities [52,54].

Tourism in agricultural areas has a positive effect on strengthening the link between urban and rural populations, giving the locals the opportunity to present and show the rural way of life in the best way possible [53], which certainly allows local residents to improve their reputation and quality of life [55]. Yang [56] stated that agritourism has a positive effect on raising the standard of living of the local population through the reconstruction of roads and the installation of sanitary conditions, and by attracting new investments in terms of infrastructure and services in the local community. One of the potential disadvantages that may occur is cultural differences between the local population and visitors [55].

##### 2.5.3. Environmental Impacts of the Development of Agritourism

The positive effects of agritourism are the preservation of ecosystems and raising the awareness of the local population of the need to protect the natural environment. Negative effects include noise, environmental pollution, the degradation of natural resources, the reconstruction of cultural heritage, and the impact on land stability by requiring transport, infrastructure, and facilities [53]. Agritourism activities include farm tours; harvesting local products; learning cultivation techniques on agricultural plots, trips to orchards, and fishing [57]; gathering forest fruits; horseback riding; hunting; and other activities that largely depend on the natural resources of the climate that may have an impact on the environment.

### 3. Materials and Methods

#### 3.1. Survey Questionnaire

A questionnaire used in the research was modelled on the research conducted by Nguyen et al. [57] and related to the development and support of agritourism development. Factors suggested by the authors are economics, socio-cultural aspects, and the environment. The questions in the questionnaire were designed in such a way that they were answered by rounding off the number that most described the attitude/opinion of the respondents. A five-point Likert-type scale was used (1—I completely disagree to 5—I completely agree).

#### 3.2. Sampling

The research was conducted on the territory of the Republic of Serbia in the period from April to July 2021. The target group for this research was the holders of agricultural farms. Agricultural households were randomly chosen, regardless of whether they were engaged in working in the fields, animal breeding, or food production. During the selection of the households, special care was taken that every region had an equal share (Belgrade 5%, Vojvodina 23%, Sumadija region and Western Serbia 42%, Eastern and Southern Serbia 30%), according to the real number of households. The data used were obtained from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia [19]. These data were not included later on in the questionnaire.

The selected households were first contacted via phone in order to be introduced to the type of research and to give their consent for their anonymous participation in it. Afterward, the online questionnaire was sent to all the households. Due to the difficulties in collecting the questionnaires, part of the questionnaires required a personal visit to the farmer and filling in the questionnaire on the spot.

For research purposes, 340 survey questionnaires were distributed, out of which 243 surveys were collected and processed from the field.

#### 3.3. Statistical Methods of Work

The obtained data were systematized and processed using the statistical program SPSS v23.0, which was used to perform statistical analyses in order to answer the research questions. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample (gender, type of land ownership, occupation, household income, level of education, size of agricultural holding). The degree of internal consistency of the items that made up the subscales, i.e., the reliability of the subscales, is expressed by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Based on factor analysis, the principal component method, and varimax rotation, the factors used in further statistical analyses were extracted, and the construct validity of the scales was examined. ANOVA (analysis of variance), as well as the *t*-test for independent samples, were used to test the differences between groups defined by sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents (gender, type of land ownership, occupation, household income, level of education, size of agricultural holding) in relation to the impact of agritourism, as well as participation in supporting agritourism development. Finally, linear multiple regression was performed to determine the predictive power of the impact of agritourism (economics, socio-cultural aspects, environment—dependent variables) and to support the development of agritourism (dependent variable). The level of statistical significance was  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

### 4. Results

#### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

For a better insight into the obtained data, we started from the analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, whose data are shown in Table 1. A total of 54.3% of female respondents and 45.7% of male respondents participated in the research. Regarding the age, most respondents were aged 36 to 50 (44.9%), followed by respon-

dents younger than 35(34.6%), whereas only 20.6% of respondents over 50 participated in the survey.

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic characteristics of respondents—general information about the sample.

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	111	45.7%
	Female	132	54.3%
Age	Up to 35 years old	84	34.6%
	36–50	109	44.9%
	51–65	43	17.7%
	Over 65	7	2.9%
Level of education	No education	7	2.9%
	Primary school	73	30.0%
	High school	112	46.1%
	Vocational studies	51	21.0%
	Bachelor's, master's, doctorate	0	0.0%
Monthly household income	EUR 1000 to 1800	168	69.1%
	EUR 1000 or less	51	21.0%
	EUR 1801 to 2800	12	4.9%
	EUR 2801 to 3750	6	2.5%
	Over EUR 3750	6	2.5%
Number of family members who work in agriculture	2 members or fewer	138	56.8%
	3 to 4 members	75	30.9%
	5 or more members	30	12.3%
Size of the farm—arable land	Up to 1 ha	108	44.4%
	1 to 3 ha	62	25.5%
	Over 3 ha	73	30.0%
Type of land ownership	Owned	231	95.1%
	Rented	12	4.9%
Number of years engaged in agriculture	Up to 10 years	131	53.9%
	11 to 20 years	44	18.1%
	21 to 30 years	37	15.2%
	31 to 40 years	13	5.3%
	41 to 50 years	18	7.4%
Level of engagement in agriculture	Full-time	70	28.8%
	Part-time	173	71.2%

The sample was not uniform according to gender and age, which may have affected the results of the research. The smallest proportion of respondents had not completed primary school (2.9%), whereas the largest proportion of respondents (46.1%) had completed secondary school. When it came to monthly household income, 69.1% of households earned between EUR 1000 and 1800, whereas only 5% of households earned over EUR 2800. The largest proportion of households (56.8%) indicated that two or more household members were engaged in agriculture, three to four household members were engaged in agriculture according to 30.9% of the respondents, and in 12.3% of households five or more members were engaged in agriculture.

Observing the size of households, i.e., the size of agricultural holdings based on arable land, 44.4% of farms cultivated up to 1 ha of land, 25.5% of farms cultivated from 1 ha to 3 ha of land, and 30% of farms cultivated over 3 ha of land. Over 95% of farms had land under personal ownership, whereas only 4.9% was leased. Based on the length of the period of farming, 53.9% of respondents had been farming for less than 10 years. The smallest proportion of respondents had been engaged in agriculture for over 30 years, which is 12.7%. Finally, 71.2% of the respondents stated that engaging in agriculture was an additional part-time job, whereas 28.8% of the respondents were engaged in agriculture full-time as their main activity (Table 1).

#### 4.2. Factor Analysis of the Respondents' Attitudes toward the Impact of Agritourism

Factor analysis was conducted to check the structure of the scales that make up the instrument and that relate to the attitudes of the respondents in relation to the impact of agritourism related to the economy, socio-culture, and environment. The items that make up these scales are subjected to factor analysis separately. The principal component method and varimax rotation were applied. The values of the Bartlett sphericity test (Chi-square) and the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test show that factor analysis can be approached (Tables 2–4).

**Table 2.** Factor structure of the scales—economic impacts.

Impact of Agrotourism	Factor Saturation		Descriptive Statistics	
	Positive	Negative	M	SD
Agritourism offers new business opportunities to the local population.	0.817		4.189	1.078
Agritourism contributes to the diversity of local economic activities.	0.840		4.239	1.041
Agritourism is an additional source of income.	0.812		4.399	0.967
Agritourism provides employment opportunities for family members.	0.811		4.305	1.035
Agritourism attracts infrastructure investments.	0.725		3.753	1.258
Agritourism promotes the demand for local agricultural products.	0.758		4.329	1.016
Agritourism is mainly used by sellers of tourist arrangements.		0.742	3.025	1.256
Due to the development of agritourism, the prices of goods and services are rising, which increases the cost of living.		0.827	3.066	1.258
Locals receive a small salary from agritourism activities.		0.736	3.374	1.231
Agritourism affects the increase in the price of agricultural land.	0.462		3.848	1.152
Eigen values	4.034	1.955	Average Rating	
% of variance explained (total variance = 59.891)	40.338	19.553	M = 3.853	SD = 0.621
Cronbach's alpha (for economic scale $\alpha = 0.744$ )	0.864	0.692		
KMO = 0.823; Chi-square = 1008.162; $p = 0.000$				

Note: SD—standard deviation,  $p$ —level of statistical significance, M—arithmetic mean, KMO—Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test, Chi-square—Bartlett's sphericity test,  $\alpha$ —Cronbach's alpha.

**Table 3.** Factor structure of the scales—socio-cultural impacts.

Impact of Agrotourism	Factor Saturation		Descriptive Statistics	
	Positive	Negative	M	SD
Agritourism provides an opportunity to get to know the culture and exchange experiences.	0.761		4.412	0.864
Agritourism makes full use of community resources.	0.687		3.646	1.171
Agritourism promotes the preservation of traditional culture.	0.802		4.251	1.020
Agritourism improves the quality of life and working conditions.	0.798		4.091	1.004
Agritourism contributes to the community being proud of its agricultural culture.	0.822		4.272	1.004
Agritourism provides more entertainment opportunities for the local population.	0.751		3.827	1.197
Agritourism affects the way of life and the local population.	0.789		4.156	0.962
Agritourism leads to an increase in crime rates such as theft, violence, and vandalism.		0.881	1.815	1.118
Agritourism causes conflicts between tourists and locals.		0.881	1.786	1.115
Eigen values	4.213	1.623	Average Rating	
% of variance explained (total variance = 64.843)	46.812	18.031	M = 3.584	SD = 0.640
Cronbach's alpha (for socio-cultural scale $\alpha = 0.785$ )	0.884	0.730		
KMO = 0.828; Chi-square = 976.874; $p = 0.000$				

Note: SD—standard deviation,  $p$ —level of statistical significance, M—arithmetic mean, KMO—Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test, Chi-square—Bartlett's sphericity test,  $\alpha$ —Cronbach's alpha.

The economic scale (Table 2) contained 10 items grouped into two subscales, with saturations (saturation) from 0.462 to 0.840 for economic positive and from 0.736 to 0.827 for economic negative. Together, they explained 59.891% of the total variance. The economic positive subscale contained seven items, explaining 40.338% of the total variance. The economic negative subscale contained three items and explained 19.553% of the total variance. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the economic scale (full scale) was  $\alpha = 0.744$ , where as for economic positive it was 0.864, and for economic negative it was 0.692.

**Table 4.** Factor structure of the scales—environmental impacts.

Impact of Agrotourism	Factor Saturation		Descriptive Statistics	
	Positive	Negative	M	SD
Agritourism improves the appearance of the area.	0.819		4.272	0.941
Agritourism preserves the natural environment in the community.	0.873		3.963	1.122
Agritourism has a positive effect on the environmental awareness of the locals and authorities.	0.864		4.025	1.113
Agritourism results in overcrowding and noise.		0.862	2.370	1.309
Agritourism disrupts the natural beauty of the landscape.		0.859	2.255	1.346
Agritourism causes an increase in the amount of garbage in the community.		0.846	2.897	1.483
Agritourism causes traffic jams and lack of parking spaces.		0.864	2.588	1.410
Eigen values	3.051	2.312	Average Rating	
% of variance explained (total variance = 76.622%)	43.591%	33.031%	M = 3.195	SD = 0.644
Cronbach's alpha (for environmental scale $\alpha = 0.530$ )	0.841	0.899		
KMO = 0.821; Chi-square = 963.133; $p = 0.000$				

Note: SD—standard deviation,  $p$ —level of statistical significance, M—arithmetic mean, KMO—Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test, Chi-square—Bartlett's sphericity test,  $\alpha$ —Cronbach's alpha.

As for the socio-cultural scale (Table 3), it contained nine items grouped into two components, with saturation ranging from 0.687 to 0.822 for the positive subscale. The positive socio-cultural subscale contained seven items and explained 46.812% of the total variance, whereas the negative subscale contained only two items, so it could not be treated as a separate factor. Cronbach's alpha for the whole socio-cultural scale was  $\alpha = 0.785$ , whereas for the positive socio-cultural scale it was  $\alpha = 0.884$ .

The environment scale consisted of seven items (Table 4), which were grouped into two subscales. Saturations ranged from 0.819 to 0.873 for the positive scale, whereas for the negative scale they ranged from 0.846 to 0.864 and explained 76.622% of the total variance. The positive environmental subscale contained three items, which made a share of 43.591% in the total variance, whereas the negative environmental scale contained four items, which was 33.031% of the total variance. Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale was  $\alpha = 0.530$ , for environment positive it was  $\alpha = 0.841$ , and for environment negative it was  $\alpha = 0.899$ .

Tables 2–4 also show the arithmetic mean for the variables on the basis of which the respondents' attitudes toward the impacts of agritourism were assessed. The highest value of the arithmetic mean was in socio-cultural impacts (agritourism provides an opportunity to get to know the culture and exchange experiences;  $M = 4.412$ ,  $SD = 0.864$ ), the second highest score was in positive economic (agritourism is an additional source of income;  $M = 4.339$ ,  $SD = 0.967$ ), and the lowest score was observed in negative socio-cultural (agritourism causes conflicts between tourists and locals;  $M = 1.786$ ,  $SD = 1.115$ ).

We also applied factor analysis to six special items that were intended to examine the participation of the respondents in supporting the development of agritourism, and that served us to identify the dimensions of these six items (Table 5). The KMO coefficient was 0.822, Chi-square was 780,534, and  $p$ -value was 0.000. The scale was one-dimensional and explained 62.721% of the total variance. Factor saturations ranged between 0.686 and 0.875. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.865 indicated high scale reliability.

#### 4.3. Differences in Group Responses Defined by Sociodemographic Variables

In order to examine the links between demographic variables, i.e., personal characteristics of the respondents (gender, type of land ownership, occupation, household income, level of education, farm size) in relation to the impact of agritourism, as well as participation in supporting agritourism development, we applied the ANOVA test (analysis of variance) and  $t$ -test to independent samples. The results we obtained confirmed statistically significant differences between the variables of farm size and household income in relation to the impact of agritourism. For other demographic variables, no statistically significant differences were found in terms of impact or support of the development of agritourism. In



the following table, we present the results of the ANOVA and *t*-test for variables in which statistical significance was observed.

**Table 5.** Factor structure and descriptive statistics—scale support for agritourism development.

Agritourism Development	Factor Saturation	Descriptive Statistics	
		M	SD
I am motivated to participate in supporting the development of agritourism.	0.686	4.300	1.047
The community should be involved in agritourism development planning.	0.732	4.588	0.810
I support new agritourism facilities and equipment that will attract more tourists.	0.875	4.556	0.793
I would like to see more agritourism activities and tourists.	0.833	4.510	0.859
Local authorities should provide financial support to improve infrastructure in order to develop agritourism.	0.823	4.745	0.624
Local authorities should provide incentive policies and plans aimed at developing agritourism.	0.787	4.770	0.564
Eigen values	3.76	Average Rating	
% of variance explained	62.721	M = 4.578	SD = 0.617
Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )	0.865		
KMO = 0.822; Chi-square = 780.534; $p = 0.000$			

Note: SD—standard deviation, M—arithmetic mean,  $p$ —level of statistical significance, KMO—Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin test, Chi-square—Bartlett's sphericity test,  $\alpha$ —Cronbach's alpha.

We tested the differences in responses and between farm sizes in relation to attitudes toward supporting agritourism development (Table 6). We can state that there was a statistically significant difference in the positive socio-cultural impacts factor ( $F_{(2,240)} = 4.964$ ;  $p = 0.008$ ) and in the positive economic impacts factor ( $F_{(2,240)} = 7.565$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). It is important to stress the high values of the arithmetic mean here, as well as the minor deviations in attitudes related to positive economic impacts in the participants with households from 1 ha to 3 ha ( $M = 4.472$ ,  $SD = 0.502$ ). The same occurrence was noticed in the positive socio-cultural impacts ( $M = 4.361$ ,  $SD = 0.517$ ).

**Table 6.** ANOVA results—farm size.

Factor	Category	N	M	SD	$F_{(2,240)}$	$p$
Positive economic impacts	Up to 1 ha	108	4.092	0.786	7.565	0.001 **
	From 1 to 3 ha	62	4.472	0.502		
	Over 3 ha	73	3.966	0.950		
	Total	243	4.151	0.802		
Positive socio-cultural impacts	Up to 1 ha	108	3.981	0.886	4.964	0.008 **
	From 1 to 3 ha	62	4.361	0.517		
	Over 3 ha	73	4.031	0.808		
	Total	243	4.093	0.796		

Note: N—number of respondents, M—arithmetic mean, SD—standard deviation, F statistics,  $p$ —level of statistical significance, \*\* significant at the level of 0.01.

Looking at Table 7, where we wanted to show the results of the ANOVA test to check whether there were statistically significant differences between the responses of the respondents with different monthly incomes in relation to attitudes to support the development of agritourism, we conclude that statistically significant differences occurred in the positive economic impacts factor ( $F_{(4,238)} = 5.021$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). Pronounced positive economic impacts were noticed in the participants with an income between EUR 1801 and EUR 2.800 ( $M = 4.381$ ,  $SD = 0.908$ ). Contrary to that, the participants with an income higher than EUR 3.750 ( $M = 2.785$ , the lowest  $SD = 0.458$ ) had a significantly poorer opinion of these impacts.

Table 8 provides an answer to the question of whether there are statistically significant differences between male and female respondents in relation to attitudes about the development of agritourism. As we can see from the table, statistically significant differences were observed in the Negative environmental impacts factor ( $t = 2.115$ ;  $p = 0.035$ ), where as in other factors there were no statistical significances.

**Table 7.** ANOVA results—monthly income.

Factor	Category	N	M	SD	F <sub>(4,238)</sub>	p
Positive economic impacts	EUR 1000 to 1800	168	4.187	0.783	5.021	0.001 **
	EUR 1000 or less	51	4.156	0.722		
	EUR 1801 to 2800	12	4.381	0.908		
	EUR 2801 to 3750	6	4.023	0.999		
	More than EUR 3750	6	2.785	0.458		
	Total	243	4.151	0.802		

Note: N—number of respondents, M—arithmetic mean, SD—standard deviation, F statistics, p—level of statistical significance, \*\* significant at the level of 0.01.

**Table 8.** Test results for independent samples—gender.

Factor	Gender	M	SD	t	p
Negative environmental impacts	Male	2.349	1.117	−2.115	0.035 *
	Female	2.678	1.278		

Note: N—number of respondents, M—arithmetic mean, SD—standard deviation, t statistics, p—level of statistical significance, \* significant at the level of 0.05.

#### 4.4. Relationship between the Impact of Agritourism and Support for Agritourism Development

A linear regression analysis was performed in order to determine whether the factors obtained by applying the factor analysis would influence participation in further improvements in the development of agritourism. Participation in further improvements in the development of agritourism was considered a dependent variable, and six factors influencing agritourism were considered independent variables.

Based on the results shown in Table 9, three factors had an impact on supporting the development of agritourism: positive economic impacts ( $\beta = 0.248$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), positive environmental impacts ( $\beta = 0.305$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), and positive socio-cultural impacts ( $\beta = 0.194$ ;  $p = 0.018$ ). The adjusted  $R^2$ , whose coefficient was 0.389, tells us that a relationship between the variables exists and explained 38.9% of the total variance.

**Table 9.** Multiple regression analysis.

Independent Variables	$\beta$	t	p
Positive economic impacts	0.248	3.644	0.000 **
Positive socio-cultural impacts	0.194	2.374	0.018 *
Positive environmental impacts	0.305	4.206	0.000 **

$R^2 = 0.401$ , modified  $R^2 = 0.389$ ,  $F = 31.754$ ,  $p = 0.000$   
 Dependent variable: support for agritourism development

Note:  $\beta$ —Standardized regression coefficient, t statistics, F statistics, p—level of statistical significance,  $R^2$ —coefficient of determination, \*\* significant at level 0.01, \* significant at level 0.05.

## 5. Discussion

The research shows that the owners of agricultural farms in the Republic of Serbia clearly expressed positive attitudes toward certain economic effects on agritourism. They see the economic benefits from employing local people, expanding the diversity of local economic activities and additional sources of income, employing family members, attracting infrastructure investment, and promoting demand for local agricultural products, as well as increasing the price of agricultural land. The respondents were aware that the development of agritourism does not only mean profit for sellers of tourist arrangements, but also that this selective form of tourism will not affect the increase in the cost of living and reduce the salaries of locals. It should be noted that the respondents expressed a positive attitude towards the item of agritourism affecting the increase in the price of agricultural land, in contrast to research by Nguyen et al. [57], where respondents had a negative attitude towards these changes.

Observing the results obtained on the impact of agritourism on socio-cultural factors, a positive attitude was observed by the respondents regarding the following: opportunities to learn about culture and exchange experiences, the usage of community resources, promoting and preserving traditional culture, improving living and working conditions, contributing within the context of community pride for agricultural culture, the entertainment of the local population, and the influence on the way of life of the local population. Negative attitudes were observed in the item about the increase in the rate of crime such as theft, violence, and vandalism, as well as possible conflicts between tourists and the local population. The item that in the original setting of the research belonged to negative factors [57]—agritourism affecting the way of life and the local population—was expressed as a positive factor in the research conducted among the owners of agricultural farms in the Republic of Serbia.

Based on the results obtained on the impact of agritourism on the environment, positive attitudes were found in the item on improving the appearance of the area, preserving the natural environment in the community, and increasing the environmental awareness of the locals and authorities. Negative connotations were given to items that were also processed by the authors Tiraieyari and Hamzah [53], which referred to the overloading of the environment with noise, disturbing the beauty of the landscape, increasing waste, and causing traffic jams, as well as lack of parking spaces.

As we can see from the results in Table 5, most respondents wanted to participate and support the development of agritourism. Not only did they support it, but the respondents also encouraged the implementation of more agritourism activities and tourists, believing that the new agritourism facilities and equipment would attract more tourists, as well as appeal to local authorities to provide financial support to provide and improve infrastructure and encourage policies and plans on the development of agritourism. According to the respondents, all six factors were equally important for the development of agritourism, and this is indicated by the high scores of arithmetic means.

From the above data in Table 6 related to the selected specific factors, it is obvious that the arithmetic means of the respondents differed in the respondents who came from farms ranging in size from 1 ha to 3 ha. They had a slightly higher score compared to the other two categories, i.e., they had more positive attitudes towards the development of agritourism.

The lowest answers were given by the respondents with incomes above EUR 3750 (Table 7), whereas the answers with the highest arithmetic means were observed in the respondents with incomes from EUR 1801 to 2800. It is an interesting fact that in our case, people with higher incomes, such as the respondents with incomes above EUR 3750, preferred agritourism less and rarely participated in supporting the development of agritourism.

Based on the arithmetic means (Table 8), it is obvious that the female respondents had a lower degree of agreement with the statements in relation to the male respondents on the negative environmental impacts factor.

Linear regression analysis (Table 9) showed that positive environmental impacts and positive economic impacts had a stronger effect on participation in further supporting the development of agritourism than positive socio-cultural impacts. These results tell us about the openness of the respondents to participating in the development of agritourism because it is not only ubiquitous in their work, but also brings them new jobs. It gives them a chance to share experiences and support while educating visitors and promoting local culture, agricultural products, and characteristic gastronomic products. It represents the economic benefit of the domicile population, sustainable development, and investment in infrastructure.

## 6. Conclusions

The subject of the paper is the attitudes of agricultural farm owners toward the impact and development of agritourism on economic and socio-cultural indicators and

the environment in Serbia. As agritourism provides more opportunities for recreation, agricultural activities, economy, and infrastructure, the positive effects of agritourism certainly play a very important role in shaping the attitudes of farm owners toward agritourism, which has certainly been proven by this study.

Based on the obtained results, it was noticed that agricultural farm owners want to participate and support the development of agritourism but also encourage the implementation of a larger number of agritourism activities and tourists. Furthermore, based on the results, farmers believe that new agritourism facilities and equipment will attract more tourists, which would provide and improve the infrastructure and encourage policies and plans aimed at the development of agritourism, leading to significant life changes.

Different attitudes among the respondents were reflected by different sociodemographic characteristics, so there was a difference between the answers of the respondents of different monthly incomes in relation to the attitudes toward the support for the development of agritourism. Here it was found that respondents with the highest monthly income preferred agritourism less and rarely participated in supporting the development of agritourism, whereas the respondents who cultivated land area from 1 ha to 3 ha had more positive attitudes toward the development of agritourism. Based on the above, it can be concluded that a statistically significant difference occurred in the positive socio-cultural impacts factor and the positive economic impacts factor.

### *6.1. Scientific Contribution of the Research*

The scientific contribution of this research conducted in the territory of the Republic of Serbia refers to the collection of data essential for creating tourism policy and addressing the negative impacts on the motivation of the population to participate in agritourism. Further guidelines for improving awareness of agritourism emphasize the necessity to involve the local government to educate the population, as well as the benefits of agritourism that contribute to better living and working conditions in rural parts of Serbia, in order to reduce migration to larger economic centers inside and outside of Serbia and to improve the economic growth of less-developed regions.

### *6.2. Potential Research Shortcomings*

Potential shortcomings of the research are reflected in the implementation of random sampling on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Random sampling in larger areas can give inaccurate data, especially when it comes to areas whose economic development is different among agricultural regions (Belgrade region, Vojvodina region, Šumadija region and Western Serbia, Southern and Eastern Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija), which has previously been determined [18].

### *6.3. Suggestions for Future Research*

In accordance with the above, future research could focus on research in the individual regions covered. In order to obtain individual data on the issues raised, a survey of subgroups—participants in agritourism, including small producers of food and gastronomic products and rural tourist households—would be of a particular importance. As well, it would be of great importance to conduct surveys on tourists and/or users of all agritourism services, keeping in mind that they are important actors whose satisfaction rate is a key factor when it comes to the success of agritourism.

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