Journal of Tourism Insights

Volume 9 | Issue 1 Article 5

2019

Incentives to Join Associations: The Case of Agritourism

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Cover Page Footnote

The authors want to express their gratitude to the executive officers and members of the Agritourism Network Association of North Carolina and the North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association for their time and commitment to this study.

INCENTIVES TO JOIN ASSOCIATIONS: THE CASE OF AGRITOURISM

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, the agricultural context has posed economic pressures to farmers who struggle to keep their farming jobs and farmland. To cope with these challenges, farmers, especially owners of family farms, had to identify strategies to maintain their agricultural ventures and supplement their farm incomes (Alsos, Ljunggren, & Pettersen, 2003). Farm entrepreneurial diversification became a commonly adopted strategy to supplement farm incomes because it can increase the economic values of traditional agriculture through the maximization and re-utilization of farmland, labor, or capital (Barbieri, Mahoney, & Butler, 2008). Agritourism is one type of enterprise that farmers have increasingly developed to cope with decreased agricultural revenues and increased operating expenses (Alsos et al., 2003; Barbieri et al., 2008). Evidence indicates that the growth agritourism showed during the last three decades will be sustained over the next years (Santeramo & Barbieri, 2017) due to the public's increased interest to reconnect with local food systems.

Although the development of agritourism has opened economic opportunities to farmers, it has also brought additional burdens (Phelan & Sharpley, 2012). The success of agritourism is very dependent on the adoption of adequate management practices that require a set of interpersonal skills, business competencies and networks (Mishra et al. 2002) that farmers not frequently possess (Halim, 2016; Sharpley & Vass, 2006). In this scenario, associations emerged to enhance the business readiness of emerging entrepreneurial farmers by providing them with marketing (e.g., collective advertising materials), networking (e.g., referrals to suppliers), and continued learning (e.g., technical updates) opportunities (Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, 2007). However, after years in operation, agritourism associations are struggling to remain in business because of high levels of inactive members and overall decreasing membership (Touchette, personal communication, March 2, 2016; Mills, personal communication, January 14, 2016). Reasons behind membership inactivity and withdraw among these associations is not readily available. Yet, it may be related to the type and quality of the services they are providing to their members because decision to join and stay in an association is a relational choice from assessing the costs and benefits incurred/received (Achim, Dragolea, & Balan, 2013; Hager, 2014).

In response to this gap of knowledge and in view of the increase of agritourism development, this study adopted the *Logic of Membership* framework to examine whether the services agritourism associations provide are in line with

their members' needs. Specifically, this study pursues four objectives: (1) assess the set of incentives driving individuals to join agritourism associations; (2) identify clusters of members based on the incentives they seek; (3) profile clusters of members based on their demographic, farm, agritourism, and membership characteristics; and (4) compare prevalent needs and levels of satisfaction across different types of members. Study results are useful to inform agritourism associations' services, which is critical given the significant benefits that associations deliver to their members, especially by enhancing the knowledge, skills and networks they need to succeed (Moon, 2000; Newbery et al., 2013). From a broader perspective, strengthening the entrepreneurial readiness of agritourism farmers can fortify this tourism sector that delivers a mosaic of economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits to family farms and their surrounding communities (Barbieri, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation refers to the psychological process that drives individuals' actions towards certain goals or behaviors (Deci, 1976). Over time, the scholarly examination of motivations has bridged from Psychology to other disciplines and adapted to explain a breadth of behaviors (Weinstein & DeHaan, 2014). Motivations vary across individuals in terms of orientation and intensity and are broadly dichotomized as intrinsic or extrinsic (Deci, 1976; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivations satisfy individuals' innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy while extrinsic motivations are the set of material rewards or hidden interests individuals seek (Ritz, 2009). Both, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations contribute to the quality of individuals' experience and performance (Ritz, 2009). Yet, intrinsic motivations trigger more positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes than extrinsic ones (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and facilitate the generation and transfer of tacit knowledge under conditions in which extrinsic motivation tends to fail (Swift et al., 2010).

Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivations enhance organizational commitment (Moon, 2000; Swift, Balkin, & Matusik, 2010), individuals' motivations varied based on their personal interests and contexts, such as hobbies, ethnicity, generational cohort, and work environments (Smith, 1994). For example, although managers from public and private organizations share similar intrinsic motivations, recognition is the main extrinsic motivation for managers working in the public sector while payment has a greater importance for those working on the private sector (Ljungholm, 2005). In business, motivations take the form of incentives because business people make decisions seeking a suite of benefits or rewards (Kreps, 1997; Mozes, Josman, & Yaniv, 2011; Robbins & Pearce 1993; Shukla, 2012). Therefore, different frameworks have been developed to examine motivations within specific business contexts. Among them,

the *Logic of Membership* was developed to examine motivations to join or remain in associations.

The Logic of Membership

Membership to associations can be viewed as a capital asset investment (Johnson, 1987) because individuals join and stay if the benefits (i.e., incentives) they receive outweighs the costs (Barbieri & Mattozzi, 2009). Thus, membership recruitment and retention is dependent on the extent to which the association fulfills members' motivations and the levels of satisfaction with the services provided (Bennett, 1998; 2000; Moon, 2000). As such, associations largely depend on their ability to improve their performance by offering selective individual benefits through collective support (Bennett & Ramsden, 2007; Ring, Peredo, & Chrisman, 2010). Associations, as other forms of membership bodies, are a primary source of collaboration by promoting cooperation, expanding social networks, and fostering collective efficiency among members (Newbery et al., 2013). They also have the capacity to bundle individual services that can then pass to their members (e.g., group insurance plans) by reducing transaction costs (Bennett & Robson, 2011).

The Logic of Membership comprises the set of incentives members seek when joining a given association (Streeck & Schmitter, 1985). According to Bennett (1998), the Logic of Membership encompasses: (1) The logic of service, defined by the amenities associations offer to respond to members' individual requests and enquiries (i.e., private incentives); and (2) the logic of influence defined by the actions associations undertake on behalf of most of their members' interests (i.e., public incentives). Private incentives comprise economic (e.g., increase members' revenues), occupational (e.g., access to professional contacts), and informational (e.g., data services) benefits and foster social relational bonding by increasing members' recognition within a network or enabling networking opportunities (Barbieri & Mattozzi, 2009; Hager, 2014). Public incentives includes normative expectations (e.g., setting professional standards) and lobbying (e.g., informing policies) on behalf of the interests of a certain field or cause (Gazley & Dignam, 2010; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002).

Both, public and private incentives motivate individuals to join an association and determine members' levels of involvement in terms of time and money contribution (DeLeskey, 2003; Gazley & Dignam, 2010; Hager, 2014). Yet, public benefits are usually underlying because individuals are highly driven by the maximization of their private benefits (Olson, 1965). Contextual conditions of a particular profession as well as personal (sociodemographic and career) factors influence incentives to join an association or members' levels of involvement. For example, education level is positively associated with individuals' participation in associations' activities, and females tend to volunteer

more in their associations than males (Hager, 2014). According to Knoke (1988), professionals at entry-level positions may seek more occupational information and advice from associations while mid-level and senior professionals may seek opportunities for career advancement.

Broadly. the Logic of Membership falls within incentive theories that seek to understand the drivers behind business decisions. As such, this framework has been mostly applied in business studies and most specifically to investigate several issues related to associations' memberships (Moon, 2000; Newbery et al., 2013). To the extent of the author's knowledge, the Logic of Membership has not been used in the context of tourism. Yet, this framework seemed suitable to identify the set of incentives that entrepreneurs seek when joining tourism associations as this study pursues, specifically related to agritourism associations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted among members affiliated to two non-for-profit associations, the North American Farm Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) and the North Carolina Agritourism Network Association (ANA). These associations were selected because while primarily focusing on agritourism, they differ on the geographic scope of their members (international vs. statewide) and membership size (NAFDMA = 734, ANA = 174), which was deemed important to capture the major associations' structural and agency-related characteristics that may influence members' incentives (Newbery et al., 2013). Considering both associations together, the study sample size was 908 members.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURES

A questionnaire addressing the study objectives was drafted with the input of key executive representatives from both associations. The survey collected general membership (e.g., length of membership), agriculture (e.g., acreage farmed), agritourism (e.g., activities offered), and socio-demographic information. It also queried members' satisfaction with association's services and information needs in terms of usefulness. A major survey component focused on the set of incentives members sought when joining their associations. Incentives were queried using the Professional Association Membership scale (Hager, 2014), slightly modified to fit the agritourism context, because of its comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of existing scales (e.g., Knoke, 1988; Olson, 1971; Yeager, 1981). Twelve statements comprising public (e.g., "Promote public awareness of agritourism"), relational (e.g., "Develop my agritourism network"), economic (e.g., "Increase my number of customers"), and informational (e.g., "Get updated information on business licenses/permits") incentives were included and measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = "Extremely Unimportant" to 5 = "Extremely Important").

Data were collected using a web-based survey given that communication between both associations and their members is predominantly electronic. An invitation e-mail describing the study purpose and personalized survey link was sent to both associations members in mid-2016. Non-respondents received up to four reminders paced according on response activity. Data collection spanned for approximately two months, yielding 399 valid responses representing a 43.9% overall response rate (NAFDMA = 305, 41.6%; ANA = 94, 54.0%). Both datasets were merged after statistical tests showed comparable social (gender composition, level of education) and economic (household income, proportion of farmers, agritourism involvement) characteristics of associations' members ($p > 0.05$). ANA members were significant older than NAFDMA's (M_{ANA} = 55 years old, M_{NAFDMA} = 51 years old; $p = 0.007$), which was not deemed an impediment to merge both datasets.

DATA ANALYSIS

A series of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis were conducted to address study objectives ($p < 0.05$). Descriptives were used to profile respondents based on their socio-demographics, farm attributes, and the extent of their involvement with agritourism; respondents' satisfaction levels and perceived usefulness with association services, as well as the incentives they sought when joining their associations were also desrcibed. Exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to reduce the incentives to fewer dimensions; eigenvalues over one, factor loadings over 0.6, and the scree-plot interpretation were used to determine the resulting factors (Garson, 2012a). Cronbach's alpha reliability tests were conducted to examine internal consistency among incentives loaded in each factor, adopting a conservative 0.70 alpha threshold (Nunnally, 1994). Composite factor scores were then calculated by averaging the means of the original incentives variables within each factor.

Both hierarchical and *k*-means cluster analysis based on the factor regression scores were conducted to classify respondents based on their incentives. Hierarchical cluster analysis was first performed to determine the best fit within a number of cluster solutions (2-to-6 clusters); then *k*-means cluster analysis was used to specify the number of clusters (Garson, 2012b). A series of Analyses of Variance (ANOVA), Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVA), and chi-square tests were conducted, as applicable, to compare key socio-demographic, membership, farm and agritourism attributes, as well as perceived usefulness and satisfaction levels with association services, across members' clusters. Wilk's lambda was used in MANOVA tests because its suitability to compare more than two groups (Garson, 2012c).

RESULTS

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Respondents were mostly female (58.5%) and between 46 and 65 years old (62.9%; M = 52.2 years old). They were also highly educated (65.3% had at least a four-year college degree) and reported high household incomes (63.0% made at least $75,000 a year). Most respondents had farm-related jobs; 56.3% were full time farmers and 35.2% were directly involved in the farm agritourism activities (e.g., agritourism manager). Among those who had a farm-related job, most were at least second generation farmers (64.9%) and employed at least one family member on their operation (M = 3.5). Respondents directly involved in farming reported farm sizes ranging from small to large operations. In terms of acres farmed, most (52.9%) farmed less than 100 acres while a small proportion (15.2%) farmed 500 or more acres (M = 267.3 acres). In terms of 2015 gross income, 23.0% reported less than $50,000 while 35.5% made at least one million.

The majority (79.3%) of responding farms offered agritourism activities on their farm (Table 1). The most common agritourism activities were educational and farm-based recreational activities (79.3%), closely followed by festivals and events (74.8%). The survey captured a variety of agritourism operations. In terms of years in business, 13.3% were recently established operations (less than 5 years) while 26.5% had at least 30 years of experience (M = 21.3 years). In terms of number of visitors, 29.3% hosted less than 5,000 visitors in 2015, while 17.4% at least 100,000 (M = 60,406 visitors). Respondents reported that agritourism was the main source of income for most of responding farms; for 67.8% of respondents, agritourism represented at least half of their farm income and it was the sole source of income for 35.3% of responding farms.

ASSESSMENT OF ASSOCIATION OFFERINGS

Respondents were moderately to very satisfied with the educational resources (M = 2.81; SD = 0.692; α = 0.876) and networking opportunities (M = 2.75; SD = 0.677; α = 0.785) they received from their associations, indicating a slightly higher satisfaction level with the overall performance of their association (M = 2.91; SD = 0.752; Table 2). Over two-thirds of respondents were at least very satisfied with how their associations promote good business practices (67.9%; M = 2.88; SD = 0.800), communicate innovation in terms of ideas and practices (67.2%; M = 2.87; SD = 0.794), and foster networking opportunities (67.8%; M = 2.90; SD = 0.835). They were less satisfied with the interactive directory of members (M = 2.64; SD = 0.786) and links to external resources (M = 2.68; SD = 0.771) both associations provide to their members. Overall, most members (69.3%) were very or extremely satisfied with their associations as a whole (M = 2.91; SD = 0.752).

Table 1. Agritourism profile of participating farms

Agritourism Indicators [a]	Number	Percent
Most Common Types of Agritourism Activities [b] (n = 270)		
Educational activities (e.g., educational tours, workshops)	214	79.3%
Farm-based recreational activities (e.g., corn-maze, hayride)	214	79.3%
Festivals or events (e.g., harvest festival, wedding)	202	74.8%
Farm hands-on activities/experiences (e.g., U-pick, cow-milking)	167	61.9%
Years of Offering Agritourism (n = 233)		
Less than 5 years	31	13.3%
5 - 9 years	40	17.2%
10 - 19 years	49	21.1%
20 - 29 years	51	21.9%
30 - 49 years	48	20.5%
50 or more years	14	6.0%
Mean (in years)		***21.3***
Number of Visitors in 2015 (n = 234)		
Less than 1,000	37	15.9%
1,000 - 4,999	31	13.4%
5,000 - 19,999	39	16.6%
20,000 - 49,999	54	23.1%
50,000 - 99,999	32	13.6%
100,000 - 199,999	29	12.3%
200,000 or more	12	5.1%
Mean (in number)		***60,406***
Percentage of Agritourism-Related Sales (n = 249)		
Less than 25%	33	13.3%
25% - 50%	47	18.9%
51% - 75%	45	18.1%
76% - 99%	36	14.4%
100%	88	35.3%
Mean (in percent)		***69.4%***

[a] Only respondents offering agritourism are reported (*n* = 279; 79.3%).

[b] This adds to more than 100% because participants could check more than one response. Only includes agritourism activities reported by at least 50% of responding agritourism farms.

Despite high levels of satisfaction, respondents appeared to need educational resources from their associations (Table 3). In order, they would find very useful to receive information related to clientele management (M = 3.04; SD = 0.737; α = 0.817), overall agriculture (M = 3.03; SD = 0.700; α = 0.813), and business operations (M = 2.74; SD = 0.806; α = 0.842). Specifically, the most useful information they would like to receive were related to agritourism in terms of liability, such as required/suggested signage and insurance (M = 3.36; SD = 1.073), and overall updates, such as new regulations (M = 3.33; SD = 1.037). Closely followed information to manage their clientele, especially in terms of

overall marketing such as branding (M = 3.33; SD = 1.017), customer service such as dealing with complaints (M = 3.06; SD = 0.995), and event planning such as weddings and festivals (M = 3.03; SD = 1.062). Respondents found information related to business start-up, such as how to write a business plan less useful (M = 2.44; SD = 1.072), most likely because they are already operating.

Table 2. Members' perceived satisfaction with association current offerings

Satisfaction Indicators (*n* = 348)	Not at all Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	Mean [a]	SD
Educational Resources (α = 0.876)						
Promoting good business practices	2.0%	30.1%	45.6%	22.3%	2.88	0.800
Communicating innovation	2.7%	30.1%	44.9%	22.3%	2.87	0.794
Links to external resources	4.4%	37.0%	44.6%	14.0%	2.68	0.771
Composite Mean					**2.81**	**0.692**
Networking (α = 0.785)						
Networking opportunities	3.8%	28.4%	42.2%	25.6%	2.90	0.835
Referrals to trusted professionals	5.7%	35.1%	41.7%	17.5%	2.71	0.820
Interactive members directory	4.6%	40.9%	40.2%	14.3%	2.64	0.786
Composite Mean					**2.75**	**0.677**
Association As a Whole						
Overall satisfaction	1.2%	29.5%	46.3%	23.0%	**2.91**	**0.752**

[a] Measured on a 4-point scale, ranging from "1 = Not at all satisfied" to "4 = Extremely satisfied".

Table 3. Perceived usefulness of information they would like to receive

Types of Information (*n* = 351) [a]	Not at all Useful	Moderately Useful	Very Useful	Extremely Useful	Mean [b]	SD
Clientele Management (α = 0.817)					**3.04**	**0.737**
Marketing	2.6%	11.4%	36.9%	49.1%	3.33	1.017
Customer service	6.0%	19.8%	36.4%	37.8%	3.06	0.995
Event planning	8.6%	19.9%	31.3%	40.2%	3.03	1.062
Social media	11.5%	30.4%	30.4%	27.7%	2.74	1.017
Agriculture (α = 0 .813)					**3.03**	**0.700**
Agritourism liability	2.6%	10.3%	36.1%	51.0%	3.36	1.073
Agritourism updates	1.8%	12.3%	37.2%	48.7%	3.33	1.037
Agricultural policy	8.0%	27.7%	33.4%	30.9%	2.87	1.010
Agricultural practices	14.3%	35.0%	29.6%	21.1%	2.58	0.979
Business Operations (α = 0.842)					**2.74**	**0.806**
Bulk purchasing of services	11.7%	21.7%	31.1%	35.5%	2.91	1.081
Funding	14.9%	23.1%	27.7%	34.3%	2.81	1.111
Finance	12.3%	26.1%	32.1%	29.5%	2.79	1.038
Internet basics	10.3%	30.5%	33.6%	25.6%	2.74	0.981
Business start-up	24.0%	30.3%	23.4%	22.3%	2.44	1.072

[a] Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient for information items.
[b] Measured on a 4-point scale from "1 = Not at all useful" to "4 = Extremely useful".

MEMBERS' INCENTIVES TO JOIN AGRITOURISM ASSOCIATIONS

The greatest incentives for joining an agritourism association were private in nature, seeking to improve their own business performance. Among those, to learn how to better serve customers and visitors (M = 4.59; SD = 0.935), get business advice specialized to agritourism (M = 4.59; SD = 0.658), learn how to maximize the use of resources (M = 4.53; SD = 0.724), and increase their profits (M = 4.49; SD = 0.862) were the most prominent. Promoting public awareness of agritourism (M = 4.37; SD = 0.843) and influencing agritourism related policies (M = 4.26; SD = 0.784), both public incentives, were the least ranked although still considered important. Factor analysis of membership incentives resulted in four factors, accounting for 76.6% of total variance (Table 4). The public incentive of promoting good business practices (M = 4.46; SD = 0.731) did not load on any factor, thus it was removed from further analysis.

Table 4. Mean and rotated factor matrix of members' incentives to join agritourism associations

Incentives by Factors (*n* = 358)	Mean [a]	SD	Factor Loadings	Explained Variance [b]	Eigen-value
Networking Incentives (α = 0.918)	**4.36**			45.1%	5.4
Expand connections with other businesses	4.32	0.800	0.900		
Enhance overall business network	4.30	0.804	0.887		
Develop a network	4.41	0.806	0.850		
Educational Incentives (α = 0.832)	**4.57**			12.9%	1.6
Get business advice specialized in agritourism	4.59	0.658	0.791		
Learn how to better serve customers/visitors	4.59	0.703	0.777		
Learn to maximize the use of my resources	4.53	0.724	0.740		
Policy and Advocacy Incentives (α = 0.721)	**4.32**			10.1%	1.2
Promote public awareness of agritourism	4.37	0.843	0.822		
Influence agritourism related policies	4.26	0.784	0.804		
Get updated information on regulations	4.33	0.801	0.640		
Economic Incentives (α = 0.859)	**4.41**			8.5%	1.0
Increase the number of customers	4.32	0.935	0.879		
Increase profits	4.49	0.862	0.855		

[a] Measured on a 5-point scale from "1 = Very unimportant" to "5 = Very important".
[b] Total Variance Explained = 76.6%.

The factors obtained showed strong internal consistency; they were labeled based on their underlying themes. *Networking* explained 45.1% of variance (α = 0.918; eigenvalue = 5.4) and captured three incentives related to developing and nurturing business connections. *Educational Incentives* also comprised three items which altogether sought to increase members' business intelligence either related to their agritourism or overall farm operations (α =

0.832; variance = 12.9%; eigenvalue = 1.6). Three incentives seeking to enhance the overall understanding and recognition of agritourism loaded in the *Policy and Advocacy* factor which accounted for 10.1% of variance (α = 0.721; eigenvalue = 1.2). *Economic Incentives* was the last factor that captured two items seeking to increase the number of visitors and profits of the members' farm business (α = 0.859; variance = 8.5%; eigenvalue = 1.0). Based on the importance of the incentives, Educational Incentives was the highest ranked factor (M = 4.57), followed by Economic (M = 4.41), Networking (M = 4.36), and Policy and Advocacy (M = 4.32) factors.

IDENTIFICATION AND PROFILE OF MEMBERSHIP SEGMENTS

The three-cluster solution was the most robust as it showed a good distribution of respondents with reduced sub-fragmentations while capturing greater differences across them (Table 5). The first cluster (n = 186; 52.0%) was labeled *Maximizer* because their members were the most statistically interested in Networking, Educational, and Policy and Advocacy incentives; they also had the highest mean score for Economic incentives, although it was only significantly higher than the third cluster. The second cluster obtained (n = 100; 27.9%) was labeled *Progressist* as their center fell within the Education Incentives while placed high emphasis on the Economic Incentives along with the Maximizers; members of this cluster were significantly less interested in Networking than their counterparts. The last cluster identified (n = 72; 20.1%) was labeled *Indifferent* because the negative sign of their centers and their lowest scores in all incentive factors indicate they joined their associations without pursuing any specific type of incentive.

Table 5. Cluster center and factor mean scores across incentive clusters

Factors *(n = 358)*	**Maximizer** *(52.0%)*	**Progressist** *(27.9%)*	**Indifferent** *(20.1%)*	**Statistical Values** F	p
Networking Incentives				195.506	< 0.001
Cluster center	**0.618**	-1.074	-0.104		
Factor mean	4.86 [a]	3.68 [b]	3.95 [c]		
Educational Incentives				232.307	< 0.001
Cluster center	0.338	**0.448**	-1.496		
Factor mean	4.87 [a]	4.68 [b]	3.65 [c]		
Policy and Advocacy Incentives				13.311	< 0.001
Cluster center	0.250	-0.215	-0.347		
Factor mean	4.57 [a]	4.21 [b]	3.83 [c]		
Economic Incentives				12.200	< 0.001
Cluster center	-0.045	0.354	-0.374		
Factor mean	4.58 [a]	4.55 [a]	3.77 [b]		

[a, b, c:] Different superscripts indicate significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons.

Table 6. Demographic, agriculture and membership attributes across clusters

	Maximizer *(51.8%)*	Progressist *(27.1%)*	Indifferent *(21.1%)*	Statistical Values	
Demographics					
Female	67.9% [a]	49.4% [b]	42.4% [b]	$\chi^2 = 15.586$	$p < 0.001$
Age (mean in years)	51.4	53.5	51.9	$F = 0.835$	$p = 0.435$
Farm-related Occupation					
Full-time farmers	55.7%	66.3% [a]	45.6% [b]	$\chi^2 = 6.813$	$p = 0.033$
Agritourism employees	37.5%	31.5%	35.3%	$\chi^2 = 0.943$	$p = 0.624$
Other	14.2% [a]	5.6% [b]	27.9% [c]	$\chi^2 = 15.384$	$p < 0.001$
Family Farm Indicators					
Generations in the farm	2.7	2.4	2.5	$F = 0.728$	$p = 0.569$
Family employees	3.6	3.3	3.0	$F = 1.153$	$p = 0.317$
Farm Size Indicators					
Acreage farmed	322.8	173.9	249.8	$F = 1.610$	$p = 0.202$
Full-time year-around employees	6.6	5.4	7.6	$F = 0.616$	$p = 0.541$
Farm gross income (2015) [1]	3.5 [a]	2.7 [b]	3.2	$F = 5.037$	$p = 0.007$
Agritourism Indicators					
Years in agritourism	23.4	18.2	19.7	$F = 2.268$	$p = 0.106$
Number of visitors (2015)	53,771.6	40,540.4 [a]	110,162.5 [b]	$F = 3.460$	$p = 0.033$
Proportion of farm income	72.8	62.5	69.1	$F = 2.286$	$p = 0.104$
Association Composition				$\chi^2 = 3.437$	$p = 0.179$
ANA	21.0%	25.0%	31.9%		
NAFDMA	79.0%	75.0%	68.1%		
Membership Length				$\chi^2 = 8.841$	$p = 0.356$
Less than 1 year	7.6%	16.2%	9.7%		
1 - 2 years	18.4%	21.2%	19.4%		
3 - 5 years	24.3%	23.2%	25.0%		
6 - 9 years	19.5%	14.1%	11.1%		
10 years or more	30.3%	25.3%	34.7%		

a, b, c: Different superscripts indicate significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons.

[1] Farm gross income was measured in a scale ranging from "1 = Less than $50,000" to "5 = $1 million or more".

Results show few significant differences in the demographic composition as well as farm and agritourism characteristics across clusters (Table 6). A significantly larger proportion of Maximizers were female (67.9%) as compared to Progressists (49.4%) and Indifferents (42.4%; $\chi^2 = 15.586$; $p < 0.001$). Statistically more full-time farmers were in the Progressist (66.3%) than in the Indifferent (45.6%) clusters ($\chi^2 = 6.813$; $p = 0.033$) and significantly more respondents from the Indifferent (27.9%) cluster held positions indirectly related to agriculture, such as industry suppliers and consultants, as compared to

respondents on the Maximizer (14.2%) and Independent (5.6%) clusters (χ^2 = 15.384; p < 0.001). In terms of business indicators, Maximizers reported a higher income in 2015 than Progressists (F = 5.037; p = 0.007) while the Indifferents hosted statistically more visitors in 2015 (M = 110,162.5) than the Progressists (M = 40,540.4; F = 3.460; p = 0.033). No significant differences were found in other socio-economic (age, proportion working in agritourism-related positions, generations in the farm, family employees), business (acres farmed, number of full-time year round employees, years in agritourism, proportion of agritourism in farm income), and membership (association affiliation, length of membership) characteristics across study clusters.

Levels of Satisfaction and Information Needs across Membership Clusters

Results showed significant differences across clusters in the level of satisfaction with the association overall (F = 30.385, p < 0.001) as well as with their educational (Wilk's lambda = 0.874; F = 7.462; p < 0.001) and networking (Wilk's lambda = 0.836; F = 9.560; p < 0.001) offerings (Table 7). Pairwise comparisons revealed that Maximizers were significantly the most satisfied with their association and with each of the educational and networking resources. In contrast, the Progressists and Indifferents were less satisfied, with few statistical differences between them. Namely, the Indifferents were less satisfied than the Progressists in the way their associations communicate innovative ideas and practices (M_{PRG} = 2.76; M_{IND}=2.41; F = 18.931; p < 0.001) and provide links to external resources (M_{PRG} = 2.60; M_{IND} = 2.27; F = 14.860; p < 0.001).

Table 7. Level of satisfaction across membership clusters

Satisfaction Indicators [1]	Maximizer *(53.0%)*	Progressist *(27.1%)*	Indifferent *(19.9%)*	Statistical Values F	p
Association Satisfaction					
Overall	3.19 [a]	2.69 [b]	2.51 [b]	30.385	< 0.001
Education-Related [2]					
Promoting good business practices	3.08 [a]	2.74 [b]	2.54 [b]	14.615	< 0.001
Communicating innovation	3.07 [a]	2.76 [b]	2.41 [c]	18.931	< 0.001
Links to external resources	2.85 [a]	2.60 [b]	2.27 [c]	14.860	< 0.001
Networking-Related [3]					
Networking opportunities	3.17 [a]	2.58 [b]	2.50 [b]	25.392	< 0.001
Referrals to trusted professionals	2.93 [a]	2.53 [b]	2.32 [b]	16.248	< 0.001
Interactive members directory	2.84 [a]	2.49 [b]	2.30 [b]	13.899	< 0.001

[a,b,c] Different superscripts indicate significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons.
[1] Measured on a 4-point scale: "1 = Not at all satisfied" to "4 = Extremely satisfied".
[2] MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = 0.874; *F* = 7.462; *p* < 0.001.
[3] MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = 0.836; *F* = 9.560; *p* < 0.001.

Significant models (Table 8) were also obtained when comparing the usefulness of the information needs across clusters related to their clientele (Wilk's lambda = 0.782; F = 10.617; p < 0.001), agriculture (Wilk's lambda = 0.806; F = 9.213; p < 0.001), and business operations (Wilk's lambda = 0.837; F = 6.009; p < 0.001). Pairwise comparisons showed that the Maximizers perceive the usefulness of all clientele-related information (i.e., marketing, customer service, event planning, social media) at a higher extent than their counterparts. In contrast, the Indifferents were the ones reporting significantly less usefulness as compared to their counterparts, except in relation to the usefulness of social media that did not show differences with the Progressists.

Table 8. Perceived usefulness of information across membership clusters

Types of Information [1]	Maximizers *(52.5%)*	Progressist *(28.1%)*	Indifferent *(19.4%)*	Statistical Values F	p
Clientele-Related [2]					
Marketing	3.57 [a]	3.29 [b]	2.78 [c]	30.127	< 0.001
Customer service	3.38 [a]	2.99 [b]	2.41 [c]	35.768	< 0.001
Event planning	3.29 [a]	2.96 [b]	2.45 [c]	19.791	< 0.001
Social media	2.95 [a]	2.63 [b]	2.28 [b]	12.605	< 0.001
Agriculture-Related [3]					
Agritourism liability	3.58 [a]	3.36 [b]	2.77 [c]	31.899	< 0.001
Agritourism updates	3.56 [a]	3.25 [b]	2.88 [c]	24.143	< 0.001
Agricultural policy	3.02 [a]	2.79	2.53 [b]	7.196	0.001
Agricultural practices	2.75 [a]	2.56 [a]	2.17 [b]	9.183	< 0.001
Business Operations-Related [4]					
Bulk purchasing of services	3.13 [a]	2.90 [a]	2.38 [b]	13.674	< 0.001
Funding	3.01 [a]	2.85 [a]	2.23 [b]	13.622	< 0.001
Finance	3.07 [a]	2.68 [b]	2.26 [c]	18.738	< 0.001
Internet basics	2.97 [a]	2.70 [a]	2.20 [b]	17.226	< 0.001
Business start-up	2.61 [a]	2.37	2.05 [b]	6.875	0.001

[a,b,c] Different subscripts indicate significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons.
[1] Measured on a 4-point scale from "1 = Not at all useful" to "4 = Extremely useful".
[2] MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = 0.782; $F = 10.617$; $p < 0.001$.
[3] MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = 0.806; $F = 9.213$; $p < 0.001$.
[4] MANOVA statistics: Wilks's lambda = 0.837; $F = 6.009$; $p < 0.001$.

Similar results were found for agricultural-related information as the three clusters showed different levels of usefulness related to agritourism liability ($M_{MAX} = 3.58$; $M_{PRG} = 3.36$; $M_{IND} = 2.77$; F = 31.899; p < 0.001) and agritourism updates ($M_{MAX} = 3.56$; $M_{PRG} = 3.25$; $M_{IND} = 2.88$; F = 24.143; p < 0.001). Overall, all clusters found less useful information on agricultural policy and agricultural practices. More specifically, the Indifferents perceived less useful information on

agricultural policy than the Maximizers (M_{MAX} = 3.02; M_{IND} = 2.53; F = 7.196; p = 0.001) and on agricultural practices than the Maximizers and Progressists with no difference between the latter two (M_{MAX} = 2.75; M_{PRG} = 2.56; M_{IND} = 2.17; F = 9.183; p < 0.001).

Somewhat different results were obtained on the usefulness of business operations information. The Indifferent cluster perceived significantly less useful information related to bulk purchasing of services (M_{MAX} = 3.13; M_{PRG} = 2.90; M_{IND} = 2.38; F = 13.674; p < 0.001), funding (M_{MAX} = 3.01; M_{PRG} = 2.85; M_{IND} = 2.23; F = 13.622; p < 0.001) and internet basics (M_{MAX} = 2.97; M_{PRG} = 2.70; M_{IND} = 2.20; F = 17.226; p < 0.001) than their counterparts, with no significant differences between the Maximizers and Progressists. Significant differences across all clusters were found on the usefulness of financial information (M_{MAX} = 3.07; M_{PRG} = 2.68; M_{IND} = 2.26; F = 18.738; p < 0.001). Lastly, the Indifferents found less useful to receive information of business start-ups that the Maximizers (M_{MAX} = 2.61; M_{PRG} = 2.68; M_{IND} = 2.05; F = 6.875; p = 0.001).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study captured a mix of farmers, farm and agritourism employees, and other agricultural stakeholders, which altogether shape the agritourism sector. Respondents reported joining their associations in pursuit of a suite of private and public incentives, confirming the extant literature (Barbieri & Mattozzi, 2009; Gazley & Dignam, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2002). Although respondents were satisfied with their association's offerings, especially in terms of communicating good and innovative business practices and fostering networking opportunities, they still have informational needs mainly related to their clientele and agricultural management. Altogether, these results speak for the critical mission of associations as education and networking catalysts for entrepreneurs (Bennett & Robson, 2011; Hager, 2014).

This study contributes to the scholarship of the Logic of Membership framework by identifying the specific incentives members involved in agritourism seek when joining their specialized associations. Most importantly, the categorization of these incentives into four distinct groups –networking, educational, policy and advocacy, economic–, moves the framework beyond the private/public dichotomization that may not suit emerging businesses in recreation and tourism, such as in agritourism, that tend to blend their private (family) and public (business) realms (Barbieri, 2013; Halim, 2016). The prioritization of educational, networking and economic incentives (usually typified as private incentives) over policy and advocacy incentives (mainly falling within the public realm), reaffirms individuals' tendency to place especial effort

in maximizing their individual benefits (DeLeskey, 2003; Hager, 2014; Olson, 1965).

The emerging knowledge on the incentives categorization of this study carries important practical implications for agritourism, taking into consideration the role that associations have in enhancing the business skills and networks of entrepreneurial farmers. Associations can use study results to identify the set of services they want to provide to their members. For example, this study indicates that associations can strengthen their effort to assist members related to agritourism liability and overall industry updates and provide more marketing support (e.g., collective promotions). Doing so can facilitate the use of benefit-based approaches to target potential members and thus increase the effectiveness of their recruitment and retention efforts (Baran, Galka, & Strunk, 2008; Oliver, 1999). In turn, a clear identification and communication of the associations' services can inform individuals to choose the association that best fits their needs (Markova, Ford, Dickson, & Bohn, 2013; Noel & Luckett, 2014). The high prevalence of educational incentives in this study suggests that agritourism associations should position themselves as an essential platform to deliver tailored information related to agritourism, especially concerning customer service and maximization of farm resources, which the agritourism literature has identified as major weaknesses among emerging entrepreneurs and those from minority groups (Halim, 2016; Yang, 2012).

This study's incentives-based member classification also carries managerial implications for associations to enhance their performance by strategically allocating resources (e.g., information materials) according to members' needs and monitoring the performance of those services over time (Phillipson, Gorton, & Laschewski, 2006; Wedel & Kamakura, 2012). Associations should nurture the three types of members identified in this study as each represents different strengths, which altogether can consolidate membership number benefiting their members' agritourism performance. The Maximizers' diverse pursuits, possibly due to the many needs they have in their agritourism venture, while holding the highest levels of satisfaction can become association's advocates to increase membership base. The Progressists' quest for educational and economic incentives while holding the least level of satisfaction can help associations to monitor the quality and relevance of their services over time. Although the Indifferents appeared as the least motivated, most likely because of their large composition of professionals indirectly related to agriculture (e.g., suppliers, consultants), their loyalty suggests they are valuable to retain as low maintenance members.

INSIGHTS INTO MOVING FORWARD

The aforementioned scholarly and practical contributions of this study should be generalized with caution due to the nature of its sample. The significant contribution of agritourism-related sales to respondents' farm income may reflect some maturity in the industry beyond merely supplementing agricultural income (Veeck et al., 2006) or may reflect a sophisticated sample of agritourism farmers, whose affiliation to specialized associations show their dedication to improve their business performance. Although special attention was placed to select associations that could capture a diversity of members within the same industry, they do not represent the mosaic of local, state, regional, and national agritourism associations that exist. As such, members' incentives may be different in other circumstances, for example in regions where the agritourism industry is more or less developed. Given that both associations have very homogenous members in terms of race/ethnicity, such information was not collected. Yet, since motivations may differ across race and ethnicity (Smith, 1994), caution is advised to extrapolate results to other associations with different or more diverse racial/ethnic composition.

This study opens opportunities for future research in view of sample characteristics and the extent of the scholarly and practical contributions. To have a greater picture of the incentives members seek, it is advisable that this study is replicated among associations with similar structural (e.g., membership size) and agency (e.g., leadership, resources) characteristics, and also across a more diverse group of associations ranging from overall agritourism-focused associations to those with a more specific agritourism-focus (e.g., dude ranches, u-pick operations), as well as those comprising a more racial/ethnic diverse membership. The relative low interest on public incentives, confirming previous studies, suggests that the role of associations in policy and advocacy efforts should be revisited using more in-depth qualitative methods of inquiry as to determine whether agritourism associations should divert such efforts when economic resources are limited. Similar methods of inquiry can be used to uncover other incentives that may have been overseen thus far.

CONCLUSION

This investigation of the types of incentives that members seek when joining agritourism associations through psychological (motivational theory) and business organizational (Logic of Membership) lenses has allowed to dissect the set of private and public incentives members seek when joining their associations into four distinctive dimensions (networking, education, economic, policy and advocacy). This four-dimensional classification equips researchers and managers with a small number of incentives that their comprising items can be customized for associations with different foci or contexts. For example, studies on small

agritourism associations heavily driven by networking and economic incentives may consider removing policy and advocacy from their offerings in increase members' satisfaction, hence loyalty over time. The incentive-based classification of members (Maximizer, Progressist, Indifferent) also enriches associations' managerial and marketing intelligence that can help to more clearly align their services to members' needs and to monitor their performance over time; such information is also suitable to craft advertising materials for recruitment purposes.

The managerial and marketing intelligence emerged from this study is critical to help agritourism associations reevaluate their offerings to enhance the effectiveness of their membership retention and recruitment programs. Such informed reevaluation is timely considering the steady decrease of these associations' membership body over the last decades that is challenging their sustainability, and thus the educational and networking capital they provide to their members, which they still need as this study reaffirmed. Keeping a vibrant membership is especially important for the success of agritourism operations as associations provide farmers with the required business competencies and networks skills they do not tend to possess (Halim, 2016; Mishra et al. 2002; Sharpley & Vass, 2006). At the same time, a clear identification and communication of the associations' offerings can assist agribusiness managers to make informed decisions in the allocation of their time and economic resources, usually scarce, to the association that will better satisfy their needs. Maximizing associations' efficiency and members' benefits is needed to foster members' cognitive, affective, and behavioral commitment towards the association. In the case of agritourism, this is critical to strengthen the entire industry that brings many economic and non-economic benefits to farmers, their families and surrounding communities (Barbieri, 2013). Finally, although this study used agritourism associations as a case study, their findings could be applicable to other recreational and tourism associations catering small businesses, which deserves further investigation.

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