ACADEME

Tourists' Satisfaction with Organic and Strawberry Farm in Bohol

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ABSTRACT

Assessing tourist satisfaction levels is necessary for tourist destination operators to gain insights for improvements. This study aimed to assess the tourists' satisfaction level of those visiting Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm. The study utilized a quantitative-correlational method and was conducted in Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm in Brgy. Mayana, Jagna, Bohol. A total of 1,045 local tourists visited the farm with 282 sample respondents chosen through stratified random sampling. Safety protocols were observed in collecting data through the use of Google Forms. The respondents were oriented with the objectives of the study, their rights to withdraw participation, privacy, and secrecy. Based on the findings, majority of the tourists were female, with age ranging from 20-29 years old and residing outside Tagbilaran City. Majority of them were high school graduates and were students and not yet employed. The data gathered and statistical analysis revealed that most of the local tourists were moderately satisfied with the place - the farm being safe, having enjoyable activities, and having a scenic view that promotes relaxation. Safety came next, followed by staff and services, and lastly price and products, the latter gaining the lowest composite mean.

INTRODUCTION

With the changing landscape in tourism and travel brought about by the pandemic, the satisfaction level of tourists when visiting a destination may now be different. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world in late December of 2019, the tourism industry was among the industries that were affected, its consequences being described as 'catastrophic. (Dube, Nhamo, & Chikodzi 2020; Legrand, 2020; Nicola, Alsafi, Sohrabi, Kerwan, Al-Jabir, Iosifidis, Agha, & Agha 2020; Mehta, Kumar, & Ramkumar, 2021). Travel bans and limitations on public meetings have been imposed on a global scale community mobility resulted in the halt of tourism activities in March 2020 (Gossling, 2020). In mid-March, the Philippine government imposed a temporary ban on foreign inbound travelers (Department of Tourism, 2020). Various studies have been conducted on the satisfaction level of tourists visiting destinations such as the study entitled The Evaluation of Tourist Satisfaction in Island Destinations: The Case of the Ionian Islands, Greece (2016). It concluded that satisfaction and revisit intentions are influenced by the tourists' experience during the visit. Tasting local gastronomy and meeting new people are among the factors that create a good experience. Another study entitled Guest Satisfaction and Loyalty among Beach Resorts in Laiya, Batangas (2020) showed that the timeliness, thoroughness, courtesy, consistency, accessibility, accuracy, and responsiveness were factors that pleased the tourists, and that convenience, expectation, guest service, personal relationships, and prizes influenced their loyalty.

The study is anchored on the theories Expectancy Value Theory, Expectation Disconfirmation Theory, Adam's Equity Theory, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The Expectancy Value Theory studies the behavior that is motivated by anticipated results or consequences. The Expectancy Value Theory (Vroom, 1964) claims that motivation springs from two sources namely the expectation of a good outcome and the value that a person puts on the outcome. The Expectation Disconfirmation Theory of Huang (2015) believes that customers see satisfaction as a result of comparing what the customers expected and what they experience. The expectation and the outcome performance are important variables that can affect the customer's satisfaction level. One of the most important elements is customer satisfaction that predicts the buying behavior of a customer. Adam's Equity Theory (Adams, 1963) calls for a fair balance

to be struck between an employee's "inputs" (hard work, skill level, acceptance, enthusiasm and so on) and their "outputs" (salary, benefits, intangibles such as recognition and more). Equity Theory is related to the study because satisfaction exists when the ratio of tourists' inputs (time and money needed to travel) and outputs (experience) are being fair. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is an Abraham Maslow idea (McLeod, 2020). This theory explains that before satisfying the higher-level needs, the needs belonging to the lower levels in the hierarchy must be met first until an individual reaches the point of self-actualization. It starts with physiological, followed by the need for safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization respectively.

The governments, both local and international, aspire to promote tourism activities as they are an impetus for developments especially in the economy of a place. The Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 8 is an example of this. It targets to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. It is necessary for a tourism attraction to be sustainable and has to be mindful of its activities, ensuring that they do not cause damage to the environment and are safe for tourists. Furthermore, Republic Act Number 710, dated 06 June 1952, Section 1, provides that there shall be an officially authorized non-profit organization assisting the Republic of the Philippines in the development and marketing of the tourism sector which can be achieved by promoting the tourist attractions to the world, in general, to create services to attract and bring in tourists and travelers, and other such important activities that lobby the influx of tourists to tourist destinations. Improving the attractions in our country, especially the Mayana Strawberry Farm, can increase the number of tourists resulting in generating investment, giving employment to local people, and enhancing tourist attractions and services to satisfy tourists.

Recently, some studies have been conducted worldwide to understand the satisfaction of local tourists visiting local destinations. Customer pleasure is a critical component of business success and will depend highly on the behaviors of frontline service providers. Perceived quality has the most significant impact on consumer satisfaction for satisfied and dissatisfied customers, while customer satisfaction is more important than the image (Lee, Wang, Lu, Hsieh, Chien, Tsai, Dong, 2016). The tourism business relies heavily on transportation. The visitor experience and overall satisfaction are influenced by the availability and quality of

transportation at the destination. Therefore, accessibility, service quality, perceived value, and destination image are dimensions of the transport system that influence tourist satisfaction (Virkar & Mallya, 2018). Tourists who have had a good experience are always ready to tell others about it experiences with friends and acquaintances (Filosofova & Apostolov, 2018).

The study of Mmutle and Shonhe (2017) concluded that customer satisfaction and the management of their expectations are strategic components to the sustainability of any organization. It was found out that service quality has a significant impact. Also, it emerged that the customers and service providers have more or less similar notions of what service quality entails. Another study by Modica, Altinay, Farmaki, Gursoy, and Zenga (2018) analyzes the effects of enterprises in the hospitality supply chains' economic, social, and environmental sustainability practices on customer satisfaction. Environmental and social sustainability strategies have a direct positive impact on customer happiness and an indirect positive impact on consumers' loyalty and willingness to pay a premium and Consumer loyalty is expected to be mediated by satisfaction, which will likely mediate the influence of environmental and social sustainability initiatives.

Another study by Peters, Chan, and Legerer (2018) investigates how tourism affects local perceptions, determines local attitudes, and, as a result, leads to active or passive support. Findings from local populations reveal that tourist impacts have a major impact on local attitudes, based on the creation of hypotheses about the relationship and an empirical survey-based study in Australia. The socio-cultural factors, in particular, influenced attitudes more than the economic and environmental dimensions. Another study by Alam, Mahmod, & Das (2020) intends to discover the elements that influence tourist satisfaction in the Rangamati District, as well as investigate the degree of dependency. According to the survey, two out of every five categories, such as environmental and cultural factors, have a favorable impact on tourist satisfaction, whereas the other three, such as tourism product, destination support services, and financial considerations, have no impact.

The study of Azhar, Jufrizen, Prayogi, and Sari (2018) investigates the effect of the marketing mix and service quality on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The findings revealed that the marketing mix had a favorable and significant impact on the satisfaction of tourists. In the Samosir region,

quality had a favorable and considerable impact on tourist satisfaction. The marketing mix had a large and favorable impact on tourist loyalty. The quality of service had a considerable and beneficial impact on tourist loyalty. Tourist satisfaction had a strong and favorable impact on tourist's loyalty in the region of Samosir.

Another study by Fitrizal, Elfiswandi, and Sanjaya (2021) identifies the impact of culinary tourism on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. The result shows that culinary tourism has a positive and significant effect on destination loyalty and tourist satisfaction, and culinary tourism is one of the effective tools to increase tourism. Tourist satisfaction, even though insufficient category, will be able to increase loyalty. The study of King-Chan, Capistrano, and Lopez (2021) focuses on determining the drivers of Camiguin visitors' environmentally responsible behavior (ERB), such as environmental attitude, knowledge, and value, as well as the role of local stakeholders in shaping such behavior on an island tourism destination. Tourist's environmental attitude, knowledge, and value have a significant effect on tourists' ERB, with environmental attitude having the coefficient. However, tourists behaved favorably toward the island's environment and played a significant role in influencing tourists' ERB. The findings of the study have implications for establishing measures to have a positive influence on the island's ecosystem. The study of Steffen, Stettler, and Huck (2020) found out local tourists are more demanding and dissatisfied with tourist service providers' hospitality than overseas visitors. The regression analysis also shows that tourists' opinions of hospitality are influenced by sex and age.

This research is a study that aimed to assess the tourists' satisfaction level of those visiting Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm. It further aimed to look into the correlation between tourists' profiles, such as age, sex, location, educational attainment, employment status, and level of satisfaction. The study's findings is beneficial to the researchers to identify a need for significant improvements and recommendations to make the farm more satisfying to the visitors.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm in Barangay Mayana, Jagna. The place offers a tour of its vast area where sweet and succulent strawberries are grown and are available for picking.

Upon the tourists' arrival at the destination, they are treated to a grand view of the distant verdant hills.

The respondents of this study were the local adult tourists visiting Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm in Brgy. Mayana, Jagna, Bohol. There was a total of 1,045 local tourists who visited the area. A random sample of 282 respondents is was selected within a margin of error of 5% at a 95% confidence interval. Stratified random sampling was utilized in this study. The researchers utilized a researcher-made questionnaire that aims to answer the questions regarding tourists' satisfaction level of the Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm located at Mayana, Jagna, Bohol. The researchers used an online survey tool, Google Forms, to collect data in observance of the health protocols and considering that face-to-face is restricted. Google Forms was used for ease of data collection of the responses of the respondents. The researchers provided a link to Google Forms.

After the local tourists answered the survey, the researchers collected, tallied, and recorded the result.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section contains the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data on the level of satisfaction of local tourists visiting Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm, Brgy. Mayana, Jagna, Bohol. Sources of the data were gathered from the local tourists who visited the farm

Profile of the local tourist respondents. Male local tourists yielded a percentage of 39.40 of the population. Meanwhile, female local tourists have a percentage of 60.60 of the population. The local tourists under the age group of 14-19 years old composed 17.00 of the total number of respondents. Local tourists whose age group belongs to the 20-29 years old have a percentage of 68.40, while the age group of 30-39 years old has a percentage of 10.60. Local tourists whose age group belongs to the 40-49 years old have a percentage of 2.80. Lastly, local tourists whose age group belongs to the 50-59 years old have a percentage of 1.10 of the population.

The local tourists who live within Tagbilaran City yielded a percentage of 16.30, while the local tourists who live outside Tagbilaran City yielded 83.70 of the population. Local tourists who live within Tagbilaran City yielded a percentage of 16.30, while the local tourists who live outside

Tagbilaran City yielded 83.70 of the population.

The local tourists who are employed have a percentage of 33.00 in the population. Local tourists who are employed part-time have yielded a percentage of 3.50. Local tourists who are self-employed have a percentage of 3.20. Local tourists who are unemployed yielded a percentage of 16.70. Retired local tourists comprised a percentage of 9.20% while student local tourists have yielded a percentage of 33.70. Lastly, local tourists that belong to others have a percentage of 0.70 of the population.

Respondents' level of satisfaction in the safety dimension. The question that yielded the highest weighted mean of 2.70 is question number 3. Question number 3 states that the proper sanitizing of Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm is strictly implemented for the safety of the visitors. The question that yielded the second highest weighted mean of 2.65 is question number 2. Question number 2 states that the listing of names and contact number of the visitors for contact tracing are properly observed and monitored. Lastly, the question that yielded the third highest weighted mean of 2.63 is question number 1. Question number 1 states that the health protocols are strictly observed in the area.

Respondent's level of satisfaction with staff and services. The top three questions that yielded the highest weighted mean are questions number 9, 6, and 7 respectively. The question that yielded the highest weighted mean of 2.75 is question number 9. Question number 9 states that the services of Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm follow the standard health protocols which ensure the safety and security of their customers. The question that gained the second highest weighted mean of 2.67 is question number 6. Question number 6 states the staff offer accurate and professional delivery of service by being courteous and responsive to inquiries and requests. The question that yielded the third highest weighted mean of 2.64 is question number 7. Question number 7 states that the services they offer are great and efficient.

The results concur with the findings of the study by Milošević, Penezić, Mišković, **Škrbić**, and Katić, (2016), which states that customer satisfaction typically leads to a longer stay in a tourist destination, which is based on a fair relationship between the service user and supplier, as well as how the service was supplied. Customer satisfaction results when staffs are attentive and offers great services that met the customers need. Tourists who were satisfied with the services offered may result for them come back or recommend the tourist spot to other people. Furthermore,

the results concur with the findings of the study by Azhar, Jufrizen, Prayogi, and Sari (2018), the quality of service had a considerable and beneficial impact on tourist loyalty.

The bottom three questions that yielded the lowest weighted mean are questions number 5, 4, and 8 respectively. The question which yielded a low weighted mean of 2.61 is question number 5. Question number 5 states that the staff are quick to respond to tourists' inquiries and concerns. The next question which gained a low weighted mean of 2.55 is question number 4. This question states that the staff are customers friendly. Lastly, the question that yielded the lowest weighted mean of 2.41 is question number 8. Question number 8 states that the staff provide error free services to its customers.

Respondents' level of satisfaction with price and products. The question that yielded the highest weighted mean of 2.60 is question number 11. Question number 11 states that the strawberries and other offerings are in good condition. Question number twelve gained the second highest weighted mean of 2.46. Question number 12 states that the products that they offer are always available. Lastly, question number 10 yielded the third highest weighted mean of 2.39. Question number 10 states that the prices of the strawberries and other organic vegetables are affordable.

Products offered in Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm, Brgy. Mayana, Jagna, Bohol is an important component in the farm's operation because it also adds to the tourist experience where in tourists enjoy picking fresh strawberries with their friends or families. This is in line with the study by Suhartanto (2016) that tourist satisfaction with the souvenir shopping experience is an essential determinant of tourist perception on destination image and tourist loyalty toward a destination.

The study of Ahmad (2018) looks at the relationship between perceived service quality, perceived price fairness, and customer loyalty. It was found out that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived service quality and customer loyalty in part and entirely mediates the relationship between perceived pricing fairness and customer loyalty in both cases.

Respondents' level of satisfaction with the place. The question that gained the highest weighted mean of 2.79 is question number 15. Question number 15 states that the Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm offers a great view of the hills that promotes relaxation. The question that gained the second highest weighted mean of 2.73 is questions number 14.

Question number 14 states that the activities are enjoyable and worth the time and effort of traveling to the farm. Question number 13 yielded the highest weighted mean of 2.68. Question number 13 states that the Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm is located in a safe location.

According to Worsfold, Mcphail, Francis, and Fisher (2016), guest satisfaction with the physical attributes have a distinct influence on visitor intentions to return and their perceptions of value. The great view of the tourist spot can attract the tourists which can contribute to their overall experience of their trip and creates satisfaction to the tourists that encourages them to return. Guest satisfaction with the physical attributes is significantly more strongly linked to the guest's intention to return than is satisfaction with service received.

Significant degree of relationship between respondents' profile and their level of satisfaction. Results revealed that there is a significant relationship between the variables location and employment status of the respondents and their satisfaction level. Meanwhile, the level of satisfaction is the same across the variables: age, sex, and highest educational attainment of the respondents.

CONCLUSIONS

Obtaining the level of satisfaction of local tourists visiting the farm helped the researcher identify that the local tourists are more satisfied with the great view provided by the location while also enjoying the activities. It correlates to the Equity Theory which states that the tourists perceive what they get from their experience (output) about what they put into it which is the time and money needed to travel (input) and then compare the ratio of their inputs-to-outputs with the ratio of inputs-to-outputs of their group. The tourists' experience and the outcome performance affect the tourists' satisfaction that predicts the buying behavior of a tourist.

The researcher also conclude that the variables sex, age, and highest educational attainment of the respondents have no significant relationship with the respondents' satisfaction level, while the variables' location and employment status of the respondents and their satisfaction level have a significant relationship. Majority of the variables in the demographic profile of the respondents visiting Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm, however, have no influence on the respondents' level of satisfaction. The result of the survey signifies that an excellent satisfaction level of local tourists can

be achieved if the Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm will improve their services and products. This study helps us understand the importance of ensuring the satisfaction of the local tourists amidst the pandemic which could also help the tourist spot to improve and gain more tourists.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the salient findings made and the derived results from this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. The Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm should maintain/improve their protocols concerning the health and well-being of visitors.

2. The management of the farm should concentrate not only on the tourists, but also on the effectiveness of their employees. Provide ways to encourage them to perform their tasks correctly.

3. The Bohol Organic and Strawberry Farm should not place too much emphasis on the cost of their products, as this is not what all tourists seek while visiting a tourist destination.

4. Future researchers may do follow-up studies to determine how satisfied tourists are after visiting a location. They expand not only on the profile, but also on other aspects that satisfy tourists. They can conduct a wide survey to get reliable data if improvements were done after the pandemic.

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