ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 10| Issue: 7| July 2024|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2024: 8.402 || ISI Value: 1.188

EXPERIENCES OF THE LOCAL TOURISTS ON FESTIVALS IN TAGUM CITY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Mary Angeline P. Salas, CGSP[1], Princess Crislyn O. Magadan, CGSP[2], Loui Chailes R. Saycon CGSP[3], Inah Auliya Diuda, CGSP[4], Bynz Tangjian, CGSP[5]
[1]St. Mary's College of Tagum, Inc., National Highway, Tagum City, 8100, Philippines

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the personal experiences and perceptions of local tourists on festivals in Tagum City. Moreover, the primary objective of this study was to provide valuable insights to the event organizer, tourism department, and local government unit of Tagum City. The study conducted within Tagum City, highlighted twelve (12) attendees ages eighteen years old and above, a resident of Tagum City who had an experience attending among the festivals in Tagum City. Among twelve (12) participants, six (6) went through in-depth interviews, while the remaining six (6) were subjected to focus group discussion. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis. Results showed that the experiences of the local tourists were the following: desiring an improved festival operation; experiencing varied emotions; facing festival challenges; witnessing memorable moments; establishing festival networks; and attending to specific popular festivals in the locality. Furthermore, the results for the contribution of the local experiences to developed Tagum City's Tourism Industry were the following: develop good services and facilities, establish destination branding, gain support and promotion for festivals, and strengthen collaboration among different entities. Moreover, these were the results for the recommendations of the local tourists for the improvement of Tagum City's festivals: boost festival services and organization, add more festival entertainments, enhance security and traffic management, strengthen promotional advertising, heighten exposure of local products and practices, and include other known festival activities. In nutshell, results will act as a basis for enhancing the overall quality of festivals and formulating creative strategies that will increase the level of satisfaction among festival attendees.

KEYWORDS: *local tourists, festival, event organizer, phenomenological study, thematic analysis, Tagum City, Philippines.*

INTRODUCTION

A festival is a temporary gathering of people for a particular cultural, social, or religious event. It may be in the form of street fairs, concerts, cuisine festivals, and more. As such, it allows individuals to interact, communicate, and learn about various cultures and customs, fostering pride and identity in the community. Moreover, festivals effectively stimulate economic development or regeneration opportunities and encourage social cohesion through cultural activities that frequently draw on local culture and history (Mair & Duffy 2018). However, local tourists might encounter challenges that will change their perceptions and experiences in attending such festivals.

On the other hand, the Tazaungdaing festival in Myanmar is culturally and religiously significant, drawing both domestic and international tourists. However, residents of Yangon, the main economic hub, are unhappy due to continuous loud noises from amplified chants and appeals, which clash with electronic music, Burmese rap, and social gatherings, causing local discontent (Arab News, 2018). On top of that, during the Panagbenga Festival in Baguio City, significant traffic congestion arises due to increased tourist arrivals, exacerbated by the city's limited, winding roads. Moreover, the festival leads to a surge in waste, putting excessive pressure on the municipality's waste management system (Dunuan, 2018). On the other hand, Tagum City frequently celebrates monthly festivals, which, according to the mayor's spouse, leads to an increase in visitor numbers and subsequently causes hotels in the city to reach full occupancy. However, as per the Mayor of the City, there is a pressing requirement for hotels and hotel rooms due to a succession of forthcoming festivals (Sunnexdesk, 2023).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the personal experiences and perceptions of local residents on festivals in Tagum City. Moreover, the primary objective of this study was to provide valuable insights to the event organizer, tourism department, and local government unit of Tagum City. This information will act as a basis for enhancing the overall quality of festivals and formulating creative strategies that will increase the level of satisfaction among festival attendees.

At this stage of the study, experiences and perceptions of local residents in Tagum City in relation to festivals refers to exploring the multifaceted ways in which festivals shape and are shaped by the perspectives of the people living in Tagum City.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the festival experiences of local tourists in Tagum City?

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 10| Issue: 7| July 2024|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2024: 8.402 || ISI Value: 1.188

2. How do these experiences contribute to the development of Tagum City's tourism industry?
3. What are the recommendations of the local residents to improve the festivals in Tagum City?

THEORETICAL LENS

This study was anchored on the conceptual Attributional Model of Visitor Event Experience developed by Ayob et al. (2013), Arnold's (1960) theory of emotion cited by Zhang & Deng, 2022, and the Cultural Ecology Theory by Julian Steward (1955) cited by JoeZimmermann, 2010.

Attributional Model of Visitor Event Experience was used in the study to investigate the particular aspects of festivals that influenced the general sense of fulfillment of participants and their future plans to return. Further, this study utilized Arnold's theory to assess local visitors' cognitive processes during their festival attendance. Specifically, it focused on evaluating essential sensory information, including visual stimuli, sounds, scent sensations, and the overall atmosphere of the festival. Lastly, Cultural Ecology Theory as a framework to understand the influence of the environment on the festivals in Tagum City, as well as the impact of people's ecological surroundings on their experiences, opinions, and suggestions related to these festivals. This idea gave the research a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural dynamics inside the festival setting.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study utilized a qualitative research design employing a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research was employed as a means of investigating and gaining a deeper understanding of real-world issues in the study. The experiences, perceptions, and behaviors of the participants were collected through qualitative research methods.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

As for the participants, Guest et al. (2006), in qualitative studies employing intentional sampling, found it typically sufficient to conduct 12 interviews to achieve data saturation. Furthermore, for this study, purposeful sampling was employed, which is also referred to as purposive and selected sampling, as a tool to discover participants who possessed the ability to provide comprehensive and deep insights into the phenomenon under investigation (Statistics Solutions, 2019). Among twelve (12) participants, six (6) underwent in-depth interviews, while the remaining six (6) were subjected to focus group discussion.

DATA ANALYSIS

In the end, we produced a comprehensive narrative or report that delved into the fundamental issues. In this phase, it was necessary to systematically arrange the research findings coherently and rationally while employing relevant quotations or data samples to substantiate each identified subject. The forthcoming analysis aimed to provide a compelling and understandable synopsis of the patterns and findings derived from the thematic analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Festival Experiences of Local Tourists in Tagum City

Major Themes	Core Ideas
75Feeling a Sense of Fun and Excitement	● feeling a sense of amusement ● feeling of excitement due to different food offered by local vendors
Witnessing Talents and Performances	● witnessing performance of famous bands outside the locality ● giving value on dance competitions

Feeling a Sense of Fun and Excitement

In support of this theme, IDI-02 said that they feel a sense of amusement:

It is very fun as they offer different activities and competitions. Each festival is distinct, and they are all quite fun.

In fact, this was supported by IDI-06 accentuated the feeling of excitement due to different food offered by local vendors:

My whole experience at festivals was fantastic. During that period, I was particularly interested in the variety of food available from local vendors

Witnessing Talents and Performances

In the same way, IDI-01stated witnessing performance of famous bands outside the locality.

They also invited prominent bands from outside the city to perform

IDI-03 whole-heartedly said that they witness giving value on dance competitions:

It is the competitions. I appreciate the Indayog festival most especially that they value dance performers.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 10| Issue: 7| July 2024|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2024: 8.402 || ISI Value: 1.188

Table 2
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Participants' Experiences as Contributions to the Development of Tagum City's Tourism Industry

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Develop Good Services and Facilities	● observing infrastructure development, marketing, and sustainable tourism ● exploring different activities and a thriving food hub through government programs
Strengthen Collaboration Among Different Entities	● collaborating with exhibitors, government, business owners, and other food product firms ● working with social media influencers to promote the city

Develop Good Services and Facilities
IDI-01 elaborated observing infrastructure development, marketing, and sustainable tourism:

Witnessing infrastructure development, marketing strategies, and ensuring the sustainability of tourism initiatives.

Moreover, IDI-06 mentioned that they exploring different activities and a thriving food hub through government programs:

The activities and the food hub being offered by the government provide opportunities.

Strengthen Collaboration Among Different Entities
IDI-06 shared collaborating with exhibitors, government, business owners, and other food product firms:

Exhibitors who partnered with the government, proprietors, in a range of food products, and other business ventures.

IDI-01 also added that working with social media influencers to promote the city

Campaign on social media or collaborations with travel blogs and assistance from travel influencers.

Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Recommendations of the Local Tourists to Improve Festivals in Tagum City

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Boost Festival Services and Organization	● recommend more entertaining activities ● allocate a more spacious venue
Strengthen Promotional Advertising	● Ensure proper awareness of activities ● participate in marketing and promotional videos

Boost Festival Services and Organization
IDI-01 recommend more entertaining activities

I suggest adding more entertaining and enjoyable activities for people to watch or participate in.

Furthermore, IDI-06 suggested to allocate a more spacious venue

The space of the venue was my suggestion

Strengthen Promotional Advertising
FGD-05 suggested to ensure proper awareness of activities:

Adding of the promotional advertisement for the festival to further entice people.

IDI-01 also suggested to participate in marketing and promotional videos:

Posting on social media, but in a creative manner. I would suggest providing a video that would excite people about the said event.)

DISCUSSION

Festival Experiences of Local Tourists in Tagum City
Feeling a sense of amusement
This proves the study of Lee and Kwon (2021), that in the context of food and wine festivals, guests' motivations and involvement were positively correlated with their satisfaction with tangible and intangible services, which may encourage them to return to the event. Further, this study was consistent with the study of Amorim et al. (2020) which highlighted those attendees of the Andanças and La Sierra festivals acknowledged that staff members provided a sense of security and self-assurance, are always available to assist, and interact amiably with attendees.

Witnessing Talents and Performances
A study from Koreman (2023), revealed that Oldambt's festivals also aid in the establishment of networks outside of the Oldambt region. For instance, the Festival Hongerige Wolf fosters social ties between locals and tourists from other countries. In addition to exploring contemporary art and music, visitors are eager to interact with individuals from many backgrounds.

Participants' Experiences as Contributions to the Development of Tagum City's Tourism Industry
Develop Good Services and Facilities
In an article published by Rahmani et al. (2020), the expansion observed in the tourism sector can be attributed to advancements in technology, the emergence of fresh markets, and the adoption of novel organizational structures. It is imperative to prioritize innovation within the tourism sector over other industries due to its heightened susceptibility to even minor shifts in political, social, economic, and technological realms.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 10| Issue: 7| July 2024|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2024: 8.402 || ISI Value: 1.188

Strengthen Collaboration Among Different Entities

In an article by Motivation Sphere (2024), festivals give local business owners a chance to collaborate and be creative. Festivals frequently include marketplaces or vendor fairs where companies can display their goods or services. Entrepreneurs can network, establish relationships, and share ideas thanks to this exposure, which may result in future collaborations and business growth. Furthermore, according to a study by Hjalager & Kwiatkowski (2018), in festival partnerships, the focus is on the manner and degree of integration of commercial interests. It takes work to put on a festival. It demands an effective organizational structure and most of the time, a collaborative operational mode and begins far in advance of the actual event.

Recommendations of the Local Residents to Improve the Festivals in Tagum City

Boost Festival Services and Organization

Qui et al. (2021), utilize various communication channels such as social media, email newsletters, and mobile apps to keep attendees informed about event schedules, lineup changes, and important announcements. This author argue that their study fills a void by addressing various aspects of music festival marketing, including types of marketing strategies, social media platforms, consumer behaviors, and motivation theories like push-pull models. They aim to provide insights into consumer behavior, particularly regarding decisions about attending festivals. The study highlights the significant influence of social media on motivating festival attendance and its role in fostering ongoing communication between organizers and attendees, extending beyond the event itself.

Strengthen Promotional Advertising

According to the study of Ojionu et al. (2021), found that employing a strategic ambiguity tagline significantly captures consumers' attention. Additionally, the study revealed substantial impacts of consumers' attitudes toward tagline ads, perceptions of tagline ads, and the brand's motivations behind using tagline ads on consumer attention when they encounter such advertisements. These findings underscore the effectiveness of utilizing strategic ambiguity in taglines to attract consumer attention. Moreover, in research conducted by

IMPLICATIONS FOR TOURISM PRACTICE

This qualitative study's conclusions highlight the multifaceted impact of festivals on Tagum City, emphasizing their role in cultural expression, social cohesion, and community engagement. To integrate these insights into tourism practices, Tagum City can focus on enhancing festival experiences by implementing suggestions such as diversifying entertainment options, improving venue infrastructure, leveraging social media for promotion, ensuring security measures, and embracing diverse cultural representation. By incorporating these recommendations into tourism initiatives, Tagum City can cultivate a more vibrant and inclusive festival environment, attracting both local and international visitors, and thereby bolstering its position as a dynamic tourist destination.

Recommendation for Further Research

It has been observed that this study's primary goal was successfully attained, which was to explore the experiences and perceptions of local residents on festivals in Tagum City, as well as to provide valuable insights to the event organizer, tourism department, and local government unit of Tagum City. It was demonstrated by the fact that the undertaker's key concepts were sufficient to offer details and an explanation for the same phenomena.

Nevertheless, it ought to be mentioned that this study was not the sum total of all the researchers that were assigned to look into the aforementioned area of study. This implies, as researchers, we honestly acknowledged that the results of our study were only descriptive and could not be applied to a larger population. This was due to the fact that we only looked for experiences, emotions, and opinions of IDI and FGD participants who were present for the phenomenon under study.

Within this segment, it was advised that additional researchers conduct this research study in their own contexts. Moreover, this might be accomplished by interviewing a bigger group of people to determine any parallels with the data that was extracted. It is also recommended carrying out additional research about local tourists' experiences dealing with the poor circumstances attending festivals. It needs to be fully focused on in order to comprehend the experiences of the local tourists on festivals in Tagum City.

REFERENCES

1. *Amorim, D., Caballero, J. L. J., & Almeida, P. (2020). The impact of performing arts festivals on tourism development: Analysis of participants' motivation, quality, satisfaction and loyalty.*
2. *Ayob, N., Wahid, N. A., & Omar, A. (2013). Attributional Model of visitors' event experience in festivals and special events*
3. *Guest G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many participants do I need? A guide to sample estimation*
4. *Hjalager, A. M., & Kwiatkowski, G. (2018, October 6). Entrepreneurial implications, prospects and dilemmas in rural festivals*
5. *JoeZimmermann (2010, October 18). Theory + anthropology [licensed for non-commercial use only] / Cultural ecology*
6. *Koreman, M. C. J. (2023, April 20). Reinventing a rural area: A case study into cultural festivals in Oldambt, the Netherlands*
7. *Lee, W., & Kwon, H. (2021). The influence of personal involvement on festival attendees' revisit intention: food and wine attendees' perspective. sustainability, 13(14), 7727. doi.org/10.3390/su13147727*
8. *Motivation Sphere (2024). Celebrate and engage: The role of festivals and cultural events in community bonding*
9. *Ojionu, C. E. N., Adzharuddin, N. A., Waheed, M., & Khir, A. M. (2021, December 19). Impact of strategic ambiguity tagline on billboard advertising on consumers attention. Doi.org/10.30935/ojcmt/11432*
10. *Qiu, L., I, A., Lee, T. J., & Kim, J. S. (2021). How sustainable social media advertising affect visitors' decision to attend a festival event? sustainability, 13(17), 9710. doi.org/10.3390/su13179710*
11. *Rahmani, F., Zangoei, S., & Rahnama, A. (2020). Identifying and prioritizing innovative opportunities for tourism investment in Mashhad city*

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 10| Issue: 7| July 2024|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2024: 8.402 || ISI Value: 1.188

12. *Statistics Solutions. (2019). Qualitative sampling techniques - statistics solutions.*
13. *Zhang, S.-N., & Deng, F. (2022, September 20). Innovation and authenticity: constructing tourists' subjective well-being in festival tourism. Frontiers in psychology, 13. Doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.950024*