

Impact of Religious Sites in the Province of Batangas, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the impact of religious sites to the community in terms of socio-cultural and economic aspect. Specifically, it presented the profile of the respondents in terms of the number of years as resident, occupation and frequency of visit to the site, determined if there is a significant difference or the impact of religious sites when grouped according to profile. The descriptive method of research was statistically treated using frequency, weighted mean, independent sample t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) from a total of 285 residents as respondents of top ten religious' sites from the Department of Tourism. The researchers used an adapted questionnaire as their main instrument. Based from the result, the researchers were able to identify the impacts of religious sites in the province of Batangas regarding socio-cultural and economic aspect. It showed that majority of the respondents were living in the sites 20 years and above, employed and visited daily. It was also revealed that there were no significant differences in the assessment of the impacts of the respondents on Religious sites when grouped according to the number of years as a resident. However, there was a significant difference in the assessment of the impacts of the respondents regarding the occupation and there was a highly significant differences in the assessment of the impacts of the respondents in terms of frequency of visiting and destinations. It is recommended that each religious site must extend more effort in promoting and improving their facilities to attract more tourists. Management of the religious sites may consider taking the proposed action plan to address the problems.

Keywords: *Religious Sites, Tourist Attraction*

INTRODUCTION

Religious tourism is the number one ancient forms of tourism. The abstraction of the religious pilgrimage begins with the aurora of humankind. Since the beginning of history, individuals acknowledge Catholic to radiant goals. Likewise, by the Biblical eon, fitting religious focuses had turned out to be not the only one as the designation of a social scene, as capable as

had turned out to be above players in limited business and imperative areas of the abbreviated version of those urban groups that encouraged religious focuses (Tourism & More, 2014).

In the Philippines, they are continuing to pull in a considerable number of guests on a yearly introduce. In recent years, religious travel has developed into a much bigger and more divided market. Religious-oriented travel then has happened since the first pilgrimage. In the presents, religious travel incorporates different sub-specialties that range from the extravagance journey market to exploring and from religious institutional go to volunteer arranged encounters planned to help those in some needed (Somnez & Tarlow, 2014; De Castro et al., 2014).

Religion influences the best of destination, day-tripper artifact preferences, and the alms of adoration accompanying opportunities and accessories to tourists. Like added tourism subgroups religious tourism should be apparently added with commendations to the accepted advancing ambiance in which the tourism and accommodation industries are consistently analytic for new chump segments. In this ambiance, the tourism industry consistently restrains an advancing relationship, area sightseers feel they accept no added advantage than to barter off on their adorable aesthetics for a day-tripper encounter. Instead, tourism and adoration should accompany a commute if not co-habitual relationship. For this purpose, all-around the religious needs of any acceptance and added studies acclamation these needs are appropriate (Ron, n.d; Ylagan & Laguador, 2014).

Nowadays, a religious act is still practicing. Batangas Province is best known for having a faith religion and most profound sense of being that people pay respect in a different way such as serenades, make rituals and dances to satisfy them (Province of Batangas, 2018).

However, the current study is a limited addition to the existing religious tourism studies in Batangas Province. There are three major variables used in the study; historical significance, holiness and spirituality, and customs and traditions. The Historical importance of religious tourism mainly refers to how noteworthy is religious tourism with regards to history. Therefore, it is also used to evaluate what was significant about selected events, people and developments in the past (Tamayo & Celis, 2014; Buted et al., 2014; Vizconde & Felicen, 2012). Particularly, the contributions of Batangas religious sites indicated to the development of the ability and history of the people in Batangas. One of the reasons why people travel is to visit historic religious sites as opportunities for authentic cultural and educational experiences. Besides, it is very essential to assess this historical significance (Asi, Blanco, Castillo, Lacorte, Lumbera & Moneda, 2015; Buted et al., 2014).

This research was conducted to access the religious site in the community of Batangas, also to determine the impact of religious sites in the community in terms of socio-cultural and economic aspects and how this signifies the important and difference of continuous improvement of the religious tourism in the province of Batangas. This research also conducted to know if the faith tourism is now boosting or it may now fade. This research may be used by the future students of LPU-Batangas and the residents of Batangas province and its neighbouring town as well as the pilgrimage participant that are researching for the assessment of the religious site in the community of Batangas.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to assess the impact of religious sites to the community of Batangas Province. Specifically it will sought to present the profile of the respondent in terms of the number of years as resident, occupation, frequency of visit to the site; determine the impact of religious sites to the community in terms of socio-cultural and economic aspect; test the significant difference or the impact of religious sites when grouped according to profile; and propose an action plan based on the result of the study.

METHODS

Research Design

This study used descriptive research to know the profile of respondents and impact of religious sites to the community. Descriptive research is all about describing people who take part in the study; observational which is defined as a method of viewing and recording the participants; case study which is defined as an in-depth study of an individual or group of individuals and survey which is defined as a brief interview or discussion with an individual about a specific topic (Kowalczyk, 2018).

Participants of the Study

To collect pertinent data, this study acquired information from people who have enough knowledge regarding the focal point of the study. The participants of the study were the residents and local tourists. The number of respondents was a total of 285 from the top ten (10) religious sites in the province of Batangas. The data obtained from the DOT Batangas was based on an effect size of 0.25 and a power probability using G*power 3.1.9.

Instrument

The researchers adapted the questionnaires from the study of Religious Tourist Destination in Lipa City by Ramos, Doneza, Malantic, Medina, Valencia and Quinio (2010). The instrument determined the impacts of religious sites to community. Part I presents the profile of the respondent sites in terms of the number of years as resident, occupation, frequency of the visit site. Part II determines the impact of religious sites to the community in terms of socio-cultural and economic aspect.

Procedure

The researchers conducted the survey to selected respondents in every religious site and they went to tourism office to determine the tourist arrival of top ten religious sites and constructed a letter for ecclesiastical persons of top ten religious' sites. They gathered the questionnaire to the tourist in every religious site then asked them to answer and then gathered the

results. The overall result of questionnaire was collected from the total respondent and tabulated by the statistician.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were tallied, encoded, organized, tabulated and interpreted. Different statistical tools were used. Frequency distribution and percentage were used to identify the profile of the respondents while weighted mean was utilized to determine the contribution on economic and social aspect. In addition, Independent Sample t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the significant difference on the assessment of religious sites when grouped according to profile was also used. All data were treated using a statistical software, PASW version 18 to further interpret the results of the study.

Ethical Consideration

Further, the respondents were assured that their responses were treated with utmost confidentiality and namelessness unless the respondents voluntarily allowed the researchers to reveal some components of the findings Personal bias and opinions do not influence the findings of this analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of respondents' profile in terms of the number of years as a resident, occupation, frequency of visit and destinations as the profile variables.

In terms of the number of years as a resident, 20 years old and above got the highest with 142 or 49.7 percent followed by lowest 1-5 years with 25 or 8.7 percent. Most of the respondents are 20 years and above as a resident because they have been long living in the area. Other than that, they live there because they can easily find income.

On the other hand, in terms of occupation, there are 148 respondents or 51.7 percent that are employed followed by a student with 61 or 21.3 percent; the pensioner got the lowest with 6 or 2.1 percent.

Furthermore, most of the respondents are employed and got the highest percentage followed by the student because some of them spend their time to visit sacred sites during their day off instead of exploring more destinations and choosing long-term backpacking trip. It is also very important to people's lives, and it has been argued that human beings have always had a need to believe in a superior entity. Furthermore, the pensioners got the lowest percent because not all of them wants to travel, some of the pensioners spend money with their family as their support towards them, particularly their children.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number of years as a resident		
1-5 years	25	8.7
6-10 years	30	10.5
15-20 years	89	31.1
20 years and above	142	49.7
Occupation		
Employed	148	51.7
Student	61	21.3
Senior	15	5.2
Pensioner	6	2.1
Unemployed	56	19.7
Frequency of Visit		
Daily	102	35.7
Twice a week	28	9.8
Weekly	85	29.7
Twice a month	28	9.8
Monthly	35	12.2
Thrice a month	8	2.8
Destinations		
Caleruega	67	23.4
Shrine of St. Raphael	3	1.0
Lumang Simbahan	25	8.7
Don Bosco Chapel on the Hill	31	10.8
Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John the Baptist	14	4.9
St. Michael Parish Church	28	9.8
Mt. Maculot Grotto	5	1.7
National Shrine of St. Padre Pio	55	19.2
Marian Orchard	44	15.4
Monte Maria	14	4.9

The result is supported by the study made by Walker (2012), which states that People in the religious tourism spend their time to visit historical churches since they are highly keen on history or architecture however in this manner people may get moral lesson about the Christian religion and subculture

In terms of frequency of visit, 102 or 35.7 percent said that they do it in a daily basis followed by weekly with 85 or 29.7 and the lowest with 8 or 2.8 percent in thrice a month visiting. This means that most of all the respondents are nearby or their business is around the area so they can go anytime to the church while visiting thrice a month got the lowest percent because they do not have time enough to visit.

In terms of destination, Caleruega has 67 or 23.4 percent followed by National Shrine of St. Padre Pio with 55 or 19.2 percent and Shrine of St. Raphael got the lowest with 3 or 1.0

percent. This means that Caleruega has the highest percentage of visitors not only because of the church but also other tourist spots. Despite limited access to transportation, it is still visited by many tourists, while Shrine of St. Raphael got the lowest percent because it is not popular to visit and there are fewer respondents.

In the research done by Tarlow (2014) today's are more rapidly growing segment and becoming popular religious tourism including pilgrimage within international, although it was specialty segment. A lot of individuals dream to escape from the current life and day to day visit religious sites. With regards to religious tourism, it is necessary to make a difference between those, who travel to a destination in order to visit a historical site from the social perspective, joining it with relaxation and those, who are searching for a profound or religious experience.

Table 2. Impacts to the Development of Tourist Industry in Batangas Province in terms of Socio-cultural Impacts

Socio-cultural Impacts	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. It improves the lifestyle both of the residents and tourists.	3.34	Agree	4
2. Overcrowding the place.	2.91	Agree	8
3. Creates social solidarity.	3.20	Agree	7
4. It brings social changes among the residents, tourists, and government officials of Batangas Province.	3.28	Agree	6
5. Residents have social commitment to their Place.	3.35	Agree	3
6. Regional values and tradition are strengthened and highly appreciated.	3.39	Agree	2
7. Preservation of culture and religious sites.	3.41	Agree	1
8. Sharing of culture among people (ex. Common Language, similarities involve)	3.32	Agree	5
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.49 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 is supported by the study made by Walker (2012), which states that People in the religious tourism spend their time to visit historical churches since they are highly keen on history or architecture however in this manner people may get moral lesson about the Christian religion and subculture

The results show that the socio-cultural impacts greatly help to the residents. It can help to generate the development of facilities as a benefit to residents. Socio-cultural impacts help to boost tourism generate money that is invested to preserve the local historical place, to offer better local facilities which in turn creates higher training, to improve infrastructure, organizing frequent social occasions, better enjoyment centers, and therefore a higher life-style for the locale people (Mdusm,2016).

The research done by Samson (2015) states that socio-cultural impact refers to changes to inhabitants' ordinary encounters, and add to their qualities, scholarly and lifestyle and masterful

items. For an assortment of reasons, have groups frequently are the weaker party in collaborations with their visitors and specialist organizations, utilizing any impact they may have. In addition, it can possibly advance social improvement through business creation, salary redistribution, and neediness lightening. The potentially positive effects of tourism incorporate tourism as a power for peace, fortifying groups, offices produced for tourism can profit occupants, revaluation of culture and conventions and energize municipal association and pride.

Among the items cited, the preservation of culture and religious sites got the highest weighted mean of (3.41) followed by regional values and tradition are strengthened and highly appreciated (3.39) and residents have social commitment to their place (3.35). All are assessed with verbally interpreted as agree.

The results revealed that the respondents value the preservation of culture because culture and its heritage reflect and shape values, beliefs, and aspirations, thereby defining a people's national identity. It is important to preserve the cultural heritage, because it keeps integrity as a people. Values are important because they help an individual to grow and develop.

The low results are the indicators, it brings social changes among the residents, tourist and government officials of Batangas Province (3.28) followed by creates social solidarity (3.20) and overcrowding the place (2.91) which got the lowest weighted mean with verbal interpretation of agree.

The journey and tourism region are cornerstone of the worldwide financial system and way to a growing center class, improved virtual and bodily connectivity and generations of people with an insatiable urge for food to explore the world. It is increasing rapidly,” says the report. “Of route, this boom is followed by using challenges, many of which may be summed up with the term ‘overcrowding’. “Overcrowding is never new however it appears to be coming to a head in popular destinations throughout the globe.” reputation may be each a gift and a curse when it comes to tourism. Once a destination has reached tipping factor, the result can alienate locals, push infrastructure to its limits and consequently affect negatively on the visitor revel in (Coffey, 2017; Magpantay et al., 2014).

Overcrowding is a worldwide problem, with locations as various as Thailand’s koh khai islands, Peru’s Machu Picchu, and Venice. For destinations already suffering from overcrowding, the research observed five procedures that have proved to help. Unfold site visitors across websites, for example, with the aid of growing new points of interest and selling less-famous web sites and areas, adjust pricing to balance deliver, clean site visitors over the years with the aid of encouraging them to visit all through nonpeak instances of day, season, and 12 months thru actions together with arrival limits and ticketing structures, and demand by way of, as an example, introducing variable or tiered pricing, adjust lodging deliver thru policies on domestic-sharing and further hotel rooms, and in dire situations, restrict get admission to and activities to protect the natural and cultural integrity (McKinsey, 2017).

Table 3 shows the impact to the development of tourist industry in Batangas province in terms of economic impact with a composite mean of 3.35 and a verbal interpretation of agree. Nowadays, religious tourism has become an important source of tourism industry. It was observed that there were sacred sites including strong religious motivation. This research helped to see this

kind of tourism from a different angle and understand that not all people visiting religious places are spiritually motivated.

Table 3. Impacts to the Development of Tourist Industry in Batangas Province in terms of Economic Impact

Economic Impact	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Uplift tourism Industry	3.33	Agree	5
2. Additional revenue to the LGU	3.27	Agree	7
3. Increase of potential tourist.	3.34	Agree	3.5
4. Improvement of the standard of living	3.30	Agree	6
5. A better development for the province of Batangas.	3.34	Agree	3.5
6. it creates job opportunities among residents of Batangas.	3.41	Agree	2
7. Additional income to the community	3.44	Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.35	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.49 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

It is supported based on the study of Nyaupane, Timothy and Paudel (2015) which claims that millennial people nowadays are going to sacred sites. Specifically, spirit-seekers went to holy places considering a want to wind up nearer to eternity, adore precursors, look for pardoning for bad behaviour, and nature divine beings. This religiously motivated fly out advanced through time to wind up more formalized and institutionalized.

Among the items cited, the additional income to the community got the highest weighted mean with (3.44) followed by it creates job opportunities among residents of Batangas (3.41) and assessed as agree. The result shows that job opportunities among residents are supporting the government by directly hiring workers, sending contracts to businesses to hire workers or increasing subsidies to state governments so that they do not have to lay off workers.

The result is supported by the study made by Minhaj University Lahore (2018) which states that the religious tourism in Pakistan is a rapidly developing, multi-dimensional and potential zone of work. The Open and private organizations are dynamically motivated by the economic impact of religious tourism at all over the world. Tourism's financial advantages have made it an industry for a combination of reasons including the sale purchase, economic exchanges and gloat to the economy. Community assumes the huge part in religious tourism. Economic advantages and cost of religious tourism reach to everybody's concerned.

The improvement of the standard of living got the low weighted mean of 3.30 followed by additional revenue to the LGU (3.27). The result shows that the residents are willing to support the community of Batangas and to increase the economic growth of the additional revenue to the LGU includes such as taxes, loans, business and the rate of the employees.

The authorities might determine the seat of government from in which governmental and company offerings should be introduced. In choosing expressed site, components identifying with geological centrality, openness, accessibility of transportation and verbal trade focuses, seepage

and sanitation, advancement and money related improvement, and diverse material issues might be considered (Chanrobles, 2018).

Table 4. Difference Impacts to the Development of Tourist Industry in Batangas Province when Grouped According to Profile

	Socio Cultural			Economic		
	F-value	p-value	I	F-value	p-value	I
Number of years as a resident	.824	.481	NS	1.233	.298	NS
Occupation	5.728	.000	HS	3.366	.010	S
Frequency of Visiting	6.853	.000	HS	5.608	.000	HS
Destinations	16.356	.000	HS	16.169	.000	HS

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05; HS – Highly Significant, S- Significant; NS-Not Significant

Table presents the responses on the development of tourism industry when grouped according to profile. It was observed that there was significant difference on socio – cultural when grouped according to occupation (0.000), frequency of visit (0.000) and destinations (0.000) and on economic when grouped according to occupation, frequency of visit and destinations also. This was observed since the obtained p-values were less than 0.05 alpha levels. This means that a significant difference observed and implies that the responses differ. Based from the post hoc test that those who are pensioners, visit the place weekly and those who visit St. Michael Parish Church assessed positively the socio cultural and economic aspect.

The table reveals that the respondents have a high assessment on the socio-cultural effect because they have higher understanding on this as a witness on how the tourism industry affects their culture and lifestyle.

Socio-cultural when grouped according to the pensioner was observed as highly significant because the respondent reveals that each religious site gives them an opportunity to grow their community. Not all of them want to travel; some of the pensioners spend money with their family as their support towards them, particularly their children.

This support the study of socio-cultural according to Kurmanaliyeva et al., (2014), which states religious tourism can be provided through a complex mechanism of negotiations, dialogue of ideas and concepts of representatives of community. Result will be a reasonable compromise from without all participant of negotiable process will only benefit.

In addition, frequency of visiting in their sites is very important so they maintain that and value for it and visited weekly. It was observed as highly significant because some of them spend their time to visit holy site during free time instead of exploring more destination and choosing long term back packing trip.

This is supported by the study of Walker (2012), which states that People in the religious tourism spend their time to visit historical churches since they are highly keen on history or architecture however in this manner people may get moral lesson about the Christian religion and subculture

However, the socio-cultural when grouped according to St. Michael Parish Church was observed as highly significant because religious tourism including pilgrimage is becoming more popular and it is a rapidly growing segment within international and local tourism. Some respondents have a strong believe about the subculture of each religious site.

This is supported by the study of CBI (2016). According to UNWTO, more than 300 million tourists visited the most trends sites in each year, almost 600 million of international and national religious journey is added to, including a range of activities such as pilgrimages, monastery, missionary travel, religious conferences, meetings, and gatherings, faith-based camps and others that related to a religious activity. However, in the world tourism, it is said that religious tourism is known as the biggest and rapidly growing.

Furthermore, the pensioner got significant to economic because most of all are nearby in the area and at this age, they spend their time to sacred place.

It is supported by the study of Vijayanand (2012), which claimed that tourism is a delicate economic level of activity in the traveller producing countries, it gives settled income other than essential products. Therefore, an impact of economic pilgrimage can be seen its commitment to the nation, the biggest faithfulness is found in the multiple pilgrimage places around the world. It has a major economic significance for a country that tourism can give an economic source of profit and additionally developing visitors that produce wage for both open and private segment other than influencing wages and business opportunities.

In addition, in terms of Frequency of visiting, especially to the religious sites, it is highly significant because the respondents revealed that visiting in sites is very important so they can visit weekly and they value it. Moreover, the residents have a social commitment to their place became the respondents are nearby in the area so they can go anytime to the church. This means increased of frequency visiting of the people can help to uplift the tourism industry and it can give an additional income to the community.

There are a few reasons why numerous individuals go on religious tours through the sacred sites, obviously, is to join one's interest in traveling and seeing foreign lands into a way of acquiring spiritual merit. By everyone likes to movement and see new nations and locates and motivating spots, and the absolute most invigorating spots are those of profound significance where authentic occasions or supernatural occurrences have occurred, or where noteworthy otherworldly episodes have occurred as portrayed in different profound writings and legends (Knapp, 2017).

Overall, to expand comfort recurrence, they must give shoppers a critical ordeal that keeps on pleasing and assemble a relationship well past the exchange. With the end goal for buyers to appreciate the experience, accommodation stores need to make a feeling of trustworthiness with their customers by having steady, quality items; drawing in arrangements or advancements, and an assortment of items at various day parts for purchase (Romsey, 2016).

On the other hand, in terms of St. Michael Parish Church to economic, it is highly significant because the only reasons why people go to that place is because of its attractions showcasing the value of that place. Tourists increase spending in the country and provide new

employment opportunities and without destination there would be no tourism at all. St. Michael Parish Church raise the profile of an area and result in a greater awareness of that area worldwide, this can be beneficial due to increased social pressure if economic challenges arise.

The research done by Wang (2018), which states that these attractions give the motivation behind why the nation ought to be a piece of their agenda and ought to be commended in that capacity. UNESCO world heritage destinations are the extraordinary designation of what is real about the world and what the residents of such nation take pride of. It produces work, monetary openings, and above all human association between all parts of the globe which cannot be estimated.

Table 5. Proposed Action Plan to Promote Religious Tourism

Key Result Areas / Objective	Strategies/ Activities	Outcomes
Socio-cultural		
To lessen overcrowding place.	Expand or widen the parking area.	The church officials are the one who take action to reduce a overcrowding place.
To improve social solidarity	Share their thoughts, ideas, culture and being friendly.	The residents and the community are the key to the improvement of social solidarity.
Economic		
To gain more additional revenue to the Local Government Units	Introduce and promote their community and create a Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan	The local councils are the person's involved to increase the revenue to the Local Government Units The Barangay Officials are the one who begin improvement of the standard of living.
To improve the standard of living	Access to quality and affordable education, healthcare and making agriculture viable.	

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the respondents are 20 years old and above, employed, visit the religious site daily and the most popular visited religious sites is Caleruega church. The respondents agreed that religious sites contribute to tourism in terms of preservation of culture and religious sites in socio-cultural and additional income to the community in economic aspect. There is a significant difference on socio-cultural and economic when grouped according to occupation, frequency of visit and destinations. The researchers proposed an action plan to enhance the socio-cultural and economic aspects in the province of Batangas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The local government may provide council who will handle the religious sites and how it can be preserved for further enhancement of tourism industry of Batangas province. The churches may be safeguarded in the province of Batangas to keep up its features as pilgrim's sites. Devotees and church visitors may give donations for the improvement of the vicinity. The researchers proposed an action plan that may be implemented to solve the problems encountered by residents. And for the future study may also be conducted using the impact of religious sites to the community in terms of the number of years as resident, occupation and frequency of visit to the site to further confirm the result of the study.

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