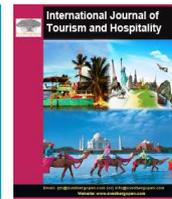




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Longganisa Festival: Sizzling Promotion of Tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, Philippines

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Abstract

The study's goal is to better understand the Longganisa Festival and how it affects tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, Philippines. Initially it explores respondents' demographics, such as age, gender, and occupation. In addition, it discusses the festival's activities and the involvement of residents and the local government unit. Furthermore, the study looks into the tourism promotion strategies used for the festival, including print, broadcast, and social media. Likewise, it assesses respondents' satisfaction levels with the event experience, festival implementation, and planning and preparation. Finally, the study investigates whether there is a significant relationship between the Longganisa Festival and tourism promotion in Calumpit, with the goal of providing useful insights into the festival's role in boosting tourism in the region. The study's methodology encompasses comprehensive data collection through surveys with local residents, government units, and business owners to evaluate the Longganisa Festival's impact on tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, Philippines. Utilizing the universal sampling method ensures a diverse representation of participants, including tourists, business owners, and government officials.

Keywords: Festival tourism, Marketing strategy, Philippine tourism, Sustainability, Culture

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1. Introduction

As per Mariano (2023) from a GMA Network article, the longest "Longganisa boodle fight" in the Philippines has now moved to Calumpit, Bulacan, surpassing the previous record held by Guinobatan, Albay. This record-breaking event in Calumpit holds the potential to significantly boost the town's tourism, showcasing the patron Saint John the Baptist, listed as one of Bulacan's historical heritages since the 17th century. Calumpit residents proudly feature their town's trademark product, the famous "Longganisang Calumpit" variant known as "Longganisang bawang," made from lean pork, pork fat, garlic, bay leaves, brown sugar, soy sauce, vinegar, salt, black pepper, paprika, and chili.

According to Ho (2020), longganisa, which originated in Spain, finds its roots in Filipino cuisine as well. Vigan, Ilocos Sur, offers a distinct version of longganisa, influenced by Mexican salami, while Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija, uses beef meat instead of pork, resulting in "Batutay" or "Batotay." Cebu's "chorizo de Cebu" stands out for its pork-based sausage, uniquely red in color from achuete seeds.

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These provincial festivals, including Calumpit's, not only celebrate local culinary traditions but also promote tourism and economic growth. Calumpit's Mayor Glorime M. Faustino and Vice Mayor Zacarias C. Candelaria have strategically aligned the festival with the town's 451st founding anniversary, aiming to expand the market for Calumpit longganisa, even considering export opportunities with support from the local government.

For the longganisa makers, the festival represents a significant opportunity to elevate Calumpit longganisa's recognition nationally and globally, thus contributing to the town's tourism and economic development. The festival serves as a testament to the potential of local culinary traditions in driving tourism and enhancing the economy, shedding light on the importance of such events in promoting cultural heritage and community prosperity.

This paper outlines key questions to investigate the festival's impact on tourism in the area. The problem statement aims to address several inquiries:

Firstly, it seeks to understand the demographic profile of respondents, including their age, gender, and occupation. Secondly, it aims to describe the Longganisa Festival in terms of its activities and the participation of residents and the local government unit. Thirdly, the paper explores the tourism promotion strategies employed for the festival, encompassing print media, broadcast media, and social media. Additionally, it assesses the level of satisfaction of respondents regarding their event experience, festival implementation, and planning and preparation. Finally, the research investigates the existence of a significant relationship between the Longganisa Festival and the promotion of tourism in Calumpit. Through these inquiries, the study aims to provide insights into the festival's role in enhancing tourism in the region.

2. Literature Review

Velez *et al.* (2023) reported that the inaugural Calumpit Longganisa Festival attracted thousands of attendees during the town's 451st founding anniversary in Bulacan province. Festivities included the King and Queen Longganisa pageant and a street dancing competition, aimed at enhancing the marketability of the town's longganisa products, deeply rooted in local tradition. The Local Government Unit of Calumpit played a pivotal role in organizing the festival, involving locals in the preparatory activities. Meanwhile, GMA Network (2019) highlighted the festival's debut with the longest longganisa boodle fight and the search for the festival's first King and Queen. The candidates from 29 barangays showcased native-inspired costumes, adding vibrancy to the pageant event.

In a separate study by Chan (2020), it is proposed to strengthen and promote cultural events in Vigan, focusing on the Vigan City Fiesta and the Viva Vigan Binatbatan Festival of the Arts. The study underscores the need for collaboration among local, regional, and national organizations to maximize the impact of these festivals on tourism and cultural preservation. Similarly, Gunes *et al.* (2022) evaluated the sustainability of regional festivals in the context of tourism, highlighting both positive economic benefits and negative social and cultural effects. Suggestions for enhancing the positive contributions of festivals were provided, emphasizing the importance of sustainability in festival planning and management.

Richard *et al.* (2020) explored the dimensions of event experiences in cultural events, identifying cognitive engagement as the most significant factor, followed by affective engagement, novelty, and physical engagement. Lansangan *et al.* (2021) evaluated the agribusiness commodity system within the Longganisa industry, aiming to enhance its overall performance in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija. While Dychkovsky *et al.* (2020) underscored the role of festival tourism in generating tourist flows and achieving social and cultural objectives, while Mukunda *et al.* (2020) emphasized the role of cultural festivals in enhancing visitor experiences and promoting local heritage. Furthermore, Ferreira and Villares (2023) analyzed the impact of literary festivals, such as ESCRITARIA in Penafiel, on destination promotion and enrichment of the tourist experience. Lastly, Buckley *et al.* (2020) discussed the dual impact of tourism on biodiversity, highlighting both negative and positive effects, and the need for sustainable tourism practices to mitigate adverse impacts.

The synthesis of various studies and reports emphasizes the importance of cultural festivals, particularly focusing on events like the Longganisa Festival, in promoting tourism, preserving heritage, and stimulating economic growth. The success of the Calumpit Longganisa Festival and similar events highlights their potential to attract visitors and showcase local traditions. Studies stress the need for sustainability in regional festivals to address potential social and cultural challenges while maximizing economic benefits. Furthermore, research underscores the emotional engagement of visitors and the broader role of cultural festivals in achieving social and cultural objectives. The dual impact of tourism on biodiversity is also acknowledged, highlighting the necessity of sustainable tourism practices. Overall, these

findings underscore the significance of cultural festivals in enriching destinations, fostering community engagement, and promoting heritage preservation.

3. Methodology

The study's methodology encompasses comprehensive data collection through surveys with local residents, government units, and business owners to evaluate the Longganisa Festival's impact on tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, Philippines. Utilizing the Universal Sampling Method ensures a diverse representation of participants, including tourists, business owners, and government officials. The Likert scale serves as a key research instrument to quantify attitudes and opinions regarding the festival's significance in promoting tourism. Data gathering involved surveys with various stakeholders and a review of historical records to provide a comprehensive analysis. Data processing involves meticulous cleaning and coding, followed by descriptive and inferential statistical analysis to uncover insights into the festival's impact on tourism promotion.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings derived from the collected data unveil several key insights:

Demographically, the respondents comprised 36% males, 61% females, with 3% falling into other categories. Their ages ranged from 10 to over 50, with a predominant proportion (28%) falling within the 20-29 age bracket. Occupation-wise, a significant portion (45%) identified as local government employees.

Regarding festival activities, respondents deemed a diverse array of foods (70%), parades (59%), community gatherings (68%), and the coronation of the Longganisa King and Queen (57%) as pivotal in bolstering tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan. They also highlighted the importance of local residents' involvement in various festival aspects, such as decorating (65%), food preparation (53%), ensuring electricity (65%), and maintaining cleanliness (58%).

In terms of government participation, respondents strongly concurred that authorities should prioritize safety and security (80%), utilize diverse media for festival promotion (61%), establish concrete event plans (67%), and allocate funds (59%).

Regarding promotional strategies, a significant majority (80%) favored social media, particularly Facebook, followed by television (67%) and brochures (58%).

Respondents expressed high satisfaction levels across multiple facets, including event exploration (58%), venue (66%), goals and objectives (58%), and competition performance (17%). Additionally, there was overwhelming satisfaction with festival implementation (60%), its anticipated positive impact on tourism (60%), alignment with goals and objectives (60%), promotion of tourism, gastronomy, and the economy (53%), budget allocation (72%), and planning and preparation (unspecified high level).

Comparative analysis of the data indicated a statistically significant relationship ($\text{sig. [1-tailed]} = 0.000$) between the Longganisa festival and the promotion of tourism in Calumpit, suggesting promising implications for the town's tourism sector.

5. Conclusion

Based on the extensive research conducted on the significance of the Longganisa Festival in promoting tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, several conclusive insights emerge. Firstly, the study unveils a diverse demographic profile among participants, with a notable representation of females in the 20-29 age group and a significant presence of local government employees. Secondly, key festival activities such as culinary showcases, parades, community gatherings, and the coronation of Longganisa royalty are identified as instrumental in enhancing Calumpit's tourism appeal. Moreover, respondents emphasize the importance of robust government involvement, advocating for measures like safety protocols, media promotion, event planning, and financial support to bolster tourism initiatives effectively. The research also highlights the efficacy of social media, particularly Facebook, as the preferred platform for promotional endeavors, underscoring the need to leverage digital channels for maximum outreach and engagement. Impressively, high satisfaction levels across various dimensions of the festival experience indicate a positive perception and endorse the festival's potential impact on tourism. Statistical analysis further reinforces the significance of the Longganisa Festival in driving tourism growth, substantiating its pivotal role as a catalyst for economic development in Calumpit. In conclusion, the findings underscore the festival's profound potential as a strategic driver of tourism promotion, emphasizing the importance of sustained investment and support to foster Calumpit's status as a premier tourism destination within Bulacan and beyond.

6. Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the Longganisa Festival's impact on tourism in Calumpit, Bulacan, several recommendations emerge to further enhance its efficacy and maximize its potential:

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can further elevate the Longganisa Festival as a premier tourism event, driving economic growth, cultural exchange, and community development in Calumpit, Bulacan, while ensuring its sustainability for future generations.

Activities	Strategies
Enhanced Promotion Strategies	Invest in more robust and diversified promotional campaigns across various media platforms, with a particular focus on leveraging social media channels like Facebook to reach a wider audience both locally and internationally.
Strengthen Community Engagement	Foster greater community involvement and participation in festival planning and execution processes, encouraging residents to actively contribute to the event's success through volunteerism, cultural performances, and creative initiatives.
Government Support and Collaboration	Forge stronger partnerships between the local government and festival organizers to streamline logistical arrangements, enhance safety measures, and allocate adequate resources for the smooth execution of the event.
Diversification of Festival Activities	Introduce new and innovative festival activities and attractions to cater to diverse interests and preferences, thereby enriching the overall visitor experience and extending the festival's appeal to a broader audience.
Sustainable Tourism Practices	Embrace sustainable tourism principles by implementing eco-friendly initiatives, waste management strategies, and responsible tourism practices to minimize the festival's environmental footprint and preserve Calumpit's natural and cultural heritage.
Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms	Establish robust mechanisms for collecting visitor feedback and evaluating festival outcomes to identify areas for improvement, address stakeholder concerns, and refine future iterations of the Longganisa Festival.

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