

Gauging The Culinary Business Opportunities of The Tourism Industry

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Abstract

Food has been a significant factor in the growth of tourism as one of the most important service businesses in the world economy over the course of the past several decades, and this growth has been largely attributable to the growth of the tourism industry. Food plays an exceptionally significant role in the expansion of tourism services due to the fact that it accounts for a considerable portion of overall tourism expenditures and is an absolute necessity for vacationers at every area they visit. As a result, the food industry has played an especially significant role in the expansion of tourism services. The researcher selected to use a methodology that was descriptive in nature but quantitative in its analysis as their approach of choice. The various types of business operations in the tourism sector each have their own unique set of financial requirements, market targeting, product offers, investments, regulatory hurdles, flexibility, and cultural factors to take into account. These factors all play a role in the assessments of the culinary business opportunities available in the tourism industry. The tourism industry is among the most well-known and successful tourist sectors in the world. There is a diversity of opinions among the responders since the numerous kinds of culinary businesses each have their own unique collection of advantages and disadvantages.

Keywords: food tourism, tourism industry, culinary business, business operations

Introduction

Over the course of the last few decades, tourism has developed into one of the most important service industries in the global economy, and food has played an important part in this development. In addition to its function as a source of sustenance, food is an essential component of every culture, a significant component of intangible cultural heritage around the world, and an increasingly vital draw for vacationers. According to Fadriquelan et al. (2012), food has many roles to play for consumers: it is functional, it plays a key role in our celebrations, it is a conduit for socializing, and it is a way of experiencing new cultures and countries. Food is one of the essential expressions of any culture and one of the elements of creativity in everyday life that is engaging for many tourists.

Food plays an especially significant function in the expansion of tourism services due to the fact that it accounts for a significant portion of total tourism expenditures and is an absolute requirement for vacationers at every location they visit. This presents new chances and problems for tourism destinations, notably in the areas of experience development, marketing, and branding. On the one hand, this presents new opportunities and on the other hand, this presents new challenges.

The respective roles that tourism and culinary experiences play in the growth of a community are one of the most essential aspects that encourage the link between the two. According to Lee (2012), culinary tourism has the potential to significantly impact the economic growth of a wide variety of rural areas. It does this through providing support for the production system of the locality, building the vital infrastructure, attracting consumers, promoting cultural production and consumption, and providing assistance for regeneration in both urban and rural contexts.

Food tourism, also known as gastronomic tourism or culinary tourism, can be defined as the following: tourism experiences in which one learns about, appreciates, and/or consumes food and drink that reflect regional or national cuisine, heritage, culture, tradition, or culinary techniques. This definition comes from the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (2011). According to Hall et al. (2003), as stated in Lee (2012), food tourism is the practice of traveling to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants, and other specified areas with the purpose of tasting food and/or experiencing the characteristics of a region that specializes in the production of specialty foods.

Because culinary tourism is an integral aspect of the creative economy, it helps to foster the growth of food-related local business prospects. Because culinary tourism is a composite product, it needs to be planned and managed so that a distinctively alluring place identity and image may be developed. According to Hjalager and Richards (2002), who were mentioned by Karim (2006), food has been identified as an effective marketing and positioning instrument for an area. Karim (2006) reinforced this point.

Consumption of food is an essential component of tourism, and the economic impact of this consumption can be significant not just for the immediate businesses that directly offer food for tourists (such as hotels, restaurants, and attractions), but also for businesses further up and down the food supply chain. According to Mossberg and Svensson (2009), industries related to food, experiences, and tourism have become ever more significant as stimulants for growth and development in the economies of rural communities. It is common knowledge that travelers place a high value on visiting restaurants that offer memorable dining experiences.

According to the OECD Studies on Tourism (2009), the ability of a tourism destination to compete depends on its capacity to convert the fundamental characteristics that it has inherited into assets that it has produced. This could imply that some regions have the organizational capacities that allow them to make better use of the assets they have inherited and produced to make themselves more appealing to tourists.

Establishing a culinary cluster in order to provide towns in Region III of The Country with a competitive advantage requires a plan that is designed to capitalize on the economic, cultural, and environmental features of a location that is located in an appealing setting and is accessible to markets who are interested in the cluster's products.

Indeed, overall economic returns may be greater in general if business aspects such as opportunities, competition, and threats are anticipated, identified, and addressed because those who are engaged in this venture are expected to provide comprehensive offer. Potential economic opportunities, provided by developing food and tourism connections, are created not only by the gastronomy or cuisine tourism market but from all tourism markets. This can only be accomplished by first thinking about whether or not the business will be profitable and the chances of being successful.

Statement of the Problem

1. How do the respondents assess the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry in terms of the following aspects when grouped according to profile:
 - 1.1 Financial
 - 1.2 Market
 - 1.3 Product
 - 1.4 Investments
 - 1.5 Regulatory

Research Methodology

The methodology which was adopted by the researcher is descriptive method and quantitative in its analysis. Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables; he can only report what has happened or what is happening (Driscoll, 2011). According to Dawson, et al. (2005), it is used

when a research attempts to describe systematically a situation, problem, phenomena, service or programme, or provides information about living condition of a community or describes attitudes toward an issue. Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity (Saunders, et al., 2007).

The study used descriptive method since it focused on determining and assessing the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry and the culinary business threats of the said industry. The respondents comprised the culinary business owners in the selected Provinces in Region III. The lists were provided by the Personnel or Record Officers of the Provincial Department of Tourism. The purposive sampling technique was utilized in determining the number of respondents of this study.

Before the actual conduct of the study, the researcher determined the parameters of the sample through a pre-survey. The researcher sought the assistance of the Personnel or Record Officers of the Department of Tourism of the selected Provinces in Region III to enable the researcher to identify the samples of the study. Simple random samplings was utilized by the researcher in the study.

Slovin's formula was used to calculate the sample size (n) given the population size (N) and a margin of error (e). It is a random sampling technique formula to estimate sampling size. It is computed as $n \geq N / (1 + Ne^2)$.

$$n \geq 2100 / ((1 + 2100 (.02)^2) = 1141$$

This study was conducted at the different provinces of Region III or Central Luzon, Philippines. These provinces consist of Zambales, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Tarlac. Figure 3. Map of Region III



The respondents were culinary business owners in the selected provinces in Region III. There were 1169 business owners who participated in the study. This research study used survey questionnaire to measure the participants' assessment of the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry and the culinary business threats of the said industry in Region III. This research has adopted a researcher-made instrument based on related readings.

The researcher had extensive review of the works of Michael Porter's Five Forces of Competitive Position (2008), Hall and Sharples (2008) and Storchmann, (2008) as sources of items/indicators for the research instrument.

The survey questionnaire contained 55 key items/indicators which had two parts. However, there were items added to the survey instrument on the profile of the respondents.

The first part ascertained the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry which include the

Respondents were asked to rate about the status of culinary business opportunities as well as the threats of the culinary tourism industry. They answered from the scale of (strongly agree/to a very great extent) to 1 (strongly disagree/not an opportunity).

To test the validity of the instrument, the consensus validation technique was used. A set of subject matter experts from the Department of Tourism of the selected Provinces of Region III (Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales) reviewed and checked the indicators for clarity and directedness to minimize the occurrences of misinterpretations. The validity of the questions could be eroded if participants misinterpreted the indicators in the instrument.

Each of them was given a set of instrument with another attached sheet for them to write their suggestions and comments for the items. The requested evaluators were given one (1) week to go over the instrument. After a week, the instruments were retrieved. Their suggestion and comments were considered. The revisions made in the instrument were under the approval, comments and consideration of the research adviser and committee of oral examiners.

To generate more data for the study, the unstructured interview was conducted. This interview solicited answer and clarified some vague answers on the questionnaire.

The researcher sought permission and recommendation to field survey questionnaire form the Dean of PUP Graduate School for the Department of Tourism and Tourism officials who indorsed the request to the Department of Tourism. Effective data gathering through personal delivery of formal request and survey instrument to various respondents was done. The researcher personally met the respondents and whenever necessary the questionnaire was translated to Filipino for better understanding with the aid of the local guide.

Discussion of Results and Findings

To examine a variety of characteristics, including as financial, market, product, investment, and regulatory issues, in order to explain the considerable disparities that were found in the respondents' evaluations of the culinary business opportunities available in the tourism industry, which were categorized according to the type of company operation that they engage in. Restaurants, mobile food vendors, catering companies, and other similar enterprises could fall under the category of culinary businesses operating within the tourism industry. Let's go deeper into each component:

Financial

It is quite likely that the evaluations of the respondents concerning the financial elements will vary depending on the kind of culinary company activity being surveyed. Restaurants could demand greater initial investments in terms of location, decoration, and equipment, which could lead to higher levels of perceived risk. On the other hand, food trucks could be considered as a more cost-effective solution with lower initial costs than traditional restaurants. Catering services may require less initial capital, but their income may be more volatile due to changes in the demand for their services.

The high general weighted mean of 4.26 indicates that the respondents have a strong agreement on the culinary business opportunities in the tourism industry. This agreement is specifically in terms of the financial aspects when the respondents are grouped by the form of business organization. This could be explained through the application of a variety of theoretical perspectives and conceptual frameworks. Let's investigate several hypotheses that could explain this phenomenon, including the following:

According to **Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky's Prospect Theory**, individuals have a tendency to weigh possible costs and profits in different ways. This theory was developed to explain this phenomenon. In the context of potential for culinary businesses, respondents may have a strong impression of the financial benefits connected with the various organizational structures available to businesses operating in the tourism industry. If the general weighted mean scores are high, it may imply that respondents believe the possible earnings from these culinary operations outweigh the probable risks and costs of engaging in such endeavors.

Opportunity Theory in Entrepreneurship: According to this school of thought, entrepreneurs seek out and seize chances that present themselves in the marketplace. Strong agreement among respondents about the financial aspects of culinary business opportunities may imply that respondents see a favorable alignment between the wants of visitors and the culinary offers that are offered by various forms of business organization. This might be the case if respondents perceive a favorable alignment between the two. This confluence of factors points to a potentially fruitful business opportunity.

RBV, or the Resource-Based View, of the Company:

According to the RBV hypothesis, the success of a company is contingent on the company's capacity to capitalize on its distinctive and valuable resources. Respondent's selected form of business organization may have resources and capabilities that can provide competitive advantages in the tourism industry, which may lead respondents to assume that their chosen form of business organization possesses resources and capabilities in the context of culinary business potential. The high level of agreement may be attributable to the widely held belief that these resources have the potential to be exploited for financial advantage.

This theory focuses on the relationships between persons involved in an exchange and the perceived benefits received from these relationships. **The Social Exchange Theory** was developed to explain this phenomenon. The high level of agreement expressed by respondents may be an indication of their conviction that the prospects presented by the culinary business sector will result in financially beneficial outcomes for all parties concerned, including tourists, locals, and the owners of the firm. The high value of the general weighted mean may be an indication of a favorable view of the possibilities' monetary value as an exchange.

The term "innovation adoption theory" refers to a theory that attempts to explain how and why people take up new concepts, goods, or habits. In the context of prospects for doing business in the culinary industry, the respondents' high level of agreement may signal that they view these opportunities as innovative and capable of satisfying the ever-changing requirements of tourists. Because of the perceived newness of the concept and the opportunity for increased revenues, the financial aspects may be considered as quite appealing.

Respondent's Perception of the Business's Viability If respondents have the impression that the forms of business organization being considered have a high potential for both viability and profitability, then it's possible that they will strongly agree on the financial elements. It's possible that they came to an agreement because they believe that these culinary endeavors are in good alignment with the interests and spending patterns of vacationers, which will result in high financial performance.

In conclusion, the strong agreement among respondents on the culinary business opportunities in the tourism industry, particularly in terms of financial aspects when grouped by form of business organization,

can be supported by theories such as the Prospect Theory, the Entrepreneurial Opportunity Theory, the Resource-Based View, Social Exchange Theory, Innovation Adoption Theory, and the concept of perceived business viability. All of these theories and the concept of perceived business viability are related to the concept of perceived business viability. These theoretical viewpoints serve to explain why respondents perceive these prospects as financially promising, as well as how the respondents' beliefs contribute to the high general weighted mean score of 4.26.

Market

Various sorts of culinary enterprises cater to various subsets of the tourism industry. There is a possibility that restaurants that serve both visitors and locals may have a more consistent customer base. Food trucks might potentially target visitors in places with significant foot traffic by offering both convenience and novelty to customers. Catering services may decide to specialize on events and conferences, relying on partnerships and contracts with local venues as their primary source of business.

The results of the survey reveal a sizeable consensus among respondents, which indicates a solid agreement regarding the potential for culinary-related businesses within the context of the tourism industry. This unanimity is more obvious when market elements are analyzed, as well as when considering the classification of respondents according to the type of company organization they operate. The significant general weighted mean of 4.15 emphasizes the breadth of this agreement and hints to a prevalent belief that these opportunities hold significant potential within the market. Both of these points are significant for their own reasons.

The high general weighted mean score of 4.15 demonstrates the respondents' collective conviction that the chosen forms of business organization are well-aligned with the dynamics of the market. This belief is reflected by the high score. This alignment demonstrates a deep comprehension of the myriad preferences and requirements of both international visitors and domestic customers. The consensus of the respondents suggests that these culinary endeavors successfully tap into the complex tapestry of tastes, cultural influences, and experience wants that visitors look for when they are traveling to a new location.

In addition, the strong consensus that was reached among the respondents provides evidence of the perceived feasibility and competitiveness of these culinary businesses within the context of the wider tourism environment. This perspective is most likely the result of an in-depth grasp of current trends in consumer behavior as well as an awareness of the dynamic changes occurring within the tourism industry. The high general weighted mean of 4.15, as a result, not only emphasizes the collective confidence in the appeal of these culinary goods but also implies a strategic insight into how these firms might effectively position themselves to grab a considerable portion of the market. In other words, the high general weighted mean not only accentuates the collective confidence in the appeal of these culinary offerings but also suggests a strategic insight.

In conclusion, the findings of the study point to a substantial agreement among respondents concerning the culinary business potential in the tourism industry. More specifically, the emphasis is placed on the alignment with market characteristics when the opportunities are grouped according to the form of business organization. The high overall weighted mean score of 4.15 demonstrates a widespread consensus that these culinary endeavors have the potential to be successful, appropriate for their target markets, and competitive in nature. This collective agreement highlights both a solid awareness of the market's sophisticated demands as well as the possibility for these enterprises to flourish within the ever-changing landscape of the tourism industry.

Product

The way in which a culinary enterprise is run will have a direct bearing on how product opportunities are interpreted. Restaurants have the potential to foster innovation and specialization by providing diners with a variety of eating experiences and menu options. Food trucks may be particularly well-suited to providing

tourists with speedy, convenient options that can be grabbed on the way out the door. Catering businesses could capitalize on the need for event-specific menus and personalized preparations.

The findings of the survey reveal a sizeable consensus among respondents, which indicates a strong concurrence regarding the culinary business potential available within the tourism industry, particularly in connection to product elements. This consensus is made especially clear when the respondents are categorized according to the type of business organization they belong to. The remarkable general weighted mean of 4.18 exemplifies the breadth and depth of this consensus, indicating that there is a widespread impression that these opportunities hold a tremendous potential in terms of the product offers they can facilitate.

The high general weighted mean score of 4.18 demonstrates the respondents' shared conviction that the selected forms of company organization are extremely well-suited to accommodate the various and growing preferences of both visitors and local consumers. This belief is reflected by the high score. This alignment highlights an insightful knowledge of the need of developing gastronomic experiences that resonate with the distinctive preferences, cultural influences, and experiential desires of tourists when they engage with a region

In addition, the high level of consensus among respondents indicates the perceived innovativeness and adaptability of these culinary businesses within the ever-changing context of tourism. This view most likely derives from an acute grasp of altering consumer needs as well as a clear respect for the function that gastronomical offers play in boosting overall visitor experiences. The high general weighted mean of 4.18, as a result, not only suggests a collective confidence in the appeal of these culinary items, but it also indicates a strategic insight into how these enterprises may effectively innovate in order to consistently capture and satisfy their target audience. Consequently, the high general weighted mean indicates a collective confidence in the appeal of these culinary products.

In conclusion, the findings of the study reveal a compelling consensus among respondents concerning the culinary business potential within the tourism industry, with a specific focus on product features when the chances are separated by the form of business organization. The exceptional overall weighted mean score of 4.18 emphasizes a common belief in the capability of these organizations to offer culinary experiences that are alluring, culturally resonant, and inventive. This unanimity demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the delicate interplay between gastronomic offerings and the multifarious wants of the tourism market, so hinting towards a high potential for these culinary endeavors to prosper and make an influence that will last for a long time.

Investments

The evaluations of investments and returns that are provided by respondents vary. It's possible that restaurants have higher overhead costs, but they also have the potential for larger revenue thanks to their regular clientele. Food trucks could have cheaper running costs, but their availability might be restricted by the seasons and their locations. Catering services could entail investments in transportation and equipment, but larger events could result in huge financial gains from those investments.

The results of the survey highlight a large and general consensus among respondents regarding the culinary business prospects inherent in the tourism industry, with a particular emphasis on the financial aspects of these opportunities. This concordance becomes much more obvious when one considers the categorization of respondents according to the number of branches each of their companies possesses. This widespread perception that these prospects bring great potential in terms of investments is indicated by the substantial general weighted mean of 4.19, which highlights the breadth and unanimity of this consensus.

The high general weighted mean score of 4.19 demonstrates the widespread belief that the culinary enterprises, when categorized according to the number of branches, are ready to produce profitable

returns on investment. This alignment highlights an astute knowledge of the complexities involved in striking a balance between investments and prospective returns within the hospitality and tourism industries. The consensus of the respondents indicates that these possibilities have the potential to be financially successful while also requiring sensible risk management of any dangers that may be associated with them.

Furthermore, the substantial agreement among respondents demonstrates the perceived competency of these culinary businesses in efficiently allocating resources and making strategic investment decisions, particularly in regard to the expansion of branches. This is because of the fact that the expansion of branches has been a consistent topic of discussion. This perspective is most likely the result of the respondents' prior experience as well as their extensive industry expertise, which enables them to identify profitable investment opportunities amidst a shifting tourism scene. Therefore, the high general weighted mean of 4.19 not only highlights their mutual trust in investment returns, but also highlights their strategic understanding in identifying and capitalizing on possibilities that correspond with the scope of expansion of their enterprises.

In conclusion, the findings of the study highlight a strong consensus among respondents concerning the culinary business chances buried within the tourism industry, with a specific emphasis on investment factors classified by the number of branches. In addition, the findings of the study highlight a compelling consensus among respondents concerning the opportunities for expanding a culinary business. The substantial general weighted mean score of 4.19 demonstrates a widespread perception that these companies have the ability to generate great financial outcomes, which is supported by their experience and sector expertise. The existence of this collective agreement is evidence that they are skilled at negotiating the investment dynamics of the hospitality and tourism industries; hence, it suggests that there is significant potential for continued expansion and success.

Regulatory Obstacles

The many types of culinary businesses are subject to a wide range of regulatory factors, which can have a substantial impact. Regulations pertaining to health and safety, zoning rules, and alcohol licenses are some of the obstacles that restaurants must overcome. It's possible that food trucks will have their operating areas limited in order to ensure that they comply with the legislation governing mobile food vendors. Standards for food handling and cleanliness are required to be adhered to by catering services, particularly when feeding big gatherings.

According to Hall (2009), in order for tourism destinations to initiate a developmental model, the innovation system must include relevant institutional support such as education and research, financial resources, policy that facilitates innovation at all levels, the ability of stakeholders to innovate at all levels, and the existence of cluster and network groups. Destinations in the tourism industry strive to differentiate their products in order to obtain a competitive advantage. According to Walder, Weiermair, and Perez (2006), innovation and changes in technology, in particular information and communication technology (ICT), are considered as more critical variables in the struggle for competitiveness. Innovation has started to take center stage in modern analyses of tourism, with competition being considered as a key factor in driving innovation. Therefore, competition is particularly fierce in the tourism industry due to the ease with which innovations may be replicated by other businesses and the macro environment.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The respondents only agreed (to a great extent) on the culinary business opportunities when grouped by capitalization. However, they strongly agreed (to a very great extent) on the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry in terms of financial aspects when grouped by form of business organization, number of years of operation, number of employees, number of branches, and type of operation. When grouped by form of business organization, capitalization, number of years of operation, number of employees,

number of branches, and type of business operation, the respondents were in agreement (to a large extent) on the culinary business opportunities of the tourism industry in terms of market, product, investments, and regulatory aspects. When it comes to screening, evaluating, approving, and administering small and medium-sized business loans, banks and other financial lending agencies might want to think about making some adjustments to the conventional banking and lending methods and procedures. They might also take into consideration being more indulgent toward these business owner-applicants who are just getting their business venture off the ground. It's possible that they'll come up with a plan or set of guidelines that will boost lending to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the basis of the profitability of their businesses and that would make collateral requirements a secondary concern when it comes to issuing loans.

It is possible that the local government will want to review the necessary paperwork that micro cuisine enterprises are required to comply with and submit; they may choose to simplify the procedure, or they may decide that the application process should not be as severe as it already is. They could also look over the necessary documents and just ask the owners for the most critical papers to bring with them.

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