

STATUS OF MANILA'S TOURISM AND FOOD ENTERPRISES IN TIME OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The paper assessed the status of the local travel and food operators in time of COVID-19 pandemic in Manila. The assessment utilized the Pillars of New Normal taken from the identified implications of the study titled The Philippine Travel Survey Report: Insights on Filipino Traveler's Sentiments on the New Normal. (Tan, Drew (2020), Center for Tourism and Guide to the Philippines). The fundamental point of the study was to analyze the impact of COVID-19 pandemic to local travel and food enterprises in the city of Manila. This study can be a basis for regaining and adapting to the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The study applied the qualitative descriptive research design which was used in gathering data that determined the status of Manila's tourism and food enterprises in time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Tourism, Food, Local Travel, Enterprises, COVID 19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Food and tourism are and have always been closely associated. Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. It seeks to explore the twentieth century development of food tourism, to trace origins, trends, and fashions in the symbiotic linkages between food production and tourism, and to find out more about the ways in which such relationships are formed. Hall suggested that for many years the understanding of the food tourism relationship was limited to the commercial provision of food for tourists in hotels, restaurants, and resorts. Hjalager and Richards in 2002 expanded on this proposition emphasizing the importance of place and locality; suggesting that 'gastronomic experiences are developed from aspects that are unique to, or only found in that region.

There is a vital role for food in broadening a destination's appeal; increasing visitor yield; enhancing visitor experience; strengthening regional identity; and stimulating growth in

other sectors. Thus, food contributes to the overall sustainable competitiveness of a tourism destination (Devahli, Karwowski, Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, 2020). The social and cultural significance of food in tourism have also gained recognition. As Jones and Jenkins quoted, "Food is now used as a means of developing new niche markets, supporting regional identities, developing quality tourism and sustainable tourism. Food has therefore developed from being a basic necessity for tourist consumption to being regarded as an essential element of regional culture" (Haven-Tang & Jones. 2006).

Sharples mentioned that "the media undoubtedly form a pervasive and invasive aspect of culture which has an enormous influence on destination and place image, as well as on taste." This, in effect, has 'lifted' food from the realms of functionality and hospitality and elevated cuisine in importance in today's western lifestyle, facilitating the transition of food and drink from a necessity to a status commodity (Hall, Mitchell, & Sharples, 2008).

Manila serves as the center of culture, economy, education, and government in the Philippines. It is the most populous region of the country and one of the most densely

populated in the world. It is also the main gateway for international travelers going to the Philippines by flights. When someone say “Manila,” it can mean two things. First, it can refer to the City of Manila, the capital of the Philippines. Manila is made up of 16 administrative districts, which include Binondo, Ermita, Intramuros, Malate, and Quiapo, among others. Second, Manila is also referred to as greater Metropolitan Manila area. Manila is accessible from both international and local destinations by flights. Tourists land in one of the four terminals of Manila Airport, specifically in either Pasay City or Parañaque City, depending on the airline.

For first-time visitors in the Philippines, the best thing to do is to zero in on the famous historical places in Manila. A museum tour and a food tour should be on top of one’s list of things to do in Manila. Whether it is history, food, culture, shopping, or nightlife, tourists will surely find something fun and unique to do in the metro. One of the best things to do for first-time travelers in Manila is to enjoy traditional Filipino cuisine and culture by patronizing dining establishments that offer a cultural experience. Manila is a foodie haven. There is no distinct cuisine that can best represent the region since Manila is a melting pot of multicultural lifestyle. Thanks to its diverse community, one can find cuisine from various areas of the Philippines. Binondo, established in 1594 is a vibrant and historic place to visit in Manila. It is the oldest Chinatown in the world. Like other Chinatowns, Binondo has bustling alleys filled with hole-in-the-wall joints, traditional bakeries, and budget-friendly streetside eateries, alongside family-style buffet Chinese restaurants.

Food tourism is inclusive. It includes the food carts and street vendors as much as the locals-only (gastro) pubs, dramatic wineries, or one-of-a-kind restaurants. To support the saying “the surest way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” the Department of Tourism (DOT) under the leadership of Secretary Joseph Ace Durano recently launched Culinary Tourism dubbed as Kulinarya Filipina as part of the Cultural Tourism Program. This program hopes to introduce the Philippine flavors to domestic and international scene and aims to promote the country as a culinary destination.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness. A novel coronavirus outbreak was first documented in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in

December 2019. The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has led to mass scientific conference cancellations, travel restrictions, social distancing, and other unprecedented prevention measures (Diebner, Silliman, Ungerman, Vancauwenbergh, 2020).

The tourism industry was one of the world's greatest markets; until the world met a pandemic in the 21st century, COVID-19. Without a doubt, the tourism industry is among the sectors that has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The closing of borders, airports, and hotels as well as restrictions on mass gatherings, land travel and related services across the world put around 100 to 120 million jobs at risk as estimated by the World Tourism Organization. In the first quarter of 2020, the period when the travel restrictions and lockdowns in most countries started, international tourist arrivals declined by 22% resulting in an estimated loss of US\$80bn in global tourism receipts. In such period, 97 destinations have totally or partially closed their borders for tourists, 65 destinations have suspended international flights totally or partially, and 39 destinations were implementing the closing of borders i.e., banning the arrivals from specific countries (Lee, 2020).

In the Philippines, revenue from foreign arrivals for January to March 2020 plummeted to PHP 79.8 billion, a 40.62 percent decline compared to PHP 134.3 billion in the same quarter last year. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused massive disruptions in the world's airline, travel, and tourism industries. The government closed the airports in Luzon on 20 March as part of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) that started in the island on 16 March. The tourism sector has already felt the negative impact of the pandemic on its performance much earlier. In other countries, travel restrictions and measures have started as early as January of this year and have impacted the Philippine international tourist arrivals. Domestic tourists, on the other hand, also limited their travel for fear of contracting COVID-19. The Department of Tourism reported that international tourist receipts in the first quarter of the year declined to PHP85bn, 36% lower than the revenues in the same period last year. One of the top questions leaders across the world have, is how to restart the tourism sector after COVID-19 pandemic.

As cited in the study of Steinmetz (2010), “In recent years food has gained recognition by governments, business, and academics as an integral part of the tourism product, and as a means of differentiation for destinations”. There are many benefits to be had in linking food and tourism for all stakeholders concerned. Local food is a vital element that can

help create a sense of ‘place’ and heighten destination appeal. Local produce adds authenticity to the tourist experience and provides motivation for visitors to come to a location. Tourists may even be tempted to stay longer in one place because of the availability of food products and related activities. Tourism provides an additional sales outlet for food producers and tourism-related spending on locally produced food products helps to stimulate and revitalize local economies. Increasingly, food is used in development initiatives to strengthen tourism destinations, and to create linkages of benefit to both the food production industry and the tourism industry (Steinmetz, 2010).

The Department of Tourism, in partnership with Guide to the Philippines and AIM- Dr. Andrew L. Tan Center for Tourism conducted a travel survey entitled The Philippine Travel Survey Report: Insights on Filipino Travelers’ Sentiments on the New Normal. The survey aimed to help Tourism and Food enterprises as well as stakeholders identify the domestic travelers’ sentiments and behavior that can be used as basis to craft strategies and plans for the new normal in travel and food enterprises. The salient findings of the survey were the Implications for Tourism Enterprises which were summarize under the following: Rebuild trust and confidence in travel, adapt products and services, Shift to digital and collaborate with stakeholders (Tan, & DOT, 2020).

In this study the abovementioned Implications were utilized to assess the status of the tourism and food enterprises in the City of Manila. It seeks to find out how tourism and food enterprises in the City of Manila adapt and prepare in the new normal in terms of travel and dining experiences (Tan, Andrew (2020), Philippine Travel Survey). In relation to study, idiographic approach is used since it is the most frequent form of attraction typology encountered in tourism research. The organizational perspective is a different research approach which does not necessarily examine the attractions themselves, but rather focuses on their spatial, capacity, and temporal nature. In this approach, attraction typologies are developed to reflect these qualities. Scale is the simplest basis for categorizing the spatial character of an attraction within an organizational perspective. Scale considerations can provide insight into the organization of tourist attractions, their relationship to other attractions, and the relationship of attraction images to attractions themselves. These considerations are important in the planning and marketing of tourism (Lew, 1987).

METHODOLOGY

In this study the researchers employed the qualitative descriptive research design. The goal of qualitative descriptive studies is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals. The researchers made use of structured interview questions adapted from the implications for tourism enterprises in the study of Tan in 2020.

Interview Questions

The following interview questions guided the study.

Implications for Food/Tourism Enterprises

I. Rebuild Trust and Confidence in Travel

What adjustments will I make to endure the safety of customers/travelers?

How can I improve my customers’ experience given the dining/travel requirements?

II. Adapt Products and Services

How am I monitoring shifts in dining/ travel behavior?

How can I tweak my products /services to changing dining/traveler preferences (e.g preferences for activities that limit exposure to crowds)?

III. Shift to Digital

What customer touchpoints do I need to digitize?

How can I establish diners’/traveler’s confidence in online transactions?

IV. Collaborate with Stakeholders

How can I seek convergence points with stakeholders of local food/tourism establishment?

Source: Philippine Travel Survey Report (June, 2020) Joint project of Department of Tourism-Philippines, AIM-Dr. Andrew L. Tan Center for Tourism and Guide to the Philippines.

Limited number of travel and food enterprises were in operations during the collection of data, since Manila was placed under enhanced community quarantine. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was employed. Only those travel and food enterprises that were in operations and with

key informants who were willing to participate were included in the study. There were ten travel agencies and ten food establishments that participated in the study.

Coding and Themes

Table 1. Food Enterprise (Restaurant/Café/Dining Establishment)

Code	Establishment	No. of Years of Established	Participant
1	Restaurant		Head Waiter
2	Cafe	4.5 years	Administrative Officer
3	Restaurant	29 years	President
4	Restaurant	1 year	Owner
5	Cafe	5 months	Operations Head
6	Cafe	1 year	Manager
7	Chinese Restaurant	11 years	Head Cashier
8	Cafe	2 years	Shift Supervisor
9	Seafoods Restaurant	13 years	Dining Manager
10	Tea House	13 years	Supervisor

Table 2. Travel Enterprise

Code	Establishment	No. of Years of Established	Participant
11	Travel Agency	50 years	Reservation Officer
12	Tourist Travel Transport Service	2 years	Operations Head
13	Museum	38 years	Complex Manager
14	Travel Agency	10 years	Operations Manager
15	Tourist Destination	41 years	Researcher
16	Travel Agency	4 years	General Manager
17	Travel Agency	22 years	
18	Travel Agency	5 years	General Manager
19	Travel Agency	30 years	Sales Officer
20	Travel Agency	6 years	Chief of Processing Division

Data Analysis

Data analysis of qualitative descriptive research is unlike other qualitative approaches. This data analysis does not use a pre-existing set of rules that have been generated from the philosophical or epistemological stance of the discipline that created the specific qualitative research approach. Rather, qualitative descriptive research is purely data-derived in that codes are generated from the data in the course of the study. Like other qualitative research approaches, qualitative descriptive studies generally are characterized by simultaneous data collection and analysis (Lambert et. al, 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implication I

Rebuilding Trust and Confidence. As stated in the joint survey of Tan and DOT (2020) rebuilding trust and confidence is described as inspiring trust and confidence in the safety of travel and should be the main priority for tourism enterprises.

Category 1: Ensuring Safety of Clients. This category appeared through asking key informants from both food and travel enterprises on what adjustments will they make to ensure the safety of customers/travelers? As per World Health Organization (2020) guidelines specified that businesses to remain safe from virus contamination the main priority is to keep the virus out of the environment. Several key measures are required including upgrading of cleaning and sanitation measures, disinfecting surfaces and high-touch points, educating staff on the virus and how to protect themselves and others, reinforcing protocols such as physical distancing, hand washing, and improved security with people staying in their vehicles/sanitizing hands when handing out documents and other material. This leads to the finding of two themes which are compliance with health and safety protocols and modified service operations.

Compliance with Health and Safety Protocols. Most participants noted that upon the government instructions all areas of the enterprises (1) started to be sterilized and periodic application of deep disinfection; (2) checked body temperatures of all the customers who are visiting; (3) observed social distancing; (4) mandatory use of face masks

and face shields; (5) wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE); and (6) compliance in travel requirements.

Participant 18 stressed that it is important that the travel enterprises inform and explain to the clients the needed travel requirements such as RT-PCR when choosing a travel destination.

Participant 5 shared that the City Government of Manila requires employees of food enterprises to undergo testing in the accredited COVID-19 testing centers.

In reference to hygiene and sanitation, participant 10 provided this response

“Yes. Complete hygiene and sanitation materials and equipment in our store. Using temperature check, declaration form from supplier, employees and customers is a must. Foot mat was also provided in the store. If the employees report for work and exceeded in 37 temperature, they will have to proceed to designated clinic of the store.”

Participant 1 emphasized

“This is even more significant today, as ensuring safety of customers is indispensable in the management of pandemic.”

In the study of Bagner et. al (2020) which investigated the impact of COVID-19 on hotel operations, emphasized takeout or delivery options to reduce public dining; to implement intensified cleaning/sanitizing protocols, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and accentuate personal hygiene to workers; properly communicate new COVID-19 policies to guests and employees; implement physical distancing practices and implementing protocols for guest exposed to or infected by COVID-19.

Modified Service Operations. Participants 3 and 20 stated, aside from compliance with health and safety protocols they gradually opened their food enterprise for takeout service in accordance with DTI Memorandum Circular 20-52 for dining/restaurants stating that establishments are encouraged to conduct delivery and takeout only during Enhanced Community Quarantine and Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine. Whereas respondent 20 declared that they did not allow walk-in clients as much as possible and connected via online or call only.

In reference to client capacity limitation, participant 8 provided this response

“We are following safety protocols in our store as imposed by the DOH and government such as practicing social distancing which led to rearrangement of tables and chairs, putting barriers for table, sanitizing every 30 minutes and taking temperature of customers before entering the store”.

In addition, participant 16 imparted

“We focus on online transactions where our staff were observing work from home scheme.”

Participant 17 shared

“We applied shifting schedule of our staff and limit the capacity of our office. We preferred more online transactions in asking inquiries or assisting our clients.”

Participant 5 stated,

“Outdoor seating was offered, and we do takeout service.”

Participant 10 uttered

“Since then, we shifted into take-out orders, we tied up with some delivery companies such as Food Panda and we created our own online application orders and social media site such as, Booty application.”

The study of Jain, S. (2020) recommended series of actions for restaurants to attract customers in the post-covid-19 period, these are: (a) inclusion of island-sitting arrangements to assure maximum physical distances between people; (b) provide actual cooking counters to allow customers to watch their food being prepared; and c. instill confidence in its safety and have appropriate hygiene and cleaning procedures.

Category 2: Improving Customer’s Experience.

Given the dining and travel requirements. The category was in evidence when the respondents answered the question, how can I improve my customer’s experience given the dining and travel requirements? COVID-19 pandemic has devastated lives and livelihood around the globe. Food and travel enterprises was forced to rethink of what customer care means. Assessment of customer journeys and satisfaction measurements have given way to an acute urgency to address what they need (Diebner et. Al ,2020). This assessment directs to the conceptualization of these themes which are quality customer service and ensuring the health and safety of client and staff.

Quality Customer Service. Participants specified that to ensure quality customer service, aside from wearing the PPE which hinders proper communication, staffs verify orders repeatedly and conduct short but meaningful conversations.

The following participants shared overall statements to satisfy customers and provide them with convenience.

Participant 5 shared

“Create relaxing ambiance, limited dining capacity, and convenient operation hours”.

Participant 1 said

“Measure the customer experience at every point. Optimize customer journey and increase satisfaction.”

Participant 6 also declared

“We implement advanced booking in our café to avoid long queues.”

Participant 16 also stated

“Providing assistance in accomplishing their travel requirements as well as refund/rebooking of travels.”

While participant 14 specified

“Recommend to our client the best destination that they can enjoy in spite the pandemic.”

Whereas participant 20 shared

“We make sure that upon arriving in their desired destination, we do everything, and all the requirements are already prepared for the clients.”

Ensuring Client and Staff Health and Safety. Three out of the twenty participants responded to the theme as follows during the pandemic; sitting dining capacity was decreased to observe social distancing and apply broken time in operating schedules to give time in store cleaning and sanitation.

Participant 19 specified that aside from following the safety protocols they also provide hygiene kits to their guests. Participant 12 also adheres to safety protocols such as taking the client's body temperature, filling-out health declaration form and wearing of PPEs of employees are strictly implemented. While participant 13 makes use of QR code in lieu of the mandatory medical declaration.

The section showed that during the COVID 19 pandemic both food and travel enterprises as stated by the participants

focus on re- designing guidelines in operations to comply to the government requirements. Furthermore, the participants were able to offer new customer experiences and be concerned about safety.

Devahli, et al (2020) mentioned in their study the specific steps for an exit strategy and the reopening of activities in different business sectors as presented by Peterson et al (2020). Primary steps include implementing widespread COVID-19 testing, having enough PPE supply, lifting social distancing and mobility restrictions, using electronic surveillance, and implementing strategies to decrease workplace transmission. Emphasis was placed on the daily screening of hospitality sector staff for COVID-19 by using real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction or serology tests.

Implication II

Adapt Products and Services. All enterprises in the travel value chain must continually probe shifting travel behaviors and adapt their offerings based on the changing demands (Tan and DOT, 2020).

Category 1: Monitoring Shifts in Dining/Travel Behavior. The category was evident when the participants responded in the question: How am I monitoring shifts in dining/travel behavior? The shift in demand patterns was dramatic during the pandemic. According to McKinsey Survey across cities in China in February 2020 overall penetration increased by 15 – 20 %. E-commerce sales for consumer products in Italy soared by 81 percent in a single week. (Bertoletti, 2020) All of the Key Informants stated that to keep them abreast of their clients dining and travel behaviors, news and social media platforms played a significant role.

The essences derived from the interviews include participant 20 which stated,

“We make it sure that we are informed by reading articles online or watching news.

Also, participant 15 declared

“We monitor news via social media on a daily basis.”

Category 2: Unique Customer Experience. This category emerged when the participants were asked: How can I tweak my products/services to the changing dining/travel preferences (e.g., preferences for activities that limit exposure to crowd)? Tan (2020) conveyed that all enterprises in the

value chain must continually probe shifting travel behaviors and adapt their offerings based on the changing demands.

Participant 6 said

"We established the site of our store at the back of Manila Cathedral which serves as a beautiful background whenever our customers will take pictures in our café; it became Instagramable because of that."

Participant 12 stated

"It is more practical to avail our products which leads to traveler's satisfaction and at the same can make our client's healthier and safe from virus since one is to one in riding a bicycle."

Participant 19 disclosed

"Create intimate travel packages and support local tourism."

Participant 16 also said

"We focus more on local tour packages and airline ticketing which is more income generating in this time of pandemic."

The descriptions presented above suggested that in the new normal, customary offerings are inadequate. Enterprises should take steps rapidly and innovate in the delivery model of their products and services to cope in the changing demands of the consumers.

Wen et al. (2020) reviewed literature and news on Chinese tourist behavior, tourism marketing, and tourism management; they concluded, the growing popularity of luxury trips, free and independent travel, and medical and wellness tourism post-COVID-19 period. They also indicated that new forms of tourism would be more prevalent in post-COVID-19, including: (1) slow tourism, which emphasizes local destinations and longer lengths of stay; and (2) SMART tourism, which uses data analytics to improve tourists' experiences.

Implication III

Shift to Digital. Online visibility is a necessary condition to thrive in the new normal. (Tan, 2020)

Category 1: Digital Touchpoints. A touchpoint can be defined as any way a consumer can interact with a business, whether it be person-to-person, through a website, an app, or

any form of communication ("Touchpoint Glossary", n.d.). Whereas digital touchpoints are those online and mobile interactions where consumers engage with a business. It includes interactions across different devices, from smartphones to mobile tablets, and various channels including social media and websites. (<https://study.com/academy/lesson/digital-customer-touchpoints-definition-examples.html#>). The category was obtained from the gathered definitions and after the participants responded to this query, "What customer touchpoints do I need to digitize?" The themes derived during the interview can be classified into Online Transactions and Maximizing Digital/Marketing and Promotion.

Online Transactions. Seven out of twenty participants reveal that online transaction was their frequently utilized customer touchpoint during the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Participants 1, 3, 7, 9 and 10 stated that they apply cashless payments such as Debit, Credit card, Paymaya and Gcash. The customers can order foods through online or landline phones. For participant 3, aside from online transaction they also do online purchase of stocks.

Participant 6 stated

"Online reservation/booking and cashless payments."

In addition, according to participant 6

"We ensure that every customer specially every time they visit our store as well as following health protocols that keep our employees and customers safe. For example, all card transactions are barcode ready for scanning to limit contact to customers."

Maximizing Digital Marketing and Promotion. Most respondents use their digital touchpoints in marketing and promotion of the enterprises to entice technology savvy customers.

Participant 2 shared:

"In this time of pandemic, the safety and welfare of everyone must be on the first line. In view of this, I think one aspect that should be digitized will be the food/menu and its availability to the prospected customers. For them to be able to choose an array of different menus through an online website on a certain page for them to inquire price, promos and discounts. It enables more sustainable customer interaction which turn results in better service."

Nine among of the ten participants from the Travel Enterprise group reveal that social media accounts such as Facebook page, Email, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube and Marketa.com are the most used hub in marketing and promotion of their enterprise. This was supported by participant 7 who declared that

“Active monitoring of Facebook account page can accommodate inquiries of clients/guests.”

Participant 2 also indicated

“By simply through informative and detailed information into the services, food and any related aspects that you mainly cater on. The social media presence also means more people will be reached out.”

Participant 1 said

“Provide value content through Facebook and Twitter to expand conversation with our customers.”

In connection participant 8 shared

“Since we are a lean store, we keep our social media postings consistent every week via Facebook and shared by our friends to drive more sales. We mostly post our new product line up to inform our market.”

Participant 6 point out

“Social media is very powerful especially if our customers are taking their selfies or pictures in our store. We actually became known because of social media.”

Social Media Boosting as suggested by participant 4, participant 15 and 20 was utilized to allow advertisements to be more prominent across the entire Facebook platform. Participant 13 stated that they shifted to digitalized door processing portal in the main entrance of the enterprise to promote safety for both clients and employees as well as ease in guest's admission. Participants 9, 12, 18 and 19 manage regular posting of updated news, products, and services that they offer in the social media platforms to communicate to their clients.

Category 2: Building Trust and Confidence in Online Transactions. This category emerged through asking the participant, “How they establish diners'/traveler's confidence in online transactions?” According to Atif (2002) building confidence in e-commerce requires more than

robust processing systems. The human perception of trust is a core ingredient in any online transaction and future e-commerce system must support trust services to gain loyalty at both the consumer and provider ends.

Building clients' trust and confidence. When asked, “How can they establish clients' confidence in online transactions?” participant 4 stated

“Faster transaction thru digital process/tech know-how of staff provides easier communication or clear instruction for customers.”

In addition, participants 6, 7, 16 and 18 declared

“More efficient, effective and safer than the usual/traditional transaction of payment and taking orders.”

Participants 2 and 20 suggested

“There should be always any proof of every successful transaction and it should be more accessible at any times.”

Participant 12 recommended

“Advanced booking/reservation is more efficient so that they will not be in queue and wait for a long time. When they arrive, they can immediately ride/rent the bicycle.”

Participant 15 emphasized confidentiality, privacy, and timeliness in response. Participant 13 shared that

“continuous and sustainable implementation and monitoring per online transaction with performance evaluation and or feedback evaluation for the satisfaction of travelers.”

Lastly, participant 14 assured clients of legitimacy through feedbacks and reviews from their loyal customers via the Facebook page.

In this trying time, customers need extra information, guidance, and support to navigate an unusual set of challenges, from safety to working from home and to helping kids to learn when face to face learning is not viable. Trusted and socially responsible enterprises that strongly rely on creative use of technology to help consumers get through the pandemic safely will establish a strong advantage.

Implication IV

Collaborate with Stake Holders. Tan (2020) stated that stakeholders need to strengthen their coordination mechanisms with particular attention given to the most vulnerable destinations and segments of the industry.

Category 1: Convergence points with Stakeholders. The category transpired when participants were asked how to seek convergence points with stakeholders of local food and tourism enterprises. Per recommendation of Tan (2020) collaboration among tourism stakeholders is critical to the success of tourism recovery. The descriptions provided by the participants lead to the discovery of two themes: a. stakeholders' cooperation to strictly comply with health and safety protocols; and b. stakeholders' engagement and partnership.

Stakeholders' cooperation to strictly comply with health and safety protocols. Six participants agreed that strictly following the COVID-19 protocol and adhere to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) mandate, will standardize health protocols in food and tourism enterprises.

Stakeholders' engagement and partnership. Participant 5 said that engaging in trade events and other similar activities can enhanced local partnership among enterprises. In addition, participant 3 and 9 stated

"The City of Manila municipal licenses office called us to join in the Manila Restaurant Week held in Manila Hotel last December 2020. Through this event the restaurant became known to other people and social media."

Participant 17 said

"Actively participating in the survey conducted by the DOT and joining in travel expo that will be organized by PTAA this coming May 2021 to boost local tourism. In connection, Travel B and D Key Informants suggested "Helping the local tourism by encouraging travelers to travel or make sightseeing in Intramuros."

Participant 13 stated that

"Proper individual coordination per stakeholder through regular zoom meeting to tackle immediate concerns."

The descriptions presented above the COVID-19 pandemic shifted both food and tourism enterprises in the

new perspective and require the thorough needs assessment, benchmarking, and joint consultations of various stakeholders for the industry to build long term-relationship.

As stated in the UNWTO Secretary-General's Policy Brief on Tourism and COVID 19, a roadmap to transform tourism needs to address five priority areas: (1) Mitigate socio-economic impacts on livelihoods, particularly women's employment and economic security; (2) Boost competitiveness and build resilience, through economic diversification, with promotion of domestic and regional tourism where possible and facilitation of conducive business environment for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); (3) Promote advance innovation and digital transformation of tourism, including promotion of innovation and investment in digital skills, particularly for workers temporarily without jobs and for job seekers; (4) Foster sustainability and green growth to shift towards a resilient, competitive, resource efficient and carbon-neutral tourism sector.; and (5) Coordinate and build partnerships to restart and transform sector towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

IMPLICATIONS

Rebuilding trust and confidence by providing safety standards required by the government is a must to food and travel enterprises. Food and travel enterprises offer ingenious support and care for customers and employees not only to continuously operate but to encourage positive relationships that guaranteed to last long after the crisis has ended.

Food and travel enterprises were prompt in innovating to redesign operations and services considering the changes in customer preferences and were able to provide customers' needs in this time of crisis.

The pandemic shifted the customers behavior that leads to changing the demand patterns of food and travel services. Most enterprises were very prompt in collecting information via social media to understand the customers. Travel and food enterprises developed modes of services and offerings with unique experiences but still promotes protection from acquiring the virus.

Travel and food enterprises adapted to online transactions and maximized digital marketing and promotion

using digital touchpoints. In building trust and confidence in online transactions Travel and food enterprises focus on efficiency of services by fast transactions and issuance of proof of payment as well as confidentiality.

Stakeholders of travel and food enterprises seek cooperation in strict compliance of the health and safety protocols. They also emphasized exclusive and regular engagement and partnerships with local government for needs assessment, benchmarking, and joint consultations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Food and travel enterprises must continuously design customer experiences in the environs of health and safety, enhance health and safety protocols that may come as concerns to customers, and focus on care and connection to ease any apprehensions brought about by the pandemic.

Travel and food enterprises should reassess and recalibrate their company purpose and values in the industry considering the changes in customer behaviors during this time of pandemic.

Search and invest in the growing number of available online marketplaces to expand digital reach. The travel and food enterprises should also maximize the use of social media platforms to create a communication strategy that can optimize marketing and promotions. Digitalization of transactions and booking/reservation is one of the key tools to survive the business in time of pandemic.

Travel and food Enterprises should continue to be involved with other stakeholders such as, local community and local agencies and focus on discussions about health, safety, and sustainability.

Since the study was conducted during the heightened alert of the enhanced community quarantine because of COVID-19 pandemic, selection of the food and tourism enterprises that were included was limited to those that were in operations. Therefore, the researchers recommend an in-depth study that will examine and understand more the tourism and food enterprises shareholders' lived and perceived COVID-19 experiences to understand and act providently to the pandemic. Further research is also highly recommended since the study revealed that the nature and degree of crises-led transformations depend on whether and

how shareholders are affected by how they respond and reflect on crises.

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