

PREDICTING THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED DESTINATION ATTRACTIVENESS TO VISIT INTENTION OF TOURISTS TO DAVAO ECOTOURISM SITES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to predict the role of perceived destination attractiveness in to visit intention of tourists to Davao ecotourism sites. A total of 672 respondents were surveyed through online platforms. Most of these respondents are from Davao City, female and completed a bachelor's degree, aged 18 to 25 years old, and are considered millennial tourists. Five-factor loadings emerged that describe the measures of ecotourism attractiveness: service quality, Communication facilities, aesthetics, Local culture, and recreation. Further, research findings show that respondents are very much willing to visit Davao City as an Ecotourism destination. Moreover, the results of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation show that perceived factors of ecotourism destination attractiveness have a statistically significant correlation with visit intentions. It suggests that the more attractive the destination is, the higher the likelihood that tourists will visit Davao City's ecotourism sites. These findings challenge the local tourism government to improve the ecotourism destinations of Davao City to invite more influx of tourists. Findings on the differences in the perception of respondents on destination attractiveness as well as on visit intention may also provide practical implications to tourism planners and marketers, particularly in creating varied packages that would suit the needs of different market segments. Lastly, the study results contribute to the literature focusing on Davao ecotourist behaviors.

Keywords: *Destination attractiveness, Visit intention, ecotourism, tourist behavior, tourist behavioral intentions*

INTRODUCTION

Tourists' perceptions of travel attributes are heterogeneous, despite rising globalization. According to Henkel, Agrusa, & Tanner (2006), tourism destinations wield enormous influence over one's preferred location or location of choice, opportunities for contentment, intent to visit, evaluations of benefits and motives, good perceptions of opinion leaders, the cost incurred, and the length of stay. Dewi (2020) stated that only when the local community demonstrates sufficient support for the expansion of tourism does the perceived attractiveness of the new destination become greater, leading to the choosing intention of potential visitors. The production, availability, and quality of tourist products and services that fulfill tourists' expectations are as critical to attaining and consolidating tourist satisfaction and loyalty as is developing a favorable and attractive image of a location (lao and Moreira, 2014). These are a few of the many important reasons tourists are willing to visit a certain tourist destination. Moreover, the reason for this study is to predict the role of perceived destination attractiveness in to visit intention of tourists to Davao ecotourism sites.

The Davao City Government recorded about a million tourists from January to May 2018. According to an interview with Generose Tecson, the city tourism

office head of Davao City, the city shall target by the end of 2018 a total of 2.3 million tourists. To achieve their target tourists, they planned to coordinate with the police and military to maintain the security of Davao City (City Government of Davao City, 2018). Moreover, in the following year, the Davao City Tourism Operations Office recorded 2.34 million tourists as of November 2019. These data show that Davao City's tourism is rich and sustainable for the ecotourism industry (Banzon, 2019).

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak that emerged in the Philippines and the closure of numerous ecotourism destinations, the Department of Tourism reported a reduction in tourism sector revenue in Davao City of roughly 94% in 2020. Officials, as much as they want to open these establishments, are bounded by health government officials implementing health-related protocols in the city. In addition, the absence of research about predicting the role of perceived destination attractiveness on to visit intention of tourists has left us with limited opportunities to follow their approach. Despite facing such and other limitations, the researchers wanted to focus on predicting the role of destination attractiveness to visit intention of tourists to Davao Ecotourism sites.

It is a significant challenge to address how the effect of this research can be a benefit-based study for some specific research. As concerned researchers, the study is conducted to give the employees, managers, and future researchers a better understanding of these challenges and difficulties, which would help them develop strategies and make a more informed decision to encourage tourist visits.

Destination Attractiveness

The meaning of the word "attractiveness" is derived from the Latin word "atrathere," meaning to attract (Ariya, Wishitemi&Sitati 2017). According to Reitsamer, Sperdin, and Saucer (2016), the term "destination attractiveness" describes a place's appeal to tourists based on how well it meets their expectations. Moreover, in recent decades, both tourism research and policy makers have paid close attention to the idea of destination attractiveness and how to assess it. This means that the phrase "Attractiveness of a location" can be construed in various ways, which has sparked debate about the tourist business among academics and the research community. In addition, the notion of destination attractiveness, which encompasses components of distinctive appeal, underlying institutional framework, and tourist amenities, as well as the destination's atmosphere, has been written about for a long time in travel books (Vigolo, 2015).

In addition, according to the findings of Ariya, Wishitemi, and Sitati (2017) on the topic of Tourist Destination Attractiveness as Perceived by Visitors to Lake Nakuru National Park, the study results also support the usage of distinct scales for positive and negative affect items, as advised by the scale creators. As a result of the findings, it would appear that the rating system and criteria developed to evaluate the attractiveness of Lake Nakuru national park is accurate, and a reliable and valid tool for assessing how appealing a place to visit is because of its wildlife.

Furthermore, the capacity of a place to both attract and satiate potential visitors is what we mean when we talk about the attractiveness of a tourism destination (Le et al. (2019). According to Yacob, Johannes, and Qomariyah (2019), one of the primary reasons for destination attractiveness is that it is one of the most significant factors in determining whether or not a destination will be

visited by tourists who have specific wants and needs. Second, it is critical to foster a positive attitude toward nature tourism among residents and government officials. The third is to raise public awareness of their efforts to conserve and preserve the environment as a source of economic value through rural tourism.

In addition, a recent study stated that attractions are the most crucial aspects in defining a destination's attractiveness. According to the study's findings, the appeal of a location may be broken down into three categories: people-related factors, support services, and attractions; however, these criteria had varied effects on destination attractiveness (Vengesai, Mavondo, and Reisinger 2015). However, the research mentioned that it depends on the research context and the researchers' methodology, the aspects of destination attractiveness may differ. Extensive research has demonstrated the importance of destination appeal in a variety of settings, including but not limited to wineries, urban tourism, national parks, and cultural and historical areas (Raimkulov, Juraturugunov, and Ahn 2021). This research indicated that six factors were studied to meet the study's aims and objectives: cultural attraction, natural attractiveness, complementarity, superstructure, infrastructure, and pricing attractiveness. (Raimkulov, Juraturugunov and Ahn 2021b). The study results that the attractiveness of a destination has a positive relationship with satisfaction. On the other hand, a significant correlation between contentment and the three aspects of a destination's attraction (natural appeal, infrastructural attractiveness, and pricing attractiveness) has not been found. The negligible impacts of the destination attractiveness dimensions on satisfaction may result from the variables not being able to cater to the requirements and preferences of the vacationers.

On the other hand, a lack of research examines the impact of a person's degree of education on the decision-making process involved in selecting a travel destination. When choosing a vacation destination, the significance of a person's educational degree is mentioned in only one of the tourism papers (Wong and Kong, 2016). The findings showed that persons with higher levels of education travel more frequently outside the country. In comparison, people with lower levels of education tend to travel more frequently inside their state. No research has been conducted on education's effect on vacation choices. The premise of this research is that potential tourists' degree of education affects not just their preferences but also the amount of research they do before making a purchase and how decisions are formed. The locations they choose to visit (Djeri, Stamenkovic, Bozic, and Nagy, 2017).

Tourists choose a place depending on a variety of factors. The place must have features of a specific ecotourism site that appeals to potential visitors. The appeal of a destination is determined by both pull and push factors: Destination-related pull variables influence the establishment of a favorable or negative opinion of a location. Travelers are enticed by various elements, including the area's natural beauty, cultural significance, infrastructure, cost, festivals, events, activities, and tourist amenities. On the other hand, Push factors are psychological elements that influence a tourist's perception of a site. These elements, which are internal and external, operate as motivators to go to the places. Therefore, tourists are influenced to visit ecotourism areas in Davao City by the perceived destination appeal aspects.

Factors Affecting Destination Attractiveness

According to Debadyuti (2007), a tourist destination is a complex tourism industry commodity made up of natural resources, facilities, superstructure, amenities, unique local characteristics, and cultural attributes. Among other things, to determine the attractiveness of a tourism product, it can be evaluated in terms of attraction, services, and accessibility. In addition, Lui (2019) asserts that the expectations that tourists have of a destination are predicated on a wide range of features of that location, such as the culture, architecture, food, infrastructure, geography, events, shopping, and so on of the destination. These characteristics encourage people to visit the location, and they make the trip as a whole more enjoyable. According to Viet, Dang, and Nguyen (2020), people's perspectives on innovation are affected by the individualism and long-term orientation that are part of the national culture. It is said that people in individualist nations are more open to new ideas than individuals in collectivist ones. In addition, according to Seyidov and Adomaitiene (2016), the elements influence the choice of location made by local tourists. The study stated that attractions, amenities, accessibility, image, pricing, and human resources make tourism destinations acceptable and available to travelers. Depending on the location, environment, and natural or man-made buildings, many tourist destinations (ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental, and recreational) are created to satisfy the demands and aspirations of visitors (urban, seaside, alpine, and rural destinations).

In addition, the destination comprises many different parts, some directly related to tourism, such as hotels and restaurants. In contrast, others are more tailored to locals' needs, such as pharmacies and grocery stores, but whose very presence increases the likelihood of attracting tourists (Pallavicini 2017). Furthermore, the same study stated that managing the location and its resources is also critical in enhancing its appeal. Increased competitiveness and attractiveness can be achieved by investment in infrastructure, creation of facilities, and marketing of tourist activities, as well as the support of professional development of competencies among individuals working in the tourism sector. In addition, good destination management would encourage appropriate and pleasant living circumstances for locals and tourists alike making for an inviting atmosphere while avoiding the drawbacks of mass tourism like high hotel prices and disruptions to locals' daily lives (Valls et al., 2015). Dey, Matthew, and Chee-Hua (2020) note that homestay tourism, which offers an alternative to hotels, has attracted much attention. Salleh et al. (2016) investigated the elements influencing homestay operators' engagement and perception. Homestay operators' attitudes toward homestay accommodation was investigated by Ranasinghe (2017).

According to Das and Sarkar (2016), a recent study considered tourists' expectations, experiences, and satisfaction with various touristic qualities to determine the destination's attractiveness. Furthermore, the site's attractiveness or enticing qualities inside the location affects the tourist's final decision. When a traveler can't decide between several options where the quality of their stay, the cost, and the ease of getting there are all about the same, the attractiveness factors may sway their decision. Attraction considerations are the driving force behind visitors' decisions to go on vacations. Nature places inside the destination (natural products) or human made items and structures, as well as other "live" activities such as carnivals, can be enticing factors as elements of the tourist destination or attraction (Blazeska, Milenkovski and Gramatnikovski 2015). Seyidov and Adomaitiene (2016) argue that tourists are drawn to a destination because it provides them with the experiences they seek. Primarily activities,

physical surroundings, and social/cultural features (catering and shopping) and tertiary) are categorized elements of a tourist attraction.

Moreover, Service quality, according to Yusof, Rahman, Jamil, and Iranmanesh (2014) is an assessment of whether the service provided is commensurate with the customer's expectations, preferences, and demands. This defined service quality as an overall assessment of a given service provided by a business based on comparing the firm's performance with a customer's typical expectations about how that industry's businesses should operate.

Relationship between Destination Attractiveness and Visit Intention

Destination attractiveness is an important stream of literature (Ma, Hsiao, and 2017). It refers to a location's ability to attract tourism flows. Natural and historical attractions, amenities and services, infrastructure, hospitality, and pricing are all factors that influence it. In the tourism research literature, the idea of destination attractiveness has been widely investigated, with two key study techniques evolving through time. The first method, the cognitive approach, focuses on a destination's physical elements, referred to as tourism attractions (Mikuli et al., 2015). Hallman (2015) stated that attractiveness tends to appeal in the marketing setting, whether in strategic analysis or management.

Regarding substance, there are two main parts to destination attractiveness: demand and supply. The tourist market is the focus of demand, while the destination product is the focus of supply. Marketing techniques, product quality, value, and product assessment are all aspects of the product that must be prioritized. Moreover, attributes of a place that entice or drive visitors to visit a certain destination zone are known as destination attractiveness factors (Renata, 2016).

The attractiveness of a place is a mental image of the place that only exists in the minds of people who might go there. Tourist attractions may be considered physical expressions of destination attractiveness, while destination attractiveness may be considered a mental image produced from the area's natural attractions (Kresic & Prebežac, 2016). On the other hand, visiting intention is something within or engaged behavior (Hallman 2015b). As a result, the motivation behind someone's desire to engage in tourism-related activities rests on a combination of factors, the most important of which is behavioral intention (Alegre and Cladera, 2015). Intention, on the other hand, in the field of tourism research, means the likelihood that a tourist will use the information on attractions and activities provided by the destination's administration. According to Zeithaml (2015), visiting intention is linked to the tourist's impression and value as customers or visitors evaluate the consequence or items they have previously experienced (service). The values that tourists place on their visit are an antecedent of customer happiness and future behavioral intention, regardless of whether there is a correlation between the price and the quality they experienced. For example, a traveler with a high perceived value of a tourism destination will undoubtedly experience varying levels of happiness with all their feelings. If this is done, visitors will have a better time and be more likely to return or promote the area to others.

The attractiveness of a location has a big impact on its image, as an appealing destination might arise from a favorable image of a tourism destination because of a marketing system on a relevant website. This study's findings are

consistent with those of other studies. Travelers who have a positive outlook or image are more likely to try new things and have a more enriching experience, according to research by Sun et al. (2013). The respondents also know that the destination image variable may impact their personal intention to travel. Cognitive image (tourism attraction, basic facility, culture attraction, accessibility, and tourism sub-structure, as well as the natural environment) and affective image (tourism attraction, basic facility, culture attraction, accessibility, and tourism sub-structure) are all factors that contribute to visitors' favorable impressions of a destination (pleasant and nice village with the intense hospitality of local people). This was demonstrated by travelers' actions, highlighting the good aspects of ecotourism and encouraging others to visit the place. The visit intention was impacted by the variable of destination attractiveness mediated by destination image, as evidenced by visitors who had a pleasant experience and were pleased with all they had felt and acquired (Yacob and Qomariyah 2019).

There was a significant effect on the variables mentioned above from destination attractiveness and travel intent. Tourists' and visitors' visiting intentions are significantly affected by the variables of destination attractiveness and destination image, with the effects of both being moderated by the latter (Yacob, Syahmardi, Johannes, Qomariah, & Nor et al. 2018). Destination attractiveness affects tourists' or visitors' destination images; however, destination images also significantly affect the tourists' or visitors' visiting intention; and destination attractiveness mediated by destination images significantly affect the tourists' or visitors' visiting intention within the effective region.

Visit Intention

Tourists' visit or purchase intention (P.I.) is the most important feature in the tourism sector since it reveals the probability, willingness, and likelihood of visiting an establishment, making it the best predictor of their planned behavior (Mgiba and Chiliya 2020). Multiple decision-making procedures and destination choice models attribute the formation of destination awareness, the modification of travel intents, and the selection of options set to travel stimuli, personal and social determinants of behavior, and external variables (Henessey, Yun, and MacDonald 2016). In addition, travelers' willingness to pay for and actual purchase ecotourism activities are indicators of their aspirations to participate in it shortly. Positive attitudes about ecotourism and beliefs that support the environment, in turn, influence people's intentions. The findings of previous studies lend credence to these hypotheses, suggesting a constructive connection between the practices, intentions, and attitudes of ecotourists towards ecologically responsible tourism consumption (Hultman, Kazemenia, & Ghasemi, 2015).

In addition, Teeroovengadum (2018) found that having a stronger sense of environmental identity was associated with having a more positive attitude toward ecotourism, increased interest in ecotourism, and a higher readiness to pay a premium for ecotourism. Berhanu and Raj (2020) mentioned that one of the most important factors that visitors evaluate while planning a trip to a certain location is the authenticity of information sources. Trust is essential for online tourism marketing since it increases the desire to purchase.

When choosing a vacation spot, factors such as gender, education level, age, and income all play a role. Still, for ecologically aware travelers, the perceived sustainability of nature is of utmost importance. Furthermore, social media has

played an important role and developed into a possible marketing tool influencing travelers' intentions to visit a specific (Hidayat & La Are 2018).

According to Dudovsky (2016), it is a critical process and behavior for achieving the tourist goal. In other words, visitors would apply choices to the attitude objective after generating motivation to meet the tourism belief and generate unique consumer behavior. Moreover, gender and tourist type had no bearing resulting in a significant difference in this research. Huh (2002) results in conflict with this. There is a clear link between total tourism and Morakot, as well as pleasure and gender (2002), who discovered varying degrees of satisfaction among first-time and returning visitors. Furthermore, theories of innovativeness suggest that younger people are more likely to come up with novel ideas when exposed to novel products or services or while engaging with novel suppliers. Contrarily, older people are more likely to be skeptical about novel goods and services and unfamiliar vendors (Im, Bayus, and Mason, 2003). Knowledge processing theories claim that younger people are more likely to seek new information. At the same time, the elderly are more likely to rely on the information they have previously gained because of the natural loss in a person's capacity to process new information that comes with aging (Homburg and Giering, 2001).

Collins and Tisdell (2002) examined the travel habits of Australians leaving the country throughout their lives, breaking down the data by gender and the motivation for the trip. Men's and women's life cycle travel habits differed significantly depending on the reason for the trip. Men tended to travel more for business and work-related objectives, while women tended to travel more for pleasure. McGehee (2018) looked at the gender disparities in the push and pulled motivating variables among Australian leisure travelers. Men were more likely to be driven by culture, possibilities for family connection, and status. At the same time, women put greater weight on sports and adventure while partaking in the pleasure travel experience, according to the study. Moreover, from the study by Yangzhou & Ritchie (1993), an educational vacation experience is one in which a person is particularly interested in the chances and activities of learning about and experiencing the local culture of a place's lifestyle.

In addition, Masud, Aldakhil, Nassani, and Azam (2017) stated that visitors would examine numerous elements and develop plans to establish tourist intentions after getting information about tourism sites. As a result, there was a chance of people arriving before such activities. It indicates that consumer intent can be influenced by word of mouth. According to Chow (2016), "word of mouth" refers to the informal and face-to-face dissemination of information among consumers that influences their evaluation and choice of a product or service through personal recommendations. Large numbers of tourists flocking to a certain location can be attributed largely to the favorable impressions that tourists get of the area based on media portrayals of it (Lee and Hsieh, 2016).

Handriana and Ambara (2016) explained that environmentally conscious visitors are increasingly worried about how environmentally friendly a place is, as determined by demographics (age, income, education level, and sex) when choosing a vacation spot. Furthermore, social media has played an important role and developed into a possible marketing tool influencing travelers' intentions to visit a specific (Hidayat and La Are 2018). According to Dudovsky (2016), it is a critical process and behavior for achieving the tourist goal. In other words, visitors

would apply choices to the attitude objective after generating motivation to meet the tourism belief and generate unique consumer behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This study's major objective was to examine the influence that tourists' perceptions of the attractiveness of a place play in the frequency with which they plan to visit ecotourism sites in the Davao region. The researchers used a correlational design. This research design measured the link between two variables and found that both variables, destination attractiveness and visit intentions, were related. Specifically, the researchers wanted to determine whether visit intentions increase with more attractive ecotourism destinations.

In this study, the researchers used a survey questionnaire as a tool to be used in gathering data. The researchers adopted the survey questionnaires of Saiful, Hossain, and Noorr (2017), Vengesayi, Movondo, and Reisinger (2009), and Shuib et al. (2015). The researchers used a random sampling technique. It is the term used to describe a variety of selection methods in which members of the sample are selected at random but have a predetermined chance of being chosen. By using chances for selecting individuals from the population participating in the study.

To ensure that survey constructs were uniform and consistent across items. A reliability test was run in SPSS. Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Spearman and Guttman split-half coefficient tests were employed to measure internal consistency and to check the reliability of the question items, which were 0.93 and 0.98 for the entire inventory, respectively, that have a value greater than 0.70. In other words, you can trust every question on the test. Since removing one item would not affect the Cronbach alpha in either direction, none were eliminated. Cronbach's alpha and the split-half technique outputs from SPSS reveal that all constructs meet the minimum required level of reliability for further study. The extensive literature and research review informed the adoption and adaptation of the questions used in this study. As a result, the questionnaire was ready for the final survey and statistical analysis. *Rating scale for Destination Attractiveness was used five-point Likert scale (Very High 4.20- 5.00, High 3.40-4.19, Moderate 2.60-3.39, Low 1.80-2.59, Very low 1.00-1.79).*

In the statistical treatment of data these methods would be used to check the collected data: Mean. This used to determine the level of perceived destination appeal and the intention of tourists visiting ecotourism sites in the Davao region. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. This tool used to determine the significant association between the attractiveness of a destination and the intention to visit that destination. Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA). This will be used to identify the factors driving the attractiveness of Davao City's ecotourism destinations. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This tool used to utilized to determine the difference in the attractiveness perceived between individuals of different ages, educational backgrounds, marital statuses, and countries of origin. And T-Test. This tool used to determine differences in the measure of destination attractiveness and visit intention regarding gender.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outputs of data sets of perceived destination attractiveness to visit intention of tourists to Davao ecotourism sites were presented, analyzed, and interpreted in

this segment and ordered based on the objectives of this research. The order of the discussion on the mentioned topics are as follows: First, perceived factors that drive the attractiveness of Davao City as an Ecotourism destination; Second, the willingness of tourists to visit ecotourism sites in Davao City; Third, factors that influence perceived ecotourism destination attractiveness to tourist; Fourth, demographic-based differences in the perceived destination attractiveness and likelihood to visit.

Perceived Factors that Drive the Attractiveness of Davao City as an Ecotourism Destination

Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to determine the perceived factors that drive the attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination. Table 2 shows the results of the EFA of the attractiveness factors. Out of the previous thirty (30) ecotourism attractiveness factors, only sixteen (16) were obtained by extracting attractiveness drivers of ecotourism. These results led to the development of five-factor loadings, which describe the various indicators of ecotourism attraction. Based on the items that fall into each dimension, the first factor focuses on the destination's costs, named "service quality." The second factor includes items that focus on communication facilities, thus labeled as "Communication networks." The third factor entails the attractiveness of the destination's infrastructure; thus, it is named "aesthetic." The fourth factor includes the uniqueness of local arts and crafts and local language, labeled as "Local Culture." Lastly, the fifth factor describes the destination's unique built attractions, availability of internet facilities, and local hospitality termed as "recreation." Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine and verify the characteristics that fall under each attractiveness construct.

Table 2. *Perceived Factors that Drive the Attractiveness of Davao City as an Ecotourism Destination*

Factor Items	Factor loading	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
F1: Service Quality		9.681	32.268	32.268
Destination's price advantage	0.736			
Prices of tourism services	0.71			
Ease of making reservation	0.707			
Levels of service delivery	0.698			
Availability of discounted tour packages	0.666			
Availability of healthcare and emergency medical treatments	0.66			
Adequate internal transportation	0.631			
Accessibility of attraction site	0.61			
Traffic congestion	0.604			
F2: Communication Networks		2.111	7.037	39.305
Communication facilities	0.64			
F3: Aesthetic		1.455	4.852	44.157
Destination infrastructure	0.602			
F4: Local Culture		1.107	3.689	47.845

Unique handicrafts/souvenirs	0.687			
The language of local people	0.675			
F5: Recreation		1.078	3.592	51.437
Unique built attractions	0.743			
Availability of Wi-Fi internet hotspots	0.669			
The hospitality/friendliness of local people				

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Rotation converged in 8 iterations.*

The study's findings suggest that tourists' perception of the attractiveness of an ecotourism site is based on its destination service features, communication facilities, and tourism infrastructures. Local cultural elements such as the host community's local language and products, the built attractions within the ecotourism destination, the hospitality of its people, and most notably, the availability of internet facilities attract tourists.

According to the most recent research, the capacity of a location to draw tourism flows is referred to as that location's destination attractiveness. Various things can affect it, including natural and historical attractions, amenities and services, infrastructure, hospitality, and cost (Faddah and Sorensen 2017). According to Cong (2016), natural components, man-made components, such as infrastructure, tourism providers, and other components that more widely support tourist desires in a certain place, have also been recognized. These components include cultural heritage, natural resources, geographical and climatic qualities, and other components.

The result agrees with Raimkulov, Juraturugunov, and Ahn (2011), who state that pricing attractiveness contributes to the value of a destination's appeal. Also, it is to the results of Faddah and Sorensen (2014) (that one factor determining a location's capability to attract people is the price.

Another factor that drives tourists to visit Davao City is the ease of making a reservation. This withstands with Smith (2016), who preferred to book reservations over the internet, on the other hand, concluded that six criteria influence their decision to do so: 1. convenient 2. Affordable 3. Ease of making reservations 4. Transaction. In addition, another important factor that tourists consider is the level of service delivery. According to Yusof et al. (2014) service quality is an assessment of whether the service is commensurate with the customer's expectations. Client's preferences and demands.

Willingness of tourists to visit Davao City as an Ecotourism destination

Table 2 shows the willingness of the tourist to consider Davao City as an Ecotourism destination based on their visit intention. It is divided into five items to determine their visit intention.

Generally, the results show that respondents are very much willing to visit Davao City as an Ecotourism destination (4.58). Particularly, respondents are willing and intend to visit Davao ecotourism spots (4.67 and 4.60, respectively).

They are willing to try to visit those spots (4.59) and spend time and money (4.46). Tourists also intend to visit Davao City within the predictable future (4.60).

Table 3. *Willingness of tourists to visit Davao City as an Eco-Tourism Destination*

Willingness to Visit	Mean	Standard Deviation	Description
1. I am willing to visit ecotourism spots in Davao City.	4.67	0.54	Very High
2. I am willing to make an effort to visit ecotourism spots in Davao City.	4.59	0.60	Very High
3. I am willing to spend time and money to visit ecotourism spots in Davao City.	4.46	0.69	Very High
4. I have the intention to visit ecotourism spots in Davao City.	4.60	0.60	Very High
5. I intend to visit Davao ecotourism spots within predictable future.	4.60	0.59	Very High
Over-all Mean	4.58	0.47	Very High

Moreover, attributes of a place that entice or drive visitors to visit a certain destination zone are known as destination attractiveness factors (Renata, 2016). According to Zeithaml (2015), visiting intention is linked to the tourist's impression and value as customers or visitors evaluate the consequence or items they have previously experienced (service). For example, a traveler with a high perceived value of a tourism destination will undoubtedly experience varying levels of happiness with all their feelings. This will enhance the tourist experience and increase the likelihood of others returning or recommending the location.

The visit intention was impacted by the variable of destination attractiveness mediated by destination image, as evidenced by visitors who had a pleasant experience and were pleased with all they had felt and acquired (Yacob and Qomariyah 2019). Hultman, Kazemenia, and Ghasemi (2015) noted that the willingness to pay for and purchase ecotourism activities indicates future visitor participation. Positive attitudes about ecotourism and beliefs that support the environment, in turn, influence people's intentions.

Overall, the result implies that tourist is willing to visit Davao's Eco-tourism destination, for this could mean that our tourism department in Davao City should try doing anything that could stimulate their attention even further. Such as enhancing and developing their service quality, reactional activities, and transportation facilities. Nowadays, people tend to study nature because global warming is rising. In addition, most people are busy with their work and do not have the time to unwind, which is important to them. Consequently, people need to find someplace peaceful and open where they may unwind. This may be seen as a suggestion for the tourist department to keep working to protect our ecotourism.

Influence of Attractiveness Factors on Willingness to Visit Ecotourism Destination

The non-parametric test Spearman Rank Order Correlation was used to determine whether the perceived factors of ecotourism destination attractiveness have a statistically significant correlation with wellness tourist visit intentions. In general, results in Table 4 revealed that there is a positive correlation between the ecotourism destination factors and visit intention ($p < 0.01$). However, looking at the strength of the relationship, all five ecotourism destination attractiveness factors

have a weak correlation with the willingness to visit. Analyzing the strength of the connection it was found that service quality (0.202) and communication facilities (0.218) have a weak correlation with ecotourism visit intention. Further, a very weak correlation between communication facilities, aesthetics, recreation, and ecotourism visit intention was found in the study ($p < 0.01$).

Table 4. Influence of Attractiveness Factors on Willingness to Visit Ecotourism Destination

Spearman's Rho		Visit Intention
Service quality	Correlation Coefficient	.202**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0
	N	672
Communication Network	Correlation Coefficient	.160**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0
	N	672
Aesthetic	Correlation Coefficient	.159**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0
	N	672
Local Culture	Correlation Coefficient	.218**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0
	N	672
Recreation	Correlation Coefficient	.113**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003
	N	672

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Yusof, Rahman, Jamil, and Iranmanesh (2014), service quality assesses whether the service is commensurate with the customer's expectations, client preferences, and demands. This defined service quality as an overall assessment of a given service provided by a business based on comparing the firm's performance with a customer's typical expectations about how that industry's businesses should operate. According to Lui (2019), the experiences tourists anticipate having at a destination depending on a wide range of factors, such as the culture, architecture, food, infrastructure, geography, events, shopping, and so on of the destination. These characteristics encourage people to visit the location, making the trip more enjoyable.

In addition, the specific choice visitors make influenced by the location's beauty or the enticing features contained inside the location. When a traveler is torn between several options that are otherwise almost identical in terms of amenities, cost, and convenience, it may come down to aesthetic considerations to help them settle on a single destination. Attraction considerations are the driving force behind visitors' decisions to go on vacations. Nature places inside the destination (natural products) or humanmade items and structures, as well as other "live" activities such as carnivals, can be enticing factors as elements of the tourist destination or attraction (Blazeska, Milenkovski and Gramatnikovski 2015). The results imply that the perceived ecotourism destination attractiveness influences tourists to visit Davao City. However, even though the connection between communication facilities, aesthetics, recreation, and ecotourism visit intention is weak, the ecotourism organization in Davao City must develop their provision more to attract more tourists. For this reason, the willingness of people to visit ecotourism will become high.

Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Gender

This study also tried to determine significant differences in the perception of respondents on the attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination based on the demographic profiles of the respondents. Table 5 demonstrates no disparities in the respondents' perceptions that may be attributed to differences in their gender based on statistical analysis. Both male and female respondents presented the same perceptions of Davao City as an attractive ecotourism site. According to Huh (2002), gender and tourist type had no bearing.

Moreover, no gender-based differences were found in the respondents' intention to visit Davao City. The overall pleasure of tourists at the selected beautiful sites did not differ significantly by gender or sex. There were no gender disparities in tourist intention in this survey, although there were significant differences across age groups. The gender of the travelers is one of the most influential factors in the desire for travel (Collin and Tisdell, 2002). The reasons men and women travel are two major factors that influence how men and women travel. According to Collin and Tisdell's research, men travel more than women (2002). Men travel for business reasons, but women travel mostly to visit friends and family and lean toward vacations that are shorter in the distance than those taken by men (Moriarty and Honnery, 2005). It is believed that women spend more time shopping than men and are more affected by the restrictions imposed by either interpersonal relationships or institutional settings (Josiam et al., 2005; Andronikidis et al., 2008).

Table 5. *Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Gender*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Difference	Error
Attractiveness Factors						
<i>Service quality</i>	-0.68	651	0.50	-0.05	0.08	
<i>Communication network</i>	-0.75	651	0.45	-0.06	0.08	
<i>Aesthetic</i>	0.27	651	0.79	0.02	0.08	
<i>Local culture</i>	1.46	651	0.15	0.11	0.08	
<i>Recreation</i>	1.44	651	0.15	0.11	0.08	
Visit Intention	0.91	651	0.36	0.03	0.04	

Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Age

This study found significant differences in the respondents' perceived attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination in terms of Age (Table 6). Particularly, there were statistical differences in the perceived attractiveness of service quality and recreation. However, no statistical differences were found in the perceived attractiveness of Davao City in terms of communication facilities and local culture. Collins and Tisdell (2002) investigated the lifecycle travel patterns of outbound travelers according to both gender and purpose of travel. Their findings indicated that gender had a significant effect on travel demand. This can be linked

to their study. Men's and women's life cycle travel habits differed significantly depending on the reason for the trip.

In addition, according to theories of innovativeness, younger folks have a greater probability of generating new concepts when shown with newly introduced goods or services or while communicating with new suppliers. On the other hand, those who are older tend to be skeptical about novel goods, offerings, or vendors (Im, Bayus, and Mason, 2003). Because of the natural decline in a person's capacity to process new information that occurs with aging, information processing theories suggest that younger individuals are more inclined to seek new information. In contrast, elderly people rely on the information they have already acquired (Homburg and Giering, 2001).

No age-based differences were found in the intention to visit Davao City as an ecotourism destination. This shows that everyone has an intention to visit ecotourism sites. Service quality, communication facilities, aesthetics, local culture, and recreation do not impose any restrictions on visitors' ages to take advantage of these factors of ecotourism destinations.

Table 6. Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attractiveness Factors						
<i>Service quality</i>	Between Groups	20.467	5	4.093	4.191	0.001
	Within Groups	650.533	666	0.977		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Communication facilities</i>	Between Groups	10.157	5	2.031	2.047	0.07
	Within Groups	660.843	666	0.992		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Aesthetic</i>	Between Groups	5.364	5	1.073	1.073	0.374
	Within Groups	665.636	666	0.999		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Local culture</i>	Between Groups	5.67	5	1.134	1.135	0.34
	Within Groups	665.33	666	0.999		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Recreation</i>	Between Groups	63.557	5	12.711	13.937	0.00
	Within Groups	607.443	666	0.912		
	Total	671	671			
Visit Intention						
	Between Groups	1.522	5	0.304	1.394	0.225
	Within Groups	145.445	666	0.218		
	Total	146.967	671			

Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Area of Residence

This study found significant differences in the respondents' perceived attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination in terms of Area of Residence (Table 7). There were substantial differences in perceived attractiveness in terms of Service Features, aesthetics, and Recreational. This means that tourists in the area choose to visit a destination with service features such as destination price advantage, uniquely built attractions, and recreational amenities such as Wi-Fi internet hotspot availability. However, no significant differences in Davao City's perceived attractiveness were observed in Communication Networks and Local Culture. According to Lai, Zhang, Tseng & Shiau (2021), the visitors' attitude toward a particular culture reflects their compatibility with that culture and influences their destination preferences. Tourist destinations are formed around local cultural attractions. The growth of cultural tourism has enticed tourists to visit captivating locations. (Saadi M. et al. 2018).

There is a significant difference in visit intention, indicating that respondents' place of residence influenced their willingness to visit. Only these two factors, service quality, and recreation, have a connection to visit intention. Therefore, to have the visit intention, these factors need to be enhanced and made into a concept by, for example, generating more physically active activities and improving the service.

Table 7. Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Area of Residence

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attractiveness Factors						
<i>Service quality</i>	Between Groups	9.975	3	3.325	3.36	0.018
	Within Groups	661.025	668	0.99		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Communication Networks</i>	Between Groups	5.483	3	1.828	1.835	0.14
	Within Groups	665.517	668	0.996		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Aesthetic</i>	Between Groups	1.408	3	0.469	0.468	0.705
	Within Groups	669.592	668	1.002		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Local Culture</i>	Between Groups	3.381	3	1.127	1.127	0.337
	Within Groups	667.619	668	0.999		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Recreation</i>	Between Groups	37.744	3	12.581	13.271	0
	Within Groups	633.256	668	0.948		
	Total	671	671			
Visit Intention	Between Groups	1.88	3	0.627	2.885	0.035
	Within Groups	145.087	668	0.217		
	Total	146.967	671			

Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Marital Status

This study found that significant differences exist in the respondents' perceived attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination in terms of Marital status (Table 8). Particularly, there were statistical differences in the

perceived attractiveness of local culture and recreation. However, no statistical differences were found in the perceived attractiveness of Davao City in terms of service quality, communication networks, and aesthetics. There is a significant difference in visit intention, which means that the respondents' marital status led to varying reasons of willingness to visit. Researchers Nasra Shoka Kara and Kezia Herman Mkwizu (2020) found that the marital status of tourists was highly variable. For instance, compared to singles, married people put less emphasis on leisure activities. This is because married people typically have more commitments outside work and family life, leaving less time for leisure pursuits like vacationing or playing sports. Less-extended excursions are more appealing to singles because they can be taken more frequently. It's commonly held that those without families have more time on their hands to pursue interests such as music, dance, and television than those with children. 83 Sociable travel, demographic variables, and the reasons behind them.

Therefore, it stands to reason that single travelers will have a more positive experience and a greater desire to return to popular tourist places (such as those with sandy hills, magnificent mountains, and wonderful beaches) than married travelers will. On the other hand, married tourists are more likely to report feeling uncomfortable on extended coach rides and to be concerned about their safety at their destinations. (Huu Phuc Dang & Ho Hai Nguyen 2020).

Table 8. Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Marital Status

		Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
		Squares		Square		
Attractiveness Factors						
<i>Service quality</i>	Between Groups	8.087	4	2.022	2.034	0.088
	Within Groups	662.913	667	0.994		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Communication Networks</i>	Between Groups	0.872	4	0.218	0.217	0.929
	Within Groups	670.128	667	1.005		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Aesthetic</i>	Between Groups	0.821	4	0.205	0.204	0.936
	Within Groups	670.179	667	1.005		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Local Culture</i>	Between Groups	16.051	4	4.013	4.087	0.003
	Within Groups	654.949	667	0.982		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Recreation</i>	Between Groups	23.651	4	5.913	6.092	0
	Within Groups	647.349	667	0.971		
	Total	671	671			
Visit Intention						
	Between Groups	2.232	4	0.558	2.571	0.037
	Within Groups	144.735	667	0.217		
	Total	146.967	671			

Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Educational Background

This study found that significant differences exist in the respondents' perceived attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination in terms of *educational background* (Table 9). Particularly, there were statistical differences in the perceived attractiveness regarding service quality, aesthetics, recreation, and local culture. However, no statistical differences were found in the perceived attractiveness of Davao City in terms of communication networks. There is a significant difference in visit intention, which means the respondents' educational background affects the willingness to visit the destination.

From the study by Yangzhou & Ritchie, J. R. B. (1993), an educational vacation experience is one in which a person is particularly interested in the chances and activities of learning about and experiencing the local culture of a place people's lifestyles. When choosing a vacation destination, the significance of a person's educational degree is mentioned in only one of the tourism papers (Wong and Kong, 2016). The findings showed that persons with higher levels of education travel more frequently outside the country. In comparison, people with lower levels of education tend to travel more frequently inside their state. No studies on this topic deal with the influence of education on the decision-making process about travel. The premise of this research is that potential tourists' degree of education affects not just their preferences but also the amount of research they do before making a purchase, the way they go about making decisions, and the destinations they end up visiting (Djeri, Stamenkovic, Bozic, and Nagy, 2017).

Table 9. Analysis of Difference in Attractiveness Factors and Visit Intention by Marital Status

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attractiveness Factors						
<i>Service quality</i>	Between Groups	8.087	4	2.022	2.034	0.088
	Within Groups	662.913	667	0.994		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Communication Networks</i>	Between Groups	0.872	4	0.218	0.217	0.929
	Within Groups	670.128	667	1.005		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Aesthetic</i>	Between Groups	0.821	4	0.205	0.204	0.936
	Within Groups	670.179	667	1.005		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Local Culture</i>	Between Groups	16.051	4	4.013	4.087	0.003
	Within Groups	654.949	667	0.982		
	Total	671	671			
<i>Recreation</i>	Between Groups	23.651	4	5.913	6.092	0
	Within Groups	647.349	667	0.971		
	Total	671	671			
Visit Intention	Between Groups	2.232	4	0.558	2.571	0.037

Within Groups	144.735	667	0.217
Total	146.967	671	

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that: The perceived factors that drive the attractiveness of Davao City as an Ecotourism destination are service quality, communication networks, aesthetics, local culture, and recreational opportunities. It indicates that Davao City's ecotourism destinations are excellently highlighting the features of their particular attractions. It also suggests that ecotourism in Davao City will probably grow exponentially if more attention is paid to the service quality of the attractions in terms of its destination's price advantage, prices of tourism services, ease of making a reservation, levels of service delivery, availability of discounted tour packages, access to healthcare, including emergency care, adequate internal transportation, and accessibility of attraction site.

The tourists have a strong interest in going to the ecotourism destination in Davao City. It appears that the local government of Davao City and the tourism enterprises in the surrounding area are excellently attracting many potential visitors who would visit the ecotourism areas in and around Davao City. More publicity, particularly in printed and social media, is needed to keep the public abreast of ecotourism's development.

Respondents are very much willing and intend to visit Davao ecotourism spots. Findings suggest that the more attractive the destination is, the higher the likelihood that tourists will visit Davao City's ecotourism sites.

The demographic-based differences in the perceived destination attractiveness influence the visit intention except for gender. This implies that the ecotourism destination in Davao City has an edge in attracting various types of tourists. This should be improved and promoted to become more competitive on a worldwide scale and attract a greater number of tourists.

The researchers suggest that the local government must work hard on improving the perceived factors that drive the attractiveness of Davao City as an ecotourism destination in terms of service quality, communication networks, aesthetics, local culture, and recreational opportunities. This may be accomplished by giving seminars and training to the owners of tourist destinations and their staff to ensure the greatest level of service. Additionally, enhancing attractions with innovative and contemporary elements might boost their reputation without risking the environment as a whole. And The Department of Tourism in Region XI and the Davao City local government unit should also work together to enhance visitor participation in the city.

The tourists have a strong interest in going to the ecotourism destination in Davao City. To keep the public apprised of the development of ecotourism in the area or destination, researchers recommend stepping up advertising efforts, particularly in print and online media. In addition, they can boost their image and expand their customer base through social media advertising.

Respondents are very much willing and intend to visit Davao ecotourism spots. It is recommended by the researchers involved that ecotourism destination

owners must work together with the local government in Davao City and the Department of Tourism in Region XI. They can do this by highlighting the most important features of the destination on social media. Using promotional advertising may also impact the amount of tourist visit intention.

The demographic-based differences in the perceived destination attractiveness influence the visit intention except for gender. This reflects well for Davao City's ecotourism destination, suggesting that it will be able to draw visitors from a wider range of travel backgrounds.

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