



EXPLORING THE MOALBOAL'S FACE OF PARADISE: INSIGHTS, CHALLENGES, AND EXPERIENCES OF TOURISTS (ICE)

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Abstract

This research delved into the exploration of the tourists at Moalboal's Face of Paradise, taking into account their Insights, Challenges, and Experiences (ICE) in Moalboal, Cebu, Philippines. This research is anchored on Destination Image Theory, Sustainable Tourism Theory, and Tourist Motivation and Satisfaction Theory. The legal bases are rooted in the Republic Act No. 9593, also known as the Tourism Act of 2009, and Republic Act No. 1478. This research employed an explanatory mixed-methods approach, integrating research methods: quantitative and qualitative. A total of 151 tourists, both local and foreign, participated in the study. This study utilized and adapted an instrument from the Philippines (PIDS) (2024) in gathering quantitative data from the respondents. Thematic Analysis (TA) of Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to interpret the qualitative data, while descriptive statistics were used to describe the numerical data. There was positive satisfaction among tourists' perception and intention to travel back to Moalboal, in terms of Tourists' Spots, Price, Food and Beverage, Hotel and Accommodation, Beaches, People, and Activities. Eight emerging themes were found: these are the (1) Pristine Beaches, (2) Amazing Aquatic Life, (3) Reefs and Beyond, (4) Adventure Like No Other, (5) Diversity of Activities, (6) Island Vibes but Twisted, (7) Superb Sunset, and (8) Exciting Life or in short, PARADISE. It is recommended to strengthen policies that can enhance the overall tourist experience and expectation.

Keywords: *insights, challenges, experiences, explanatory mixed-methods, hospitality management, management-action plan*

Introduction

Insights, challenges, and experiences of tourists play a significant part in tourism management implementation. However, the challenges and the reasons for tourists' experiences and constant revisits in Moalboal have not been extensively studied. Padillo and Ampurado (2022) expressed that unemployment hurts the quality of life of those who have careers in the tourism sector. In this case, it is essential to provide a perspective in this study, which explores the influences tourists' experiences can have on the local economy and the job market for tourism employees. In addressing such a gap, this paper explores what are the effects of tourism on the satisfaction and choices of travelers through a mixed-method approach by incorporating both phenomenological elements and quantitative analysis.

Moalboal as "Dagway sa Paraiso" offers an amazing fusion of tranquil beauty and natural wonders. It is a town well-known for its sardine run, which draws divers and snorkelers from all over the world with its millions of sardines swimming in synchronized patterns. Above the surface, the immaculate white sand beaches and verdant tropical surroundings offer the ideal haven for leisure and exploration. Zafra (2021), a specific focus on tourism and economic statistics in the Philippines in recent years, highlights the interplay between ocean tourism and economic progress in archipelagic nations. This implies that for an island nation like the Philippines, the development of its economy relies greatly on ocean tourism, which is the main contributor. Moreover, Velos et al. (2020) highlighted tourists' arrival in the Philippines through a model, SARIMA, wherein the demand of tourists in the Philippines and its dynamics were captured. This presents insights that are worthy of digging further into the variations as well as trends that influence their demand in the Philippines. Hence, this paper would seek answers to the literature gaps, particularly its understanding of tourism in the Philippines in the present time, specifically in Moalboal, Cebu.

The municipality of Moalboal attracts many visitors, both local and international tourists, due to various reasons. Some of these intentions could be purely from the thrill of adventure or exploration to the town's pride—the abundant aquatic environment, while others may simply choose to relax on the beautiful sand beaches or to sunbathe. Judging by the alluring marine life and the crystal-clear waters, particularly the famous sardines run that has become Moalboal's hallmark, tourists tend to have very high expectations of the area. In a study of Lacson (2019), the Filipinos' way of living is one to have captivated the interests of many travelers, particularly international travelers, as they often deemed the lifestyle, the people, and the atmosphere as comfortable and relaxing. It is like finding one's identity along their journey. Not only that Moalboal exude natural beauty, but there is more to the town—a haven for those who desire to bask in peace and comfort in its breathtaking scenery. Vada et al. (2019) specifically gave focus on how the behavioural intentions of tourists are molded by positive psychology and how it reflects the idea of visitors exploring actual unforgettable experiences and cultural interactions in Moalboal, supporting the idea that both the natural beauty and Moalboal's richness in terms of culture and are the main reasons that moved visitors.

Yearly, Moalboal deals with numerous tourists, particularly in popular destinations in the area such as the Basdaku Beach and the Panagsama Beach. Hence, necessary adoption towards environmental protection should be considered. According to Melchor (2023), destination sustainability and the features that affect the behavior of tourists provide the answers to how tourism can go together with ecological conservation. This study would enable better management of Moalboal's tourism with all considerations of its beauty and both tourists and local communities to have satisfactory favor. In the same way, Lasarte (2020) states that for travelers to have a worthwhile experience, a good emphasis on the frontline facilities and services of tourism is essential, especially when meeting a certain travel market demand and expectation.

As Cebu's top tourist destination, Moalboal also faces several pressing challenges, which are extensively examined and addressed by the researchers of the study. Omar et al. (2024) expressed that over-tourism is one of tourism's main concerns in the last few decades, often causing detrimental results to the resources and environment, especially in well-known areas such as dive spots and beaches. The common issues that the municipality of Moalboal encounters and are need to be addressed includes the implementation of existing tariff for transportations and the regulation of pricing that particularly increases to foreign tourists, malfunctioned ATMs all around the area and digital payment adoption, road repair that is prone to accidents, poorly lit roads, and unmaintained environmental areas that concerns most of the foreigners.

While various attributes in relation to tourists' loyalty are present, with the drawbacks of Moalboal, the safety, enjoyment, and ultimate experience of the visitors and the community can be affected as they can be susceptible to the adverse results of over-tourism (Suhartanto et al., 2020). Capocchi et al. (2019) also highlighted that people's lives will become difficult, and the local ecosystems can be affected by this issue. To create conducive strategies, it is necessary to address the main issues and eliminate gaps in this study to encourage sustainable tourism and aid the needs of the local community and travelers through support.

Furthermore, an effective framework that will further elaborate on Moalboal's tourism is provided in the study. However, it also poses unusual challenges. Broszeit and Johansson (2023) viewed through a dive tour operator's diving goggles the occurring environmental changes in zones like the coasts, stressing their effects on the ecology. Such a point of view leaves awareness of tourism's greater outcome-positively and negatively, to the communities and ecosystems of the locals, while also taking note of the importance of the views of the locals for legitimate and eco-friendly tourism development, and without disregarding the voice and judgment of the community in an extensive discussion on tourism experiences.

Research Questions

This research delved into the exploration of the tourists at Moalboal's Face of Paradise taking into account their Insights, Challenges, and Experiences (ICE) in Moalboal, Cebu, Philippines, as basis for the crafting of a management-action plan. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. Describe the demographic profile of respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. gender;
 - 1.3. nationality; and
 - 1.4. economic status?
2. To what extent do the tourists perceive and intend to travel back to Moalboal, Cebu in terms of:
 - 2.1. tourist spots;
 - 2.2. price;
 - 2.3. food and beverages;
 - 2.4. hotel and accommodation;
 - 2.5. beaches;
 - 2.6. people; and
 - 2.7. activities?
3. What is the meaning of the tourists' experiences in Moalboal, as claimed to be the face of paradise?
4. What management-action (man-act) plan can be created based on the findings of the study?:

Methodology

Research Design

This research employed an explanatory mixed-methods approach, integrating research methods: quantitative and qualitative, which is a suitable approach for a deeper understanding and in-depth analysis of the intricate experiences of tourists in Moalboal. Also, it intends to offer essential knowledge about the tourists' experiences in Moalboal, highlighting both its appeal and the challenges faced, which will contribute to the municipality's sustainable development of tourism.

Respondents

There are 151 respondents for this study. The respondents for a survey on Moalboal's tourist experiences are individuals who have visited the area. This includes domestic and international tourists of various ages, backgrounds, and interests. They might be divers, snorkelers, beachgoers, or adventurers seeking outdoor activities like canyoneering or island hopping. By surveying a diverse range of tourists, researchers gained a comprehensive understanding of their perceptions, experiences, and satisfaction levels with Moalboal as a destination. Since this study used a random sampling technique, there are no assigned numbers for either domestic or international tourists. This valuable information is used to enhance the overall tourist experience, improve the local economy, and protect the environment of Moalboal.

Instruments

This study utilized and adapted an instrument from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) (2024) in gathering quantitative data from the respondents. This instrument was validated in the field of hospitality management psychology and those in the field of research and evaluation this instrument went through content validity to make sure it measures what it intends to measure such as the insights, challenges, and experiences of the respondents. The results of the validity made the instrument a tool to address the gap of the study. There were items deleted and modified to align with the nature and the purpose of the study (Colton & Covert, 2007). The total number of items left after validation was 35.

The qualitative instrument was a semi-structured interview guide questionnaire. According to Smith (2019) semi-structured interview guide questionnaire best defeats a gathering of quantitative data to make follow-up questions. This instrument went through face and content validity to increase the rigor of the study, as it demands a comprehensive data collection (Cabello & Bonotan, 2021). There were six items in the semi-structured interview guide, questions were sufficient to achieve data saturation, showcasing the meaningful experiences of the tourist.

Procedure

In gathering the data, the researchers began with the development of an adapted instrument from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) (2024) and a semi-structured interview guide questionnaire, tailored to capture tourists lived experiences and challenges. These survey questionnaires were distributed at key tourist sites and accommodations in Moalboal, such as Panagsama Beach and Basdaku Beach, ensuring a diverse participant pool.

Data Analysis

A popular qualitative method, the Thematic Analysis (TA) of Braun and Clarke (2006) is a suitable approach in finding, examining, and summarizing patterns or themes in data. For statistical treatment in this investigation, a mixed-method approach is used for the information. Counts and Frequency is used to determine the total number of participants based on age, gender, nationality, economic status, and the data's percentage. These will be used to determine the tourists' intentions to visit Moalboal. The Mean and the Standard Deviation are used to describe the average of the values and the consistency of the data. Qualitative data obtained from interviews were thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and insights, complementing the quantitative findings. This integration of both data types benefits the researchers as it offers an in-depth understanding of the experiences of tourists at Moalboal, allowing for richer interpretations and recommendations.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were applied and considered during the course of the research investigation, even if the approach offers a precise structure for analyzing data. In ethical considerations of Bryman and Bell (2017) highlight that in a mixed-method approach, researchers must handle ethical issues carefully for both qualitative and quantitative methods. This includes getting a clear consent form from participants, protecting their privacy, and avoiding harm. It should be honest and avoid bias when combining data from both methods. They must also respect cultural differences and balance the unique challenges of each method, like keeping the survey responses anonymous.

All participants were asked for their informed consent, assuring that they are fully aware of the study's objectives and their voluntary participation rights. Maintaining confidentiality was given top priority by keeping data safe and by anonymizing the responses to safeguard participants' identities. Cultural awareness will be taken into account as the study will respect local traditions and respectfully interact with the community. Furthermore, the research will aim to reduce any possible adverse effects on the local culture and environment, to encourage responsible tourism practices, all throughout the study.

In ensuring that the study is carried out with uprightness and consideration for the participants, ethical considerations were considered. The strategy used by Bryman and Bell (2017) promotes reflexivity and an understanding of how the role of the researchers significantly shapes the analysis, while also making it certain that the results are communicated in a manner that is moral, open, and mindful of the rights and experiences of the participants.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents is determined by their age, gender, nationality, and economic status. These indicators are discussed comprehensively in the literature to corroborate the results.

Table 1. *Age of the Respondents*

<i>Age</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
18-28 years old	91	60.26%
29-38 years old	42	27.81%
39-48 years old	7	4.63%
49 years old and above	11	7.28%
Total:	151	100%

Table 1 shows the sample profile of the study, which includes the age of the respondents. It can be perceived that most of the respondents belong to the age bracket 18-28, with 91 counts (60.26%). In contrast, the age bracket 39-48 has the lowest count of 7 respondents (4.63%). This implies that most of the respondents are young adults. In the age range with fewer life obligations, whether in finance, career, or personal life, young adults tend to have the freedom to travel more than those in their mid-thirties and above.

According to Fathi and Ní (2024), practices and experiences of home in migration are affected by age, generation, and transitions in the whole life-course. Some people who are capable of traveling start their migrant journey to enjoy other countries' cultures. They also want to experience things that they can't experience in their own country, like summer, marine life, etc. Crăciun (2023) also expressed that loneliness has a significant impact and is commonly linked to emotions that are negative in midlife and older age, such as feelings of rejection, as well as anxiety or depression. Because of this, people nowadays prefer to enjoy their lives after a tiring day of studying and working on various things. They may go to places or other countries where they could rest for a while, enjoy peace, think positively, and be away from the things that caused them stress.

According to Dawson and Rapport (2021), traveling globally can help individuals discover identities in geographical places they may be in. Furthermore, the Age of Globalism has fondly shaped ideas of home and identity through increased cultural encounters and migration. On the other hand, they may encounter new cultures that challenge their own. By engaging with others, people have been able to expand their horizons, develop empathy, and contribute to a more connected world.

Table 2. *Gender of the Respondents*

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Male	63	41.72%
Female	80	52.98%
LGBTQ++	8	5.29%
Total:	151	100%

Table 2 presents the total number of respondents, which is a total of 151. 80 of them are females (52.98%), 63 (41.72%) are males, and 8 (5.29%) of them belong to the LGBTQ+ bracket. This implies that most of the respondents are female tourists, with a count of 80 (50.98%). Alguero-Boronat et al. (2024) expressed that males, females, and the LGBTQ+ genders have motivations, preferences, and influence decisions when choosing a tourist destination, may it be due to safety purposes, activities they want to experience, or the cultures they want to embrace.

According to Rinaldi and Salerno (2020), tourism offers chances and huge trials for gender. Tourism grew almost continuously in the last decades. As a labour-intensive sector, there was also an increase in job creation, but not equally for men and women. The tourism sector is known as an important contributor to creating new opportunities for women. When it comes to women, tourism can serve as a driver that urges the idea of gender equality, and their involvement can have a notable effect on the development of tourism (Elshaer et al., 2021).

The respondents represented a range of gender identities, including male, female, and LGBTQ+ individuals. This offers a wider understanding of how gender may impact travel experiences. Taking these different identities into account allows the study to identify unique concerns, preferences, and challenges, helping to promote more inclusive and responsive tourism services.

Table 3. *Nationality of the Respondents*

<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Philippines	51	33.77%
United Kingdom	24	15.89%

Australia	14	9.27%
Italy	7	4.63%
Canada	6	3.97%
Germany	6	3.97%
Denmark	5	3.31%
France	5	3.31%
United States	5	3.31%
Israel	4	2.64%
Netherlands	4	2.64%
Europe (Unspecified)	3	1.98%
Spain	3	1.98%
Switzerland	3	1.98%
Bulgaria	2	1.32%
Ireland	2	1.32%
Russia	2	1.32%
Austria	1	0.66%
Czech Republic	1	0.66%
Slovakia	1	0.66%
Sweden	1	0.66%
United Arab Emirates	1	0.66%
Total	151	100%

Table 3 shows the sample profile of the local and foreign respondents in terms of nationality. There are a total of 151 respondents who participated in this study: 51 domestic tourists and 100 international tourists, and as indicated in the table of the gathered data, most of the respondents are from the Philippines, with 51 counts (33.77%) if the nationalities of the international tourists are specified. However, the international tourists combined differ greatly from the domestic tourists twice with a result of 100 counts (66.22%). Specifically, the respondents from the United Kingdom have the highest counts of 24 (15.89%) among the other international respondents, followed by the Australian respondents with 14 counts (9.27%), Italian respondents with 7 counts (4.63%), and the Canadian and German respondents with 6 counts (3.97%) each. France and United States follows with 5 counts (3.31%) each; Israel and Netherlands with 4 counts (2.64%) each; Europe (Unspecified), Spain, and Switzerland with 3 counts each (1.98%); Bulgaria, Ireland, and Russia with 2 counts each (1.32%); and lastly, foreign respondents who had the least count in this study were from the following countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Sweden, and United Arab Emirates with 1 count (0.66%) each. This implies that most of the foreign travellers in Moalboal are from the European continent, particularly the United Kingdom.

Tourist's nationality is a stronger predictor of revisit intention than overall trip happiness, except for Danish tourists. Tourists depend more on their background and how much money they have, than on how much they enjoyed their trip. Additionally, the chance of tourists to return is significantly tied to their happiness, suggesting a cultural emphasis on personal travel experience or higher expectations that influences their decisions (Reis et al., 2021).

Table 4. Economic Status of the Respondents

<i>Economic Status</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Rich	18	11.92%
Upper-Income	30	19.87%
Upper-Middle	22	14.57%
Middle-Middle	39	25.83%
Lower-Middle	11	7.28%
Low-Income	14	9.27%
Poor	17	11.26%
Total	151	100%

The presented data in Table 4 shows the sample profile of the study, which is the respondents' different economic status. These income levels were determined in Philippine Peso currency. As indicated on the table, the majority of the respondents are from the middle-middle income class (Greater than or equal to 43,828.00 but less than 76,669.00), with 39 counts (25.38%) among the eight economic statuses of the respondents presented in the table. This was followed by the upper-income class (but not rich) (Greater than or equal to 131,848.00 but less than 219,140.00) with 30 counts (19.87%). The third class that followed is the upper-middle category (Greater than or equal to 76,669.00 but less than 131,848.00) with 22 respondents (14.57). Next is the respondents from the rich income class (Greater than or equal to 219,140.00) with a total of 18 tourists (11.92%). Subsequently, the poor income class (Less than 10,957.00 monthly income per month) totaled 17 counts (11.26%).

Then, the total respondents from the low-income class (but not poor) (Greater than or equal to 10,957.00 monthly income per month but less than 21,194.00) had 14 (9.27%) respondents in total. On the other hand, the lowest count of the respondents' economic status is from the lower-middle income bracket, with 11 counts (7.28%). This implies that tourists in the middle-middle income level, which is situated in the center of the distribution of income, tend to have access to many destinations for reasons that their priorities likely include basic needs and an affordable travel experience.

According to Waqas-awan et al. (2021), middle-middle income level people tend to have a sensitive reaction than those with greater and lower income, who tend to react less in income changes. This gives an implication that individuals in this group earn an average savings with their stable jobs. Thus, having discrete spending choices on different things. Moreover, income changes or fluctuations has lesser effect on the spending habit of the people that belonged in this class.

In addition, Du et al. (2024) expressed that an individuals who come from higher income classes tend to engage in anything relation to the environment. This implies that an individual's decision and behavior to his or her satisfaction in environmental involvement has a significant connection to his or her income level.

Tourist Perception and Intention to Travel Back to Moalboal

Through a survey questionnaire, the respondents who participated in this study were given an adapted instrument from the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2024) and were given the freedom to identify their satisfaction while travelling in Moalboal, in terms of: (1) Tourists' Spot, (2) Price, (3) Food and Beverage, (4) Hotel and Accommodations, (5) Beaches, (6) People, and (7) Activities. Among the questions that fall in these seven categories were the choices that correspond to their level of satisfaction, ranging from Very Satisfied (5), Satisfied (4), Neutral (3), Dissatisfied (2), and Very Dissatisfied.

The Mean describes the average of the values, while the Standard Deviation describes the consistency of the data. These will be used to determine the tourists' intentions to visit Moalboal. Since the means are often not whole numbers, it was interpreted as falling between these categories. In this case, a mean around 4.20-5.00 would be described as "Very Satisfied"; a mean around 3.40-4.20 would be described as "Satisfied"; a mean around 2.60-3.40 would be described as "Neutral"; a mean around 1.80-2.60 would be described as Dissatisfied and a mean around 1.0-1.80 would be described as "Very Dissatisfied".

Table 5. *Tourist Perception and Intention to Travel Back to Moalboal*

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Description</i>
Tourists' Spot			
<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>			
the tourist spots in Moalboal, Cebu such as the Sardine Run and Turtle watching?	4.38	0.64	Very Satisfied
the quality of underwater activities such as free and scuba diving and snorkeling?	4.37	0.72	Very Satisfied
availability of information about the tourist spots and local tourists guides who increase the level of experience?	4.29	0.76	Very Satisfied
the maintenance of the cleanliness of the tourist spots?	3.68	0.93	Satisfied
effort of preserving the tourist spots in Moalboal for environmental sustainability?	3.93	0.87	Satisfied
WM	4.13	0.78	Satisfied
Price			
<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>			
the entrance fees and other charges in visiting the tourist spots in Moalboal?	3.94	0.93	Satisfied
cost of the underwater activities such as the free and scuba diving and snorkeling?	4.02	0.89	Satisfied
transparency of transaction in connection with the worth of visiting Moalboal?	4.05	0.83	Satisfied
the prices of the drinks, food, and other dining options?	3.95	0.98	Satisfied
prices of the special promotions on the different packages such as day tour?	3.83	0.88	Satisfied
WM	3.96	0.90	Satisfied
Food and Beverages			
<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>			
the availability and accessibility of the variety of drinks and food options in Moalboal?	4.23	0.83	Very Satisfied
quality of the ingredients used in the food and beverages being served?	4.14	0.83	Satisfied
availability of the international food cuisines?	4.18	0.76	Satisfied
the cleanliness of the food and drinks, the establishments, and the vendors?	4.01	0.74	Satisfied
the customer service of the staff and manager in serving foods and drinks in the different bars and restaurants?	4.36	0.81	Very Satisfied
WM	4.18	0.80	Satisfied
Hotel and Accommodations			
<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>			
the overall quality of your accommodation such as the comfort and amenities?	4.12	0.83	Satisfied
the different accommodation options such as resorts, hotels, inn, hostels, homestay, and backpackers?	4.19	0.82	Satisfied
the value of the cost of stay including the way how the staff treated you during your stay?	4.32	0.74	Very Satisfied
the cleanliness of the accommodations?	4.04	0.98	Satisfied
the distance of different bar, restaurants, and activities from where you stay?	4.30	0.81	Very Satisfied
WM	4.19	0.84	Satisfied
Beaches			
<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>			
the quality of sand in the beaches in Moalboal?	4.04	0.94	Satisfied
the maintenance of the cleanliness of the beaches?	3.81	0.95	Satisfied
the accessibility and security of the beaches in terms of transportation, roads, and signages?	3.86	0.97	Satisfied
safety while swimming and enjoying the beaches?	4.20	0.87	Satisfied

the scenic beauty of the beach and the sunset?	4.57	0.72	Very Satisfied
WM	4.10	0.89	Satisfied
People			
How satisfied are you with...			
the locals in Moalboal in terms of how friendly they are?	4.68	0.60	Very Satisfied
the way how responsive they are in terms of your needs such as asking for location, food options, and many more?	4.54	0.70	Very Satisfied
the way how locals in Moalboal communicate with you in English?	4.59	0.69	Very Satisfied
the attitude of the locals?	4.55	0.72	Very Satisfied
the feeling of being safe when trusting the locals?	4.42	0.71	Very Satisfied
WM	4.56	0.68	Very Satisfied
Activities			
How satisfied are you with...			
the different activities available in Moalboal such as diving, snorkeling, island hopping, and many more?	4.53	0.64	Very Satisfied
the quality of outdoor activities?	4.46	0.66	Very Satisfied
the tours and packages you availed?	4.31	0.75	Very Satisfied
the safety of the different activities?	4.26	0.79	Very Satisfied
the affordability of the activities?	4.21	0.81	Very Satisfied
WM	4.35	0.73	Very Satisfied
AWM	4.21	0.80	Very Satisfied

The perception of tourists in Moalboal differs in many ways. The highest score they give is—Weighted Mean of 4.57, which falls into the Very Satisfied category. This implies that the respondents were most likely fond of the beaches in Moalboal. In terms of their satisfaction with the people in Moalboal, the scores of the respondents achieved a Weighted Mean of 4.56, which also falls in the Very Satisfied level.

The town of Moalboal is one of the famous attractions here in Cebu. The data presented in the “Tourists’ Spots” table provides an in-depth analysis of tourist satisfaction that has various features. The highest rated perspective of the tourist spots themselves includes sardine run and turtle watching, with a mean score of 4.38 and a low standard deviation of 0.64 memorable experience and remaining constant. As well, the quality of underwater activities like snorkeling and diving also receives a high score of 4.37, reflecting the strong approval. The availability of information and the presence of local tour guides were also rated as very positive at 4.29, highlighting the importance of well informed and supported experience. However, there is also a lower satisfaction observed in terms of cleanliness in the town (mean=3.68, SD=0.93), and the "environmental sustainability efforts" (mean=3.93, SD=0.87) both have the maximum variation of responses, showing contradictions in upkeep and preservation efforts across the different tourist attractions. Overall, the tourist attractions are reported as a high level of satisfaction with a weighted mean (WM) of 4.13 and the standard deviation of 0.78, conveying overall satisfaction with some variability in experiences. These results highlight the Town of Moalboal's strengths when it comes to marine attractions and supported experience, while also determining the environmental sustainability and cleanliness as key areas for improvement to enhance overall satisfaction.

The Price table shows how happy tourists are with various aspects related to price during their stay in Moalboal, Cebu. With an overall satisfaction score of 3.96, this shows that most of the tourists are satisfied. But there is some variation in their experiences, as presented by a standard deviation of 0.90. The highest score, 4.05, was for transparency of transactions, which means tourists know the value they experience for their money. The price of underwater activities, like scuba diving and snorkeling, also gets a good score of 4.02, indicating that tourists are generally satisfied, but some may not find these deals as attractive or affordable as they expected. On the other hand, the score for food and drinks, and dining options were 3.95, but entrance fees were a bit lower at 3.94. Both scores are still in the “Satisfied” range, but they appear to have slightly more variation, especially in dining, which had a standard deviation of 0.98. This suggests that there might be some inconsistency in pricing or quality. The lowest score was for special promotion and tour packages at 3.83, which shows that tourists are normally satisfied, but some may not see these deals as attractive or affordable as they expected. Overall, the results indicate that the tourists are mostly satisfied with the prices and transparency in Moalboal. Although there is still room for improvement, particularly in making special promotions more engaging and ensuring that food and service are more reliable.

The “Food and Beverage” table represents the satisfaction of tourists related to Food and beverage in the paradise of Moalboal, Cebu, with an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.80, generally showing the rating of “Satisfied” with elements of very high satisfaction in specific areas. The customer service in the food and beverage is the highest-rated item in the establishment. The mean of 4.36 shows that tourists highly recommend the service provided by staff and managers in bars and restaurants. Followed by the availability and accessibility of food and drinks options (4.23), proposed that tourists find it easy to search for a variety of dining choices. The accessibility of international cuisines (4.18) and the quality of ingredients used (4.14) also receive positive feedback, reflecting satisfaction with diversity and food quality. The lowest score, though still relatively high, was for the purity of the food and drinks, and establishment (4.01), indicating the room improvement in hygiene and sanitation practices. Overall, tourists are glad about the food and beverage offered in Moalboal, particularly in terms of the customer service and variety, though the quality and cleanliness of the food can still be enhanced to further elevate the dining experiences of the tourists.

The next table, “Hotel and Accommodations”, present an overview of tourist satisfaction regarding hotels and accommodation here in Moalboal Cebu, with overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.19 and the standard deviation of 0.84, in general level of satisfaction with key aspects reaching very satisfied levels. The Highest rate item is the value cost of stay and staff treatment (4.32), followed by the proximity of accommodations to bars, restaurants, and activities (4.30), both of which fall under the "Very Satisfied" category. Tourists view accommodations in Moalboal as affordable and accessible, with staff providing high-quality service. The diversity of lodging options (4.19) and the overall quality, including comfort and amenities (4.12), also received favorable ratings, reflecting overall satisfaction with available choices. However, cleanliness scored the lowest at 4.04 and had the highest standard deviation (0.98), pointing to inconsistent hygiene standards across establishments. Overall, while guests are pleased with the accessibility, value, and service, maintaining more consistent cleanliness could further improve their experience.

With an overall weighted mean (WM) of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.89, the “Beaches” table analyzes how satisfied tourists are with the beaches in Moalboal, Cebu. This suggests that tourists are usually happy with their beach experiences. With a mean score of 4.57 and the least fluctuation (SD = 0.72), the beach and sunset are the most highly rated features, indicating a strong and steady appreciation of Moalboal's inherent coastal appeal. A high rating of 4.20 was also given to safety when swimming and enjoying the beach, indicating that visitors feel safe when participating in water sports. Sand quality, on the other hand, received a favorable rating (4.04) despite somewhat more variable comments. But the lowest satisfaction ratings went to accessibility and security (3.86) and cleanliness (3.81), with higher ratings having greater standard deviations (0.95 and 0.97, respectively), suggesting irregularities in infrastructure, signage, or upkeep in various beach locations. In conclusion, even though Moalboal's beaches are prized for their unspoiled beauty and secure setting, travelers' overall beach experiences might be further improved with upgrades to accessibility and cleanliness.

The “People” table presents the findings from the satisfaction survey conducted among the tourists visiting Moalboal, Cebu, which shows high positive impressions with an average weighted mean (WM) of 4.56 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.68, indicating a consistently very satisfied experience by all rated items. The friendliness of the local tourist got the highest rating at 4.68, which shows that tourists feel exceptionally welcomed. Additionally, the locals’ expertise in communicating English is 4.59, the responsiveness to the needs of tourists with the rating of 4.54, and the locals’ overall attitude has the highest rating of 4.55, means that it indicates their strong hospitable and helpfulness in the community. Moreover, tourists also expressed very high satisfaction with safety and trust when it comes to dealing with locals, with 4.42, which means that Moalboal is an environment that is safe and friendly to tourists. However, this strong standard deviation across all categories shows that most of the respondents had a good experience during their visits to Moalboal. Overall, the data indicates that the people of Moalboal are the strength of the place, as they add a satisfying experience for tourists with their warmth, helpfulness, and communication skills.

The “Activities” table shows tourists who generally enjoy the activities in Moalboal, Cebu, with an overall rating of 4.35 and an average of 4.21, both falling under the “Very Satisfied” category. The most highly rated item activity is the variety offered, like diving, snorkeling, and island hopping, with a score of 4.53 and 0.64, with the lowest standard deviation, and signifies both strong satisfaction and consistency of tourists’ experiences. Next, tourists gave high ratings to outdoor activities (4.46) and the tours and packages they took (4.31), meaning they found them enjoyable and well-organized. They were also quite satisfied with how safe (4.26) and affordable (4.21) the activities with a slightly higher standard. However, the slightly higher differences in scores (0.79 and 0.81) show that not everyone had the same experience. Overall, the results show that Moalboal offers enjoyable, safe, and affordable activities that make the place attractive to visitors.

The Lived Experiences of Tourists in Moalboal – The Themes and Their Discussions

There are eight emerging themes found after analyzing the data. These are the (1) Pristine Beaches, (2) Amazing Aquatic Life, (3) Reefs and Beyond, (4) Adventure Like No Other, (5) Diversity of Activities, (6) Island Vibes but Twisted, (7) Superb Sunset, and (8) Exciting Life or in short PARADISE. These themes are the reflection of the tourists’ perceptions, impressions, and suggestions about the face of paradise – Moalboal. These themes are derived from the words of the locals and international tourists. This can be a reference for making a management-action (man-act) plan that can sustain and protect the beautiful face of Moalboal. The themes are discussed comprehensively below to further comprehend the lived experiences of the tourists in Moalboal.

Theme 1: Pristine Beaches

Pristine beaches are lovely stretches of coast that generally remain free of profound human interference. Clear, clean waters, untainted sand, and a decent ecosystem make these places an ideal retreat from the mundane. These unspoiled havens are preferred for their natural beauty and the opportunity to be in a coastal environment that is as pristine as it can get. Also, conservation of these beaches serves an important purpose for maintaining ecological balance as well as the recreation of future generations.

According to T1, one is expecting to be in Moalboal “To see green places and beaches.” To be in Moalboal, one can expect to see vibrant places and beaches where you can relax. T42 added, “Beautiful, laid-back paradise. Very happy with all activities and beaches to enjoy.” This means that when engaging with different activities, one can surely achieve the level of happiness and joy since Moalboal is tagged as a laid-back paradise. T80 expressed that as a tourist, he was “Very happy. Expected beach to be more paradise”, implying that although the beach made the tourist feel as if he was in paradise, it could’ve been better, but the happiness never left him, nonetheless.

As stated by T106, "Breath-taking experience here, and I expect that I will enjoy the view and whole beach itself", implying that being in Moalboal is an exhilarating experience, full of expectations of enjoying what Moalboal could offer. T117 indicated that Moalboal has

"Fine sandy beaches", indicating that the shore is soft and smooth and is comfortable to walk on, which is ideal for those who love to sunbathe. Furthermore, T145 stated, having the impression and expectation that Moalboal is "Great for beaches and activity", meaning that it lives up to its coined name "Face of Paradise".

From the preferences of T111, the things to grow fond of when staying in Moalboal are the "Beach and the scenic view", implying that natural surroundings can create a stunning environment for visitors. T119 further specified, "The sea and Basdaku (White Beach)", indicating that Moalboal is a gem when it comes to white beaches. Apart from those, T14 came up with a suggestion, which is to "Clean all beaches and the city. Keep the environment in a good condition". By any means, anyone would want to wander and stay in a maintained place, especially when it is deemed as paradise. Conforming to the previous statement, T128 also stressed more valuable suggestions, "Moalboal should continue to prioritize its environmental protection efforts. Maintaining the pristine condition of its beaches and marine ecosystems is crucial for its long-term success as a tourist destination. Perhaps investing in more robust security measures, particularly in areas prone to petty theft, would enhance the safety and peace of mind for the visitors. Increased community education initiatives on responsible tourism could also help protect and ensure the sustainability of the local economy and the environment." Generally, environmental conservation is a priority in the tourism management development for the safety of the travellers and species, as well as the promotion of tourism to save its natural resources and ensure the well-being of the visitors and the local community.

Theme 2: Amazing Aquatic Life

Amazing and aquatic life refers to the incredible variety of living organisms that inhabit water environments such as oceans, rivers, lakes, and ponds. Moalboal is known for its amazing aquatic life, which refers to the breathtaking beauty and rich biodiversity found beneath its crystal-clear waters and offering a remarkable underwater world of rich, stunning coral reefs, colorful fish, sea turtles, and the famous sardine run. Snorkelers and divers from around the world visit Moalboal to witness the extraordinary marine ecosystem, making it truly amazing and showing how natural wonders can develop a well-preserved aquatic environment.

As mentioned by T5, which is "ethical to wildlife," connotes the importance of protecting the different wildlife, especially found in the waters of Moalboal. T14 added "Snorkeling was very good and the food I had after, as well." Experiencing the water activity is unforgettable, and the food is so delicious. T19 says that "Snorkeling in interesting water with sardines and whale sharks." It shows how beautiful when you experience underwater activities in Moalboal.

As mentioned by T37, one of the best things one should try in Moalboal is to "Enjoy snorkeling with sea turtles and sardines". T5 added, what one should expect and love in Moalboal, "Sardine run; swimming with the turtles is amazing; lovely people; easy to access things". As T66 thinks, it is the "The scuba diving particularly the turtles and sardines" that showcases the beauty of Moalboal best.

Theme 3: Reefs and Beyond

Reefs and Beyond means not just the coral reefs in the ocean, but also everything else around them. This includes the sea animals that live there, the deeper parts of the ocean, nearby beaches and islands, and even the local towns and people. It's about the full experience—both the underwater beauty and the life and culture you find on land near the sea.

According to T22, Moalboal has "Nice corals, amazing sardines run, amazing turtles, very friendly". This reflects a positive and memorable experience where the person enjoyed the ultimate underwater experience, such as personally seeing beautiful coral reefs, a fascinating sardine run, and amazing turtles. The tourist also indicated the friendly atmosphere of local people, showing both natural beauty and human warmth. T46 added, "I want to find great marine fauna, warm, friendly people who welcome tourists and involve them in their culture", expressing a desire for a meaningful travel experience and showing that the tourist value both natural beauty and cultural connection, hoping for an experience that combines underwater exploration with genuine human interaction. Moreover, T63 stated, "We came to scuba dive and explore the beaches. The town looks nice with good diving options and a lot of good food to choose from". This shows that the person came with the main goal of enjoying scuba diving and spending time on the beach. They also noticed that the town itself is attractive, offering not only great spots for diving but also a wide variety of good food. It reflects a positive impression of both the natural environment and the local amenities, suggesting a well-rounded and enjoyable visit.

As stated by T12, "Very nice dives and snorkels, good food and drinks, nice atmosphere", it is likely an expression of a positive and casual review of a place or experience, likely related to a vacation or resort. It highlights three key aspects: enjoyable water activities, satisfying food and beverages, and a pleasant environment. Though brief and informal, it gives a clear sense that the overall experience was enjoyable and well-rounded. T43 expressed, "We had great experiences snorkeling, scuba diving, and canyoneering", implying they had a fun and enjoyable time doing activities like snorkeling, scuba diving, seeing the sardine run, and experiencing canyoneering from nearby towns. Added by T70 "Scuba-dived, free-dived the sardines, went canyoneering and to White Sands Beach—all were amazing". More people had an amazing time in Moalboal, enjoying scuba diving, free diving with sardines, canyoneering, visiting White Sands Beach, and participating in any activities. And added by things in Moalboal that T65 loves, "Sardine run, coral reefs too". The infamous "Sardine Run" refers to a natural phenomenon in which thousands of sardines swim collectively, developing an excellent spectacle within the waters off the coast of Moalboal—home to beautiful coral reefs, which are vibrant in the ecosystems teeming with marine life. These reefs provide a habitat for a variety of species, enhancing the overall experience for those visiting the area to witness both the sardine run and the thriving underwater world.

As stated by T28, "Several things stood out. The sardine run was once in a lifetime experience, absolutely unforgettable. The scuba diving was world class offering incredible opportunities to explore vibrant coral reefs and diverse marine. I also appreciated the town's commitment to preserving its marine environment. It's clear that conservation is a priority. Finally, the nightlife provided a fun, and lively atmosphere offering a good balance to the more relaxed daytime activities." For T28, the overall experience in Moalboal was amazing. Lastly, T63 added, "The attractions are very centered on living", implying a focus on the lifestyle experiences in Moalboal that enhance living.

Theme 4: Adventure Like No Other

Adventure is not just a journey. It is an experience that brings the unexpected and extraordinary. It offers the thrill of discovery and the challenge of stepping outside one's comfort zone and forces us to confront fear and uncertainty, and often rewards us with growth, new perspectives, and unforgettable memories. Adventure isn't only about where one would go or what one would do. It's about how one would view the world—a mindset, a way of saying yes to the unknown and finding meaning in the journey.

According to T31, "Moalboal is well-known for being a diving destination, and it lives up to the expectations. First impression is that it is a calm town that offers the most during the daytime via outdoor activities". This means to be in Moalboal is to be impressed with a town that offers sundry experiences, most especially during the day. Furthermore, T47 added, "Diving around. Good spots for snorkel and explore the area", expressing that the place, naturally having abundant marine life and clear waters, is ideal when it comes to underwater recreational activities.

Theme 5: Diversity of Activities

Diversity of Activities in Moalboal refers to the wide range of experiences and recreational options available in the area, including both land-based and water-based activities. From snorkeling and scuba diving in the vibrant coral reefs, to canyoneering in nearby towns, hiking, island hopping, and exploring local culture and cuisine. Moalboal offers something for every interest and adventure level. It allows people to choose from a variety of tasks of fun experiences. This variety supports tourism, promotes community engagement, and caters to both local and visitors seeking a unique and enjoyable experience.

According to T4, Moalboal has a "Good diving, relaxing atmosphere". To be in Moalboal is to be able to experience a diving adventure like no other, and a beautiful ambiance where you can relax. T3 added, "Nice, friendly (locals), and beautiful location; Good mix of activity, accommodations, and food options." This means that Moalboal is an inviting destination by welcoming residents and has a diverse range of things to do, making it appealing for visitors. Similarly, T26 expressed what Moalboal is: "Very friendly place and there are lots of activities to keep you busy." This means that Moalboal is not only a welcoming and hospitable destination, but it also offers a wide range of engaging activities for visitors. T48 also shared the things one could love in Moalboal, which are: "Snorkeling, diving, sardine run, sunset, turtles, corals, good food and drinks, and massage", implying that when one chooses Moalboal, there are plenty of things to try, including recreational activities and relaxation options.

Moalboal is so broad; a place with various things to try and love, as T40 indicated, "Local food; fun nightlife; amazing activities". Not only does the atmosphere feel engaging for visitors, but it is also a lively destination for everyone. T43 particularly mentioned the attributes that the people in Moalboal have, "People are friendly and helpful and all spoke great English; Party has nice venues with the live music; Places has lovely nature." For most foreign tourists, Moalboalans are great English speakers, for reasons that the economy of the municipality heavily relies on the tourism. T61 shared what she thinks of the party, people, and place in Moalboal, "Not experienced yet, but it seems to have some bars with live music and a nice vibe." This means that the tourist has heard about bars that feature live music and a pleasant atmosphere, suggesting a lively social scene. For T67, "The people are very kind. Everyone we have met in restaurants, hotels, and guides have been very nice and helpful. The party is fun. There are lots of places to choose from." means that the locals in Moalboal are exceptionally friendly and helpful but also it suggests that there are numerous fun nightlife options available, providing plenty of choices for entertainment.

With an atmosphere as enjoyable as bars featuring live music, this is what makes Moalboal a lively place to stay, as T76 mentioned, "Lots of live music which has been nice at the bars." Moreover, T87 stated, "Party life looks fun. People are great. Lots of things to do here", expressing what diversity is when in Moalboal. However, despite the good feedback, T2 as a visitor, suggests to "Teach locals English; clean the island more; build more clubs; open more local restaurants; food for less money; a supermarket at the main street", and by means, to look after a place as treasured as Moalboal, supporting both the development of the community and tourism. Additionally, T80 stated, "More air conditioners in bars," suggesting that tourists, in a tropical place like Moalboal, need or desire improved comfort in Moalboal's bars through better air conditioning.

Theme 6: Island Vibes but Twisted

Island Vibes but Twisted represents the laid-back, tropical atmosphere that defines this stunning coastal town, as well as the twisted reality hiding behind the façade of beauty. Recognized for its clear waters, stunning coral reefs, and beautiful sunsets, Moalboal offers a serene escape from everyday life. The air is filled with the sounds of gentle waves lapping against the shore and the laughter of locals and travelers alike. Island vibes but Twisted characterized the relaxed and welcoming vibe, making Moalboal a perfect destination for those seeking calmness and adventure in harmony with nature, as well as the imperfections of the place.

According to T2, "More clean and local food. Good and I love it here. Locals are better at English," implies the tourist expresses the whole stay in Moalboal as a good experience, with an appreciation towards the well-maintained environment and more local sources of food. The tourists also find it impressive and helpful compared to other places where locals here in Moalboal are better at speaking English. T5 states, "Very Friendly Locals" means it's a compliment by a tourist to the welcoming, approachable, and kind people of Moalboal. Furthermore, T9 expressed, "I can say that what I expect about the town of Moalboal is what it truly is in person: the friendly locals and the tourist spot as well," implying that the tourist expectations about the town of Moalboal align with what they experienced while staying at the place. The locals are truly friendly and hospitable, and the tourist spots are just as impressive as they dream of.

T15 commented, "I think it's very cool and beautiful. I love the vibes," meaning the tourist sees the paradise as aesthetically pleasing and stunning, and the tourist enjoys the overall mood and atmosphere. T25 also mentioned, "Great vibes and distance to the restaurant", expressing the welcoming environment or the feeling of the place's warmth, and approachable folks and atmosphere. The distance of the restaurant was indicated as an advantage, as it is only a short walk away. In addition, T30 stated, "I was surprised about the place, very local and touristic at the same time. Streets could be better constructed to make it easier for tourists or locals to move. But apart from that, the impression is positive." means it seems that the paradise has a one of a kind for being both local and internationally friendly. The blend of comfort and attraction for tourists is interesting. But the streets could be an issue that needs to be improved and needs to be done.

T59 states that "I enjoy the balance of choice of restaurants and bars, but still feeling very casual, nice vibe" means the tourists appreciate that the overall atmosphere stays pleasant and casual. They also enjoy having a variety of restaurants and bars that they could choose from while keeping the tourists feeling relaxed and enjoying themselves. Apart from that, T73 left a poetic statement, "A place where the sky melts into the sea and the air hums with only love and joy," which means the tourists describe a dreamy, idyllic place where everything feels at peace. A sunset or tranquil ocean scene symbolizes unity, beauty, and harmony, and an environment brimming with kindness, positivity, and calmness. According to T82, "The beauty of Moalboal has well exceeded my expectations provided by social media. Its activities, scenery, food, and people were amazing," means the person had a much better experience staying here in Moalboal than what is expected based on what they saw in the social media. Moalboal turned out to be even more exciting and beautifully anticipated.

T61 also mentioned that "So far, great accommodations, cool diving vibe town, but maybe a little too touristic (many western stores). The roads are quite lovely in the villages' front side (beach side). This would be the main point that, for me, needs to be improved (get less muddy). Sometimes the taxi drivers can be too intense in selling their rides/activities, such as canyoneering." This implies that the accommodations have been great, and the town of Moalboal has a fun diving vibe. Overall, it's a cool place, though it does lean a bit too touristic for his/her taste with a few western chain stores. One area that needs improvement is the condition of roads to get muddy, which can be inconvenient. A more relaxed approach would make the tourist have a more comfortable experience.

According to T72, "People, the vibes, the beauty of the beach and forest. Everything is very smooth (thanks to people and organization), but not (yet?) too much touristically in, and this is much appreciated". This means that the beach and the vibes of Moalboal are not only the reason why tourists keep coming back for more, yet some tourist finds the place too crowded, but they still manage to enjoy their stay. On the other hand, according to T1, "Missing dirty toilet paper everywhere". Amidst the good feedback, there are still some places here in Moalboal that lack equipment for a comfort room, which was the main concern of some tourists. Furthermore, T3 added, "Poor quality roads, Poor service in restaurants at times. It wouldn't discourage us from visiting as we are understanding of the country. But some people might be discouraged". This means that even though there are some tourists who think that the place did not meet their standards, they are still trying to appreciate and understand what Moalboal has.

According to T25, "Didn't find a foreign money exchange business". This means that one of the concerns of some tourists is the foreign money exchange, which they found very difficult to find. Additionally, according to T32, "Very few working ATMs that are not 'Euronet'; White Beach has no shade to stay under on a sunny day, but it has lamps at night, you pay so many fees for the environment and the beaches themselves, but still the beaches are dirty. People should learn some manners, as well in this direction; more garbage bins for recycling perhaps". This means that some tourists are disappointed with what they experience here in Moalboal. They were concerned about the cleanliness of the beaches, and they complained about the fees that they paid. Moreover, according to T58, "Overcrowding. Too many Chinese large groups. Some roads or traffic can be intimidating". This means that tourist finds the place very hard when it comes to transportation since they were not used to experiencing traffic back when they were in their country. Lastly, according to T64, "Felt arrested by so many of the local people. I didn't like the non-stop suggestions in the street". This means that some tourists misunderstood the kindness and intentions of some locals, though the locals want to help tourists so they can have an amazing stay in Moalboal.

Among the issues that arose in Moalboal, T93 said, "Sometimes (it's) tricky to find vegetarian food." Some of the tourists visiting Moalboal really like vegetarian food, and for them it is hard to find a restaurant that suits their taste. Also, T144 mentioned that "Too many people trying to sell us their services." This means that when they come to Moalboal, many services offer them like massage, activities, and even food and beverages, which can be tiresome for those who seek peace. T32 added "(RECOS) Very few working ATMs that are not 'Euronet'; White Beach has no shade to stay under on a sunny day, but it has lamps at night; you pay so many fees for the environment and the beaches themselves, but still the beaches are dirty. People should learn some manners, as well. In this direction, more garbage bins for recycling, perhaps. Perhaps these are the most bothersome things that we struggled with and wished to be different. But we like Moalboal anyways. As tourists here in Moalboal, they want to see the beautiful beaches and nature that

Moalboal can offer, and for them, they want it to be as beautiful and clean as possible so that they can enjoy their vacation here at Moalboal. Also, they want it to be accessible for their need, like ATMs, and directions.

Theme 7: Superb Sunset

Sunset symbolizes escape and tranquility, while for others, sunset is a perfect backdrop for tourists who love photography. The vibrant mix of orange, pink, and purple hues over the horizon creates a captivating visual experience. The Superb Sunset captures the atmosphere expressed by tourists who witness the beauty and peace often associated with romance and calm. The town of Moalboal, as a tourist destination, is rich in scenic beauty and a tranquil experience, often prompting tourists to pause and admire the peaceful scenery.

According to T93, “Beautiful sunsets and looks like a paradise that isn't too busy with tourists, like Thailand, etc.” This implies that Moalboal is a paradise that is not as crowded as other countries. T177 added “Amazing sunset view”. The view of the beach is exceptional, and the people around find it amazing when it's the sunset they are watching. T22 also added that Moalboal is a “Very nice place; very friendly people; very nice during sunset time.” In this municipality, there are many beautiful scenes to see, the people are kind, and they make people feel at ease with them.

In addition, T12 expressed the things he loves in Moalboal, “Sunsets, diving is affordable, and the landscape.” This means that activities like scuba dives here in Moalboal are very cheap, and the landscapes, as well as the sunset viewing, are superb. As per T32 added, “The hospitality and friendliness of local people; Lovely sunsets; People singing and listening to good music.” The locals in Moalboal are very friendly and hospitable. They love making tourists comfortable and entertained. Moreover, T89 expressed the things he grew fond of in the municipality in a statement: “Sunsets, activities, and food.” There are many activities that Moalboal is offering, such as sardine run, scuba diving, free diving, and many others. Also, there are a variety of foods to choose from, which are very affordable and enjoyable while seeing the beautiful view of the beaches and sunsets. T125 added “View, sunset, and the nightlife”. This means that not only are the views and the sunset beautiful in Moalboal, but also the nightlife.

Theme 8: Exciting Life

Exciting Life means the combination of experiences and adventures that tourists feel as a connection during their stay in Moalboal. As Moalboal is perceived by tourists as a vibrant tourist' spot comprised of real wonders, lively social atmosphere, and exciting activities, this theme is perfect as it offers a reflection of Moalboal's destinations and the exhilarating motivators it offers.

From the point of view of T6, expectations and impressions of tourists in Moalboal lived up to what other nations could offer, stating “I love the variety of food, accommodation, and easy access to things. I'd say my impression is great, expectations were exceeded. Better than many towns I've been to other countries”. This means a trip is relaxing when there is easy access to different things enjoyable. T8 also added, “Very beautiful—the people and the scenes. It is paradise”. This gives a point that Moalboal is indeed a paradise comprised not only of aesthetic scenery but beautiful people as well. T38 also states, “I have been overwhelmed by how close the town is to the shore, how beautiful it is, and how friendly everyone has been”, indicating that shores are likely to appear nice especially if their easy access to places such as the town, while also stressing how the people in Moalboal left great impressions in terms of attitude.

For T55, “Good food, pretty landscape, nice and fun people, and variety of activities” is what impressed a tourist like him. People can enjoy breathtaking views and food, and various activities, and this is what makes Moalboal a suitable place to indulge in never-ending fun. “I am very impressed with Moalboal. There are plenty of food options and things to do. Everyone is so nice and friendly, too. Moalboal is a gem”, adds T70. For these common reasons, tourists deem Moalboal as something precious and rare. As believed by T113, “Moalboal experience renders both calming and adventure. It provides relief from the crowded and complex run of the city”. Since the municipality of Moalboal is a province mile from the city of Cebu, it is an ideal place that offers serene wonders and adventures like no other, as well as an experience of a rural lifestyle.

Along the lines of T6, T55, and T70, T45 also adds, “Our experiences have all been positive from the activities to the food, and the people. Moalboal feels well-setup to cater for tourists”, in which with all what Moalboal could cover-may it be the diverse activities, food, and attitudes of the people towards them, Moalboal is a desirable destination that can satisfy the conception of what tourists may think is perfect. Correspondingly, T113 thinks that “A day stay is not enough to sum up the experience. However, the short, allotted time provides relaxation and nirvana. It soothes the exhausting run of the busy city”. If a bustling place like the city could exhaust one's energy, a new setting like the provinces can alleviate that feeling with a tension-free and blissful feeling away from karma or suffering.

T68 states, “Bars and restaurants. Good night vibe. Sardine run and tours. I feel very safe and great hospitality from the guides”, stressing an impressive vibe of the night life, all while expecting and having the impression of bars and restaurants and sardine run and tours in Moalboal with the hospitable gestures of tour guides. With all the specified statements defining common expectations and impressions when travelling in Moalboal, T22 expresses, “When I stay in Moalboal, I'll say "I'll never regret"”, highlighting that in this opinion, Moalboal could never go wrong in terms of regrettable visits if one decides to visit and stay in the municipality.

Conclusion

Tourists' perception is how visitors judge or view a place they visit. It includes their insight, challenges, experiences, and satisfaction with things like the environment, service, people, and safety of the area they are visiting. In this study, the researchers focused on understanding what tourists think, feel, and perceive during their visit, as Moalboal is coined as “The Face of Paradise” simply because when tourists go to Moalboal, they can see and feel that they are in a paradise. This is crucial to improve services, fix any issues

encountered, and provide the ultimate satisfactory service, because tourists may feel disappointed or unsafe if their needs and concerns are ignored. Over time, fewer people may choose to visit. Hence, this study will serve as a tool that will further enhance and lead to a more comfortable and memorable trip for future visitors. With this, tourists' satisfaction rates, which show how happy tourists are overall, also reveal how likely they are to recommend the place to others. Thus, allowing a more progressive and sustainable tourism management in Moalboal.

Based on the gathered tourist insights, several key recommendations emerge to enhance the overall tourist experience and address identified challenges. First is the maintenance of cleanliness in tourist spots, particularly in areas such as public toilets, which tourists highly demand. It is highly recommended to maintain the cleanliness of the tourist spots as it enhances the overall appeal of the location, contributes to a positive tourist experience, and lessens the possibility of health problems. The second recommendation is the prices of special promotions of the different packages, such as day tours. This attracts more tourists and increases the overall revenue potential of the destination. The third recommendation is the cleanliness of the food and drinks of the establishment and vendors, which should be monitored by the Rural Health Unit (RHU) of Moalboal. Cleanliness is essential for preventing foodborne illnesses as it gives a positive reputation and helps build trust among tourists for their safety. The fourth recommendation is the cleanliness of the accommodations and beaches; clean accommodations and beaches are crucial for attracting tourists and ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable stay that could boost tourist confidence. The fifth recommendation is the feeling of being safe when trusting the locals; a sense of safety is paramount for a positive tourist experience, as it can gain visitors' trust and can attract more visitors to visit and explore Moalboal. The sixth recommendation is the affordability of the activities with an approved tariff from the tourism office. Affordability ensures that tourism is accessible to a wider range of visitors, providing a budget-friendly package that can also support locals. These recommendations will ensure an updated management practice and practical implementation, encouraging a revisit intention.

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