



TOURIST'S LOYALTY IN CAVITE CITY, PHILIPPINES FASHIONED BY LOCAL FOOD SATISFACTION

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Abstract

The study investigates the relationship between tourists' satisfaction with local cuisine and their loyalty to Cavite City, Philippines, as a tourist destination, while also exploring the mediating role of perceived risks, including Covid-19, man-made events, and natural disasters, in shaping this relationship. Destination loyalty reflects tourists' desire to revisit and recommend a destination, while food satisfaction encourages participation in gastronomic experiences and supports destination loyalty, leading to repeat visits. Moreover, perceived risks are measured to understand tourists' decision-making and behaviour, influencing their willingness to dine out and shaping their destination preferences. The study employs a quantitative approach and reveals that tourists exhibited high levels of interest and engagement in local culinary experiences, significantly influencing their decision to visit the destination. Utilizing STATA version 1 for analysis, the findings indicate that tourists were generally satisfied with the food offerings in Cavite City, and this satisfaction was positively associated with their loyalty to the destination. On the other hand, perceived risks did not significantly affect the link between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. The study suggests that destination managers and policymakers could leverage the city's gastronomic experiences to enhance tourist satisfaction and foster greater destination loyalty.

Keywords: perceived risk; food satisfaction; destination loyalty; tourists; Cavite City

1. Introduction

Research on tourist destination loyalty and its relationship with perceived risks and food satisfaction has gained attention due to its importance in understanding tourists' behaviours and intentions. Destination loyalty is a critical factor influencing tourists' revisit intent and overall satisfaction with a destination (Chen & Chen, 2010). Recent studies hypothesize that tourist loyalty shapes the travelers' perceived satisfaction from experience, expectations, quality service, and costs of tourism products present (Hoang et al., 2022; Nilplub et al., 2016; Sudari et al., 2019). Yoo & Bai (2013) emphasize that understanding destination loyalty is vital for achieving sustainable profitability in the tourism industry.

Despite the acknowledged importance of destination loyalty, there remains a gap in understanding how local food integration impacts satisfaction and subsequently shapes tourists' loyalty to a destination. Research on the

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integration of local food has been limited, despite its importance in terms of satisfaction and destination loyalty (Q. Chen & Huang, 2018; Erkmen, 2019; Hernández-Rojas & Huete Alcocer, 2021; Horng et al., 2012). A study by Lacap (2019a) demonstrated that tourists often associate satisfaction with local food with positive sentiments towards the destination. Chen & Huang (2019a) highlight that tourists' satisfaction with local food, stemming from their involvement and motivation, enhances destination loyalty.

Moreover, Ali et al. (2020) underlines the significance of food satisfaction in influencing tourists' willingness to revisit a destination, emphasizing the pivotal role food plays in shaping the tourism experience. Despite this, the integration of local food and its impact on destination loyalty remains understudied, highlighting the need for further research (Yasami et al., 2021). Understanding the connection between food satisfaction and destination loyalty is crucial for effective destination marketing strategies that leverage local cuisine to enhance overall visitor experience and loyalty.

Cavite City, situated at the northern end of the Cavite province in the Philippines, is renowned for its historical significance and rich culinary heritage. Despite its proximity to Manila, efforts towards local heritage cooking have allowed Cavite to showcase unique dishes like Pansit Punit, Pansit Puso, Bibingka, Tamales, Calandracas, and Bacalao, making it an emerging food tourism destination (Gondra, 2022; Harne, 2021; Heussaff, 2019; Casper, 2019). Initiatives such as the "Proba: Cavite Comida" food crawl tour by the San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center have promoted Cavite as a food destination, emphasizing its diverse culinary traditions (Vanzi, 2018). However, the city faces various natural and man-made risks, including COVID-19 with a recent low number of active cases, vulnerability to typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and terrorism incidents (Cavite Provincial Information Office, 2023; Juanico, 2015; Deña, 2023). Understanding how these risks influence tourist travel decisions is crucial for assessing the sustainability of Cavite City's emerging food tourism sector.

Despite the recognized importance of food satisfaction in destination loyalty, there remains a gap in understanding how perceived risks, including those related to COVID-19, natural disasters, and man-made risks, mediate the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty in Cavite City. COVID-19 risk perceptions have notably impacted individuals' willingness to dine out and engage in local cuisine experiences (Dedeoğlu & Boğan, 2021a; Li et al., 2022). Furthermore, broader tourist risk perceptions, encompassing concerns about safety and health risks beyond COVID-19, influence tourists' overall satisfaction and destination loyalty (Hasan et al., 2017; Çakar, 2021; Mancini, 2022). High-risk perceptions can deter tourists from participating in local culinary experiences, which are integral to the tourism appeal of Cavite City (Jeaheng & Han, 2020; H. Zhang et al., 2018). Understanding how these perceived risks mediate the explicit perception of food satisfaction and visitor loyalty in Cavite City is essential for informing strategic tourism management and marketing initiatives aimed at enhancing visitor experiences and promoting destination loyalty.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether tourists' satisfaction with local cuisine is related to their loyalty to the destination. While exploring how perceived risks might be mediated by this relationship. In inclusion of the perceived risks as the mediating factor, the study used a framework with variables of destination loyalty and food satisfaction. The following research objectives were:

- To investigate the direct relationship between tourists' satisfaction with local cuisine and their loyalty towards Cavite City, Philippines as a tourist destination.
- To explore how perceived risk influences the relationship between tourist risk perception on the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty in Cavite City, Philippines

2. Literature Review

2.1. Destination Loyalty

Destination loyalty comes from tourists paying attention to and enjoying the places they visit, which can lead to competition among different destinations. This idea is explained through tourists' sensory experiences, known as the nomological network (Lv et al., 2020). The nomological network of experiencecape describes the conditions where different services are provided, making it easier to understand (Tasci & Pizam, 2020). Agapito et al. (2014) showed that people use their senses to experience the world, which shapes their attitudes and behaviors and influences their decisions. One key sensory experience is the haptic impression, like the feel of the surroundings, which affects how loyal tourists are to a destination (Fakfare et al., 2021). This study looks at whether satisfaction with food can influence tourists' loyalty to a destination, either supporting or challenging the sensory impression theory

2.2. Food Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is assessed by comparing their expectations with their actual experiences at a destination (Sangpikul, 2018). In this study, tourists who enjoy Cavite City's local food are seen as having a positive reaction to their food experiences. Ullah et al. (2022) state that satisfaction from food encourages tourists to engage more actively in culinary experiences, which builds loyalty to the destination. Atikahambar et al. (2019) also found that positive food satisfaction increases destination loyalty and repeat visits. Moreover, satisfaction with local restaurants significantly boosts a destination's culinary identity, leading to return visits and enthusiastic recommendations (Toudert & Bringas-Rábago, 2019). Additionally, Yasami et al. (2021) note that food satisfaction plays a crucial role in promoting a destination's local cuisine.

This study aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior, a well-known framework in research on tourists' attitudes towards local food (Alonso et al., 2015; Angelakis et al., 2023; Pahrudin et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2024). The Theory of Planned Behavior suggests that people's actions are guided by their intentions, which are influenced by their attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). This framework helps to understand tourists' reactions to Cavite City's local food experiences in this study. Therefore, the current study hypothesizes that:

H1: Food satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty.

2.3. Perceived Risks

2.3.1 Perceived Risk of COVID-19

The global impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism and hospitality industry has caused severe negative consequences for countries, businesses, jobs, and future opportunities (UNWTO, 2020). Research by Li et al. (2022) found that consumers' awareness of pandemic-related risks negatively affects their restaurant dining habits. The unique nature of COVID-19, with no cure other than vaccines, sets it apart from other health risks in terms of

perceived danger (Dedeoğlu et al., 2022a). Dryhurst et al. (2020a) reported a widespread heightened perception of risk related to COVID-19 across Europe, Asia, and North America. Risk perceptions significantly influence decisions about accepting dangers and actions taken before, during, and after a crisis (Rohrmann, 2008). Cui et al. (2016) highlighted that risks in the tourism sector are linked to satisfaction and catastrophic events. Additionally, Dedeoğlu and Boğan (2021b) showed that perceived COVID-19 risks affect tourists' motivation for dining out and choosing destinations. As perceived risks decrease, they play a smaller role in shaping tourists' travel and food consumption choices (Dedeoğlu et al., 2022b). The study aligns with Huete-Alcocer and Hernandez-Rojas (2022), who emphasized that food satisfaction significantly influences tourists' views and their intentions to revisit a destination. The current study employs the Protection Motivation Theory (Rogers, 1975), which has been used in previous research by Dedeoğlu and Boğan (2021c) and Dryhurst et al. (2020b) to understand people's decisions based on potential health risks and consequences (Clubb & Hinkle, 2015).

2.3.2 Perceived Risk of Natural Disasters

Natural disasters greatly influence destination loyalty by making affected areas seem more dangerous and less appealing to tourists (Genç, 2018). Rosselló et al. (2020) classified natural risks into geological events (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides) and meteorological events (hurricanes, cyclones, floods). These events can damage infrastructure, disrupt transportation, and pose safety threats to tourists (Rosselló et al., 2020). Increased perceived risk from these hazards leads to lower satisfaction and a reduced likelihood of future visits (An et al., 2010; Tavitiyaman & Qu, 2013). Despite these risks, Dulani et al. (2021) found that tourists are willing to take chances when it comes to trying authentic local cuisine, valuing the experience and cultural uniqueness over potential health risks. Tourists believe they can manage these risks with personal precautions and prioritize their travel experiences (Li & Ito, 2021). The moderating effect of natural disasters on tourism is a crucial area of ongoing research, highlighting how such events can negatively affect destination loyalty by making destinations seem riskier and less desirable (Genç, 2018).

2.3.3 Perceived Risk Made by Man

Man-made disasters can be categorized into three main types: security, economic, and political, making the tourism industry particularly vulnerable to them (Ma et al., 2020). Terrorism is a significant man-made risk that deters tourism. Corbet et al. (2019) argue that terrorism, involving violence or threats, instills widespread fear among tourists, disrupts infrastructure, and hampers tourism operations at affected destinations. Even with reduced prices for tickets and other tourism products, Liu and Pratt (2017) noted that tourists often avoid destinations with a history of terrorism. Tavitiyaman and Qu (2013) identified perceived risks including psychological, social, physical, and political instability-related risks, as well as risks to satisfaction. These risks are interrelated and influence decision-making, adding significant uncertainty to outcomes. Ensuring the safety image of a destination is crucial following a disaster to maintain tourist satisfaction and foster destination loyalty. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

H2: *The perceived risks have a mediating effect on the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty.*

3.3 Conceptual Framework

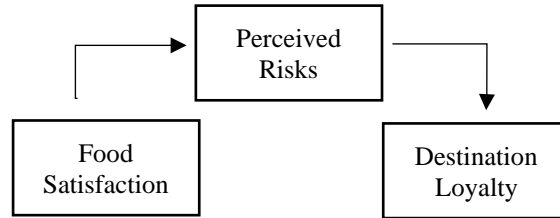


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the IV-DV model used in the study to outline the hypotheses. This model explores whether the independent variable (IV) plays a crucial role in affecting the dependent variable (DV) (Tabuena, 2021). The research specifically examines how tourists' food satisfaction (IV) impacts their loyalty to the destination (DV). Mediating variables are included to evaluate perceived risks, allowing the analysis of both direct and indirect effects of perceived risk on destination loyalty and satisfaction (Chaudhary & Islam, 2021). The upward-pointing arrow signifies the mediating role of perceived risks between the independent and dependent variables. Additionally, Lacap (2019b) introduced extra variables such as food-related motivation and local food involvement, which are now integrated as components of the food satisfaction construct.

The integrated theoretical framework for this study combines the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) to analyze tourists' behaviors, attitudes, and risk perceptions influencing destination loyalty driven by food satisfaction. According to Ajzen (1991), TPB posits that tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control shape their intentions and subsequent behaviors, including choices related to traditional foods (Singh et al., 2024). Angelakis et al. (2023) demonstrate that tourists' perceptions of food quality and value directly impact satisfaction, leading to intentions to revisit and recommend destinations. Concurrently, PMT, outlined by Rogers (1975) and Shillair (2020), helps understand how perceived risks, including those related to COVID-19, influence tourists' attitudes and behavioral responses. This study applies PMT to examine the mediating role of perceived risks between food satisfaction and destination loyalty, in line with research emphasizing the impact of perceived risks on food safety concerns and activity participation (Soon et al., 2022). By integrating TPB and PMT, this research aims to uncover the interplay between attitudes, risk perceptions, and behavioural intentions in culinary tourism, providing insights for effective destination management and risk mitigation strategies.

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative method, which was appropriate given the research objectives: to determine if tourists' food satisfaction influenced destination loyalty and to assess if perceived risks had any mediating effects between these two variables. Data were collected using an on-site survey questionnaire distributed to selected respondents. The survey results enabled the researchers to address and explain the research problems and hypotheses

3.2 Research Participants

The study conducted in Cavite City focused on local tourists who had visited the area and engaged with its traditional cuisine, using purposive sampling to select respondents who had spent at least a day in the city. This approach aimed to gather firsthand insights relevant to the investigation of food satisfaction, destination loyalty,

and perceived risks. Survey sites included restaurants offering traditional Caviteño cuisine. Additionally, respondents were selected based on their experiences visiting Cavite City during the pandemic, starting from 2020 onwards. The study included a minimum age requirement of ages twenty (20) to sixty (60) years old, targeting adults due to the nature of travel and dining experiences. The use of the GPower Calculator for sample size determination was appropriate as it accounts for statistical power, effect size, and significance level, ensuring the study's ability to detect meaningful relationships between variables. Employing linear regression as the statistical method was suitable for analyzing relationship between predictor variables (food satisfaction) and destination loyalty. The F-test within this framework allowed for testing the significance of the overall model and specific predictor variables, effectively addressing the research questions.

3.3 Data Gathering

The survey questionnaire served as the primary tool for data collection in this study. Food satisfaction was assessed using a set of 19 questions: six questions focused on food-related motivation, eight questions on local food involvement, and five questions on overall food satisfaction. These questions were adapted from studies by Beer et al. (2012), del Bosque & San Martín (2008), Kim et al. (2010), Mason & Paggiaro (2012), McKercher et al. (2008), Sparks (2007), and Žabkar et al. (2010).

Additionally, three questions measuring Destination Loyalty were derived from Q. Chen & Huang (2019b). The first 21 questions were validated and summarized by Q. Chen & Huang (2019c) and Lacap (2019c).

Perceived risk was categorized into three types: six questions assessed perceptions of COVID-19 risks based on Z. Li et al. (2022), four questions evaluated perceived risks from man-made incidents following B. Zhang (2016), and another four questions gauged perceived risks from natural disasters, drawing from studies by Kellens et al. (2011), Ng (2022), and Rindrasih (2018).

The study in Cavite City employed a self-administered approach for data collection, where respondents voluntarily participated by completing survey questionnaires distributed on-site at specific food tourist spots, including Asao Grill & Restaurant, Lydia's Down-Home Cooking, Regal Dining Catering and Restaurant, Palakainan, Hattydy's Sizzling & Panciteria, and Café Antix. The researchers conducted a pilot test with ten respondents to assess question validity, ensuring that the survey items effectively measured the intended constructs. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha on the pilot test results, confirming the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. All questions were deemed valid and reliable for the study. The data-gathering process involved obtaining informed consent from participants, encompassing both international and local tourists who visited Cavite City from 2020 onwards. Surveys were conducted over six weekends inside local restaurants, providing a comprehensive snapshot of tourist perspectives on food satisfaction, destination loyalty, and perceived risks within the city.

3.3 Statistical Analysis

The study utilized a range of statistical methods to comprehensively analyze data related to food-related motivation, satisfaction, and destination loyalty in Cavite City. Descriptive statistics, such as mean calculations and standard deviations, were employed to summarize and interpret responses on various food-related factors, providing insights into the level of motivation and satisfaction among respondents. Linear regression analysis was chosen to investigate the correlation between food satisfaction (independent variable) and destination loyalty

(dependent variable), aiming to identify patterns and trends in the relationship. This method allowed for the exploration of how changes in food satisfaction impact destination loyalty. Additionally, mediation analysis was conducted to understand the potential mediating role of perceived risks on the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. These statistical techniques were selected based on their suitability for examining relationships between variables and for exploring potential mechanisms underlying tourists' behaviors and satisfaction levels. The choice of STATA version 1 for data analysis was justified by its robust capabilities in regression modeling, mediation analysis, and handling complex relationships among multiple variables, ensuring the study's objectives were effectively addressed and interpreted..

3. Findings

3.1. Mean Results & Correlation

Table 1 presents rankings and mean scores related to food-related motivation, food involvement, and food satisfaction. The analysis of mean concerning food satisfaction provides valuable insights into tourists' satisfaction with the local cuisine of Cavite City and it reveals a strong inclination towards local cuisine, indicating its significant role in destination choice and visitor experiences. With a composite mean score of 4.21 for food-related motivation and 4.12 for food involvement, tourists show high levels of interest and engagement in culinary activities. The finding underscores the significant impact of cuisine on destination choice, aligning with prior research by Morris et al., (2020) emphasizing local food's role in attracting tourists. This highlights that local food experiences are not just add-ons but compelling reasons for choosing a destination (Atikahambar et al., 2019; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017; Su et al., 2020). A study by Sthapit et al. (2020), also found that sampling local cuisine drives trips and is a primary activity. While various studies found that increasing tourist loyalty to a destination is a result of a positive food experience (Lacap, 2019d; Ullah et al., 2022).

Moreover, tourists express considerable satisfaction (composite mean = 3.96, SD = 0.57) derived from their food experiences in Cavite City. This aligns with prior studies emphasizing the critical role of local food in enhancing tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Fitrizal et al., 2021; Zargar & Farmanesh, 2021). Positive food experiences not only increase satisfaction but also encourage re-visits (Ryu & Jang, 2006). The highest mean score for Food Satisfaction in our study supports the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), indicating that positive attitudes towards local food contribute to intentions to revisit or recommend the destination.

Table 1: Mean Results of Food Satisfaction

Descriptive Statistics for Food Satisfaction				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Food in Cavite City plays an important role in my destination choice.	4.46	0.63	Agree	1
2. Prior to my trip in Cavite City, I planned food choices to experience local culture.	4.34	0.64	Agree	3.5
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
3. I decided on destinations to visit only based on the foods I wanted to experience.	3.69	1.07	Agree	6

4. I usually do some research about the local food or restaurants in Cavite City prior to my trip.	4.00	1.01	Agree	5
5. Prior to my trip in Cavite City, one thing I anticipate is eating the food there.	4.34	0.75	Agree	3.5
6. I like trying different styles or types of food during travel in Cavite City.	4.40	0.82	Agree	2
Food-Related Motivation Composite Mean	4.21	0.60	High level of motivation	
1. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Interesting.	4.35	0.78	Agree	1
2. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Appealing.	4.14	0.87	Agree	4
3. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Valuable	4.25	0.80	Agree	2
4. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Exciting.	4.16	0.83	Agree	3
5. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Stimulating.	4.05	0.84	Agree	6
6. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Desirable.	4.02	0.92	Agree	7
7. Local Food activities in Cavite City are Wanted.	3.90	0.84	Agree	8
8. Local Food activities in Cavite City mean a lot to me.	4.09	0.86	Agree	5
Food Involvement Composite Mean	4.12	0.67	High level of motivation	
1. My food experience in Cavite City gave me high satisfaction.	3.99	0.76	Agree	3
2. My choice to taste the local cuisine of Cavite City was a wise one.	4.15	0.85	Agree	2
3. My food experience in Cavite City gave me a sense of joy.	4.19	0.73	Agree	1
4. The food in Cavite City met my expectations.	3.81	0.83	Agree	5
5. My food experience in Cavite City exceeded my expectations	3.68	0.84	Agree	6
Food Satisfaction Composite Mean	3.96	0.70	Satisfied	4
Overall Food Satisfaction	4.11	0.57	Satisfied	

Table 2 presents the mean results of destination loyalty among respondents. The findings reveal a strong level of loyalty towards Cavite City, as indicated by high mean scores for key loyalty indicators. Specifically, respondents expressed a high willingness to recommend Cavite City to others (mean = 4.37) and to spread positive word-of-mouth about the destination (mean = 4.36), with these items ranking the highest among the statements. Additionally, while the intention to revisit Cavite City received a slightly lower mean score (mean = 4.23), respondents still demonstrated agreement with this sentiment. The composite mean for destination loyalty (4.32) further confirms the overall high level of loyalty observed among respondents.

These results align with previous research by Lee & Xue (2020), which suggests that recommending the destination and intending to revisit are strong indicators of tourist loyalty. The findings highlight the importance of

positive experiences, including food satisfaction, in fostering destination loyalty. It is evident that tourists who are satisfied with the local cuisine are more inclined to exhibit behaviors that reflect loyalty towards Cavite City.

Table 2: Mean Results of Destination Loyalty

Descriptive Statistics for Destination Loyalty				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I would like to recommend Cavite City to others	4.37	0.781	Agree	1
2. I will spread positive word of mouth about Cavite City.	4.36	0.767	Agree	2
3. I will visit Cavite City again	4.23	0.913	Agree	3
Destination	4.32	0.749	Loyal	

The mean analysis presented in table 3 provides insights into tourists' perceived risks when visiting restaurants in Cavite City. The study aims to understand how tourists' risk perceptions, including those related to Covid-19, man-made risks, and natural risks, influence their food satisfaction and subsequent loyalty to the destination. Regarding Covid-19 risks, respondents expressed a high level of perceived risk overall (composite mean = 3.78, SD = 0.50), particularly emphasizing concerns about restaurant safety measures during the pandemic (item two, mean = 4.47). However, there was a neutral response towards visiting restaurants without the Covid-19 vaccine (item four, mean = 3.07). These findings align with previous research highlighting increased anxiety and cautiousness due to Covid-19 (Faour-Klingbeil et al., 2021; Dedeoğlu et al., 2022c; Li et al., 2022). Concerning man-made risks, respondents held a neutral stance overall (composite mean = 2.88, SD = 0.93), indicating a reluctance to revisit restaurants after terrorist attacks (item seven, mean = 2.44), consistent with studies emphasizing the influence of risk perception on destination decisions (Chahal & Devi, 2017; Zha, 2016). Regarding natural risks, respondents expressed a moderate level of perceived risk (composite mean = 2.83, SD = 0.87), with a neutral stance on the influence of natural disasters on revisiting restaurants in Cavite City (item twelve, mean = 3.02). These findings suggest varying impacts of perceived risks on destination choices, with natural disasters potentially having a less substantial influence compared to Covid-19 and man-made risks.

Table 3. Mean Results of Perceived Risk

Descriptive Statistics for Risk				
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I am very worried about getting COVID-19.	4.01	1.10	Agree	3
During the COVID-19, I paid more attention to restaurant disinfection & safety measures during the service of the restaurant staff (such as tableware disinfection/contactless thermometer, wearing of mask)	4.47	0.73	Agree	1

Around the time of the COVID-19, the frequency of my dining out dropped considerably	4.08	0.88	Agree	2
I am interested in visiting restaurants in Cavite City even without the COVID-19 Vaccine	3.07	1.19	Neutral	5
I'm still willing to go to restaurants during the COVID-19	3.29	1.06	Neutral	4
Covid risk composite mean	3.78	0.50	High Risk	
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if unexpected crimes may happen	2.96	1.04	Neutral	2
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if terrorist attacks can occur and destroy my personal property and lives may happen unexpectedly.	2.44	1.12	Disagree	4
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if unexpected political restrictions may limit the places I am visiting and traveling.	2.93	1.08	Neutral	3
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if traveling expenses may increase according to the change of the price of products and services.	3.19	1.13	Neutral	1
Man-made risk composite mean	2.88	0.93	Neither	
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if unexpected natural disasters, such as floods, landslides, or storms etc. may happen.	2.97	0.95	Neutral	2
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if I am worried that typhoons are dangerous or catastrophic to me	2.76	0.97	Neutral	3
I will revisit restaurants in Cavite City even if I expect great chances of storm surges causing flood	2.57	0.92	Neutral	4
A natural disaster will not influence my decision to revisit restaurants in Cavite City	3.02	1.07	Neutral	1
Natural risk composite mean	2.83	0.87	Neither	
Overall Risk	3.73	0.66	High Risk	

Table 4 displays a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.614 with a p-value of 0.001, indicating a strong positive correlation between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. This suggests that as food satisfaction increases, so does destination loyalty, and vice versa. These findings support hypothesis one, which posits that food satisfaction positively influences destination loyalty. Previous research by Ali et al. (2020), Q. Chen & Huang (2019), Folgado-Fernández et al. (2017), Lacap (2019e), and Safian et al. (2021) aligns with these results.

Moreover, existing studies indicate that when tourists are satisfied with the food at a destination, they are more inclined to recommend it to others and revisit it themselves, thereby enhancing their overall satisfaction (Esparza Huamanchumo et al., 2023; X. Li & Qiu, 2023).

Table 4: Pearson's Correlations

Variable		Food satisfaction	Destination
1. Food satisfaction	Pearson's r	—	
	p-value	—	
2. Destination	Pearson's r	0.614	—
	p-value	< .001	—

3.2. Mediation Analysis

Table 5 presents the direct effect analysis, illustrating how tourists' satisfaction with local food influences their loyalty to the destination, taking into consideration various risk factors. The statistical significance with a p-value of <0.001 validates the strong relationship indicated by the correlation presented in Table 5. The estimated coefficient of 0.709 indicates that for every one-unit increase in food satisfaction, there is an expected increase of 0.709 units in destination loyalty, even when adjusting for the influence of risk factors. Furthermore, the results of the mediation analysis show that satisfaction with food directly impacts tourists' loyalty to the destination, even when accounting for the presence of perceived risks. This finding contradicts Hypothesis two, which proposed that perceived risks would mediate the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. Initially, it was hypothesized that tourists' perceptions of risk would significantly influence their loyalty to the destination, potentially overshadowing the impact of food satisfaction. However, the findings suggest otherwise. Despite any perceived risks, tourists who derive greater satisfaction from their culinary experiences are still likely to exhibit loyalty to the destination. This conclusion aligns with previous research that has explored the link between food satisfaction and destination loyalty (Chaudhary & Islam, 2021; Cong, 2021). In contrast, Mancini (2022) found that tourists who perceive significant risks associated with a destination are less likely to experience satisfaction, make recommendations, or revisit the place. This study, however, is among the first to rigorously control for risk factors, providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between these variables.

Table 5: Direct effects

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Food satisfaction → Destination	0.709	0.092	7.747	< .001	0.530	0.889

Note. Delta method standard errors, normal theory confidence intervals, ML estimator.

Table 6 displays the indirect effect of the risk factor, functioning as a mediator between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. With a p-value of 0.355 indicating non-significance, it suggests that the risk factor does not notably affect the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. The findings imply that although there is a risk factor, it does not strongly affect the relationship of tourists' food satisfaction with their loyalty to the destination, as their concerns about risk do not impact their loyalty, even if they enjoy the local food. The findings also support the study's objective, where the research aims to explore how the perceived risks influence the relationship between the satisfaction of tourists with local cuisine and their loyalty to the destination. Moreover, the results highlighted the complexity of tourist behaviours, which suggests that other factors may have a more prominent influence on destination loyalty, overshadowing the perceived risks associated with the travel experience. Further investigation into these factors could provide valuable insights into the mechanisms driving tourists' decisions and preferences.

Table 6: Indirect effects

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Food satisfaction → Risk → Destination	0.019	0.021	0.925	0.355	-0.021	0.060

Note. Delta method standard errors, normal theory confidence intervals, ML estimator.

Table 7 illustrates the total effects of food satisfaction on destination loyalty without accounting the influence of the risk factor. The p-value of <0.001 indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. In simpler terms, results suggests that there is a strong connection between tourists' satisfaction with the local food and their loyalty to the destination they are visiting. The findings presented in Table 8 addresses the first research objective, which is to examine the direct relationship between tourists' satisfaction and their loyalty to Cavite City. Moreover, the coefficient of 0.728 further validates this relationship as results suggests that for every one-unit increase in food satisfaction, there is an expected increase in destination loyalty by 0.728 units. This means that as tourists become more satisfied with the food offerings in the destination, their loyalty to that destination also tends to increase without considering the risk factor. These findings also support hypothesis one, indicating that food satisfaction positively influences destination loyalty. The results are consistent with previous studies by Lacap (2019f) and Ali et al. (2020), which also found a direct relationship between food satisfaction and loyalty to a destination. These results support the notion that offering enjoyable culinary experiences can boost tourists' loyalty to a destination, bringing significant implications for the study.

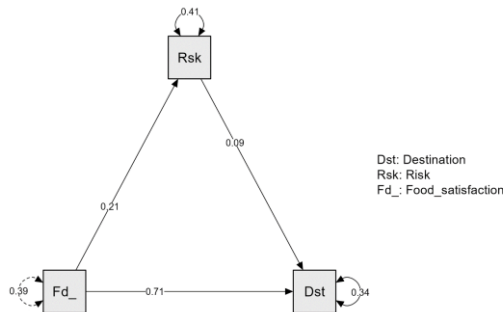
Table 7: Total effects

	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Food satisfaction → Destination	0.728	0.090	8.088	< .001	0.552	0.905

Note. Delta method standard errors, normal theory confidence intervals, ML estimator.

Figure 2 illustrates the complex relation between each variable such as the connection between food satisfaction and the risk factor, as well as the relationship between the risk factor and destination loyalty. The path from food satisfaction to the risk factor has a value of 0.21, indicating that an increase in tourists' food satisfaction is associated with an increase in the risk factor by 0.21 units. In other words, when tourists are more satisfied with the food they experience in Cavite City, they tend to perceive the overall risk associated with visiting the destination to be higher. Moreover, the path from the risk factor to destination loyalty has a value of 0.09, suggesting that an increase in the risk factor leads to a 0.091-unit increase in destination loyalty. This suggests that as tourists perceive the risks associated with visiting Cavite City to be higher, their loyalty to the destination actually increases. This might seem counterintuitive at first, but it aligns with previous research conducted by Chew & Jahari (2014), where they found that individuals who had previously visited areas affected by disasters often expressed a strong desire to return to those destinations during the recovery phase. In such instances, tourists may perceive unique opportunities or distinct experiences that outweigh the perceived risks, leading to increased loyalty. Overall, these findings underscore the complexity of tourist behavior and decision-making processes. They highlight how factors such as food satisfaction and perceived risks intertwine to influence tourists' loyalty to a destination.

Figure 2: Path Plot



4. Conclusions

The findings provided compelling insights into the relationship between food satisfaction, destination loyalty, and perceived risks among tourists visiting Cavite City. The analysis revealed that tourists exhibit a strong inclination towards local cuisine, indicating its significant role in destination choice and visitor experiences. The high levels of food-related motivation and involvement underscore the importance of culinary activities in attracting and engaging tourists.

Moreover, tourists expressed considerable satisfaction derived from their food experiences in Cavite City, aligning with prior studies emphasizing the critical role of local food in enhancing tourist satisfaction and loyalty. The study's correlation analysis demonstrated a strong positive relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty, highlighting that as food satisfaction increases, so does destination loyalty, independent of perceived risks.

Contrary to the hypothesis, perceived risks did not significantly mediate the relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty. Despite concerns about Covid-19, man-made, and natural risks, tourists who derived higher satisfaction from culinary experiences demonstrated a consistent loyalty towards Cavite City. This underscores the significance of food experiences in shaping tourists' perceptions and behaviours towards a destination. By offering an in-depth understanding of the interconnection among satisfaction with local food, perceived risks, and loyalty to the destination, the study substantially contributes to the scholarly discourse, producing a more nuanced and comprehensive knowledge of these pivotal facets within tourism research and management.

5.1 Implications

The study's findings carry significant implications for destination management and tourism research. The high levels of food-related motivation and involvement observed among tourists underscore the crucial role of local cuisine in shaping destination choices and visitor experiences. Notably, the strong correlation between food satisfaction and destination loyalty highlights the direct impact of culinary experiences on tourists' propensity to revisit and recommend a destination. These insights align with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), emphasizing the importance of positive attitudes towards local food in influencing tourists' intentions. However, these findings also contradict the Protection Motivation Theory (PMT), as perceptions of risks like Covid-19, man-made events, and natural disasters do not significantly mediate tourists' loyalty when they are satisfied with food experiences, suggesting that effective destination strategies should prioritize enhancing culinary offerings while addressing safety measures. This contradiction challenges conventional understandings of risk perception in influencing tourist behaviours and emphasizes the multifaceted nature of decision-making processes in tourism.

The study suggests several factors that can benefit tourism in the future. Including, a strategic marketing initiative should concentrate on highlighting the gastronomic experiences of Cavite City while enhancing the quality and diversity of available food choices. Enhancing food satisfaction can lead to increased destination loyalty and attract more tourists. One example is optimizing digital platforms to create and engage visually appealing content that showcases the city's various local foods through virtual tours and websites—creating exclusive culinary experiences by partnering with local food establishments, artisans, and producers. The culinary events, workshops, and package deals could be organized in collaboration to highlight the city's distinctive flavours. Develop innovative marketing campaigns designed to stimulate the senses and pique the interest of consumers.

The present study has limitations due to a small sample size of respondents, mainly comprising day tours and local tourists. Future researchers should consider expanding the participant pool to include more overnight and foreign tourists to enhance generalizability. Additionally, investigating further aspects of culinary experiences, including food quality, authenticity, and cultural significance, could provide insights into their influence on overall satisfaction with local cuisine, risk perception, and subsequent impact on destination loyalty. Moreover, it is recommended to conduct additional investigations to delve into the interplay among food satisfaction, destination loyalty, and perceived risks in other destinations to compare or contrast the results of the present study. Such endeavours would enable comparing or differentiating findings from the current study. Understanding these connections can inform effective marketing strategies in different contexts.

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