

## EXPLORING THE MOTIVES OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN SELECTED DIOCESAN SHRINE AND PARISH CHURCHES

AURE, N. A. A.<sup>1\*</sup> – RAMOS, A. R. P.<sup>1</sup> – SILVESTRE, Z. V.<sup>1</sup> – ESPLANADA, D. E.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *College of Tourism and Hospitality Management, De La Salle University, Dasmariñas,  
Philippines.*

*\*Corresponding author  
e-mail: aurenicoke05[at]gmail.com*

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this study is to know the motives of tourist visiting the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Senora De Candelaria in Silang, Cavite and Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral. The two parishes were chosen in the study because the two churches are both heritage sites. By conducting survey, the researchers will know if the tourist visits for religious or secular purposes. Quantitative Research will be used by the researchers. The sampling method will also be used. Based on the results, the purpose of most tourists for visiting was for secular purpose. It has a percentage of 56.66% while the religious purposes have a percentage of 43.33 % percent. The study aims to determine the tourist's preferences on visiting two selected churches in Cavite. The study's finding tells that the tourists' motivational visits are for secular reasons. It was found that religious motives significantly prevail as very important factors for visitors to set out on journey in comparison to secular motives which is regarded as not very important travel motivator towards religious sites.

**Keywords:** *pilgrimage tourism, motives, diocesan shrine, religious tourism*

### Introduction

According to Ng and Ho (2018), travel motivation is a set of demands that leads a person to participate in a specific travel activity or place. The most prevalent motives are for visiting overseas; for example, education, relaxation, and novelty. Numerous research studies, particularly those on education and tourism, have made motivation a prominent subject. It is recognized as the “motivating factor behind all acts”, and is thus described as a person's drive and readiness to perform. According to Reyes et al. (2021), the Philippines were the one of very few various Roman Catholic majority countries in Southeast Asia. Critics argue that the Philippine style of Catholicism is a synthesis of its past and present. A long-standing link with Spanish Christianity defines history; while the present is defined by the confluence of eastern and western religious mindsets that run parallel to secular notions. According to STANDS4 Network Official Portal (2023), religious tourism refers to the practice of individuals or groups traveling for religious, missionary, or recreational purposes. The church that acts as the neighborhood's main place of worship is known as a parish church. The parish church can occasionally play a prominent part in neighborhood affairs in many parts of the world, especially in rural areas, allowing nonreligious community events to be held on its premises. The church structure reflects this position, and parish churches vary greatly in size and style.

According to ETravel Official Portal (2023), religious tourism occurs when a person visits to a pilgrimage location solely for religious reasons. These pilgrims go on pilgrimage to worship and enjoy salvation. While worship is the primary motivation for religious tourism, other motives include thankfulness and confession, spiritual salvation, celebrating religious events, and communicating with other believers. Religious

motivation measures how significant religion is to an individual's existence and sheds light on how it affects both their internal and external existence. Extrinsic, intrinsic, and quest motivation are the three subscales of the newly presented measure of religious motivation (Jennings, 2016). While there are many different reasons to go to modern pilgrimages, some of them include interest, a quest for understanding, a need for personal development, compassion, a faith journey, and a deep sense of connection and community (Collins-Kreiner, 2016). Two perspectives on the significance and purpose of the parish church structure exist: as examples of both material and immaterial cultural forms (Klimenko and Berdnik, 2018). In addition, impact of cultural heritage, religious and secular motives, and tourism factors are also interested for this research. The church structure may serve as a landmark in the local community's cognitive map and serve as a point of spatial orientation.

The Our Lady of Candelaria Parish Church, also known as the Silang Church or the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Señora de Candelaria, is renowned for its Spanish colonial architecture and retablos with rococo influences in Silang, Cavite. It is the oldest stone church still standing in the province of Cavite. The Franciscans founded it in 1595 and built it, together with a school, between 1637 and 1639 using light materials. In 1603, a fire destroyed the original building. By that time, the Jesuits were stationed in Silang, and Father Juan de Salazar oversaw the construction of the current stone building from 1637 to 1639. The church was consecrated to Our Lady of Candelaria in 1640. Unlike other Jesuit churches erected under Father Salazar's supervision at Antipolo and Tanay, the Silang Church has a basic exterior devoid of intricate embellishment. This was largely owing to Father Salazar's death in 1640. The inside of the church is very stark, with high-placed tiny windows and plain pilasters. Its retablos are built of wood, and it has ornate ledges and panels, as well as several niches for saint pictures.

Three retablos may be found at the Silang Church: one main altar and two colaterales (or side altars). The altar mayor tells the story of Jesus in Mary's life using the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. The first level's central niche is occupied by a beloved image of Silang's patroness, Nuestra Señora de Candelaria. Saints associated with the church's religious order often occupy the lower niches, with the uppermost niches allocated for the patron saints of the church. The icon of the Virgin of Candelaria was also a feature of the church. According to legend, the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary was discovered in 1640 by a Silang local named Andres. Andres discovered the picture. When another local saw the image, he begged Andres for it, and Andres handed it up without hesitation. The image garnered a large number of devotees, prompting the construction of a tabernacle. In 1643, the native departed Silang without paying respect to the picture, and when he returned, the image was nowhere to be discovered. He searched high and low for the image after appealing for forgiveness. However, the picture would vanish nine times more over the next few years. A Jesuit rector urged him to bring the icon to the Silang Church, where it still stands today. Today, the image is commemorated with a procession and celebration from February 1 to 3 (Cavite Official Portal, 2020).

The Our Lady of the Pilar, officially known as the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral, is the seat of the bishop of the Diocese of Imus and one of the provinces of Cavite's oldest Spanish colonial churches. In Barangay Toclong, a section of Cavite Viejo that would later becoming the modern Kawit in Cavite, the Augustinian Recollects built a church when they first arrived in Imus in

1795. Father Pedro de San Buenaventura, a Recollect, asked the government to create Imus as a separate municipality in 1774. It was not until October 3, 1795, that Imus was declared a separate town or parish. In what is now known as Barangay Bayan Luma, a town center and a makeshift chapel were built. It was later relocated to its current position in Barangay Balangon, and development began in 1823. The facade of the church was modeled by the Manila Cathedral, which flourished from 1760 to 1852 and was built of stones and bricks. As the scene of several conflicts and uprisings against the Spanish regime, the cathedral has also witnessed such history. Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora were three priests who perished in 1872. On June 12, 1898, General Emilio Aguinaldo declared an independence from Spanish rule in Kawit, Cavite. And it became a separate bishop from Manila on November 25, 1961, as a result of Pope John XXIII's Apostolic Constitution *Christi fidelium*.

The Diocese of Imus was formally created on April 29, 1962. The church made the Virgin Mary, also known as Our Lady of the Pilar, their patroness. The National Historical Commission of the Philippines (formerly the National Historical Institute of the Philippines) designated the cathedral as a historical structure on November 13, 2006, with the erection of a historical marker. Reynaldo Evangelista, who replaced outgoing Bishop Luis Antonio Tagle, who was named Archbishop of Manila on December 12, 2011, as the present bishop of Imus, was chosen by Pope Francis on April 8, 2013. On June 5, 2013, Evangelista was ordained as the sixth bishop of the diocese. On December 3, Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle canonically crowned Our Lady of the Pillar of Imus, a painting, as the patroness of Imus Cathedral. The church houses Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Imus' original, canonically crowned statue (Our Lady of the Pillar). The Blessed Virgin Mary is the acknowledged patroness of the Diocese of Imus, Province of Cavite, according to the now-saint Pope John XXIII. John the Baptist serves as the city's secondary patron saint (Diocese of Imus Official Portal, 2023).

Two parishes in the province of Cavite were chosen for this study's purpose: Our Lady of Candelaria Parish in Silang, and the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral in Imus. In addition, this will determine the motivation of tourists who visit one of the two selected heritage churches for either religious or secular purposes. The selected churches would be the research locale of the study. This research has certain drawbacks. This includes the lack of related literature in terms of tourists' motivation and purpose in visiting religious sites, and the limited number of tourists entered the sites. Researchers plan to expand as well by including additional religious places and a wider range of faiths. The study will fill a knowledge gap by determining the tourists' preferences on visiting two selected churches in Cavite, a parish church and a cathedral which is the seat of the province's diocese that are also considered as heritage significance. Additionally, there were added indications of cultural and historical awareness, context, and comprehension and interpretation of meanings and symbols.

Specifically, the researchers, aim to answer the following: (1) what is the respondents' demographic profile in terms of: name, age, gender, educational attainment; (2) what is the purpose of their visit by one of the reasons: (i) religion purposes [expressing love and respect for God, searching for forgiveness, getting closer to something sacred, pilgrimage, healing-psychological well-being, physical health, spiritual], and (ii) secular value [historic value, cultural value and architecture, interesting place to visit, following the modern trends in travelling, exploring legends and interesting stories about the site]; as well as (3) is there a significant difference in

the respondent's assessment of the purpose of the visit when grouped according to profile?

In addition, the hypothesis of this research would be that there is no significance in measuring the motivational factors in terms of grouping according to age, gender, and educational background, as this study will determine the purpose of their visit of a religious site. The objectives of the study are to diagnose the motivation of tourists who visit one of the two selected churches in Cavite, the Our Lady of Candelaria in Silang and the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral, which is the two (2) following reasons. First, the tourist visits the site for religious motives (sacred acts). And lastly, the tourist visits the site for secular motives (tourism acts). Moreover, the following will benefit of this research from the study's findings: (1) The Provincial Tourism Office of Cavite and Local Government Units or LGU: The proposed study may be beneficial to them as this will help them to promote churches as cultural and historical importance to the visitors, along with serving as a guide for their proposed improvements and strategies to potential visitors in the future; (2) Church Organizations, Parishioners, and Workers: The proposed study may be beneficial to them as this will help them to promote their church as cultural and historical importance to the visitors; (3) Potential Tourists and Visitors: The proposed study may be beneficial to them as this will help them to plan for the visit either personal reasons or as part of their trip itineraries; and (4) Future Researchers: The proposed study may be beneficial to them as a guide and reference for future academics and provide additional information about the motivation of tourists in visiting cultural and heritage location such as religious sites and the travel preferences in visiting common churches in the Philippines.

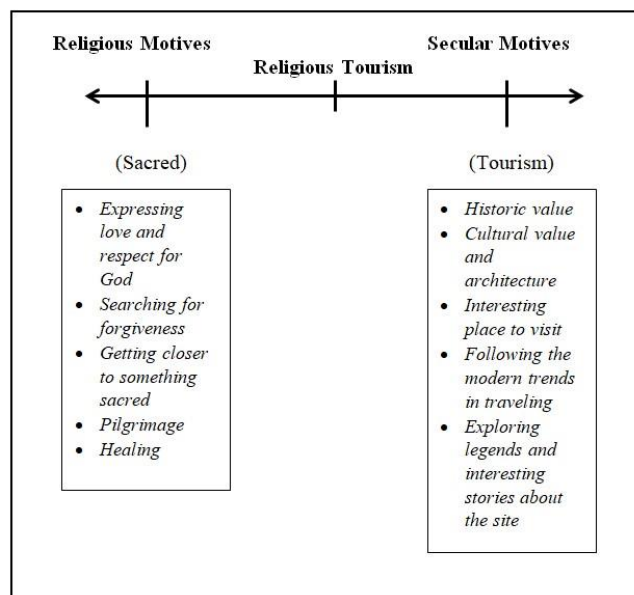
This research study added to the paucity of literature on visitors' travel preferences in visiting common churches at the Philippines. Furthermore, the findings gave further information and ideas for individuals, groups, and travel agents to design vacation packages based on the visitors' travel interests. The uniqueness of this study is to comprehend and act on travel motivations, providing an opportunity to recognize the purpose of visiting the two selected churches. This will allow both current and potential tourists. Aside from worship and its tradition of the Holy Mass and other rites, it emphasizes curiosity as to why tourists visit cultural establishments such as churches. Such experiences can be had within the church grounds, along with other tourists and devotees. Making the researchers curious as to how they were persuaded to visit such a location. The study will be unique since it will review religion and motivation of tourists in visiting the Our Lady of Candelaria Parish Church and the Imus Cathedral. Its result will also benefit other researchers who will study the connections between motivation and religious sites.

The researchers will gather 30 respondents, 15 in each church, that will be asked to answer the questionnaire-based in-person interview for more in-depth information on their visit in Our Lady of Candelaria Parish Church in Silang and the Imus Cathedral, and our respondent will only be limited to aged 18 years old and older. The researchers will gather all the data regarding to this study and analyze their visit if it is for religious or tourism purpose. This study is guided using a survey questionnaire to determine the effect on the two selected churches in Cavite. Furthermore, the study only focused on exploring the motives of pilgrimage tourists in visiting two selected churches in Cavite for either religious or secular (tourism) purpose. Specifically, to the tourists who visited

either one of the two selected churches in Cavite, as the respondents in this research. Residents, parishioners, and church workers were not included in this research.

### ***Literature review and conceptual/theoretical framework***

According to Rebuya et al. (2020), the relative infancy of the field, the dynamic nature of the phenomena under examination, and the regular separation of research and practice all contribute to the prevalence of the descriptive research approach in the leisure and tourism industries. Additionally, it aims to convey and outline the special qualities of the subject under consideration. This was modified backed up by facts provided in the study of Božic et al. (2016) (*Figure 1*).



**Figure 1.** *The pilgrim-tourist motives: A conceptual framework.*  
Source: Božic et al. (2016).

The framework on Figure 1 shows the explanation of the pilgrim-tourist motives. This framework provides three variants of Secular Tourist and Pilgrims. Pilgrims who are driven by both typical tourist attractions and religious motivations are referred to as religious tourists. According to Božic et al. (2016), secular travelers have profane reasons and adhere to the ideas. Pilgrims, on the other hand, possess strong religious beliefs, are motivated by religion, and fall under the category of religion. Both sorts of religious tourists have both positive and negative motivations. Recreational tourists do not fall into either category.

According to Ng and Ho (2018), travel is thought to be educational because it broadens one's perspective and mind. It was discovered that having a vacation can help people minimize burnout and stress while also making them feel happier and healthier. Travel helps one's mental wellness health in addition to educational outcomes. Having a vacation can help people feel happier and healthier while also reducing burnout and stress. A variety of visitors, including students, backpackers, and retirees, have been studied in recent tourism research to identify their travel motivations and behavior. The strength of emotions can vary from day to day while on tour. Furthermore, travelers' emotional reactions play an important part in travel experienced such as the satisfaction, destination connection, perceived the entire picture, and perceived behavior control. The

research analyzes a comprehensive visit intention model based on trip incentive, expected dangers, and transportation restrictions using actual data. Visit intention was unaffected by physical, financial, or socio-psychological danger. Interpersonal and intrapersonal travel limitations were found to be negatively associated with visit intention (Khan et al., 2018). It can be concluded that most urban tourists do not exhibit extremes in their personality when traveling. They are either daring or reserved. Despite the fact that they are open to new experiences, many tourists value the independence they enjoy while traveling.

Following a predetermined itinerary is less crucial than being able to manage and budget their own time during tours. This is because tourists from metropolitan regions are accustomed to a daily routine that requires them to stick to a timetable. Because of their regimented daily schedule, they prefer a more relaxed expectation on their trips rather than a greater expectation (Reyes et al., 2021). The COVID-19 was declared by the World Health Organization a health crisis. Due to this, each nation closed the border to pilgrims, holy sites, and several government policies were mandated to protect the borders from infection. All religious sites were closed to the public, resulting in a decrease in religious tourism (Yasin et al., 2020). Prasetyo et al. (2020) stated that COVID-19 has such a direct and considerable impact on perception intensity and vulnerability. In addition, perceived vulnerability and harshness had a significant indirect impact on motivation to follow. The following intent had a substantial significant effect on both real and participative manner, resulting in efficacy beliefs. It has been discovered that understanding COVID-19 has a considerable indirect impact on perceived efficacy.

Religious tourism is one of the oldest tourism activities (Zamani-Farahani and Eid, 2016), and it is extremely important in the tourism and hospitality industries. According to Terzidou et al. (2018), believers' intimate and emerging performances of places, as well as of religion itself, have a direct influence on travel motivations. The definition of places is found on experiences from engaging religion and connecting with the divine, as shown by commitments and prophecies. Such knowledge is required for predicting the impacts of failed pilgrimages as well as place authentication processes, which can aid in explaining visitor trends. Though religious concepts and cultures are unique to a given location, they can excite public's curiosity in witnessing or engaging with people, resulting in consumer habits and the influx of people and wealth. While the development of tourism is an important source to economic progress, managerial decisions can have both favorable and unfavorable outcomes on the sector, community, and nature, influencing community environmental sustainability (Lin et al., 2021).

The design of religious buildings and memory is crucial in assisting those who are grieving. It creates a structure that is closest to the ground, permanent, and most noticeable. It is a representation of human creativity and the pinnacle of spirituality and aspirations in life. Its exterior shape, scale, expressiveness, ideological value, and symbolic message can incite or defuse conflict, inspire peaceful coexistence in communities, or serve as a catalyst for conflict by sending the wrong messages and inciting conflict (Uscinowicz, 2016). In the other instance, the religious structure represents devotion, religious tradition, and patriotic in the minds of the general public. Deri et al. (2018) stated that religious places contribute to tourism in terms of sociocultural preservation of culture and religious sites and economic benefit to the community. When categorized by occupation, frequency of visit, and destination, there is a considerable socio-cultural and economic difference. Smith (1992) identifies and

differentiates between religious and secular causes. Religious motivations are solely based on spiritual faith and adoration of God, whereas secular motivations combine trips to religious sites where recreational and other tourist industry services are offered. He remarked that some pilgrims who travel for religious reasons are more travelers than pilgrims; while others are both travelers and pilgrims, and those who are primarily tourists but utilize pilgrimage as an excuse to travel.

Artuz (2020) explains that the churches' historic cultural religious practices, devotee culture, and praying as a holy leisure all play a large role in local tourism as cultural representations, while sacred items such as the tabernacle, bell tower, patron saints, and retablos are all play a significant role in local tourism as attraction value of locations. It was determined that pilgrims who visit historical churches are heterogeneous. The first form of tourism mobility to exist was pilgrimage thousands of years ago. Its importance has diminished in recent decades as other tourism niches have grown in importance. Despite being a relatively recent phenomenon, modern tourism has its roots in the age-old ritual of pilgrimage. Indeed, it is challenging to comprehend how tourism has evolved without having a clear understanding of how pilgrimage was practiced in earlier centuries (Collins-Kreiner, 2020). Scholars have long disputed and challenged the term "pilgrimage." It has been employed as a term to describe, examine, and justify religiously inspired pilgrimages to specific holy places. Recent research, however, suggest that this may not be the fact. With the expansion of tourism businesses, devotion has become commodified and has become an essential component of tourist attractions. As a result, creating a precise and permanent meaning of the term is challenging (Sya'rani, 2018).

According to Co and SU (2018), the entire process of living can be viewed as a journey. To term it a pilgrimage to oneself is, to say the least, stating the obvious and, to be blunt, fatuous. There is no holy or sacred place to visit, only the labyrinth of thoughts inside one's private spaces, these gaps nonetheless filled by our relationships with significant persons who no doubt affect our judgments. Rebuya et al. (2020), explains that users of the site's religious motivational components were significantly more focused on religious motivation than secular groups, which was reflected in their interactions. It reveals how natural spiritual direction, such as spiritual conscience fulfillment and cultural mystery, motivate religious pilgrimages. In this sense, visitors are spiritual travelers since the primary motivations for visiting sacred locations are a yearning for knowledge, wisdom, or an actual contact with the divine or sacred. Prudente (2017) defines that the comprehension of performative depictions of Tagalog faith and religiosity requires a grasp of the Tagalog idea of panata. A person's desire to perform, singing, play, and dance in fulfil a religious duty to God for a decent society. The performativity of panata highlights the close bond and mutual support between the performing arts and panata. Because of panata's spiritual zeal to perform before God, Tagalog demonstrations of religion will thus remain as a living tradition.

In the era of secularization, churches are becoming less important. Despite this, they continue to be significant to municipal, provincial, domestic, and global cultures (Szajda, 2018). The churches serve as locations for concerts, other cultural activities, and tourist hotspots. The importance of the church building structure can be taken into account in two ways-as an expression of the culture of the material world, and as a symbol of the community's spiritual life (Klimenko and Berdnik, 2018). Cabrera et al. (2019) believes that acknowledging a holy site's historical and cultural relevance for tourism and its carrying capacity would lead to public appreciation, which might be

critical to property conservation, protection, and effective regional governance. Consideration of population features, religion, and regularity of spiritual excursions might raise a number of issues linked to generating spiritual tourism and could open up new avenues for research in holy site management and religious tourism marketing. The church building continues to be seen as a shared benefit by the neighborhood and a component of parish that contributes to both socialization and personal personality. In other words, the structure embodies a variety of creative endeavors, such as architectural design, building, or space adaption for religious worship, as well as customs and practices of daily creation as a “sacred space” (Gilbert et al., 2019). In terms of social and economic aspects, pilgrim churches support tourism, but they vehemently disagree in terms of cultural aspects. In several areas of the country, churches play a significant role in the tourism industry. The accessibility of the transportation was identified as the issue that was encountered most frequently, and an action plan was suggested to remedy it (De Castro et al., 2014).

## **Materials and Methods**

The research method used in the study are; the Research Design, Research Instrument, and data gathering procedure. The instrument and the data gathering procedure is presented to attain the study’s objective on the exploring the motives of pilgrimage tourism in Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Señora de Candelaria and Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral in Cavite. Quantitative Research Design is to be used by researchers. Acquiring and evaluating statistical data are required. It can be used to determine averages and trends, generate forecasts, assess the veracity of causal theories, and extend findings to larger populations. The tourist motivation to visit the Our Lady of Candelaria in Silang, Cavite and the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral, Cavite was the center of the study. The sampling method that will be used is Purposive Sampling where participants are recruited to provide the information needed for a particular phenomenon. Purposive sampling is a sort of sampling where the sample was selected based on the researcher's assessment of which people are best suited to the study's requirements.

A self-administered questionnaire-based in-person survey will be used as the primary data collection method to accomplish the study's objectives. The researchers will conduct a survey of 30 individuals consists of 15 participants each both Our Lady of the Candelaria in Silang and the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar - Imus Cathedral. Descriptive Statistics Analysis will be used to identify the fundamental characteristics of data in a study and gives short descriptions of the measures and sample. It assists researchers in understanding the specifics of a sample group rather than making assumptions or projections about the full population. The questionnaire is a self-made questionnaire. The part one of the question will be the demographic profile such as age, gender, and educational attainment. And the second part will be asked of the purpose of their visit for religious or secular purposes, each purposes contains five reasons of their selected two purpose of their visit. The five elements on their reason will be rated in 4-point liker scale from 4 which is highly agreed to 1 which is highly disagreed. The data of statistical treatment that will be used are frequency and percentage, and weighted mean. This will be used to measure the respondents’ reasons of their visit. Based on the statistician, upon gathering the data the statistical analysis



that will be used are T-test in comparing two groups (ex. gender) and in comparison, and ANOVA will be used for three or more groups (ex. age, educational attainment).

To sum it up, this research is non-output base and will be coming up with only recommendations regarding to the Exploring the Motives of Pilgrimage Tourism in Diocesan Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Señora de Candelaria and Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral in Cavite. A letter of permission will be issued to the respective Parish offices in Our Lady of the Candelaria Silang Church and the Diocesan Shrine and Parish of the Our Lady of the Pillar-Imus Cathedral as the subjects of this research and to conduct the interview with the visitors or tourists. The researchers will then visit and conduct the survey to the visitors once permission is granted. All gathered answers will be forwarded to the statistician. Rest assured that the respondents' identities will be of utmost confidentiality for the study purposes. Minimum health protocols are also observed both the researchers and participants due to recent increase of COVID-19 cases.

## Results and Discussion

Pilgrimage is considered as one of the growing activities of people in the world. Religious historical sites are important travel destinations that not only promote global travel and economic expansion but also serve as vital gathering places for tourists and the local populations, fostering tolerance, respect, and cultural understanding. Due to the growing secularization of society, tourism has become one of the factors influencing the preservation of many religious landmarks. Engaging with different religions is a one-of-a-kind experience for visitors that can only take place with the utmost respect for host communities (UNWTO, 2014). *Table 1* illustrates the gender of the respondents wherein the male respondents show the majority in a frequency of 17 in 56.67%, while female participants count to 13 frequencies with 43.33%. *Table 2* shows the age level of the respondents wherein the highest frequency of 13 in 43.33% among 21-30 years old, followed by 9 in 18-20 age range with 30%. Next, with a frequency of 5 among 41-50 years old participants with 16.67%, only 3 counts garnered from 31-40 years old. While other year age level shows no counts in zero percent. *Table 3* demonstrates the purpose of visit of the respondents. Among the 30 participants, 17 of them visited the church due to secular purpose while religious purpose was yield among 13 respondents. *Table 4* shows that the religious motives of the respondents. The highest of respondents that motivated them to visit the site due to searching of forgiveness in 1.933 mean, followed by 1.63 mean on healing specifically on spiritual. On pilgrimage purpose shows 1.567 mean, 1.6 mean on expressing love and respect of God, 1.1 mean among getting closer to something sacred; and lastly, on healing motives due to physical health. *Table 5* illustrates the secular motives. The highest mean was 2.73 wherein the participants visit on purpose for exploring legends and interesting stories about the site, followed by 1.567 due to historic value, interesting place to visit with a mean of 1.5, 1.267 mean on cultural value and architecture; and lastly, with the least of the mean yield to 1.167 in following the modern trends in travelling.

**Table 1.** *The analysis based on gender.*

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	17	56.67
Female	13	43.33

Others	0	0
Total	30	100

**Table 2.** *The analysis based on age group.*

Age	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
18-20	9	30
21-30	13	43.33
31-40	3	10
41-50	5	16.67
51-60	0	0
61-70	0	0
>71	0	0
Total	30	100

**Table 3.** *The analysis based on purpose of visit.*

Purpose of visit	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Religious	13	43.33
Secular	17	56.67
Total	30	100

**Table 4.** *The analysis based on respondents' visit by religious motives.*

Religious motives	Mean
Expressing love and respect for God	1.60
Searching for forgiveness	1.93
Getting closer to something sacred	1.10
Pilgrimage	1.57
Healing	
a. Psychological well-being	1.03
b. Physical health	0.87
c. Spiritual	1.63
Total	1.39

**Table 5.** *The analysis based on respondents' visit by secular motives.*

Secular motives	Mean
Historic value	1.57
Cultural value and architecture	1.27
Interesting place to visit	1.50
Following the modern trends in traveling	1.17
Exploring legends and interesting stories about the site	2.73
Total	1.65

The study aims to determine the tourists' preferences on visiting two selected churches in Cavite, a parish church and a cathedral which is the seat of the province's diocese that are also considered as heritage significance. Additionally, there were added indications of cultural and historical awareness, context, and comprehension and interpretation of meanings and symbols. Majority of the respondents are male in 56.67%, among of them were in range of 21-30 in percentage of 43.33%. Most of the participants visited the site with secular motives. Exploring the modern trends in travelling shows the most response out of the population. On religious motives, searching for forgiveness was shown to be the highest mean out of the responses.

## Conclusion

This study discussed the results from the three objectives. First, no motivational differences were found for education background, as this will not affect the study's objectives. Second, this study found that tourists visiting these two pilgrimage churches are mostly secularly motivated. Exploring legends and interesting stories about the two pilgrimages are the main reasons of their visit. Lastly, motivational differences were found for gender and age in the assessment of the purpose of visit. A small difference on male visitors than female visitors, and adults aged 21 to 30 are among the largest visitors at the time of conducting the survey. The study's finding tells that the tourists' motivational visit of two pilgrimage churches is for secular reasons. According to the UNWTO (2016), people often visit churches for touristic reasons. It was found that religious motives significantly prevail as very important factors for visitors to set out on journey in comparison to secular motives which is regarded as not very important travel motivator towards religious sites. This is particularly true as many tourists recognized the province of Cavite as one of the recognized tourists' destinations, including pilgrimage tourism. If we examine the two churches, we found that they played the important role in the province's history and culture. This will help to gain more tourists to visit and to promote the historical and religious tourism.

The study's results will benefit for the individual, group, and organizations involved. As tourism continues to progress throughout the province, the government units should continue to revise the tourism plan for both provincial and local units. Religious tourism growth brings unprecedented opportunities for sustainable development by creating jobs, allowing infrastructure and investment, and stimulating local culture, crafts, and food (UNWTO, 2016). Thus, the crowd control of the visitors during peak days and prevention of spreading infectious diseases, cultural protection and preservation, and opportunities for residents are among the tourism plans needed for the continuing of revising the tourism plan. This plan will help the church parishioners, workers, and volunteers to continue promoting and developing the churches mentioned in this study. This study is limited in its ability to generalize because of only 30 respondents chose and that the tourists might share both secular and religious motives during their visit rather than one of them mentioned. It is suggested that the future studies use probability sampling. Furthermore, it is recommended to conduct the study using expanded framework including both religious and secular motives along with expanded supporting related literatures, and same location that are mentioned and additional pilgrimage churches.

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## Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest with any parties involved in this study.

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