

Embroidery Industry as Tourist Attraction in Taal Batangas, Philippines

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***Abstract** - Taal is renowned for its fine art of embroidery being kept alive by the woman living in the heritage town. The study aimed to determine how the respondents perceive embroidery industry in Taal, Batangas. Descriptive type of research was utilized in the study. Results showed that respondents strongly agreed that human resources in terms of labor were adequate which indicated that multipliers occur in the business wherein, it was not just the tourism industry being benefited by the income coming from the tourist but also it provides employment. In terms of the monthly income of the respondents, most of them got a monthly income of 10,000 – 19,000 when their product establish contact to some extent, rapport with some entrepreneurs by engaging in a small business venture with them through friends who bought embroidery item in a bulk to be sold in the city. The respondents mostly agreed that the needle was the most adequate material resources in making embroidery. As the ways of the government of Taal in promoting embroidery, the respondents mostly agreed that the provincial events contributed to the promotion of embroidery. The promotion of provincial events got the highest weighted mean. Budgetary problem was the main factor for not engaging in embroidery. The respondents strongly agreed that because of changes in the design, modes of production and distribution, cost and materials capital increased.*

Keywords - Embroidery, Taal Batangas, Heritage Town, Tourism Industry

I. INTRODUCTION

Philippine embroidery is well known all over the world. Its universal appeal embodies a captivating style with its intricate design and soft hues. Embroidery in the Philippines originated as a hobby among women folk in provinces and barrios. Tourism has social, economic, environmental, cultural, heritage and arts effects on the Municipality of Taal, Batangas (Aguda, et. al, 2013).

Embroidery is one of the Filipino traditions wherein women at one point were lavishly praised and loved. For Taal is the hub of barong tagalong making, Taaleños prefer to call it Barong Pilipino in the country. It is an industry that dates back to the American regime at the 19th century.

Embroidery is the pattern of other ornamental effects to a fabric. In the modern sense, embroidery is the decoration made on the finished woven material by the use of needle and thread. As a mean of depicting the culture of a country, embroidery has historic origin and this has official sanction dates back as early as the Spanish educational reform of 1863. Embroidery took the place of geography, history and agriculture in the women's curriculum. This maybe construct as chauvinism at its worst but at best, the implication is that women are natural born artist and should be given

all the time to perfect their talent at this craft. Philippine embroidery is usually done with white cotton thread on imported cotton or linen. The people of Taal also grew cotton of reputable quality and finished them as clothing with beautiful permanent here both men and women were involved in the textile industry.

Since people of Taal love embroidery, women and children of this place grow up with the needles, thread and embroidery patterns as ardent fixtures in their environment. Town folks are proud to declare that many houses in Taal were build by embroidery. It continues to be the lifeblood of people who send many young Taaleño to school. Aside for being important to the people of taal, embroidery has become the lifeline of the people; it is also played roles in tourism. Many tourist's got amazed when they see the different embroidered tablecloth of Taal.

Bonsol (2000) declared that embroidering is now included in the town's school curriculum to preserve one of Taal's greatest treasures. As interesting as fine needlework are the textile materials on which the fanciful embroidery makes it presence, hand embroidered items have always been much sought after not only linens and garments are available but many small gift items and even picture frames.

Embroidery presented that most of the Barong Tagalog purchased in the stalls of central market Divisoria and other stores in Manila came from Taal. Embroidery have been also kept alive and made rampant in school, provinces, regions or even abroad. Raw materials such as ramil come from Manila where they are distributed throughout the country even exported abroad.

Embroidery was taught in private schools before the public schools were organized. Each supervising teacher and principal worked out the course in their own ways. The bureau of public schools now furnishes the school throughout the stands with perforated patterns. Articles made in the schools must conform to design approved by the Bureau of Public schools.

Taal is one of the oldest towns in the Philippines. It is located between Lemery and Alitagtag. It is bound on the north by the Municipality of San Nicolas, on the east by Alitagtag, on the south by San Luis and on the west by Balayan Bay and Lemery. The culture being inscribed in the townsfolk must have been the source of keeping look and feel of the Poblacion. Furthermore, the indigenous trades, such as jusi embroidery and balisong making have been kept alive adding to the present treasures.

As such, tourism has implications on the economy, on the natural and built environment, on the local population at the destination and on the tourists themselves. Due to these multiple impacts, the wide range and variety of production factors required producing those goods and services acquired by visitors, and the wide spectrum of stakeholders' involved or affected tourism, there is need for a holistic approach to tourism development, management and monitoring. Although heritage tourism spends money, time and other resources on a trip or visit, no there is no tangible return on their investment. What tourists receive from their investment is an experience that provides mainly psychological benefits (Kozak, 2002). Hence, the Heritage tourist product is not a measurable or quantifiable good. Rather is an experience or 'a point of view' (Mathieson and Wall, 2002).

Since embroidery is important to the people of Taal, we, as the researchers, found out that it would be helpful for the researchers to evaluate and promote embroidery in the Tourism Industry. The researchers also believe that embroidery is a part of our history and they are hoping that it lives longer than history. It would also be challenging to our part as the researchers to know more about the embroidery in Taal. The researchers also believe that this topic is very interesting. This art of needlework is expected to

continue. With this the researchers deemed it appropriate to make an investigation about the future of embroidery and likewise find out if this contributes to Tourism Industry.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to determine how the respondents perceive embroidery industry in Taal, Batangas. Specifically this research is conducted to fully understand the existing and famous embroidery as inputs to its promotion to Tourism industry when it comes to the profile of the Embroidery Industry in terms of Human Resources, Material Resources and Government Regulation; the identify the extent of government support to promote embroidery and to determine the factors why some people of Taal could not productively engage in embroidery business.

III. METHOD

Research Design

In order to determine the need information regarding the status of the famous embroidery in Taal, Batangas, the descriptive method of research was used in this study. It is done to fully understand the topic that was being studied. Descriptive research is defined as the collection of data to answer questions concerning the status of the subject. The descriptive method of research determines the information needed to form an adequate interpretation and it is something more and beyond just data gatherings and deals with present existing conditions.

Participants

The study was conducted in Taal, Batangas. It focused in Barangay Iba who made embroidery as their source of living. It involves the profile, ways of promotion, factors involved in the productivity of the industry. The study utilized a purposive sampling with a total of 100 respondents who are from this chosen Barangay of Taal, Batangas. The researchers believe that the respondents are really professional in making embroidery.

Instrument

In order to obtain the necessary data, the researchers used the self – made questionnaire as their main data gathering instrument. Furthermore, the researchers employed interview to validate the data taken. To acquire the data or information, the questionnaires are divided into parts. The first includes the profile of embroidery industry; the second part

includes the ways of the government of Taal in promoting embroidery; the Third part pertains to the factors in which the government of Taal could not productively engaged in embroidery industry. The researchers made an interview and discuss how to answer the questions.

Procedure

The researchers formulated four working titles and gave it to the research professor for checking and approval. The researchers devoted most of their time in the library to read magazines, pamphlets, books and unpublished thesis to get information in preparing the questionnaire. Draft of the questionnaire was given to the research professor for checking. The research professor gave suggestions for improvement of the questionnaires. From the suggestion given by the adviser, revisions were made. Ultimately, the final draft was prepare for distribution to the actual respondents. After the final draft was prepared the researchers asked the permission of the Municipality of Taal by personally sending the letter of request with the researcher's signatures as well as the adviser and the Dean of College of International Hospitality Management in order to conduct the study. The researchers were also given the opportunity to interview the respondents.

The researchers made sure that the respondents answered the questionnaire personally. They asked help from their friends for the easy distribution and it was followed by immediate retrieval of the questionnaire. This became the basis for the analysis and interpretation of data.

Data Analysis

The collected data were subjected to weighted mean and Percentage Distribution. Percentage Distribution was used to determine the profile of the embroidery industry in terms of human resources, material resources and government regulation. On the other hand weighted mean was used in the ways of promotion of the government of Taal and factors in which people of Taal could not productively engaged in embroidery business. The 4-point Likert Scale was used to analyze and interpret the gathered data: Strongly Agree: 3.50 – 4.00; Agree: 2.50 – 3.49; Disagree: 1.50 – 2.49 and Strongly Disagree: 1.00 – 1.49.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The profile of the embroidery industry with regards to human resources, material resources and government support was taken into account in order to provide

background information about the respondents of the study. Out of 100 respondents, seventy nine percent (79) of the respondents agreed that the human resources in terms of labor were adequate. Embroidery for the residents of Taal is one of the major sources of income and industry that became the source of livelihood in Taal, Batangas. On the social aspect, the industry brought about the solutions to unemployment. While the respondents who choose the inadequate got the frequency of 21 or twenty one percent (21) because the rapid changes of technological and urbanization of an individual in the place led them to venture to other areas of specialization.

Table 1 presents the monthly income of the embroidery industry.

Table 1. Profile of the Embroidery Industry in Terms of Monthly Income

Monthly Income	%
Below 10,000	24
10,000 – 19,000	41
20,000 – 29,000	9
30,000 – above	26
Total	100

It can be gleaned from the table that forty one percent (41) of the respondents got the highest income of 10,000 – 19,000. This was the common embroiders who have their own shop in selling different kinds of embroidery items in the market. Some of them also purchased their product not only in Taal but also in the stalls of Central Market Divisoria and other store in Manila. Meanwhile, twenty six percent (26) got the monthly income of 30,000 and above. Much embroidery, especially costly work for ceremonial purposes has always been produced by professional males as well as females. Embroiders were organized in commercial workshop or sometimes in official workshop attached to courts, generally under the supervision of men. These professional usually entered a long apprenticeship and where often subject to the regulation of the craft guild. Twenty four percent (24) of the embroiders has a monthly income of below 10,000. Some of these embroiders consider this kind of needlework as only their secondary occupation. Meanwhile, embroiders agreed that there is also a stiff competition in business. Having the same design, materials used and style make it hard for the owner to make a step farther away from his competition. The least monthly income got nine percent (9) and belongs to 20,000 – 29, 000. It was found out that embroidery

industry is not just a seasonal affair but work for the whole year round.

Table 2 presents the material resources of the embroidery industry.

Table 2. Profile of the Embroidery Industry in Terms of Material Resources

Material Resources	Adequate (%)	Inadequate (%)
Fabric	87	13
Sewing Machine	78	22
Embroidery Machine	69	31
Material Resources		
Thread	86	14
Needle	92	8

It can be seen from the table that majority of the respondents choose needle as the most adequate material resources in the embroidery industry in Taal, Batangas with a percentage of ninety two for the reason that it is the cheapest among the materials and the major material as well while the embroidery machine is the least among all the materials with the frequency of sixty nine and a percentage of 69. As mentioned on the studies, some embroiderers nowadays preferred to use their bare hands than using embroidery machine and doing that makes their products last for long. Other material resources that are needed in making embroidery are Fabric, Sewing Machine and Thread with the percentage of 87, 78 and 86 respectively.

The respondents were asked to provide information with regards to the government support. Ninety two percent (92) of the respondents have permit. They definitely registered their business in the Municipality of Taal. It also shows that only eight percent (8) of the respondents are working without permit for the reason that they are doing their job only at their own houses without the knowledge of the municipality. This implies that the industry is monitored by the government and can thereby plan the future of the business.

Possible Ways of the Government of Taal in Promoting Embroidery

The following table revealed the possible ways of the government of Taal in promoting embroidery. These ways were ranked and interpreted using the verbal scale range.

Table 3 shows that all the ways of promotion are observed by the embroiderers. Ranked first among them is through provincial events. It got the highest weighted mean of 3.69, followed by publicity in the magazine with a weighted mean of 3.66. Through this they can deliver the message they want to convey and show the public the different embroidery they want to promote.

Mass Media got a weighted mean of 3.64 which are some of the many ways of promoting a product of the destination.

Table 3. Weighted Mean Distribution with Regards to Promotion of Embroidery

Ways to Promote Embroidery	WM	VI	Rank
1. through provincial events	3.69	SA	1
2. conducting exhibit	3.61	SA	6
3. giving workshops	3.56	SA	8
4. contest and campaigns	3.46	A	10
5. giving management seminars	3.50	SA	9
6. assisting financial insufficiency	3.38	A	11
7. issuance of business permit	3.62	SA	5
8. publicity in the magazine	3.66	SA	2
9. mass media	3.64	SA	3.5
10. personal selling	3.64	SA	3.5
11. word of mouth	3.59	SA	7
Composite Mean	3.58	SA	

Scale: Strongly Agree (SA): 3.50 – 4.00; Agree(A): 2.50 – 3.49; Disagree(D): 1.50 – 2.49 and Strongly Disagree(SD): 1.00 – 1.49

Through promotion, embroiderers aim of having immediate response from their customers or guests. These are the first three highest rankers in many ways of promoting embroidery. One study conducted in China, it reveals that it is really fun for both painting and embroidery lovers to explore the refined tastes of the Gu's embroidery and its cultural background, as the fancy art is deemed a height of Ming and Qing embroidery art (Yu, 2009).

Assisting financial insufficiency has the lowest weighted mean of all the ways of promotion of the government of Taal in promoting embroidery. It has a weighted mean of 3.38. This could be due to the effort of the present administration who gives priority for the promotion of Tourism – a prime dollar earner of the country. With the weighted mean of 3.46, contest and campaigns are partially implemented because Taal is only a small town and word of mouth advertising would be enough with a weighted mean of 3.59. Giving management seminars has a weighted mean of 3.50. Giving seminars help the embroiderers to enhance their talent in making embroidery. Many people find it hard to attend to this because of their easy going style. With the promotional tools the influx of guests increase leading to increase in sales.

Based on the data shown in Table 4, there are factors that keep embroiderers for not engaging in embroidery business. Budgetary problem ranks first with a weighted mean of 3.75. Embroiderers agreed that

the problem they always encounter is the shortage of the materials used in making their craft.

Table 4. Factors For Not Engaging in Embroidery Industry

Factors for not Engaging in Embroidery Business	WM	VI	Rank
1. Budgetary problem	3.75	Strongly agree	1
2. No experience	3.44	Agree	4.5
3. Not committed to work	3.49	Agree	2
4. Lack of talent	3.44	Agree	4.5
5. Obligated to work	3.34	Agree	6
6. Influence by family	3.02	Agree	12
7. Time Constraint	3.01	Agree	13
8. Communication gap toward promotion	3.12	Agree	10.5
9. Not interested to engage in the task	3.16	Agree	9
10. Social status	3.32	Agree	7
11. Ashamed of what they are doing	3.25	Agree	8
12. Boring	3.12	Agree	10.5
13. Physical Condition	3.46	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.58	Strongly Agree	

Not committed to work got a weighted mean of 3.49. As the basic source of income of the residents, embroiderers only considered embroidery as their secondary occupation. Physical condition got a weighted mean of 3.46. This connoted that most of the respondents are not capable of making embroidery. Other factors for not engaging in embroidery business are no experience, lack of talent, obliged to work continuously, not interested to engage in the task, social problem and ashamed of what they are doing having a weighted mean of 3.44, 3.34, 3.16, 3.32 and 3.25 respectively.

Ranked 10.5 are Boring and Communication Gap toward Promotion with both 3.12 in the weighted mean. This is followed by Influenced by family with a weighted mean of 3.02. Some of the residents are not forced for making embroidery. It clearly explains that until now, making embroidery is not just an employment but also reawakening of the cultural, aesthetic beauty and preserving their craft and time constraint in the last as of its weighted mean of 3.01. It was found out that some of the residents of Taal have engaged in embroidering only if they have nothing to do. This implies that they have other priorities aside from this.

V. CONCLUSION

The Embroidery Industry in Taal found out that they have adequate human resources as well as the material resources. Most of the embroiderers were registered in the municipality of Taal which helped the government monitor the embroidery industry. As the means of the government in promoting embroidery in Taal, it was found out that through provincial events, it contributed to uplift the indigenous craft and boosted embroidery industry to the residents as well. The factors for not engaging in embroidery business always started from the budgetary problem that affected the whole circulation of the production. embroidery business in Taal had long been and still is a popular domestic craft, It is expected to continue for as long as new designs, textiles follow the trend and continued patronage increase.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Embroiderers should always continue the development of embroidery products and transportation facilities and services to promote the influx of local and foreign tourist. The government of Taal must be active promoting and creating more programs to further enhance the embroidery industry for the tourist, both local and foreign. To further improve the industry of Taal Embroidery and also to the development of the Tourism Industry in Taal, there must be unity between the local people and non – government organizations in promoting embroidery consciousness and appreciation among residents. Tall Tourism Office should coordinate with the Department of Tourism for the promotional campaign of the craft to the tourist regarding the plans in uplifting the economic contribution of embroidery.

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