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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Comparing Local and Foreign Tourists' Behavior Toward Local Food in Siquijor Using the AISDALSLove Model: A Path Analysis to Guide Marketing Strategies**

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**| ABSTRACT**

This study explores how emotional engagement shapes food tourism behavior in Siquijor, using the AISDALSLove model by Wijaya (2011) to trace tourist behavior from attention to emotional loyalty. While models like this have been applied in urban contexts, this research focuses on rural Siquijor, examining how each stage—attention, interest, search, desire, action, like/dislike, share, and love/hate—affects local and foreign tourists differently. A quantitative design was used, surveying 400 respondents (207 Filipino and 193 foreign tourists) through a structured questionnaire. A pilot test showed high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.964$ ), and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Z-tests, and path analysis. Results show that Filipino tourists respond more to localized, culturally familiar content and are deeply influenced by the pasalubong tradition, leading to stronger actions and sharing behaviors. Foreign tourists showed more curiosity-driven interest, favoring novelty and immersive experiences. Statistically significant differences were observed across several behavioral stages, especially in desire and post-purchase actions like sharing. Path analysis revealed that interest and search positively influence desire, which leads to action, and that action strongly predicts sharing ( $r = 0.79$ ). Both groups showed high emotional engagement post-purchase, supporting the model's emotional dimensions. Based on these findings, recommendations for food producers include culturally tailored storytelling, influencer partnerships, and digital visibility in English for foreigners, and pasalubong-centric, Filipino-language content for locals. Ethical standards were upheld throughout the six-month data collection period (Nov 2024–Apr 2025), with voluntary participation and researcher-funded operations ensuring unbiased results. Future research should expand sampling, use longitudinal tracking, and study digital engagement's impact on food tourism loyalty.

**| KEYWORDS**

Food tourism, emotional engagement, AISDALSLove model, tourist behavior, Siquijor marketing strategies

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### **1. Introduction**

Tourism research increasingly highlights the importance of emotional and behavioral models in understanding purchasing decisions, especially in food tourism. The AISDALSLove model, proposed by Wijaya (2011), has gained attention for its relevance in capturing modern consumer journeys—from attention to emotional attachment. As destinations like Siquijor seek to leverage local food as a key part of the tourist experience, several studies underscore how each stage in this model—attention, interest, desire, and beyond—can influence not just initial purchases but long-term loyalty. For instance, Semwal et al. (2024) emphasize how emotional connections and memories play a central role in food-related satisfaction and advocacy, while Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) found that even high awareness does not guarantee consumer action unless emotional engagement is present. These insights show that understanding behavior through a stage-based lens is a rising trend in both tourism and consumer marketing.

Despite growing interest in models like AISDALSLove, gaps remain in how they are applied locally—especially in rural or emerging destinations such as Siquijor. Most marketing strategies by local sellers focus narrowly on visibility or pricing without accounting for emotional or post-purchase behavior. Studies by Degtyareva (2023) and Aisyah and Alfikri (2023) indicate that sustained engagement and consumer connection depend on deeper factors such as storytelling, cultural identity, and personalized experiences, which are often missing in local seller strategies. Furthermore, post-consumption stages like the Like/Dislike and Share phases—critical for word-of-mouth marketing—are rarely optimized or even considered by small businesses.

A key issue this research addresses is the disconnect between tourist awareness and deeper behavioral outcomes such as loyalty, sharing, or emotional attachment. While tourists may try local food once during their visit, their decisions to recommend it, seek it out again, or form lasting preferences are influenced by underexplored emotional dimensions. Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) pointed out that despite strong awareness of Indonesia's halal logo, desire and liking remained low—suggesting that emotional resonance must be actively nurtured. Similarly, Chiengkul et al. (2025) and Liu et al. (2021) emphasized that digital tools and emotionally charged experiences are needed to sustain interest and encourage positive sharing behavior. Without a deeper understanding of these behavioral stages, sellers risk losing repeat business and missing opportunities to turn satisfied tourists into brand advocates.

By applying the AISDALSLove model to tourist consumer behavior in Siquijor, this research can offer local food sellers' actionable insights into how to attract, engage, and retain customers throughout the full consumer journey. From capturing attention through authentic storytelling (Hanum et al., 2021) to encouraging positive post-trip sharing (Suwitho et al., 2023), the findings can inform more targeted, emotion-driven marketing strategies. Additionally, by analyzing consumer profiles—such as food preferences, purchase motivations, and spending habits—sellers can tailor offerings that align with traveler expectations. This can lead to better customer satisfaction, stronger word-of-mouth promotion, and ultimately, more sustainable business practices rooted in understanding what tourists actually value and respond to.

### 1.1 Theoretical Framework

The AISDALSLove model, developed by Bambang Sukma Wijaya in 2011, builds upon traditional hierarchy of effects models by incorporating additional stages that better reflect modern consumer behavior. This model outlines a more dynamic and emotionally driven journey, beginning with (1) Attention, where a brand captures the consumer's initial notice. Once engaged, the consumer moves to the (2) Interest stage, where curiosity about the product or service grows. This leads to the (3) Search phase, where they actively seek more information to evaluate their options. If the appeal strengthens, the (4) Desire stage follows, fostering a deeper inclination toward the product or service. This motivation then translates into (5) Action, where the consumer makes a purchase or takes a specific step toward engagement. However, the journey doesn't end there—post-purchase, consumers form opinions in the (6) Like/Dislike phase, determining satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Those with strong experiences may progress to the (7) Share stage, where they communicate their thoughts and reviews with others. Ultimately, the model culminates in the (8) Love/Hate stage, where consumers develop deep emotional connections, either positive or negative, influencing long-term brand loyalty or aversion. By integrating these dimensions, the AISDALSLove model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and shaping consumer decision-making in today's highly interactive and experience-driven marketplace.

### 1.2 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework outlines the consumer journey in experiencing local food, breaking it down into three key stages: Pre-Purchase, Purchasing Practices, and Post-Purchase dimensions, alongside an analysis of consumer behavior profiles.

In the Pre-Purchase stage, tourists first become aware of local food through (1) Attention, where advertisements, promotions, or recommendations catch their notice. This leads to (2) Interest, where curiosity about traditional or unique culinary offerings grows. Motivated by this curiosity, they move into the (3) Search phase, actively seeking more information through travel blogs, reviews, or social media. Once they find appealing options, their curiosity turns into (4) Desire, sparking an eagerness to try local dishes.

The Purchasing Practices stage is straightforward (4) Action occurs when tourists make a decision and buy or consume the local food.

Following the purchase, the post-Purchase stage begins, where tourists reflect on their experience. In the (5) Like/Dislike phase, they form either positive or negative opinions based on taste, presentation, or overall satisfaction. If the experience is noteworthy, they may proceed to the (6) Share stage, where they talk about it with friends, post on social media, or leave reviews. Over time, some tourists develop deep emotional ties in the (7) Love/Hate stage, where they either become lifelong enthusiasts of a particular cuisine or avoid it in the future.

The framework also considers different aspects of Consumer Behavior Profiles that influence food-related decisions. Food preference varies among tourists, with some drawn to street food, others seeking organic or packaged goods. Buying behavior differs as well—some purchase for personal enjoyment, while others buy local food as souvenirs or gifts. Several external factors, such as social media, word-of-mouth, advertisements, and tour guides, play a role in influencing decision-making. Additionally, spending habits range from budget-conscious travelers seeking affordable options to premium spenders looking for high-end culinary experiences. Lastly, marketing channel awareness highlights the effectiveness of promotions, whether through social media, travel blogs, posters, or personal recommendations.

### **1.3 Related Literature**

Tourist behavior is shaped by a series of emotional and cognitive stages that influence how they discover, engage with, and ultimately act on local experiences especially food. Models like AISDALSLove offer a framework for understanding these stages, from initial attention and interest to emotional reactions like desire, satisfaction, and sharing. Recent studies across marketing, tourism, and consumer psychology provide rich insight into how each stage plays a role in shaping decisions, loyalty, and the depth of emotional connection tourists form with local food products.

#### **1.3.1 Attention**

Across various studies, attention has been consistently identified as a crucial factor in consumer behavior and marketing effectiveness. Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) found that awareness, which includes attention, had the highest rating (84.30%) in consumer responses to Indonesia's new halal logo, but this did not necessarily translate into desire or preference, highlighting the need for further engagement. Similarly, Hanum et al. (2021) emphasized that attention and interest were the most influential factors in media choice, with online platforms proving most effective in capturing consumer attention, particularly in financial education campaigns. Degtyareva (2023) reinforced the importance of attention in shaping consumer experiences, suggesting that businesses must craft compelling content to maintain engagement. Hoang (2023) also applied the AISAS model, affirming that attention is the first and most critical stage in digital marketing but must be followed by interest and search behavior for successful consumer engagement. Lastly, Xu et al. (2024) explored AI-driven consumer behavior prediction, demonstrating how AI models leverage attention patterns to optimize advertising strategies and ensure brands effectively reach their target audiences. Together, these studies confirm that while attention is a key driver in marketing and consumer behavior, sustaining engagement beyond this initial stage is essential for long-term success.

#### **1.3.2 Interest**

The Interest dimension in the AISDALSLove Model plays a crucial role in shaping audience engagement, as evidenced by multiple studies. Hanum et al. (2021) found that media effectiveness was closely tied to its ability to capture Interest, leading to better public engagement. Similarly, Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) highlighted that while Awareness of Indonesia's new halal logo was high, sustaining consumer Interest was necessary to drive purchasing behavior, reinforcing the need for strategic marketing efforts. Suhud et al. (2024) confirmed that Interest serves as a vital bridge between initial Attention and deeper consumer involvement, particularly in the context of traditional textile exhibitions, where it encouraged further exploration. Aisyah and Alfikri (2023) demonstrated the significance of Interest in digital marketing, showing that consumers who developed Interest in a

beauty brand were more likely to seek additional information and interact with the brand. Finally, Liu and Jung (2021) explored Interest in search behavior, emphasizing that growing Interest not only enhances information retention but also sustains user engagement over time. Collectively, these studies affirm that Interest is not merely a passive reaction but an active driver of engagement, influencing consumer decisions, media effectiveness, and long-term behavioral patterns.

### **1.3.3 Search**

The study by Ursu, Zhang, and Erdem (2021) found that prior brand familiarity significantly reduces search effort, as consumers are more likely to search for and purchase brands they already own or recognize, leading to shorter search times and fewer alternative considerations. This suggests that businesses should focus on brand awareness campaigns, loyalty programs, and strategic advertising to reinforce familiarity and preference. Jin, Zhu, Yang, and Liu (2022) explored the role of anticipated regret in search depth, showing that consumers who fear making a poor decision tend to conduct more extensive searches, increasing price sensitivity and market competitiveness; to mitigate regret, businesses can implement easy return policies, satisfaction guarantees, and free trials. Saha and Sahney (2021) highlighted the strong influence of socialization agents, such as friends, family, and social media, on consumer search behavior, particularly in branded apparel and lifestyle products, with first-time buyers relying heavily on online reviews and social media while experienced buyers trust prior brand interactions—prompting businesses to invest in social proof, influencer marketing, and user-generated content. Honka, Seiler, and Ursu (2024) demonstrated that pre-purchase search behavior, such as browsing patterns, cart additions, and clicks, provides valuable insights into consumer intent, allowing businesses to leverage AI-powered recommendations, abandoned cart reminders, and personalized discounts to enhance conversions. Lastly, Fukui, Tabata, and Hosoda (2022) examined pre-purchase behavior and decision prediction, finding that consumers who spend longer searching online and repeatedly visit product pages exhibit high purchase intent, underscoring the need for companies to differentiate serious buyers from casual browsers by utilizing urgency techniques, retargeting hesitant consumers, and optimizing marketing strategies based on behavioral data. By understanding these insights, businesses can refine their marketing, pricing, and engagement strategies to improve consumer search behavior and drive conversions.

### **1.3.4 Desire**

Desire to try and buy locally made food while traveling is deeply rooted in a mix of cultural curiosity, emotional engagement, and personal values. Tourists are often (1) drawn to unique and authentic culinary experiences that help them connect with the local culture, as seen in Jiang and Xu's (2021) study, where Gen Z travelers preferred small, locally owned restaurants offering culturally immersive meals. This aligns with motivations such as looking forward to tasting traditional or specialty foods and preferring products that are (2) unique to the region. Li and Qiu (2023) found that sensory appeal, cultural interest, and health considerations drive food satisfaction, which increases the likelihood of recommending the destination or returning—suggesting that the excitement of trying local food isn't just fleeting; it shapes overall travel satisfaction. Knapp et al. (2024) added that ego-related motivations like pride and self-image also play a role, reinforcing the idea that (3) bringing home local food as a gift or souvenir can satisfy both emotional and social needs. In line with this, Levyda and Maulana (2024) highlighted that authenticity, emotional connection, and social status help deepen tourists' loyalty to (4) local food products. Baby and George (2023) pointed out that many tourists are also driven by ethical values such as supporting local economies and sustainability, making their food choices meaningful beyond taste. For those interested in the (5) story behind what they eat, this value-driven dimension of desire connects personal interest with cultural heritage. However, as Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) observed, high awareness doesn't always lead to action—suggesting that marketing needs to do more to emotionally engage travelers and spark that final step of desire. Overall, these findings show that the desire to explore and purchase local food is shaped by more than just curiosity—it's a mix of anticipation, emotion, identity, and values that turns intention into action.

### **1.3.5 Action**

The Action phase in the AISDALSLove model is where tourist intentions turn into real behavior—like buying local food, sharing it with others, or coming back for more. In the case of Siquijor, several factors influence this behavior. (1) Tourists are more likely to purchase local food when they've had positive emotional experiences during their trip. Even though impulsiveness doesn't directly cause them to buy, it strengthens the link between feeling good and taking action (Coskun & Norman, 2021). (2) People tend to buy and share local food when they see it as authentic, nostalgic, unique, or perfect for gifting. These value-driven perceptions turn food into both a memory and a keepsake (Chang et al., 2021). (3) Social factors also come into play—what tourists believe others expect of them, their own attitudes, and their sense of control all help shape decisions to buy, recommend, or come back for local food (Chamoli et al., 2023). (4) When tourists are motivated to try local dishes and enjoy the experience, they're more likely to tell others or return for a second taste, showing that satisfaction fuels loyalty (Poyoi et al., 2022). (5) Lifestyle and background matter, too. Tourists' demographics and preferences influence how they engage with local cuisine, often using food to explore culture or express identity (Süzer & Doğdubay, 2024). (6) Finally, the action doesn't end when the trip does. Posting on social media, writing reviews, or gifting food souvenirs are all post-trip behaviors that keep the

experience alive and help spread the word about the destination (Yuliati & Simanjuntak, 2024). These six dimensions capture common tourist behaviors like buying local food, seeking out recommended spots, sharing their experiences, bringing food home as gifts, and returning for products they loved.

### **1.3.6 Like/Dislike**

Tourists often enjoy the (1) taste and quality of locally made food products, which greatly enhances their overall satisfaction. This enjoyment also increases the likelihood that they will revisit the destination and recommend it to others (Angelakis et al., 2023; Nguyen, 2023). Many travelers prefer (2) local food over imported or commercial alternatives because it feels more authentic and closely tied to the local culture and traditions, enriching their travel experience (Tiganis & Chrysochou, 2024). Trying local specialties (3) brings a sense of satisfaction that often leads to deeper engagement with the destination, including stronger cultural involvement and a higher chance of returning (Réhman et al., 2021; Poyoi et al., 2022). When tourists have (4) positive experiences with local food, they tend to recommend it to others—motivated by satisfaction, quality, and the cultural value they associate with the food (Angelakis et al., 2023; Nguyen, 2023). On the flip side, tourists may (5) avoid local food if they dislike how it tastes, looks, or is packaged. These negative perceptions, along with food neophobia, significantly influence avoidance behavior (Chamoli et al., 2023; Tiganis & Chrysochou, 2024).

### **1.3.7 Share Stage**

In the sharing stage of the tourist experience, several behaviors emerge, shaped by emotional engagement and social dynamics. 1. Tourists often turn to social media to share their satisfaction, using posts, blogs, or reviews, with emotional connection to the experience—such as feelings of authenticity or nostalgia—playing a strong role in motivating this behavior (Suwitho et al., 2023; Han & Bae, 2022). The intensity of these emotions often drives electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on platforms like Instagram or Facebook (Liu et al., 2021). 2. Recommending destinations to friends or family remains a powerful and trusted form of communication, with slow tourism in particular encouraging deeper, more personal recommendations based on meaningful experiences (Beşirova, 2024; Marić et al., 2021). 3. After returning home, tourists tend to talk about standout moments—especially food and cultural highlights—as a way to connect with others and build their social identity (Schoner-Schatz et al., 2021), which can influence not only their own future choices but also the perceptions of those they share with (Li et al., 2022). 4. Many travelers also bring back local food or handcrafted products as gifts, a practice that strengthens personal relationships and reflects the giver's connection to the place (Zhu et al., 2024), with experiential gifting increasingly used to express both personal and cultural meaning (Gardiner & Bec, 2021). 5. Finally, emotionally invested tourists often become informal brand ambassadors, encouraging others to try local food or visit destinations they enjoyed—motivated by a mix of altruism, social credibility, and community values (Martínez García de Leaniz et al., 2024; Sharma & Singh, 2022).

### **1.3.8 Love/Hate Stage**

The Love/Hate stage in consumer behavior captures both positive and negative emotional responses toward products or experiences, with several sub-dimensions that shape long-term attachment or aversion. (1) Developing a strong liking for certain locally made food products and wanting to try them again reflects the “Like” and “Desire” sub-dimensions. However, Wahyudi and Mardiyati (2023) found that in the case of Indonesia’s new halal logo, these emotional stages scored lower than others, suggesting that desire and liking require deeper emotional resonance beyond basic awareness. (2) Feeling excited upon seeing or hearing about favorite local food products from past travels aligns with the emotional triggers enhanced through AI-driven tourism marketing; Semwal et al. (2024) emphasized that AI personalization strengthens bonds like love and excitement, leading to lasting satisfaction and loyalty. (3) Forming emotional connections with local foods based on good memories supports Hosany’s (2012) findings that emotions like love and joy in tourism are deeply tied to self-relevance and positive past experiences. (4) On the other end of the spectrum, avoiding specific local food products due to bad experiences or personal preference reflects the “Hate” dimension—often underestimated but important, as strong negative responses also shape behavior. (5) Finally, feeling disappointed when a beloved local product is no longer available after travel indicates a form of emotional loss. Chiengkul et al. (2025) noted that emotionally engaging, AI-powered experiences can help maintain such connections, potentially easing that emotional gap even after leaving the destination.

## **2. Methodology**

This study used a quantitative research design. A total of 400 respondents were surveyed, consisting of 200 local tourists and 200 foreign tourists. Data were collected using a descriptive survey questionnaire designed to capture relevant insights from both groups.

## 2.1 Pilot Testing

A pilot test was conducted with 10 faculty members from the Tourism and Business Administration departments, all of whom frequently travel to other islands. The purpose was to assess the reliability of the instrument. The results yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.964, indicating excellent internal consistency.

## 2.2 Statistical Treatment

The data were analyzed using several statistical tools. Descriptive statistics, specifically the weighted mean, were used to summarize the respondents' answers and identify central tendencies in their responses. A Z-test was applied to test the difference in means between the responses of Filipino and foreign tourists. Path analysis was conducted to examine the relationships across the stages of consumer behavior—specifically from pre-purchase to purchase, and from purchase to post-purchase behavior.

## 2.3 Sampling Technique

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula to ensure adequate representation of the population while maintaining a manageable number of respondents. Given the estimated tourist population and using a standard margin of error (5%), the calculated sample size consistently approached 400. Based on this result, a total of 400 respondents were selected for the study—comprising 207 local tourists and 193 foreign tourists participated in the study

## 2.4 Ethical Consideration

Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. Participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. No form of remuneration was provided. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained throughout the research process, ensuring that all responses remained untraceable to individual participants.

## 2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected using a survey questionnaire administered to the selected respondents. All expenses related to the data collection were shouldered by the researcher. Prior to distribution, permission was secured from local authorities, as well as from the respondents themselves. The purpose of the study and the participants' rights—including voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time—were clearly explained before proceeding with the survey.

## 3. Result and Discussion

The results reveal clear behavioral differences and patterns between local and foreign tourists in their interactions with local food, from attention and interest to action and emotional response. Statistically significant differences emerged in key areas such as attention to promotional content, interest in trying local cuisine, and the cultural practice of bringing food home as gifts. These findings support a broader behavioral model where pre-purchase engagement fuels purchasing decisions, and strong post-purchase emotions drive sharing and loyalty.

### 3.1 Result and Discussion

Table 1 Attention

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Attention Variables	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Tourist noticed advertisements or promotions	4.03	Often	4.04	Often	
Tourist pay attention to signs, posters or social media post	4.11	Often	3.88	Often	Significant
Tourist are aware of popular local foods	4.01	Often	4.04	Often	
Tourist read, watch, or listen to ads about traditional foods	3.95	Often	3.91	Often	
Tourist recognized logos, packaging or branding of local foods they see on advertisements	3.78	Often	3.68	Often	
Composite Mean	3.98	Often	3.91	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61-3.40 Sometimes; 3.41-4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 1 shows that local tourists (mean = 4.11) pay more attention to signs, posters, or social media posts than foreign tourists (mean = 3.88). The computed z-score (-2.137) exceeds the critical value (1.6449), indicating a statistically significant difference. This finding is supported by several studies that highlight how local tourists engage differently with promotional content. Kirani and Kumara (2024) found that luxury-themed social media content in Bali made local tourists feel excluded, prompting tourism marketers to tailor e-flyers and promotional materials specifically for local audiences. This underscores how local tourists are sensitive to presentation and prefer culturally familiar formats. Similarly, Yuliarti et al. (2021), in their study of Instagram tourism promotions for Borobudur and Danau Toba, observed that storytelling elements in posts were underutilized, which weakened their appeal—particularly to local audiences—though the study did not directly compare local and foreign viewers.

Yosita et al. (2022) examined tourism promotion for Mount Pasang Panti and found that reliance on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook failed to attract broad interest, especially from foreign tourists. This suggests that local channels may be more effective in reaching domestic audiences. Amanda et al. (2023) supported this conclusion with their research in Karo Regency, where social media significantly enhanced the role of local youth in promoting tourism, indicating that localized content may resonate more strongly with local populations.

Table 2 Interest

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Interest	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Interested in trying locally made foods	4.33	Always	4.47	Always	Significant
Take time to read or watch advertisement about Traditional or specialty foods	3.92	Often	3.84	Often	
Curious about new or unique local foods	4.25	Always	4.28	Always	
Ask locals or vendors on food products	4.31	Always	4.23	Always	
Look for social media post, blogs, travel guides about local foods	4.20	Often	4.05	Often	
Composite Mean	4.20	Often	4.17	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61-3.40 Sometimes; 3.41-4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 2 reveals a statistically significant difference in interest between foreign and local tourists in trying locally made foods. Although both groups received similar verbal descriptions, foreign tourists scored slightly higher (4.47) than local tourists (4.43). A z-test confirmed this difference as significant, with a computed z-score of -1.82 exceeding the critical value of 1.6449. This suggests that foreign tourists have a measurably stronger inclination toward exploring local cuisine, likely influenced by factors beyond surface-level interest—such as cultural immersion and novelty-seeking behavior.

Süzer & Doğdubay (2024) found that the lifestyles and cultural values of foreign tourists play a major role in shaping their intentions to try local food, particularly in culturally rich destinations like Istanbul. Baby & George (2023) emphasized how elements such as freshness, sustainability, and cultural authenticity enhance tourists' food-related motivations. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2022) showed that tourists' perception of food imagery significantly drives their consumption intentions, as seen in Macau. Khamis (2022) identified novelty and involvement as strong motivators among tourists in Egypt, while Gupta & Sharma (2024) noted that flavor and taste were central to tourists' food preferences in Fiji. In Crete, Angelakis et al. (2023) linked food satisfaction with destination loyalty and revisits. Finally, Pérez-Priego et al. (2023) demonstrated how unique food spots like Spain's 'Chiringuitos' attract tourists specifically motivated by gastronomic experiences.

Table 3 Search

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Search	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Actively Search Information on local food	4.25	Always	4.15	Often	
Ask Locals, tour guides, or vendors for recommendations on local foods	4.15	Often	4.23	Always	
Use social media, blogs or travel websites to buy authentic foods	4.17	Often	3.98	Often	Significant
Visit markets, food stalls, or specialty stores on locally made foods	4.16	Often	4.15	Often	
Compare different local food before trying or souvenir	3.95	Often	3.93	Often	
Composite Mean	4.14	Often	4.09	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61-3.40 Sometimes; 3.41-4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 3 indicates that local tourists are more likely than foreign tourists to use digital platforms—particularly social media, blogs, and travel websites—when deciding where to buy authentic food, as shown by a z-score of 1.99, which exceeds the critical value of 1.6449. This finding aligns with broader research showing that locals not only rely on these tools for personal decisions but also actively contribute to shaping food culture online. For instance, in Ottawa, locals use social media to discuss and evaluate food retailers based on quality and price (Lynch et al., 2021), while Yelp reviews in Hawaii reflect how locals link authenticity with cultural identity and community (Ariyasriwatana, 2022). Moreover, local influencers and bloggers significantly impact purchase decisions, especially through parasocial relationships formed on platforms like Instagram (Syarif et al., 2025) and through blog content that signals expertise and value (Guruharan & Jayasri, 2023).

Foreign Tourists, on the other hand, also rely heavily on social media for food choices, though perhaps more passively. In Delhi NCR, Gupta et al. (2023) found that food tourists' perceptions of authenticity and quality are shaped by what they see online, suggesting social media plays a strong curatorial role. However, unlike local tourists tend to be recipients of social influence rather than contributors to the digital food discourse. While both groups value authenticity (Levitt & Dipietro, 2021), locals are more likely to use social media as a platform to advocate for local food traditions and influence others. In Malaysia, social media has empowered small food vendors to challenge large tourism-driven enterprises by promoting their offerings directly to local audiences (Everett, 2021), further illustrating how locals use these tools not just to consume but to preserve and promote local culinary identities.



Table 4 Desire

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Desire	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Feel excited in trying local foods	4.39	Always	4.45	Always	
Prefer buying local foods	4.17	Often	4.18	Often	
Want to bring home local foods as gift	4.21	Always	3.99	Often	Significant
Looks forward on tasting traditional or specialty foods	4.32	Always	4.26	Always	
Interested in learning stories or history behind local foods	4.08	Often	4.05	Often	
Composite Mean	4.23	Always	4.19	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61–3.40 Sometimes; 3.41–4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

The data in Table 4 reveals that Filipino tourists (mean = 4.21) have a stronger desire to bring home local food as gifts compared to foreign tourists (mean = 3.99). A Z-test score of 2.10, which surpasses the critical value of 1.6449, confirms this significant difference. This stronger inclination among Filipinos can be traced to the cultural tradition of gift-giving, particularly through "pasalubong" and the sending of balikbayan boxes. McCallum (2021) emphasized how these material exchanges, especially among transnational Filipino families in countries like Japan, help maintain emotional and familial connections. These acts are more than routine—they are tied to identity, care, and maintaining a sense of home across borders.

Moreover, the pasalubong tradition has gained economic and commercial traction, as seen in Mendoza et al.'s (2022) study on developing a systemized Pasalubong Center in the Philippines. Their research highlights how this cultural practice is being adapted into structured business models to improve efficiency and reach through digital platforms. On the other hand, foreign tourists display different behaviors, often centered around digital storytelling and monetization. Aquino and Cabalquinto (2025) note that these travelers are more invested in content creation and exotic experiences than in gift-giving traditions. This contrast further supports the finding that Filipinos are more inclined to engage in practices rooted in cultural and familial connection.

Table 5 Action

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Action	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Purchase locally made foods	4.20	Often	4.30	Always	
Visit recommended restaurants, markets or food stalls to try local specialties	4.25	Always	4.35	Always	
Share experiences with local food through social media, reviews or word of mouth.	4.09	Often	3.98	Often	
Bring home locally produced foods as gift	4.20	Often	3.94	Often	Significant
Return to buy local foods that I enjoy	4.05	Often	4.09	Often	
Composite Mean	4.16	Often	4.13	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61–3.40 Sometimes; 3.41–4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Albery and Spada (2021) found that desire, particularly when intensified through vivid mental imagery, can directly lead to immediate behaviors like increased alcohol consumption—especially among habitual users. This direct link between desire and

action echoes findings in tourism behavior, where Filipino tourists (mean score 4.20) showed a greater tendency to bring locally produced foods as gifts compared to foreign tourists (3.94), as seen in Table 4. Devos et al. (2021) further support this with evidence that imagined consumption increases food desire, which then heightens both willingness to pay and actual consumption. Lucian et al. (2024) reinforces the role of desire as a powerful mediator between social influence and behavioral intentions in tourism, indicating that when the desire to bring home a pasalubong is strong, it directly shapes real-world actions.

Gregory (2021) takes a broader philosophical stance, arguing through the ODM framework that desire is the only internal motivator behind all human action, though not always proportional in effect. This adds depth to our understanding of why tourists may act on gift-giving impulses. From a neuroscientific perspective, Berridge (2023) describes how the concept of "incentive salience" shows that desire can override rational thinking, leading people to act in ways that contradict their better judgment. Finally, Zaitsev (2022), drawing from Lacanian psychoanalysis, positions desire as central to ethical and life-guiding decisions. Together, these perspectives help explain why the strong cultural desire to give pasalubong drives more action among Filipino tourists—it's not just tradition, it's an internally motivated, psychologically reinforced behavior.

Table 6 Like/Dislike

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Like/Dislike	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Enjoy the taste and quality of locally made foods	4.39	Always	4.45	Always	
Prefer locally produced food over commercial foods	4.13	Often	4.21	Always	
Feel satisfied with my experience when trying local specialties	4.27	Always	4.29	Always	
I recommend local foods to my friends, family or other travelers	4.29	Always	4.31	Always	
I avoid buying or eating local food products if I dislike their taste, appearance or packaging (RS)	3.91	Often	3.94	Often	
Composite Mean	4.20	Often	4.24	Always	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61-3.40 Sometimes; 3.41-4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

As shown in Table 6, tourists—regardless of being local or foreign—exhibit remarkably consistent attitudes toward local food, with no major differences in taste preference, satisfaction, or likelihood to recommend. This uniformity suggests that certain motivations and barriers are widely shared across tourist groups. Tiganis and Chrysochou (2024) support this pattern by identifying "Sensory Seekers" as the largest tourist segment, driven primarily by flavor and food quality. They also highlight the role of cultural values, noting that "Cultural Experiencers" are especially drawn to locally produced food for its authenticity and cultural relevance. Poyoi et al. (2022) further confirm that satisfaction with local cuisine is strongly shaped by taste, authenticity, and perceived value—factors that boost the intention to revisit and promote destinations. Complementing this, Shi and Lee (2021) show that when tourists are provided with high-quality restaurant and food recommendations online, their satisfaction increases along with their willingness to return and share positive reviews.

However, this generally positive trend is not without challenges. Dixit and Prayag (2022) caution that even interested tourists may avoid local foods if they find them visually unappealing or unfamiliar, a response tied to sensory aversion and food neophobia. They emphasize that taste, packaging, and presentation can be deciding factors in whether a tourist chooses to try local cuisine. Still, when local food aligns with sensory expectations and cultural appeal, tourists are more likely to enjoy the experience, remain loyal, and advocate for the destination.

Table 7 Share

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Share	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Recommend locally made food products to friends, family or fellow travelers	4.35	Always	4.31	Always	
Share Experiences with local foods through social media, posts, reviews, blogs.	3.99	Often	3.95	Often	
Talk about local food discoveries with others	4.28	Always	4.20	Often	
Bring home or give locally produced food as gift	4.17	Often	3.95	Often	Significant
Encourage others to try local foods	4.29	Always	4.26	Always	
Composite Mean	4.21	Always	4.13	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61–3.40 Sometimes; 3.41–4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 7 highlights a notable difference in the aspect of food sharing, with Filipino tourists reporting a higher mean score of 4.17 compared to 3.95 among foreign tourists. This suggests that Filipino travelers place more value on the act of sharing local food, possibly due to cultural practices and emotional connections tied to food gifting. Fan and Wu (2022), while studying Chinese tourists, underscored the importance of gifting motivations rooted in reciprocity and care—values that strongly align with Filipino cultural norms. Although their research focused on a different demographic, the relevance of such motivations resonates with how Filipino tourists engage with local food as meaningful souvenirs.

Supporting this, Lastimoso et al. (2024) found that in the Philippines, purchasing intentions for local food are significantly influenced by subjective norms and cultural attitudes, more so than in many other tourist groups. Similarly, Chamoli et al. (2023) reinforced the idea that social expectations shape food-buying behaviors among Filipino travelers. This connection between culture and consumption extends to how tourists perceive the experience itself; Aliwalas et al. (2025) noted that authenticity in Filipino cuisine enhances tourist satisfaction, making local food a compelling gift option. Further, the gifting tradition among Filipino overseas workers, as detailed by Parilla and Abadilla (2023), reflects deep-seated habits of sending local food home—a practice that, while not exclusive to tourists, signals a broader cultural norm of food sharing and emotional connection through gifting.

Table 8 Love/Hate

Nationality	Filipinos n=207		Foreign n=193		Significant Difference
Love / Hate	WM	VD	WM	VD	
Developed a strong liking for locally made foods	4.35	Always	4.31	Always	
Feel excited when I see or hear about local foods	4.27	Always	4.28	Always	
Formed an emotional connection towards local foods	4.15	Often	4.12	Often	
Avoid specific local foods because of past experience	3.80	Often	3.88	Often	
Disappointed when tourist cannot find local foods	3.90	Often	3.97	Often	
Composite Mean	4.09	Often	4.11	Often	

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 Not Practiced; 1.81 – 2.60 Rarely; 2.61–3.40 Sometimes; 3.41–4.20 Often; 4.21 – 5.00 Always

Table 8 on Love and Hate shows that there is no significant difference between local and foreign tourists' preferences across five emotional sub-dimensions related to local food: developing a strong liking for locally made foods, feeling excited when encountering them, forming emotional connections, avoiding certain dishes due to past experiences, and feeling disappointed when local food is unavailable. This uniformity suggests that both groups—despite cultural and national differences—respond emotionally in similar ways to local cuisine. The absence of statistically significant variation points to the universal appeal and emotional relevance of food in shaping tourist experience, regardless of origin.

Several studies reinforce this emotional connection with local food. Mansueto et al. (2024) found that local cuisine served as a key “pull factor” for foreign tourists, particularly European millennials, who associated it with cultural immersion and excitement. Sthapit et al. (2021) reported that domestic Indian tourists linked local food with joy and love, while Praswati et al. (2021) identified emotional and epistemic values—like curiosity and excitement—as shaping tourists' attitudes toward culinary destinations. Furthermore, Kim et al. (2021) highlighted how cultural background shapes emotional responses to local food, such as excitement or hesitance. Chamoli et al. (2023) observed that tourists with food neophobia, often driven by prior bad experiences, were less inclined to try local dishes. Mohamed et al. (2025) added that emotional connection to food also reinforces personal identity and loyalty to destinations. Meanwhile, Nguyen (2023) linked unmet food expectations with disappointment and reduced satisfaction, and Sthapit et al. (2021) emphasized that tourists often relive positive food experiences after their trip, demonstrating long-term emotional resonance. Altogether, these findings give depth to Table 8's results and confirm that emotions around food—both positive and negative—play a consistent, cross-cultural role in tourism.

### 3.1.1 Path Analysis



Figure 1 Path Analysis on Tourist Behavior Towards Local Foods

The path analysis shows a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.70$ ) between the Pre-Purchase and Purchase phases, indicating that customers who are more engaged during the early stages—such as paying attention, showing interest, searching for information, and feeling desire—are significantly more likely to proceed with a purchase. Additionally, there is an even stronger positive correlation ( $r = 0.81$ ) between Purchase and Post-Purchase behavior. This suggests that those who make a purchase are highly likely to express clear post-purchase reactions, whether through emotional responses like liking or loving the product, or through social behaviors like sharing their experience.

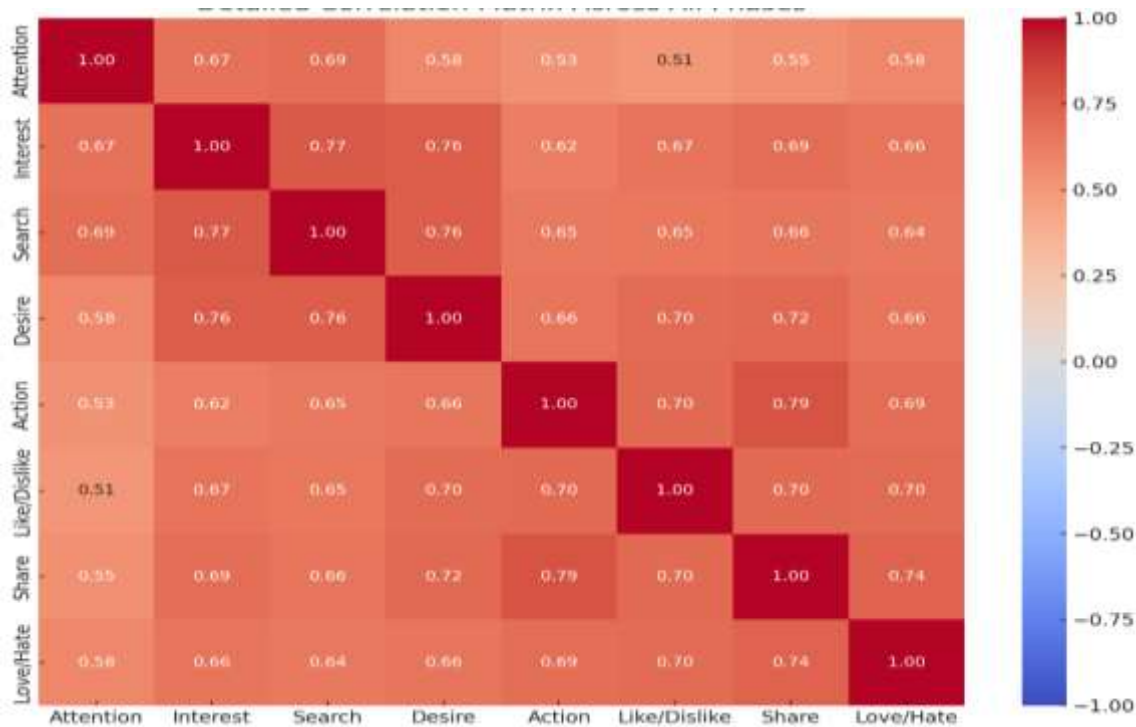


Figure 2 Detailed Correlation Matrix

The data reveals a clear behavioral flow through the customer journey. Strong correlations between Interest & Search ( $r = 0.77$ ) and Search & Desire ( $r = 0.76$ ) suggest that as people explore, their motivation to act deepens. Desire significantly influences Action ( $r = 0.66$ ), emphasizing the role of emotional drive in prompting purchases. The strongest link—Action leading to Share ( $r = 0.79$ )—shows that those who buy are very likely to talk about it. Finally, post-purchase reactions such as Like/Dislike, Share, and Love/Hate are tightly connected ( $r \approx 0.70+$ ), pointing to a unified emotional response once the decision is made.

3.2 Conclusion

The findings reveal clear behavioral and cultural contrasts between local and foreign tourists in how they engage with food promotions and experiences. Filipino tourists respond more strongly to familiar visual cues such as posters and social media content that reflect local values and aesthetics, pointing to the effectiveness of culturally tailored marketing. In contrast, foreign tourists show a slightly higher interest in trying local cuisine, largely driven by curiosity and a desire for cultural immersion. This difference suggests that while both groups are interested in local food, their motivations vary—Filipinos are influenced by cultural connection, while foreigners are drawn by novelty.

Local tourists also play an active role in the digital food ecosystem, using blogs and social media not only to search for information but to shape and share their own narratives. Their engagement goes beyond consumption, positioning them as both participants and influencers in the culinary tourism space. The tradition of *pasalubong* further drives a strong desire among Filipinos to bring home food as a meaningful gift, reinforcing action through emotional and cultural significance. Although both local and foreign tourists show high emotional responses to local food, Filipinos are more likely to translate those emotions into sharing behavior. This aligns with the data showing a strong correlation between action and sharing, underlining how culturally rooted practices can amplify post-purchase advocacy.

3.3 Recommendations

For food manufacturers in Siquijor aiming to attract foreign tourists, the following strategies are recommended to enhance visibility, engagement, and appeal: (1) Highlight novelty and authenticity by showcasing what makes local cuisine unique—such as rare ingredients, traditional cooking methods, and cultural backstories—to attract tourists seeking cultural immersion. (2) Invest in high-quality visual storytelling by using professional photos and videos on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and travel blogs to create a strong, shareable image of local foods. (3) Collaborate with travel influencers such as bloggers, vloggers, and digital nomads to boost credibility and reach among foreign audiences who trust peer recommendations. (4) Offer immersive food experiences, including guided tastings, food tours, or cooking classes, to provide hands-on cultural engagement

and increase tourist spending. (5) Ensure that all key information—such as menus, directions, and food descriptions—is easily accessible in English across digital platforms like Google Maps and TripAdvisor to build trust and improve the tourist experience.

For food manufacturers in Siquijor targeting Filipino tourists, the following recommendations can help build stronger cultural and emotional connections with local consumers: (1) Tap into *pasalubong* culture by designing packaging and promotions around gifting—highlighting “perfect for pasalubong” items, creating bundled sets, or promoting locally made products that align with family-oriented and sentimental values. (2) Use culturally familiar content and formats in marketing materials by incorporating Filipino storytelling, humor, or nostalgia in posters, local radio ads, and Facebook campaigns to increase relatability and attention. (3) Leverage local influencers and microbloggers, especially those who create content in Filipino, to deliver authentic reviews and boost credibility within local communities. (4) Emphasize community and pride by framing local food not just as a product, but as a source of cultural identity and heritage. Messaging such as “Support Local,” “Taste of Home,” or “Proudly Siquijor-Made”, “Ani nang isla yaman nang isla” resonates with Filipino consumers who value tradition and belonging. (5) Encourage user-generated content by prompting visitors to share their food experiences through hashtags, incentives for posting reviews, or reposts on official pages—tapping into Filipinos’ active online presence and strengthening organic word-of-mouth promotion.

### Declaration

**Funding:** This research was personally funded by the author to ensure independence and objectivity throughout the study. By not relying on external sponsorship or institutional funding, the research process remained free from commercial or organizational influence, thereby enhancing the credibility and reliability of the results.

**Limitation:** This study is limited to the responses of 207 Filipino tourists and 197 foreign tourists who voluntarily agreed to participate, which may not fully represent the broader tourist population in Siquijor. Data collection was conducted over a six-month period, from November 2024 to April 2025, allowing for seasonal variability but still constrained by participant availability and willingness. Throughout the research process, ethical standards were strictly observed, including informed consent and data confidentiality, to ensure the integrity and ethical soundness of the findings.

**Future Directions:** To build on the findings of this study, future research should aim to address current limitations and explore emerging patterns in tourist behavior. As food tourism continues to evolve in response to cultural, technological, and social changes, more nuanced investigations are needed. (1) Future research could expand the sample size and include a more diverse demographic profile to improve generalizability and capture the evolving preferences of both local and foreign tourists across different age groups, regions, and travel motivations. (2) Longitudinal studies could be conducted to observe how tourist behavior changes over time, especially in response to shifts in marketing strategies, cultural trends, or post-pandemic travel patterns affecting food tourism in Siquijor. (3) Further studies may explore the impact of digital engagement—such as influencer content, user-generated posts, and social media storytelling—on actual purchase behavior and destination loyalty, particularly comparing active content creators with passive consumers.

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