



Holiday Economics: Perspectives and Experiences from Hospitality Professionals

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Abstract.

This research examined the perspectives and experiences of hospitality professionals on the resurgence of the Philippine Holiday Economics Law, first enacted in 2007, discontinued in 2010 under the Aquino administration, and revived in 2022 during the Marcos administration. The policy strategically shifts holidays to create long weekends and boost domestic tourism as part of its recovery program following the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on grounded theory and lived experience theoretical perspectives, this study employed a qualitative research design through semi-structured interviews with 15 hospitality professionals working in six restaurants, five cafes, and four hotels in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Philippines. The results revealed that the concept of holiday economics is ambiguous to the participants, yet they have experienced its impact on operations and the workforce. This pioneering study provides actionable insights for stakeholders, facilitating more effective policy implementation. It contributes to understanding how a specific law or tourism-related policy on holiday adjustments is perceived and how it impacts the operations and workforce of hospitality professionals in a particular setting, which could serve as the foundation for similar studies in diverse contexts.

Kata Kunci:

Liburan, Pariwisata domestik, Akhir pekan panjang, Filipina, Perhotelan.

Abstrak.

Penelitian ini mengkaji perspektif dan pengalaman para profesional perhotelan mengenai kebangkitan Undang-Undang Ekonomi Liburan Filipina, yang pertama kali diberlakukan pada tahun 2007, ditangguhkan pada tahun 2010 di bawah pemerintahan Aquino, dan dibidik kembali pada tahun 2022 pada masa pemerintahan Marcos. Kebijakan ini secara strategis mengubah hari libur untuk menciptakan akhir pekan yang panjang dan meningkatkan pariwisata domestik sebagai bagian dari program pemulihan setelah pandemi COVID-19. Berdasarkan perspektif grounded theory dan pengalaman langsung, penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 15 profesional di bidang perhotelan yang bekerja di enam restoran, lima kafe, dan empat hotel di Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Filipina. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konsep ekonomi liburan masih ambigu bagi para partisipan, namun mereka telah merasakan dampaknya terhadap operasi dan tenaga kerja mereka. Penelitian perintis ini memberikan wawasan yang dapat ditindaklanjuti oleh para pemangku kepentingan, memfasilitasi implementasi kebijakan yang lebih efektif. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memahami bagaimana undang-undang atau kebijakan terkait pariwisata tentang penyesuaian liburan dirasakan dan bagaimana dampaknya terhadap operasi dan tenaga kerja profesional perhotelan di lingkungan tertentu, yang dapat menjadi dasar untuk penelitian serupa dalam konteks yang beragam.

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1. Introduction

The tourism industry is a powerful driver of economic growth and development (UNWTO, 2019) (Naseem, S., 2021). It is projected to generate 3% annual employment growth over the next decade, potentially creating one million jobs worldwide (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2024). In Asia, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) forecasts that Asian international tourist arrivals from 619 million in 2024 will increase to 762 million by 2026, indicating a recovery rate of 111.6% compared to pre-pandemic levels, showcasing Asia's leading role in tourism recovery, followed by the Americas and the Pacific (PATA, 2024) (Özgür Töre, V., 2024). In the Philippines, tourism recovery is steadily growing, ranking 7th among the 10 ASEAN member countries in terms of tourist arrivals in 2023 (Sukoco, R., 2024). The Philippines' tourism sector accounts for 8.6% of the country's GDP. The Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (TDGVA) amounted to P2.09 trillion in 2023, the highest since the Philippine Statistics Authority began compiling data in 2000 (Department of Tourism, 2024). While higher than during the COVID-19 pandemic, but still behind the pre-pandemic phase, the Philippine Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2023 reports that the tourism industry could contribute over US\$155 billion to the country's GDP by 2032, accounting for 21.4% of the total economy.

From this standpoint, boosting the tourism industry, including domestic tourism, is a viable option to revitalize and aid in recovering the tourism sector post-pandemic (Tan, A. 2021) (Department of Tourism, 2022) (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023) (Pineda, J., 2023). For example, Baguio, a popular tourist destination with a surge in tourists and hotel occupancy, experiences peak activity during the Holy Week (Agoot, L., 2023).

As a point of departure, this study aims to examine one of the recovery programs of a developing country, such as the Philippines, to boost domestic tourism and economic growth through the strategic use of holidays, known as "holiday economics law." The Philippines could capitalize on the flexible holidays as they observe numerous holidays in a year ranking fourth among the countries with the most holidays, along with Colombia, Trinidad, and Tobago (WorldAtlas, 2024), and placing 3rd among the ASEAN member states with the most number of holidays (20) following Cambodia (27) and Myanmar (25) (Holiday Economics, 2014).

Merriam-Webster may have originated as a commemoration of an event, which could be religious, historical, and/or social, and eventually evolved into its verb meaning of "to take a vacation" (Holiday, 2025). They have now evolved into a policy-driven strategy aimed at promoting domestic travel within the country. As Sun et al. (2022) highlighted, public holidays generate leisure time that is essential for tourism.

Examining the holiday economics policy through the lens of hospitality professionals, who are the service providers, represents a shift from studies that are tourist-centered. For instance, Cui's (Cui, R., 2023) research on the travel duration and the restorative experiences of tourists taking holidays, Lima et.al.'s (2020) research on the effects of holidays on tourists, and Shen et al. (2018) study on how adjustments to the holiday system affect tourist consumer behavior. Understanding the impact of holiday economics on hospitality professionals is crucial, primarily because the industry is characterized by a long and demanding work environment that revolves around customer service, significantly affecting its employees' psychological well-being (Grobelna, A., & Skrzeszewska, K. (2019). They also experience issues with scheduling and rostering (Rocha, M. et al., 2012) as well as productivity challenges (Peshave, M., 2020).

In understanding the human resource management aspects of tourism and hospitality professionals, the researchers acknowledge Baum's (2015) critique that empirical studies are predominantly of a

Western-centric perspective, and the analysis of theory that does not acknowledge the influence of culture is increasingly a critical challenge. Thus, this study will adopt the grounded theory approach, employing an inductive method through the lived experiences of hospitality workers, where their shared culture and societal norms shape these experiences.

Developed by Glaser and Strauss, Grounded Theory (1965) criticized traditional qualitative research methods, which relied on hypothesis testing, as limiting, and this theory emerged as a more flexible approach that allowed for the development of theory directly from data (Delve, Ho, Et al., 2021). While the nature of most jobs in the tourism and hospitality industry operates on weekends and holidays, this is further intensified when holidays are extended. More important than adapting to this policy is the extent to which these professionals understand the law, enabling them to mitigate challenges and maximize opportunities. Satta's (2018) The Ambiguity Theory of Knows argues that what one "knows" and its related terms have multiple meanings. The truth of a knowledge claim can vary depending on the specific meaning used in a particular context. In this study, what one knows about holiday economics goes beyond surface definitions; it is about what is experienced by the hospitality professionals—essentially, the extended holidays are an extended respite from work, but for hospitality professionals, this is extended work.

The knowledge gained from direct participation in everyday events or lived experiences (Fisher, H., & du Rand, G., 2024) was pioneered by Husserl in phenomenology, a method of studying one's experiences based on the person's consciousness (Moran, D., 2013). Described as a ubiquitous term (Gellwieler, S. et al., 2018), Moran (2013) detailed what encompasses a lived experience, which includes "sensory awareness, perception, memory, imagination, feeling, emotion, mood, free will, time-consciousness, judgement, reasoning, symbolic thought, self-conscious awareness, as well as subconscious drives and desires." The individual experiences of hospitality professionals encompass knowledge, emotions, and perceptions that are collectively shared and shaped by the culture and society of their locale, as well as those of the industry. This perspective is anchored on Raymond William's "Structure of Feelings" (1977) (2024), which reflects how the individual's emotions and perceptions are personal but also cultural. Additionally, the researchers are grounded in their subjectivities, as insiders within the tourism and hospitality academic community and as outsiders within the hospitality industry.

The following questions guide this study: What are hospitality professionals' perspectives and experiences on holiday economics as a policy in the context of their work? This study examined the perspectives of hospitality professionals in Fort Bonifacio Global City (BGC) in Taguig, Metro Manila. No research has explicitly examined the perspectives of hospitality professionals on their work experiences during long holidays. In this regard, the objectives of this study are (1) to determine the perspectives of hospitality professionals on Holiday Economics; and (2) to determine the experiences of hospitality professionals during long holidays, including those arising from holiday economics law.

2. Literature Review and Studies

2.1. National Context: Holiday Economics in the Philippines

Government authorities explicitly regulate holidays. Holiday Economics was introduced and implemented by former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in 2001. By 2007, the policy was institutionalized through Republic Act 9492 (RA9492), which amended a specific section of Executive Order No. 292 (Administrative Code of 1987) to restructure the observance of national holidays, allowing for the movement of holidays to create extended weekends (Holiday Economics, 2014). According to this law, holidays that fall midweek can be moved to Monday through a

Presidential Proclamation, with compensation computation for additional pay for working on a regular and memorable (non-working) holiday. Provisions are also made for overtime compensation for working beyond eight (8) hours. Former President Benigno Aquino III repealed Arroyo's legislation on driving holidays, which allowed holidays to be commemorated on their proper dates, minimized economic disruption, and enabled workers to earn daily wages (Porcalla, D., 2010). President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued Proclamation 90 in 2023, reintroducing "holiday economics" to stimulate tourism and hospitality, encouraging Filipinos to plan vacations and boost economic activity (Holiday Economics, 2023) (Parrocha, A., 2022).

Holiday Economics is supported nationally and locally through the Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593) and the Local Government Code of 1991 (RA 7160 s.1991). The Tourism Act of 2009 enhances the role of tourism as a key driver of economic growth. This law aims to attract investment, generate foreign currency, create jobs, and promote the Philippines as a tourist destination. The local government is empowered to develop tourism at its level through the Local Government Code of 1991, which systematically transfers power, authority, responsibilities, and resources from the national government to local government units (LGUs).

Related studies on holiday economics in the Philippines are still limited. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Institute for Labor Studies has raised concerns that holiday economics may result in limited gains for local tourism and employment (Makati Business Club Congress Watch Report 184, (Holiday Economics, 2014). Firms may avoid the additional labor costs associated with holiday operations, which can constrain productivity and diminish the overall impact on economic growth. On the other hand, Yu (2012) conducted an economic analysis of the Philippine tourism industry using the input-output analysis. While the study did not extensively discuss the holiday economics implementation per se, its conclusion suggested that, given the economic benefits of tourism and its interconnection with other industries, the holiday economics of the previous administration may be continued by the present administration to boost domestic tourism.

The easing of COVID-19 restrictions by 2023 has boosted hope for reviving tourism revenue and potentially increasing government income through domestic and international travel (Manila Bulletin, 2023 (Holiday Economics, 2023)). The revenue from tourism and related businesses is expected to increase by 10% during long weekends, potentially resulting in a 3.5% rise in the country's gross domestic product (Cervantes, F., 2023). However, no previous study has proven that the benefits of holiday economics outweigh the productivity losses associated with holidays (Palabrica, R.J., 2023).

2.2. *Global Practices of Holiday Adjustment*

Other countries have had similar international holiday adjustments. In the UK, it is called a bank holiday, and payday is also considered a long weekend because of the extra days off. As shared by Jones (2022), this increase in retail profits was 15% (DIY, gardening, and furniture) and contributed £500 million to the overall British economy. Japan implemented the Happy Mondays system in 1998, changing fixed holidays to Mondays for extended weekends (Hindell, J., 2000). Some holidays in the US and Canada were moved to Mondays to create extended weekends. According to Govinfo.gov (Uniform Monday Holiday Act, Pub. L., 1968), the USA's Uniform Monday Holiday Act (1963) moved federal holidays to Monday for extended weekends, while Canada has a statutory holiday, a general holiday established by federal, territorial, or provincial labor standards legislation on which workers get a day off with pay (Omololu, E., 2024). In Africa, the Public Holidays Act 36 of 1994 specifies the number of public holidays annually, as well as any day officially declared by the president as a public holiday. Similarly, a public holiday that falls on a Sunday may be observed the following Monday (Bowmans, 2022). While terminologies and legislations differ, and the economic benefits have not been fully explored across different countries, it is noteworthy to know that extended

holidays have been applied much earlier in other countries, but not as an explicit recovery policy strategy to boost domestic tourism, which is where the Philippines' holiday economics stand out.

2.3. *Synthesis and Research Gap*

A review of related literature and studies revealed that the Philippine national government has aimed to implement, discontinue, and revitalize its holiday economic policy since its inception. Enabling the laws of holiday economics, such as the Tourism Act of 2009 and the Local Government Code of 1991, will help increase domestic tourism and weekend travel. This is a practice in other countries, where holidays are moved to create extended weekends. Although studies have revealed promising potential for boosting the tourism and hospitality sectors through holiday economics, notable gaps remain. Existing scholarly work on this topic remains limited in general, and this study aims to address the research gap in empirical studies that focuses on the lived experiences of hospitality workers. Underscoring the need for more thorough studies on the perspectives and approaches of businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry and local governments, as applied to a specific research locale.

3. Methodology

In terms of research design, this study employed an exploratory qualitative research approach since there are very few studies on this phenomenon. The exploratory research method is closely aligned with grounded theory through the inductive analysis of the study (Stebbins, R., 2001), specifically focusing on the lived experiences of hospitality professionals. The semi-structured interviews offer flexibility, allowing for natural and spontaneous discussions that elicit deeper insights and perspectives (Adams, W.C., 2015).

Regarding the participants of the study, there are 15 study participants, each representing one of the following establishments: six from restaurants, five from cafes, and four from accommodations. Seven were female, and eight were male; their ages ranged from 20 to 40. Ten held supervisory and management positions, and five held staff positions. The inclusion criterion was that the participants should have directly experienced the resurgence of the holiday economics policy from 2022 onwards. Hospitality professionals may not have a comprehensive understanding of the policy's detailed specifics, but this does not diminish the importance of understanding the firsthand experiences of individuals at the ground level regarding their operational and emotional responses to the policy.

As for the research locale, the cafés, restaurants, and hotels are located on 26th Street, C5 Road, Serendra, Bonifacio High Street, 30th Street, and 32nd Street in the Bonifacio Global City (BGC), Taguig. BGC is the country's second-largest Central Business District (CBD) (Urban Land Institute, 2020). It has transformed from a former military base into a thriving financial and lifestyle district, and its office workers, residents, and visitors contribute to a dynamic economic environment (Sarne, V.B., 2018).

3.1. *Data Collection Method*

The researcher-made research instrument was a semi-structured interview guide sheet, grounded in the study's research objectives. Three (3) internal faculty experts validated the research instrument. An official request letter was emailed to establishments that required formal communication, and interviews were scheduled upon approval. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. In-depth, face-to-face interviews, which lasted between 40 minutes and one hour, were conducted from September 22 to October 21, 2024.

Regarding ethical considerations, participation in the study was voluntary, and informed written

consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the interview at any time, as well as throughout the research process. The researchers provided an interview guide that allowed participants to review the questions and understand the scope of the interviews. Following the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173), an anonymization technique was used to code participants and their work establishments (e.g., P1 to P15).

3.2. Data Analysis

The research began as an undergraduate thesis, which underwent significant revisions, and the research advisor later became a co-author. This collaboration broadened the research scope and provided objectivity through a collaborative reflection among the authors on how their research biases, as well as their insider and outsider perspectives as part of the tourism academe and outside of the hospitality industry, influenced their interpretations of the study's findings.

Thematic analysis was used to identify the patterns, themes, and subthemes within the collected data. Thematic analysis is a flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns (themes) within qualitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the dataset (Nowell, L.S. et al., 2017). This approach enabled a systematic exploration of participants' responses, allowing for the identification of recurring themes organized through inductive coding. Coding involves categorizing data sections with labels representing specific themes or ideas, which helps uncover patterns and relationships within the data (Castleberry, A. & Nolen, A., 2018). The initial coding was identified from the participants' responses, which were tallied and organized manually using an Excel spreadsheet. An iterative process of grouping and re-grouping data into themes was then employed, and the results were checked by their adviser. Interview transcripts that were directly quoted in the study to support the analysis, which were initially in Filipino and Taglish (a combination of Filipino and English), were translated into English using Google Translate with necessary modifications to ensure contextual coherence. An external language editor checked the final output.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Perspectives of Selected Hospitality Professionals on Holiday Economics

In terms of Ambiguity in the Holiday Economics Concept, the participants varied in their familiarity with the concept of holiday economics, with the majority responding that they were unfamiliar with the term "holiday economics" but were fully aware of long weekends. For instance, as shared by P13: *"No, I'm not familiar. But with long weekends, yes, I am familiar. When the holiday moves to the weekend, it becomes a long weekend."* (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, P12, P13, P15).

While policies on tourism recovery, such as holiday economics, significantly impact the tourism and hospitality industry, a gap exists in understanding how these policies affect the industry. Okuyama (2018) highlighted that the role of policy in shaping the industry remains understudied, especially in developing countries and regions. Aronsson and McCarthy (2016) noted that, in the study of regulation at the municipal level, many have developed a wide range of plans, strategies, and guidelines; the primary challenge lies in their creation and effective implementation. The researchers concur with this observation, which is not only valid at the municipal level but also applicable across all levels—provincial, regional, and national. Even well-intentioned policies may fail if they lack clarity and acceptance among the stakeholders. Aharon *et al.* (2021) pointed out that governments should be transparent and forthright regarding the types of initiatives they intend to apply, how they plan to carry them out, and how long they plan to do so.

4.2. Experiences of hospitality professionals during long holidays, including those arising from the Holiday Economics law

The experiences shared by the respondents were grouped into operations and human resource management.

4.2.1 Operations Management Aspects

Regarding the economic benefits of holiday concentration (Sales Spikes and Spatial Disparities), While 14 of 15 establishments reported higher sales, location-dependent variation (e.g., P4) suggests uneven distribution of benefit.” P4, a Restaurant Manager, disclosed that the low sales were due to the establishment's location on the 5th floor of the mall and the poor timing of mall promotions, resulting in sales losses. This highlights the importance of a strategic location in achieving business success. As shared, “*In our restaurant, especially as a manager, the holidays negatively impact our business. Since our restaurant is not usually crowded, these holidays mean we must double our labor costs. If there are not many customers, there are no sales. And to top it off, we face competition from online platforms.*” This implies that online platforms pose a challenge to brick-and-mortar establishments during high-traffic holidays.

The anticipated increases in sales and revenue have a dominant effect on operations. Preparing for more guests requires additional supplies, a larger workforce, and a greater understanding of customer needs and demands, which may lead to increased complaints and waste. The hospitality professionals interviewed demonstrated that, while challenges exist, they take proactive measures to ensure smooth operations.

As for the proactive inventory management, most establishments proactively prepare for an anticipated increase in demand for long holidays (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P11, P12, and P13 (10)); one will borrow from other branches if they experience a shortage of supplies (P9), and two experience stock shortages during long weekends (P3 and P10). Fluctuating demand for tourism and hospitality may lead to stock shortages (Badr, H., & Ahmed, W., 2023), necessitating effective forecasting and flexible supply chain adjustments to meet consumer needs without disruption (Zhang, S., 2024).

As a Café Supervisor, P8 shared that inventory adjustments are made based on demand forecasting: “*We adjust our inventory on a need basis. We are a business hotel, but we also tap the leisure market on long weekends and adjust the inventory accordingly.*”

A café officer-in-charge, P9, stated that they had purchased or borrowed additional supplies from other branches. “*With so many orders, we often run out of products. We borrow from other branches or purchase additional supplies.*” This suggests that smaller or less-resourced businesses often face systemic supply chain inflexibility in adjusting their inventory, leading to shortages, borrowing from other branches, or purchasing additional supplies.

With more customers, more challenges may arise, as increased numbers of guests may lead to complaints and operational challenges during long weekends. P1, P3, P4, P7, P8, P9, P1, P11, P12, P13 (10) To quote, “*During long weekends, customer service is affected. There have been a few complaints about service.*”

The hospitality establishments interviewed employed problem-solving approaches to ensure that these complaints were handled effectively and preventive actions were taken to minimize similar concerns. Operational challenges were also addressed through the planning and standardization of the procedures. “*In the morning, we review the sales and complaints from the previous day and create a game plan*

to prevent those complaints from happening again." P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P10, P12, P15 (9).

Another challenge is excess food, which leads to waste (P4, P6, P9, P12, P14, and P15) (6). Some have effectively reduced food waste through proper inventory management and forecasting (P5, P11, and P13 (3)). This finding supports Papargyropoulou et al's (2014) study on reducing food waste effectively as a significant food-related operation.

4.2.2 Human Resources Management Aspects

In terms of employee experiences (navigating compensations, stress and motivation), Bratton *et al.* (2022) define human resource management as "*a body of knowledge and a set of practices that define the nature of work and regulate the employment relationship.*" In the context of the participants' experiences with holiday economics, human resource management is directly implicated in navigating the compensation, increased workload, scheduling adjustments, and stress that may arise from the influx of guests, which are essential considerations. The participants also shared numerous economic benefits, including increased pay, reduced service charges, and additional tips. Despite the stress and additional work, the participants reported being generally happy with their work and the company's conducive work environment.

Regarding the workforce and scheduling, the hospitality industry requires working hours that include irregular shifts, night shifts, and weekends (Kusluvan, S. et al., 2010) (Tan, K. et al., 2020) (Choi, H. et al., 2019). The study participants reported that their companies made proper adjustments to manning and scheduling during long holidays (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P13, P14, and P15), which may have entailed longer working hours.

For instance, P14, a Front Office Manager, shared workforce scheduling adjustments during long weekends: "*Whenever we have a long weekend, we adjust our staffing. We either get a schedule in advance or have a straight work schedule because we need more people to take care of all the guests.*" Here, schedule can either be fixed means it covers one shift, while a straight schedule may cover more than one shift (e.g., 7 am-3 pm; 3 pm to 11 pm) which happens in hospitality operations just like in restaurants, hotels, and cafes, which operate multiple shifts in a day.

Some experienced challenges because they were understaffed and had an increased workload, which may have led to difficulty meeting customers' needs, potentially resulting in complaints (P7, P8, P9, P12, and P19) (5). P12, a Front Office Manager in a 5-star hotel, shared: "*We have been facing challenges with staffing, especially during long weekends. This often leads to difficulties accommodating all our customers, resulting in negative complaints.*"

As for the workforce benefits, thirteen of the 15 participants received additional pay during long weekends, either through double pay for working on a holiday, increased service charges, or tips from guests. To quote: "*During long weekends, we have double pay.*" P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, P11, P13 (9) "*We are very particular about the long weekends, with good sales, and we have service charges. More sales, more service charge.*" P1, P2, P3, P6, P9, P10, P11, P13 (8)

"Our employees also receive tips from guests." P5, P12, P13, P15 (4)

Despite the additional compensation mandated by the government, the pay schemes appear non-uniform and vary depending on the company's policy. Some participants recommended a salary increase, given the challenge of working long hours. P10, a Café Server and Receptionist, recommended this: "*Employees should be included in the policy implementation. Increase our wages because we are the ones working during long weekends.*"

P13, a Room Service Waiter, also recommended a salary increase: "*Perhaps they should also give some*

compensation or reward to the staff, maybe even a salary increase. Because if they work straight from Friday to Saturday, they only get double pay for Friday, even though they are tired."

These two participants held entry-level positions with lower salaries, thus justifying their salary recommendations. Highlighting the financial remuneration for working during long weekends supports Paddit's (2021) finding that employees primarily attribute their job satisfaction to salaries and wages.

Regarding work conditions and employee emotions, increased demand on long weekends increases employee workload and stress, particularly during peak hours (P1, P3, P5, P8, and P13 (5)). As P8, a Café Supervisor, shared, *"Despite our best efforts, we still get many customer complaints. It is stressful, and we often bring that stress home."*

This finding aligns with D'Souza and D'Souza (2023), who noted that hospitality staff members face additional pressure during peak periods, particularly when responding to high customer expectations. This also reinforced the earlier studies by Edvardsson and Gustavsson (2003), who noted that guests' high expectations add a layer of stress, further complicating their work.

Interestingly, 14 out of 15 study participants were happy despite the workload and stress arising from work demands (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, and P15) (14). As shared by P9, a Café Officer-in-Charge: *"We are happier and not stressed during long weekends because we have a healthy work environment and good management."*

When there are more customers, employees become more inspired and feel more motivated to work, thanks to their incentives and increased productivity. By comparison, they felt demotivated and less productive when there were fewer customers present (P2, P4, P6, P7, and P8). P9)(6). To quote: *"We are inspired to work harder because of the incentives our boss gives us."* (P6, Restaurant Receptionist).

"Our staff is getting demotivated by the lack of customers. To boost sales, we are working hard to improve our services." (P4, Restaurant Manager)

"There is a huge impact on employees' productivity since our workloads during regular days are doubled whenever there is a long weekend, so all the employees are becoming all around." (P7, Café Team Lead)

Participants also shared strategies for managing stress and conflict at work, such as teamwork, coaching, and positive reinforcement (P3, P6, P8, P9, P11, P13)(6).

P6, a Restaurant Receptionist, shared how they managed stress collectively through teamwork and did not lose sight of their main goal in customer service: *"Stress is a part of the job, but we manage it together. We collaborate to handle any issues. Our main goal is to ensure customers leave the restaurant happy."* This highlights the importance of teamwork in addressing workplace challenges.

P7, a Team Lead in a Café, emphasized open communication, accountability, and coaching. Potential rewards were also highlighted to encourage everyone to increase sales. *Despite being stressed, we work as a team, communicate openly, and are accountable for everything. We encourage one another through coaching and positive reinforcement. Also, we emphasize the potential incentives to motivate everyone to increase sales and improve our overall performance."*

A study by Bellet et.al. (2023) showed that happy workers are 12% more productive, suggesting a significant causal effect of happiness on productivity. Thus, happy employees translate to better performance, and ultimately, happier guests. Several studies have emphasized the significance of

management support in employee career development, economic security, and fostering supportive work environments (Ohunakin, F. et al., 2020; Ghani, B. et al., 2022; Dogonyaro, H., 2021). Additionally, a happy working environment supports Tan's (2013) study, which strengthens the position of extrinsic factors such as work conditions as key employee motivators. This is especially true in strenuous situations where productivity is tested. This challenges a revisit of Herzberg's two-factor theory of employee motivation, which posits that extrinsic factors are mere dissatisfaction preventers, but are also important motivators. As studies across various industries and countries have demonstrated, these factors can still significantly contribute to job satisfaction. Raymond Williams' "Structure of Feeling" frames the analysis of employee emotions, presenting the complexities of emotions through both collective and individual experiences. While seemingly contradictory, "structure" and "feeling" highlight the dialectical relationship between societal structures and individual emotions (Raymond Williams Society, 2024). Despite the operational challenges and stress associated with long weekends, participants expressed positive feelings and attitudes towards working during these periods, reflecting a generally favorable working environment.

5. Conclusion

This study offers valuable insights into the pervasive ambiguity surrounding hospitality professionals in holiday economics law. Despite experiencing the effects of extended weekends, most of the interviewed hospitality professionals did not fully understand policy objectives and mechanisms. This finding underscores the disconnect between policy awareness and operational compliance. Lušický & Musil's (2016) study on the South Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic highlighted the importance of stakeholders' involvement in the planning, dissemination, and evaluation of tourism-related policies to address the challenge that many laws and policies exist with which stakeholders have a limited understanding. This enables the government to periodically review its policy and law implementation and strengthen its communication and awareness-building efforts to achieve more effective implementation and stakeholder engagement.

Experiences and emotions are varied and complex. Despite experiencing stress and an increased workload, most people are generally satisfied with their work environment. Emotions are fluid, and experiencing stress at work does not always result in an unhappy workforce. The challenge for hospitality businesses is to create and sustain a healthy work environment in which employees can thrive, even in challenging situations.

Additionally, the unpredictable nature of the hospitality industry, along with its fluctuating demand, can pose challenges to the operational and human resources of various hospitality-related establishments during long weekends. Waste management, particularly food waste, poses a significant challenge for many establishments, especially during long weekends and peak hours. This calls for revisiting the inventory and planning of long-weekend preparedness for tourism- and hospitality-related businesses.

Regarding practical implications, this study offers actionable insights for business stakeholders, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sectors. It can be used for policy enhancement, strategic planning, workforce management, the adoption of more sustainable practices, and sharing best practices in national and international settings.

In terms of bridging the communication gap and fostering collaboration, this study offers insights for the government to enhance its communication and orientation with stakeholders regarding the reimplementation of a new policy or law, specifically holiday economics. Ambiguity and a lack of understanding of the policy reflect a communication gap at the national level, which may also affect a country's competitiveness as a tourist destination.

This presents an opportunity for the Philippine government to enhance information dissemination and policy implementation. The government could provide more accessible information by leveraging digital technology to develop a mobile app primer on holiday economics and other tourism-related policies, enabling businesses to adapt and communicate effectively with their workforce. This information can be disseminated through various communication channels, such as official websites and social media, given that the tourism and hospitality industry operates within an international business landscape where its markets, products, services, and supply chains are not limited to cities, provinces, or nations.

This also provides an opportunity for the tourism and hospitality industry, as well as nations, to collaboratively conduct policy reviews with input from stakeholders, including international hospitality businesses, to gain insight into how policies can influence business decision-making and address challenges that may impede the optimization of the potential benefits of such policies and laws.

Regarding strategic planning and operational efficiency, hospitality businesses may factor in their strategic planning of operational and human resource aspects during long weekends and anticipate that there will be more extended weekends due to the flexible movement of holidays brought about by holiday economics law. Strategic planning is vital for capitalizing on opportunities presented by long weekends in the tourism and hospitality industries. It is a systematic process that involves analyzing an organization's internal and external factors to make informed decisions (Bryson, J.M., 2011). By examining market trends and consumer behavior, businesses can forecast demand spikes and adjust their operations, such as workforce rotation and inventory planning. Additionally, since the results showed increased sales and revenue during long weekends, promotional and marketing programs should be revisited to optimize sales and revenue. Leveraging data analytics can help develop more accurate demand forecasting, maximize resource utilization, and minimize waste.

Concerning the adaptation to more sustainable management practices in waste management, the potential increase in waste during extended holidays underscores the importance of integrating sustainable practices into tourism and hospitality businesses. Sustainable management practices, particularly in waste management, should be integrated into the strategic plans of tourism and hospitality businesses, given the anticipated increase in waste during long weekends. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (2017), approximately 40% of food is wasted in restaurants, hotels, and supermarkets. Extended holidays are likely to generate more waste that is characteristic of tourism, such as food waste, packaging materials, and single-use plastics (Singh, J. et al., 2014). With the increasingly devastating effects of climate change, hospitality businesses must enhance their sound waste management practices to achieve both environmental and economic sustainability in the long run.

From the perspective of workforce planning and management, regarding work dynamics, having an appropriately staffed workforce, effective scheduling, and providing employee support can help improve employee well-being. Research has shown that organizations prioritizing work-life balance are more likely to attract and retain top talent (Sok, J. et al., 2014) (Al-Refaie, A., 2015). The reality is that while the tourism and hospitality sectors provide comfort and enjoyment to their guests during long weekends, these professionals experience more stress and operational challenges during peak moments. This can negatively impact businesses. These factors can lead to employee burnout, decreased job performance, lower job satisfaction, and increased intention to turnover (Ayachit, M., & Chitta, S., 2021). Organizations that focus on mental health programs, flexible policies, and access to healthcare improve productivity, engagement, and employee retention, while reducing societal burdens on healthcare (Kestel, D., 2019), (Baicker, K. et al., 2010). The participants reported being happier and more inspired to work long weekends due to the monetary incentives and emotional and

professional support they would receive in the workplace. This study provides practical insights for hospitality businesses that cultivate a happy workplace, where supportive structures, recognition, and rewards are in place.

In relation to engaging with the academe and sharing best practices, Academic institutions, especially those offering education in tourism and hospitality, play a crucial role in shaping the industry's future. Continuously updating course content, including relevant laws such as those related to holiday economics, should be integrated to adapt to rapidly changing industry trends and needs. It also enables industry and academia to collaborate, inviting industry practitioners to lecture students and faculty. This is now more feasible with flexible learning modalities that have allowed international industry lecturers to share global trends. Stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors can gain valuable insights and perspectives by sharing best practices and strategies for navigating similar laws and policies related to holiday adjustments, as applied in diverse settings. Conferences, seminars, case studies, and forums can facilitate information sharing and provide insights into strategies to enhance hospitality operations and work dynamics.

The implications of this study underscore the importance of a more proactive and collaborative approach among stakeholders, including the government and the tourism and hospitality industries, for the effective implementation of laws and policies, ultimately leading to sustained growth and sustainability.

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