



EVENT QUALITY, VISITOR SATISFACTION, AND PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF TERRA MADRE ASIA AND PACIFIC

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Abstract

Terra Madre Asia and Pacific is a large-scale cultural and gastronomic event of the Slow Food movement that brings together food producers, advocates, scholars, and visitors around sustainable food systems and cultural heritage. This study determined the event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits of the 2025 event in Bacolod City and examined whether evaluations differed according to age, sex, civil status, and visitor type. It employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational design. An adapted and modified four-point survey was administered onsite to 400 domestic and international visitors through nonprobability quota sampling; accordingly, the findings are not statistically generalizable to all event visitors. Means and standard deviations described the variables. Mann–Whitney U tests were used for two-group comparisons, Kruskal–Wallis H tests with Dunn post hoc comparisons were used for comparisons involving more than two groups, and Spearman’s rho tested relationships. Event quality was rated very high, with fun, surprise, social, and hedonic aspects receiving the strongest evaluations, while immersion and participation obtained comparatively lower means. Visitor satisfaction was very high in most dimensions, although traffic and information received only a high rating and emerged as the principal service gap. All perceived-benefit dimensions were rated very high, led by socio-cultural exchange and community visibility and image enhancement. Evaluations were generally consistent across demographic groups. Age-related omnibus differences emerged in fun and in community visibility and image enhancement, although no specific pairwise comparison remained significant after Bonferroni adjustment. Event quality was positively related to visitor satisfaction ($p = .695$), perceived benefits ($p = .552$), and visitor satisfaction was positively related to perceived benefits ($p = .497$), all $p < .001$. The findings support an experience-centered framework emphasizing participatory programming, visitor navigation and information, and youth-responsive destination communication.

Keywords: *event quality; visitor satisfaction; perceived benefits; Terra Madre; Slow Food; food festival; event management*

Introduction

Events have become increasingly important to tourism economies because they concentrate cultural expression, visitor expenditure, destination promotion, social interaction, and institutional collaboration within a limited period. Their significance extends beyond attendance figures. Events can provide media exposure, stimulate improvements in services and infrastructure, strengthen associations among stakeholders, and create opportunities for learning and community participation (Arora & Sharma, 2022; Mair & Smith, 2021). As events grow in scale and complexity, however, their value depends increasingly on the quality of the experiences they produce and on the capacity of organizers to evaluate those experiences systematically. Effective event design must coordinate programs, people, spaces, information, services, and symbolic meanings in ways that allow diverse visitors to participate comfortably and find the occasion worthwhile (Bowdin et al., 2023; Mbaze-Ebock et al., 2025).

This concern is particularly relevant to food and cultural events. Food festivals do not merely present products for consumption; they provide spaces in which culinary pleasure, local identity, agricultural practice, biodiversity, heritage, and sustainability are interpreted for the public. When designed well, they may connect producers and consumers, encourage cultural learning, widen markets for local goods, and make the host community visible to



visitors. The Slow Food movement exemplifies this intersection. Emerging in Italy in the 1980s, it developed into an international movement committed to pleasurable yet responsible food consumption, biological and cultural diversity, taste education, and closer relationships between producers and consumers (Voinea et al., 2016). Its contemporary agenda also addresses food justice, biodiversity loss, agroecology, and climate change, demonstrating how gastronomy can serve as an entry point into wider political, ecological, and community concerns (Amo, 2023).

Terra Madre is among the movement's major platforms. Since 2004, Terra Madre gatherings have brought together food producers, fishers, cooks, activists, academics, and communities to exchange knowledge and build collective action toward food sovereignty and sustainable food systems (Amo, 2023). A Terra Madre event is therefore both an organized visitor experience and a values-driven forum. It must be able to provide enjoyment and hospitality while communicating an advocacy, enabling cultural exchange, and demonstrating benefits to participants and the host community. These multiple purposes make evaluation especially important: a favorable public image cannot by itself establish whether visitors were immersed in the event, able to participate, satisfied with essential services, or convinced that the event generated meaningful economic, social, cultural, and educational benefits.

Event quality offers one means of evaluating that experience. It concerns how visitors assess the experiential and operational features through which an event is encountered. Armbrrecht (2020) identified immersion, surprise, participation, fun, social value, and hedonic value as important dimensions of participatory-event quality. These dimensions move evaluation beyond a narrow assessment of physical facilities. They ask whether visitors became absorbed in the event, encountered distinctive or unexpected experiences, interacted with activities and offerings, enjoyed themselves, developed social connections, and experienced excitement, escapism, challenge, or memorability. Such qualities are consequential because event experiences are departures from everyday routines. Their concentration of sensory, emotional, cognitive, and relational stimuli can create memories and evaluations that shape satisfaction and later behavioral intentions (Biaett & Richards, 2020; Volo, 2021).

Visitor satisfaction represents a related but distinct judgment. It reflects the extent to which the actual experience meets or exceeds what visitors expected from the event. Satisfaction is influenced not only by the program but also by the conditions that permit visitors to access and enjoy it: traffic circulation, information, hygiene, safety, infrastructure, cultural content, products and services, and opportunities for socialization. In festival settings, these tangible and intangible attributes function together. Compelling cultural programming may be diminished by unclear directions or congestion, while efficient logistics without meaningful content may produce a technically competent but forgettable event. Satisfaction is important because it is associated with favorable word of mouth, loyalty, willingness to return, and the continuing viability of event and tourism enterprises (Mittal et al., 2023; Molina-Gómez et al., 2021; Mortazavi, 2021).

Perceived benefits add a third evaluative perspective. Special events may generate economic activity, community consolidation, socio-cultural exchange, visibility and image enhancement, and opportunities for knowledge and entertainment. These benefits are not identical to immediate satisfaction. A visitor may be satisfied with the services received yet remain uncertain about the event's broader community value; conversely, a visitor may strongly appreciate its advocacy and cultural contribution while identifying operational deficiencies. An informed evaluation therefore requires attention to both the personal event experience and the wider outcomes that visitors believe the event creates. Event impacts may be economic, social, cultural, and environmental, and their perceived value helps explain support for future events and sustainable tourism development (Dwyer, 2020; Kim et al., 2015; Pereira et al., 2021).

Despite Terra Madre's global relevance, empirical evaluations of a Terra Madre Asia and Pacific event remain limited, particularly those that examine event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits within a single analytical framework. The 2025 gathering in Bacolod City provided an opportunity to establish evidence from domestic and international visitors while the experience was recent. Specifically, the study sought to: (1) determine event quality in terms of immersion, surprise, participation, fun, social aspect, and hedonic aspect; (2) assess visitor satisfaction with traffic and information, hygiene and safety, culture and art, infrastructure, products and services, and socialization; (3) determine perceived economic benefits, community consolidation, socio-cultural exchange,



community visibility and image enhancement, and knowledge and entertainment opportunities; (4) test differences in these evaluations according to age, sex, civil status, and visitor type; and (5) test the relationships among event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits. The findings were intended to provide a basis for strengthening event design and management while preserving Terra Madre's distinctive cultural and sustainability mission.

Review of Related Literature

The study was anchored in an experience-centered understanding of event quality. Event consumption involves fantasies, feelings, sensory responses, and enjoyment as well as functional judgments (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In an event context, these responses emerge from encounters with programs, places, people, products, and symbols arranged within a bounded time and space. The experience is not simply delivered to a passive audience; visitors may co-create it through movement, attention, interaction, learning, tasting, discussion, and participation. Armbrecht's (2020) event quality model captures this complexity through immersion, surprise, participation, fun, social value, and hedonic value.

Immersion refers to deep involvement in an activity. When attention is concentrated and distractions recede, visitors may lose awareness of time and become absorbed in the event. This resembles the state of flow in which activity and awareness are closely integrated (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). In tourism and leisure environments, immersion can be encouraged by coherent themes, sensory richness, storytelling, demonstrations, and opportunities for visitors to enter the cultural world being presented. It is especially relevant to food heritage events because visitors can move beyond observation through tasting, preparation, conversation with producers, and hands-on learning. Baker (2025) argues that storytelling can connect separate service encounters into a meaningful visitor journey; in Terra Madre, that journey may connect food products with the people, landscapes, traditions, and sustainability issues from which they arise.

Surprise concerns novelty and the encounter with something distinctive or unexpected. Extraordinary moments interrupt routine expectations and can intensify memory. The event's capacity to present rare foods, unfamiliar traditions, unexpected performances, or new forms of interaction may therefore add experiential value. Surprise does not require spectacle alone. It may arise from discovering a producer's story, learning an unfamiliar method, or recognizing a shared ecological concern across cultures. Memorable tourism experiences are often strengthened by novelty, local culture, meaningfulness, involvement, and knowledge (Kim & Ritchie, 2014).

Participation concerns the degree to which visitors can act rather than merely observe. Direct interaction and co-creation deepen the connection between visitor and event. In food and cultural settings, participation may include workshops, tastings, dialogues, demonstrations, games, community activities, and collaborative advocacy. The quantity and quality of interaction with people, products, and services shape how visitors evaluate the experience (Weru et al., 2024). Participation also supports learning because it allows visitors to test ideas and practices, ask questions, and relate event content to their own contexts.

Fun expresses enjoyment during consumption, while the social dimension refers to value derived from interaction with companions, other attendees, organizers, exhibitors, and hosts. Events gather people around shared interests and create temporary communities in which visitors can strengthen existing relationships and form new ones. Social interaction may be an outcome in itself and a pathway to community attachment, belonging, and subjective well-being (Ahn et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2020). Hedonic quality encompasses excitement, escapism, challenge, emotional stimulation, and memorability. Together, fun, social value, and hedonic value describe the affective energy of an event. They explain why a technically efficient occasion may still feel flat and why a vibrant atmosphere can elevate otherwise ordinary encounters.

Evidence across event types indicates that experience quality is associated with satisfaction and favorable behavioral responses. Armbrecht (2021) found that affective and cognitive dimensions of event quality contribute to perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Çevik and Şimşek (2020) similarly reported that event experience quality influenced spectator satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Lee et al. (2022) showed that enjoyment,



socialization, and emotional and functional value are central to visitor outcomes in festivals. Although these studies concern different settings, they converge on the proposition that event quality is multidimensional and that visitor responses are shaped by the complete experience rather than by a single service attribute.

Visitor satisfaction is commonly understood as a post-experience comparison between expectations and actual performance. Pivac et al. (2011) operationalized festival satisfaction through traffic and information, hygiene and safety, culture and art, infrastructure, products and services, and socialization. These dimensions acknowledge that festivals function simultaneously as cultural programs and temporary service systems. Traffic and information determine whether visitors can reach the venue, understand the schedule, locate activities, and respond to changes. Hygiene and safety influence comfort, trust, and willingness to remain at the event. Infrastructure provides the physical conditions for movement, rest, sanitation, performance, display, and emergency response. Culture and art supply much of the event's symbolic substance, while products and services translate themes into tangible encounters. Socialization gives visitors space to meet, converse, celebrate, and build relationships.

Research consistently associates service and experience attributes with satisfaction. Cleanliness, functional facilities, information, staff support, accessibility, cultural authenticity, hospitality, and entertainment contribute to visitor evaluation (Bratić et al., 2024; Lamberz & Litfin, 2021). Darvishmotevali et al. (2023) found that entertainment, education, aesthetics, and cultural exploration shape perceived value and subsequent behavioral intentions in food-festival contexts. Marković (2020) likewise reported that festival experience quality influences satisfaction. These findings suggest that satisfaction is neither purely operational nor purely emotional. It arises from the interaction between enabling services and meaningful content.

The consequences of satisfaction extend beyond the event day. Satisfied visitors are more likely to recommend an event, revisit, speak favorably about the destination, and support its continuation. Electronic and interpersonal word of mouth are influential because they originate from people who have experienced the event and may be considered more credible than conventional promotion (Ahn et al., 2020; Pranaya et al., 2023). Over time, satisfaction and loyalty behaviors can affect organizational and destination performance (Mittal et al., 2023). For a recurring advocacy event, however, loyalty also has a social dimension: returning visitors may become collaborators, volunteers, producers, or advocates who strengthen the network that sustains the movement.

Perceived benefits broaden evaluation from immediate service judgments to anticipated or observed gains. Kim et al. (2015) identified economic benefits, community consolidation, socio-cultural exchange, community visibility and image enhancement, and knowledge and entertainment opportunities as major domains of event impact. Economic benefits may include visitor spending, producer sales, employment, enterprise exposure, and tourism activity. Local food events can contribute to rural and regional development by supporting short supply chains, encouraging entrepreneurship, and increasing demand for local products (Ossowska et al., 2023). Economic assessment alone, however, is insufficient because an event may also redistribute attention, recognition, relationships, and cultural confidence.

Community consolidation refers to strengthened relationships, participation, pride, and collective capacity. Festivals can create spaces in which residents, institutions, producers, and visitors cooperate around a shared undertaking. Participation in community festivals has been associated with social capital, connectedness, and well-being (Ahn et al., 2023). Socio-cultural exchange arises when people encounter different traditions, practices, identities, and viewpoints. In Terra Madre, this exchange is integral to the event rather than incidental: the movement joins local food communities across national boundaries while encouraging them to maintain their distinctiveness. Community visibility and image enhancement concern how the event influences perceptions of the host place and its capacity to organize an internationally relevant gathering. A successful event may position a destination as culturally vibrant, hospitable, sustainable, and capable of convening diverse stakeholders.

Knowledge and entertainment opportunities combine learning and pleasure. Food demonstrations, forums, exhibitions, producer encounters, and cultural presentations can communicate complex ideas through accessible experiences. This integration is consistent with Slow Food's effort to connect culinary enjoyment with education and



ecological responsibility. The perceived benefit framework therefore complements event quality and satisfaction: it captures whether the experience is interpreted as useful not only to the individual visitor but also to the community and advocacy that the event represents.

The literature also raises the question of whether demographic characteristics shape event evaluation. Some studies suggest that age cohorts may differ in media use, entertainment preferences, expectations of technology, and attendance motivations; however, these patterns should not be treated as fixed generational traits. In the event literature, actual event attributes often explain evaluations more consistently than demographic classifications. Monteiro et al. (2023) reported limited age-group differences in experiential perceptions, while event organization and experience quality have frequently been stronger predictors of satisfaction than visitor characteristics (Armbrecht, 2021; Škorić et al., 2021). Sex, civil status, and domestic or international visitor status may likewise provide useful comparison categories, but any differences require direct empirical support in the setting studied.

These perspectives support the study's integrated framework. Event quality describes the character of the encounter; satisfaction evaluates how well the event and its services fulfilled visitor expectations; perceived benefits identify the value visitors associate with the event's wider consequences. The variables are conceptually distinct but expected to be positively connected. Strong immersion, participation, enjoyment, social interaction, and hedonic value should contribute to satisfaction. A well-managed, meaningful experience should also make economic, social, cultural, educational, and image-related benefits more visible. In turn, the recognition of these benefits may reinforce satisfaction because visitors understand their attendance as both personally rewarding and socially consequential.

Methodology

The study used a quantitative descriptive-comparative-correlational design. The descriptive component established the extent of event quality, the level of visitor satisfaction, and the level of perceived benefits. The comparative component examined whether evaluations differed across age, sex, civil status, and visitor type. The correlational component tested the direction and strength of the associations among the three principal variables without manipulating the conditions of the event.

Data were collected during Terra Madre Asia and Pacific 2025, held in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, Philippines, from November 19 to 23, 2025. The event convened local and international participants around sustainable food systems, cultural heritage, and community-based gastronomy. The respondents were event visitors who were at least 18 years old. A minimum sample of 367 was calculated using the Raosoft sample-size calculator (estimated population = 8,000; 95% confidence level; 5% margin of error; 50% response distribution), and 400 usable responses were obtained through nonprobability quota sampling. Quotas were established according to visitor type to secure representation of both domestic and international visitors. The researcher was stationed at the registration area to identify prospective respondents, while enumerators assisted with survey administration. Because quota sampling is nonprobability-based, the study sought representation of relevant visitor categories but does not claim that every participant had an equal probability of selection (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021; Stratton, 2023).

An adapted and modified questionnaire was developed from published instruments and related literature on event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived event benefits, particularly Armbrecht (2020), Pivac et al. (2011), and Kim et al. (2015). The first section obtained demographic variables. Following the generational boundaries used in the instrument and the adult-only eligibility requirement, respondents were coded as Generation X (45–59 years), Generation Y (29–44 years), or Generation Z (18–28 years); these operational bands correspond to the commonly used birth-cohort boundaries discussed by Dimock (2019), with Generation Z restricted to eligible adults. The event-quality section contained 18 items covering immersion, surprise, participation, fun, social aspect, and hedonic aspect. The visitor-satisfaction section contained 17 items addressing traffic and information, hygiene and safety, culture and art, infrastructure, products and services, and socialization. The perceived-benefits section contained 16 items measuring economic benefits, community consolidation, socio-cultural exchange, community visibility and image enhancement, and knowledge and entertainment opportunities. Responses were recorded on a four-point



Likert scale: 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree. Mean scores of 3.50–4.00 were interpreted as very high, 2.50–3.49 as high, 1.50–2.49 as low, and 1.00–1.49 as very low.

Fifteen experts with master's or doctoral qualifications in hospitality and tourism management evaluated the instrument. The overall content validity index was .91. Two items were removed following the validation results and expert recommendations. The revised instrument was pilot-tested with the first 30 eligible event visitors before administration to the final analytic sample; their responses were excluded from the final analysis. Cronbach's alpha was .92 for event quality, .76 for visitor satisfaction, and .72 for perceived benefits, indicating sufficient internal consistency for the study.

The study received exempt ethics clearance from the Institutional Review Board (Ethics) of La Consolacion College Bacolod under Ethics Clearance No. 202526-093. The clearance was issued on November 15, 2025 and was valid from November 16, 2025 through May 31, 2026. Permission was also obtained from the event organizing committee before data collection. Questionnaires were distributed onsite from the second day through the final day so that respondents had already encountered the event's principal activities and services. The researcher and enumerators approached eligible visitors, explained the study, secured informed consent, provided clarification when necessary, and retrieved completed questionnaires on the same day. Participation was voluntary, and respondents could decline or withdraw without penalty. No unnecessary personally identifiable information was collected. Individual responses were not made available to the organizing committee, access to encoded data was restricted to the research team, and hard-copy questionnaires were secured for the approved retention period in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Means and standard deviations were calculated to summarize event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits. Nonparametric procedures were selected following assumption testing for normality via Shapiro-Wilk tests, which revealed significant deviations from normal distribution across all composite outcome dimensions (W ranging from 0.522 to 0.907, all $p < .001$). Group comparisons for binary demographic variables (sex, civil status, and visitor type) were conducted using Mann-Whitney U tests. Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used to evaluate differences across the three age groups; significant omnibus results were followed by Dunn's pairwise post hoc tests with Bonferroni-adjusted p-values (p_{Bonf}) to control for familywise error rates. Associations among event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits were examined using Spearman's rank-order correlation (ρ). Statistical significance was evaluated at $\alpha = .05$.

Results

The sample comprised 400 respondents. Generation Z constituted the largest age category ($n = 235$, 58.75%), followed by Generation Y ($n = 115$, 28.75%) and Generation X ($n = 50$, 12.50%). Women comprised 222 respondents (55.50%), while men comprised 178 (44.50%). Most respondents were single ($n = 276$, 69.00%), with 124 married respondents (31.00%). Domestic visitors predominated ($n = 315$, 78.75%), while 85 respondents were international visitors (21.25%).

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Age/generation	Generation X	50	12.50
Age/generation	Generation Y	115	28.75
Age/generation	Generation Z	235	58.75
Sex	Male	178	44.50
Sex	Female	222	55.50
Civil status	Single	276	69.00
Civil status	Married	124	31.00
Visitor type	Domestic	315	78.75



Visitor type	International	85	21.25
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Event quality was rated very high in all six dimensions. Fun obtained the highest overall mean ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.42$), followed by surprise ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.40$), social aspect ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.44$), and hedonic aspect ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.36$). Immersion ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.47$) and participation ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.49$) remained very high but were the two lowest-rated dimensions. Across age groups, Generation Y produced the highest means for surprise ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.41$), participation ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.49$), fun ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.39$), social aspect ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.41$), and hedonic aspect ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 0.42$), whereas Generation X obtained the highest immersion mean ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.43$). Generation Z recorded the lowest means across the event-quality dimensions, although its ratings remained favorable.

Table 2. Event Quality Dimensions

Dimension	M	SD	Interpretation
Fun	3.72	0.42	Very high
Surprise	3.70	0.40	Very high
Social aspect	3.65	0.44	Very high
Hedonic aspect	3.64	0.36	Very high
Immersion	3.56	0.47	Very high
Participation	3.55	0.49	Very high

Subgroup means showed only small descriptive variation across sex, civil status, and visitor type. Because the corresponding inferential tests were nonsignificant, these minor numerical differences were not interpreted as stable group-specific patterns.

Comparative analysis showed no significant differences in event quality according to sex, civil status, or visitor type. Age groups also did not differ significantly in immersion, surprise, participation, social aspect, or hedonic aspect. A significant omnibus age-group difference was found only for fun, $H(2) = 6.07$, $p = .048$. However, none of the Dunn pairwise comparisons remained statistically significant after Bonferroni adjustment. The smallest adjusted probability was observed between Generation Y ($n = 115$) and Generation Z ($n = 235$), $z = 2.376$, $p_{Bonf} = .054$, with a small effect ($r = .13$, calculated as $z / \sqrt{N}$ for the two compared groups). Generation Y had the higher descriptive mean, but this specific pairwise contrast did not meet the adjusted significance criterion.

Visitor satisfaction was very high in most dimensions. Culture and art obtained the highest overall mean ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.33$), followed by socialization ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.36$) and products and services ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 0.35$). Hygiene and safety ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.43$) and infrastructure ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.50$) were also evaluated as very high but had comparatively lower means. Traffic and information received the lowest evaluation and was the only dimension interpreted as high rather than very high ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.53$).

Table 3. Visitor Satisfaction Dimensions

Dimension	M	SD	Interpretation
Culture and art	3.81	0.33	Very high
Socialization	3.79	0.36	Very high
Products and services	3.74	0.35	Very high
Hygiene and safety	3.59	0.43	Very high
Infrastructure	3.52	0.50	Very high
Traffic and information	3.42	0.53	High



Subgroup descriptive ratings for visitor satisfaction varied only slightly across age, sex, civil status, and visitor type. These small differences were not emphasized because none of the corresponding inferential comparisons was statistically significant.

None of the visitor-satisfaction dimensions differed significantly according to age, sex, civil status, or visitor type. Thus, the observed descriptive variations did not constitute statistically reliable group differences.

All five perceived-benefit dimensions were rated very high. Socio-cultural exchange ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.29$) and community visibility and image enhancement ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.32$) received the highest overall means. Economic benefits received the lowest mean but remained very high ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.35$). Generation Y recorded the highest means for socio-cultural exchange ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.00$), economic benefits ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.32$), community consolidation ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.24$), and knowledge and entertainment opportunities ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.27$). Generation X obtained the highest mean for community visibility and image enhancement ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.23$). Male and female respondents, single and married respondents, and domestic and international visitors produced closely similar evaluations across the perceived-benefit dimensions.

Perceived benefits did not differ significantly according to sex, civil status, or visitor type. Age groups did not differ significantly in economic benefits, community consolidation, socio-cultural exchange, or knowledge and entertainment opportunities. A significant omnibus age-group difference was found for community visibility and image enhancement, $H(2) = 6.95$, $p = .031$. However, none of the Dunn pairwise comparisons remained statistically significant after Bonferroni adjustment. The smallest adjusted probability was observed between Generation Y ($n = 115$) and Generation Z ($n = 235$), $z = 2.271$, $p_{\text{Bonf}} = .069$, with a small effect ($r = .12$, calculated as $z / \sqrt{N}$ for the two compared groups). Generation Y had the higher descriptive mean, but this specific pairwise contrast did not meet the adjusted significance criterion.

Spearman correlation showed that event quality had a positive, statistically significant association with visitor satisfaction, $p = .695$, $p < .001$. Event quality was also positively associated with perceived benefits, $p = .552$, $p < .001$. Visitor satisfaction and perceived benefits were positively associated, $p = .497$, $p < .001$. The coefficients indicated moderate to strong covariation among the three principal variables.

Table 4. Correlations Among the Principal Variables

Variable pair	ρ	p	N
Event quality–Visitor satisfaction	.695	< .001	400
Event quality–Perceived benefits	.552	< .001	400
Visitor satisfaction–Perceived benefits	.497	< .001	400

Discussion

The results portray Terra Madre Asia and Pacific as a highly successful visitor experience, while also identifying specific weaknesses that broad overall ratings might conceal. The very high scores for fun, surprise, social value, and hedonic value indicate that the event generated enjoyment, novelty, interpersonal connection, and emotional stimulation. These outcomes are consistent with its nature as an international food and cultural gathering: visitors were exposed to products, performances, people, ideas, and advocacy that differed from ordinary consumption settings. The findings support the view that memorable event experiences are formed through affective and cognitive engagement rather than through service efficiency alone (Armbrecht, 2021; Biaett & Richards, 2020).

The comparatively lower scores for immersion and participation are nevertheless important. They remained very high in absolute terms, but their position relative to the other dimensions suggests that visitors found more



opportunities to watch, enjoy, and socialize than to enter deeply into the content or co-create the experience. For an event centered on food heritage and sustainability, this distinction matters. Terra Madre's mission is not exhausted by presenting attractive stalls and performances. It seeks to connect people with producers, traditions, ecosystems, and collective action. Greater use of hands-on workshops, guided tasting, producer conversations, culinary demonstrations, storytelling, community visits, and participatory sustainability activities could convert favorable attention into deeper learning and involvement. These formats would strengthen the visitor journey described by Baker (2025) and the co-created value emphasized in event-experience research.

The prominence of fun reinforces the importance of affective energy in large-scale events. Visitors do not necessarily separate educational and advocacy content from entertainment; enjoyable formats may make learning more accessible and memorable. Although the omnibus test indicated that fun ratings were not identical across the three age groups, none of the pairwise contrasts remained significant after Bonferroni adjustment. Generation Y had a higher descriptive mean than Generation Z, but the adjusted Generation Y–Generation Z comparison was not statistically significant and had only a small effect ($r = .13$). The evidence therefore does not support attributing a distinct pattern of fun to either cohort. Organizers may nevertheless broaden intergenerational engagement through interactive challenges, short-format demonstrations, creator-led storytelling, collaborative art, sustainability games, live digital content, and shareable installations without reducing cultural substance.

The satisfaction findings distinguish the event's symbolic strengths from its logistical weaknesses. Culture and art, socialization, and products and services received the strongest ratings. These are core domains through which Terra Madre communicates identity and value. The high culture-and-art rating indicates that visitors recognized the authenticity and richness of the content, while the strong socialization rating suggests that the event operated successfully as a meeting place. The favorable product-and-service evaluation further indicates that exhibitions, food offerings, and service encounters generally supported the visitor experience. These findings align with research showing that cultural content, hospitality, and experiential value are central to satisfaction and favorable behavior (Bratić et al., 2024; Darvishmotevali et al., 2023).

Traffic and information, by contrast, was the only satisfaction dimension rated merely high. At $M = 3.42$, it was favorable but clearly separated from culture and art at $M = 3.81$. This is the clearest operational priority in the study. Large events impose substantial cognitive and physical demands on visitors: they must decide where to enter, park, queue, walk, obtain schedules, locate booths and facilities, respond to program changes, and move safely among crowded spaces. When information is fragmented or directional systems are insufficient, visitors spend attention on navigation rather than on the event itself. The result implies a need for an integrated wayfinding and information system that begins before arrival and continues throughout the venue.

Such a system should combine clear directional signage, consistent names and symbols for activity zones, printed and digital maps, QR-accessible schedules, visible information booths, trained roving volunteers, real-time announcements, parking guidance, and coordinated crowd and traffic management. Accessibility should be considered in font size, contrast, language, physical placement, and mobile usability. The objective is not simply to provide more information but to provide the right information at the point at which a visitor must act. Improvements in this dimension may also reinforce immersion: when movement is intuitive and uncertainty is reduced, visitors can devote more attention to content and participation.

Hygiene, safety, and infrastructure were positively evaluated but also trailed the strongest satisfaction dimensions. This pattern is understandable in a large event with outdoor and high-traffic components, but it should not be treated as secondary. Clean restrooms, hand-washing facilities, waste management, drinking-water access, seating, shade, medical support, emergency protocols, and visible security are enabling conditions for inclusive participation. Older adults, children, persons with disabilities, international visitors unfamiliar with the venue, and attendees staying for extended periods may experience these conditions differently even when group comparisons are not statistically significant. Sustaining high satisfaction therefore requires continuous facility monitoring and rapid service recovery, particularly during peak periods.



The very high perceived-benefit ratings demonstrate that visitors understood the event as more than an entertainment occasion. Socio-cultural exchange and community visibility and image enhancement were the strongest dimensions. Terra Madre appears to have enabled visitors to encounter different food cultures and to interpret Bacolod City and Negros Occidental as capable hosts of an internationally significant sustainability event. This supports the movement's translocal character: local food identities are preserved and communicated through international exchange rather than displaced by it (Amo, 2023).

The very high evaluations of community consolidation, knowledge and entertainment opportunities, and economic benefits likewise show a broad conception of value. Visitors associated the event with strengthened relationships, learning, enjoyment, and economic activity. Economic benefits had the lowest perceived-benefit mean, although it remained very high. This may reflect the different visibility of event outcomes. Visitors can directly experience cultural exchange and image-building during the event, whereas longer-term economic effects are more difficult to observe. Claims of economic impact should therefore be supported in future evaluations with complementary indicators such as exhibitor sales, visitor expenditure, supplier participation, employment, repeat orders, and post-event business connections. Perceptions remain valuable, but they should not be presented as a substitute for economic-impact measurement (Dwyer, 2020).

The omnibus age-group difference in community visibility and image enhancement indicates some variation across the three cohorts, but none of the pairwise contrasts remained significant after Bonferroni adjustment. Although Generation Y had a higher descriptive mean than Generation Z, the adjusted comparison was not statistically significant and had a small effect ($r = .12$). Communication initiatives should therefore address visitors across age groups rather than presume a confirmed cohort-specific difference. Inclusive digital storytelling may feature local farmers, cooks, artisans, volunteers, and sustainability advocates; explain how purchases and partnerships support communities; and show how hosting the event contributes to cultural identity and regional visibility. Collaboration with schools, community organizations, creators, and tourism stakeholders could give diverse visitors visible roles in destination storytelling.

The absence of statistically significant differences in most demographic comparisons is also substantive. Across the inferential tests, event quality, satisfaction, and perceived benefits were generally not shown to differ by age, sex, civil status, or domestic or international visitor category. These nonsignificant results caution against interpreting small subgroup mean differences as stable preferences. The findings support a universal-design approach to core services, combined with targeted enhancements only where a statistically supported difference—and its magnitude—identifies a meaningful gap.

The correlation results provide support for the proposed integrated framework. Event quality and visitor satisfaction had the largest association, $p = .695$. Visitors who evaluated immersion, surprise, participation, fun, social interaction, and hedonic experience more positively also tended to report higher satisfaction with the event's services and offerings. The coefficient does not establish causality because the design was cross-sectional and correlational; it indicates that experiential evaluations and satisfaction covaried closely in this sample. This relationship accords with findings connecting event experience quality with satisfaction and favorable behavioral intentions (Çevik & Şimşek, 2020; Marković, 2020).

Event quality was also related to perceived benefits, $p = .552$. When the experience was engaging and memorable, visitors were more likely to recognize economic, community, cultural, image-related, educational, and entertainment value. This connection may arise because quality gives benefits in a concrete form. Cultural exchange is perceived through actual encounters; community visibility is inferred from how the place and its people are presented; learning is enabled through activities; and economic benefit becomes visible through producer and enterprise participation. A well-designed event thus does more than please visitors—it helps them understand why the gathering matters.

Visitor satisfaction and perceived benefits were moderately associated, $p = .497$. Satisfaction increased alongside the recognition of broader value, but the relationship was weaker than that between quality and satisfaction. This



difference reinforces the conceptual distinction between the variables. Visitors may judge services favorably without making strong claims about community outcomes, while advocates may recognize an event's social contribution despite inconveniences. Management should therefore avoid treating satisfaction as the sole measure of success. A comprehensive evaluation should continue to assess experiential quality, service satisfaction, and perceived or measured benefits separately.

Taken together, the evidence supports a framework with three mutually reinforcing priorities. The first is participatory experience design, focused on immersion, involvement, fun, and intergenerational engagement. The second is friction-reducing visitor management, focused on traffic, information, hygiene, safety, infrastructure, and real-time assistance. The third is visible community value, focused on socio-cultural exchange, local producer stories, youth participation, destination image, and transparent evidence of economic and social outcomes. These priorities should be integrated rather than implemented as isolated projects. Digital maps can include producer stories; workshops can generate social-media content; volunteers can provide wayfinding while facilitating cultural interpretation; and post-event communication can connect visitor memories with continuing Slow Food initiatives.

Several limitations qualify the findings. Quota sampling limits statistical generalization beyond the participating visitors, and data collected onsite may reflect positive response tendencies associated with the event atmosphere. The cross-sectional survey captures perceptions during a particular edition of Terra Madre and cannot determine how evaluations change over time or whether favorable perceptions lead to return visits, advocacy, or measurable community outcomes. The correlations do not demonstrate causal effects. Further, broad demographic categories cannot fully represent differences in motivation, previous event experience, cultural background, length of stay, or degree of participation. These limitations do not diminish the value of the benchmark, but they identify areas for longitudinal, mixed-method, and impact-focused research.

Conclusion

Terra Madre Asia and Pacific 2025 generated a highly favorable experience among the 400 visitors surveyed. Event quality, visitor satisfaction, and perceived benefits were all evaluated positively, and these judgments were broadly shared across demographic groups. The strongest features of event quality were fun, surprise, social interaction, and hedonic experience, demonstrating the event's capacity to create an enjoyable, distinctive, and socially meaningful atmosphere. Immersion and participation, although still rated very high, were comparatively weaker and therefore represent opportunities to deepen the connection between visitors and the movement's food, cultural, and sustainability content.

Visitor satisfaction was strongest in culture and art, socialization, and products and services. Traffic and information was the principal service gap, with hygiene, safety, and infrastructure also requiring continued attention. The event's perceived benefits extended well beyond entertainment. Visitors strongly recognized socio-cultural exchange, community visibility and image enhancement, community consolidation, learning opportunities, and economic value. Significant omnibus age-group differences were found for fun and for community visibility and image enhancement, but no specific pairwise comparison remained significant after Bonferroni adjustment. The results therefore should not be interpreted as evidence of a confirmed difference between particular generations.

The positive relationships among the variables affirm that event quality, satisfaction, and perceived benefits should be managed as an integrated system. A richer experience is associated with greater satisfaction and stronger recognition of value; effective services allow visitors to engage more fully; and visible benefits give the experience wider meaning. Terra Madre's future design should therefore unite cultural authenticity and advocacy with participatory programming, reliable visitor systems, and clear communication of community outcomes.

Recommendations

Future Terra Madre Asia and Pacific events should expand hands-on and co-created activities, including culinary and agricultural demonstrations, guided tastings, producer dialogues, cultural workshops, storytelling sessions,



sustainability challenges, and community-based learning encounters. Entertainment should be designed for intergenerational appeal through formats that allow visitors across age groups to create, interact, share, and connect event content with contemporary concerns.

Organizers should establish an integrated traffic, wayfinding, and information plan before the next event. This should include advance arrival guidance, coordinated parking and transport information, clearly marked entrances and exits, strategically placed directional signs, consistent zone names, printed and QR-accessible maps, accessible schedules, staffed information points, roving visitor assistants, and real-time updates through venue screens, public announcements, and official digital channels. Crowd-flow plans should be tested against peak attendance scenarios.

Hygiene, safety, and infrastructure should be managed through scheduled inspection and rapid-response protocols. Adequate restrooms, hand-washing stations, waste facilities, seating, shade, hydration points, medical assistance, emergency personnel, and accessible routes should be distributed according to visitor flow rather than concentrated only near entrances. Visitor feedback channels should allow operational concerns to be reported and resolved during the event.

Communication efforts should make community benefits visible across age groups without assuming that any cohort is homogeneous or that the descriptive Generation Y–Generation Z variation represents a confirmed pairwise difference. Digital storytelling may feature farmers, fishers, cooks, artisans, volunteers, and cultural advocates and show how the event supports food heritage, biodiversity, local enterprise, and destination identity. Partnerships with schools, youth organizations, campus groups, tourism stakeholders, and local creators may provide young people with visible roles in programming, volunteer work, advocacy, and content production.

Future evaluation should combine visitor perceptions with operational and impact indicators. Attendance, queue and travel times, information requests, facility incidents, exhibitor sales, visitor expenditure, local supplier participation, media reach, digital engagement, producer partnerships, and post-event behavioral intentions should be measured where feasible. Follow-up surveys and interviews could determine whether visitors return, recommend the event, adopt Slow Food practices, or maintain connections formed during the gathering. Comparative studies across editions and locations, supported by probability sampling where practical, would strengthen the evidence base for sustainable event design.

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