

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the results of the observations and interviews that we have conducted, we have reached conclusions that answer our 3 problem formulations, namely as follows:

1. Bunratty Castle is one of the oldest castle in Ireland, located in Bunratty Village, that has been used by Mr. O'Reagan as a stopping place for tourists, also as the reason for the tourists to stay longer at Bunratty Village, with history of Bunratty Castle and the heritage of Irish culture as interesting aspects that attracts tourists. Bunratty Castle uses their castle space the most by making it into a historic museum and filling every spot with complete historical evidence objects from ancient times, starting from war equipments such as armor, traditional cooking utensils, soldier's room arrangement including the old bed from the 90s, and many more. Medieval Banquet, which is also one of the best banquet dinners in Ireland, is one of the castle's powerful ways to introduce Irish Culture through ancient style cuisines that had to be eaten with hand to preserve the old tradition, with traditional Irish entertainment such as fiddle, choir, and harp. Last but not least is Folk Village Park that makes the visitor feel like being taken back to ancient times. The Bunratty Folk Village Park is designed exactly like the village in 90s back then, with rebuilt old houses and antique furniture inside, traditional old pub, mansions, deer field, and a park facing the bunratty village.
2. Bunratty Castle opens employment fields for the local community for around 200 staff to work during winter, when cultural tourism usually experiences a decrease in visitors. They have been making plenty of cultural events throughout the year to keep the environment busy, as they do not want to lay off their staff. Besides indirectly encouraging and giving exposure to local businesses like pubs and hotel, Bunratty Castle also invites local businesses to collaborate for the gift shop, namely Kildare Design and wine tasting with The Bunratty Mead.

3. The Castle team uses low visitor season to show how extra the castle can be even in quiet seasons and make future visitors for the future, namely in summer, where it would be more festive and crowded. For instance, they still put full effort on the Christmas themed folk park this year even though the number of visitors is quite low. They have a Christmas parade, Christmas market, and the most festive event is the Christmas banquet, despite the low number of visitors due to the holiday season and people usually traveling outside Ireland. Beside that, they also face the challenges in making guests stay in Shannon because the prospective guest has a bigger option of accommodation in the bigger city near Shannon, for example Limerick or Ennis. To add to that, the ancient-old Bunratty Castle property and goods that have to deal with a variety of guest requests which are sometimes difficult to fulfill, although if we look up to the bright side, they did gain some new inspiration about the new guest packages for the upcoming seasons from that difficult request.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the results of the observations and interviews that we have conducted, here are the suggestions we can offer:

1. Guided Tour

Bunratty Castle does have guided tour facilities, but apparently for now it is only available for big groups only. We would suggest making a specific schedule of the day where individuals or small groups can be put into a group and strolls around the folk park, where it can be led by a tour guide. It is also one of our concerns when we were strolling around the Bunratty Folk Park, due to the fact that we were somewhat struggling to understand the background story of the properties on a deeper level.

2. Exploration and Adventure

After strolling around the Folk Village Park, we do think that Bunratty Castle were not using their potential to the fullest. There are still so many empty spaces

that can actually be used to create fun exploration, namely the deer fields in front of the Bunratty Mansion. It would be fun for the visitors if they could feed the deer and play with them, instead of just seeing them sleeping from afar. Having some fun activities like traditional archery would also add a big ancient experience for the visitors, reminiscing how spacious and wide Bunratty Castle fields are. Besides increasing customer experience, this can also increase Bunratty Castle's revenue since visitors will definitely have to pay extra for the additional shows.

5.3 Limitations of Storytelling

While this research focuses on the topic of Bunratty Castle role in preserving cultural heritage and the impact it gives to local communities, this research didn't delve deeper into the history of the Bunratty Castle itself

5.4 Further Research Recommendations

Despite the fact that we arranged plenty of interviews with the castle team and lecturer, we did face challenges interviewing a few Bunratty Castle visitors about the guest experience and satisfaction due to the discretion of visitors during the winter holiday. We would suggest for the next researcher to book the Bunratty Folk Village Park in spring, namely in February until the end of August. There are various and dynamic events during that month, for instance St. Patrick's Day annual celebration in March, featuring Irish dances and traditional music instruments, and massive green embellishment in order to celebrate Ireland's national festive event. To add to that, there are also Easter Celebrations followed by festive pastel ornaments and egg hunting activities. The guest will also find a Medieval Tournament event in summer, where the castle celebrates Ireland's national symbol, the Harp, followed by live performances and workshops, highlighting the traditional Irish folklore, held specifically in August. It would also be a better output if the next researcher could highlight more about the social and culture impact in the problem

formulation, or even economy side. For example, namely local foods, or even the philosophy of food.

