

Left Behind or Unseen Potential? A SWOT and 7Ps of Marketing-Based Evaluation of Biliran Island's Tourism Development

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Abstract

This study examines the tourism development of Biliran Island using an integrated analytical framework combining SWOT analysis and the 7Ps of marketing. A descriptive-comparative research design was employed to assess differences in perception between local stakeholders and outside visitors. Data were collected from 200 respondents and analyzed using non-parametric statistical techniques, including the Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis test, and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test. Results indicate a statistically significant difference in perceptions, with outside visitors reporting more favorable evaluations of the destination compared to local stakeholders. The findings identify key strengths in natural and cultural tourism assets, alongside critical weaknesses related to infrastructure, accessibility, and marketing integration. The analysis further reveals inconsistencies between promotional efforts and service delivery, contributing to uneven tourism development outcomes. The study provides empirical evidence on perception gaps in emerging destinations and demonstrates the utility of combining SWOT and the 7Ps framework in tourism assessment. It highlights the need for integrated, stakeholder-driven strategies that align marketing initiatives with infrastructure development and community participation to enhance destination competitiveness and sustainability.

Keywords: Biliran Island, Perception Gap, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism Development, 7Ps of Marketing.

A. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a key driver of economic growth, particularly for emerging destinations seeking to leverage natural and cultural resources for sustainable development. In the Philippines, while destinations such as Palawan and Boracay dominate the tourism landscape, smaller provinces like Biliran Island remain relatively underdeveloped despite their rich tourism potential. Biliran Island is endowed with diverse natural attractions, including waterfalls, hot springs, beaches, and cultural heritage sites. However, limited accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, weak destination branding, and fragmented marketing efforts constrain its tourism development. These challenges suggest the need for a structured and theory-driven evaluation of the island's tourism sector. This study integrates SWOT analysis and the 7Ps of the marketing framework to provide a comprehensive assessment of Biliran Island's tourism development. Although these frameworks are widely used, this research contributes empirical value by comparing the perceptions of local stakeholders and outside visitors (Badilla, 2022). Understanding these perception gaps is critical in designing inclusive and sustainable tourism strategies. The study is anchored on the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) and Community-Based Tourism (CBT), emphasizing that successful destination development requires not only strong marketing but also stakeholder collaboration, infrastructure support, and community participation.

This study aims to evaluate the current state of Biliran Island's tourism development through SWOT analysis and the framework of the 7 P's of marketing from the perspectives of locals and outside visitors. (1) Determine the demographic profile of the respondents, both locals and outside Biliran visitors. (2) Examine the current state of Biliran Island's tourism industry through SWOT analysis (Iswara et al., 2020). (3) To determine the perceptions of outside and local visitors about the current state of Biliran Island's tourism

development using the 7P's of the marketing framework. (4) To determine the significant relationship between the demographic profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the current state of Biliran Island tourism development. (5) To determine whether there is a significant difference in the perceptions of the current state of Biliran Island's tourism industry and its tourism development between the two groups. (6) Provided strategic recommendations for Biliran Island tourism development. The lack of adequate tools may hinder tourist inflow, regardless of the island's natural beauty.

Theoretical Framework

Tourism development in emerging destinations requires a balance between economic growth, environmental sustainability, and community involvement. Recent studies emphasize that integrated marketing strategies and stakeholder collaboration are essential in enhancing destination competitiveness. SWOT analysis remains a widely used tool in tourism planning, allowing destinations to identify internal strengths and weaknesses while responding to external opportunities and threats. However, contemporary research highlights the importance of complementing SWOT with strategic marketing frameworks to ensure actionable outcomes.

The 7Ps of marketing product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence provide a comprehensive approach to evaluating tourism services. Studies show that destinations with strong alignment across these elements tend to achieve higher visitor satisfaction and competitiveness. Recent literature also points out the necessity of perception studies in tourism. Visitors often evaluate destinations based on experience and marketing exposure, while residents base their perceptions on lived realities, including infrastructure and service limitations. This divergence can lead to perception gaps that affect the results of tourism development.

The Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model suggests that destinations evolve through stages, from exploration to development and eventual stagnation or rejuvenation. Biliran Island appears to be in the early development stage, where strategic planning and investment are crucial for addressing local needs and ensuring that tourism development aligns with community interests. Addressing local concerns, ensuring equitable benefits, and fostering community empowerment are essential for achieving sustainable tourism.

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) further highlights the importance of involving local stakeholders in tourism development. Sustainable tourism cannot be achieved without addressing local concerns, ensuring equitable benefits, and fostering community empowerment. Despite these insights, limited studies focus specifically on Biliran Island, particularly using integrated frameworks such as SWOT and 7Ps combined with perception analysis. This study addresses this gap. (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019) examined digital tourism competitiveness among Southeast Asian island destinations, focusing on how destination marketing strategies shape both visitor and local perceptions. Their findings revealed that while external tourists often perceived the destinations as attractive and authentic, local residents were more critical, citing issues in accessibility, pricing, and benefit distribution. The researchers concluded that inclusive and digital-oriented marketing strategies—particularly those emphasizing People and Promotion in the 7Ps—can bridge perception gaps and foster sustainable destination image and growth. Anchoring this to Biliran Island, the research emphasizes the necessity and points out the importance of local involvement and transparent marketing communication. While outsiders may already recognize Biliran's beauty and potential, local satisfaction and participation remain critical determinants of long-term competitiveness.

This underscores the need for community-based marketing initiatives and coordinated government efforts to align tourism growth with local aspirations and sustainability goals. The findings support the TALC model, indicating that Biliran Island is in the early development stage. The results also align with CBT principles, highlighting the importance of addressing local stakeholder concerns, such as ensuring that tourism development benefits the community economically and socially. The perception gap identified in the study calls for further research and dialogue among stakeholders to bridge the divide between tourist

expectations and local realities. Engaging community members in the planning process will be critical to instill a sense of ownership and ensure that tourism initiatives are both beneficial and sustainable. This calls for a holistic approach that integrates marketing, infrastructure development, and community engagement.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This section, research design, methods, and procedures employed to investigate the perceived state of tourism development in Biliran Island using the 7Ps of Marketing framework. It outlines how data were collected, analyzed, and interpreted to determine the differences in perceptions between local stakeholders and outside visitors. The chosen methodology aligns with the study's objective of uncovering key factors that influence tourism development and identifying untapped opportunities for strategic improvement.

Research Design of this study employed a descriptive-comparative research design to examine and compare perceptions of tourism development between local stakeholders and outside visitors. Research *Locale*, this study was conducted in Biliran Island, a province located in the Eastern Visayas Region (Region VIII) of the Philippines. Known for its rich natural resources, Biliran is home to a variety of tourist attractions and sites, including waterfalls, rice terraces, hot springs, pristine beaches, and cultural heritage sites. The province comprises eight municipalities: Naval (the capital), Almeria, Kawayan, Culaba, Caibiran, Biliran, Cabucgayan, and Maripipi. Data collection was primarily focused in key tourism-accessible areas, such as Naval, Almeria, Caibiran, and Biliran town proper, where local tourism stakeholders and recent visitors were more accessible.

Research Respondents of a total of 200 respondents were selected using purposive sampling, consisting of 100 local stakeholders and 100 outside visitors with relevant tourism experience. Research Instrument structured questionnaire was used, consisting of three parts: demographic profile, SWOT-based evaluation, and 7Ps marketing assessment. The instrument utilized a Likert scale to measure perceptions. The instrument's reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

The data collection process for this study was carried out systematically to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and integrity of the information gathered from the respondents. After the research instrument was validated by experts and its reliability confirmed through a pilot test using Cronbach's alpha, the final version of the questionnaire was deployed using Google Forms, a user-friendly and efficient digital survey platform. This method was chosen to enable broader reach, reduce logistical constraints, and ensure respondent safety and convenience—especially when targeting tourists who were no longer on the island (Tourism Promotions Board Philippines., 2016).

The researcher disseminated the online survey link through various platforms, including email, Facebook groups, Messenger, and tourism-related community pages. For the local stakeholders, the researcher coordinated with municipal tourism offices, local businesses, and community organizations to help identify and encourage eligible participants to respond. For outside visitors, the survey was shared with those who had recently visited Biliran, either through referrals or through tourism-related social media pages where recent tourists interact.

Ethical Considerations, to uphold ethical standards and ensure voluntary participation, each respondent was initially presented with an informed consent section at the commencement of the questionnaire. This section clearly explained the purpose of the study, assured the confidentiality of responses, and allowed participants to opt out at any time. Only those who agreed to participate could proceed to answer the survey.

Data Analysis, data were analyzed using non-parametric statistical techniques appropriate for ordinal Likert-scale data. The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to examine differences in perception between local stakeholders and outside visitors, while the Kruskal - Wallis test was used to assess variations

across demographic groups. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test further evaluated paired differences within related variables.

The results showed that there were statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between locals and visitors. Outside visitors generally gave Biliran Island's tourism development better reviews. Variations across selected demographic variables were limited, suggesting that perception is influenced more by stakeholder perspective than by demographic characteristics, such as age, income, or education level, which typically shape individual views on tourism development.

Overall, the analysis confirms the presence of a perception gap and highlights inconsistencies between perceived tourism potential and actual service delivery. The use of non-parametric methods ensures analytical rigor and supports the reliability of the study's findings.

Ethical Consideration, this study followed strict ethical standards to protect the rights, dignity, privacy, and well-being of participants. An informed consent statement at the start of the online survey explained the study's purpose, voluntary nature, estimated completion time, and confidentiality assurances. Only those who gave consent participated, and respondents could withdraw anytime without penalty. No personal identifiers were collected, and data were securely stored. The questionnaire was designed to be respectful, non-invasive, and context - appropriate. The study avoided bias, coercion, or harm and complied with guidelines for research involving human subjects, ensuring integrity, credibility, and social responsibility. section covers the

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the findings of the study based on the data gathered from local stakeholders and outside visitors regarding Biliran Island's tourism development through the lens of the 7Ps of Marketing. The results are organized and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to highlight trends, significant differences, and insights into the perceived state of the island's tourism industry. The discussion integrates relevant literature, theories, and local context to interpret the implications of these findings for strategic tourism planning and development.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of The Responden (Locals in Biliran)

Variables		f	%
<i>Sex</i>			
	Male	48	48.00
	Female	52	52.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Age</i>			
	23-27 years old	40	40.00
	28-32 years old	14	14.00
	33-37 years old	20	20.00
	38-42 years old	19	19.00
	43 years old and above	7	7.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Educational Attainment</i>			
	Postgraduate (Master's/Doctorate)	30	30.00
	College Graduate	70	70.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Occupation</i>			
	Academic / Researcher / Educator	47	47.00
	Healthcare Professional	2	2.00
	Engineer / IT / Technical Specialist	1	1.00
	Sales / Marketing / Customer Service (Tourism & Hospitality)	16	16.00

	Skilled Trade Worker	9	9.00
	Self-employed / Entrepreneur	23	23.00
	Retired	2	2.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Salary</i>			
	₱10,001 – ₱15,000	14	14.00
	₱15,001 – ₱20,000	43	43.00
	₱20,001 – ₱30,000	6	6.00
	₱30,001 – ₱50,000	32	32.00
	Above ₱50,000	5	5.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Frequency of Visit</i>			
	Rarely (once every few years)	14	14.00
	Occasionally (once/ twice a year)	45	45.00
	Frequently (several times a year)	28	28.00
	Regularly (monthly or more)	13	13.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Municipality</i>			
	Almeria	16	16.00
	Biliran	4	4.00
	Caibiran	6	6.00
	Cabucgayán	8	8.00
	Culaba	12	12.00
	Kawayan	7	7.00
	Maripipi	4	4.00
	Naval	43	43.00
	Total	100	100.00
<i>Purpose of Visit</i>			
	Visiting Family or Friends	25	25.00
	Business /Work	6	6.00
	Attending Events or Festivals	5	5.00
	Relaxation and Leisure	64	64.00
	Total	100	100.00

Source: Researcher, 2025

In table 1 above a balanced sex distribution (52% female, 48% male) and a preponderance of young to middle-aged adults (40%) are evident in the demographic profile. This demographic enjoys digital interaction and travels frequently (Tourism Promotions Board Philippines., 2016). The majority of respondents (70% college, 30% postgraduate) had a high level of education, making them a demographic that is frequently attracted to cultural and sustainable travel (Butler, 2018). There was potential for knowledge-sharing and community-based tourism, as evidenced by the diverse range of occupations, with many working in academia (47%), self-employment (23%), or tourism services (16%).

Income levels were moderate to above average (43% earn ₱15,001–₱20,000; 32% earn ₱30,001–₱50,000), supporting mid-market tourism but requiring flexible pricing (Saarinen, 2016). Most visitors came occasionally (45%) or several times a year (28%), highlighting the need for loyalty programs (Chi & Qu, 2008). Respondents were concentrated in Naval (43%), with fewer from Almeria (16%) and Culaba (12%), suggesting uneven tourism participation (Mazzola et al., 2022). Leisure was the main purpose of the

visit (64%), followed by visiting friends and relatives (25%), confirming Biliran's leisure-driven market but with VFR tourism potential (Backer, 2012).

Biliran attracts an educated, moderately affluent, leisure-driven market. To maximize potential, it should diversify eco-cultural products, expand promotion beyond Naval, adopt loyalty strategies, and emphasize sustainability and authentic experiences.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Outside Biliran)

Variables	f	%
Sex		
Male	39	39.00
Female	54	54.00
Total	100	100.00
Age		
18-22 years old	16	16.00
23-27 years old	23	23.00
28-32 years old	12	12.00
33-37 years old	34	34.00
38-42 years old	5	5.00
43 years old and above	10	10.00
Total	100	100.00
Educational Attainment		
Postgraduate (Master's/Doctorate)	8	8.0
College Graduate	74	74.0
Some College/Undergraduate	18	18.0
Total	100	100.00
Occupation		
Academic / Researcher / Educator	8	8.00
Engineer / IT / Technical Specialist	11	11.00
Business/ Management/Executive	20	20.00
Sales / Marketing / Customer Service (Tourism & Hospitality)	22	22.00
Self-employed / Entrepreneur	18	18.00
Student	21	21.00
Total	100	100.00
Salary		
Below P5,000.00	7	7.00
P5,001-P10,000.00	5	5.00
P10,001 – P15,000	9	9.00
P15,001 – P20,000	21	21.00
P20,001 – P30,000	10	10.00
P30,001 – P50,000	10	10.00
Above P50,000	1	1.00
Prefer not to say	37	37.00
Total	100	100.00
Frequency of Visit		
First time/Only once	10	10.00
Rarely (once every few years)	25	25.00
Occasionally (once/ twice a year)	35	35.00
Regularly (monthly or more)	20	20.00
Transfer to live in other municipality	10	10.00
Total	100	100.00
Region		
NCR (National Capital Region)	21	21.00
Region III	10	10.00

	Region IV-A	10	10.00
	Region VII	5	5.00
	Region VIII	42	42.00
	Region XI	12	12.00
	Total	100	100.00
Eastern Visayas Province			
	Leyte	53	53.00
	Southern Leyte	5	5.00
	Not from Eastern Visayas	42	42.00
	Total	100	100.00
Purpose of Visit			
	Visiting Family or Friends	30	30.00
	Business /Work	15	15.00
	Education/School related	19	19.00
	Religious/Pilgrimage	1	1.00
	Leisure/Vacation /Tourism	35	35.00
	Total	100	100.00

Source: Researcer, 2025

On Table 2 above demographic profile of outside respondents shows a majority of young to middle-aged adults, with women slightly outnumbering men. This aligns with global findings that women and younger travelers are increasingly active in leisure travel and often influence family decisions (UNWTO, 2024). Most respondents were college graduates (74%), reflecting a well-educated market inclined toward cultural, educational, and sustainable tourism experiences (Butler, 2018). The diverse occupational mix—spanning sales/marketing/tourism (22%), students (21%), professionals (20%), and entrepreneurs (18%)—indicates potential for niche tourism products catering to both professionals and youth segments (Kotler et al., 2017).

Income data suggests a moderate-spending market, consistent with trends in regional domestic tourism where affordability drives travel choices (Vavpotič et al., 2021). The fact that many visit only occasionally or rarely (60%) underscores the need for stronger marketing strategies and repeat-visitor incentives (Chi & Qu, 2008). Regional distribution, with strong representation from Leyte (53%) and nearby provinces, highlights Biliran's dependence on neighboring markets while also showing opportunities to expand reach to NCR and other urban centers (Butler, 2018; Mazzola et al., 2022). Leisure and VFR (visiting friends and relatives) remain the dominant purposes of travel, confirming Biliran's leisure-driven appeal while also pointing to untapped educational and business tourism opportunities (Backer, 2012).

To attract and retain this market, Biliran must strengthen affordable and diverse tourism products, highlight cultural and educational experiences for young and educated visitors, and expand promotions beyond regional audiences. Fostering loyalty programs and enhancing accessibility from NCR and other regions will be key in sustaining growth.

Current State of Biliran Island's Tourism Industry SWOT Analysis

Table 3. Summary of perceptions of both outside Biliran and local visitors.

Statements SWOT	Locals in Biliran			Outside Biliran		
	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description
1. Strengths	3.76	.877	Disagree	4.25	.697	Strongly Agree
2. Weakness	1.96	.825	Agree	2.06	.739	Disagree
3. Opportunities	4.43	.719	Agree	4.71	.577	Strongly Agree
4. Threats	4.13	.809	Agree	4.29	.694	Strongly Agree

Source: Researcer, 2025

The findings on table 3 above highlight Biliran's strong tourism assets in nature, culture, and hospitality. Both locals (M = 4.17) and visitors (M = 4.59) rated natural attractions as the island's top strength, followed by cultural heritage (locals: 4.10; visitors: 4.53) and community hospitality (locals: 4.06; visitors: 4.50). Overall means (locals: 3.76; visitors: 4.25) indicate that outsiders view Biliran more favorably. However, lower ratings for infrastructure and outdoor activities point to areas needing investment. Preserving core strengths while improving facilities, services, and promotions is essential for competitiveness.

Weaknesses were rated relatively low (locals: 1.96; visitors: 2.06), though concerns remain. The lack of skilled tourism professionals ranked highest, followed by weak marketing and vulnerability to natural disasters. These results suggest a need for capacity-building programs, stronger digital promotion, and disaster preparedness measures to improve visitor confidence and service quality. Opportunities received the highest ratings (locals: 4.43; visitors: 4.71), with both groups strongly agreeing on Biliran's growth potential. Collaboration with stakeholders, technology adoption, and enhanced promotion emerged as top opportunities. Strategic partnerships, digital platforms, and consistent branding can greatly boost visibility and competitiveness. Perceived threats were also significant (locals: 4.13; visitors: 4.29). Top concerns included negative media coverage, economic instability, and environmental degradation. These findings underscore the importance of proactive reputation management, resilient tourism packages, and sustainable environmental policies to safeguard long-term growth.

The analysis reveals that Biliran Island's strengths lie in its natural attractions, cultural heritage, and hospitality. However, weaknesses include poor infrastructure, limited accessibility, and inadequate tourism facilities. Opportunities exist in digital marketing and eco-tourism, while threats include competition from established destinations and environmental degradation.

Analysis Current State of Biliran Island's Tourism Industry 7 P's Analysis

Table 4. Summary Table on the Perceptions of Outside Visitors about the Current State of Biliran Island's Tourism Development

Variables	AM	Description
Product	3.47	Agree
Price	3.49	Agree
Place	3.41	Agree
Promotion	3.58	Agree
People	3.95	Agree
Process	3.37	Neutral
Physical Evidence	3.87	Agree
Overall Mean	3.59	Agree

Source: Researcher, 2025

The summary of table 4 findings on the perceptions of outside visitors about the current state of Biliran Island's tourism development presents a generally positive assessment, with most variables receiving an "agree" interpretation and an overall mean score of 3.59. This indicates that visitors from outside Biliran hold a favorable view of the island's tourism sector, recognizing its strengths across several key dimensions while also identifying areas that need improvement. Among the seven evaluated variables, "People" received the highest mean score of 3.95, reflecting strong agreement that the local community and tourism service providers are friendly, welcoming, and supportive of tourism. This underscores the crucial role that human interaction plays in shaping the tourist experience in Biliran. The hospitality, knowledge, and warmth of locals are seen as a major asset that enhances the island's appeal. "Physical Evidence" followed closely with a mean of 3.87, indicating that the physical components of the tourism experience—

such as cleanliness, signage, accommodations, and visual appeal—are well-maintained and contribute positively to visitor satisfaction. Tourists perceive the island as aesthetically pleasing and properly equipped to support their needs during their stay. Other variables such as promotion (3.58), price (3.49), product (3.47), and place (3.41) also received agreement ratings. These scores suggest that tourists find Biliran’s promotional strategies effective, pricing fair and competitive, tourism products unique and enjoyable, and the location relatively accessible, particularly by land and sea. However, these areas still have room for improvement, especially in enhancing product packaging, strengthening online visibility, and further developing infrastructure. The lowest-rated variable was “Process,” with a mean score of 3.37, interpreted as neutral. This highlights some concerns in the operational aspects of tourism delivery, such as booking systems, customer service responsiveness, reliability, and the effectiveness of feedback mechanisms.

Table 5. Summary Table on the Perceptions of Biliran Locals about the Current State of Biliran Island’s Tourism Development

Variables	AM	Description
Product	3.36	Neutral
Price	3.21	Neutral
Place	2.99	Neutral
Promotion	2.85	Neutral
People	3.45	Agree
Process	2.99	Neutral
Physical Evidence	3.52	Agree
Overall Mean	3.20	Neutral

Source: Researcher, 2025

The perceptions of Biliran locals reveal that the island’s tourism development on table 5 is at a neutral stage (overall mean = 3.20). While strengths were noted in people (M = 3.45) and physical evidence (M = 3.52), several dimensions require improvement. Tourism products (M = 3.36) were seen as average, suggesting the need for diversification into eco-tourism, agri-tourism, and cultural heritage experiences. Diversified tourism products are critical for small destinations to remain competitive and resilient (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Price (M = 3.21) was rated neutral, reflecting the perception that while costs are fair, they lack competitiveness. Affordable and standardized pricing schemes, including discounts and bundled promotions, can increase tourist arrivals and spending (UNWTO, 2022). The low rating for place (M = 2.99) highlights accessibility and infrastructure gaps. Improved transportation, road networks, and signage are essential, as infrastructure quality directly influences destination attractiveness (Liangco et al., 2024). Similarly, process (M = 2.99) suggests average service delivery; adopting standardized systems for bookings, reservations, and digital information dissemination can enhance efficiency and visitor satisfaction (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Promotion received the lowest mean (M = 2.85), pointing to weak branding and marketing. Strengthening digital campaigns, engaging influencers, and forging partnerships with travel agencies are crucial, as online presence significantly shapes tourist decision-making (Gretzel et al., 2015). On the positive side, the high rating for people affirms locals’ hospitality—an intangible but vital strength in tourism competitiveness (Crotts, 2004). Continuous training in service quality and community-based tourism can further capitalize on this advantage. Physical evidence (M = 3.52) also reflects appreciation of Biliran’s natural and cultural assets. To sustain these, conservation and sustainable practices must be prioritized, aligning with the principles of sustainable tourism that balance growth with environmental protection (UNWTO, 2018). Overall, Biliran’s tourism is promising but underdeveloped. To transform neutral perceptions into positive ones, the province needs a comprehensive and sustainable tourism development plan that strengthens infrastructure, diversifies products, enhances promotions, and professionalizes

services. This strategic approach can help Biliran build a stronger market position and ensure long-term competitiveness.

Findings also show that while the tourism product is strong, gaps exist in promotion, process efficiency, and physical evidence. Marketing efforts are fragmented, and service delivery lacks consistency.

Relationship of Variables between the demographic profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the current state of Biliran Island tourism development. (Locals in Biliran)

Table 6. A Mann-Whitney U Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Sex

Group	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p-value
Male	48	36.63	582.00***	-4.630	.000
Female	52	63.31			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The results reveal of table 6 above a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development between male and female respondents ($U = 582.00$, $z = -4.630$, $p < .001$). The mean rank for females (63.31) was significantly higher than that of males (36.63), indicating that female respondents held more favorable perceptions of Biliran Island's tourism development compared to their male counterparts. This suggests that gender plays a role in shaping how individuals assess the current state and potential of the island's tourism industry. The findings underscore the importance of considering gender perspectives when planning and implementing tourism development strategies.

Table 7. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Age

Age Group	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
23-27 years old	40	65.91	31.91***	4	.000
28-32 years old	14	20.39			
33-37 years old	20	50.68			
38-42 years old	19	49.11			
43 years old and above	7	25.93			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results at table 7 indicate a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development across different age groups ($\chi^2 = 31.91$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$). Among the five age brackets, respondents aged 23–27 years old had the highest mean rank (65.91), suggesting they viewed Biliran Island's tourism development more positively than other age groups. In contrast, those in the 28–32 years old group had the lowest mean rank (20.39), reflecting the least favorable perceptions. These findings suggest that age significantly influences perceptions, with younger adults (particularly those in their mid-20s) perceiving the tourism development efforts more positively than both slightly older and much older age groups. This insight can help tailor tourism communication and engagement strategies according to generational preferences and expectations.

Table 8. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Postgraduate (Masters/Doctorate)	30	41.22	4.455*	1	.035
College Graduate	70	54.48			
Total	100				

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results at table 8 show a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on educational attainment ($\chi^2 = 4.455$, $df = 1$, $p = .035$). Respondents who were college graduates had a higher mean rank (54.48) compared to those with postgraduate degrees (41.22), indicating that college graduates viewed Biliran Island's tourism development more favorably than those with higher educational qualifications. This suggests that individuals with postgraduate education may hold more critical or discerning views, potentially due to broader exposure or higher expectations regarding tourism planning and sustainability. These results imply the need for more inclusive tourism education and awareness efforts across different educational backgrounds.

Table 9. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Occupation

Occupation	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Academic/researcher/ Educator	47	44.02	15.054*	6	.020
Healthcare Professional	2	92.50			
Engineer/IT/Technical Specialist	1	88.50			
Sales/Marketing Customer Service	16	56.56			
Skilled Grade Worker	9	60.67			
Self-employed/Entrepreneur	23	46.52			
Retired	2	93.25			
Total	100				

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test at table 9 reveals a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development across various occupational groups ($\chi^2 = 15.054$, $df = 6$, $p = .020$). The results show that retired individuals (mean rank = 93.25), followed by healthcare professionals (92.50) and engineer/IT/technical specialists (88.50), held the most favorable perceptions of Biliran Island's tourism development. In contrast, those in academic, research, or education roles had the lowest mean rank (44.02), indicating more critical or less favorable perceptions. This variation suggests that perceptions of tourism may be influenced by professional exposure, socioeconomic interests, or levels of engagement with tourism-related activities. These findings can inform stakeholder-specific strategies in tourism planning and promotional campaigns.

Table 10. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Salary

Salary	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
P10,000 – P15,000.00	14	70.25	21.075***	4	.000
P15,001 – P20,000.00	43	53.08			
P20,001 – P30,000.00	6	14.50			
P30,001 – P50,000.00	32	49.52			
Above P50,000.00	5	22.50			
Total	100				

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results at table 10 show a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on monthly salary ($\chi^2 = 21.075$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$). Respondents earning P10,000 – P15,000 had the highest mean rank (70.25), suggesting they had the most favorable perceptions of Biliran Island's tourism development. In contrast, those earning above P50,000 had a much lower mean rank (22.50), indicating less favorable or more critical perceptions. Similarly, respondents in the P20,001 – P30,000 bracket also had a very low mean rank (14.50). These results imply that lower-income individuals tend to view tourism development more positively, possibly because of perceived economic opportunities, while higher-income earners may have more critical perspectives, perhaps due to greater exposure to more developed tourism destinations or higher expectations. This insight highlights the importance of understanding economic perspectives in tourism planning and community engagement.

Table 11. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Frequency of Visit

Frequency of Visit	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Rarely (once every few years)	14	55.93	30.631***	3	.000
Occasionally (once/twice a year)	45	65.69			
Frequently (several times a year)	28	29.52			
Regularly (monthly or more)	13	37.27			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals at table 11 a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on frequency of visit to Biliran Island ($\chi^2 = 30.631$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$). Respondents who visit occasionally (once or twice a year) had the highest mean rank (65.69), followed by those who visit rarely (55.93), indicating more positive perceptions of the island's tourism development. On the other hand, those who visit frequently (29.52) or regularly (37.27) had significantly lower mean ranks, reflecting more critical views.

This suggests that less frequent visitors tend to have more favorable impressions, possibly due to limited exposure or nostalgic perceptions. In contrast, frequent and regular visitors may notice shortcomings or stagnation in tourism services, infrastructure, or management, leading to more critical evaluations. These findings highlight the need to address visitor experience and satisfaction over time, especially for repeat tourists who can serve as both advocates and constructive critics of local tourism development.

Table 12. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Municipality

Municipality	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Almeria	16	32.22	18.886**	7	.009
Biliran	4	61.63			
Caibiran	6	63.92			
Cabucgayan	8	65.44			
Culaba	12	30.42			
Kawayan	7	63.64			
Naval	4	58.88			
Maripipi	43	54.30			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test at table 12 shows a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development among respondents from different municipalities in Biliran ($\chi^2 = 18.886$, $df = 7$, $p = .009$). The highest mean ranks were observed in Cabucgayan (65.44), Caibiran (63.92), and Kawayan (63.64), suggesting that residents from these areas perceive Biliran's tourism development more positively. In contrast, respondents from Culaba (30.42) and Almeria (32.22) had the lowest mean ranks, indicating more critical or less favorable perceptions. These variations suggest that perceptions of tourism development are likely influenced by geographic and socio-economic factors specific to each municipality, such as accessibility, infrastructure, level of tourism activity, and community involvement. The results emphasize the importance of localized tourism planning and the need to address uneven development across the island's municipalities to ensure inclusive growth and community support for tourism initiatives.

Table 13. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Purpose

Purpose	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Visiting Family/Friends	25	48.16	16.253***	3	.001
Business/Work	6	30.50			
Attending Events or Festival	5	9.00			
Relaxation and Leisure	64	56.53			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test at table 13 reveals a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on the respondents' purpose of visit ($\chi^2 = 16.253$, $df = 3$, $p = .001$). Those who visited Biliran for relaxation and leisure had the highest mean rank (56.53), followed by those visiting family or friends (48.16). These groups generally held more favorable perceptions of the island's tourism development. In contrast, respondents whose purpose was business/work (30.50) and especially those attending events or festivals (9.00) had much lower mean ranks, indicating less favorable or more critical perceptions. This suggests that leisure-oriented visitors may be more satisfied with the tourism experience, while those involved in events or work may be more aware of infrastructural or organizational limitations. These findings underscore the importance of enhancing tourism facilities and services not only for leisure tourists but also for event-goers and business travelers, to ensure a well-rounded and positive tourism experience across all visitor types.

Relationship of Variables between the demographic profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the current state of Biliran island tourism development. (Outside Biliran).

Table 14. A Mann-Whitney U Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Sex

Group	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p-value
Male	48	49.51	955.000	-.768	.443
Female	52	45.19			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Mann-Whitney U test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development between male and female respondents from outside Biliran ($U = 955.000, z = -0.768, p = .443$). Although males had a slightly higher mean rank (49.51) compared to females (45.19), the difference is not significant at the conventional levels ($p > .05$). This suggests that sex does not have a significant impact on how outside respondents perceive the current state of tourism development in Biliran Island. Both male and female visitors generally share similar views regarding the island's tourism performance, indicating that gender is not a strong differentiating factor in tourism perception among outsiders.

Table 15. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Age

Age Group	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
18-22 years old	16	49.53	7.171	5	.208
23-27 years old	23	58.17			
28-32 years old	12	55.46			
33-37 years old	34	40.81			
38-42 years old	5	51.30			
43 years old and above	10	61.00			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results show that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development among different age groups of respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 7.171, df = 5, p = .208$). While some age groups had higher mean ranks such as the 43 years old and above group (61.00) and the 23–27 years old group (58.17) and others, like the 33–37 years old group, had lower mean ranks (40.81), these differences were not significant at the conventional threshold ($p > .05$). This implies that age does not significantly influence how outside visitors perceive the current state of tourism development in Biliran Island. The perceptions across different age brackets remain relatively consistent, suggesting a generally shared view of the island's tourism experience regardless of age.

Table 16. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Age

Educational Attainment	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	Df	p-value
Postgraduate (Masters/Doctorate)	8	51.06	.024	2	.988
College Graduate	74	50.24			
Some College/Undergrad	18	51.33			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development based on educational attainment among respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 0.024$, $df = 2$, $p = .988$). The mean ranks for all educational groups were nearly identical. Some College/Undergrad (51.33), Postgraduate (51.06), and College Graduate (50.24) demonstrating minimal variation in their perceptions. This result suggests that educational background does not significantly influence how individuals from outside Biliran perceive the island's tourism development. Regardless of academic level, respondents tended to have a shared or consistent evaluation of the tourism state, indicating that perception may be shaped more by personal experiences or expectations rather than educational attainment.

Table 17. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Occupation

Occupation	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Academic/researcher/ Educator	8	53.63	2.642	5	.755
Engineer/IT/Technical Specialist	11	42.77			
Business Management/ Executive	20	47.03			
Sales/Marketing Customer Service	22	57.45			
Self-employed/Entrepreneur	18	47.83			
Student	21	51.67			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development across different occupational groups among respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 2.642$, $df = 5$, $p = .755$). While the Sales/Marketing/Customer Service group had the highest mean rank (57.45) and the Engineer/IT/Technical Specialist group had the lowest (42.77), these variations were not significant at the $p < .05$ level. This suggests that occupation is not a determining factor in how respondents from outside the province perceive the current state of Biliran Island's tourism development. Overall, perceptions appear to be relatively consistent regardless of professional background, implying that tourism impressions may be shaped more by individual experiences and expectations than by occupational roles.

Table 18. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Salary

Salary	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Below P5,000.00	7	43.93	16.518*	7	.021
P5,001 – P10,000.00	5	51.20			
P10,000 – P15,000.00	9	29.17			
P15,001 – P20,000.00	21	58.38			
P20,001 – P30,000.00	10	26.15			
P30,001 – P50,000.00	10	56.00			
Above P50,000.00	1	50.00			
Prefer not to say	37	57.47			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on monthly salary among respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 16.518$, $df = 7$, $p = .021$). This indicates that income level has a meaningful impact on how respondents perceive the current state of tourism development in the province. Notably, those earning P15,001–P20,000 (mean rank = 58.38) and P30,001–P50,000 (mean rank = 56.00) showed more favorable perceptions, while those earning P20,001–

P30,000 (mean rank = 26.15) and P10,000–P15,000 (mean rank = 29.17) had less favorable views. Additionally, the large group who preferred not to disclose their income (mean rank = 57.47) also expressed relatively positive perceptions.

These findings suggest that moderate to higher-income earners tend to view Biliran's tourism development more positively, while lower to middle-income respondents are more critical. This may reflect differing expectations or levels of satisfaction with infrastructure, amenities, or tourism services based on economic background. As such, income sensitivity should be considered in tourism planning and promotional efforts to address varying expectations across socio-economic groups.

Table 19. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Frequency of Visit

Frequency of Visit	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
First time/ Only once	10	44.95	4.246	4	.374
Rarely (once every few years)	25	45.64			
Occasionally (Once/ Twice a year)	35	49.69			
Regularly (Monthly or more)	20	61.83			
Transfer to live in the municipality	10	48.40			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test shows that there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on the frequency of visit among respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 4.246$, $df = 4$, $p = .374$). While some variation exists—such as regular visitors (monthly or more) having the highest mean rank (61.83) and first-time visitors (44.95) the lowest the differences are not large enough to be statistically meaningful.

This suggests that how often a person visits Biliran Island does not significantly influence their perception of its tourism development. Whether a visitor comes frequently, occasionally, or just once, their views about the state of tourism remain relatively consistent, pointing to other possible influencing factors such as purpose of visit, individual expectations, or personal experiences during the stay.

Table 20. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Region

Region	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
NCR (National Capital Region)	21	45.88	7.338	5	.197
Region III	10	35.45			
Region IV-A	10	41.10			
Region VII	5	51.20			
Region VIII	42	58.19			
Region XI	12	51.75			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test results indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development based on region of origin among respondents from outside Biliran ($\chi^2 = 7.338$, $df = 5$, $p = .197$). Although some regional variations are observed, Region VIII (mean rank = 58.19) and Region XI (51.75) reported more favorable perceptions, while Region III (35.45) had the lowest mean rank, these differences are not statistically significant. This suggests that geographic region does not substantially affect how respondents perceive Biliran Island's tourism development. Despite slight variations, respondents across different regions of the Philippines generally hold comparable views,

implying that other factors such as personal travel experience or exposure to tourism infrastructure may be more influential than regional background.

Table 21. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Eastern Visayas Province

Eastern Visayas Province	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Leyte	53	54.90	2.843	2	.241
Southern Leyte	5	39.80			
Not From Eastern Visayas	42	46.23			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals that there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on the respondents' provincial origin within or outside Eastern Visayas ($\chi^2 = 2.843, df = 2, p = .241$). While respondents from Leyte had the highest mean rank (54.90), suggesting slightly more favorable perceptions, those from Southern Leyte (39.80) and those not from Eastern Visayas (46.23) had lower ranks. However, the differences in mean ranks are not large enough to be considered significant, as the p -value is greater than .05. This indicates that the province of origin whether from Leyte, Southern Leyte, or elsewhere does not significantly influence how respondents perceive the current state of tourism development in Biliran Island. Overall, perceptions appear to be fairly consistent regardless of provincial background, pointing to other factors (such as purpose of visit, frequency, or personal experiences) as more influential in shaping visitor opinions.

Table 22. A Kruskal-Wallis Test Comparing Perceptions of Tourism Development by Region

Region	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	df	p-value
Visiting Family/Friends	30	38.83	11.625*	4	.020
Business/Work	15	56.33			
Education/ School related	19	66.68			
Religious/ Pilgrimage	1	55.50			
Leisure/Vacation/ Tourism	35	49.07			
Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The Kruskal-Wallis test reveals a statistically significant difference in perceptions of tourism development based on purpose of visit ($\chi^2 = 11.625, df = 4, p = .020$), indicating that the reason for coming to Biliran Island significantly affects how visitors perceive its tourism development. Respondents who visited for education or school-related purposes reported the highest mean rank (66.68), suggesting they had the most favorable perceptions of tourism development. This was followed by those who came for business/work (56.33) and religious/pilgrimage (55.50). In contrast, those visiting for family/friends (38.83) had the lowest mean rank, indicating more critical views. Meanwhile, those visiting for leisure/vacation/tourism (49.07) fell in the middle range.

These findings suggest that visitors with academic or professional purposes may have more structured experiences and greater exposure to the island's organized facilities or services, leading to more positive perceptions. On the other hand, those visiting for personal or informal reasons like family gatherings may focus more on day-to-day realities, resulting in less favorable evaluations. This highlights the need for tourism development strategies that enhance both formal tourism services and the everyday visitor experience.

Table 23. Results of Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for Perception Scores

Variable	Ranks	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p-value
Perception (Biliran Local)	Negative	64	51.89	3321.00	-4.106***	.000
	Ranks					
– Perception (Outside Biliran)	Positive	30	38.13	1144.00		
	Ranks					
	Ties	6				
	Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Negative ranks indicate PTS\ Biliran scores were lower than PTS scores. Positive ranks indicate PTS\ Biliran scores were higher than PTS scores. The * p -value is two-tailed.

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test results show a statistically significant difference in perception scores between Biliran locals and respondents from outside Biliran ($z = -4.106, p < .001$). A majority of the cases ($n = 64$) showed negative ranks, meaning that Biliran locals rated tourism development lower than outsiders did. These negative ranks had a mean rank of 51.89 and a sum of ranks of 3,321.00. In contrast, only 30 cases had positive ranks, where locals rated higher than outsiders, with a mean rank of 38.13 and a sum of ranks of 1,144.00. Six responses were tied.

This result indicates a clear perception gap. respondents from outside Biliran generally view the island's tourism development more favorably than the locals. This may reflect local dissatisfaction or unmet expectations regarding tourism's impact, infrastructure, or benefits to the community, while outsiders may base their perceptions on limited but curated tourism experiences. These insights highlight the need to bridge perception gaps by involving locals in tourism planning and ensuring that development efforts benefit and resonate with the host community.

Significant Difference in the perceptions between Biliran Locals and Outside Biliran Respondents

Table 24. Results of Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for Perception Scores

Variable	Ranks	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	z	p-value
Perception (Biliran Local)	Negative	64	51.89	3321.00	-4.106***	.000
	Ranks					
– Perception (Outside Biliran)	Positive	30	38.13	1144.00		
	Ranks					
	Ties	6				
	Total	100				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Negative ranks indicate PTS\ Biliran scores were lower than PTS scores. Positive ranks indicate PTS\ Biliran scores were higher than PTS scores. The * p -value is two-tailed.

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test reveal a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of tourism development between Biliran locals and respondents from outside Biliran ($z = -4.106, p < .001$). The test compared paired perception scores from both groups, revealing that a majority of the responses (64 out of 100) showed lower perception scores among Biliran locals compared to outsiders. These negative ranks had a mean rank of 51.89 and a total sum of ranks of 3,321.00. In contrast, only 30 responses showed higher perception scores from locals, with a lower mean rank of 38.13 and a sum of ranks of 1,144.00. Additionally, six cases showed no difference between the two groups, indicating tied perception scores.

This statistically significant result suggests that people from outside Biliran tend to view the island's tourism development more positively than those who live within the province. The disparity may reflect the

fact that outsiders, typically seeing the island through a tourist's lens, may appreciate its natural beauty, serenity, and potential as a destination without fully witnessing its limitations. On the other hand, locals may have a more critical perspective, being directly exposed to the day-to-day realities of tourism in the area. These may include inadequate infrastructure, limited promotional efforts, poor visitor facilities, or uneven economic benefits, all of which can affect how they assess the current state of tourism development.

The results indicate that outside visitors generally perceive Biliran Island's tourism development more positively than local stakeholders. This suggests that visitors are more influenced by attractions and promotional exposure, while locals are more aware of structural and operational limitations.

D. CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that Biliran Island's tourism is marked by unseen potential rather than stagnation. Outside visitors hold more favorable views, appreciating its natural beauty, peaceful setting, and cultural identity, while locals are more cautious, reflecting concerns over infrastructure, accessibility, and service quality. This perception gap suggests that although Biliran is appealing to tourists, its full potential remains untapped.

Strengths in nature, culture, and hospitality provide a strong foundation, but improvements in infrastructure, marketing, and professional training are needed. Outsiders' positive impressions highlight opportunities for growth through digital promotion, eco-tourism, and stakeholder collaboration, while locals emphasize the importance of addressing pricing, accessibility, and inclusive planning. This aligns with Buhalis and Sinarta's (2019) view that tourism competitiveness depends on leveraging digital tools and co-creation, and with Dangi and Jamal's (2016) call for community-based approaches that balance development with sustainability.

Demographic factors further shape local perceptions: women and younger adults tend to be more optimistic, while older, highly educated, and higher-income groups are more critical, reflecting uneven development across municipalities. These differences stress the need for balanced and community-driven planning to ensure tourism benefits are widely shared (UNWTO, 2018). Inclusive planning is crucial, as tourism must not only meet visitor expectations but also address community concerns to achieve long-term sustainability (Khanna, 2021).

Overall, Biliran is not left behind, it is a destination with strong appeal already recognized by visitors, but still awaiting strategic investment and inclusive development to unlock its sustainable tourism potential. This implies that policymakers, local government units, and stakeholders must strengthen infrastructure, enhance marketing visibility, and promote professional skills training to bridge the perception gap and position Biliran as a competitive, sustainable, and community-driven destination.

Biliran Island possesses significant tourism potential but remains underdeveloped due to structural and strategic limitations. While visitors view the destination positively, local stakeholders identify critical gaps that must be addressed.

The study highlights the importance of aligning marketing strategies with on-the-ground realities. Bridging the perception gap requires integrated planning, improved infrastructure, and stronger stakeholder collaboration.

Recommendation, to enhance the overall visitor experience, it is essential to prioritize improvements in infrastructure and accessibility, particularly in transportation networks, tourism facilities, and essential services. Alongside this, the development of a unified and strategic marketing plan anchored in the 7Ps framework is crucial to ensure consistency in destination branding, service delivery, and promotional efforts. Strengthening stakeholder collaboration and fostering active community participation are equally important, as inclusive engagement promotes shared responsibility and sustainable development outcomes. Furthermore, expanding digital promotion through integrated online platforms can significantly

improve destination visibility and market reach. Finally, prioritizing sustainable and eco-tourism initiatives will help preserve Biliran Island's natural and cultural resources while ensuring long-term competitiveness and resilience in the tourism sector.

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