

## **TOURIST SATISFACTION AT BEACH RESORT IN SOUTHERN NEGROS, PHILIPPINES: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY**

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**Abstract:** Tourism plays a crucial role in the economy of Southern Negros, Philippines, with beach resorts being a significant draw for both local and international visitors. This study utilizes a Concurrent Nested Design to investigate tourist satisfaction with a beach resort in Southern Negros through a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data were gathered from 150 tourists using a structured questionnaire to assess their satisfaction with the key dimensions: service quality, cleanliness, facility maintenance, and accessibility. Qualitative insights were obtained from an in-depth interview with the resort owner, who has operational experience. The quantitative results revealed high satisfaction levels, with cleanliness and service quality being the most significant factors. Correlation analysis revealed strong interrelationships between the dimensions. The qualitative narratives provided contextual depth, illustrating the resort's commitment to personalization, ongoing facility improvements, and the challenges of managing peak periods. This integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provides a comprehensive understanding of tourist satisfaction and highlights areas for potential enhancement. This study underscores the importance of combining numerical data with experiential insights to inform effective management practices in the tourism sector.

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**Keywords:** Tourist Satisfaction, Beach Resort, Mixed-Methods, Quantitative Analysis, Qualitative Analysis, Southern Negros, Philippines

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is a pivotal sector in the economic landscape of the Philippines, with beach resorts being a significant contributor to this industry. In Southern Negros, beach resorts attract both local and international tourists, substantially contributing to the region's economic growth and development (Dela Cruz & Manalo, 2023). The competition among these resorts necessitates a deeper understanding of factors influencing tourist satisfaction to enhance service quality and ensure repeat visits (Chen & Tsai, 2022).

Tourist satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including service quality, cleanliness, facility maintenance, and accessibility (Kim, 2020). Service quality, in particular, has been extensively studied and linked to overall tourist satisfaction, suggesting that higher service quality leads to higher levels of satisfaction and loyalty (Davis, 2021). Cleanliness and facility maintenance are also critical factors that directly impact the comfort and experience of tourists (Reyes & Santos, 2020; Manalo & Dela Cruz, 2022).

In the context of the Philippines, local studies have highlighted the importance of personal interaction and local hospitality in enhancing tourist satisfaction (Bautista, 2019). For instance, Santos and Cruz (2021) emphasized that personalized service and responsiveness to guest needs are crucial for achieving high satisfaction levels. Despite these insights, there is a gap in research focusing on specific resorts in Southern Negros, highlighting the need for studies that explore both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of tourist satisfaction at these local establishments (Dela Cruz & Manalo, 2023).

Tourist satisfaction is also influenced by contextual factors such as local culture, environmental sustainability, and seasonal variations (Alonso & Ogle, 2021; Lee et al., 2023). Understanding these factors can provide a more nuanced view of tourist experiences and expectations, informing better management practices, and enhancing overall satisfaction (Wang et al., 2022). Additionally, recent studies have emphasized the role of digital reviews and social media in shaping tourist perceptions and expectations (Lee & Chen, 2022).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess tourist satisfaction levels across various dimensions at a beach resort in Southern Negros, Philippines.
2. To identify key factors contributing to tourist satisfaction based on quantitative survey data.
3. To gain in-depth insights into operational challenges and guest experiences from the perspective of resort owners.
4. To integrate both quantitative and qualitative findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of tourist satisfaction at the resort.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a Concurrent Nested Design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to explore tourist satisfaction at a beach resort in Southern Negros. For the quantitative aspect, a purposive quota sampling method was used to select 150 tourists, ensuring a representative sample of the resort's diverse clientele. Respondents were chosen based on their experience at the resort, including factors such as length of stay and type of accommodation. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which included Likert-type scale items to assess dimensions of satisfaction like service quality, cleanliness, and facility maintenance. The survey was administered and sent directly to the respondents' email using online forms.

For the qualitative component, an in-depth interview was conducted with the resort owner, identified through the local government unit's tourism officer serving as the gatekeeper. The owner, who had experience operating the resort, was selected based on criteria ensuring extensive involvement in daily operations and a standing in the local tourism industry. The interview, guided by open-ended questions, uncovered the owner's insights into tourist satisfaction, operational challenges, and feedback trends.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis and presented in tabular form to summarize findings. Qualitative data were examined using Litchman's three-dimensional (3Cs) approach—coding, categorizing, and Conceptualizing—to identify key themes and insights. Coding involved highlighting significant statements, categorizing grouped codes into broader themes, and conceptualizing these themes to draw conclusions.

Ethical considerations were rigorously observed, including obtaining informed consent from all respondents and ensuring confidentiality. The study also adhered to the principles of respect and sensitivity. Rigorous practices such as triangulation, peer review, pilot testing of the survey, and member checking for qualitative data were

employed to enhance the validity and reliability of the research. These measures aim to provide a robust and comprehensive understanding of tourist satisfaction at the resort.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### *Quantitative Results*

The survey results are summarized in Table 1, which presents the mean scores and standard deviations for the various tourist satisfaction.

**Table 1:** Summary of Tourist Satisfaction Dimensions

Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Service Quality	4.32	0.78
Cleanliness	4.5	0.72
Facility Maintenance	4.2	0.85
Accessibility	4.1	0.8

The quantitative data reveal high levels of satisfaction across all assessed dimensions. The highest mean score was observed for cleanliness ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ), indicating that tourists particularly valued the resort's commitment to maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. This finding is consistent with previous research that emphasizes the critical role of cleanliness in shaping overall tourist satisfaction (Davis, 2021).

The service quality also received a high mean score ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = 0.78$ ), suggesting that the resort's efforts to provide attentive and responsive service contributed significantly to guest satisfaction. This aligns with Chen and Tsai's (2022) findings that service quality is a major determinant of tourist loyalty and satisfaction.

Facility maintenance, with a mean score of 4.20 ( $SD = 0.85$ ), reflects the importance of well-maintained amenities for enhancing tourist experiences. This result supports the literature highlighting the need for the regular upkeep and modernization of facilities to meet guest expectations (Reyes & Santos, 2020; Manalo & Dela Cruz, 2022).

Accessibility was the lowest among the dimensions but still scored relatively high ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ). This indicates that although the resort generally meets guests' needs in terms of accessibility, there are areas for improvement. The importance of accessibility in ensuring a positive guest experience has been documented in previous studies, suggesting that even small improvements in this aspect could further enhance satisfaction (Kim, 2020).

### **Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the different dimensions of tourist satisfaction.

**Table 2:** Correlation Between Dimensions of Tourist Satisfaction

Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Correlation Coefficient
Service Quality	Cleanliness	0.75**
Service Quality	Facility Maintenance	0.68**
Service Quality	Accessibility	0.60*
Cleanliness	Facility Maintenance	0.72**
Cleanliness	Accessibility	0.55*
Facility Maintenance	Accessibility	0.65**

The analysis revealed strong positive correlations between all dimensions, with service quality and cleanliness showing the highest correlation ( $r = 0.75$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that service quality improvements are closely related to enhanced perceptions of cleanliness, which is consistent with the findings of Davis (2021). Facility maintenance and cleanliness also showed a strong correlation ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that well-maintained facilities significantly contribute to the perception of cleanliness.

The correlation between accessibility and other dimensions was positive but relatively weaker, particularly in comparison to cleanliness and service quality. This finding suggests that although accessibility is important, it may not be as strongly linked to overall satisfaction as other factors (Kim, 2020). This highlights the need for targeted improvements to accessibility to enhance overall guest satisfaction.

### **Qualitative Results**

Qualitative analysis derived from the narrative provided by the resort owner revealed several key themes that offer deeper insights into tourist satisfaction:

#### **Guest Experience**

The owner emphasized the importance of providing a personalized experience. The owner stated, "We strive to make each guest feel special by remembering their preferences and ensuring that our staff provides attentive service."

Personalization and attentive service play crucial roles in enhancing guest satisfaction. This aligns with existing literature that highlights the impact of personalized service on guest loyalty and satisfaction. Research by Santos and Cruz (2021) supports this, noting that personalized interactions significantly influence tourist satisfaction by making guests feel valued and cared for. Personalized service can lead to positive reviews and repeat visits, which are vital for the long-term success of hospitality businesses.

#### **Facility Improvements**

The owner mentioned ongoing efforts to upgrade the facilities. "We continuously invest in improving our facilities based on guest feedback. For instance, we recently renovated our beachfront area to enhance the overall experience."

Continuous investment in facility improvements is essential for maintaining high guest satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Manalo and Dela Cruz (2022), who found that regular upgrades and maintenance of facilities are critical for meeting guest expectations and enhancing their overall experience. Up-to-date and well-maintained facilities contribute to higher satisfaction and can differentiate a resort from its competitors.

#### **Operational Challenges**

The owner discussed challenges related to maintaining service quality during peak seasons. "Managing peak periods can be tough, but we try to ensure that our staff is well-trained and prepared for high guest volumes."

Handling peak seasons effectively is a significant challenge for many resorts. Davis (2021) noted that managing high guest volumes requires effective staff training and operational strategies to maintain service quality. Adequate preparation and staff training are crucial for ensuring consistent service quality, which directly impacts tourist satisfaction. Addressing these challenges proactively can help resorts maintain high satisfaction levels, even during busy periods.

#### **Conclusion**

This study, employing a Concurrent Nested Design, provides a comprehensive assessment of tourist satisfaction at a beach resort in Southern Negros through both quantitative and qualitative lens. The quantitative analysis revealed high tourist satisfaction levels, particularly regarding cleanliness and service quality. The qualitative

insights from the resort owners highlighted the significance of personalized service, continuous facility improvements, and effective peak-period management to maintain high satisfaction. The integration of these findings underscores the importance of combining numerical data with contextual narratives to enhance tourist satisfaction. This study offers practical recommendations for resort management to focus on cleanliness, personalized guest interactions, and proactive operational strategies to further improve the guest experience.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has declared no conflict of interest.

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