

Original Article

Services Offered by Major Tourist Destinations in Guimaras in the Post Pandemic Era: It's Implication to Tourist Security

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Abstract: Guimaras is another popular island destination. The island's natural beauty has garnered several accolades and, concurrently, the attention of tourists. The increase in the number of people visiting the island raises safety and security concerns. The purpose of this study is to examine how visitors to the island perceive their safety and security around the various tourist destinations in a post-pandemic environment. The findings, which were taken from a survey of 150 tourist visiting the Guimaras Island. This study employed a descriptive- survey approach to examine tourists' perceptions of their safety at various tourist destinations and the security given by various tourist establishments. The descriptive research design was used in determining the safety and security on the services offered by the major tourist destinations, employing the research instrument to 150 respondents. The statistical tool used were frequency and percentage, mean, Mann Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis Test, and Spearman Rho Correlation. This study identified the services offered by major tourist destinations were food with a total mean score of "4.60", water with a total mean score of "4.67", medical services with a total mean score of "4.67", accommodation with a total mean score of "4.62", and transportation with a total mean score of "4.63" all were interpreted as "excellent". This study also revealed that the level of security in the services offered by major tourist destinations has mean score of "4.74" and was interpreted as "excellent" and in term of level of safety had a total mean score of "4.62" which was interpreted as "excellent". The result of the study favorable to the safety of the services offered by numerous tourist attractions.

Keywords: services, safety, security, tourist destination

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an industry that operates on a global scale and is marked by intense levels of competition. Despite the fact that it is inherently susceptible to financial crises, natural disasters, outbreaks of warfare, and epidemics, international tourism has demonstrated an impressive capacity to recover from the detrimental effects of such negative, but short-term factors. As a result, tourism is highly sensitive to perceptions of danger and lack of safety and security. It is in this context that lack of safety and security and incidences of crime represent a more serious threat to travel and tourism than any other negative factor. The tourism industry in the Philippines has been identified as one of the driving forces behind the countries expansive and sustained economic expansion. Small and large businesses in the Philippines offer their services to tourists. Numerous tourist attractions exist in the country without investment. The magnificent natural environment, the tropical sea, the beaches, and the

mountainous regions further inland are all present. No investment is necessary. Habitats, particularly more traditional settlements and cultural practices, are also very appealing to tourists. These attractions require almost no financial investment. [1] The records from the Department of Tourism show that in 2021, despite the pandemic, there was a significant increase in the demand for travel within the country. In the 2021 Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts and Tourism Statistics Online Dissemination, the Department of Tourism and the Philippine Statistics Authority revealed some optimistic industry figures. According to the report by the Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts, domestic tourism had a boom in 2021, totaling 37,279,282 trips. This represents a gain of 38.16% when compared to the number of 26,982,233 trips recorded in 2020. The island of Guimaras is known for producing the sweetest mangoes in the world. In addition to this, Guimaras is renowned for being one of the most popular tourist destinations among the Philippines' many islands. Because of its sandy beaches, coves, caves, islets, green landscapes, rustic countryside, agri-tourism sites and culturally-based festivals, offering unique experiences to visitors. It is without a doubt one of the most peaceful spots to travel to and one of the safest destinations for lone backpackers to explore in the Western Visayas region of the Philippines. [2]. The Philippines, despite being generally safe and genuinely tourist-friendly, is vulnerable to the same safety issues that plague even more developed nations, such as petty crime and small scams. According to [3], the number of crimes committed in the Philippines were about 375.73 thousand cases that was reported to authorities. This reflects a decline from the previous year's total of about 395 thousand. Decreased dramatically in 2021 compared to the previous year, which can still be attributed to the lockdown limitations imposed at the beginning of the year because to the COVID-19 epidemic. The most prevalent index or focus crime was theft, followed by rape and physical injury. These were heinous acts that occurred routinely and frequently and were deemed to be of a serious character. In contrast, the number of recorded occurrences of violence against women and children, as well as cases of online sexual abuse and exploitation, has decreased during the past several years. As more Filipinos adopt digital services, an increase in cyberattacks has been observed over the past few years. Terrorist activity in the Philippines extreme south and the 2010 hijacking of a tourist bus in Manila have given the country a rather negative reputation in recent years. However, these are isolated incidents, and there is no reason for tourists visiting popular destinations in the Philippines to be more concerned about their safety than in their home countries, so long as they take sensible precautions. [4] The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to the tourism sector, with safety and security playing an increasingly significant role in choosing a tourist destination. Safety and security concerns in the tourism industry have also been identified as a driving force of change in the sector. Concerns about tourists' safety and security have increased in recent years as news of terrorist attacks and violent conflicts has spread. As a result, many tourists still think twice before visiting our shores because of security concerns. Avoiding negative press and travel warnings in the future requires resolving current security concerns. Safety and security are vital to providing quality services in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors (Rose, 2004). According to the study titled "Issues of Safety and Security: New Challenges to Malaysia's Tourism Industry" by [5] and [6] safety and security issues have become one of the forces causing changes in the tourism industry in the new millennium. This issue is primarily concerned with crime rates, terrorism, food safety, health issues, and natural disasters. False reporting and speculation in social media do more damage to a destination's image because the media plays a central role in how tourists form their perceptions. If tourists feel unsafe or pressured to visit a particular destination, they may form a negative impression of that location. And as a result, tourism in the region has declined. In the study titled "Tourism Safety and Security in the Municipality of San Augustine, Surigao Del Sur, Philippines" by [7], it was revealed that respondents associated tourism safety and security with the protection of the tourism environment or tourist destinations. Local Government Units were responsible for ensuring the safety and security of tourists (LGU). Education and training of people was essential for enhancing tourism safety and security, whereas overcrowding of tourism facilities was the greatest contributor to the decline or failure of tourism safety and security. When it comes to natural

beauty there is always an indisputable cocktail ingredient that would definitely make one travel destination stand out, and Guimaras Island will prove itself why it stands out among other travel destination in Western Visayas Region. The researchers are interested in identifying areas for improvement in the safety and security provided by tourist destinations on Guimaras Island. The tourism industry could be improved if the industry recognized its flaws and devised appropriate solutions and adjustments. Various tourists will explore, potentially generating revenue not only for local residents but also for the entire country. This study aimed to determine the level of safety and security on selected tourist destination in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study carried out in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras, the province's tourism capital and major fishing center. Nueva Valencia has a total land area of 137.12 square kilometers (52.94 square miles), accounting for 22.41% of Guimaras' total area. According to the [8], its population was 42,771. Guimaras province, which has 22.77% of the total population, is home to a number of white sand beaches, inexpensive cottages, expansive passageways, and abundant fisheries. The study was limited in determining the level of safety and security of the services offered by the major tourist destinations in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras. The respondents were tourist visiting the island. The study used the descriptive research design specifically, descriptive- survey. According to [9], a survey is a detailed and quantified description of a population, used for studies that the objective is to see the general picture of the population under investigation, describe the nature of existing conditions, or determine the relationships that exist between or among specific variable of the study. The questionnaire developed by the researchers was subjected to validations after consolidating the suggestions of the validators to the questionnaire, the reliability of the questionnaire was tested. Permission was received from the respondents prior to the administration of the questionnaire. The data gathered from the respondents was coded, tabulated, computer process, analyzed and interpreted by employing the Special Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The statistical tool used in this study were frequency and percentage, Mean, Mann Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis Test, and Spearman Rho Correlation.

3. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1. The respondents were grouped according to sex, civil status and educational attainment. The data shows when categorized according to sex majority were female (Male - 48.7% and Female – 51.3%). It is observed that in civil status majority of the respondents were married 89 (59.3%), followed by single 57 (38%), separated 3 (2%) and the least of the respondents in terms of civil status is divorced 1 (0.7%). When the respondents were categorized according to educational attainment most were College Graduate 101 (67.3%), followed by College Undergraduate 33 (22%), High School Undergraduate 14 (9.3%) and least were under the category of Others 2 (1.3%). Based on the profile of the respondent it can be drawn that the tourism industry in Guimaras Island is thriving. In the article written by [10], 38,216 tourists visited Guimaras during the last quarter of 2020. Guimaras ranks 4th, getting 8% of the total visitors' arrivals in Region VI, however, Guimaras has an advantage and potential for growth in the tourism industry this is due to its relatively varied tourism attractions like beaches/resorts/islets, festivals mostly community-based, religious sites/activities, nature, historical and agri/farm sites.

Table1: Profile of the Respondents

	f	%
Sex		
Male	73	48.7
Female	77	51.3
Total	150	100
Civil Status		

Single	57	38
Married	89	59.3
Separated	3	2
Divorced	1	0.7
Total	150	100
Educational Attainment		
High School Grad	14	9.3
College Undergrad	33	22
College Graduate	101	67.3
Others	2	1.3
Total	150	100

The data collected from respondents resulted in a mean score of "4.60", which is interpreted as "excellent" and is displayed in Table 2. Services in Terms of Food Offered by the Major Tourist Destination. The data gathered by using the questionnaire revealed that in terms of food the total mean was "4.60" interpreted as "excellent". Food services in tourist destinations receive a positive response regardless of respondent profile. Food establishments are certified, which means they follow strict compliance in food preparation and waste disposal.

Table 2: Services in Terms of Food Offered by the Major Tourist Destination

Sex	Food	
Male	4.59	Excellent
Female	4.61	Excellent
Civil Status	Food	
Single	4.58	Excellent
Married	4.62	Excellent
Separated	4.20	Very satisfactory
Widowed	5.00	Excellent
Educational Attainment	Food	
High School Grad	4.51	Excellent
College Undergrad	4.53	Excellent
College Graduate	4.62	Excellent
Others	5.00	Excellent
Total	4.62	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"

Table 3: Services in Terms of Water Offered by the Major Tourist Destination reveals that the services offered in terms of water resulted in an overall mean score of "4.65", which can be interpreted as "excellent." This demonstrates that the water used in tourist destinations is regularly tested and that there is a sufficient supply for drinking and other recreational activities.

Table 3: Services in Terms of Water Offered by the Major Tourist Destination

Sex	Water	
Male	4.69	Excellent
Female	4.61	Excellent
Civil Status	Water	

Single	4.59	Excellent
Married	4.68	Excellent
Separated	4.57	Excellent
Widowed	5.00	Excellent
Educational Attainment	Water	
High School Grad	4.65	Excellent
College Undergrad	4.49	Excellent
College Graduate	4.70	Excellent
Others	4.50	Excellent
Total	4.65	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent".

The medical services at the various tourist destinations were rated as "excellent" with a mean score of 4.67, as shown in Table 4. It was revealed that resort personnel are trained in first aid and can attend to tourists' medical needs in the event of an emergency, and that resorts are equipped with the necessary medical equipment and rooms.

Table 4: Services in Terms of Medical Services Offered by the Major Tourist Destination

Sex	Medical Services	
Male	4.64	Excellent
Female	4.62	Excellent
Civil Status	Medical Services	
Single	4.54	Excellent
Married	4.69	Excellent
Separated	4.50	Excellent
Widowed	5.00	Excellent
Educational Attainment	Medical Services	
High School Grad	4.61	Excellent
College Undergrad	4.50	Excellent
College Graduate	4.67	Excellent
Others	5.00	Excellent
Total	4.68	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"

Table 5 shows a total mean of "4.62" interpreted as "excellent" for services in terms of accommodation offered by major tourist destinations. The result revealed that the island's various resorts are safe for boarding and lodging, comfortable, and large enough to accommodate both local and foreign tourists.

Table 5: Services in Terms of Accommodation Offered by the Major Tourist Destination

Sex	Accommodation	
Male	4.63	Excellent
Female	4.62	Excellent
Civil Status	Accommodation	
Single	4.60	Excellent
Married	4.64	Excellent
Separated	4.50	Excellent

Widowed	5.00	Excellent
Educational Attainment	Accommodation	
High School Grad	4.50	Excellent
College Undergrad	4.48	Excellent
College Graduate	4.68	Excellent
Others	4.75	Excellent
Total	4.64	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"

Table 6 shows the transportation services provided by the major tourist destinations. Transportation used gained a total mean of "4.63" interpreted as "excellent". The main mode of transportation used to reach Guimaras is by motorboat, and the results show that motorboat operators provide adequate lifesaving equipment for passengers and personnel are trained in sea safety.

Table 6: Services in Terms of Transportation Offered by the Major Tourist Destination

Sex	Transportation	
Male	4.66	Excellent
Female	4.59	Excellent
Civil Status	Transportation	
Single	4.58	Excellent
Married	4.66	Excellent
Separated	4.50	Excellent
Widowed	5.00	Excellent
Educational Attainment	Transportation	
High School Grad	4.57	Excellent
College Undergrad	4.52	Excellent
College Graduate	4.66	Excellent
Others	5.00	Excellent
Total	4.67	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"

The level of security in the services offered by major tourist destinations in Guimaras can be seen in Table 3. The data revealed that the overall mean of "4.74" interpret as "excellent", the "Light posts are present along the streets especially at night." (M= 4.85) having ranked first among all the 10 indicators. The "There is an operational CCTV in different establishment around the island." (M= 4.63) ranked as the tenth among all 10 indicators. According to Hall (2003) that "tourist behavior and, consequently, destinations are deeply affected by perceptions of security and management of safety, security and risk" and emphasizes that "tourism industry is highly vulnerable to changes in the global security environment".

Table 7: Level of Security in the Services Offered by the Major Tourist Destinations in Guimaras

	Mean	Interpretation
There are adequate police personnel to secure the tourists.	4.76	Excellent
There is an operational CCTV in different establishment around the island.	4.63	Excellent

There is a security guard in the area of establishment.	4.69	Excellent
Tourists/ visitors assistance centre is available and functional.	4.71	Excellent
Tourist guides show expertise in their duty.	4.75	Excellent
Rescue and emergency groups are present.	4.73	Excellent
Rescue and emergency vehicle and motorboats are available in case of emergency.	4.77	Excellent
Emergency hotlines are provided for tourists.	4.72	Excellent
Light posts are present along the streets especially at night.	4.85	Excellent
There is a check point at the entrance of the island.	4.79	Excellent
Overall Level of Security	4.74	Excellent
Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"		

Table 4 shows the level of safety in the services provided by Guimaras' major tourist destination located in Nueva Valencia. The data revealed that the overall mean of "4.62" interprets as "excellent". This could be interpreted as tourists visiting the island's various tourist destinations feel safe and secure while in the various tourist destinations. As to the level of safety in terms of food the overall mean of "4.60" interpret as "excellent". Analysis shows that the highest mean is the "Food establishment's personnel have updated health certificate issued by the local government health office." (M= 4.77). For the level of safety in water an overall mean of "4.65" interpret as "excellent". Among the indicators the highest mean is "Sufficient supply of drinking water is observed." (M= 4.67). The result revealed that the level of safety in medical service had an overall mean of "4.63" interpret as "excellent". The "There is a building or room available for the medical concerns of the tourists." (M= 4.67) had the highest mean among the indicators under medical services. Item analysis showed that in terms of safety in accommodation the overall mean of "4.62" interpret as "excellent", the "There are sufficient rooms to accommodate tourists during peak season." (M= 4.67) had the highest mean. For the level of safety in terms of accommodation the overall mean was "4.62" interpret as "excellent". Among the indicators the highest mean was "There are sufficient rooms to accommodate tourists during peak season." (M= 4.71). As to the level of safety in terms of transportation an overall mean of "4.63" interpret as "excellent". The indicator with the highest mean was "Certificate of compliance from the Philippine Coast Guard is acquired by the motorboat operators and their vessels are compliant with the Philippine Coast Guard requirements." (M= 4.73). For visitors to the island to have a positive experience, both local and foreign tourists must be safe. Government officials have improved the security at the major tourist destinations. Workers at tourist attractions deliver high-quality services to visitors while ensuring the security of their offerings. The local law enforcement ensures that visitors are protected from any harm in any way. In the study of [11] revealed that in order to make potential visitors feel secure before or during their holidays, it is crucial to comprehend the fundamental human demand for safety and security.

Table 4: Level of Safety in the Services Offered by the Major Tourist Destinations in Guimaras

	Mean	Interpretation
Food	4.60	Excellent
Food establishment's personnel have updated health certificate issued by the local government health office.	4.77	Excellent
Food establishments follow Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points guidelines in preparation and serving food.	4.55	Excellent
Left- over foods are properly managed and disposed.	4.46	Excellent
Water	4.65	Excellent

Water refilling stations comply with water analysis regularly.	4.59	Excellent
Clean and sanitized water for washing and bathing are supplied sufficiently by the island water district.	4.66	Excellent
Sufficient supply of drinking water is observed.	4.67	Excellent
Medical Services	4.63	Excellent
In case of emergency, there are trained medical personnel to attend to the needs of the tourists.	4.63	Excellent
Complete medical tools and equipment's are available in the island.	4.63	Excellent
There is a building or room available for the medical concerns of the tourists.	4.67	Excellent
Accommodation	4.62	Excellent
Beach houses and resort rooms are safe for boarding and lodging.	4.59	Excellent
Comfortable and relaxed accommodation is provided for tourists.	4.65	Excellent
There are sufficient rooms to accommodate tourists during peak season.	4.71	Excellent
Transportation	4.63	Excellent
Motorboat operators provide adequate lifesaving equipment's for passengers.	4.61	Excellent
Motorboats operators are trained on safety at sea by authorized agency.	4.64	Excellent
Certificate of compliance from the Philippine Coast Guard is acquired by the motorboat operators and their vessels are compliant with the Philippine Coast Guard requirements.	4.73	Excellent
Overall Level of Safety	4.62	Excellent

Scale: 1.00-1.80 "Poor", 1.81-2.60 "Fair", 2.61-3.40 "Satisfactory", 3.41, 4.20 "Very satisfactory", 4.21-5.00 "Excellent"

Presented on Table 5 are the relationship between the level of security and level of safety by major tourist destination in Guimaras. Significant correlation was noted between safety and security (R-value= 0.345; p-value= 0.000). This implies that the level of safety had a higher mean value than that of the level of safety.

Table 5: Relationship between Level of Security and Level of Safety in the Services Offered by the Major Tourist Destinations in Guimaras

Variable	Mean	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Safety	4.62	0.345	0.000	Significant
Security	4.74			

4. CONCLUSION

Guimaras, renowned for producing the Philippines' sweetest mangoes, is keen on developing its tourism industry. However, the growth of this industry hinges on a crucial factor: the safety and security of its various tourist destinations. Ensuring that visitors feel protected and secure is essential for the island's tourism sector to thrive. Fortunately, the safety measures in place near local tourist attractions have garnered positive feedback from respondents. The attractions are well-guarded and equipped with various tools designed to prevent crime. This emphasis on safety creates an environment where visitors feel at ease, allowing them to fully enjoy their experience without concern for their well-being.

The concept of tourist destinations acting as a "home away from home" underscores the importance of creating a welcoming and secure atmosphere for visitors. When tourists feel safe, they are more likely to explore the area, engage with the local culture, and return in the future. By prioritizing safety and security, Guimaras can establish itself as a reliable and attractive destination, ultimately driving the growth of its tourism industry.

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