

Extent of Implementation of the Provincial Tourism Development Plan of Guimaras Island

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the extent of implementation of the existing Provincial Tourism Plan according to its goal in luring tourist in the island of Guimaras. This study was a basis to develop an action plan to operationalize the monitoring system of the program implementation and performance evaluation in accordance with the various programs as embodied in the tourism program of the province. The descriptive survey research designed was used in this study. The respondents of this study were composed of the actual tourists / visitors present in the different resorts at the time of the study and the resort owners. The researcher made questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously to the actual tourists / visitors present in the different resorts at the time of the study. The statistical tools used in the study were frequency counts and percentages for descriptive statistics and for correlational studies t-test was used. The major findings were: there were 82 major tourist destinations in Guimaras divided into accommodation and non-accommodation wherein majority are non-accommodation; that for the last two (2) years, from 2004-2005, the trend on the volume of tourists arrival was increasing however, it declined in 2006. This could be attributed to the Oil Spill incident that occurred that time; the trend in volume of income generated from the tourist arrival also followed with that of tourist arrival wherein there was also a decline in the revenue generated in 2006; In the extent of implementation, respondents indicated that there was a high extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Plan in the areas of tourism policy, strategy, investment, development projects and partnership, the tourism personnel has a lower perception as to the extent of implementation of the Provincial Tourism Plan and the respondents did not indicate any concerns or issues regarding the implementation of the Provincial Tourism Plan.

Keywords: Provincial Tourism Development Plan, Extent of Implementation

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Between the islands of Panay and Negros and accessible by pump boat from Iloilo is the small island of Guimaras. The place is known to Visayans as the site of the much-admired Roca Encantada (Enchanted Rock), summerhouse of the distinguished Lopez family of Iloilo. The house is perched on a promontory overlooking Guimaras Strait. Across the promontory is a picturesque group of coral islets called Siete Pecados (Isles of the Seven Sins), a curious counterpoint to the attractions of spiritual value in Guimaras. Near the capital town of Jordan is a Trappist Monastery, the only one in the Philippines; and Bala-an Bukid (Holy Mountain), a favorite Catholic pilgrimage site where a 30-minute climb up a stairway leads to a huge cross and chapel on the top. The town of Nueva Valencia, 20 kilometers south of Jordan, is host to Catilaran Cave, from where Ming jars have been unearthed and where on Good Friday the "Pangalap" ritual is held. Hundreds of devotees recite prayers in Latin while crawling through the half-kilometer-long cave.

When in Guimaras, it would be a sin to overlook the Island resort of Costa Aguada. This is the premiere resort in the inampulayan island that offers first class amenities with carefully developed and maintained surroundings. The island has a vast mountain that is best for trekking and biking. Some of its attractions are the mini-zoo, the mangrove plantation and the thriving community that produces soap and other materials made from coconut. The resort, and the whole island so to speak, is self-sufficient - they grow their own vegetables and fruit trees, raise animals and even culture crabs. You will never undermine their capability to live independently when you try their ice cream made from coconut milk and meat.

There are many island resorts in Guimaras, and each has its own uniqueness (and variation in accommodation costs, of course). Island hopping is favorable and will not cost you any, except for paying the boatman. Resort owners and operators are very friendly, and some of them will even tour you around their area without expecting anything in return. Exploring the coastal attractions is equally refreshing, especially if the boatman will bring you to the best shoreline and swimming areas.

Guimaras Island has a lot to offer to the visitors in terms of natural and man-made attractions. However, data showed that in terms of the volume of tourist visiting Guimaras still lag behind with Cebu and Boracay. There were 232,478 foreign tourists visited the Central Visayas Region last year. A total of 704,459 foreign tourists and 533,453 local tourists were recorded in 2003, among them were Koreasy, and Americans, Germans and British who visited Boracay Island.

(http://www.lakbaypillipinas.com/press_releases/20040414_iot_destinations.html). However, Guimaras only had 3,014 foreign tourists in 2006. This very low turnout as compared to 2005 with 1,104 foreign tourists could be attributed to the oil spill incident that had caused damage to the island, but still, the 2005 figure is far behind that of Cebu and Boracay (Provincial Tourism Report). This concern should be addressed so that the local government planners could make necessary plans of action to correct and respond to this discrepancy and help improve the income of the local tourism industry. Tourism counts as one of the good sources of income for the province. Thus, one of the aims of the province in its medium-term development plan focused on tourism activities. Tourism is on top of the economic agenda of the province.

The natural blessings of the island province will not blossom into a full economic backbone if proper planning and programs are not made and implemented. As a very young province, Guimaras' plans and programs were all at the infant stage. Thus, to address the status of the island as a tourist destination and to protect the existing natural and man-made infrastructures and the natural endowment of the island, the provincial government created the Area Specific Plan for Guimaras for the period covering 2002–2010. This tourism master plan was formulated with the end view of developing and promoting tourism in a sustainable manner. However, the question which still remains unanswered is that after five years of its implementation, was the end goal of the Guimaras Tourism Master Plan attained? Hence, this is the reason for the conduct of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to determine the extent of implementation of the existing Provincial Tourism Plan according to its goal in luring tourists to the island of Guimaras. The study covered the basis to develop an action plan to operationalize the monitoring system of the program implementation and performance evaluation in accordance with the various programs as embodied in the tourism program of the province.

Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. What is the status of the island of Guimaras in terms of tourist destinations, number of tourism establishments, tourist arrivals, and tourism revenue?
2. To what extent is the implementation of the existing provincial tourism plan in the island of Guimaras, as rated by LGU Tourism Personnel, stakeholders, and tourists, according to tourism policies, tourism strategies, tourism investment, tourism development projects, and tourism partnerships?
3. Is there a significant difference between the ratings of the participants in the implementation of the provincial tourism plan according to rated attributes?
4. What are the issues and concerns affecting the implementation of the Provincial Tourism Plan at the island of Guimaras?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research designed was used in this study. The respondents of this study were composed of the actual tourists/visitors present in the different resorts at the time of the study and the resort owners. The researcher made questionnaires which were distributed to the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously to the actual tourists/visitors present in the different resorts at the time of the study. The statistical tools used in the study were frequency counts and percentages for descriptive statistics and for correlational studies t-test was used.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Distribution and Profile of the Respondents

Data in table 1 presents the profile of the respondents composed of tourists (102), stakeholders or resort owners (33), Local Government Units (LGU) Officials (26), and tourism personnel (6). The profile determined was gender and educational attainment. Results revealed that out of the 167 respondents, 104 or 62.3% were female and 63 or 37.7% were male. In terms of educational attainment, only 19 or 11.4% were high school graduates and 148 or 88.6% were college graduates.

Status of Tourism Industry in Guimaras Province

Data in table 2 presents the summary of the major tourist destinations in the Province of Guimaras classified into accommodation and non-accommodation establishments. Results revealed that there are 20 major destinations in Jordan contributing 24.4% to the total major destinations in the island of Guimaras. Out of these 20 tourist destinations, 7 or 31.58% are accommodation establishments and 13 or 68.42% are non-accommodation establishments. There are 21 major destinations in the town of Buenavista contributing 25.92% to the total major destinations in the island of Guimaras. Of these 21 tourist destinations, 7 or 35% are accommodation establishments and 14 or 66.67% are non-accommodation establishments. In the municipality of Nueva Valencia, there were 26 tourist destinations contributing 31.7% to the total major.

destinations in the province of Guimaras. Out of this 26 tourist destinations, 13 or 50% are accommodation establishments and 13 or 50% are non-accommodation. In the municipality of San Lorenzo, only one (1) accommodation establishment was available and four (4) non-accommodation establishments. In the municipality of Sibunag, there were 5 accommodation establishments mostly island resorts, and two natural attractions.

Tourism Arrival and Revenue in Guimaras for the Last 3 Years

Data in table 3 presents the information on the volume of tourist arrival for the last three (3) years and the corresponding revenue it has contributed to the income of the province. In 2004, there were 831 foreign tourists, 2,163 foreign excursionists, 34,305 local tourists and 99,333 local excursionists for a total of 136,632 who visited the island province contributing an income of Php 159,150.00. In 2005, the number of foreign tourists who visited Guimaras totaled to 181,915 composed of 2,776 foreign tourists, 4,369 foreign excursionists, 39,708 local tourists and 135,062 local excursionists. These have contributed P204,312.00 to local revenue collection. In 2006, the number of foreign tourists who visited Guimaras totaled to 181,915 composed of 3,014 foreign tourists, 5,285 foreign excursionists, 36,551 local tourists and 128,135 local excursionists. These have contributed a total of P166,810.10 to local revenue collection.

Table 1
Distribution and Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Respondents:		
Tourists	102	61.1
Stakeholders	33	19.8
LGU officials	26	15.6
Tourism Personnel	6	3.6
Total	167	100
Gender:		
Male	63	37.7
Female	104	62.3
Total	167	100
Educational Attainment:		
High School	19	11.4
College	148	88.6
Total	167	100

Table 2
Frequency and Percentages of the Major Tourist Destination in the Province of Guimaras Classified
Into Accommodation and Non-Accommodation Establishments

Major Destination	FREQUENCY					Total	%
	Jordan	Buenavista	Nueva Valencia	San Lorenzo	Sibunag		
A. Accommodation Establishments							
Mountain Resorts	1	3	0	0	1	5	6.17
Beach Resorts		4	10	1	1	17	20.99
Island Resorts	1	0	3	0	3	7	8.64
Agro-tourism	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.24
Special point of interest	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.24
Religious Sites	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.23
Hotel	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.23
Sub-Total	7	7	13	1	5	33	39.5
Percentage	35.0	33.3	50.00	16.67	55.56		
B. Non-Accommodation Establishments							
Theme Parks	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.21
Religious Sites	1	1	0	0	0	2	2.41
Historical Sites	0	3	1	0	0	4	4.91
Natural Attractions	9	5	9	2	2	27	33.3
Agro-Tourism	1	2	1	3	2	9	11.1
Special Point of Interest	1	3	2	0	0	6	7.41
Sub-Total	13	14	13	5	4	49	60.7
Percentage	65	66.67	50.00	83.33	44.44		
Total	20	21	26	6	9	82	100
% Based from the total tourist attractions	24.4	25.6	31.7	7.3	10.97	100	

Table 3
Tourism Arrival and Revenue in Guimaras for the Last 3 Years*

Year	Foreign		Local		Total Tourist Arrival	Tourism Revenue
	Tourists	Excursionists	Tourists	Excursionists		
2004	831	2,163	136,632	99,333	136,632	159,150.00
2005	2,776	4,369	181,915	135,062	181,915	204,312.00
2006	3,014	5,285	172,985	128,135	172,985	166,810.10
Total	6,621	11,817		362,510		
Grand Total			491,532		491,532	530,272.00

*Source: Guimaras Tourism Office

Extent of Implementation of the Provincial Tourism Development Plan

Data in table 4 presents the responses of the respondents to the extent of implementation of the Provincial Tourism Development Plan. In the area of tourism policies, results showed that tourists have pointed out that there was a high extent of implementation of the Provincial Tourism Development Plan with a mean of 4.04. The overall mean for the extent of implementation under the tourism policy was 3.99 or it showed a high extent of implementation.

In the area of tourism strategies, results revealed that the tourists have indicated that the tourism development plan was implemented to a high extent with the mean of 4.01. The overall mean under the area of tourism strategy was 3.97 with the equivalent description of high extent.

In the area of tourism investment, results revealed that the tourists, LGU officials and the stakeholders/resort owners believed that there was a high extent of implementation with mean of 3.97, 3.97 and 3.84, respectively. Only the tourism personnel have indicated that there was a moderate extent of implementation with a mean of 3.92. However, the overall perception of the respondents on the extent of Implementation was high extent with an average mean of 3.92.

In the area of tourism development project, results revealed that the tourists, LGU officials and stakeholders have indicated that there was a high extent of implementation of the tourism development plan with 3.00, 4.02 and 3.90, respectively. Only the LGU tourism personnel who said that there was only a moderate extent of implementation with a mean of 3.25.

On the extent of the implementation of the tourism development plan in Guimaras province under the area of tourism partnership, it can be gathered in the data found at table 8 that all the respondents have indicated that there was a high extent of implementation.

Table 4

The Extent of Implementation of the Tourism Development Plan in the Area of Tourism Policies, Tourism Strategies, Tourism Investment, Tourism Development Project and Tourism Partnership

Respondents	N	Tourism Policies Mean	Description
Tourists	102	4.04	High Extent
Local Gov't. Units (LGU)	26	4.05	High Extent
Stakeholders/Resort Owners	33	3.88	High Extent
LGU Tourism Personnel	6	3.35	Moderate Extent
Total	167	3.99	High Extent
Respondents	N	Tourism Strategies Mean	Description
Tourists	102	4.01	High Extent
Local Gov't. Units (LGU)	26	4.07	High Extent
Stakeholders/Resort Owners	33	3.85	High Extent
LGU Tourism Personnel	6	3.41	Moderate Extent
Total	167	3.97	High Extent
Respondents	N	Tourism Investment Mean	Description
Tourists	102	3.97	High Extent
Local Gov't. Units (LGU)	26	3.97	High Extent
Stakeholders/Resort Owners	33	3.84	High Extent
LGU Tourism Personnel	6	3.33	Moderate Extent
Total	167	3.92	High Extent
Respondents	N	Tourism Development Project Mean	Description
Tourists	102	3.99	High Extent
Local Gov't. Units (LGU)	26	4.02	High Extent
Stakeholders/Resort Owners	33	3.9	High Extent
LGU Tourism Personnel	6	3.25	Moderate Extent
Total	167	3.95	High Extent
Respondents	N	Tourism Partnership Mean	Description
Tourists	102	4.00	High Extent
Local Gov't. Units (LGU)	26	4.18	High Extent
Stakeholders/Resort Owners	33	3.82	High Extent
LGU Tourism Personnel	6	3.81	High Extent
Total	167	3.99	High Extent

Scale of Means: 4.21-5.00 - Very High Extent; 3.41-4.20 - High Extent; 2.61-3.40 - Moderate Extent; 1.81-2.60 - Low Extent; 1.00-1.80 - Very Low Extent

Differences in the Responses of the Respondents on the Extent of Implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan

The ANOVA result showed significant differences in the area of tourism policy. The means square between groups 1.061 and within groups was .235. The F - value was equal to 4.513 at degrees of freedom (df) 3 and 153 for a total of 166. The p - value was .005 was less than the set probability equal to 0.05, interpreted as significant. This meant that there was a significant difference in the ratings made by the respondents on the area of tourism policy.

Significant differences also existed in the area of tourism strategy. The mean square between groups was .915 and within groups was .215. The F - value equal to 4.257 at the degrees of freedom (3, 163) equal to 166. the p - value was .006 was less than the set probability at 0.05, interpreted as significant. This meant that there were significant differences in the ratings made by the respondents on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan on the area tourism strategy.

No significant differences existed in the area of tourism investment. The mean square between groups was .863 and within groups was .360. The F - value equal to 2.396 at the degrees of freedom (3, 163) equal to 166. the p - value was .070 was greater than the set probability at 0.05, interpreted as not significant. This meant that there were no significant differences in the ratings made by the respondents on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan on the area tourism strategy. The respondents are aware that there are still needs to improve and intensify campaign for investors to invest in the province.

Significant differences existed in the area of tourism development project. The mean square between groups was 1.092 and within groups was .267. The F - value equal to 4.08 at the degrees of freedom (3, 163) equal to 166. The p - value was .008 was less than the set probability at 0.05, interpreted as significant. This meant that there were significant differences in the ratings made by the respondents on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan on the area of development projects.

No significant differences existed in the area of tourism partnership. The mean square between groups was .702 and within groups was .337. The F - value equal to 2.082 at the degrees of freedom (3, 163) equal to 166. The p - value was .105 was greater than the set probability at 0.05, interpreted as not significant. This meant that there were no significant differences in the ratings made by the respondents on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan on the area tourism partnership.

Table 5

The Differences in the Ratings of the Participants in the Implementation of the Tourism Development Plan in the Area of Tourism Policy, Tourism Strategy, Tourism Investment, Tourism Development Project and Tourism Partnership

Areas	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Tourism Policy					
Between Groups	3.182	3	1.061	4.513	.005*
Within Groups	38.301	163	0.235		
Total	41.482	166			
Tourism Strategy					
Between Groups	2.744	3	0.915	4.257	.006*
Within Groups	35.014	163	0.215		
Total	37.758	166			
Tourism Investment					
Between Groups	2.69	3	0.863	2.396	0.070*
Within Groups	58.738	163	0.36		
Total	61.328	166			
Tourism Development Project					
Between Groups	3.275	3	0.863	2.396	.008*
Within Groups	43.528	163	0.36		
Total	46.802	166			
Tourism Partnership					
Between Groups	2.69	3	0.863	2.396	.006*
Within Groups	58.738	163	0.36		
Total	61.328	166			

P < .05

Extent of Implementation of the Tourism Development Plan as a Whole

The ANOVA result showed significant differences existed in the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan as evaluated by Tourists, LGU Officials, stakeholders/resort owners and tourism personnel. The mean square between groups was .905 and within groups was .213. The F-value equal to 4.249 at the degrees of freedom (3, 163) equal to 166. The p-value was .006 was less than the set probability at 0.05, interpreted as significant. This meant that there were significant differences in the ratings made by the respondents on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan as a whole group as evaluated by the tourists, LGU officials, stakeholders/resort owners and tourism personnel.

As a whole the tourism personnel and stakeholders/resort owners have less rating on the extent of implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan in the areas of tourism policy.

Table 6

The Differences in the Extent of Implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan as Evaluated by Tourists, LGU Officials, Stakeholders/Resort Owners and Tourism Personnel as a Whole Group

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.716	3	0.905	4.249	.006*
Within Groups	34.721	163	0.213		
Total	34.436	166			

P < .05

Issues and Concerns

Data in Table 7 presents the summary of issues and concerns of the implementation of the tourism development plan. It shows that the main concern is the banking facilities and ATM services. As observed the trend today is most people do not use cash instead they use their ATM or credit cards to pay their bill in hotels or restaurants. So these must be addressed thoroughly by the Provincial government and also the tourism personnel. It is followed by the lack of one-stop shop, which it is very important on the part of the tourist especially if they do not bring anything in visiting the island. They think that there is also a shop where they can buy their personal needs.

Table 7

Issues and Concerns Affecting the Implementation of the Guimaras Tourism Development Plan*

Indicators	Total	Rank
1. Lack of one-stop-shop facilities to provide the needs of the tourist.	45	2
2. Inadequate tourism support services like transportation.	28	9
3. No coordination between LGU and Provincial Tourism Council.	25	10
4. Limited hotel accommodation.	38	4
5. Inactive tourism councils in every municipalities.	30	8
6. Lack of cooperation between individual and private sector.	33	7
7. Limited banking facilities and ATM services.	49	1
8. Lack of comprehensive tourism policies and ordinances.	36	5
9. Lack of coordination for tourism promotion and marketing.	34	6
10. No promotional pricing being implemented even during lean months.	40	3

*Multiple Responses

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The status of the tourism industry in Guimaras still needs improvement as shown by the limited number of accommodation establishments available in the province. In terms of revenue and tourist arrival, there is still a need for more campaign, to increase the figures and be comparable with other tourists' destinations in the country. The extent of implementation of the Provincial Tourism Plan was implemented to a high extent. There were significant differences that existed in the ratings made by the respondents according to the rated attributes such as tourism policy, strategy, investments, development projects, and partnerships. There were no issues and concern that were indicated by the respondents.

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, it is recommended that as to status of tourism industry: there should have more thorough campaign and advertisements on the attributes of Guimaras as a tourist destination in Visayas to improve tourists' arrival and revenue comparable to Boracay and Cebu; there should have an increase in the accommodation establishment in the island to lure more tourists. The present Provincial Tourism Plan should not focus only on the Tourism sector but should be integrated with the whole plan of the province. Inasmuch as there was a significant difference in the responses made by the respondents, there should be a tool to evaluate the implementation of the Provincial Tourism Plan of the province so that the tourism personnel will not rate their performance par beyond excellence. There should be a periodic evaluation on the extent of the implementation of the plan.

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