
PERCEPTION OF PASSENGERS ON THE SAFETY MEASURE PRACTICES OF MOTORIZED BANCAS ENGAGED IN TOURISM ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES IN NAVAL, BILIRAN

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Abstract : This study entitled, "Perception of Passengers on Safety Measure Practices of Motorized Banca in Naval, Biliran". The purpose of this study is to determine the level of perception of passengers on safety measure practices of motorized banca in Naval, Biliran. With 100 respondents the study revealed that most of the respondents of the municipality of Naval, Biliran are ages 25 and below, male and single. Based on the perception of passengers, it indicates that not all of the crews of the banca are in uniform and having a proper hygiene and also, since only few of them experience commotion or problem during their travel, banca operators and crews are doing their job on maintaining safety and security sea travel for the public.

Keywords: safety measure practices; motorized bancas; tourism activities; passengers; tourism services.

INTRODUCTION

The vast crystal-clear waters that are home to hundreds of marine species and the tropical weather that's perfect for achieving tan lines are what make the Philippines one of the top tourist destinations in the world in 2017. In a survey conducted by a popular travel magazine Conde Nast Traveller, 3 among the top 30 islands in the world are from the Philippines: Boracay Island in Aklan ranked first, Cebu and the Visayan Islands ranked second, while Palawan ranked third (www.cntraveler.com). Undeniably, one of the biggest factors that triggered a significant amount of tourist arrivals in the country is our vast, not-so-exploited islands. Foreign visitors prefer to experience a low-cost vacation in a world-class tourist destination and more often than not, the Philippine islands is part of their to-go list.

But it is more than just the white sand beaches and pristine islands that make foreign visitors want to visit the Philippines more often. In a lifestyle article published by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5 factors were revealed as to why tourists prefer to visit the Philippines. The article revealed that beaches, friendliness, diving, wildlife, and atmosphere are the 5 main things that keep inviting more and more tourist arrivals each year.

Many of the tourist visitors today prefer to explore less crowded places or islands in the Philippines. They wanted to experience a more peaceful and soulful connection with the nature and so they tend to make their itinerary different this time from the usual Boracay-Palawan islands tours. And because of this sudden change of tourist market behaviour, a growing number of tourists are exploring other beautiful and unpopular islands in the country. To name few are Kalanggaman Island in Palompon, Leyte, Cuatro Islas in Inopacan, Leyte, and of course, the Sambawan Island of the Province of Biliran.

The said islands in Leyte and Biliran Province were once exclusive for locals. But because of the power of social media, these used to be unexplored islands have slowly become a haven of tourists who wish to experience a more intimate vacation experience. In the island province of Biliran in Region VIII lies various white sand beaches and pristine islands that have become popular tourist destinations today, not only for the locals of Biliran and the Filipino citizens but also for the foreign visitors.

A travel review website called www.tripzilla.com chose one of Biliran's gems, the Sambawan Island in the Municipality of Maripipi, as one of the top 10 'unspoilt' destinations in the Philippines. The review revealed that the beautiful white sand and panoramic view of the entire island at a view deck point are what made Sambawan attractive to the tourists. (www.tripzilla.com).

Aside from Sambawan Island that's gaining popularity today in social media after having visited by popular bloggers and news agencies. Biliran has more to offer. The inhabited island of Higatangan in the capital town of Naval has long been an attraction in Biliran. It has been featured several times on national television, particularly its unique white sandbar that shifts direction depending on the wind directions. The province also has Dalutan Island, a small island with white sand and crystal clear waters situated in the municipality of Almeria. The Island is widely popular to locals of Biliran, a go-to outing destinations during special occasions.

Sambawan, Higatangan, and Dalutan Islands are gems of Biliran And all of these destinations are only accessible by water through motorized bancas. Majority of the destinations tourists intend to visit are tropical islands and can only be reached through small motorized passenger boats. Thus, safety measures are of utmost importance. The gateway to the mentioned gems of Biliran is the capital town of Naval where the province's largest port is situated. In Naval port docks all types of vessels- passenger ferry, cargo vessels, and even small motorized bancas. The said town also houses the province's largest Coast Guard and Philippine Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) offices, key authorities in safeguarding and implementing rules on passenger safety and precautionary measures on sea travels.

On a daily basis, not less than 20 passenger motorized boats that can carry an average of 25-35 passengers dock and depart Naval port. Some of these motorized bancas can also be rented privately for tourist activities, or locally known as "pakyaw". Pakyaw is an agreement of fulltime services of the motorized boat and its crew to a certain group of individuals, or in very often cases, tourists, who pay certain agreed amount for a tour. In exchange of this agreement is a whole day island hopping activity among the most popular islands in Biliran.

Pakyaw practice or motorized boat rental has become popular in Naval among local and even foreign tourists for a more convenient and personalized tour to their desired itinerary. Despite this practice, the passenger safety and security still remains the highest priority. Boat operators and crew have to be adept of the safety regulations or precautionary measures before transporting passengers to their respective destinations. This research will further on the perception of the passengers on the safety measure practices in boarding motorized bancas, specifically those who are engaged in tourism activities. It will also assess motorized bancas operators and crew's competency in the risk management and safety during voyage. The study aims to determine the perception of passengers on safety measure practices of motorized bancas engaged in tourism activities and services in Naval, Biliran.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Research Design

A descriptive research design is used. A survey research is conducted in this study. The survey design is used to collect data for the perception of passengers on the safety measure practices of motorized bancas engaged in tourism activities in Naval, Biliran. This design is chosen to meet the objective of the study.

2. Research Locale

Mainly, the area of concern of this study focuses in Naval, Biliran specifically at the Naval Port Area.

3. Research Respondents

The respondents of the study are the passengers of motorized bancas engaged in tourism activities and services.

4. Research Instrument

A survey questionnaire is chosen as data collection instrument. The questionnaire includes a variety of questions for the respondents to answer. The questionnaire consists of 10 statements. The questionnaire has two parts, first was the profile of the respondents which consist of the age, sex and civil status and the second was the statements on safety measure practices in tourism activities and services in Naval, Biliran, The respondents are required to complete the information asked.

5. Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers acquired permission from the Dean to conduct a survey. The researchers then acquired permission from each respondent to conduct the survey. Survey questionnaires were distributed and retrieve thereafter. Data gathered are categorized based on the respondents' answer to the questions.

6. Data Scoring

The data were scored as presented in the following: Perception of Passengers on the Safety measure practices of motorized banca engaged in tourism activities and services in Naval, Biliran were categorized into:

Scale	Qualitative Description
5	Excellent
4	Very Good
3	Good
2	Fair
1	Poor

7. Statistical Treatment of Data

Data gathered during the survey will be analyzed and presented in tabular form using descriptive statistics such as simple percentage, mean and weighted mean.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data gathered and the sequential organization of areas based upon the survey questionnaire presented in the appropriate tables flowed by the corresponding interpretation.

a. Profile of the Respondents

This subsection presents the profile of the respondents. This profile categorizes the age, sex and the civil status.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
56 and above years old	11	11%
41-55 years old	16	16%
26-40 years old	26	26%
25 and below years old	47	47%
Total	100	100%

5.1.1 Age. The table shows that majority of the respondents are in ages of 25 and below with 47%, and while ages 26-40 got 26%, ages 41-55 got 16% and 56 and above got 11% which is the lowest. This might implies that the passengers of the bancas specially the ages 25 and below are very much motivated to travel than the elderly due to some personal reasons like health, financial, and time.

Sex		
Male	52	52%
Female	48	48%
Total	100	100%

5.1.2 Sex. It reveals that majority of the respondents are male with 52%. And the female respondents have 48% only. This might be due to males are braver in terms of travelling across the sea than females.

Civil Status		
Single	47	47%
Married	43	43%
Widow	10	10%
Total	100	100%

5.1.3 *Civil Status*. Out of one hundred (100) respondents, forty-seven (47) of them are single which is the highest, forty-four (44) are married and ten (10) are widows which is the lowest. The data simply shows that majority of the respondents are single. It might connote that when someone is does not have big obligations and responsibilities like married couple has, that someone can travel all they want.

b. Perception of Passengers:

In this subsection the perception of passengers on safety measure practices are being revealed.

Range of Value

5.0-4.5	Excellent
4.4-3.7	Very Good
3.6-2.8	Good
2.7-1.9	Fair
1.8-1.0	Poor

Table 2. Perception of Passengers Statement

Statement	WM	Interpretation
1. The crew of the banca are well dressed and having a proper hygiene.	3.6	Good
2. The coast guard personnel check and announced the safety precautions before sailing.	3.9	Very Good
3. The crew check first the machine and katig before loading on the banca.	4.4	Very Good
4. The katig of the bancas is lumber instead of the traditional bamboos.	4.3	Very Good
5. The bancas has a secured and safety seating area for the passengers.	4.1	Very Good
6. The crew of the banca strongly implement/recommend the passengers to wear life jackets before sailing.	4.1	Very Good
7. Fire extinguisher, axes and medical kit are present inside the banca.	4.2	Very Good
8. The life Jackets and other life-saving equipment are in good condition.	4.2	Very Good
9. Experience cancellation or delayed departure due to bad weather.	4.2	Very Good
10. Experience commotion or problem happened during the duration of your travel going to your destination.	3.5	Good
Average Mean	3.72	Good

Perception of passengers. The table presents the level of perception of passengers on the safety measure practices of motorized banca in Naval, Biliran particularly in the Port Area. It reveals that the respondent's perception rated average in terms of the statement. The crew of the banca are well dressed and having a proper hygiene (WM-3.6). The coast guard personnel check and announced the safety precautions before sailing (WM-3.9), The crew check first the machines and katig before loading on the banca (WM-4.4). The katig of the banca is lumber instead of the traditional bamboo (WM-4.3), The banca has a secured and safenseating area for the passengers (WM-4.1). The crew of the banca strongly implement, recommend the passengers to wear life

jackets before sailing (WM-4.2). Fire extinguisher, axes and medical kit are present inside the banca (WM-4.1). The life jackets and other life-saving equipment are in good condition (WM-4.2). Experience cancellation or delayed departure due to bad weather (WM-4.2), Experience commotion or problem happened during the duration of your travel going to your destination (WM-3.5). And has a weighted mean of 3.6 rated as Good. The result may be due to the strong implementation of MARINA of their policies and regulations and cooperation of the operators and crew regarding on the safety measure practices of the motorized bancas.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study revealed that most of the respondents of the municipality of Naval, Biliran are ages 25 and below, male and single. Based on the perception of passengers, it indicates that not all of the crews of the banca are in uniform and having a proper hygiene and also, since only few of them experience commotion or problem during their travel, banca operators and crews are doing their job on maintaining safety and security sea travel for the public.

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