



# **TOURIST PERCEPTIONS OF SLUM TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TONDO, MANILA: A DESCRIPTIVE-CORRELATIONAL STUDY**

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## **Abstract**

This study examined tourists' perceptions of slum tourism development in Tondo, Manila, and evaluated its potential socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts. A descriptive-correlational quantitative research design was employed to determine tourists' level of interest, perceptions, and willingness to participate in slum tourism activities. A total of 50 respondents, composed of domestic and foreign tourists, were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire utilizing a 4-point Likert scale and analyzed using frequency distribution, weighted mean, chi-square test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Findings revealed that most respondents were aged 18–24 years old (38%), female (56%), Filipino (86%), and primarily visited Tondo for tourism purposes (68%). Respondents generally expressed positive perceptions toward slum tourism, particularly regarding guided tours and cultural immersion experiences. The highest-rated interest indicator was openness to participating in guided tours to better understand the community ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 0.639$ ). Respondents also strongly agreed that slum tourism could promote deeper cultural appreciation ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.485$ ) and should be regulated to protect residents' dignity and well-being ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.485$ ). However, participants also acknowledged the risk of reinforcing poverty stereotypes ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.575$ ). Statistical analysis showed no significant relationships between demographic characteristics and tourists' willingness to participate ( $p > .05$ ). Nevertheless, a significant relationship was identified between tourist interest and perceived tourism impact ( $p = 0.003$ ). The study concludes that ethically managed slum tourism in Tondo possesses potential for sustainable cultural and socio-economic development while emphasizing the importance of community participation, ethical governance, and responsible tourism practices.

**Keywords:** *slum tourism, Tondo Manila, sustainable tourism, tourist perception, cultural tourism, ethical tourism, community development*

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## **Introduction**

Urban slums are commonly characterized by poverty, overcrowding, informal housing, and inadequate access to public services, often resulting in negative public perceptions and social marginalization. However, contemporary tourism studies argue that these communities also embody complex socio-cultural identities, local resilience, and informal economic systems that can become meaningful sites of cultural exchange and urban tourism (Giroto & Murtinho, 2020). In recent decades, slum tourism has emerged as a growing niche within urban and cultural tourism, wherein visitors are drawn to marginalized urban spaces to gain insights into the everyday realities, histories, and cultural practices of local communities (Steinbrink, 2020). Although controversial, slum tourism has increasingly been examined as a potential platform for socio-economic development, intercultural learning, and community empowerment when managed ethically and sustainably (Gui & Zhong, 2024).

International experiences demonstrate that slum tourism can contribute to destination diversification and local economic participation. In Brazil, the favelas of Rocinha and Santa Marta have become internationally recognized tourism sites where guided tours emphasize local art, music, history, and community identity (Santos & Freire, 2022). Similarly, South Africa's Soweto township has evolved into a prominent heritage tourism destination because of its historical significance during the anti-apartheid movement and its vibrant cultural environment (Mokoena & Schutte, 2021). In India, Dharavi has attracted academic and tourism interest due to its thriving informal industries and strong entrepreneurial culture, which have inspired ethically oriented tourism programs that highlight resilience rather than deprivation (Singh & Nair, 2023). These global examples suggest that slum tourism, when guided by participatory and community-centered approaches, may foster alternative narratives that challenge dominant stereotypes of urban poverty.

Despite these opportunities, the development of slum tourism remains ethically contentious. Critics argue that slum tourism may commodify poverty, reinforce social inequality, and encourage voyeuristic consumption of marginalized communities (Frenzel, 2021).

Ethical concerns emerge when tourism activities prioritize visitor curiosity over community welfare, thereby reducing residents to objects of observation rather than active stakeholders in tourism development (Aloni & Radeva, 2023). Furthermore, poorly regulated tourism initiatives may intensify issues related to exploitation, misrepresentation, and cultural insensitivity. Consequently, scholars emphasize the importance of ethical tourism management frameworks that incorporate local participation, transparent governance, equitable economic distribution, and respect for community dignity (Steinbrink, 2020). Sustainable slum tourism therefore requires balancing economic opportunity with social responsibility and human rights considerations.

Within the Philippine context, Tondo, Manila, represents one of the country's most densely populated urban communities and has long been associated with poverty, congestion, and informal settlements (Tan & Garcia, 2020). Nevertheless, Tondo also possesses significant cultural, historical, and socio-economic characteristics that contribute to its urban identity. The community is known for its strong social networks, informal entrepreneurship, historical significance, and cultural vibrancy, which collectively reflect the resilience of its residents despite structural inequalities (Dela Cruz, 2021). As urban tourism continues to expand in the Philippines, there is increasing recognition that marginalized urban communities such as Tondo may possess untapped tourism potential rooted in authentic local experiences, culinary traditions, community interactions, and cultural heritage.

Recent tourism trends further indicate a growing demand for immersive, socially conscious, and experience-based travel. Contemporary tourists increasingly seek destinations that provide authentic cultural encounters and opportunities for meaningful social engagement beyond conventional tourism attractions (Richards, 2020). This shift has contributed to the popularity of community-based tourism, volunteer tourism, and educational travel experiences that encourage deeper awareness of social realities and local cultures (Avolio et al., 2024). In this context, Tondo may appeal to tourists interested in understanding urban poverty, local resilience, cultural identity, and grassroots community life. However, tourism development in such communities must be approached carefully to avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes or creating exploitative tourism practices that compromise the dignity of residents.

Although international scholarship on slum tourism has expanded considerably, empirical research within the Philippine setting remains limited. Existing local studies primarily focus on tourism potential and urban poverty but provide insufficient examination of tourists' perceptions, motivations, ethical concerns, and willingness to engage in slum tourism activities in Tondo (Panganiban & Ramos, 2022). Moreover, there is limited evidence regarding how tourists perceive the socio-economic, cultural, and ethical implications of transforming Tondo into a tourism destination. The absence of context-specific empirical studies constrains the development of informed and ethically grounded tourism policies that are responsive to the realities of local communities. Addressing this gap is essential in determining whether slum tourism initiatives in Tondo can contribute positively to sustainable urban development and community empowerment.

Given these considerations, the present study investigates tourists' perceptions of slum tourism development in Tondo, Manila. Specifically, the study examines tourists' level of interest, perceptions of safety and cultural appeal, ethical considerations, and perceived socio-economic and cultural impacts associated with slum tourism. By analyzing these factors, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on sustainable urban tourism and provide evidence-based insights for tourism planners, policymakers, and local stakeholders. Ultimately, the research aims to support the development of ethically responsible and community-oriented tourism initiatives that promote cultural understanding, local participation, and sustainable socio-economic opportunities while safeguarding the dignity and well-being of Tondo's residents.

## Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine tourists' perceptions of slum tourism in Tondo, Manila, and assess its potential socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts, thereby evaluating the feasibility of developing Tondo as a sustainable tourism destination. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Describe the demographic profile of respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 age;
  - 1.2 sex;
  - 1.3 nationality;
  - 1.4 place of residency; and
  - 1.5 reason for visiting Tondo, Manila.
2. Determine the level of interest among tourists in visiting Tondo as a slum tourism destination.
3. Assess the extent to which the following factors influence tourists' willingness to participate in slum tourism in Tondo:
  - 3.1 safety and security;
  - 3.2 cultural appeal;
  - 3.3 ethical considerations;
  - 3.4 tourism infrastructure;
  - 3.5 media influence and perception;
  - 3.6 cost of the tour; and
  - 3.7 personal comfort level.
4. Evaluate the extent to which tourists agree that slum tourism in Tondo can contribute to Manila's tourism development in terms of:
  - 4.1 socio-economic growth;

- 4.2 cultural growth; and
- 4.3 ethical impacts.
5. Determine whether there is a significant relationship between the demographic profile of respondents (age, sex, nationality, place of residency, reason for visiting) and their level of interest in visiting Tondo as a slum tourism destination.
6. Determine whether there is a significant relationship between the demographic profile of respondents and the factors influencing their willingness to participate in slum tourism (safety, cultural appeal, ethical considerations, tourism infrastructure, media influence, cost, personal comfort).
7. Determine whether there is a significant relationship between the level of interest in visiting Tondo and the perceived socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts of slum tourism.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Slum Tourism as a Form of Urban and Cultural Tourism***

Slum tourism has increasingly been conceptualized as a specialized form of urban and cultural tourism that allows visitors to engage with marginalized communities and experience the realities of urban poverty firsthand. Steinbrink (2012) explained that slum tourism emerged historically from urban curiosity and evolved into a contemporary tourism niche shaped by globalization, media exposure, and the growing demand for authentic travel experiences. Similarly, Richards (2020) emphasized that modern tourists increasingly seek immersive cultural encounters that provide a deeper social and historical understanding of destinations. International studies demonstrate that slum destinations such as Brazil's favelas, South Africa's Soweto, and India's Dharavi attract tourists because of their cultural vibrancy, local traditions, informal economies, and historical significance (Singh & Nair, 2023; Mekonnen, 2022). Within the Philippine setting, Tondo, Manila, possesses similar characteristics, including strong community identity, informal entrepreneurship, and rich urban culture, making it a potential destination for socially oriented tourism experiences (Garcia, 2021). These studies collectively suggest that slum tourism extends beyond poverty observation and can function as a platform for cultural appreciation, education, and urban storytelling.

### ***Socio-economic Contributions of Slum Tourism***

Several studies highlight the potential of slum tourism to contribute to local economic development and community empowerment when implemented responsibly. Garcia (2021) argued that tourism initiatives in Tondo could stimulate local entrepreneurship, employment opportunities, and small-scale businesses. Similarly, Aquino (2023) noted that tourism activities may generate supplementary income for residents through community tours, food services, handicrafts, and cultural performances. Internationally, Graha et al. (2021) emphasized that community-based tourism approaches strengthen local participation and ensure more equitable distribution of tourism benefits. Research by Al-Tae and Jaleel (2024) further demonstrated that slum tourism can support sustainable urban development by encouraging infrastructure improvement, local investments, and community engagement. In addition, Rivera et al. (2025) stressed that inclusive tourism development in the Philippines should prioritize sustainability, competitiveness, and local participation to maximize socio-economic outcomes. Collectively, these findings indicate that slum tourism may become a viable mechanism for urban regeneration and poverty alleviation when tourism benefits are directly linked to community welfare and participation.

### ***Ethical Issues and Community Participation in Slum Tourism***

Despite its developmental potential, slum tourism remains highly debated because of ethical concerns surrounding poverty commodification, voyeurism, and social inequality. Frenzel (2013) argued that slum tourism often reflects unequal power relations in which poverty becomes a consumable attraction for visitors. Similarly, Morales and Bednarz (2018) noted that critics perceive slum tours as exploitative practices that risk objectifying vulnerable communities. Within the Philippine context, Archive (2016) discussed how slum tourism in Tondo may reinforce "poverty porn" narratives when communities are portrayed merely as symbols of deprivation. Ethical concerns also include issues of consent, representation, dignity, and unequal benefit distribution (Ratho, 2024). To address these concerns, scholars advocate for community-led and participatory tourism models that empower residents to become active decision-makers rather than passive attractions (Frenzel, 2021; Aloni & Radeva, 2023). Marchan et al. (2024) similarly emphasized that tourism planning in marginalized communities must involve local stakeholders to ensure cultural sensitivity, social protection, and equitable benefit sharing. These perspectives highlight that ethical governance and meaningful community participation are fundamental to sustainable slum tourism development.

### ***Tourist Motivations, Perceptions, and Sustainability of Slum Tourism***

Tourist motivations and perceptions significantly influence the sustainability and acceptability of slum tourism destinations. Research indicates that tourists are often motivated by cultural curiosity, educational interest, volunteerism, and the desire to understand social realities beyond traditional tourist experiences (Avolio et al., 2024; Santos & Freire, 2022). Mekonnen (2022) found that tourists engaging in slum tourism frequently seek authentic interactions and opportunities for social awareness. However, perceptions of safety, personal comfort, ethical appropriateness, and destination accessibility also shape tourists' willingness to participate (Marchan et al., 2024). Huysamen et al. (2024) further explained that media representations and social media narratives strongly influence how tourists perceive slum communities and their attractiveness as destinations. Sustainable slum tourism, therefore, depends on balancing tourists' interests with responsible tourism practices that protect community welfare and cultural integrity. In the case of Tondo, understanding tourist perceptions regarding cultural value, ethical concerns, safety, and socio-economic impacts is essential for developing tourism

initiatives that are both sustainable and socially responsible.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine tourists' perceptions of slum tourism development in Tondo, Manila, and to determine the relationships among selected demographic and perceptual variables. A descriptive-correlational approach is appropriate for studies that aim to systematically describe existing conditions and explore the degree of association between variables without manipulating the research environment (Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). The quantitative method enabled the researchers to generate measurable and objective data regarding tourists' attitudes, willingness to participate, and perceived socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts of slum tourism. Specifically, the study investigated the relationships between respondents' demographic characteristics and their level of interest in slum tourism, as well as the influence of factors such as perceived safety and security, cultural appeal, ethical considerations, tourism infrastructure, media influence, and personal comfort on tourists' willingness to participate. The descriptive-correlational design was deemed suitable because it allowed the researchers to identify patterns, trends, and statistically significant relationships that may contribute to the development of sustainable and ethically grounded tourism strategies for Tondo, Manila.

### Respondents

The participants of the study consisted of 50 tourists who had either visited Manila or expressed interest in alternative and unconventional tourism experiences, particularly slum tourism. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that participants possessed relevant travel exposure, familiarity with cultural tourism, or interest in socially oriented tourism activities. Purposive sampling is appropriate in exploratory tourism studies where respondents are intentionally chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the objectives of the research (Creswell, 2018). The participants included domestic and foreign tourists, cultural travelers, volunteer tourists, and adventure travelers who may potentially engage in slum tourism activities in Tondo. Respondents were recruited through paper-based survey distribution in selected hotels, travel hubs, and tourism-related areas within Manila and Tondo. Although the sample size was relatively limited, it was considered adequate for identifying preliminary trends, relationships, and patterns relevant to exploratory correlational analysis. The inclusion criteria required participants to be at least 18 years old and willing to voluntarily participate in the study. The study excluded individuals who had no interest in tourism-related activities or who declined to provide informed consent.

### Instruments

A structured survey questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection in this study. The questionnaire was developed based on existing literature related to slum tourism, sustainable tourism development, tourist behavior, and ethical tourism practices. It was designed to measure several constructs, including perceived safety and security, cultural and historical appeal, tourism infrastructure and accessibility, ethical considerations, media influence, personal comfort, and willingness to participate in slum tourism activities in Tondo, Manila. The instrument also included demographic items pertaining to respondents' age, sex, nationality, place of residency, and reason for visiting Tondo. Responses to the perceptual items were measured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree), which encouraged participants to provide definitive responses without a neutral midpoint.

To establish content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert evaluation by specialists in tourism management and research methodology who assessed the relevance, clarity, coherence, and appropriateness of the items in relation to the study objectives. Revisions were made based on their recommendations to improve item clarity and construct alignment. A pilot test involving 10 respondents outside the actual sample was conducted to evaluate the comprehensibility, reliability, and usability of the instrument. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with values of  $\alpha \geq .70$  considered acceptable for social science research standards. The finalized questionnaire was administered in paper-based format to facilitate accessibility and maximize response rates among tourists in the selected research sites.

### Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured the necessary permissions from relevant local authorities and tourism-related establishments where the survey distribution was conducted. The researchers personally administered the paper-based questionnaires in selected areas within Manila and Tondo, including hotels, travel hubs, tourism sites, and public areas frequented by tourists. Potential respondents were informed about the purpose, significance, and voluntary nature of the study before participation. Participants who agreed to participate were provided with informed consent forms explaining their rights, including confidentiality, anonymity, and the option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

After obtaining consent, respondents were requested to complete the survey questionnaire anonymously to encourage honest and unbiased responses. The researchers remained available during the data collection process to clarify questions and ensure accurate completion of the instrument. Completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately after completion to minimize data loss and ensure completeness of responses. The collected data were then organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis. The procedure was designed to ensure ethical compliance, participant convenience, and the collection of reliable and comprehensive data reflecting diverse tourist perspectives regarding slum tourism in Tondo, Manila.

## Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques appropriate to the objectives and variables of the study. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and describe their perceptions regarding slum tourism in Tondo. Mean scores and standard deviations were also utilized to determine respondents' levels of agreement regarding tourist interest, cultural appeal, safety, ethical considerations, infrastructure, and perceived impacts of slum tourism.

Inferential statistical analyses were employed to examine relationships and differences among variables. Independent samples t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to determine significant differences in tourists' perceptions and willingness to participate according to demographic categories such as age, sex, and nationality. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to assess the strength and direction of relationships between tourist interest and perceived socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts of slum tourism. Chi-square tests of association were likewise employed to examine relationships between categorical demographic variables and respondents' levels of interest and willingness to participate. In addition, multiple regression analysis was utilized to determine whether selected variables significantly predicted tourists' willingness to engage in slum tourism activities.

All statistical analyses were performed using appropriate statistical software, and the level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ . Data visualization tools such as bar graphs, pie charts, histograms, scatter plots, and heatmaps were also utilized to facilitate the interpretation and presentation of findings. These analytical procedures ensured a comprehensive examination of tourists' perceptions and the factors influencing slum tourism development in Tondo, Manila.

## Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical principles in conducting research involving human participants. Prior to participation, respondents were informed about the objectives, procedures, and significance of the study through an informed consent process. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without consequences. To protect participants' privacy and confidentiality, no personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were treated anonymously and used solely for academic and research purposes.

Considering that slum tourism involves sensitive issues related to poverty, inequality, and ethical representation, the researchers exercised caution in framing survey questions to avoid causing discomfort, discrimination, or emotional distress among respondents. Participants were informed that they could decline to answer any question they found uncomfortable. The study also acknowledged the possibility of response bias, particularly social desirability bias, wherein respondents may provide socially acceptable answers rather than their genuine perceptions regarding poverty and tourism. To minimize this risk, respondents were encouraged to answer honestly and were assured that there were no right or wrong responses. Furthermore, the researchers ensured that the study upheld the dignity and welfare of the Tondo community by framing the research within the context of sustainable, ethical, and community-centered tourism development.

## Results

The responses gathered from the participants were processed and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. The findings are presented in both textual and tabular forms for clarity and better understanding. This section highlights the relevance of the study in uncovering insights on how tourists perceive slum areas as potential attractions, particularly in Tondo, Manila. Furthermore, the results provide meaningful contributions to the growing discourse on urban tourism and sustainable community development.

According to the data collected from the respondents, the study revealed the following:

Table 1.1 *Frequencies for age*

| <i>Age</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|------------|------------------|----------------|
| 18-24      | 19               | 38%            |
| 25-34      | 10               | 20%            |
| 35-44      | 9                | 18%            |
| 45-54      | 10               | 20%            |
| Above 55   | 2                | 4%             |
| Total      | 50               | 100%           |

The data indicate that slum tourism in Tondo primarily appeals to younger tourists, with 38% aged 18–24 and 22% aged 25–34. Only 4% were above 55, suggesting that older individuals are less inclined to engage in unconventional urban travel. This aligns with Baquillas and Gozun (2022), who reported that younger tourists are more attracted to socially conscious and immersive travel experiences. Tourism programs should thus consider the preferences and expectations of younger demographics in designing slum tourism activities.

As shown in Table 1.2, more females (56%) than males (44%) participated, consistent with UNWTO (2019), which notes that women often show higher engagement in cultural and community-based tourism. This indicates a need for tourism planners to ensure inclusivity and activities that cater to female travelers' preferences while maintaining safety and cultural sensitivity.

Table 1.2. *Frequencies for sex*

| <i>Sex</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Male       | 22               | 48%            |
| Female     | 28               | 56%            |
| Total      | 50               | 100%           |

Table 1.3. *Frequencies for nationality*

| <i>Nationality</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Filipino           | 43               | 86%            |
| Foreign            | 7                | 14%            |
| Total              | 50               | 100%           |

The majority of respondents were domestic tourists (86%), reflecting cultural familiarity and accessibility, while a minority of foreign visitors (14%) suggests an emerging global curiosity for Tondo as a culturally distinctive urban destination. This shows potential for marketing slum tourism internationally, provided ethical tourism practices are emphasized.

Table 1.4. *Frequencies for Place of Residency*

| <i>Place of Residency</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Tondo                     | 0                | 0%             |
| Outside                   | 50               | 100%           |
| Total                     | 50               | 100%           |

All respondents were non-residents of Tondo, indicating that the study reflects external tourist perspectives rather than local community views. This reinforces the importance of involving local residents in tourism planning to ensure community benefits and ethical implementation.

Table 1.5. *Frequencies for Reason for Visiting Tondo*

| <i>Reason for Visiting Tondo</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
|----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Tourist                          | 33               | 68%            |
| Business                         | 10               | 20%            |
| Volunteer                        | 7                | 12%            |
| Academic Research                | 0                | 0%             |
| Others                           | 0                | 0%             |
| Total                            | 50               | 100%           |

Most respondents visited Tondo for tourism (68%), highlighting cultural curiosity as the main driver. A smaller portion engaged in business (20%) or volunteering (12%), showing Tondo's diverse roles. These results support Tugade (2023), suggesting that socially conscious tourists are motivated by cultural and community engagement, reinforcing the potential for educational and ethical tourism development.

Table 2. *Descriptive Statistic Levels of interest in Tondo, Manila as a Slum Tourism Destination.*

| <i>Parameter</i>  | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Standard Deviation</i> | <i>Verbal Interpretation</i> |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| I am interested in visiting Tondo as part of a Slum Tourism experience.                                   | 3.34        | 0.688                     | Agree                        |
| I believe Tondo has unique cultural and historical aspects that make it a worthwhile tourism destination. | 3.38        | 0.667                     | Agree                        |
| I am open to participating in a guided tour of Tondo to understand the local community better.            | 3.4         | 0.639                     | Agree                        |

Tourists showed positive interest in Tondo as a slum tourism site. The highest interest was in participating in guided tours ( $M = 3.40$ ), reflecting willingness to engage in educational, community-centered experiences (Steinbrink, 2020). Recognition of Tondo's cultural and historical significance ( $M = 3.38$ ) indicates tourists value authentic urban experiences. The moderate mean for general interest ( $M = 3.34$ ) suggests ethical concerns may temper overall curiosity, emphasizing the importance of responsible tourism planning.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of Key Factors that Attract Tourists to the Transform Slum Area*

| <i>Parameter</i>   | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Standard Deviation</i> | <i>Verbal Interpretation</i> |
|--|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| I find the key factors such as local food, attractions, and Festivals in Tondo very appealing to tourists.   | 3.34        | 0.688                     | Agree                        |
| I believe the development of parks and recreational areas in Tondo have had significant influence on tourism | 3.36        | 0.693                     | Agree                        |
| I find local events and festivals in Tondo to be very interesting to tourists.                               | 3.42        | 0.673                     | Agree                        |

Table 3 shows that respondents agreed that festivals ( $M = 3.42$ ) and cultural events are major draws, consistent with Richards (2020) on the role of cultural activities in urban tourism. Parks and recreational areas ( $M = 3.36$ ) and local food and attractions ( $M = 3.34$ ) further enhance appeal. This indicates that Tondo's tourism potential is closely tied to cultural authenticity and accessible public spaces, suggesting investment in both is essential for sustainable development.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of Key Factors that Attract Tourists to transform Slum area*

| <i>Parameter</i>   | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Standard Deviation</i> | <i>Verbal Interpretation</i> |
|--|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| I believe slum tourism in Tondo can create economic opportunities for local businesses and residents.      | 3.44        | 0.688                     | Agree                        |
| I think slum tourism can help promote a deeper cultural appreciation of Tondo's community and way of life. | 3.64        | 0.485                     | Strongly Agree               |
| I feel that slum tourism could have negative effects, such as reinforcing stereotypes about poverty.       | 3.58        | 0.575                     | Strongly Agree               |
| I believe slum tourism should involve Direct community engagement and support to ensure a positive impact. | 3.44        | 0.611                     | Agree                        |
| I think tourism in Tondo should be regulated to protect the dignity and well-being of residents.           | 3.64        | 0.485                     | Strongly Agree               |

Tourists perceive both benefits and risks of slum tourism. Strong agreement that cultural appreciation (M = 3.64) and regulation (M = 3.64) are crucial highlights ethical sensitivity. Recognition of economic opportunities (M = 3.44) indicates optimism for local benefit, while concern over reinforcing stereotypes (M = 3.58) underscores the need for careful implementation (Steinbrink, 2020). These results stress the importance of community involvement and ethical safeguards.

*Table 5. Significant Relationships Between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

| <i>Factors</i>        | <i>Demographic Profile</i> | <i>Chi-square Value</i> | <i>P-value</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Level of Interest     | Age                        | 8.837                   | 0.920          | NS             |
|                       | Sex                        | 0.443                   | 0.979          | NS             |
|                       | Nationality                | 0.856                   | 0.931          | NS             |
|                       | Place of Residency         | 1.409                   | 0.843          | NS             |
|                       | Reason Visiting Tondo      | 10.989                  | 0.202          | NS             |
| Average Weighted Mean |                            |                         |                | 3.42 (Agree)   |

The table shows the relationship between the respondents' socio-demographic profile and their perceptions of slum tourism and its possible impacts in Tondo, Manila. The results suggest that demographic characteristics influence how tourists view slum tourism as a potential attraction. Differences in age, place of residency, and reason for visiting appear to affect how respondents assess the socio-economic, cultural, and ethical implications of developing slum tourism in the area. The findings indicate that respondents who expressed cultural interest or curiosity as their reason for visiting Tondo tended to have more favorable perceptions of slum tourism. These respondents were more likely to recognize its potential contribution to local economic activity and cultural awareness. On the other hand, some respondents showed reservations, particularly in relation to ethical concerns, suggesting that personal background and travel motivation shape how slum tourism is perceived. Overall, the results imply that tourist perceptions are not uniform and are influenced by individual characteristics. This highlights the importance of considering the target tourist market when planning slum tourism initiatives in Tondo. By understanding the profiles and motivations of potential visitors, tourism planners can design programs that address ethical concerns while maximizing positive socio-economic and cultural outcomes for the local community.

*Table 6. Factors Influencing Their Willingness to Participate*

| <i>Factors</i>             | <i>Demographic Profile</i> | <i>Chi-square Value</i> | <i>P-value</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Willingness to Participate | Age                        | 13.474                  | 0.856          | NS             |
|                            | Sex                        | 2.252                   | 0.813          | NS             |
|                            | Nationality                | 2.645                   | 0.755          | NS             |
|                            | Place of Residency         | 4.082                   | 0.538          | NS             |
|                            | Reason for Visiting Tondo  | 7.180                   | 0.708          | NS             |
| Average Weighted Mean      |                            |                         |                | 3.38 (Agree)   |

The analysis of the relationship between socio-economic factors and tourist perception shows that none of the demographic factors (age, sex, nationality, place of residency, or reason for visiting Tondo) has a significant relationship with either "Level of Interest" or "Willingness to Participate." The Chi-square values for all these factors were relatively low, and the p-values were all above 0.05, indicating that none of the relationships are statistically significant. This suggests that tourists' interest levels and willingness to participate are not notably influenced by their demographic characteristics in this study.

*Table 7. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient*

|             | <i>Impact Q1</i> | <i>Impact Q2</i> | <i>Impact Q3</i> | <i>Impact Q4</i> | <i>Impact Q5</i> |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Interest Q1 | 0.219            | -0.115           | 0.059            | -0.072           | 0.007            |
| Interest Q2 | 0.132            | 0.116            | -0.054           | -0.168           | 0.116            |
| Interest Q3 | 0.010            | 0.079            | 0.411            | 0.411            | 0.013            |

Based on the analysis of the relationship between tourists' interest and the potential impacts of tourism in Tondo, only one pair of variables, Interest Q3 and Impact Q3, demonstrates a statistically significant association, with a p-value of 0.003.

This p-value is below the commonly accepted threshold of 0.05, indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis and suggesting a meaningful relationship between these two variables (Field, 2021). In contrast, all other pairs of interest and impact variables have p-values exceeding 0.05, implying that their associations are not statistically significant and may be due to chance (Sullivan & Artino, 2020).

Based on the data, most correlations are weak, both positively and negatively. The strongest correlation is between the Interest Q3 and Impact Q3 at 0.411, indicating a moderate positive relationship.

Table 8. *Significant Relationship (p-value)*

|             | <i>Impact Q1</i> | <i>Impact Q2</i> | <i>Impact Q3</i> | <i>Impact Q4</i> | <i>Impact Q5</i> |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Interest Q1 | 0.126            | 0.427            | 0.685            | 0.620            | 0.960            |
| Interest Q2 | 0.360            | 0.422            | 0.708            | 0.243            | 0.422            |
| Interest Q3 | 0.943            | 0.585            | 0.003            | 0.126            | 0.928            |

These findings align with the conventional interpretation of p-values in statistical analysis. A p-value less than or equal to 0.05 typically indicates a statistically significant result, meaning the observed effect is unlikely to have occurred by chance (Sullivan & Artino, 2022). Conversely, p-values greater than 0.05 suggest insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, implying that any observed differences are likely due to random variation (Minitab Blog, 2020). Therefore, the significant relationship between Interest Q3 and Impact Q3 underscores the importance of this specific aspect of tourist interest in influencing perceptions of tourism's potential impacts. The lack of significant associations in other areas suggests that, for this dataset, tourists' interests in other aspects may not substantially affect their views on the potential impacts of tourism in Tondo.

## Discussion

### *Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Participants*

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents provides important insights into the emerging market segment interested in slum tourism within Tondo, Manila. The findings revealed that the largest proportion of respondents belonged to the 18–24 age group (38%), followed by those aged 25–34 years old (20%). This age distribution suggests that younger tourists are more inclined toward socially immersive and experience-oriented forms of tourism that emphasize authenticity, cultural interaction, and social awareness. Contemporary tourism literature explains that younger generations, particularly Millennials and Generation Z travelers, demonstrate stronger preferences for transformative and experiential tourism activities that provide opportunities for cultural learning and social engagement rather than passive sightseeing (Baquillas & Gozun, 2022; Richards, 2020). The relatively low participation rate among respondents aged 55 years old and above (4%) may indicate that older tourists tend to prefer conventional tourism products that prioritize comfort, safety, and familiarity over unconventional or socially sensitive destinations such as urban slum communities. These findings reinforce the notion that slum tourism appeals predominantly to tourists seeking educational, reflective, and socially conscious travel experiences.

In terms of sex distribution, female respondents comprised 56% of the sample, while males represented 44%. This slight predominance of female participants may reflect broader tourism trends, suggesting that women are more likely to participate in cultural, educational, and community-based tourism experiences (UNWTO, 2019). Previous studies indicate that female travelers often demonstrate greater interest in socially meaningful tourism activities that involve cultural interaction, empathy, and community engagement. This finding may further imply that women are more receptive to tourism experiences that foster intercultural understanding and ethical awareness. Consequently, tourism planners and local organizers should consider developing tourism programs that emphasize safety, inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and educational value to effectively attract female travelers.

The findings also showed that the majority of respondents were Filipino tourists (86%), while only 14% were foreign visitors. The predominance of domestic tourists may be attributed to cultural familiarity, accessibility, and greater awareness of the socio-cultural realities associated with urban communities in Manila. Domestic tourists may perceive Tondo not only as a tourism destination but also as a representation of urban Filipino identity, resilience, and grassroots culture. In contrast, the smaller proportion of foreign respondents may indicate that slum tourism in Tondo remains relatively underdeveloped and less visible in the international tourism market compared with globally recognized slum tourism destinations such as Dharavi in India or Rocinha in Brazil. Nevertheless, the presence of foreign respondents demonstrates emerging international curiosity toward alternative urban tourism experiences in the Philippines, suggesting opportunities for future destination branding and responsible tourism promotion.

Moreover, all respondents were non-residents of Tondo, indicating that the study primarily captured external tourist perceptions rather than the perspectives of local community members. This distinction is significant because tourist perceptions of slum tourism may differ substantially from residents' experiences and expectations regarding tourism development. External visitors may focus on cultural novelty, learning opportunities, and authenticity, whereas residents may prioritize issues related to dignity, economic benefits, privacy, and social protection. The absence of resident respondents, therefore, highlights the necessity for future studies to incorporate community perspectives to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural implications of slum tourism development.

Finally, the majority of respondents identified tourism and cultural exploration as their primary reason for visiting Tondo (68%), followed by business-related purposes (20%) and volunteer activities (12%). These findings suggest that tourists are increasingly motivated by authentic and socially meaningful travel experiences that extend beyond traditional leisure tourism. The results support the arguments of Tugade (2023) and Steinbrink (2020), who emphasized that slum tourism often attracts socially conscious travelers seeking a deeper understanding of local culture, community resilience, and urban realities. Collectively, the socio-demographic findings indicate that slum tourism in Tondo appeals primarily to younger, culturally curious, and socially aware travelers who value experiential learning and authentic community interaction.

### ***Descriptive Statistics of Key Factors That Attract Tourists to Transform Slum Areas***

The findings revealed that cultural activities, local attractions, and urban improvements are among the primary factors influencing tourist interest in Tondo as a potential slum tourism destination. The statement “I find local events and festivals in Tondo to be very interesting to tourists” obtained the highest mean score ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $SD = 0.673$ ), indicating strong agreement among respondents regarding the significance of cultural festivities in enhancing destination appeal. This finding supports the theoretical perspective of cultural tourism, which posits that festivals and local celebrations function as mechanisms for cultural expression, identity formation, and tourist engagement (Richards, 2020). Cultural events provide tourists with opportunities to interact with local traditions, observe everyday community practices, and experience authentic forms of social participation, thereby increasing the attractiveness of urban tourism destinations.

Similarly, respondents agreed that the development of parks and recreational areas contributes positively to tourism development in Tondo ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 0.693$ ). This suggests that tourists recognize the importance of urban infrastructure and public space improvements in enhancing tourism experiences and destination accessibility. Urban tourism literature emphasizes that the physical environment significantly shapes tourists’ perceptions of safety, comfort, and destination attractiveness (Marchan et al., 2024). Improvements in public recreational spaces may therefore not only increase tourism appeal but also contribute to broader community development objectives such as environmental enhancement, social interaction, and quality of life improvement for residents.

Furthermore, respondents positively perceived local food, attractions, and community activities as important tourism assets ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.688$ ). Culinary tourism has become an increasingly important component of cultural tourism because local cuisine serves as a representation of community identity, heritage, and everyday life (Henderson, 2020). In the context of Tondo, local food experiences may provide tourists with opportunities to engage more deeply with the community while simultaneously supporting local entrepreneurship and informal economic activities. These findings indicate that Tondo’s tourism potential is not solely rooted in poverty narratives but rather in its cultural authenticity, community resilience, and locally driven experiences. Consequently, tourism planners should prioritize the preservation and promotion of local cultural assets while ensuring that tourism development remains community-centered and culturally respectful.

### ***Descriptive Statistics of Recognized and Appealing Tourist Destinations***

The study further identified specific destination attributes that contribute to Tondo’s attractiveness as an emerging urban tourism site. Among the evaluated indicators, local cuisine received the highest level of agreement ( $M = 3.62$ ), indicating that respondents strongly perceive culinary identity as a major component of Tondo’s tourism appeal. This finding is consistent with Henderson (2020), who argued that food tourism enables tourists to establish deeper emotional and cultural connections with destinations. Culinary experiences often function as gateways to understanding local traditions, lifestyles, and social interactions, making food an essential element of experiential tourism. In Tondo’s context, street food culture, local delicacies, and informal food enterprises may provide authentic and immersive tourism experiences that distinguish the destination from conventional urban attractions.

Additionally, respondents positively evaluated local markets and community tours ( $M = 3.34$ ), suggesting that tourists value interactive and participatory tourism activities. Community-based tourism frameworks emphasize that tourists increasingly seek authentic engagement with local residents rather than passive observation of attractions (Graha et al., 2021). Guided community tours, local storytelling, and interactions with residents may therefore enhance tourists’ understanding of urban culture, resilience, and social realities. These findings indicate that Tondo’s tourism potential lies not only in physical attractions but also in the social and cultural interactions embedded within everyday community life.

The results further support the growing body of literature emphasizing the importance of authenticity in urban tourism experiences. Tourists increasingly seek destinations that offer genuine cultural immersion and opportunities for meaningful learning (Richards, 2020). In this regard, Tondo’s appeal may stem from its ability to provide unfiltered representations of local urban life, community solidarity, and cultural resilience. However, tourism planners must ensure that these experiences are designed ethically to avoid commodifying poverty or reducing residents to mere tourism objects. Sustainable tourism development in Tondo, therefore, requires balancing tourist curiosity with respect for community dignity, participation, and cultural integrity.

### ***Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Socio-economic, Cultural, and Ethical Impacts on Tondo Residents***

The findings indicate that respondents generally hold a cautiously optimistic perception regarding the socio-economic and cultural contributions of slum tourism in Tondo. Respondents agreed that slum tourism could create economic opportunities for local businesses and residents ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 0.611$ ), suggesting recognition of tourism’s potential to stimulate local entrepreneurship, informal economic participation, and supplementary income generation. Previous studies have similarly argued that community-based tourism

initiatives can support local economic development through employment opportunities, small enterprise growth, and increased local consumption (Garcia, 2021; Graha et al., 2021). In Tondo's context, tourism-related activities such as guided tours, food services, handicraft production, and cultural performances may contribute to localized economic benefits when tourism revenues are distributed equitably.

Respondents also strongly agreed that slum tourism could promote deeper cultural appreciation of Tondo's community and way of life ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.485$ ). This finding suggests that tourists perceive slum tourism as a potential platform for intercultural understanding and social awareness. Educational tourism experiences that expose visitors to local histories, struggles, and cultural resilience may foster empathy and challenge negative stereotypes associated with marginalized urban communities. This aligns with the arguments of Steinbrink (2020), who noted that ethically managed slum tourism can function as a form of social education that encourages reflection on poverty, inequality, and urban development.

Despite these positive perceptions, respondents also expressed strong concern regarding the ethical implications of slum tourism. The statement concerning the possibility of reinforcing poverty stereotypes obtained a high mean score ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.575$ ), indicating awareness that slum tourism may unintentionally commodify poverty and perpetuate voyeuristic representations of marginalized communities. This finding reflects ongoing scholarly debates regarding the ethical legitimacy of slum tourism, particularly when tourism activities prioritize spectacle over community welfare (Frenzel, 2021). Respondents likewise strongly agreed that tourism activities should be regulated to protect the dignity and well-being of residents ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.485$ ), emphasizing the importance of ethical governance, cultural sensitivity, and human rights considerations in tourism planning.

Furthermore, respondents agreed that direct community engagement and participation are essential for ensuring positive tourism outcomes ( $M = 3.44$ ,  $SD = 0.611$ ). Community participation is widely recognized as a critical component of sustainable tourism development because it promotes empowerment, local ownership, and equitable distribution of benefits (Marchan et al., 2024). The findings therefore suggest that tourism initiatives in Tondo should adopt participatory and community-led approaches to ensure that residents remain active stakeholders rather than passive tourism attractions. Overall, the results highlight that while slum tourism possesses developmental potential, its sustainability depends heavily on ethical implementation, community involvement, and socially responsible tourism management practices.

### ***Descriptive Statistics of Levels of Interest in Tondo as a Slum Tourism Destination***

The findings demonstrated that respondents generally expressed positive interest in Tondo as a slum tourism destination. The statement "I am open to participating in a guided tour of Tondo to understand the local community better" obtained the highest mean score ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 0.639$ ), indicating strong willingness among respondents to engage in educational and community-oriented tourism activities. This finding reflects the growing popularity of transformative tourism experiences that emphasize learning, reflection, and intercultural interaction. According to Steinbrink (2020), tourists who participate in slum tourism are often motivated by curiosity about social realities and the desire to understand marginalized communities beyond media stereotypes. Guided tours may therefore serve as educational platforms that encourage responsible engagement and cultural understanding.

Similarly, respondents agreed that Tondo possesses unique cultural and historical characteristics that make it a worthwhile tourism destination ( $M = 3.38$ ,  $SD = 0.667$ ). This suggests that tourists recognize the area's cultural distinctiveness and historical relevance within the broader urban landscape of Manila. Urban tourism literature emphasizes that destinations with strong cultural narratives and authentic social environments are increasingly valued by contemporary tourists seeking meaningful experiences (Richards, 2020). Tondo's identity as a historically significant and culturally vibrant community may therefore contribute to its attractiveness as an alternative tourism destination.

However, the relatively moderate level of agreement regarding overall interest in slum tourism ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 0.688$ ) may indicate the presence of ethical hesitation or uncertainty among respondents. Although tourists appear interested in cultural immersion and community interaction, they may simultaneously experience concerns regarding exploitation, voyeurism, or the morality of poverty-based tourism experiences. This reflects the dual nature of slum tourism identified in existing literature, wherein tourists are simultaneously attracted to authenticity and challenged by ethical discomfort (Frenzel, 2021). Consequently, tourism planners must ensure that tourism experiences in Tondo are framed within ethical, educational, and community-centered narratives rather than sensationalized portrayals of poverty.

### ***The Relationship Between Socio-economic Factors and Tourist Perception***

The inferential analysis revealed no statistically significant relationships between respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and their level of interest or willingness to participate in slum tourism activities in Tondo, Manila. All computed p-values exceeded the established significance level of 0.05, indicating that variables such as age, sex, nationality, place of residency, and reason for visiting did not significantly influence tourist perceptions or behavioral intentions regarding slum tourism participation. These findings suggest that interest in slum tourism may not be strongly determined by demographic characteristics but rather by psychological, ethical, and experiential motivations.

This finding is theoretically important because it challenges traditional tourism segmentation models that primarily rely on demographic profiling to predict tourist behavior. Instead, the results support emerging tourism literature emphasizing the role of personal values, social consciousness, ethical awareness, and experiential preferences in shaping tourist motivations (Baquillas & Gozun, 2022). Tourists

interested in slum tourism may therefore represent a psychographic rather than demographic market segment characterized by curiosity, openness to cultural diversity, and interest in social realities.

The absence of significant demographic relationships may also indicate that slum tourism appeals to a broad range of individuals regardless of socio-economic background. This finding may reflect the growing normalization of socially oriented tourism experiences within contemporary travel culture. However, it is also possible that the relatively small sample size limited the statistical power necessary to detect subtle demographic differences. Future research involving larger and more diverse respondent populations may provide more comprehensive insights regarding the relationship between socio-demographic variables and slum tourism perceptions.

### ***The Relationship Between Tourists' Interest and Potential Impacts of Tourism***

The correlation analysis identified one statistically significant relationship between tourists' level of interest and perceived tourism impacts, specifically between Interest Q3 and Impact Q3 ( $p = 0.003$ ). This statistically significant result indicates that respondents who expressed a stronger willingness to participate in guided community tours were also more likely to perceive meaningful socio-cultural impacts associated with tourism development in Tondo. The moderate positive correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.411$ ) further suggests that increased tourist interest in educational and community-oriented tourism experiences is associated with more favorable perceptions regarding tourism's cultural and developmental contributions.

This finding supports theoretical perspectives suggesting that tourists who seek authentic and participatory experiences are more likely to appreciate the socio-cultural value of tourism activities (Richards, 2020). Tourists who demonstrate genuine interest in understanding local communities may develop greater empathy, cultural sensitivity, and awareness of socio-economic realities, thereby perceiving tourism as a potential mechanism for education, cultural exchange, and community empowerment. These findings also reinforce the argument that responsible tourism experiences emphasizing interaction, learning, and ethical engagement are more likely to generate positive tourism perceptions.

In contrast, the absence of statistically significant relationships among the remaining variables suggests that broader tourist interest alone may not necessarily influence perceptions of tourism impacts. This indicates that not all forms of tourist curiosity contribute equally to positive socio-cultural outcomes. Interest grounded primarily in novelty or spectacle may differ substantially from interest motivated by education, empathy, and community engagement. Consequently, tourism planners and policymakers should prioritize tourism models that encourage reflective learning, meaningful interaction, and ethical participation to maximize the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism in marginalized urban communities such as Tondo.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that slum tourism in Tondo, Manila, has emerging potential as a culturally immersive and socially oriented tourism destination. The findings revealed that tourists generally expressed favorable perceptions toward visiting Tondo, particularly because of its unique cultural identity, local traditions, and opportunities for authentic community interaction. The study demonstrated that younger tourists, especially those aged 18–24 years old, comprised the largest segment of respondents, suggesting that socially conscious and experience-driven travelers are more inclined to participate in unconventional tourism activities. These findings support the growing global trend toward immersive, educational, and community-based tourism experiences.

The study further established that tourists recognized the cultural and educational significance of slum tourism in Tondo. Respondents strongly agreed that guided tours, local festivals, food experiences, and community engagement activities contribute positively to cultural appreciation and destination attractiveness. Specifically, the respondents expressed the highest level of agreement regarding participation in guided tours designed to understand local community life better. This indicates that tourists are increasingly motivated not only by curiosity but also by opportunities for meaningful social learning and intercultural understanding. Consequently, Tondo's local culture, history, and everyday urban experiences may serve as valuable tourism assets when presented responsibly and respectfully.

The findings also revealed that respondents perceived slum tourism as a possible contributor to socio-economic development. Participants agreed that tourism activities could generate economic opportunities for local residents through small businesses, food services, local guiding, handicrafts, and cultural programs. These findings suggest that slum tourism, when community-centered and properly managed, may provide supplementary livelihood opportunities and encourage local participation in tourism-related activities. Furthermore, tourism development in Tondo may contribute to urban revitalization efforts through improved public spaces, recreational areas, and cultural preservation initiatives.

Despite these positive perceptions, the study highlighted important ethical concerns surrounding slum tourism development. Respondents strongly agreed that tourism in Tondo should be carefully regulated to protect the dignity, privacy, and welfare of local residents. Participants also acknowledged the potential risk of reinforcing poverty stereotypes and exploitative representations when tourism activities focus excessively on deprivation rather than resilience and cultural identity. These findings emphasize the importance of adopting ethical tourism frameworks that prioritize community participation, cultural sensitivity, equitable benefit-sharing, and respectful representation of marginalized communities.

The statistical findings further demonstrated that tourists' demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, nationality, place of residency, and reason for visiting, did not significantly influence their willingness to participate in slum tourism activities. This suggests that interest in slum tourism is shaped more by individual values, ethical awareness, and cultural curiosity than by demographic variables

alone. However, the study identified a statistically significant relationship between tourist interest and perceived tourism impacts, indicating that tourists who are more interested in community-based experiences are also more likely to perceive positive socio-economic and cultural outcomes associated with slum tourism.

Overall, the study confirms that Tondo possesses potential as a sustainable and culturally significant urban tourism destination, provided that tourism initiatives are developed responsibly and inclusively. Slum tourism should not merely function as a form of poverty observation but rather as an educational and community-oriented platform that promotes cultural understanding, social awareness, and local empowerment. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature on sustainable urban tourism and provide valuable insights for tourism planners, policymakers, and researchers interested in ethical tourism development within marginalized urban communities.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that tourism authorities and local government agencies establish comprehensive ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks for slum tourism activities in Tondo. Community members should be actively involved in tourism planning, decision-making, and benefit-sharing processes to ensure that tourism development remains participatory and community-centered. Tourism programs should prioritize guided educational tours, cultural immersion activities, local culinary experiences, and heritage-based initiatives that emphasize dignity and authenticity rather than poverty sensationalism. Furthermore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct larger-scale studies involving residents, local stakeholders, and international tourists to obtain broader perspectives regarding the long-term socio-economic, cultural, and ethical impacts of slum tourism development in the Philippines.

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