

FACTORS INFLUENCING PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN THE NATIONAL SHRINE AND PARISH OF THE DIVINE MERCY CHURCH IN MARILAO, BULACAN

ABSTRACT

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This study explores the factors influencing pilgrimage tourism at the National Shrine and Parish of the Divine Mercy Church in Marilao, Bulacan. As one of the prominent Catholic pilgrimage sites in the Philippines, the shrine draws both local and international visitors seeking spiritual fulfillment, cultural enrichment, and personal reflection. Understanding the motivations and experiences of pilgrims is essential for enhancing site management and promoting sustainable tourism practices. The study employed a quantitative, survey-based research design. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 100 pilgrims visiting the shrine. The instrument gathered demographic data and measured key variables such as pilgrimage motivations, expectations, and satisfaction levels related to the shrine's offerings. The results revealed that the primary factors influencing pilgrimage tourism at the site include spiritual growth, cultural exploration, and personal reflection. Pilgrims expressed high levels of satisfaction with the shrine's facilities and services, indicating that their expectations were generally met. The data highlighted the importance of spiritual ambiance, cleanliness, accessibility, and community involvement in shaping the overall pilgrimage experience. The findings suggest that the National Shrine and Parish of the Divine Mercy Church holds strong spiritual significance for its visitors. The positive feedback from pilgrims indicates effective site management and alignment with their spiritual and cultural needs. These insights underscore the potential for further development of pilgrimage tourism in the area, particularly through sustainable practices that preserve the shrine's sanctity while enhancing visitor engagement and experience.

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