

UNVEILING THE POTENTIALS OF SLUM TOURISM IN PORT AREA, MANILA: A PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT TO VISITING GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF TOURISTS AND LOCALS

ABSTRACT

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This study explores slum tourism in the Baseco Port Area, Manila, highlighting its potential to drive social change and stimulate economic development while addressing the ethical concerns it raises. Slum tourism provides travelers with unique opportunities to engage with marginalized communities, fostering cultural exchange and raising awareness of local socio-economic challenges. However, the practice has drawn criticism for potentially exploitative elements, such as commodifying poverty and reinforcing stereotypes. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study surveyed 50 residents and 50 non-residents of the Baseco Port Area through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire to capture participants' perceptions and experiences related to slum tourism. The findings indicate that slum tourism offers benefits to both tourists and residents. For older residents, it contributes to a sense of life satisfaction, while younger tourists gain authentic cultural experiences and deeper insights into marginalized communities. Although concerns about safety and security were commonly expressed by both groups, there was a shared recognition of the unique value inherent in the residents' narratives. Many residents showed a willingness to engage with visitors, viewing tourism as a way to challenge negative stereotypes and foster community pride. Despite ethical concerns, particularly around voyeurism, the study suggests that slum tourism has the potential to support local economic growth, create employment opportunities, and generate revenue for community-based initiatives. The study underscores the need to improve visiting guidelines to ensure that slum tourism remains respectful, ethical, and mutually beneficial. By prioritizing safety measures and fostering meaningful, culturally sensitive interactions between tourists and residents, slum tourism can catalyze positive social transformation. When responsibly managed, it has the potential to enhance community well-being, challenge harmful stereotypes, and promote deeper cultural understanding.

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