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Efficacy of Accessible Tourism Dimensions for Individuals with Disabilities at the National Museum

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Abstract

Museums were once thought to be only institutions for collecting, repairing, preserving, and displaying objects, but they are now an educational resource for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. This study examines the significance of accessible tourism for individuals with special needs at the National Museum of the Philippines as a foundation for program intervention. The snowball selection technique was used to specify a survey questionnaire of 23 respondents, and SPSS was used to analyze the outcomes. Furthermore, univariate analysis is used as a statistical technique to diagnose the consequences. As a result of the study, most respondents did not state confidential conditions, and the assistance was rated strongly agree regarding disability dimension access, universal design, access enablers, and support needs, with mean scores of 3.33, 3.36, 3.34, and 3.31, respectively. The researcher used the Pearson Correlation Coefficient to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables. This relationship, however, contrasted relying on the age of the respondent. According to the statistics, disability dimension access is more influential in terms of the age profile of the respondents, with a p-value of 0.041. Likewise, it is the key to energetic tourist ageing, strengthening social connections, and creating unique relationships through museums and other social engagement options. As a result, museum managers should consider the quality of specific policies, services, and systems conceived for tourist visitors with special necessities, regardless of their profile.

Keywords: Available Tourism, Individual with Disabilities, National Museum

Introduction

Tourism activities are competing in a progressively competitive and globalized economy. The innovative tourism development benchmarks are centered on emerging crucial challenges such as quality, sustainability, image, innovation, and accessibility (Baloch et al., 2022). The predominant roadblock that cognitively disabled individuals from the community, especially individuals who use wheelchairs, face regards their mobility and availability to museums (Montsho, 2022). Tourism participation can be difficult for tourists with disabilities (TWDs) due to the numerous obstacles they confront when travelling (Reindrawati et al., 2022). People with disabilities, as well as others, benefit from accessible tourism. It allows all to appreciate recreational activities without impediments. Nevertheless, variables impeding the sector's correct implementation remain, necessitating an evaluation and innovative methods for such advancement (Cruz et al., 2022).

As their economic and social integration grows, people with disabilities become more involved in tourism activities. Nevertheless, numerous obstacles and hurdles of various kinds continue to obstruct direct exposure to tourism services (UNWTO, 2021). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 15% of the world's population will be disabled by 2022, as will more than 2 billion people, including spouses, children, and caregivers. Furthermore, it is defined as the potential for destinations and businesses to welcome all visitors and boost revenue (UNWTO, 2016). Accessibility is a crucial consideration in the field of scholarship. Promoting the advancement of inclusive tourism as it is primarily concerned with the involvement of people with disabilities (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020).

The study aims to examine the state's development since 1981 (which was declared the International Year of Disabled Persons). It can be defined as being accessible in regards to transportation and being accessible to all tourists, such as those with special needs, in the configuration, advancement, and application of tourism products that can be appreciated by everyone, regardless of age or degree of impairment. Despite this being usually shown in terms of physical access or the availability of information and communication, inadequate training staff can be a huge impediment for disabled people if they are incapable of providing services in a suitable, nondiscriminatory manner, according to a study by Kamyabi and Alipour (2022). Inclusionary tourism development is regarded as an explanatory framework and an aspirational ideal. According to Aleander (2022), it has the potential to evaluate existing tourist practices and focus on areas where changes are needed, as well as to guide tourism destinations' development.

Along with other factors, accessible tourism is the least studied in tourism studies (Cassia et al., 2020). The goal of this investigation is to examine the acceptability of accessible tourism at the National Museum of the Philippines for people with special needs. It represents the first step in broadening a research program that will gain both tourists with disabilities, the tourism industry, and the local government. According to Escuderos et al. (2021), to assist in combating established accessibility deficiencies in tourist destinations and to encourage innovative products that effective investment satisfaction and enhance social integration, not only for people with special needs but also for everybody, irrespective of physical disorder.

Dela Cruz (2022) clarified that the National Museum of the Philippines marks its history back to the Museo - Biblioteca de Filipinas, founded on August 12, 1887, by a Royal Order of the Spanish Government. The National Museum handles and creates national cultural heritage, including the procedure, as well as conducting ongoing research in biodiversity, geological history, human origins, prehistoric and historical archaeology, maritime and underwater cultural heritage, ethnology, art history, and moveable and immovable cultural properties. Exhibitions, publications, educational, training, outreach, technical assistance, and other public programs are used to spread gratitude for the museum's archives and scientific reports and technical and museological knowledge and skills. (Zhang & Hu, 2022; Bjerregaard, 2021).

The research teams intend to develop accessible tourism for the National Museum of the Philippines, a tourism training center that embraces individuals from all backgrounds in its galleries, exhibitions, and programs. According to UNWTO (2016), making facilities for these viewers increases a museum's attraction to all visitors. The socioeconomic goal of this study is to implement people with special needs into civilization so that they can partake vigorously in society and live with normal dynamism.

Literature Review

Disability Dimension Access

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) have found it difficult thru out history to remain independent in a civilization riddled with unequal treatment, marginalization, and behavioural constraints. PWDs need more resources to access various museums, limiting their life experience. Montsho (2022) stated that people with physical disabilities are members of the society that museums start educating or portraying. As a result, it is critical to make museums accessible to such societies by making appropriate accommodations for their disabilities within the museum's boundaries. Museums established an independent parking spot and bathroom for adequate conditions. Wheelchairs can be leased, a separate entrance for barrier-free access, and guided tours are organized for all disability groups (Nasrin et al., 2022). Museums are attempting to make themselves more accessible to people with disabilities by offering a wide range of services and amenities (McMillen & Alter, 2017).

According to Carlsson (2022), museums should add societal value by capitalizing on different institutional capabilities and meeting particular community requirements. The study argued that museums serving as intermediaries of social inclusion and regeneration could encourage and assist in developing inclusive communities (Gigerl et al., 2022; Hansson & Ohman, 2021; Vermeulen et al., 2019). The International Council of Museums (2019) agrees that museums are social change catalysts. They are self-contained organizations that accumulate, preserve, transmit, and interact with cultural heritage. As a result, museums ought to be the accessible venue for all individuals in society, which include people with disabilities, and identify issues that are important to their cultures through their archives and the stories they share. Furthermore, people with disabilities (PWD) can live like any other human being. Their disability does not prevent them from living a productive and healthier lifestyle.

Support Needs

Emphasizing inclusive culture and connectivity at the museum represents one of the best methods to assist disabled tourists and establish an interactive experience for all. Creating a friendly environment for them should be a primary concern for businesses and museum expositions. Reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities, such as audio and visual signage, accessible parking spaces, and ramps and elevators, are considered management techniques to make the institution more comprehensive and to gladly accept more tourists (Reindrawati et al., 2022). Under the investigation, the National Museum of the Philippines consistently disseminates appropriate information for people with disabilities. According to Eardley et al. (2022), the interaction of touring a museum showcase is innately representational. Even though audio and tactile content, as well as imaginative and convenient programming, are progressively being provided to blind and partially blind visitors, these measures are rare and frequently assume that the objective is to substitute or make up the difference for the visitor's relative paucity of glimpse.

Viewable museums provide equitable access to exhibits for people with disabilities, improve tourist satisfaction, and allow more individuals to discover and understand the presentations (Gallego, 2022; Kamyabi & Alipour, 2022). In addition, by becoming more adaptable to people with disabilities, the museum could boost its revenues. Offering discounted or free admission is among the best means to reach out to those with disabilities. According to researchers, many museums provide unlimited access to low-income individuals or families, seniors, toddlers, and even people with disabilities (Simon, 2022). It

enables everyone to appreciate the museum irrespective of their financial circumstance. Museums can extend millennial consumers in addition to people with disabilities using these processes, ensuring that every person has the chance to experience their compilations and art shows (Trainer et al., 2022).

Universal Design

According to Filova et al. (2022), museums are a multidimensional architectural typology. Despite their specific emphasis, their mission is to deliver a cultural, educational, and exploratory experience for all. The accessibility of the physical environment is critical, as is the accessibility of the exhibition's perception. Universal design refers to the creation of products, environments, programs, and services that are as accessible to all individuals as possible that do not necessitate acclimation or specialized design (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012). According to Article 2 of the United Nations (2006), the universal design shall not exclude adaptive equipment for particular groups of individuals with disabilities where such systems are required. Universal design takes into account capable of interfering as individuals with disabilities can appreciate all environments and assistance on an equitable level and thereby participate in society. For example, the circular pattern design concept of the Guggenheim Art Museum in the United States continues to remain among the most inclusive design concepts and is a universal design. Private citizens have similar reactions to the museum. It promotes equity, integrity, and connectivity for all, including people with disabilities (Bringolf, 2022).

More museums are vigorously extending their doors while carefully considering their attributes and orientation to provide encompassing expertise and interaction for their visitors. For example, the Museo de Arte Moderno intends to deliver a reliable service to the community predicated on the universal design principle and an educational program that incorporates essential projects for people with disabilities (Museo Moderno, 2022). Furthermore, the museum provides a broad range of extensions that aim to encourage involvement, citizenship, and connection to society, thereby boosting the functionalities of all people. Guo et al. (2022) present a fuzzy comprehensive evaluation method and quality evaluation system for a community museum experience based on human-centered design principles. According to the analysis, the fuzzy complete evaluation approach has moral significance in empirically assessing the effectiveness of urban community museums using data on tourism experiences. The museum should guarantee that universal designs are intrinsically accessible to as many individuals as possible, regardless of age, ability level, cultural background, or other distinguishing elements.

Access Enablers

Many organizations take ease of access to museums and their compilations very seriously. Employees who are considered necessary to provide physical assistance to people with disabilities must undergo training which equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge (Canadian Transportation Agency, 2020). A simple staff survey was conducted to assess staff members' interactions with visitors of diverse abilities. The findings revealed that employees were frightened of performing the mistake, so they did nothing. It was discovered that staff lacked essential disability awareness and the capacity to interact with and assist disabled visitors (Silverman et al., 2012). As a result, training should provide staff with the necessary equipment to be effective with any visitor, irrespective of their ability. Furthermore, the museum must proceed to offer a variety of staff training with local and national presenters to foster a culture of inclusive mindset among museum employees. A study by Karaduman et al. (2022) characterizes a museum staff indication of using 3D

printing technology to make museums accessible to blind and partially sighted visitors by constructing a three-dimensional printable artefacts museum (3D-PAM) that showcases 3D printed replicas of artefacts from renowned galleries and museums.

In terms of feedback approach, the museum should be open to suggestions and recommendations coming from complaints and negative comments of a person with disabilities, including the colonial past of museums. Dutch museums are sending scholars to the former colonies while developing guidelines to deal with complaints about the return of heritage (Hickley, 2019). Promotions and developments are great enablers to having accessible tourism for all (Global Data Travel and Tourism, 2022). According to various academic scholars, implementing inclusive, sustainable development goals in the tourism sector must promote opportunities and experiences for people with disabilities. For instance, Reindrawati et al. (2022) studied the tourism experiences of people with disabilities. The findings strengthen the theory by conceptualizing the original voices of the tourism experience through past experiences. The agents of the disability experience in tourism help to improve the understanding of inclusivity as it relates to tourism experiences and the need to hear the voices of people with disabilities in tourism planning.

Methodology

The research used descriptive with quantitative research methods for the twenty-three (23) respondents with special needs that have visited the National Museum of the Philippines. The descriptive research design will summarize the data and include measures of averages and variability. The research decided to use the quantitative method to assess the effectiveness of accessible tourism using the four (4) dimensions or concepts of accessible tourism as cited in the study's theoretical framework.

This paper used a sampling technique under non-probability sampling. In the quantitative method, the researcher used the snowball sampling technique due to the limited knowledge of the researcher. The researcher prepared a google form to utilize the responses online. Books, theses, dissertations, internet journals and publications, periodicals and magazines, and other reference materials are secondary data sources because they contain the necessary information for the study's data gathering. The statistical tools used for this study's gathered data are frequency and percentage distribution, weighted mean, and chi-square test.

Results And Discussion

Table 1. *Demographic Distribution*

Demographic Profile	f	%
Age		
18-22	2	9
23-28	21	91
Total	23	100
Sex		
Male	6	26
Female	17	74
Total	23	100
Civil Status		
Single	22	96
Married	1	4
Total	23	100

Table 1 exhibits the demographic data for this study. The majority of respondents, 91%, are between the ages of 23-28 years old, as indicated by the results. 74% of the responses are likely from females. Therefore 26% are males. These statistical results paralleled the report of Museums Audience in 2018 that museums attract more female audiences, with 63% and higher proportions of 25-44 year-olds than other art forms (Walker, 2018). Further, in this study, single constituted the most considerable marital status, accounting for 96% of the respondents. It implies that national museums are the perfect place for all ages, sexes, and marital levels, as well as people with disabilities, to feed their curious minds, explore new things, and spark their creativity. Further, it is the same result of a study by Nguyen (2021) that demographic variables such as age, sex, and civil status significantly influence behavior patterns and attraction preferences of leisure-based tourists in museums.

Table 2. *Level of assessment on person with need condition*

Variable	f	%
Person with Need Condition		
Yes	4	17
No	19	83
Total	23	100
Disability Condition		
Auditory Disability	1	4
Communication Disability	3	13
Visual Disability	9	39
Confidential	10	43
Total	23	100

Table 2 shows the assessment level of a person with a need condition. Based on the results, 19 out of 23 or 83% of respondents voted "No" and did not reveal their disability condition, with 43% confidentiality. It implies that people with disabilities have expressed myriad reasons for hiding their identities. Stereotyping, stigmatization, and discrimination are challenges for people with disability (Pelleboer-Gunnink et al., 2021). Much of the disabled society encounters exclusion from parts of the community other people take for granted. In tourism and hospitality, many museum management has been demonstrated to harbor sincere yet ill-founded sentiments about the work-related capabilities of individuals with disabilities. These opposing hypotheses are frequently an outcome of interrelated concerns permeating the employment cycle (Bonaccio et al., 2020).

Table 3. *Accessible tourism dimensions' assistance among the Person in Needs*

Variables	WM	VI
Disability Dimension Access	3.33	SA
Support Needs	3.31	SA
Universal Design	3.31	SA
Access Enablers	3.32	SA
Composite Mean	3.32	SA

Legend: 3.26-4.00=Strongly Agree (SA), 2.51-3.25=Agree (A), 1.76-2.50=Disagree (D), 1.00-1.75=Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 displays the accessible tourism dimensions' assistance of the National Museum among the person in need. With a weighted mean of 3.33, respondents ranked the disability dimension access as the most critical aspect of assistance among the four (4)

characteristics. The results indicated that People in Need strongly agreed that they experience quality assistance and privileges for discounts provided by the National Museum, with a weighted mean score of 3.57. The National Museum is equipped with facilities to attend to the concerns of people with special needs and attentions. Escuderos et al. (2021) pointed out that accessibility is recognized as an economically good value for museums and tourist companies due to the growing population of people with disabilities.

Accessible tourism allows individuals with access essentials, including vision, hearing, mobility, and cognitive dimensions of access, to perform alone and with equity and satisfaction through the delivery of universally concocted tourism products, services, and atmospheres (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2020, cited on Darcy & Dickson, 2009). While the accessible tourism agenda has undoubtedly evolved in sophistication (Darcy et al., 2020), it has been somewhat devoid of an inclusive agenda.

Table 4. *Significant relationship of person in needs' profile and accessible tourism dimensions provided by National Museum*

Profile	Disability Dimension		Support Needs		Universal Design		Access Enablers	
	X^2	p-v	X^2	p-v	X^2	p-v	X^2	p-v
Age	14.6	0.041	8.3	0.504	7.26	0.298	5.68	0.894
Civil Status	4.97	0.664	6.58	0.681	6.36	0.384	1.96	0.999
Sex	12.89	0.075	2.96	0.966	1.96	0.923	12.41	0.334

Note: *if the computed p-value is greater than the level of significance which is 0.05, it accepts the null hypothesis. Otherwise, rejects.*

The researchers can derive from Table 4 that the profile of the respondents has no significant and indirect association with the accessible tourism dimensions such as support needs, universal design, and access enablers provided by the National Museum of the Philippines. According to the table, civil status and sex are not substantially connected with accessible tourism dimensions. The estimated p-value of the two profile variables was more than the significance level, which is 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. However, statistics indicate that disability access is more significant regarding the age profile with a p-value of 0.041, and the decision is rejected. The resulting evidence captures how the accessibility of museums impacts aging visitors who have access problems and a higher need for assistance and, therefore, provides valuable information to improve cultural supply. Giammanco et al. (2022) measure the museums' accessibility for aging citizens and identify the factors that facilitate or hinder aging tourists' visits to the museum. The results revealed that the great majority of museums (63.7%) guarantee free access or priority to social engagement options of the museum for aging visitors, and almost 60% of them extend this to their accompanying people.

Though aging is associated with social isolation, especially person with disabilities, they use various strategies to maintain social connections and build new relationships through the museum. Going to a museum can prevent reduced physical activities and their consequences (Palmer et al., 2019). According to Lubben (2017), leisure time and social activities in a museum can decrease isolation. Disability dimension access to knowledge of their social space, including leisure activities, also is key to active tourist aging and their social connectedness (Sinclair & Grieve, 2017; Cardozo et al., 2017). Yu et al. (2018)

affirmed that older adults that use technology are increasing, which could serve as a way for elders to discover museums and other social engagement options. Therefore, museum managers should assess the quality of certain services designed for visitors with special needs. This study shows that regardless of those profiles, it has nothing to do with how National Museum does the policies, procedures, and services for people with special needs.

Conclusion

Regarding the disability dimension, it is concluded that the person with special needs received actual treatment and privilege from the National Museum thru discounts and care assistance. The National Museum is equipped with facilities and equipment to follow the situations of individuals with special needs and attentions.

With regards to Support Needs, it is concluded that the National Museum provides any support assistance to accommodate all the people with special needs. It shows that the National Museum commands inclusivity among all its visitors and offers activities that may let them experience the proper branding and value of the museum. It is also concluded that the National Museum was supported by various projects for a person with special needs, such as PWDs.

In terms of Universal Design, it is concluded that the facilities and services of the National Museum are designed to experience by individuals in the place. Policies and regulations are applicable and promote inclusively and equality of all people. It is also shown that there is a need to modify some areas within the place. Such as unique places or areas for the blinds where they can feel the essence and services of the museum.

When it comes to Access Enablers, it is concluded that they trained their staff to handle people with special needs, which is essential for inclusivity. On the other hand, there is also a response to the need to look for opportunities and hire people with special needs. Government support and resource allocation need to be reclassified or modified concerning these visitors.

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