

Paradisiacal Lived Experiences of Tourists in Islas de Gigantes

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Abstract: This study explores the viewpoints and experiences of tourists at Islas de Gigantes, a captivating tourist destination located in the Philippines. This research aims to unravel the complex factors that influence tourists' perception of Gigantes as an authentic paradise, using a combination of interviews and observations. This study explores the underlying motives of tourists, their interactions with the local environment and community, and their overall level of contentment during their travels. Moreover, it carefully examines the complex relationship between tourism and the remarkable variety of biodiversity of plants and animals found on these islands. It places special importance on the long-term viability of activities like scallop harvesting and their compatibility with efforts to protect the environment and promote the welfare of local communities. This analysis examines the economic consequences of tourism for local communities, emphasizing the crucial role that tourism plays in promoting local economic growth while also acknowledging the possible disruptions that may occur. The study reveals intricate patterns and underlying patterns, enhancing our understanding of idyllic travel experiences. This research considerably contributes to the global discussion on paradisiacal locations by exposing these findings to a comparison analysis with previous literature. Additionally, it provides practical suggestions to individuals involved in the tourism industry, highlighting the significance of responsible and sustainable actions that protect the natural surroundings and conserve the local cultural heritage. Although acknowledging the inherent constraints of any research undertaking, this study provides guidance for future inquiries. This statement proposes potential areas for future research, including longitudinal studies and evaluations of climate resilience, with the aim of improving the sustainability and resilience of tourism in picturesque locations in an increasingly volatile world. This research offers valuable insights into the enticing appeal of Islas de Gigantes, as well as enhances our comprehension of how pleasant destinations can coexist harmoniously with the environment and local communities, serving as an exemplary model for responsible and sustainable tourism practices worldwide.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Ecological Conservation, Tourist Perceptions, Community Empowerment, Islas de Gigantes Paradisiacal Destination

1. Introduction

The Gigantes Islands in the Philippines beckon travellers with their pristine beauty and untouched landscapes. Nestled in the municipality of Carles in Iloilo, these islands offer a tranquil escape far from the usual tourist hubs. While gaining popularity, they retain their calm nature, devoid of the lively beach parties found elsewhere. Their allure lies in exquisite landscapes, crystal-clear waters, white sand beaches, and diverse marine life. Adding to the appeal are unique caverns and rock formations reminiscent of Palawan. The islands comprise two main ones - Gigantes Norte and Gigantes Sur - and ten smaller islets, each boasting its own scenic wonders. Recent infrastructural developments by the Department of Public Works and Highways (2023) have played a significant role in their growing popularity. An 8.86-kilometer concrete road now provides easier and safer access to the islands' myriad attractions. These improvements enhance not only transport but also the potential for increased economic activity and opportunities in the region. The combination of natural beauty and modern conveniences positions Gigantes Islands (Debuayan, 2013), as a unique destination for those seeking a blend of serenity and accessibility. However, with increasing tourism (Lim, 2023) comes the need for comprehensive travel guides that blend insights from various sources. This is crucial to assist first-time visitors in planning and navigating their trips efficiently (UNDP, 2015). While enjoying the islands' untarnished beauty, it's important to consider (Vito, 2023) the impact of tourism and infrastructure development on the local ecology and community. Ensuring sustainable growth requires a delicate balance, preserving the islands' natural treasures and cultural heritage for future generations.

This research aims to unravel the complex factors that influence tourists' perception of Gigantes as an authentic paradise, using a combination of interviews and observations. The results of this study will form basis for developing a detailed travel guide that promotes sustainable tourism practices and encourages respectful interaction with the local environment and community. By embracing this approach, we can ensure that the Gigantes Islands continue to offer a captivating escape for generations to come.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To delve into the perceptions and experiences of tourists in Islas de Gigantes, focusing on understanding the elements and features of the islands that contribute to paradisiacal perceptions and assessing any discrepancies between expectations and realizations.
2. To explore the impact of tourism on the unique biodiversity of Gigantes Islands, especially focusing on the interaction between tourists and the local flora and fauna, including the endemic species.
3. To assess the sustainability of current tourism practices in alignment with environmental conservation, local community well-being, and the effects on local marine life, particularly the harvesting of scallops.
4. To investigate the economic contributions of tourism to the local communities in Gigantes Islands, examining the benefits and potential disruptions or conflicts, and evaluating the empowerment and overall well-being of the local populace through tourism.
5. To formulate informed and balanced strategies and policy recommendations aimed at optimizing the tourism experience while emphasizing environmental conservation, sustainable economic development, and the well-being of local communities in the Gigantes Islands.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to a nuanced understanding of sustainable tourism within the paradisiacal context of Islas de Gigantes (Scheyvens, 1999). By exploring tourist perceptions and experiences, this research aligns with global constructs of tourism studies, which emphasize the importance of visitor satisfaction, destination image, and experiential value in determining the success of a tourism destination (Chen & Chen, 2010). Additionally, this study addresses the global concept of sustainability, as outlined by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), assessing the equilibrium between environmental conservation, economic profitability, and socio-cultural responsibility within the local tourism practices of Islas de Gigantes (UNWTO, 2005).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Related Studies

In exploring tourism experiences in similar paradisiacal settings, several studies offer insights into tourist perceptions, motivations, impacts, and the pursuit of sustainability.

A study by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2012) delves into the understanding of the nature of the tourist experience in islands and coastal areas, exploring elements like motivation, satisfaction, and emotional experiences. Their findings suggest that the emotional and psychological elements of the experience significantly impact overall satisfaction and the likelihood of recommending the destination to others, underlining the importance of considering these aspects in destination management and marketing.

Another noteworthy study by Jones, Scott, and Khaled (2016) analyses the interplay between biodiversity and tourism in island destinations. Their research highlights the significance of biodiversity conservation in maintaining the appeal of paradisiacal destinations and underscores the need for strategic management to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism activities on local ecosystems, particularly in destinations hosting endemic species.

In examining the sustainability of tourism practices, Koens, Postma, and Papp (2018) present a comprehensive exploration of the impacts of tourism on local communities in island destinations. Their research sheds light on the necessity for a balance between tourism development and community well-being, emphasizing community participation in tourism planning and management to ensure the equitable distribution of benefits (Ebay, 2023) and the preservation of local cultures and traditions.

Stronza and Durham (2008) and Detourista (2016, July 22) provide a valuable perspective on the relationships between local communities and tourists, highlighting the mutual influences and the potential for empowerment and learning on both sides. Their work suggests that responsible and ethical interactions between tourists and local communities can contribute to increased understanding and appreciation of different cultures and can foster positive change in both tourist and host communities.

The concept of sustainable development in tourism has been exhaustively studied by Saarinen (2006), who investigates the potential for sustainable tourism in fragile ecosystems. His research underscores the importance

of adopting sustainability principles in tourism development to ensure the long-term viability of destinations, particularly those in sensitive ecological settings, focusing on minimizing negative impacts and maximizing benefits for local communities and the environment.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Given the title "Exploring Paradisiacal Perspectives: Lived Experiences of Tourists in Islas de Gigantes," the most applicable theoretical framework that was applied in this study was the Experience Economy by Pine and Gilmore (1999). This theory was particularly relevant as it explored how individuals, especially tourists, sought memorable and transformative experiences, valuing these over the consumption of services or goods. This shift in paradigm to experience provided a foundational lens through which the diverse and unique experiences of tourists in paradisiacal destinations like Islas de Gigantes were understood and interpreted. The application of this theory offered insights into what constituted authenticity and value for tourists in such locales and how these destinations could curate enriching and memorable experiences for its visitors. The study, by adopting this theoretical perspective, delved into how the experiences of tourists contributed to their perception of the place as a paradise.

3. Methodology

Research design: In this study, a qualitative research design was employed to explore the lived experiences of tourists in Islas de Gigantes and their perceptions of the destination as a paradise. The qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of tourists' experiences, motivations, perceptions, and interactions within the paradisiacal setting of Islas de Gigantes. It facilitated the exploration of subjective experiences and the generation of rich, detailed data.

Sampling method: The study utilized purposive sampling (Gonzaga et al., 2023) to select participants who had visited Islas de Gigantes. This sampling method was instrumental in ensuring that participants had relevant experiences and could provide insightful information pertinent to the study objectives (Balida & Encarnacion, 2020). The sampling yielded (13) tourists who had visited the islands within the last year and were willing to share their experiences and perceptions were included in the sample.

Table 1: Participants

Tourist no.	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Perception of Paradise	Visual Appeal of Islas de Gigantes
2	Perception of Paradise	Visual Appeal of Islas de Gigantes
3	Perception of Paradise	Visual Appeal of Islas de Gigantes
4	Interaction with Biodiversity	Tourists' Engagement with Endemic Species
5	Interaction with Biodiversity	Tourists' Engagement with Endemic Species
6	Interaction with Biodiversity	Tourists' Engagement with Endemic Species
7	Cultural Engagement and Local Community	Contributions of Tourism to Local Communities
8	Cultural Engagement and Local Community	Contributions of Tourism to Local Communities
9	Sustainability Concerns and Environmental	Impact of Tourism on Marine Life
10	Sustainability Concerns and Environmental	Impact of Tourism on Marine Life
11	Discrepancy between Expectations and Realizations	Discrepancies between Expectations and Experiences
12	Discrepancy between Expectations and Realizations	Discrepancies between Expectations and Experiences
13	Discrepancy between Expectations and Realizations	Discrepancies between Expectations and Experiences

Table 1 presents the number of participants representing the tourists who have visited the island of Gigantes and categorized responses to the interview broken down as themes and sub-themes.

Data collection: Data for this study were primarily collected through semi-structured interviews, guided by a set of carefully crafted questions that were derived from an extensive review of existing literature on paradisiacal

tourism experiences. These questions were further validated through pilot interviews with a small group of participants who had visited Islas de Gigantes. This process ensured that the interview questions were relevant, comprehensive, and capable of eliciting in-depth responses. The semi-structured interviews allowed participants to share their experiences, perceptions, and reflections in their own words. This method provided flexibility during the interviews, enabling the researcher to probe further into participants' responses for clarification and depth, while also allowing participants to express themselves freely. In addition to interviews, observations were conducted to gain insights into the interaction between tourists and the local environment and community. These observations were guided by a predefined set of criteria and focused on behaviours, interactions, and reactions observed in the natural setting of Islas de Gigantes. Field notes were taken diligently during these observations to ensure the accurate documentation of relevant data points.

Data analysis: The data collected from interviews and observations were analysed using thematic analysis. This method involved the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) within the data. Initial codes were generated, and similar codes were grouped into broader themes reflecting the participants' experiences and perceptions. The analysis aimed at interpreting various aspects of the research topic and answering the research questions by extracting meaningful insights from the collected data (Crisostomo et al., 2020). The iterative process of thematic analysis facilitated the exploration of nuanced perspectives and the identification of commonalities and differences in the lived experiences of tourists in Islas de Gigantes.

4. Findings

The findings section presents a comprehensive analysis of tourists' experiences and perceptions during their visits to Islas de Gigantes. Through thematic exploration, this section illuminates the multifaceted dimensions of the island's allure, encompassing its breath-taking landscapes, diverse biodiversity, cultural interactions, sustainability considerations, and the alignment (or misalignment) of expectations with reality. By delving into the narratives provided by tourists, this section offers insights into the unique blend of natural beauty, cultural immersion, and environmental consciousness that collectively contribute to Islas de Gigantes' status as an extraordinary destination.

Table 2: Major themes

Themes	Description
Perception of Paradise	Tourists consistently perceived Islas de Gigantes as a paradise due to its natural beauty, pristine beaches, and clear waters. They often used words like "unspoiled," "enchanting," and "tranquil" to describe their experiences.
Interaction with Biodiversity	Tourists expressed fascination and delight with the unique biodiversity of Islas de Gigantes. Encounters with endemic species and marine life exploration were highlights, highlighting the significance of biodiversity in shaping their experiences.
Cultural Engagement and Local Community	Engaging with local cultures and communities greatly impacted tourists' experiences. The hospitality and warmth of the local people enhanced the sense of connection and enriched the travel experience.
Sustainability Concerns and Environmental	Tourists showed concerns about sustainability, indicating an awareness of environmental conservation needs. Discussions on sustainable tourism practices like waste management and eco-friendly activities were common.
Discrepancy between Expectations and Realizations	Some tourists reported differences between their pre-visit expectations and the realities they encountered. These discrepancies often related to amenities, accessibility, and infrastructural development, leading to reflections on paradisiacal experiences and the role of unmet expectations.

Tables 2 shows the descriptions of the major themes derived from the participants' responses. Tourists to Islas de Gigantes were captivated by its stunning natural beauty, diverse marine life, and welcoming local culture. They described it as a "paradise" thanks to pristine beaches, unique species, and warm hospitality. However, some faced unmet expectations regarding amenities, sparking conversation about balancing tourism with environmental protection and managing travel expectations.

Table 3: Sub-themes

Theme	Sub-theme	Description
Picturesque Landscapes	Visual Appeal of Islas de Gigantes	- Explores the visual elements of the landscape in Islas de Gigantes that tourists find appealing. - Includes unique topography, vegetation, and the surrounding marine environment.
Interaction with Local Biodiversity	Tourists' Engagement with Endemic Species	- Sheds light on how tourists engage with and perceive the diverse flora and fauna, especially endemic species.
Sustainability and Environmental Conservation	Impact of Tourism on Marine Life	- Examines the observed and perceived effects of tourist activities on marine life, including scallop harvesting.
Local Community and Economy	Contributions of Tourism to Local Communities	- Explores how tourism affects the economic and social fabric of local communities, including benefits and conflicts.
Tourists' Expectations and Realizations	Discrepancies between Expectations and Experiences	- Scrutinizes the varied experiences of tourists, focusing on discrepancies between their expectations and reality.

Table 3 indicates that beyond Islas de Gigantes' captivating visuals, researchers delved deeper into tourist interactions with nature, sustainability concerns, community impacts, and unmet expectations. They explored how visitors experience the island's unique flora and fauna, including concerns about marine life conservation, and how tourism both benefits and challenges local communities. Finally, they examined the gap between idyllic pre-trip visions and the realities encountered, offering valuable insights into tourist perceptions and travel dynamics.

4.1 Narratives

Theme 1: Picturesque landscapes - Sub-theme: Visual appeal of Islas de Gigantes

"The vibrant colours of the scenery were mesmerizing," shared one participant, emphasizing the visual allure of Islas de Gigantes. The stunning landscapes seemed to captivate many tourists, with stories abounding of the unique topographical features and lush vegetation that decorate the islands. *"It was like stepping into a painting, every element was so vivid and full of life,"* another visitor expressed, highlighting the enriching and immersive nature of the landscapes.

Theme 2: Interaction with local biodiversity- Sub-theme: Tourists' engagement with endemic species

Several narratives revolved around encounters with the local flora and fauna. One tourist recalled, *"Seeing the unique species that inhabit the islands was a thrilling experience. It made me appreciate the richness of our planet's biodiversity."* This emphasizes the importance of interaction with local biodiversity in shaping tourists' experiences.

Theme 3: Sustainability and environmental conservation- Sub-theme: Impact of tourism on marine life

A recurring theme in the narratives was the impact of tourism activities on marine life. One tourist remarked, *"I was concerned about the effect our presence might have on the delicate marine ecosystem, especially the scallops which are so abundant in the area."* This narrative reflects a growing awareness and concern among tourists regarding the sustainability of their activities.

Theme 4: Local community and economy- Sub-theme: Contributions of tourism to local communities

The benefits and challenges of tourism to local communities were central in participants' stories. A visitor mentioned, *"The influx of tourists surely brings economic benefits, but I wonder about the social disruptions it might cause to the local communities."* This illustrates the multifaceted impact of tourism on local communities and the economy.

Theme 5: Tourists' expectations and realizations- Sub-theme: Discrepancies between expectations and experiences

Many narratives highlighted the contrast between initial expectations and the actual experiences of tourists. "*I expected serene and untouched islands, but the crowd was overwhelming,*" said one participant, signalling a discrepancy between expectation and realization. The varying degrees of satisfaction among tourists (Mayuga, 2017) underlined the diversity in expectations and perceived fulfilment of these expectations during their visit.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The analysis concerning the paradisiacal perspective of tourists, which unveils the intrinsic and extrinsic elements contributing to such perceptions, aligns with the insights presented by Binkhorst and Dekker (2009) about the essence of experiential realms in tourism. They argue that the dimensions of experience significantly contribute to the overall perception and satisfaction of tourists. The intricate interactions with local biodiversity and the discernible impact on endemic species correlate with the notions posited by Buckley (2019). He discusses the nuanced experiences and impacts of tourists interacting with local ecosystems, emphasizing the pivotal role of such interactions in fostering an appreciation for biodiversity and ecological conservation.

The emerging theme regarding the sustainability of tourist activities echoes the global discourse on sustainable tourism delineated by Koens, Postma, and Papp (2018). They spotlight the increasing urgency to integrate sustainability in tourism practices to mitigate the potential detrimental impacts on local environments and communities. The reflections captured in the study mirror the global dialogue on fostering responsible and sustainable tourism. The discussions surrounding the socio-economic implications of tourism on local communities resonate with the concepts elaborated by Sharpley (2018) and Buckley et al (2019). This probes the multifaceted impacts of tourism on community well-being and economic prosperity, reflecting on the delicate balance between tourism-driven economic gains and socio-cultural integrity.

The narratives depicting the divergence between tourists' expectations and their actual experiences correlate with the observations made by Ryan (2018). He evaluates the dynamics between anticipatory expectations and ensuing experiences in the tourism context, underscoring the influence such disparities can have on overall tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. This study advances the understanding of tourists' experiences and perceptions of Islas de Gigantes in relation to global tourism constructs and theories. The extrapolated insights from the findings (Diaz et al, 2019; WCED, 1987) are significant in enhancing the scholarly conversation on sustainable tourism, paradisiacal perspectives, destination choice, and interaction with local ecosystems and communities.

5.2 Comparative Analysis

In the comparative analysis, the findings of this study portray both concordance and divergences with the established literature. The paradisiacal perspective of tourists found in this study, featuring intrinsic and extrinsic elements contributing to such perceptions, shares semblance with Binkhorst and Dekker's (2009) elucidation on the essence of experiential realms in tourism. The parallel is evident in the valuation of diverse experiential dimensions significantly contributing to the overall perception and satisfaction of tourists. There are variances when examining the interaction between tourists and local biodiversity. While Buckley (2019) extensively discusses the profound impacts of such interactions in fostering appreciation for biodiversity and ecological conservation, the present study brings forth a spectrum of interactions, some of which entail unintended consequences, revealing a more intricate dynamic between tourist activities and local ecosystems.

This study builds upon the global discussion on sustainable tourism, echoing concerns raised by Koens et al. (2018) and Sharpley (2018). However, it delves deeper by examining the specific nuances of sustainable practices in Islas de Gigantes, where tourism's impact on both environmental conservation and local community well-being must be carefully considered. The study sheds light on the unique interplay between tourism-driven economic gains and the preservation of local socio-cultural integrity, a point not as prominently addressed in existing literature. Finally, it goes beyond Ryan's (2018) and Esmilla's (2023) exploration of expectation-experience gaps by highlighting a diverse range of discrepancies between tourists' anticipated paradisiacal experience and their actual encounters in Islas de Gigantes, offering valuable insights into how these disparities shape overall satisfaction and loyalty. In short, this study contributes a contextualized and granular understanding of sustainable tourism practices and their impact on a specific island destination.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

This study's implications reach far beyond Islas de Gigantes, influencing future tourism development, management, and research on both local and global scales. Understanding tourists' paradisiacal expectations can guide refined marketing strategies and tailored sustainable practices that maximize appeal while ensuring a delicate balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and community well-being. Locally, Islas de Gigantes can implement context-specific sustainable practices that engage local communities and ensure they share in the economic benefits of tourism.

Globally, the study reinforces the urgency of integrating sustainability principles into destination management, offering valuable insights for developing responsible tourism policies and guidelines. Furthermore, it opens doors for future research exploring tourist-wildlife interactions, optimizing sustainable practices, and understanding the impact of paradisiacal experiences on destination loyalty. Longitudinal studies can also shed light on the long-term effects of tourism development in destinations like Islas de Gigantes, informing sustainable practices for the future. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the crucial need to balance economic growth with environmental protection and community well-being, promoting responsible tourism that safeguards paradisiacal destinations for generations to come.

6. Conclusion

The first objective of this study is to comprehensively investigate the perceptions and experiences of tourists in Islas de Gigantes, focusing on understanding the elements contributing to paradisiacal perceptions and assessing any discrepancies between expectations and realizations. Findings reveal that tourists are attracted to the island's pristine natural beauty, vibrant biodiversity, and warm hospitality. However, discrepancies between expectations and realities suggest the need for tailored tourism strategies to enhance visitor satisfaction. This underscores the importance of aligning tourist expectations with the actual experience to optimize their perception of Islas de Gigantes as a paradisiacal destination.

The second objective is to explore the impact of tourism on the unique biodiversity of Gigantes Islands, particularly focusing on interactions between tourists and the local flora and fauna. This investigation highlights the importance of responsible tourism practices in minimizing negative impacts on the island's biodiversity. Educating visitors about conservation efforts is crucial to promote harmonious coexistence between tourists and endemic species. By understanding and mitigating the environmental impact of tourism activities, the sustainability of Islas de Gigantes' biodiversity can be preserved for future generations.

The third objective is to assess the sustainability of current tourism practices in alignment with environmental conservation, local community well-being, and effects on local marine life, including scallop harvesting. This evaluation emphasizes the necessity of implementing sustainable tourism practices to mitigate environmental degradation and ensure the well-being of local communities. Addressing concerns such as scallop harvesting through context-specific initiatives is vital to balance economic benefits with ecological preservation. By promoting responsible tourism practices, Islas de Gigantes can sustain its natural resources while supporting the livelihoods of local residents.

The fourth objective is to investigate the economic contributions of tourism to local communities in Gigantes Islands, examining benefits, potential disruptions, and evaluating the empowerment and overall well-being of the local populace. This examination demonstrates the significant economic benefits of tourism to Islas de Gigantes while highlighting the importance of equitable distribution of benefits and minimizing disruptions to local lives. Empowering local communities through tourism initiatives is essential for long-term sustainability, ensuring that economic gains are accompanied by social and cultural preservation.

The fifth objective is to formulate informed and balanced strategies and policy recommendations aimed at optimizing the tourism experience while emphasizing environmental conservation, sustainable economic development, and the well-being of local communities in the Gigantes Islands. Based on the study's findings, these recommendations aim to foster a harmonious future for the islands, where paradisiacal beauty coexists with the prosperity and welfare of its inhabitants. By prioritizing responsible tourism, environmental conservation, and community well-being, Islas de Gigantes can continue to thrive as a sustainable and captivating destination for tourists and locals alike.

7. Recommendations

Table 4: Matrix of recommendations

Area of Focus	Recommendations	Responsible Party
1. Destination Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop targeted marketing campaigns highlighting the unique paradisiacal elements of Islas de Gigantes. - Collaborate with travel influencers to showcase the destination's natural beauty and cultural richness. 	Local Tourism Authorities Marketing Agencies
2. Tourist Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversify tour offerings to cater to various tourist motivations, from adventure seekers to relaxation seekers. - Offer guided eco-tours that educate tourists about the importance of biodiversity conservation. 	Tour Operators Local Tour Guides
3. Biodiversity Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement strict regulations for wildlife and habitat protection in popular tourist areas. - Conduct regular environmental awareness programs for tourists to promote responsible interactions with nature. 	Environmental Authorities Local Conservation Organizations
4. Sustainable Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage eco-friendly accommodations and activities. - Introduce eco-certifications for businesses adhering to sustainability standards. 	Accommodation Providers Activity Operators Local Government
5. Socio-economic Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish community-based tourism initiatives that directly involve local residents in tourism activities. - Allocate a portion of tourism revenue for community development and cultural preservation. 	Local Community Organizations Tourism Development Agencies

The recommendations in Table 4 suggest that to turn Islas de Gigantes into a tourist haven that thrives sustainably, marketing campaigns should trumpet its paradisiacal beauty while prioritizing environmental and community well-being. Partnering with influencers can showcase untouched nature and vibrant culture, while diverse tours cater to all preferences. Responsible ecotourism, fostered through guided tours, strict regulations, and awareness programs, will ensure conservation efforts flourish alongside tourism. Eco-friendly practices through certified accommodations and activities are key, while community involvement through tourism initiatives and revenue sharing will create a harmonious and prosperous future for both visitors and locals.

8. Limitations

Despite careful selection, the study's sample size limits generalizations to broader tourist populations. Additionally, findings are specific to Islas de Gigantes and may not apply directly to other destinations. Logistical constraints, social desirability bias in self-reported data, limited time frame, and language barriers all played a role in the study's limitations. While external factors like weather were not directly explored, they can significantly impact tourist experiences. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into tourist perspectives in Islas de Gigantes and lays groundwork for future research in similar contexts.

9. Suggestions for Future Research

In the realm of future research in paradisiacal tourism destinations like Islas de Gigantes, several promising avenues await exploration. Firstly, longitudinal studies could be pursued to trace how tourist perceptions and experiences evolve over time. Such research could consider the impact of seasonality, changing tourism infrastructure, and shifting visitor demographics on the destination's allure. Secondly, there is a need for comprehensive environmental impact assessments to gauge the effects of tourism on local biodiversity, particularly the endemic species, and devise sustainable ecotourism strategies. Moreover, researchers might delve into the lasting effects of tourism on local communities, delving into economic, social, and cultural dimensions to better understand community empowerment and cultural preservation.

Further research may involve segmenting tourists based on their motivations, preferences, and behaviours, facilitating more targeted marketing strategies and tailored experiences. As paradisiacal destinations are

vulnerable to climate change, future studies could focus on climate resilience strategies to safeguard their natural beauty and appeal. Evaluating the effectiveness of tourism policies and governance structures, particularly at local and national levels, in promoting sustainable practices and community well-being is another fruitful avenue. Innovative destination marketing approaches, encompassing digital and sustainable strategies, warrant exploration to attract responsible tourists while minimizing negative impacts.

Investigating the impact of visitor education programs on responsible tourism behaviour and conservation efforts in paradisiacal settings can contribute valuable insights. Comparative research across multiple paradisiacal destinations could uncover commonalities and differences in tourist perceptions, experiences, and sustainability challenges, offering a broader perspective. Lastly, developing strategies for crisis management and risk mitigation in paradisiacal destinations, especially in the face of natural disasters or global crises, is a pressing concern. These research directions hold the potential to guide destination management organizations, policymakers, and stakeholders in enhancing the sustainability, resilience, and overall quality of tourism experiences in paradisiacal settings.

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