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Filipino brand of service excellence in the tourism industry

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Abstract

This study examined how foreign tourists perceive the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) during their visit to Davao City. A total of 300 respondents participated in the research. Using the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the study revealed that the FBSE is composed of seven key values: Maka-Diyos (God-centered), Makatao (Humane), Makakalikasan (Environmentally-Responsible), Makabansa (Patriotic), Masayahin (Cheerful), May Bayanihan (Community-spirited), and May Pag-asa (Hopeful). These values represent the core characteristics of Filipino hospitality. The factor analysis was based on 40 item statements generated across 16 iterations using a factor loading threshold of 0.50. The results showed that these seven values work together to shape the overall service experience of foreign tourists. During the confirmatory analysis (CFA), the final factors revealed Makakalikasan (Environmentally Responsible), Maka-Diyos (God-centered), and May Bayanihan (Community-spirited) had the strongest influence on how tourists evaluated service quality.

Keywords: Hospitality management, Filipino, brand of service, excellence, tourism industry, Philippines

Introduction

The Philippines faces a challenge in establishing a globally recognized and culturally rooted brand for its hospitality industry, particularly when compared to other countries with iconic and universally recognized hospitality symbols. For example, Thailand's "Wai," a prayer-like hand gesture accompanied by a bow, symbolizes respect, humility, and mindfulness, serving as a powerful representation of the country's cultural identity and hospitality brand. Its universal recognition has significantly enhanced Thailand's global tourism appeal and strengthened its reputation as the "Land of Smiles" (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2023; UNESCO, 2021). Similarly, Japan's Omotenashi represents a philosophy of selfless hospitality, emphasizing attentiveness, anticipating guest needs, and meticulous service (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2022). In contrast, South Korea relies on respectful bowing gestures to convey politeness, honor, and social harmony (Korean Tourism Organization, 2021). In India, the Namaste gesture, characterized by pressing the palms together and bowing slightly, conveys respect and spiritual acknowledgment, and is often employed in hospitality settings to foster meaningful interactions with guests (Ministry of Tourism India, 2022). These examples illustrate how culturally grounded gestures or service philosophies not only enhance guest experiences but also serve as tangible markers of a nation's hospitality identity.

In contrast, the Philippines predominantly relies on verbal greetings such as "Mabuhay" and warm smiles, which, while sincere and welcoming, do not provide the same visual or symbolic impact as gestures like the "Wai" or "Namaste." Although the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) program emphasizes the innate warmth, optimism, and human-centered values of Filipinos, it currently lacks a universally practiced non-verbal gesture that could function as a distinct and recognizable symbol of Filipino hospitality. This absence of a culturally resonant visual gesture may limit the Philippines' ability to create a strong, consistent brand in the competitive global tourism market (Department of Tourism Philippines, 2024; UNESCO, 2021).

The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) framework was formally conceptualized by the Department of Tourism (DOT) to codify and promote the core values and behaviors that define Filipino hospitality. Although the nationwide institutionalization of FBSE began

in 2022 and its large-scale rollout accelerated in 2023 (Philippines News Agency, 2022), DOT had already been conducting online capacity-building initiatives during the pandemic. As early as April 2020, DOT launched its Online Training Program via Zoom, which included a module on the "Filipino Brand of Service" and emphasized values-based service rooted in the 7Ms of Filipino hospitality, establishing early groundwork for the later, formalized FBSE framework (Philippines News Agency, 2020; Newsbytes Philippines, 2020). These digital initiatives sustained workforce readiness despite mobility restrictions and introduced service-excellence concepts that were later integrated into the standardized FBSE curriculum.

The first full and structured FBSE training programs were officially rolled out in 2023, targeting frontline tourism workers to address long-standing issues of inconsistent service standards across establishments and regions (Philippines News Agency, 2022). The program aims to transform the natural warmth, empathy, and optimism of Filipino service into standardized, observable practices, thereby enhancing tourist satisfaction and establishing a unified national service identity. Statistical reports indicate that variability in service quality has been a persistent challenge, with visitor satisfaction ratings fluctuating across regions and tourism sectors (Elmedulan, 2024) ^[15]. By providing structured, value-driven training, FBSE aims to ensure that tourism personnel exhibit culturally aligned, high-quality service behaviors that enhance the Philippines' competitiveness and global reputation.

In addition to improving service quality, FBSE aligns with several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The framework's emphasis on environmental responsibility (Makakalikasan), patriotic (Makabansa), God-centered and Humane (Maka-Diyos and Makatao), community-spirited (May Bayanihan), and hopeful (May Pag-asa) contributes to SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Through training and institutionalization, FBSE promotes sustainable, culturally grounded, and inclusive tourism practices that advance both social and economic development while preserving Filipino heritage (Olivar, Bolanio, Bongcas, and Tutor, 2025) ^[31].

Despite the growing importance of service excellence globally, a notable lack of empirical research remains, specifically examining the specific traits and characteristics that define the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in the tourism industry. Although FBSE trainings have been conducted for several years, including online capacity-building sessions during the pandemic, no comprehensive evaluation studies have been carried out to determine whether the FBSE framework is consistently demonstrated or evident among tourism frontliners nationwide. Addressing this gap, the present study proposes an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of FBSE in the tourism sector, involving foreign tourists who have visited Davao City. The study also examines visitor perceptions of FBSE levels. It validates the underlying structure through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), systematically analyzing the seven core dimensions of FBSE, including Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa. This research aims to generate insights that can inform policy

development, strengthen training programs, and support practical strategies for promoting a consistent, culturally rooted, and globally competitive service brand in the Philippines.

Inspired by the 7Ms of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence, this study aims (1) to explore the dimensions of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in the tourism industry through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), (2) to determine the level of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) dimensions among foreign tourist, and (3) to validate and confirm the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is built upon the reputation of the Filipino people for their inherent warmth, hospitality, and customer-oriented approach. A unique feature of the Philippine tourism experience, Filipino hospitality is encapsulated in the "7Ms" of Filipino values: Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa. These core values shape the interaction between tourism workers and visitors, creating an environment where service excellence thrives (Department of Tourism, 2023).

Empirical studies in Philippine hospitality have demonstrated that service-quality dimensions significantly impact guest satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Research in resorts in Dauin, Negros Oriental, showed that assurance was the strongest predictor of perceived service quality, while tangibility was the weakest (Genove & Tayco, 2023). Similarly, studies in restaurants and hotels found that responsiveness and empathy significantly influence guest satisfaction, whereas physical facilities or tangibles are less critical (Apostol, De Guzman, & Mañibo, 2023) ^[3]. In DOT-accredited Mabuhay accommodations in Misamis Occidental, guest satisfaction in terms of ambiance, hospitality, and added value was found to significantly affect behavioral intentions, including revisit, recommendation, and willingness to pay (Elmedulan, 2024) ^[15]. Recognizing the strongest and weakest dimensions is essential for prioritizing resources and interventions, focusing on factors that most affect guest satisfaction while addressing areas that require improvement. These findings highlight that service excellence depends not only on technical or physical aspects but also on the quality of interpersonal interactions and culturally grounded hospitality practices. This underscores the need to adapt service-quality frameworks, such as SERVQUAL, within the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence and the 7Ms framework, ensuring culturally relevant and effective service enhancement. To wit:

Makadiyos (God-centered): Filipino culture has a strong spiritual component, and this value places a strong emphasis on service ethics, humility, and thankfulness. According to research in the hospitality industry, workplace spirituality enhances consumer trust, promotes ethical decision-making, and improves employee well-being (Aboobaker, 2022) ^[1]. Filipinos provide authentic and endearing experiences that appeal to tourists by incorporating faith-based values into their professional service (PIA, 2025).

Makatao (Humane): This value places a strong emphasis on showing guests dignity, empathy, and respect. Higher customer satisfaction and loyalty are consistently linked to

the ability to personalize service and demonstrate genuine concern for clients in the tourism industry. Research shows that human interaction service (HIS) is strongly linked to higher ratings of empathy, reliability, and enjoyment compared to self-service technology, highlighting the importance of personalized and compassionate service encounters (Park, Kwun, Park, and Bufquin, 2022) ^[33]. Similarly, Chen, Chen, Liu, and Sharma (2020) ^[12] found that guests benefit emotionally and socially from positive staff interactions, which foster a sense of care and belonging. Visitor comments frequently emphasize the warm interactions and individualized attention that characterize Filipino hospitality, which is rooted in pakikipagkapwa (shared humanity) (Tourism Industry Board Foundation, 2020).

Makakalikasan (Environmental Responsibility): This principle encourages sustainability and environmental stewardship. Sustainability is now a key factor in determining traveler pleasure and choice on a global scale (Berezan, Raab, Yoo, & Love, 2013) ^[5]. In the Philippines, environmentally friendly transportation, conservation programs, and waste minimization are examples of sustainable practices that not only protect the nation's natural landmarks but also enhance its reputation as a responsible travel destination (PIA, 2023). Research has shown that investments significantly influence the competitiveness of travel destinations in the Asia-Pacific region in environmental projects.

Makabansa (Patriotic): This value places a strong emphasis on service that upholds Philippine identity and tradition as well as national pride. The research on cultural tourism emphasizes how promoting regional customs and patriotism can enhance destination branding (Richards, 2018) ^[35]. By supporting regional goods, historical landmarks, and customs that uphold national pride, the FBSE encourages tourist employees to be patriotic (PIA, 2023).

Masayahin (Cheerful). Happiness, one of the most identifiable characteristics of Filipinos, emphasizes optimism, warmth, and friendliness. Emotional labor, or the display of happiness and optimism, is important for enhancing service encounters, according to tourism scholars (Grandey *et al.*, 2019) ^[19]. The Philippines stands out as a place where service is not just professional but also emotionally uplifting due to the smiles and joy that define Filipino hospitality.

Maybaynihan (Community-spirited): Working together for the common good, or bayanihan, is a Filipino tradition that permeates the tourism industry via cooperation, resilience, and teamwork. Collective action and resilience are essential for organizational and sector recovery, according to research on crisis management in the tourism industry (Casal-Ribeiro, Boavida-Portugal, Peres, & Seabra, 2023) ^[11]. This principle is demonstrated in real life when Filipinos assist visitors, collaborate to overcome obstacles, and ensure inclusive experiences for all.

May Pag-asa (Hopeful): Core qualities that impact service resilience and positivity are hope and optimism. Research has shown that optimism in work environments enhances

customer engagement, employee motivation, and flexibility (Luthans *et al.*, 2020) ^[27]. Hopefulness at FBSE translates into optimism about delivering greater experiences for upcoming guests and confidence in conquering obstacles.

Thus, 7Ms are a practical guideline and cultural foundation for providing excellent customer service in Philippine tourism. Values such as spirituality, empathy, sustainability, cooperation, and optimism have been shown to have quantifiable effects on customer satisfaction, service quality, and sector resilience. The FBSE enhances the Philippines' competitive edge in the international market by aligning these ideals with the best hospitality and tourism practices worldwide.

A key aspect of this service excellence is the Philippines' ability to offer personalized, memorable experiences. Studies show that tourists often remember their visits not just based on the destinations, but also on the interactions they had with the people who served them (Reyes, 2021) ^[34]. Filipino tourism workers, therefore, have become integral to the country's overall tourism industry success. The Department of Tourism (DOT) acknowledges this in its initiatives, such as the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) program, which aims to train over 100,000 tourism frontliners by 2024, thereby further enhancing service quality (Daba, 2023) ^[13]. This program emphasizes the Filipino hospitality tradition while promoting consistent and high-quality service standards across various sectors, including accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, and transportation.

The relationship between service excellence and customer satisfaction has been widely studied, with many researchers noting that excellent customer service directly correlates with repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth marketing (Campo *et al.*, 2020) ^[9]. In the Philippine context, this is especially significant as the tourism sector seeks to recover post-pandemic, with tourists' expectations now including not only excellent service but also safety and flexibility (Navarro, 2021) ^[30].

Furthermore, the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence has been associated with positive cultural traits, which, when embedded in training programs, help maintain the country's competitive advantage in the global tourism market. According to a report by the Philippine News Agency (2023), tourism workers who embody these values are not only enhancing visitors' experiences but also contributing to the sustainable development of local communities by fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and environmental care.

Thus, the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence is a crucial factor in shaping the Philippine tourism industry's identity. The recognition of Filipino values and their integration into the service delivery process are vital components that ensure the Philippines remains a top global destination for tourists seeking both quality and a unique, heartfelt experience.

This study was grounded in the theory of the Characteristics of Service Excellence from Johnston's Model (2007, pp. 17-35, 2004, pp. 129-133), which emphasizes key attributes such as exceptionally high standards, personalization, attention to detail, and staff engagement as the foundations of outstanding service. These principles resonate strongly with the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE), which is rooted in uniquely Filipino values like hospitality, warmth, bayanihan (community spirit), and genuine care. In the context of the tourism industry, this alignment highlights

how Filipino service providers not only meet technical standards of excellence but also create meaningful, emotionally resonant experiences that leave a lasting impression on visitors. By integrating Johnston's model with the FBSE, this study highlights the importance of culturally grounded, value-driven service delivery, which enhances the Philippines' global tourism appeal.

The conceptual framework of this study was anchored on the Department of Tourism's Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE), which promotes culturally rooted values in service delivery. It emphasizes seven core values known as the 7Ms, which reflect Filipino ideals in providing authentic, heartfelt, and world-class customer experiences in the tourism and hospitality sector. At the core of this framework are seven foundational values known as the "7Ms": Maka-Diyos (Godly), Makatao (Humane), Makakalikasan (Environmentally Concerned), Makabansa (Nationalistic), Masayahin (Cheerful), May Bayanihan (Cooperative), and May Pag-asa (Hopeful) (Department of Tourism, 2023). These values do not merely function as abstract ideals; they represent the lived character of Filipino hospitality as experienced by tourists and embedded in everyday service interactions.

In the context of this study, each of the seven "M" values is conceptualized as a first-order latent construct and assessed through a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to evaluate their structural integrity and empirical validity. Each factor is measured using eight behaviorally anchored indicators, carefully adapted from official FBSE training materials and grounded in observable service actions.

The baseline model assumes that the seven latent constructs are distinct yet interrelated, reflecting the idea that Filipino service values, while individually meaningful, work in concert to shape a holistic and authentic customer experience. Each observed variable is designed to load exclusively onto its corresponding latent factor, with no expected cross-loadings, ensuring both conceptual and statistical clarity. Factor covariances are freely estimated, as the 7Ms are hypothesized to correlate due to their cultural and operational interconnectedness in tourism service delivery.

Notably, this study collects data from foreign tourist arrivals in Davao City, positioning them as the primary respondents. Their perspectives offer a vital lens for evaluating the external consistency and perceived authenticity of Filipino service values. As direct beneficiaries of these service behaviors, foreign tourists provide an unbiased and experience-based assessment of whether the FBSE values are effectively transmitted and embodied by service providers. This lends not only empirical robustness to the model but also practical insights for how Filipino hospitality is interpreted across cultural boundaries.

The study on the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in the tourism industry holds significant global importance, as it contributes to the international discourse on how culture-based service quality frameworks enhance tourism competitiveness while promoting sustainable development. Globally, tourism is recognized as a major driver of economic growth and employment, accounting for nearly 10% of global GDP. Service excellence is identified as a critical determinant of tourist satisfaction, destination image, and long-term sustainability (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017; Silva, Gardolinski, & Medaglia, 2024). By operationalizing Filipino core values such as Makatao, Makakalikasan, and May Bayanihan into measurable service

excellence dimensions, the study provides an empirical model that aligns directly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) through workforce upskilling and promotion of local culture, SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by embedding ethical, culturally respectful, and sustainable service practices, and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) by reinforcing community-centered and culturally inclusive tourism experiences (UN, 2015; UNWTO, 2018). As scholars increasingly emphasize the role of tourism service quality in achieving sustainability outcomes, this study offers a transferable, values-based framework that can inform global tourism policy, destination management, and human capital development, particularly for emerging economies seeking to balance competitiveness with cultural integrity and sustainable growth (Bramwell & Lane, 2013)^[7].

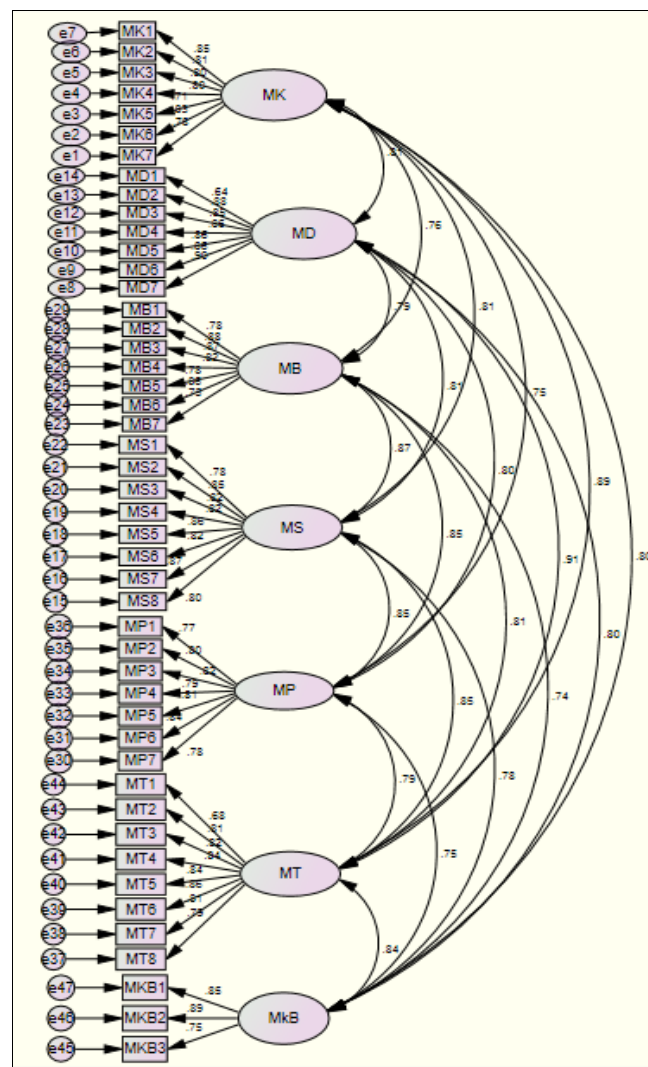


Fig 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Legend

MK - Makakalikasan
MD - Maka-Diyos
MB - May Bayanihan
MS - Masayahin
MP - May Pagasa
MT - Makatao
MkB - Makabansa

Method

Research Respondents

In a report by Espinosa (2024) ^[16] featured in MindaNews, Tanya Tan-Rabat, the Director of the Department of Tourism Region XI (DOT-11), articulates her confidence in meeting the region's tourist arrival goals for 2024. Davao City plays a crucial role in this performance, leading the region with 370,145 documented tourist arrivals. A total of 600 foreign tourists who have visited Davao City participated in the study on the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry. Of these, 300 respondents were surveyed for the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). In comparison, the remaining 300 respondents were used for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), meeting the recommended minimum sample size for meaningful statistical analysis (Siddiqui, 2013; Olivar, 2025) ^[31].

Furthermore, the sampling technique employed in this study was a stratified random sampling approach to establish a sampling frame, enabling the estimation of population parameters from the weighted sample data, derived from simple random sampling from each stratum, as emphasized by Aoyama (1954) ^[2]. The study was conducted from August 2024 to April 2024 during the academic year 2024-2025.

The study targets respondents of any ethnicity who are of legal age and are foreign visitors to Davao City for purposes such as leisure, recreation, staycation, or business. The survey was conducted within the identified geographic setting, with respondents selected randomly based on their informed willingness to participate. The research focuses on individuals of any ethnicity who are of legal age and visiting Davao City for reasons including leisure, recreation, staycation, or business activities. The survey was carried out in the designated geographic area, specifically at the Davao International Airport (DIA) in the international departure area, as well as in identified/accredited Mabuhay accommodations authorized by DOT XI. Participants were chosen at random, based on their informed consent to participate, with foreign tourists being conveniently accessed prior to their outbound flights or during their stay at these establishments. This method ensures a comprehensive and inclusive collection of data relevant to the study's objectives. The recruitment of respondents was conducted with careful attention to strict inclusion criteria, ensuring that foreign tourists met the study's demographic requirements. The exclusion criteria encompass individuals who do not qualify as foreign tourists or are under the legal age, thus safeguarding the reliability and validity of the findings. The respondent's involvement is entirely voluntary, and they will receive a formal letter informing them of the scope of their participation. Participants have the right to withdraw their consent and cease participation at any time without facing any penalties or losing benefits. The participants in this study are not relinquishing any legal claims, rights, or remedies as a result of their involvement in this research study.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the foreign respondents, revealing that the majority were male (60.7%), indicating a slightly higher participation of men in tourism-related activities during the data collection period. Most respondents belonged to the 30-39 age group (43.7%), followed by those aged 40-49 (29.7%), indicating that the sample is predominantly composed of middle-aged travelers

who typically have stable incomes, frequent travel experience, and heightened expectations for service quality.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile Variables	Group	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	182	60.7
	Female	118	39.33
Age	19 below	4	1.3
	20-29	35	11.7
	30-39	131	43.7
	40-49	89	29.7
	50-59	34	11.3
	60 above	7	2.3
Civil Status	Single	134	44.7
	Married	96	32.0
	Widowed	25	8.30
	Separated	45	15
Type of Visit	Tourist	214	71.33
	Business	40	13.33
	Family Visit	20	6.66
	Others (e.g., staycation and leisure)	26	8.66
Nationality	Chinese	71	23.66
	American	64	21.33
	Japanese	49	16.33
	Thailander	28	9.33
	Malaysian	22	7.33
	Singaporean	18	6
	Indian	18	6
	Korean	12	4
	Canadian	7	2.33
	German	5	1.66
	British	5	1.66
	Dutch/Indian	1	0.33

In terms of civil status, single individuals (44.7%) constituted the largest group, suggesting a strong presence of independent or solo travelers, while married respondents (32%) also formed a significant portion. The type of visit further reinforces this trend, with an overwhelming majority visiting the country for tourism purposes (71.33%), highlighting that leisure travelers make up the core of the respondents and are therefore highly relevant in assessing the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE). Lastly, the respondents represent a diverse mix of nationalities, led by Chinese (23.66%), American (21.33%), and Japanese (16.33%) visitors, followed by smaller groups from neighboring Asian countries, including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, India, and Korea. This multicultural composition offers a well-rounded perspective on how foreign visitors from diverse cultural backgrounds perceive the service excellence provided in the Philippine tourism industry.

Materials and Instruments

The questionnaire used in this study was developed based on the official training materials and service quality guidelines of the Department of Tourism (DOT) for the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE). Because the FBSE framework already consists of the identified 7Ms, the instrument was designed directly around these existing dimensions. An accredited FBSE Trainer (Enterprise Level

for hotels, resorts, and related establishments) validated the initial draft to ensure that each item accurately reflected the behavioral standards, service values, and principles embodied in the 7Ms framework.

Before any statistical procedure was undertaken, the questionnaire was submitted to the university research panel for expert validation. The panel reviewed the indicators for relevance, clarity, cultural suitability for foreign respondents, and congruence with the study's objectives. Their comments and recommendations were incorporated into the instrument to improve precision, readability, and content validity.

While DOT already establishes the 7Ms and was not altered, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was utilized during the development stage to support the refinement of the questionnaire items, ensuring that the indicators under each M collectively aligned and behaved consistently as intended. The EFA results helped confirm that the items grouped appropriately within their respective FBSE dimensions, serving as a preliminary validation tool rather than a method for extracting new factors.

To measure the level of FBSE as experienced by foreign tourists, a five-point Likert-type scale was used, interpreted as follows:

In evaluating the Filipino brand of service, the scale used to interpret the responses of the respondents is presented below:

Scale	Description	Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Very High	The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is always observed.
3.40-4.19	High	The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is often observed.
3.60-3.39	Moderate	The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is sometimes observed.
1.80-2.59	Low	The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is rarely observed.
1.00-1.79	Very Low	The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry is almost not observed.

After refinement and expert validation, the instrument was subjected to Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to verify the measurement structure and validate whether each set of indicators appropriately represented the corresponding FBSE dimension. The CFA provided strong support for construct validity, indicating that the model aligned well with the pre-established 7Ms structure. To assess internal consistency, the reliability of the overall instrument was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a value of .983. This result demonstrates excellent reliability, confirming that the items consistently measure the overarching construct of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence. With the instrument deemed valid and reliable, the final version was administered to foreign tourists to capture their perceptions and experiences of the FBSE in the Philippine tourism industry.

Design and Procedure

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine and validate the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) within the tourism industry in Davao City. Using a structured survey instrument, the study applied descriptive statistics to determine the respondents' perceived levels of service excellence across the seven dimensions of the FBSE: Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa.

To explore the underlying structure of these dimensions, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was first conducted to identify and confirm the latent constructs representing the 7Ms of Filipino service excellence. Subsequently, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to test the validity and reliability of the measurement model, ensuring that the observed variables accurately represented the predefined constructs. This two-step statistical approach allowed the study to rigorously validate both the dimensionality and the level of agreement on FBSE among foreign tourists, providing a robust understanding of Filipino service excellence in the tourism sector (Campos, 2015; Besana & Hinlayagan, 2024) ^[10, 6].

The data collection for this study was conducted at the Davao International Airport (DIA), specifically in the international departure area, where foreign tourists were conveniently accessed prior to their outbound flights. To

formally initiate the research process, the researcher secured approval from the Department of Tourism Region XI (DOT-XI). Following this approval, DOT-XI issued an official endorsement addressed to selected Mabuhay establishments, authorizing the administration of the survey among foreign guests within these accredited tourism-related establishments.

With the endorsement provided by DOT-XI, the researcher proceeded to coordinate with the identified Mabuhay establishments and the DIA international departure area to distribute the survey questionnaires. The data gathering followed proper courtesy protocols observed in the tourism sector, ensuring smooth conduct of the survey among foreign visitors.

Upon approaching potential respondents, the researcher provided each participant with a brief explanation of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. A careful explanation was provided to ensure the clarity of each survey item, considering the diversity of nationalities and cultural backgrounds among respondents. After collecting data at each location, a Certificate of Appearance was obtained to document the conduct of the research activity.

The collected data were tallied, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using appropriate statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used to present the demographic profile of the foreign respondents. At the same time, the mean determined their level of agreement with the indicators under the 7Ms of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE). Since the questionnaire was already developed and structured based on the identified 7Ms through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the analysis proceeded directly to Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement model. CFA was employed to confirm whether the observed indicators consistently represented each of the predefined FBSE dimensions and to evaluate the strength of the relationships between the items and their corresponding latent constructs.

Throughout the entire conduct of the study, the researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards in accordance with the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) Certification No. 2024-497. Ethical compliance encompassed voluntary participation, privacy and confidentiality, informed consent, responsible recruitment,

risk avoidance, accuracy in data handling, and integrity in authorship and reporting.

Results and Discussion

This segment presents, analyzes, and interprets the study's findings on the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry. The presentation of results is organized into four sections: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess data suitability, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify underlying dimensions, the evaluation of the extent of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry, and the determination of the best-fit model through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Adequacy Test

Table 2 presents the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to

determine the suitability of the data for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) in examining the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry. The KMO value of 0.959 clearly surpasses the widely acknowledged minimum threshold of 0.50, affirming the data's high suitability for EFA and indicating that the variables share sufficient common variance for reliable factor extraction, as per Kaiser's (1974) standards. In addition, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant (Approx. $\chi^2 = 18,393.338$, $df = 1540$, $p < 0.000$), indicating that the correlation matrix differs significantly from an identity matrix and that meaningful interrelationships exist among the variables. Taken together, these results provide strong empirical justification for the application of EFA and support the identification of underlying factor structures that explain the dimensions of service excellence within the Philippine tourism industry.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.959
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	18393.338
	df	1540
	Sig.	0.000

Figure 1 presents the scree plot derived from the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the tourism industry. Consistent with the scree test proposed by Cattell (1966), the plot displays eigenvalues on the vertical axis and component numbers on the horizontal axis, allowing for the visual identification of

the point at which a marked decline in eigenvalues occurs. The noticeable change in slope, or "elbow," indicates the number of factors that meaningfully explain the variance in the dataset. In the present analysis, a clear decline in eigenvalues is observed after the sixth factor, suggesting the retention of six significant factors and confirming the multidimensional structure of the construct.

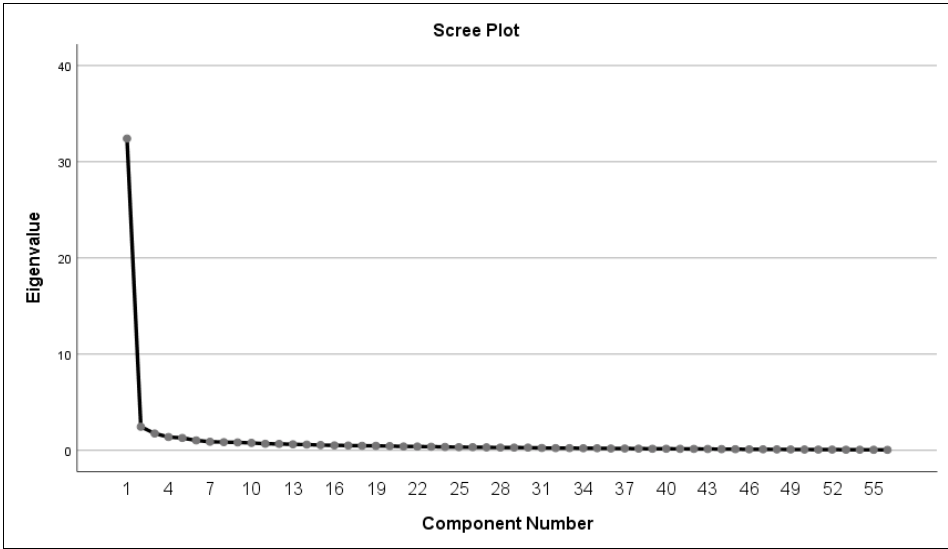


Fig 2: Scree Plot

As emphasized by Gorsuch (1997), the effectiveness of the scree test depends on adequate sample size and well-defined factor structures, both of which are evident in this study. Following factor extraction, 40 items with factor loadings of 0.40 and above were retained in accordance with the recommendations of Costello and Osborne (2005), while factors comprising fewer than three item statements were excluded to ensure construct stability and interpretability (MacCallum *et al.*, 1999; Raubenheimer, 2004; Fuentes & Gono, 2023; Romero & Gono Jr., 2021; Gono Jr., 2024; Jr. & Abalos, n.d.; Gono Jr. & Pacoy, 2021; Gono & Sales,

2024; Gono Jr. & Castro, 2025) [17, 20, 21, 22]. Consequently, six distinct and theoretically grounded dimensions emerged: Makakalikasan, Maka-Diyos, May Bayanihan, Masayahin, May Pag-asa, and Makabansa, which collectively capture the core elements of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence within the tourism industry.

Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) results, as presented in the rotated component matrix (Table 3), identified six

distinct factors underlying the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in the tourism industry. Using a factor loading threshold of 0.50, items loaded predominantly on their respective constructs, demonstrating strong indicator-factor alignment and construct validity. The rotation procedure converged after 16 iterations, indicating a stable

and well-defined factor solution with minimal ambiguity. Cross-loading items that failed to meet the loading criterion were excluded to ensure conceptual coherence across factors. The six-factor solution accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in the data (71.962%), underscoring the multidimensional nature of FBSE.

Table 3: Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry Factor Loading

Rotated Component Matrix	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Staff engage in environmental protection and conservation initiatives within their roles.	0.71					
21. Staff actively participate in and support environmental conservation programs.	0.70					
22. Staff advocate for and promote eco-friendly transportation and travel options.	0.68					
18. Staff implement environmentally sustainable practices, such as waste reduction and energy conservation.	0.67					
24. Staff educate guests about sustainability and the importance of environmental stewardship.	0.65					
20. Staff are committed to recycling practices and proper waste management.	0.65					
19. Staff encourage guests to participate in eco-friendly activities and make sustainable choices.	0.53					
5. Staff incorporate spiritual values in their behavior, influencing their professional conduct.		0.71				
3. Faith-based principles guide staff in making moral decisions and delivering ethical service.		0.69				
8. Genuine spirituality in staff interactions helps build meaningful connections with guests.		0.65				
7. Staff embody faith-based principles to navigate and resolve ethical dilemmas effectively.		0.65				
1. Staff integrate faith or spiritual values to enhance the quality of their service.		0.65				
4. Staff demonstrate gratitude and humility, contributing to a welcoming and positive guest experience.		0.63				
6. The presence of spiritual values among staff fosters a harmonious and cooperative workplace.		0.63				
2. Staff participate in workplace rituals or practices that reflect spiritual values.		0.59				
42. Staff participate in community tourism projects that reflect the spirit of "bayanihan."			0.68			
43. Staff willingly assist guests and colleagues in times of need, showcasing collective support.			0.68			
41. Staff exhibit strong teamwork and cooperation to ensure excellent service delivery.			0.67			
46. Staff empower one another to reach their full potential, fostering unity and collaboration.			0.67			
44. Staff provide support to their co-workers during challenges, creating a collaborative environment.			0.59			
45. Staff share resources, knowledge, and skills to improve overall service quality.			0.58			
47. Staff engage in community development initiatives as part of their commitment to "bayanihan."			0.57			
34. Staff interact with guests cheerfully and enthusiastically to uplift their experience.				0.68		
36. Staff contribute to a joyful and uplifting atmosphere in the workplace.				0.67		
37. Staff maintain a positive attitude even in challenging situations.				0.61		
39. Staff infuse joy and excitement into special events and celebrations for guests.				0.57		
38. Staff find joy and fulfillment in their responsibilities, which is evident in their service.				0.57		
33. Staff consistently create positive and joyful experiences for guests.				0.53		
40. Staff incorporate humor and lightheartedness in guest interactions to create a pleasant atmosphere.				0.50		
35. Staff demonstrate genuine joy and satisfaction in their roles, improving service quality.				0.50		
55. Staff pursue excellence with optimism, believing in the potential of the tourism industry.					0.68	
54. Staff actively support initiatives that enhance the tourism sector's sustainability and resilience.					0.68	
56. Staff advocate for and adopt sustainable practices, contributing to long-term industry growth.					0.66	
53. Staff tackle challenges with a positive outlook, instilling confidence in their team and guests.					0.65	
50. Staff demonstrate confidence and resilience in adapting to changes and challenges.					0.55	
52. Staff exhibit a forward-looking perspective, contributing to the recovery and growth of the tourism sector.					0.55	
51. Staff inspire hope and positivity among their colleagues through their attitude and actions.					0.44	
27. Staff actively promote Filipino cultural heritage and diversity to guests.						0.56
26. Staff prioritize supporting local businesses and services to sustain local communities.						0.55
28. Staff engage in initiatives that contribute to the development of their local communities.						0.54
Eigenvalue	32.405	2.449	1.749	1.383	1.282	1.031
% of Variance	57.866	4.373	3.123	2.470	2.290	1.841
Cumulative %	57.866	62.239	65.362	67.831	70.121	71.96

The first factor emerged as the most influential (eigenvalue = 32.405), explaining 57.866% of the total variance, followed by the second (eigenvalue = 2.449; 4.373%), third (eigenvalue = 1.749; 3.123%), fourth (eigenvalue = 1.383;

2.470%), fifth (eigenvalue = 1.282; 2.290%), and sixth factors (eigenvalue = 1.031; 1.841%). Collectively, these findings empirically support the six FBSE dimensions: Makakalikahan, Maka-Diyos, May Bayanihan, Masayahin,

May Pag-asa, and Makabansa, which reflect core Filipino values in tourism service delivery. The clarity, stability, and explanatory power of the factor structure provide a strong empirical basis for subsequent Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to test further the validity and overall fit of the measurement model.

Tables 4.1 to 4.6 in the research findings present a comprehensive thematic analysis of the item statements for the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry, derived from the exploratory factor analysis.

The first identified factor, Makakalikasan, captures environmental stewardship in service delivery. EFA results

showed high loadings (0.53-0.71) for items related to participation in conservation programs, promoting eco-friendly transportation, adopting sustainable practices, and educating guests about sustainability. Sustainability is increasingly critical for traveler satisfaction globally, with eco-friendly practices enhancing destination competitiveness and reputation (Berezan, Raab, Yoo, & Love, 2013; Khan *et al.*, 2023; PIA, 2023)^[5]. This suggests that Filipino tourism staff actively incorporate environmental responsibility into their daily service practices.

Table 4.1: Factor 1 Makakalikasan (Environmentally-Responsible)

Item Statements	Coefficients
23. Staff engage in environmental protection and conservation initiatives within their roles.	0.71
21. Staff actively participate in and support environmental conservation programs.	0.70
22. Staff advocate for and promote eco-friendly transportation and travel options.	0.68
18. Staff implement environmentally sustainable practices, such as waste reduction and energy conservation.	0.67
24. Staff educate guests about sustainability and the importance of environmental stewardship.	0.65
20. Staff are committed to recycling practices and proper waste management.	0.65
19. Staff encourage guests to participate in eco-friendly activities and make sustainable choices.	0.53

The second identified factor, Maka-Diyos, reflects the integration of spiritual and ethical values in service. Filipino culture emphasizes humility, gratitude, and moral conduct in professional interactions. According to Aboobaker (2022)

^[1], workplace spirituality enhances consumer trust, promotes ethical decision-making, and improves employee well-being.

Table 4.2: Factor 2 Maka-Diyos (God-centered)

Item Statements	Coefficients
5. Staff incorporate spiritual values in their behavior, influencing their professional conduct.	0.71
3. Faith-based principles guide staff in making moral decisions and delivering ethical service.	0.69
8. Genuine spirituality in staff interactions helps build meaningful connections with guests.	0.65
7. Staff embody faith-based principles to navigate and resolve ethical dilemmas effectively.	0.65
1. Staff integrate faith or spiritual values to enhance the quality of their service.	0.65
4. Staff demonstrate gratitude and humility, contributing to a welcoming and positive guest experience.	0.63
6. The presence of spiritual values among staff fosters a harmonious and cooperative workplace.	0.63
2. Staff participate in workplace rituals or practices that reflect spiritual values.	0.59

In line with EFA results, items such as incorporating spiritual principles into service, ethical decision-making, participation in workplace rituals, and fostering harmonious interactions (factor loadings: 0.59-0.71) demonstrate that tourism staff embody spirituality and ethics in their behavior, contributing to a positive and authentic service experience (PIA, 2025).

The third identified factor, May Bayanihan, reflects teamwork and collective support. High-loading items (0.57-0.68) include assisting colleagues, sharing resources, participating in community tourism projects, and empowering co-workers.

Table 4.3: Factor 3 May Bayanihan (Community-spirited)

Item Statements	Coefficients
42. Staff participate in community tourism projects that reflect the spirit of "bayanihan."	0.71
43. Staff willingly assist guests and colleagues in times of need, showcasing collective support.	0.70
41. Staff exhibit strong teamwork and cooperation to ensure excellent service delivery.	0.68
46. Staff empower one another to reach their full potential, fostering unity and collaboration.	0.67
44. Staff provide support to their co-workers during challenges, creating a collaborative environment.	0.65
45. Staff share resources, knowledge, and skills to improve overall service quality.	0.65
47. Staff engage in community development initiatives as part of their commitment to "bayanihan."	0.53

Research in crisis management and organizational recovery emphasizes the importance of collective action, cooperation, and resilience in the tourism industry (Casal-Ribeiro, Boavida-Portugal, Peres, & Seabra, 2023)^[11]. EFA results confirm that staff cooperation and collaborative behavior are essential to delivering high-quality and inclusive service.

The fourth factor, Masayahin, emphasizes the emotional labor required to create positive experiences. EFA items include cheerful and enthusiastic interactions, maintaining positivity in the face of challenges, humor, and joyful engagement (ranging from 0.50 to 0.68). Emotional displays of happiness and optimism are associated with improved service encounters and increased guest satisfaction

(Grandey *et al.*, 2019) ^[19]. Filipino staff consistently create uplifting, emotionally engaging experiences that strengthen

the uniqueness of the Philippine tourism brand.

Table 4.4: Factor 4 Masayahin (Cheerful)

Item Statements	Coefficients
34. Staff interact with guests cheerfully and enthusiastically to uplift their experience.	0.68
36. Staff contribute to a joyful and uplifting atmosphere in the workplace.	0.67
37. Staff maintain a positive attitude even in challenging situations.	0.61
39. Staff infuse joy and excitement into special events and celebrations for guests.	0.57
38. Staff find joy and fulfillment in their responsibilities, which is evident in their service.	0.57
33. Staff consistently create positive and joyful experiences for guests.	0.53
40. Staff incorporate humor and lightheartedness in guest interactions to create a pleasant atmosphere.	0.50
35. Staff demonstrate genuine joy and satisfaction in their roles, improving service quality.	0.50

The fifth factor, May Pag-asa, represents optimism and forward-looking attitudes. Items including pursuing excellence with hope, supporting sustainable initiatives, adapting to challenges, and inspiring colleagues loaded at 0.44-0.68 in EFA. Optimism in work environments has been

shown to enhance customer engagement, employee motivation, and organizational flexibility (Luthans *et al.*, 2020) ^[27]. Filipino staff embody hopefulness, demonstrating resilience and confidence that positively influence the tourism experience.

Table 4.5: Factor 5 May Pag-asa (Hopeful)

Item Statements	Coefficients
55. Staff pursue excellence with optimism, believing in the potential of the tourism industry.	0.68
54. Staff actively support initiatives that enhance the tourism sector's sustainability and resilience.	0.68
56. Staff advocate for and adopt sustainable practices, contributing to long-term industry growth.	0.66
53. Staff tackle challenges with a positive outlook, instilling confidence in their team and guests.	0.65
50. Staff demonstrate confidence and resilience in adapting to changes and challenges.	0.55
52. Staff exhibit a forward-looking perspective, contributing to the recovery and growth of the tourism sector.	0.55
51. Staff inspire hope and positivity among their colleagues through their attitude and actions.	0.44

The sixth identified factor, Makabansa, represents promoting Filipino cultural heritage and supporting local communities. Questionnaire items such as advocating regional customs, supporting local businesses, and engaging in community development loaded moderately in EFA

(0.54-0.56). Studies on cultural tourism suggest that fostering national pride and regional traditions enhances destination branding (Richards, 2018; PIA, 2023) ^[35]. In practice, Filipino service staff reinforce a sense of national identity while delivering authentic tourism experiences.

Table 4.6: Factor 6 Makabansa (Patriotic)

Item Statements	Coefficients
27. Staff actively promote Filipino cultural heritage and diversity to guests.	0.56
26. Staff prioritize supporting local businesses and services to sustain local communities.	0.55
28. Staff engage in initiatives that contribute to the development of their local communities.	0.54

The EFA results empirically support the 6Ms framework, confirming that the FBSE values are distinct yet interconnected dimensions of service excellence. Each factor corresponds to observable behaviors that align with literature on Filipino hospitality, emotional labor, cultural pride, environmental responsibility, and teamwork. These findings reinforce the idea that the FBSE is not only a theoretical model but also a practical guide for enhancing service quality, guest satisfaction, and the Philippines' competitiveness in the global tourism market (DOT, 2023; Reyes, 2021; Campo *et al.*, 2020) ^[34, 9].

Extent of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry

Table 5 reflected the level of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry. It can be seen that the overall level of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in the tourism industry, as perceived by foreign tourists in Davao City, was in agreement with a mean score of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 0.85. This suggests that the tourism workforce generally demonstrates behaviors consistent with the seven core Filipino values, or 7Ms, such

as Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa, thereby creating an authentic and high-quality service experience (Department of Tourism, 2023; Reyes, 2021) ^[34].

Table 5: Level of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry

7Ms Filipino Values	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Level
MakaDiyos	3.73	0.85	High
Makatao	3.59	0.72	High
Makakalikasan	3.61	0.71	High
Makabansa	3.64	0.69	High
Masayahin	3.57	0.72	High
Maybayanihan	3.59	0.67	High
Maypag-asa	3.65	0.71	High
Overall	3.73	0.85	High

Among the seven dimensions, Maka-Diyos (God-centered) registered the highest mean (3.73), indicating that tourism staff most consistently integrate spiritual and ethical values into their service. This finding is consistent with prior

research that emphasizes the role of faith-based principles in shaping workplace behavior, ethical decision-making, and customer trust (Aboobaker, 2022; PIA, 2025) ^[1]. The incorporation of spiritual values into interactions not only fosters a positive and moral workplace culture but also enhances the authenticity of Filipino hospitality as experienced by tourists.

Following closely, May Pag-asa (Hopeful) (3.65) reflects optimism and hope in service delivery. Tourism staff were observed to approach their responsibilities with a forward-looking attitude, resilience, and confidence, which aligns with literature linking optimism to improved customer engagement, employee motivation, and service resilience (Luthans *et al.*, 2020) ^[27]. Similarly, Makabansa (Patriotic) (3.64) demonstrates great national pride and support for Filipino culture, where staff actively promote local heritage and support community development. This finding supports research highlighting how cultural pride enhances destination branding and tourist satisfaction (Richards, 2018; PIA, 2023) ^[35].

Makakalikasan (Environmentally Responsible) (3.61) emphasizes environmental responsibility, showing that staff engage in sustainable practices, conservation efforts, and guest education on eco-friendly initiatives. This aligns with global trends and research indicating that sustainability has a significant impact on traveler satisfaction and destination competitiveness (Berezan, Raab, Yoo, & Love, 2013; Khan *et al.*, 2023) ^[5]. The dimensions of Makatao (Humane) (3.59) and May Bayanihan (Community Spirited) (3.59) reflect the staff's human-centered approach and cooperative spirit, demonstrating empathy, teamwork, and social responsibility—values that are consistently associated with enhanced service quality and customer loyalty (Park, Kwun, Park, & Bufquin, 2022; Chen, Chen, Liu, & Sharma, 2020; Casal-Ribeiro, Boavida-Portugal, Peres, & Seabra, 2023) ^[12, 11]. Finally, Masayahin (Cheerful) (3.57) had the lowest mean among the 7Ms, yet still falls within the "Agree" range. This suggests that tourism staff maintain cheerful interactions, thereby creating enjoyable experiences for their guests. Literature suggests that emotional labor, including displays of happiness and optimism, significantly contributes to customer satisfaction and the memorable nature of the Filipino hospitality experience (Grandey *et al.*, 2019) ^[19].

Therefore, the level of FBSE across all seven dimensions is generally high, with God-centered (Maka-Diyos) and Hopeful (May Pag-asa) leading, followed by Patriotic (Makabansa) and Environmentally Responsible (Makakalikasan). These results demonstrate that Filipino tourism staff embody culturally grounded values that strengthen service quality, enhance guest satisfaction, and reinforce the Philippines' competitive advantage in the

international tourism market (Department of Tourism, 2023; Campo *et al.*, 2020; Reyes, 2021) ^[34, 9].

Best Fit Model of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence using Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 6 presents the goodness-of-fit measures for the best-fit model of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry. The results from the goodness-of-fit measures for the Filipino brand of service excellence in the tourism industry model indicate a strong fit, with all indices meeting or exceeding the recommended criteria. The p-value of 0.15 suggests no evidence to reject the null hypothesis, indicating a good fit. The CMIN/DF ratio of 1.575 falls within the acceptable range, reflecting a balanced model complexity. Additionally, the CFI (0.994), NFI (0.983), and TLI (0.989) values all exceed the threshold of 0.95, indicating an excellent model fit. The RMSEA value of 0.044, well below the 0.05 benchmark, and the PClose value of 0.655 further support the model's adequacy in approximating the data. Overall, these results demonstrate that the model accurately represents the factors contributing to the Filipino brand of service excellence in the tourism industry, with minimal error and a high probability of close fit, making it a reliable tool for understanding the relationships in this domain.

Table 6: Goodness of Fit Measures of Best Fit Model

Index	Criterion	Model Fit Value
P-Value	>0.05	0.15
CMIN/DF	0<value<2	1.575
CFI	>0.95	.994
NFI	>0.95	.983
TLI	>0.95	.989
RMSEA	<0.05	.044
PClose	>0.05	.655

Table 7 shows the final factor analysis of the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence, which identifies three core dimensions: Makakalikasan, Maka-Diyos, and May Bayanihan, all demonstrating strong factor loadings. Makakalikasan reflects staff commitment to environmental responsibility, with loadings ranging from 0.53 to 0.71. Maka-Diyos emphasizes ethical service guided by faith and spirituality, with loadings ranging from 0.63 to 0.69. May Bayanihan represents collaborative and supportive service practices, with loadings from 0.65 to 0.70. Overall, these results indicate that sustainability, faith-driven ethics, and teamwork are central elements of Filipino service excellence in the tourism industry.

Table 7: Final Factor Loading of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence

Factors	Loading
Factor 1. Makakalikasan (Environmentally Responsible)	
1. Staff engage in environmental protection and conservation initiatives within their roles.	0.71
2. Staff are committed to recycling practices and proper waste management.	0.65
3. Staff encourage guests to participate in eco-friendly activities and make sustainable choices.	0.53
Factor 2. Maka Diyos (God-centered)	
2. Faith-based principles guide staff in making moral decisions and delivering ethical service.	0.69
3. Genuine spirituality in staff interactions helps build meaningful connections with guests.	0.65
4. Staff embody faith-based principles to navigate and resolve ethical dilemmas effectively.	0.65
5. Staff integrate faith or spiritual values to enhance the quality of their service.	0.65
6. Staff demonstrate gratitude and humility, contributing to a welcoming and positive guest experience.	0.63

7. The presence of spiritual values among staff fosters a harmonious and cooperative workplace.	0.63
Factor 3. May Bayanihan (Community-spirited)	
2. Staff willingly assist guests and colleagues in times of need, showcasing collective support.	0.70
3. Staff exhibit strong teamwork and cooperation to ensure excellent service delivery.	0.68
6. Staff share resources, knowledge, and skills to improve overall service quality.	0.65

In Figure 3, the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in Davao City is shaped by values that are deeply rooted in Filipino culture and recognized by foreign tourists. Through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), three key variables emerged that strongly influence visitor perceptions: Makakalikasan (Environmental Responsibility), Maka-Diyos (Faith and Spiritual Values), and May Bayanihan (Communal Solidarity).

The first variable, Makakalikasan (Environmental Responsibility), underscores the sustainability dimension of Filipino service. This is evident in how staff are mindful of the environmental impact of their actions and promote sustainability in their tasks (Item 1), advocate for eco-friendly transportation and travel options (Item 6), and engage in environmental protection and conservation initiatives within their roles (Item 7). Tourists view these practices as genuine efforts to protect natural resources, which aligns with global hospitality studies showing that sustainable practices enhance guest satisfaction and encourage return intentions (Berezan, Raab, Yoo, & Love, 2013) [5]. In the Philippine context, FBSE recognizes Makakalikasan as essential to maintaining responsible and competitive tourism destinations (Philippine Information Agency [PIA], 2023).

The second variable, Maka-Diyos (Faith and Spiritual Values), highlights how spirituality shapes service ethics and guest relations. It is reflected when staff participate in workplace rituals or practices that reflect spiritual values (Item 2), allow faith-based principles to guide moral decisions and ethical service delivery (Item 3), demonstrate gratitude and humility to foster a welcoming guest experience (Item 4), incorporate spiritual values into their professional conduct (Item 5), and contribute to harmony and cooperation in the workplace (Item 6). Such integration of spirituality strengthens sincerity and authenticity in guest interactions. Empirical evidence suggests that workplace spirituality has a positive influence on employee well-being, ethical service behavior, and guest satisfaction (Aboobaker, 2022) [1]. Within the FBSE framework, Maka-Diyos is emphasized as a value that nurtures compassion, humility, and respect, which resonate strongly with foreign tourists (PIA, 2025).

The third variable, May Bayanihan (Communal Solidarity), represents the Filipino spirit of cooperation and resilience in service delivery. This is shown when staff demonstrate confidence and resilience in adapting to changes and challenges (Item 2), inspire hope and positivity among colleagues (Item 3), and actively support initiatives that enhance the tourism sector's sustainability and resilience (Item 6). These behaviors foster a culture of teamwork that foreign tourists perceive as inclusivity and genuine

hospitality. Scholarship confirms that collaboration and resilience are crucial to sustaining service quality, particularly in times of crisis (Casal-Ribeiro, Boavida-Portugal, Peres, & Seabra, 2023) [11]. Training programs on FBSE also highlight May Bayanihan as a driver of collective action and sector-wide resilience (Tourism Industry Board Foundation, 2020).

Taken together, the variables Makakalikasan, Maka-Diyos, and May Bayanihan, along with their specific operational items, significantly shape the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence as perceived by foreign tourists in Davao City. These findings suggest that environmental responsibility resonates with global sustainability concerns, spirituality fosters sincerity and trustworthiness in service encounters, and communal solidarity strengthens both resilience and inclusivity in tourism delivery. Collectively, these variables demonstrate how deeply embedded Filipino cultural values translate into distinct service practices, positioning Davao City as a destination where hospitality is both authentic and culturally meaningful.

By focusing on three core values, such as Makakalikasan, Maka-Diyos, and May Bayanihan, the hospitality and tourism experiences in Davao not only meet the expectations of foreign tourists but also highlight the best aspects of Filipino culture. These values cultivate an environment where visitors are not just passive observers but become emotionally connected to the heart and spirit of the Filipino people. Moreover, service excellence orientation represents the extent to which a model addresses the essentials of exceptional service, exceeding customer expectations, and delighting the customer (Asif, 2014, pp. 763-783). When these values are embedded into service delivery, they enhance the overall visitor experience, ensuring that guests feel welcomed, valued, and inspired. Together, these elements form a holistic and culturally grounded approach to hospitality that strengthens Davao's reputation as a world-class tourist destination.

The findings were supported by the study of Nasution *et al.* (2021) [29] and Zhang *et al.* (2021) [44], which validates the growing body of research suggesting that localized cultural values can form the basis of sustainable and competitive tourism services (Nasution *et al.*, 2021; Zhang *et al.*, 2021) [44, 29]. It also strengthens the argument that tourism models must move beyond Western service paradigms to include indigenous values that resonate more meaningfully with both hosts and guests (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019) [8]. The study contributes to filling the gap in Philippine-based tourism research by offering a tested model specific to Davao City, which can serve as a prototype for developing culturally sensitive service excellence models in other local destinations.

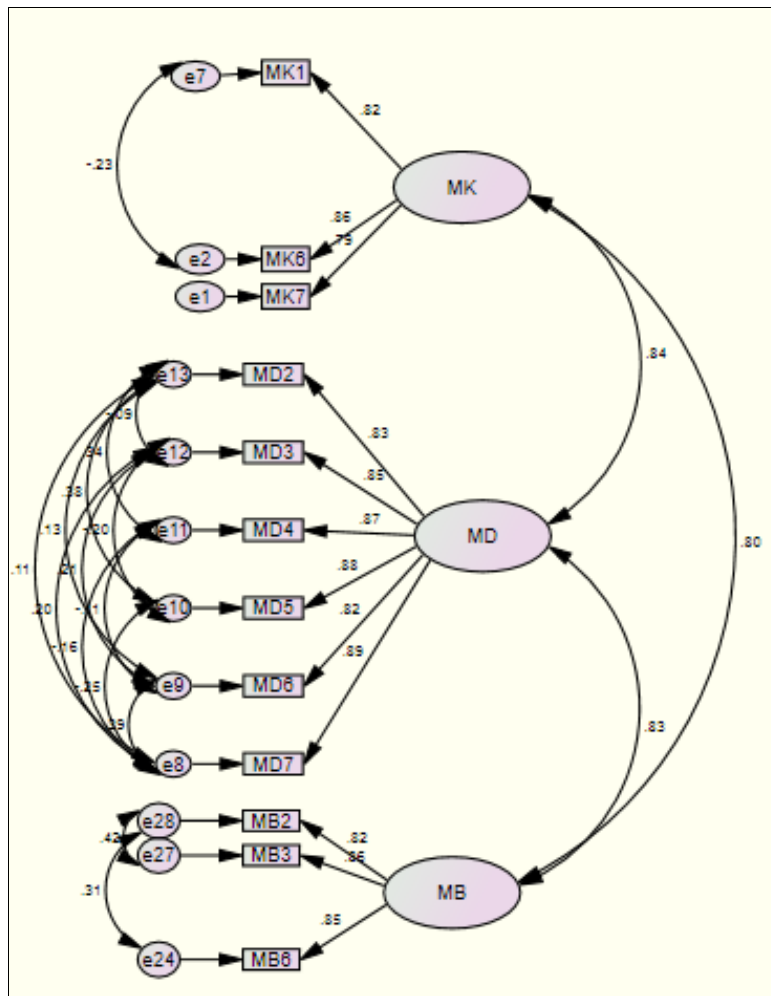


Fig 3: Best Fit Model of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence in the Tourism Industry

Legend

MK - Makakalikasan

MD - Maka Diyos

MB - May Bayanihan

Practically, this study offers a strategic and evidence-based framework for tourism stakeholders in Davao City to enhance visitor experiences and strengthen the city's brand identity. The three retained values, Makakalikasan (environmental consciousness), Maka-Diyos (faith and kindness), and May Bayanihan (community cooperation), were empirically shown to resonate with foreign visitors. This implies that these values should be actively integrated into customer service training, frontline staff engagement, tourism policy, and destination marketing. Given that global travelers increasingly seek authentic, values-driven, and sustainable experiences post-pandemic (UNWTO, 2022; Sigala, 2020), Davao City has a competitive edge in promoting these values. For instance, eco-tourism operators can highlight Makakalikasan by showcasing sustainable practices. At the same time, hotels and tour guides can reflect Maka-Diyos and May Bayanihan through warm, respectful, and communal service approaches. Moreover, this validated model can be utilized by local governments and tourism education institutions to design curricula, customer experience metrics, and service standards that are not only globally appealing but also deeply rooted in Filipino culture and identity. The approach strengthens both the quality of tourism offerings and the cultural authenticity

that sets Davao City apart as a premier destination in Mindanao and the Philippines.'

Thus, the findings of this study contribute to the theoretical understanding of service quality, service excellence, and customer satisfaction by highlighting the role of culturally grounded values in shaping tourism service experiences. The Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) model demonstrates that environmental responsibility (Makakalikasan), spirituality (Maka-Diyos), and communal solidarity (May Bayanihan) are key dimensions that influence how foreign tourists perceive service quality in Davao City.

These results suggest that service excellence is not only determined by technical skills or operational efficiency but is also deeply influenced by cultural, ethical, and collective values. Incorporating these elements into service models expands existing theories of service quality and customer satisfaction, emphasizing that localized and culturally relevant frameworks can enhance guest experiences, foster loyalty, and promote sustainable tourism practices. Overall, this study lays the groundwork for developing context-specific service excellence models that incorporate indigenous values, providing new insights for both research and practice in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) results confirm that the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) framework

is empirically robust, with seven distinct and meaningful dimensions, such as Maka-Diyos, Makatao, Makakalikasan, Makabansa, Masayahin, May Bayanihan, and May Pag-asa that collectively represent the Filipino approach to service excellence in the tourism industry. These factors highlight how tourism staff in Davao City integrate cultural values, ethical conduct, environmental responsibility, emotional engagement, teamwork, and optimism into their service behaviors, enhancing guest satisfaction and the authenticity of the visitor experience. Based on these findings, it is recommended that tourism establishments continue to reinforce these values through targeted staff training programs, embed them in organizational policies and service standards, and promote initiatives that strengthen cultural, environmental, and community-oriented practices. Additionally, future studies may examine how these seven dimensions directly influence tourist satisfaction, loyalty, and the overall competitiveness of the destination.

The level of Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) in Davao City's tourism industry is generally agreed upon, with foreign tourists perceiving staff behaviors as aligned with the seven core Filipino values, or the 7Ms. Among these, Maka-Diyos (spiritual and ethical values) and May Pag-asa (optimism and hope) received the highest ratings, followed by Makabansa (cultural pride) and Makakalikasan (environmental responsibility), while Masayahin (cheerfulness) was slightly lower yet still positive. These findings suggest that tourism staff consistently demonstrate behaviors reflecting cultural, ethical, human-centered, and sustainable practices, contributing to an authentic service experience and enhancing visitor satisfaction. Based on these results, it is recommended that tourism establishments continue to reinforce these values through targeted training, organizational policies, and initiatives that promote spirituality, optimism, cultural pride, environmental responsibility, teamwork, empathy, and positive guest interactions, ensuring a more consistent and improved level of service excellence across all dimensions.

The results of the goodness-of-fit analysis indicate that the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE) model in the tourism industry demonstrates a strong fit, suggesting that the identified factors reliably represent key aspects of service excellence as perceived by foreign tourists in Davao City. Among these, Makakalikasan (Environmental Responsibility), Maka-Diyos (Faith and Spiritual Values), and May Bayanihan (Communal Solidarity) emerged as the most influential dimensions, highlighting how sustainability, spirituality, and cooperation shape authentic and culturally meaningful service experiences. These findings underscore that integrating deeply rooted Filipino values into service delivery enhances guest satisfaction, emotional engagement, and the perceived quality of tourism experiences. Based on these results, it is recommended that tourism establishments continue to embed these core values into staff training, service standards, and organizational practices, while promoting environmental stewardship, ethical and spiritual conduct, and collaborative teamwork. Furthermore, tourism managers and policymakers may use this model as a guide to develop culturally sensitive service excellence frameworks that strengthen destination competitiveness and provide consistent, authentic experiences for both local and international visitors.

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