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# Understanding Trends in Inclusive Travel for People with Disabilities in Laiya, Batangas: Basis for a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan

Bernadeth G. Cabingan[1*], Rachelle B. Omandam[1,2], Honey Lyn G. Sancha[1,3]
[1]*PHINMA-Saint Jude College, Quezon City, Philippines*
[*]*bernadethcabingan@gmail.com; [2]omandamrachelle@gmail.com; [3]sanchahoney25@gmail.com*

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## ABSTRACT

This study assessed the status of inclusive travel for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Laiya, Batangas, Philippines, as a basis for proposing a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan. Anchored on the Social Model of Disability and Inclusive Tourism Theory, it examined the destination in terms of the 5 A's of tourism (attractions, accessibility, accommodation, activities, and amenities), the barriers perceived by PWDs, and their travel inclusivity trends. Employing a descriptive mixed-methods design, the study involved 81 PWDs and their accompanying caregivers or family members selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered through a validated four-point Likert-scale questionnaire with open-ended items and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, Spearman's rank-order correlation, and thematic analysis. Results showed that respondents agreed that Laiya is accessible across all five components, with amenities (WM = 3.136) and accommodation (WM = 3.048) rated highest and tourism activities (WM = 2.849) rated lowest, particularly the adaptability of water activities. The most frequently reported barriers were the lack of ramps or elevators (87.65%), limited discounts or promotions (60.49%), lack of assistance from staff or other people (59.26%), and the absence of sign language interpreters (59.02%). Respondents nonetheless strongly agreed on their satisfaction, intention to revisit, and likelihood to recommend Laiya, and accessibility factors were strongly and significantly related to travel inclusivity trends ($\rho = 0.689$, $p < .001$). The study concluded that Laiya offers a generally accessible tourism environment, but gaps in mobility infrastructure, communication support, staff assistance, and financial accessibility continue to limit the full participation of PWDs. A Tourism Accessibility Development Plan addressing these gaps was proposed for implementation by tourism authorities, local government, and resort operators.

**Keywords**: *Accessible Tourism, Inclusive Travel, Persons with Disabilities, 5 A's of Tourism, Tourism Accessibility Development Plan, Laiya, Batangas*

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism plays an important role in economic growth and social development, especially in coastal destinations such as Laiya, Batangas, which is known for its natural attractions and beach resorts. In recent years, inclusive and accessible tourism has gained attention as part of sustainable development, emphasizing equal access for all travelers, including persons with disabilities (PWDs). Accessible tourism promotes social inclusion and improves the overall quality of travel experiences (UN Tourism, n.d.), while supportive environments enhance the mobility, safety, and independence of persons with disabilities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022).

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Laiya is one of the well-known coastal destinations in the province of Batangas, attracting local and foreign tourists with its beaches, resorts, and natural scenery. Tourism provides employment opportunities and supports small businesses in the community, and the growing number of beach resorts, cottages, and recreational facilities has contributed to the economic development of the area. Residents of Laiya also value hospitality and community cooperation, which are reflected in their interactions with tourists.

Despite these developments, the geographical conditions and infrastructure of Laiya present challenges for PWDs. Several access roads leading to the barangay are sloping, rocky, and not fully cemented, and public transportation is limited, with tricycles serving as the main mode of travel; these vehicles are often costly and are not designed for individuals with mobility impairments. Such conditions reflect broader challenges in public transport accessibility for PWDs in the country (Philippine Information Agency, 2025). Based on the researchers' observations, many public and private resorts lack wheelchair ramps, accessible pathways, and properly designed comfort rooms; some cottages intended for PWDs are temporarily modified using unsuitable materials; steep stairways lead to the beach; and the implementation of the PWD discount is inconsistent. Resort staff also have limited training in assisting guests with special needs, recreational and water-based activities are not fully inclusive, dead corals along the shoreline make walking painful and unsafe, and there are no designated viewing areas for boats and water activities. The absence of lifeguards and first-aid stations in key locations and inconsistent waste management practices further raise concerns about safety and the overall image of the destination.

While accessible tourism has been studied in various international and Philippine settings, the experiences of PWDs in Laiya, Batangas, have not been systematically examined using the 5 A's of tourism. This study therefore assessed the status of inclusive travel for PWDs in Laiya as a basis for proposing a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan. Specifically, it sought to (a) describe the profile of PWDs visiting Laiya in terms of age, type of disability, and frequency of visit; (b) assess Laiya in terms of the 5 A's of tourism, namely attractions, accessibility, accommodation, activities, and amenities; (c) identify the physical, communication, attitudinal, and financial barriers perceived by PWDs; (d) determine the level of travel inclusivity trends in terms of overall satisfaction, intention to revisit, likelihood to recommend, and level of participation in tourism activities; (e) determine whether there is a significant relationship between accessibility factors and travel inclusivity trends; and (f) propose a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan based on the findings. The study tested the null hypothesis that accessibility factors do not have a significant relationship with travel inclusivity trends among PWDs in Laiya, Batangas.

The findings are expected to assist the Department of Tourism (DOT) in strengthening policies and programs that promote inclusive and accessible tourism, provide PWD travelers with a platform to express their experiences and expectations, help local residents understand their role in creating a welcoming environment, offer policymakers and tourism planners evidence for integrating accessibility into long-term tourism development, and serve as a reference for future research on accessible coastal tourism in the Philippines.

## Literature Review

### *Theoretical Framework*

This study is anchored on the Social Model of Disability and Inclusive Tourism Theory, which explain how the participation of PWDs in tourism is shaped by environmental, social, and institutional conditions rather than by individual limitations alone. The Social Model of Disability emphasizes that disability is created by society through inaccessible physical structures, inadequate transportation systems, limited access to information, and insufficiently trained personnel, which restrict the mobility, independence, and participation of PWDs ("A Social Theory of Disability," n.d.; Scope, n.d.). As applied to this study, the model helps explain how physical and organizational limitations in tourism destinations affect the travel experiences of persons with disabilities.

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Complementing this perspective, Inclusive Tourism Theory highlights the importance of equal opportunities, non-discriminatory practices, and participatory development in creating accessible environments, and holds that tourism services, facilities, and programs should be designed to accommodate individuals of all abilities (Inclusive Tourism, 2026; Sustainability Directory, 2025). It promotes the integration of PWDs into mainstream tourism through appropriate policies, infrastructure, and service delivery.

Guided by these perspectives, the study examines the five components of tourism, namely attractions, accessibility, accommodation, amenities, and activities, in Laiya, Batangas. These frameworks provide a basis for analyzing the challenges encountered by travelers with disabilities and for identifying strategies that promote equitable participation, ultimately serving as the foundation for a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan aimed at enhancing inclusiveness, safety, and sustainability in the local tourism industry.

***Accommodation***

Accommodation services play a crucial role in ensuring inclusive tourism experiences, yet gaps remain in infrastructure, service delivery, and staff preparedness. Reindrawati et al. (2025) examined the role of hospitality services in promoting inclusive tourism in Indonesia and identified a gap between policy and actual practice, as limitations in infrastructure, budget, and staff training often prevent hotels from fully meeting the needs of guests with disabilities. They emphasized proactive strategies, empathy, and collaboration in improving accessibility. Similarly, Sahari et al. (2025) found that while Indonesian hotels provide basic physical features such as wheelchair access, gaps remain in staff training and service quality for guests with disabilities, and they highlighted the role of digital technology and stakeholder collaboration in improving accessibility.

In the Philippine setting, Galileo (2025) studied the awareness and employment readiness for PWDs in Davao City's restaurant industry and found that while owners had positive attitudes toward inclusion, many establishments lacked essential accessibility features and staff training. These studies emphasize that inclusive accommodation requires not only the presence of accessible features but also properly designed facilities and trained personnel, offering guidance for improving accommodation accessibility in Laiya, Batangas.

***Accessibility***

Accessibility in tourism involves interconnected physical, social, and informational factors that influence participation. Bálint (2025) found that people in Romania with less direct contact with PWDs were generally less aware of accessibility barriers and less supportive of inclusive initiatives, showing that addressing attitudinal barriers is as important as improving physical access. Liao et al. (2025), using GPS data from 2,415 residents, found that greater space-time accessibility supports wider engagement in diverse social and recreational activities, suggesting that equitable mobility can improve access to transport, accommodations, and attractions.

Community engagement and reliable information further support accessibility. La Patilaiya et al. (2025) found that a community-based intervention involving educational programs and informational materials significantly increased community awareness and supportive actions toward ecotourism accessibility for PWDs in Ternate, Indonesia. Teixeira et al. (2024) developed the access@tour by Action accessible tourism information system and highlighted that reliable accessibility information is essential for enabling independent travel for PWDs, complementing physical infrastructure.

Transportation remains a critical dimension of accessibility. Ariansyah et al. (2025) found that conventional public transport in Indonesia often has accessibility limitations, while ride-hailing services provide more inclusive alternatives for PWDs. In the Philippines, challenges in public transport accessibility for PWDs have likewise been reported (Philippine Information Agency, 2025). These findings highlight the need to improve transport options and access routes to destinations such as Laiya, Batangas.

***Activities***

Tourism activities are central to travel experiences, yet participation among PWDs remains limited by accessibility barriers. Nyquist et al. (2025) found that PWDs often depend on assistive devices and reliable information to join nature-based activities, and that limited access to proper equipment, trained staff, and accurate

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accessibility details can restrict participation. Hefny (2024), examining the experiences of disability travel bloggers, found that physical barriers such as inaccessible facilities and limited transportation continue to restrict participation, although many travelers adapt and find ways to engage, highlighting both their resilience and the ongoing need for improved accessibility.

Local evidence points to similar gaps. STI College Lucena Tourism and Hospitality Management (2025) found that many tourism establishments in Pagbilao, Quezon, still lacked ramps, accessible restrooms, clear signage, and trained personnel, indicating that inclusive tourism requires supportive services and well-planned activities beyond infrastructure. Adaptive programs such as dragon boat racing for PWDs demonstrate how persons with disabilities can actively participate in water-based recreation while gaining social interaction and a sense of empowerment (PADS, n.d.). For coastal destinations such as Laiya, incorporating adaptive water sports and guided beach activities may help ensure inclusive and enjoyable experiences.

***Amenities***

Amenities and support facilities are essential in enhancing accessibility and overall tourism experiences. Aguirre Montero et al. (2023) found generally low compliance with web accessibility standards and limited use of universal design principles on the social media and tourism websites of destinations in Andalusia and northern Morocco, noting that inaccessible digital information hinders travel planning for PWDs. Hardiana et al. (2025) found that well-designed amenities and visitor-friendly facilities in Yogyakarta's museums significantly enhanced tourist satisfaction and encouraged greater participation in cultural tourism.

In the Philippines, Gaspar-Pacana (2025) found that limited knowledge of the Accessibility Law (Batas Pambansa Blg. 344) among building owners and facility managers in Dumaguete City resulted in poorly designed restrooms, walkways, and public spaces that restricted the mobility and comfort of PWDs. These findings underscore the importance of assessing tourism facilities for compliance with universal design standards.

National initiatives demonstrate the value of inclusive amenities. The ASEAN Magazine (2023) highlighted the Philippines' Barrier-Free Tourism programs, which include accessible signage, rest areas, tactile paths, child-minding centers, and accessible waiting areas developed in partnership with disability advocacy organizations. Daily Tribune (2024) reported that the Mactan-Cebu International Airport received Level 1 Accessibility Accreditation from the Airports Council International for PWD-friendly facilities such as wheelchair assistance, accessible restrooms, ramps, priority seating, emergency assistance buttons, and trained staff, illustrating how well-designed amenities improve the comfort and participation of travelers with disabilities.

***Attractions***

Tourist attractions vary in accessibility, affecting the experiences of PWDs. Chwaja et al. (2025) evaluated 20 tourist attractions in Poland's Świętokrzyskie region and found that recreational and entertainment sites were generally more accessible, whereas historical and sacred sites posed significant barriers for visitors with hearing, vision, and mobility impairments because of high renovation costs, preservation restrictions, and limited staff training. Dushanova et al. (2025) found that despite smart tourism technologies such as virtual tours, mobile apps, and QR codes in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, many attractions still lacked basic features such as ramps, lifts, and accessible restrooms, highlighting the need to combine technology with universal design.

Philippine studies report similar gaps. Regencia et al. (2023) found that most tourist attractions in Manila lacked ramps, tactile guides, and barrier-free pathways, restricting the mobility, safety, and participation of PWDs. Zuniga et al. (2026) likewise found that limited ramps, inaccessible restrooms, and poor signage significantly restricted the mobility and comfort of differently abled tourists in Intramuros, emphasizing the importance of universal design and barrier-free access at tourist sites.

Using the 5 A's of tourism, Melegrito and Mamaclay (2025) found that poorly maintained access routes and insufficient supporting facilities reduced visitor satisfaction in Dingalan, Aurora, emphasizing that accessible infrastructure and well-equipped attractions are crucial for inclusive tourism. These findings suggest that

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improving barrier-free access and facilities at beaches and sightseeing sites in Laiya may enhance the enjoyment of persons with disabilities.

***Tourism Accessibility Development Planning***

Accessibility is a fundamental component of inclusive and sustainable tourism. Ahmed and Riaz (2024) emphasized that barrier-free infrastructure, inclusive services, and equitable policies improve the participation and satisfaction of PWDs while contributing to the sustainable development of local communities. Falcon and Dugaria (2022) found that accessible online platforms improve access to tourism information and services, suggesting that accessibility development plans must incorporate both physical and digital components.

Diwa et al. (2025) emphasized that accessibility extends beyond infrastructure to communication and service delivery, as limited knowledge of sign language and disability awareness restricts the provision of inclusive services to PWDs. This perspective is supported by UN Tourism (n.d.), which promotes accessibility frameworks that integrate infrastructure, information, services, and social inclusion. Together, these studies highlight the importance of a comprehensive tourism accessibility development plan that includes physical improvements, digital accessibility, and capacity-building initiatives.

***Synthesis and Conceptual Framework***

The reviewed literature establishes that accessibility is a fundamental element of inclusive tourism for PWDs, and that accessible infrastructure, inclusive services, and well-designed facilities significantly influence participation, satisfaction, and overall travel experience (Ahmed & Riaz, 2024; Hardiana et al., 2025; Reindrawati et al., 2025). Inclusivity also extends beyond physical access to digital systems, communication, staff competence, and policy support (Aguirre Montero et al., 2023; Diwa et al., 2025; Teixeira et al., 2024). However, persistent gaps in implementation, service quality, and infrastructure remain in both international and Philippine destinations (Chwaja et al., 2025; Regencia et al., 2023; Zuniga et al., 2026), and the accessibility of coastal destinations such as Laiya, Batangas, has not been examined from the perspective of PWDs using the 5 A's of tourism.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study. The 5 A's of tourism (attraction, accessibility, accommodation, activities, and amenities) serve as the independent variables; tourism inclusivity, which reflects how effectively physical, social, and communication barriers are removed, serves as the mediating variable; and the Tourism Accessibility Development Plan, which encompasses accessibility development, inclusive accommodation, inclusive activities, accessible amenities, and tourism participation, serves as the outcome of the study.

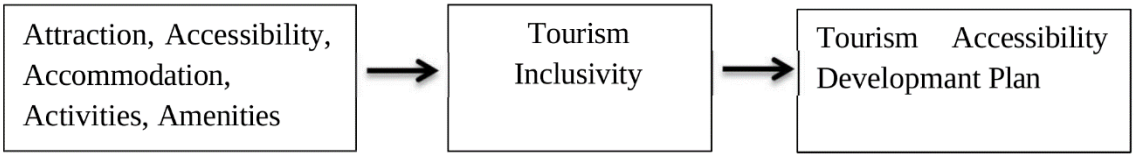



Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design using a mixed-methods approach to examine trends in inclusive travel among PWDs and their caregivers or family members in Laiya, Batangas. The quantitative approach used a structured questionnaire with closed-ended items rated on a four-point Likert scale to assess perceptions of tourism accessibility, barriers, and inclusivity, and to determine the relationship between accessibility factors and travel inclusivity trends. The qualitative approach used open-ended questions in the suggestions and recommendations section of the questionnaire to gather personal experiences, opinions, and

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insights that may not be fully captured through numerical data. This design enabled the analysis of both measurable trends and personal perspectives as inputs to the proposed Tourism Accessibility Development Plan.

**Research Locale**

The study was conducted in Laiya, Batangas, a coastal tourism destination known for its beaches, resorts, and natural scenery. It covered selected accommodation establishments and tourism activities in the area, specifically The Henry Resorts, Mamay Tino Beach Resorts, Les Caraibes Beach Resorts, Beata Jara Beach Place, and Hugon Beach Resort. The study evaluated facilities and services such as room accessibility, ramps, pathways, restrooms, staff assistance, safety provisions, and support services in relation to the 5 A's of tourism.

**Participants and Sampling Technique**

The participants were 81 PWDs and caregivers or family members who accompanied them during travel to Laiya. Participants were required to be persons with disabilities or caregivers or family members traveling with a person with a disability; to have experienced the 5 A's of tourism in Laiya by staying in an accommodation establishment, using transportation services, visiting local tourist sites, participating in tourism-related activities, and using supporting facilities and services; to be at least 18 years old; and to be willing to participate voluntarily.

Purposive sampling was employed because the research focused on individuals with direct experience of inclusive tourism in Laiya. The computed minimum sample size using the Lemeshow formula was 96, based on a 95% confidence level, a 10% margin of error, and an assumed proportion of 0.5. However, because of time constraints and the difficulty of reaching travelers with disabilities in the area, 81 respondents who were available and willing to participate during the data-gathering period were surveyed. Although slightly lower than the computed minimum, this sample was considered adequate for identifying trends and patterns relevant to the objectives of the study.

**Research Instrument**

The primary instrument was a structured survey questionnaire developed based on the objectives of the study, related literature on inclusive tourism and accessibility standards, and the conceptual framework. It consisted of five parts: Part I gathered the respondents' age, type of disability, and frequency of travel; Part II assessed Laiya based on the 5 A's of tourism using five items per component; Part III identified physical, communication, attitudinal, and financial barriers encountered during travel; Part IV measured travel inclusivity trends in terms of overall satisfaction, intention to revisit, likelihood to recommend, and level of participation; and Part V collected qualitative suggestions and recommendations. Parts II and IV used a four-point Likert scale (4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, 1 – Strongly Disagree). The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in tourism and research methodology for content validity, revised based on their recommendations, and pilot tested to determine its clarity, reliability, and appropriateness.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

Prior to fieldwork, the researchers prepared the questionnaires, informed consent forms, and official communication letters, and the validated questionnaire was finalized. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the concerned local authorities and the management of the selected accommodation establishments, after which the researchers coordinated with resort administrators and tourism personnel to reach respondents who met the inclusion criteria. During a two-day, one-night fieldwork period, the researchers personally administered the questionnaires and provided clear instructions. For participants who had difficulty reading or writing, guided interviews were conducted using the same questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, checked for completeness and consistency, clarified when necessary, and then encoded and organized for analysis.

**Data Analysis**

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondents' profile and the perceived barriers; because respondents could select more than one barrier, percentages within each category may exceed 100%.

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Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the respondents' assessment of the 5 A's of tourism and their travel inclusivity trends, with composite means computed for each component and interpreted using the scale in Table 1. Spearman's rank-order correlation (ρ) was used to determine the relationship between accessibility factors and travel inclusivity trends, and the null hypothesis was tested for significance. The respondents' open-ended suggestions and recommendations were analyzed through thematic analysis, in which similar responses were grouped into recurring themes. The quantitative and qualitative results served as the basis for the proposed Tourism Accessibility Development Plan.

Table 1. *Interpretation of Weighted Means*

| Scale | Weighted Mean Range | Descriptive Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | 3.26–4.00 | Strongly Agree |
| 3 | 2.51–3.25 | Agree |
| 2 | 1.76–2.50 | Disagree |
| 1 | 1.00–1.75 | Strongly Disagree |

**Ethical Considerations**

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the concerned local authorities and the management of the selected accommodation establishments. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, their rights, and the confidentiality of their responses, and informed consent was obtained before participation. Only individuals aged 18 years and above who were willing to participate voluntarily were included. Guided interviews were offered to participants with difficulty reading or writing to promote inclusivity and accurate responses. The principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were observed throughout the data-gathering process.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Profile of the Respondents**

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents. The largest age group was 26–35 years old (28.39%), followed by 36–45 years old (25.93%), indicating that most respondents belonged to economically active and travel-capable age groups. Physical disability was the most common type of disability (34.57%), followed by hearing impairment (25.93%) and visual impairment (20.99%). The predominance of physical disabilities suggests that mobility-related accessibility issues may play a major role in shaping the respondents' tourism experiences, particularly in a beach destination where terrain and infrastructure may pose challenges. Most respondents visited Laiya once a year (65.43%), indicating that travel to the destination is generally occasional; this frequency may be influenced by accessibility limitations, financial constraints, and the availability of inclusive facilities.

Table 2. *Profile of the Respondents*

| Profile | Category | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 18–25 years old | 11 | 13.58 |
| | 26–35 years old | 23 | 28.39 |
| | 36–45 years old | 21 | 25.93 |
| | 46–55 years old | 14 | 17.28 |
| | 56 years old and above | 11 | 13.58 |
| Type of Disability | Physical disability | 28 | 34.57 |
| | Hearing impairment | 21 | 25.93 |
| | Visual impairment | 17 | 20.99 |
| | Intellectual/cognitive disability | 6 | 7.41 |
| | Others | 9 | 11.11 |
| Frequency of Travel to Laiya | Once or twice a month | 12 | 14.82 |

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| Profile | Category | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Every three to six months | 3 | 3.70 |
| | Thrice a year | 5 | 6.17 |
| | Twice a year | 7 | 8.64 |
| | Once a year | 53 | 65.43 |

Note. N = 81.

**Assessment of Laiya Based on the 5 A's of Tourism**

Respondents agreed that Laiya is accessible across all five components of tourism. Amenities obtained the highest composite mean (3.136), followed by accommodation (3.048), attractions (2.985), and accessibility (2.960), while tourism activities obtained the lowest (2.849). The results for each component are presented in Tables 3 to 7.

**Tourism Activities**

Table 3. *Assessment of Laiya in Terms of Tourism Activities*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I can participate in beach activities safely and comfortably. | 3.050 | 0.855 | Agree |
| 2 | Water activities are adaptable for PWDs. | 2.688 | 1.074 | Agree |
| 3 | Tour guides are inclusive and accommodating. | 2.911 | 0.990 | Agree |
| 4 | Tourist spots and sightseeing areas in Laiya have accessible pathways and facilities (e.g., ramps, accessible restrooms). | 2.877 | 0.927 | Agree |
| 5 | Tourism activities provide enough support and assistance for PWDs. | 2.737 | 0.990 | Agree |
| | Overall Mean | 2.849 | 0.715 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 3, the overall mean of 2.849 indicates that respondents agreed that tourism activities in Laiya are accessible and inclusive, although this component received the lowest rating among the 5 A's. Participation in beach activities safely and comfortably obtained the highest mean (3.050), suggesting that some providers have begun implementing measures that support the participation of PWDs, and tour guides were generally perceived as inclusive and accommodating (2.911). However, support and assistance for PWDs during activities (2.737) and the adaptability of water activities (2.688) received the lowest ratings, with the latter also showing the greatest variability (SD = 1.074). These results indicate that adaptations for water-based activities and specialized support services remain limited. The finding is consistent with Nyquist et al. (2025), who found that limited assistive equipment, trained staff, and accessibility information restrict the participation of PWDs in outdoor activities, and with Hefny (2024), who reported that physical barriers continue to restrict tourism participation among travelers with disabilities.

**Accommodation**

Table 4. *Assessment of Laiya in Terms of Accommodation*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The resort entrance and pathways are safe and easy to navigate for persons with disabilities. | 3.049 | 0.921 | Agree |
| 2 | The resort provides accessible rooms designed for persons with disabilities. | 3.074 | 0.848 | Agree |
| 3 | Rooms are spacious, comfortable, and arranged to accommodate persons with disabilities. | 3.111 | 0.922 | Agree |
| 4 | Bathrooms are equipped with accessibility features (e.g., grab bars, roll-in showers, raised toilet seats). | 2.951 | 0.986 | Agree |

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| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Resort staff are trained and ready to assist guests with disabilities whenever needed. | 3.050 | 0.980 | Agree |
| | Overall Mean | 3.048 | 0.726 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

Table 4 shows that accommodations were generally perceived as accessible and supportive (overall mean = 3.048). Spacious and comfortable rooms arranged to accommodate PWDs obtained the highest mean (3.111), followed by the availability of accessible rooms (3.074), trained and ready staff (3.050), and safe and navigable entrances and pathways (3.049). Bathrooms equipped with accessibility features received the lowest mean (2.951), suggesting that accessible bathroom facilities may not yet be consistently available across accommodations. These results highlight the importance of both physical infrastructure and staff support in inclusive hospitality. The finding is consistent with Reindrawati et al. (2025) and Sahari et al. (2025), who found that while basic accessibility features are available in hotels, gaps in infrastructure and staff preparedness continue to limit the experiences of guests with disabilities.

**Accessibility**

Table 5. *Assessment of Laiya in Terms of Accessibility*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Transportation to Laiya is accessible. | 3.160 | 0.915 | Agree |
| 2 | Pathways, sidewalks, and entrances in tourism areas are wheelchair-friendly. | 2.840 | 0.993 | Agree |
| 3 | Signages and directional signs are clear, visible, and easy to understand. | 2.901 | 0.903 | Agree |
| 4 | Public areas and common spaces are free from obstacles that may hinder mobility. | 2.815 | 0.937 | Agree |
| 5 | Information desks and assistance points are easy to locate and accessible to persons with disabilities. | 3.063 | 0.965 | Agree |
| | Overall Mean | 2.960 | 0.749 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

Table 5 shows that respondents generally perceived Laiya as accessible (overall mean = 2.960), although certain barriers remain. Accessible transportation to Laiya obtained the highest mean (3.160), suggesting that respondents generally find it possible to reach the destination despite mobility challenges, followed by accessible information desks and assistance points (3.063) and clear signage (2.901). In contrast, wheelchair-friendly pathways, sidewalks, and entrances (2.840) and obstacle-free public areas (2.815) received the lowest ratings, indicating that physical infrastructure still presents challenges, particularly for individuals with mobility impairments. These results support Liao et al. (2025), who found that greater accessibility enables wider engagement in leisure activities, and Bálint (2025), who emphasized that physical and attitudinal barriers must be addressed together to support inclusive tourism.

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### Attractions

Table 6. *Assessment of Laiya in Terms of Attractions*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Beach attractions in Laiya are accessible to persons with disabilities. | 3.099 | 0.917 | Agree |
| 2 | Recreational attractions are inclusive and allow participation of persons with disabilities. | 2.802 | 0.843 | Agree |
| 3 | Viewing areas, scenic spots, and photo areas are designed to accommodate PWDs. | 2.914 | 0.897 | Agree |
| 4 | Entrance fees, rules, and attraction guidelines are fair and considerate of PWDs. | 3.086 | 0.883 | Agree |
| 5 | Attraction staff provide proper assistance to PWDs when visiting tourist spots. | 3.000 | 0.947 | Agree |
| | Overall Mean | 2.985 | 0.713 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 6, attractions in Laiya were generally perceived as accessible and inclusive (overall mean = 2.985). The accessibility of beach attractions obtained the highest mean (3.099), followed by fair and considerate entrance fees, rules, and guidelines (3.086) and proper assistance from attraction staff (3.000). Viewing areas and scenic spots designed for PWDs (2.914) and recreational attractions that allow the participation of PWDs (2.802) received the lowest ratings, implying that some recreational facilities still lack adequate adaptive features. The finding is consistent with Chwaja et al. (2025), who found that accessibility varies across types of attractions, and with Melegrito and Mamaclay (2025), who emphasized that well-maintained access routes and supporting facilities are crucial for visitor satisfaction.

### Amenities

Table 7. *Assessment of Laiya in Terms of Amenities*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Restaurants and restrooms in Laiya are accessible to persons with disabilities. | 3.150 | 0.915 | Agree |
| 2 | Public seating areas, waiting spaces, and resting areas are comfortable and accessible for PWDs. | 3.272 | 0.866 | Strongly Agree |
| 3 | Drinking water stations, trash bins, and basic facilities are conveniently located for PWDs. | 3.136 | 0.932 | Agree |
| 4 | Staff assigned to public facilities are knowledgeable in assisting guests with disabilities. | 3.037 | 1.042 | Agree |
| 5 | Emergency and first-aid facilities are accessible and available in public areas. | 3.111 | 0.975 | Agree |
| | Overall Mean | 3.136 | 0.755 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

Table 7 shows that amenities received the highest composite rating among the 5 A's (overall mean = 3.136). Comfortable and accessible public seating, waiting, and resting areas obtained the highest mean (3.272), the only indicator interpreted as Strongly Agree, followed by accessible restaurants and restrooms (3.150), conveniently located basic facilities (3.136), and accessible emergency and first-aid facilities (3.111). Knowledgeable staff in public facilities obtained the lowest mean (3.037) and the greatest variability (SD = 1.042), suggesting that additional training may further improve service quality for PWD guests. These results support Hardiana et al. (2025), who found that well-designed amenities enhance visitor satisfaction, and the Barrier-Free

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Tourism initiatives described by The ASEAN Magazine (2023), which emphasize accessible rest areas and public facilities.

**Perceived Barriers**

Table 8 presents the barriers perceived by PWDs when visiting Laiya. The most frequently reported physical barrier was the lack of ramps or elevators (87.65%), followed by uneven pathways or stairs (27.16%). The absence of sign language interpreters (59.02%) and unclear directions or signs (41.98%) were the main communication barriers. Lack of assistance from staff or other people (59.26%) was the most common attitudinal barrier, while discrimination or rude behavior (25.93%) and negative attitudes toward PWDs (18.52%) were also reported. Limited discounts or promotions (60.49%) was the most commonly cited financial constraint, followed by expensive entrance or activity fees (25.93%) and high transportation costs (19.75%).

Table 8. *Perceived Barriers Encountered by Persons with Disabilities*

| Barriers | Category | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Physical | Lack of ramps or elevators | 71 | 87.65 |
| | Uneven pathways or stairs | 22 | 27.16 |
| | Inaccessible restrooms | 6 | 7.41 |
| | Others | 2 | 2.47 |
| Communication | No sign language interpreters | 47 | 59.02 |
| | Unclear directions or signs | 34 | 41.98 |
| | Language differences | 6 | 7.41 |
| Attitudinal | Lack of assistance from staff or other people | 48 | 59.26 |
| | Discrimination or rude behavior | 21 | 25.93 |
| | Negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities | 15 | 18.52 |
| Financial | Limited discounts or promotions | 49 | 60.49 |
| | Expensive entrance or activity fees | 21 | 25.93 |
| | High transportation costs | 16 | 19.75 |

Note. N = 81. Multiple responses; percentages within each category may exceed 100%.

These results indicate that mobility infrastructure remains the most pressing challenge for visitors with disabilities, and that visitors with hearing impairments may experience difficulties communicating with tourism personnel. In their open-ended responses, respondents also emphasized the need for PWD discounts across attractions, accessibility, accommodation, activities, and amenities to reduce financial barriers. The predominance of infrastructural barriers is consistent with Regencia et al. (2023) and Zuniga et al. (2026), who found that the lack of ramps and barrier-free pathways restricts the mobility of PWDs at Philippine tourist sites, and with Gaspar-Pacana (2025), who linked poorly designed facilities to limited knowledge of the Accessibility Law. The communication and attitudinal barriers support Diwa et al. (2025), who noted that limited sign language competence among tourism personnel restricts inclusive service, and Bálint (2025), who emphasized the importance of addressing attitudinal barriers.

**Travel Inclusivity Trends**

Table 9 presents the travel inclusivity trends of the respondents. Likelihood to recommend Laiya to others obtained the highest mean (3.346), followed by intention to revisit (3.300) and overall satisfaction (3.259), all interpreted as Strongly Agree. Level of participation in activities obtained the lowest mean (3.127), interpreted as Agree.

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Table 9. *Travel Inclusivity Trends among Persons with Disabilities*

| S/N | Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Overall satisfaction level – How satisfied are you with your travel experience? | 3.259 | 0.771 | Strongly Agree |
| 2 | Intention to revisit Laiya – How likely are you to return to Laiya in the future? | 3.300 | 0.818 | Strongly Agree |
| 3 | Likelihood to recommend to others – How likely are you to recommend Laiya to friends or family? | 3.346 | 0.761 | Strongly Agree |
| 4 | Level of participation in activities – How actively did you participate in the travel or tourism activities? | 3.127 | 0.868 | Agree |

Legend: 3.26–4.00 Strongly Agree; 2.51–3.25 Agree; 1.76–2.50 Disagree; 1.00–1.75 Strongly Disagree

These results show that, despite the barriers they encountered, PWD travelers generally had positive perceptions of their travel experiences in Laiya, reflected in strong loyalty and willingness to recommend the destination. The comparatively lower rating for participation in activities is consistent with the lower assessment of tourism activities and suggests that accessibility limitations continue to constrain engagement. This pattern supports Hefny (2024), who found that travelers with disabilities often adapt and find ways to engage despite persistent barriers, and Hardiana et al. (2025), who linked accessible facilities to greater visitor satisfaction and participation.

**Relationship between Accessibility Factors and Travel Inclusivity Trends**

Table 10 shows a strong positive and significant relationship between accessibility factors and travel inclusivity trends among PWDs ($\rho = 0.689$, $p < .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

*Table 10. Relationship between Accessibility Factors and Travel Inclusivity Trends*

| Variables | Spearman ρ | p-value | Significance | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accessibility Factors and Travel Inclusivity Trends | 0.689 | < .001 | Significant at 1% | Reject Ho |

This finding implies that better accessibility conditions are associated with higher satisfaction, stronger intentions to revisit, and a greater likelihood of recommending the destination among PWDs, so that improvements in accessibility infrastructure, inclusive services, and supportive facilities may enhance their travel experiences. The result is consistent with the Social Model of Disability, which locates barriers to participation in the environment rather than in the individual, and with Ahmed and Riaz (2024), who emphasized that barrier-free infrastructure and inclusive services improve the participation and satisfaction of PWDs. It also supports Liao et al. (2025), who found that greater accessibility is associated with wider participation in leisure activities.

**Proposed Tourism Accessibility Development Plan**

Based on the findings, a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan was proposed to address the most challenging barriers first while gradually improving the overall inclusivity of Laiya's tourism environment. Table 11 summarizes its key result areas, main activities, and responsible parties, which correspond to the 5 A's of tourism and the communication, attitudinal, and financial barriers identified in the study.

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Table 11. *Summary of the Proposed Tourism Accessibility Development Plan*

| Area | Key Result Areas | Main Activities | Persons Responsible |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accessibility | Ramps, pathways, and elevators; signage; public areas | Construct ramps, install elevators, and level uneven pathways; install clear signs with braille and pictograms; clear and maintain pathways and rest points | LGU, resort owners, tourism office, resort staff |
| Accommodation | Accessible rooms; bathrooms; staff training | Install grab bars, roll-in showers, wide doorways, raised toilet seats, and emergency call buttons; conduct inclusive tourism and sensitivity training | Resort management and staff, tourism office |
| Activities | Beach and water activities; tour guides; support services | Provide adaptive equipment and trained assistants; train guides on disability awareness; establish on-site assistance points | Tour operators, resorts, tourism office, LGU |
| Attractions | Tourist spots; entrance policies; attraction staff | Install ramps, tactile markers, and accessible viewing platforms; provide discounted or free entry; train attraction personnel | LGU, tourism office, attraction management |
| Amenities | Restrooms and restaurants; seating areas; emergency facilities | Install accessible restrooms and adapt tables; provide accessible and shaded seating; set up clearly marked first-aid points | LGU, resort and restaurant management |
| Communication, attitudinal, and financial barriers | Information access; respectful interactions; affordability | Hire sign language interpreters and provide braille guides; conduct disability awareness programs; offer PWD discounts, package deals, and free services | Tourism office, resorts, LGU |

The plan requires collaboration among the DOT, tourism planners, policymakers, resort owners, local residents, and PWDs, with continuous monitoring through success indicators such as improved accessibility ratings, fewer reported barriers, and higher satisfaction and participation among PWD visitors. This approach reflects the recommendations of Reindrawati et al. (2025) and La Patilaiya et al. (2025) on stakeholder collaboration and community engagement in inclusive tourism.

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that Laiya, Batangas, offers a generally accessible and inclusive tourism environment for persons with disabilities, particularly in its public amenities and accommodation facilities. However, significant gaps remain in mobility infrastructure, communication support, staff assistance, and financial accessibility, as reflected in the lower ratings for the adaptability of water activities, support during activities, and obstacle-free pathways, and in the high proportions of respondents who reported the lack of ramps or elevators, limited discounts, lack of assistance, and the absence of sign language interpreters. These gaps continue to restrict the full participation of PWDs in tourism activities.

Despite these challenges, PWD travelers reported high satisfaction, strong intentions to revisit, and a willingness to recommend Laiya, indicating the destination's considerable potential to develop as an inclusive tourism site. The strong and significant relationship between accessibility factors and travel inclusivity trends affirms that improving physical infrastructure, implementing adaptive services, and training tourism personnel are

essential to promoting equitable participation and enhancing the experiences of travelers with disabilities. The study contributes empirical evidence on accessible coastal tourism in the Philippines and provides a basis for a Tourism Accessibility Development Plan for Laiya.

**Recommendation**

Based on the findings and conclusions, the Department of Tourism may strengthen and strictly implement policies and standards on accessible tourism, develop comprehensive guidelines on inclusive infrastructure, transportation, and service delivery, and ensure the proper implementation of mandated discounts, incentives, and privileges for PWDs across tourism establishments, with regular monitoring of compliance. Policymakers, tourism planners, and the local government may integrate accessibility into long-term tourism development plans by investing in barrier-free infrastructure, accessible transportation, and inclusive public facilities aligned with national and international standards.

Resort owners and tourism operators may prioritize the installation of ramps and accessible pathways, accessible bathroom features, adaptive equipment for water activities, and clearly marked first-aid points, and may conduct disability awareness, inclusive customer service, and basic sign language training for their staff and tour guides. They are also encouraged to ensure that pricing policies are inclusive, transparent, and compliant with PWD discount regulations.

Local residents may support inclusive tourism by fostering a welcoming and respectful environment and by participating in disability sensitivity programs, while PWDs and PWD groups may actively provide feedback on accessibility, service quality, and affordability and collaborate with tourism stakeholders in advocacy initiatives. Future researchers may extend the study to other destinations, focus on specific types of disabilities, involve larger samples that meet the computed minimum sample size, and employ longitudinal or comparative designs to further validate the findings.

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