

Abundance and diversity of mangroves in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental, Philippines

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Abstract. Mangroves are one of the most important vegetation components in the intertidal area. The municipality of Kinoguitan possesses a thick cover of mangrove forest, distributed in 6 coastal barangays. The abundance and diversity of the mangrove forest in Kinoguitan were determined using the Shannon index of diversity. The diameter at breast height, tree height of the mangroves along with environmental conditions were also recorded. A total of eleven ($n=11$) true mangrove species were surveyed in the entire municipality namely: *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Sonneratia alba*, *Avicennia marina*, *Rhizophora apiculata*, *Rhizophora stylosa*, *Excoecaria agallocha*, *Avicennia rumphiana*, *Lumnitzera littorea*, *Sonneratia caseolaris*, *Bruguiera* sp., and *Xylocarpus granatum* and one associate mangrove *Nypa fruticans*. The mangroves of Kinoguitan had a Shannon diversity index (H) of 1.63. In terms of diameter at breast height (DBH), the Barangays of Esperanza and Bulisong had most of the old growth mangroves.

Key Words: diameter at breast height, Shannon index of diversity, vegetation.

Introduction. In the tropical coastline, mangroves are one of the prominent features together with seagrass beds (Nagelkerken 2009). Mangroves are salt tolerant evergreen forest ecosystems that are morphologically adapted to tidal ecosystems (Duke 2011). They are present in the tropical and subtropical intertidal regions of the world between approximately 32°N and 38°S latitude. In general, mangrove ecosystems are recognized for the goods and services they provides such as serving as habitats to aquatic species as well as terrestrial organisms (Alongi 2014). Local communities benefit from mangroves as sources of food and subsistence (Satyanarayana et al 2012; Sawairnathan & Halimoon 2017).

The Philippines, a tropical archipelagic nation in Southeast Asia, is regarded as the area with the greatest diversity of mangroves worldwide (Spalding et al 2010). It has approximately 44 true mangroves species, holding at least 68% of the world's approximately 65 mangrove species (Kathiresan & Bingham 2001; Primavera et al 2004). The Philippines is considered one of the top 15 most mangrove-rich countries in the world according to Long & Giri (2011). However, the extent of mangrove areas in the country has been experiencing a rapid decline since the 1900s. This is attributed to overexploitation by coastal dwellers, conversion to agriculture, salt ponds, industry, and settlements. The biggest factor, however, is the mangrove forest conversion to aquaculture ponds (Primavera 2000).

Numerous assessments on mangrove biodiversity in the Philippines have already been done such as in Banaybanay, Davao Oriental and Claver, Surigao del Norte by Pototan et al (2021) and Goloran et al (2020), respectively. Kinoguitan is among the areas of Misamis Oriental with a thick mangrove cover. However, an updated

measurement of mangrove cover in Kinoguitan is needed. This assessment will provide updated information that will serve as a basis for future monitoring and policy recommendations to conserve and protect this vital life-support system. This study aimed to determine the abundance and diversity of mangroves in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental. Furthermore, the study documented the species composition, relative abundance, frequency, and dominance of mangroves.

Material and Method

Study area. The selected study area is a seaside municipality was in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental, presented in Figure 1 along with the plots for field sampling. The municipality makes up 1.36% of Misamis Oriental's total area with a land area of 42.56 km², or 16.43 sqm (PhilAtlas 2020). The descriptions of the present status of each sampling station are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Description of the six sampling sites namely the barangays of Sumalag, Buko, Panabol, Panabol, Poblacion, Bolisong, and Esperanza in terms of soil and other features in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental

Site	Barangay	Coordinates	Description
1	Sumalag	8°58'48.89"N 124°47'16.29"E	The site is situated alongside a river. The substrate is muddy covering the depth around 30 cm.
2	Buko	8°59'35.20"N 124°47'53.06"E	The largest mangrove area in Kinoguitan with a mixed substrate of sandy clay and mud. Partly submerged in water even in low tide.
3	Panabol	9°0'2.42"N 124°48'43.28"E	Site is nearby residential houses and chopped mangroves were observed near the shoreline. However, the area has many saplings of <i>Rhizophora</i> species. The site has a mixed substrate of sand, near the residential area, and mud.
4	Poblacion	8°58'54.60"N 124°47'21.07"E	Site is surrounded by houses and located near the cemetery area. Freshwater outlets coming from household areas were also observed. The substrate is a mixture of mud and big rocks. Presence of a sea wall was also observed.
5	Bolisong	9°0'13.07"N 124°49'48.14"E	The location of the site is close to houses. <i>Nypa furticans</i> also dominated the place. An outlet of freshwater was observed in the area. The substrates were a mixture of sand near the houses, and muddy near the freshwater outlet.
6	Esperanza	9°0'14.22"N 124°49'41.73"E	The site is located in the landward zone not affected by tides. The substrate was composed of sand. Beach resorts were observed within the mangrove area and dead mangrove trees were present in the vicinity due to a recent storm. Mangrove present here were <i>Avicennia rumphiana</i> .

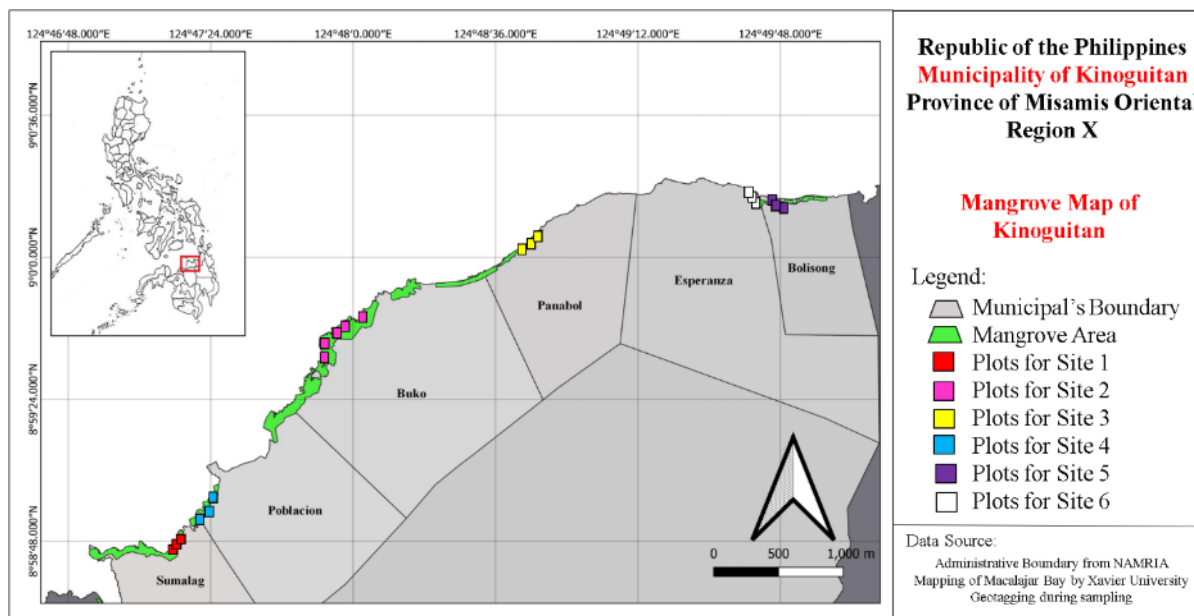


Figure 1. Location map of the sampling stations in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental (Source: QGIS version 3.16).

Environmental parameters. Environmental parameters such as water temperature, pH, salinity, and dissolved oxygen (DO) were measured *in situ* during the field sampling. A standard mercury thermometer was used to measure water temperature. A refractometer was used for measuring the salinity (ppt). A pH meter was used for measuring the pH of the water. DO content of the seawater was measured by using a DO meter and the values were recorded as mg L^{-1} .

Field sampling

Establishment of plots. Plots were established in six identified sampling sites in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental. Three to five plots with the size of 10x10 m were established at 20-m intervals. 20 m was considered the longest distance that can be accurately surveyed in a dense forest (Dallmeier 1992). The establishment of plots was subjected to accessibility to the sampling site. Hence, purposive random sampling was used in this study.

Mangrove species identification. Mangroves were identified according to the leaf morphology and its phyllotaxy, flowers and fruits. The following references were used to identify the taxonomic classification of mangroves: Calumpong & Meñez (1997), Primavera (2009), and IUCN (2017).

Measurement of abundance and vegetation structure of mangroves. Assessment of mangroves was conducted by the use of the transect-quadrat method (English et al 1997). The height and girth of mangroves that were classified as mature, with height higher than 4 m, were measured and recorded. A 100 m transect line was laid perpendicular to the shore with a 10x10 m quadrat established along the transect line. Furthermore, the trees found inside the quadrat were counted per species and the relative density (RD), relative dominance (RDOM), relative frequency (RF) and importance value (IVI) were calculated with the following formula (Krebs 1989):

$$\text{Relative density} = (\text{Number of species 1} / \text{Total number of individuals}) \times 100$$

$$\text{Relative dominance} = (\text{Basal area of species 1} / \text{Total basal area}) \times 100$$

Relative frequency = (Number of plots occupied by species 1/Total number of plots) x 100

Importance value = Relative density + Relative dominance + Relative frequency

Measurement of diameter at breast height (DBH), basal area (BA) and height. The girth was measured by using a tape measure at a standard breast height of 1.3 m and following the standard method presented in Figure 2 for measuring the DBH of mangrove forest with irregular growth (Fourqurean et al 2014). The height of trees (m) was measured using a modified clinometer applying trigonometric techniques (Figure 3). Furthermore, DBH and BA were calculated with the following formula (English et al 1997):

Diameter at breast height (DBH) = Circumference/3.1416

Basal area (BA) = 3.1416(DBH)²/4

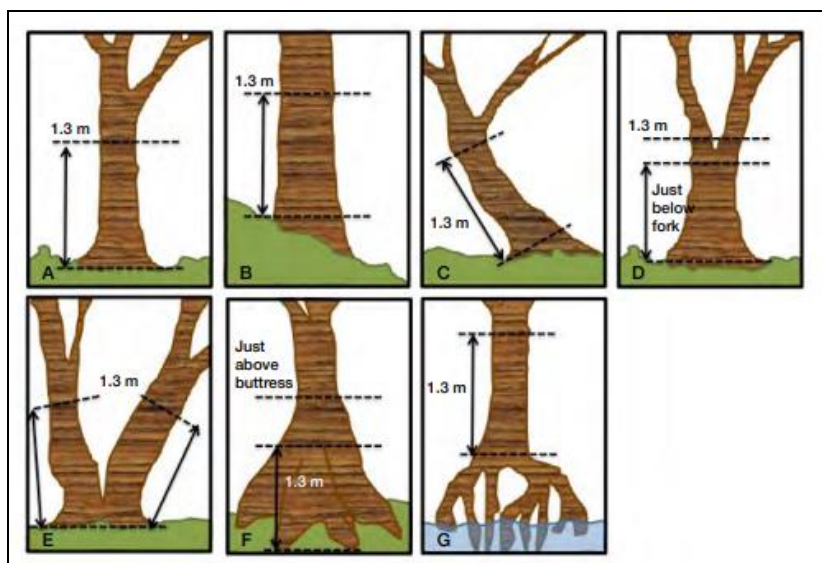


Figure 2. Estimating diameter at breast height for irregular mangrove trees; modified from Pearson et al (2005).

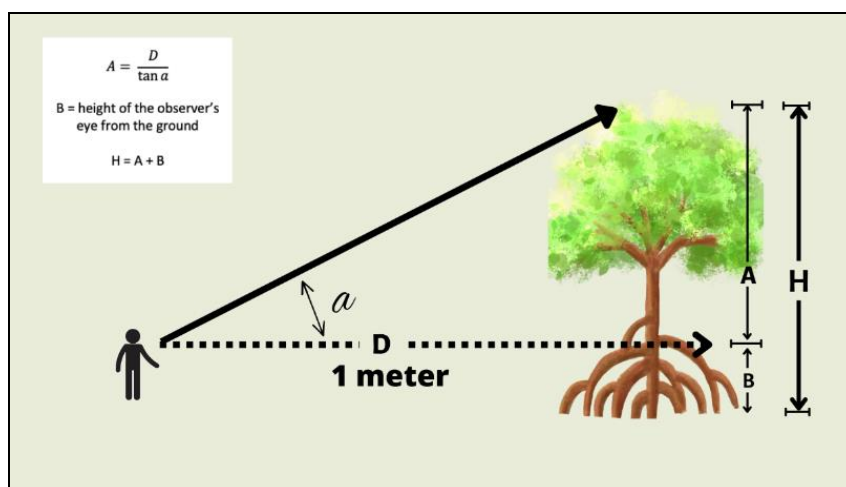


Figure 3. Measurement of height using a modified clinometer (English et al 1997).

Statistical analysis. The Shannon Index of Diversity (H) was determined using the PAST software. Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to determine the differences between the DBH, height (h) and BA of mangroves according to sampling area. Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger Pairwise Comparison was employed to determine the differences between the sampling sites.

Results and Discussion

Diversity and important value indices. Twelve species of mangroves belonging to 5 orders, 7 families, and 8 genera were found in the six coastal barangays of Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental (Table 2). *Nypa fruticans* was the only associate mangrove species. The species of true mangrove were *Sonneratia alba*, *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Avicennia marina*, *Rhizophora apiculata*, *Rhizophora stylosa*, *Excoecaria agallocha*, *Avicennia rumphiana*, *Lumnitzera littorea*, *Sonneratia caseolaris*, *Bruguiera* sp., and *Xylocarpus granatum*. Barangay Sumalag had four 4 species, Barangay Buko had 7 species, Barangay Panabol had 3 species, Barangay Poblacion had 6 species, Barangay Bolisong had 5 species and Esperanza had 1 species (Table 3).

The H value ranged from 0 to 1.47. Barangay Poblacion has the highest diversity index (H=1.47), followed by Barangay Bolisong (H=1.38) and Buko (H=1.29). Barangay Esperanza had only one species present, *A. rumphiana* (Table 4). The entire municipality of Kinoguitan had an H value of 1.63, higher compared with that of the study conducted in Dumanquillas Bay, Philippines, which was 1.1 (Bitantos et al 2017) and in the study on mangroves in Bahile, Puerto Princesa, Palawan (H=0.99) (Abino et al 2014). Also, the study conducted in Molugan, El Salvador, presented a range of H values from 0.71-1.65 (Taneo 2021).

Table 2
Classification of mangroves in in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental

Order	Family	Species	Common name
Myrtales	Lythraceae	<i>Sonneratia alba</i>	Pagatpat
		<i>Sonneratia caseolaris</i>	Pagatpat
Malpighiales	Combretaceae	<i>Lumnitzera littorea</i>	Culasi
	Rhizophoraceae	<i>Bruguiera</i> sp.	Pototan
		<i>Rhizophora mucronata</i>	Bakhaw babae
		<i>Rhizophora apiculata</i>	Bakhaw lalaki
		<i>Rhizophora stylosa</i>	Bakhaw bato
		<i>Excoecaria agallocha</i>	Buta-buta
Lamiales	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Avicennia rumphiana</i>	Miyapi
	Acanthaceae	<i>Avicennia marina</i>	Miyapi
		<i>Xylocarpus granatum</i>	Tabigi
Sapindales	Meliaceae	<i>Nypa fruticans</i>	Nipa
Arcales	Arecaceae		

Table 3
Occurrence of mangroves in 6 sites from Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental

Area	Species											
	Sa	Sc	LI	Br	Rm	Ra	Rs	Ea	Ar	Am	Xg	
Sumalag	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Buko	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	
Panabol	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	
Poblacion	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	
Bolisong	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	
Esperanza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	

Note: (+) - present; (-) - absent; Sa - *Sonneratia alba*; Sc - *Sonneratia caseolaris*; LI - *Lumnitzera littorea*; Br - *Bruguiera* sp.; Rm - *Rhizophora mucronata*; Ra - *Rhizophora apiculata*; Rs - *Rhizophora stylosa*; Ea - *Excoecaria agallocha*; Ar - *Avicennia rumphiana*; Am - *Avicennia marina*; Xg - *Xylocarpus granatum*.

R. mucronata is present in some sampling sites, such as in Barangay Sumalag, Buko and Poblacion. It has the highest total number of individuals and the highest importance value index. The occurrence of this species can be attributed to its ability to withstand high currents, tides and very high salinity (Cañizares & Seronay 2016). *R. mucronata* is a common mangrove in the Philippines with highly viable fruits that last for months (Tamai & Lampa 1988). *Rhizophora* species are often submerged in saline water, and they have adaptations that allow them to survive harsh environment conditions (Baier 1996; Loría-Naranjo et al 2014).

Another genus of mangrove that was observed in Kinoguitan with high numbers of individuals was *Sonneratia*, present in some sampling sites including barangay Sumalag, Buko, Poblacion and Bolisong. The high BA of *Sonneratia* was clearly noticeable. These results show the same trend as in the studies conducted in Sarangani Province (Mullet et al 2014; Natividad et al 2015) and Olango Island Wildlife Sanctuary (Lozano & Bueno 2015), where *S. alba* species have comparatively higher BA compared to other species. *Sonneratia* grow well in all types of soil, such as gravel, very coarse sand, medium sand, fine sand, very fine sand and silt/clay (Mullet et al 2014), showing the resilience of the species.

A. rumphiana individuals were observed in areas located in the inland portion and alongside houses of locals living near the tree. *A. rumphiana* in most sampling sites had a lower number of individuals. However, it has a greater BA compared to other species of mangroves observed, which implies that *A. rumphiana* were more mature than other species. The low density of some of the species may be attributed to the lack of substrate where the species survive and thrive best, in loam and muddy areas (Cudiamat & Rodriguez 2017). Mangrove forests have complex interactions with the surrounding environment (Sherman et al 1998; Gleason et al 2003; Otero et al 2006; Berger et al 2008), where the growth of individual species is affected by both physical and chemical characteristics of soil and seawater (Tomlinson 1986; Smith III 1992; Matthijs et al 1999; Satyanarayana et al 2002).

Table 4

Total number of individuals, basal area, H value and Importance Value Index of mangroves per sampling site

Site	Species	Total no. of individuals	Basal area (cm ²) mean ± SD	H	IVI (%)
Sumalag	<i>Sonneratia alba</i>	2	41.56±20.26	0.77	37.76
	<i>Rhizophora mucronata</i>	61	41.82±25.10		202.07
	<i>Avicennia marina</i>	3	98.50±37.39		44.17
	<i>Rhizophora apiculata</i>	18	63.00±30.73		82.67
Buko	<i>Sonneratia alba</i>	5	7591.51±6590.1	1.29	145.48
	<i>Rhizophora mucronata</i>	50	78.61±40.71		137.84
	<i>Avicennia marina</i>	8	67.12±31.82		29.06
	<i>Rhizophora apiculata</i>	3	34.34±6.83		23.19
	<i>Rhizophora stylosa</i>	32	71.25±47.55		96.52
	<i>Excoecaria agallocha</i>	1	107.18		21.21
	<i>Avicennia rumphiana</i>	2	1111.55±1529.17		26.70
Panabol	<i>Avicennia rumphiana</i>	9	404.30±355.77	0.33	280.78
	<i>Lumnitzera littorea</i>	1	369.7		52.55
Poblacion	<i>Sonneratia alba</i>	9	662.85±751.05	1.47	205.91
	<i>Rhizophora mucronata</i>	9	104.02±58.39		74.42
	<i>Avicennia marina</i>	8	67.00±18.57		66.06
	<i>Rhizophora apiculata</i>	3	64.67±45.44		45.51
	<i>Rhizophora stylosa</i>	2	63.74±60.61		41.42
Bolisong	<i>Avicennia rumphiana</i>	6	903.97± 1056.44	1.38	219.01
	<i>Lumnitzera littorea</i>	1	305.9		45.13
	<i>Sonneratia caseolaris</i>	2	231.24±216.56		54.92
	<i>Bruguiera</i> sp.	3	149.45±170.84		62.43
	<i>Xylocarpus granatum</i>	1	803.75		51.82
Esperanza	<i>Avicennia rumphiana</i>	6	1197.97±677.94	0	300

Note: H – Shannon diversity index value; IVI - importance value index.

Differences between sampling sites. Table 5 shows the comparison of sampling sites using the Kruskal-Wallis test considering girth at breast height (GBH), h, DBH and BA. Results show that sampling sites vary in terms of GBH, h, DBH, and BA ($p < 0.001$). The Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger Pairwise Comparison further showed that significant differences in terms of the height (Table 6) of mangroves existed between the following sampling sites: Bolisong and Buko, Buko and Panabol, Buko and Sumalag, and Poblacion and Sumalag. The highest number of tall trees was found in Buko and Sumalag indicating that there are more mature trees in these stations. Members of the genus *Rhizophora* had the highest number of individuals recorded in the study sites, especially in Buko and Sumalag. These species present the highest numbers of smallest to largest trees.

The differences in DBH, BA and GBH (Table 7) were observed between the following barangay: Bolisong and Buko, Bolisong and Sumalag, Buko and Panabol, Buko and Sumalag, Panabol and Sumalag, Panabol and Poblacion, and Poblacion and Sumalag. The differences were due to variation in the age of mangrove trees present (Machava-Antonio et al 2022). Sumalag and Poblacion had younger trees since it has relatively low values of BA, DBH and GBH. Bolisong and Esperanza had the highest mean BA, which implies that trees present were mature. Significant differences may also be attributed to the environment of the mangroves, like the type of substrate, the presence of freshwater or saltwater inputs, and the presence or absence of residential areas (Baier 1996; Machava-Antonio et al 2022). Mangrove trees presenting higher mean DBH and height were found in sites where it has more freshwater input. Some comparisons are not significantly different in other sites, probably due to the locations being relatively near to each other.

Table 5

Kruskal-Wallis Test for differences among sampling sites according to GBH, h, DBH and BA

Variable	X^2	<i>p</i> -value
GBH	62.9	<0.001
h	55.8	<0.001
DBH	62.9	<0.001
BA	62.9	<0.001

Note: GBH - girth at breast height; h - height; DBH - diameter at breast height; BA - basal area.

Table 6

Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger Pairwise comparison of height (h) when grouped according to sampling site

1	Pairwise comparison 2	<i>p</i> -value
Bolisong	Buko	0.01
	Panabol	0.98
	Poblacion	0.36
	Sumalag	0.90
Buko	Panabol	0.03
	Poblacion	0.96
	Sumalag	<0.001
Panabol	Poblacion	0.49
	Sumalag	0.52
Poblacion	Sumalag	0.01

Table 7

Dwss-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger Pairwise comparison of GBH, DBH and BA when grouped according to sampling site

1	Pairwise comparison		p-value
	2		
Bolisong	Buko	0.01	
	Panabol	1.00	
	Poblacion	0.22	
	Sumalag	<0.001	
Buko	Panabol	<0.001	
	Poblacion	0.57	
	Sumalag	<0.001	
Panabol	Poblacion	0.01	
	Sumalag	<0.001	
Poblacion	Sumalag	<0.001	

Note: GBH - girth at breast height; h - height; DBH - diameter at breast height; BA - basal area.

Environmental conditions. Four environmental parameters, pH, temperature, salinity and dissolved oxygen (DO) were measured in each station. However, the environmental conditions within Barangay Esperanza were not determined, since it is located in the landward area, which is not exposed to water and tide (Figure 4).

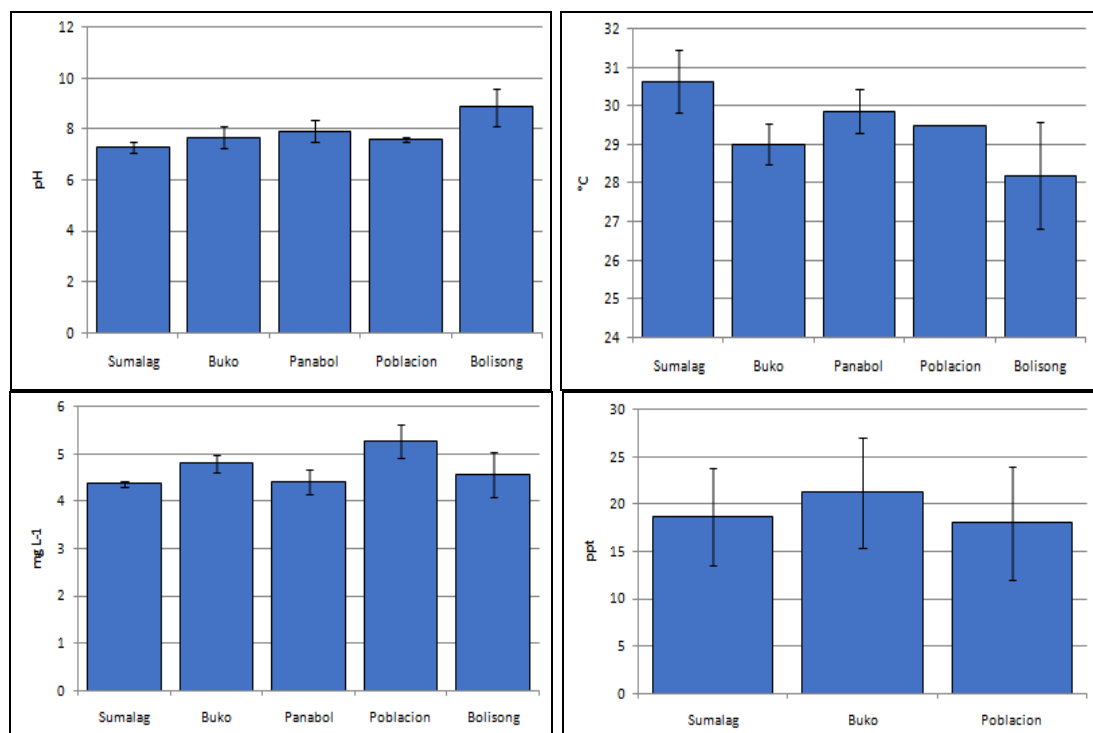


Figure 4. Mean and standard deviation of environmental parameters (pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen and salinity) in the coastal barangays of Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental.

The average water temperature ranged from 28.8-31.2°C (Figure 4). The water temperature limits the life of mangroves. The temperature data values coincide with the normal temperatures for mangroves, between 20 and 40°C (Supriharyono 2000).

The average recorded salinity was in the range of 0-35 ppt. The differences in water salinity in different sites are influenced by the freshwater inputs. Mangroves are facultative halophytes that can grow and function well up to a salinity of 90 ppt. However, mangrove's best growth is between 5 and 75 ppt (Krauss et al 2008), in which

the values recorded in this study are situated. The fluctuations in salt concentration were caused by tides, which drive seawater towards the mangrove area (Parida & Jha 2010).

The pH values ranged from 7.27 to 8.85. The pH values recorded in the different stations ranged from 7 to 7.99, which is a low pH compared with Barangay Bolisong. Mangroves favor areas with pH values ranging from 6.7 to 7.3, slightly acidic to slightly basic, which coincides with the data set obtained by the researchers. The data set values are mostly in the neutral range because it is where most of the nutrients are available to the mangrove plants. Otherwise, when pH conditions are extreme, essential nutrients would be inaccessible to the mangrove plants (Alsumaiti & Shahid 2018).

The mean DO in all stations ranged from 4.36 to 5.26 mg L⁻¹. The values from Barangay Poblacion are above the acceptable minimum value of mangroves set by Philippines DENR, which is 5 mg L⁻¹ (DENR-AO No. 2016-08, 2016). The higher values of DO in Barangay Poblacion are due to the more oxygenated water masses from nearby surroundings, like freshwater input (Woodroffe 1992).

Conclusions. The mangrove trees in Kinoguitan, Misamis Oriental were diverse and most trees were mature in age. Most of the mature trees were located in the landward region that is within the reference of the neighborhood or residential houses. The study provided vital information such as geographical locations, freshwater inputs, and types of substrates that would help in identifying the type of mangrove for replanting and rehabilitation actions of the mangal communities with low importance value index.

Conflict of Interest. The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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