

Green Tourism: Management Practices for Sustainable Tourism in the First District of Albay

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Abstract—Sustainability systems are market-based tools designed to address the most pressing social and environmental challenges of our time. They give people power to make an impact. This study adapted the quantitative research method using the descriptive-survey technique. This is the most appropriate research method and design to be used considering that the data to be collected will use a questionnaire composed of a checklist and a five-point Likert scale, and shall be analyzed statistically involving appropriate statistical tools. Findings revealed that majority of the ecotourism sites in the First District of Albay are privately owned and operating for almost eleven (11) years and as to the type of ecotourism site majority are cultural and with an approximate annual revenue of P50,000 to P100,000. Moreover, the ecotourism site owners are more aware of the employment opportunities that they can offer to the community like hotel housekeeper and resort manager. The top two sustainable tourism strategies employed by the ecotourism sites are the provision of eco-friendly environment and protection of natural resources. The top two challenges met by the ecotourism owners are the exploitation of natural resources and policy and regulatory challenges.

Index Terms—sustainable tourism, natural endowments, hotel night auditor, hotel housekeeper, concierge.

1. Introduction

Sustainability systems are market-based tools designed to address the most pressing social and environmental challenges of our time. They give people power to make an impact. By defining responsible practices, assessing the implementation of these practices and measuring impacts over time, sustainability systems are used in many sectors worldwide to successfully improve social and environmental performance. Market transformation drives progress on a range of global priorities like the UN sustainable development goals. Multi-stakeholder sustainability system provides concrete guidelines and metrics to help address the environmental and social issues captured in global goals. By doing so, it provides platforms for collective actions across sectors and supply chains.

Tourism is a universal activity among people of various races and nationalities. The activity is generally aimed at visiting places of interest either in geography, natural wonders, science, history, archeology, health, industry, manufacturing,

agriculture, or just to visit well-known places of natural beauty. Tourism is resorted to by people for a number of reasons and purposes. Fundamental among these reasons and purposes is to obtain rest and relaxation following days of work in office or in the factory. Concomitant with the search for opportunity to rest and relax is the desire to see other places and experience the culture of other places which in the process, gives them additional social, geographical, or economic orientation. Others use tourism to expand business opportunities and discover areas for further expansion of business and enterprises. Business minded people likewise visit particular places which they expect to be the source of materials for their business. For people in the academe, tourism becomes an opportunity for them to obtain wider orientation and accumulation of knowledge which they can share with their students. For people in government or those in large business enterprise, tourism is the means to have firsthand knowledge and personal observation of facts and circumstances relative to their purpose of adopting ways and means that other people do that can be done also in their particular local setting.

The Philippines is among the countries in the world which offers significant tourist destinations that are either man-made or existing in the environment as part of the endowment of nature. Because of the beautiful tourist spots in this country, the Philippines is regarded by international tourists as a favorite and preferred tourist destination. Hence, the Philippines is always part of the listed itinerary of foreign tourist enthusiasts from Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America. There are various well-known destinations to visit in this country like caves, exotic islands, volcanoes, white beaches, dive sites, underground rivers, colonial buildings, historical fortresses and war memorials like the Pacific War Memorial in the Island of Corregidor, plus other places of interest (Bermejo, et.al., 2022).

Not to be out-shadowed in prominence among tourist destinations in the Philippines is the province of Albay which lies in the southern portion of the Bicol region. This province being bordered on the eastern seaboard by the coastal waters of the Albay Gulf and the Lagonoy Gulf, offers a number of interesting and inviting tourist spots which titillate the interest and curiosity of both local and foreign tourists. In as much as

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tourism is now occupying one of the major pillars of the economy that brings in substantial income to the country, studying tourism therefore, as a human activity, in relation to natural tourist endowments, *vis-à-vis* how tourism entrepreneurs manage their business, is but an important concern of both the academe and the industry. Hence, as a matter of contributing to the concerted efforts at developing tourism as a major dollar earner for the country, tourism entrepreneurs and the academe need to work hand in hand to develop the tourism industry. It is for that reason that the researchers studying in Amando Cope College under the BSTM program are conscious on how to develop a wider knowledge in order to support tourism as one the contributing industry in Philippine's economy, hence, the study.

2. Methodology

This study adapted the quantitative research method using the descriptive-survey technique. This is the most appropriate research method and design to be used considering that the data to be collected will use a questionnaire composed of a checklist and a five-point Likert scale, and shall be analyzed statistically involving appropriate statistical tools. The respondents of the study are the LGU registered owners, managers and other stakeholders of identified ecotourism sites and establishments in the first district of Albay. The owners may be different from the managers, but in some cases, the owners are at the same time the managers of their respective ecotourism sites.

3. Results and Discussions

The findings revealed in this study were: Six (6) or 66.67% of the ecotourism sites are privately owned, two (2) or 22.22% are privately owned and one or 11.11% is manage by the local government unit. Five (5) or 55.56% are operating for almost eleven (11) years. In terms of the type of ecotourism site, nine (9) or 100% are cultural, two (2) or 22.22% as adventure and one (1) or 11.11% as nature-based. As to the approximate annual revenue, three (3) or 33.33% of the respondents gained an approximate annual revenue of P50,000 to P100,000 and one (1) or 11.11% has an annual revenue of P301,000 – P500,000. Lastly, as to employment opportunities, five (5) or 55.56% said that hotel managers and resort managers were the topmost employment opportunities that they could offer followed by hotel general managers with 44.44%. Two (2) indicators got the highest mean of 4.67 these are: provision of eco-friendly environment and protection of natural resources with an adjectival description of always practiced followed by: utilization of renewable resources, community engagement, environmental conservation and education and awareness for tourists and local residence (4.56) also described as always practiced. The indicators education and awareness of the community on the sustainable tourism practices and protection of habitat got a weighted mean of 4.44 with an adjectival description of always practiced followed by: promote rural tourism and connect with nature and maintaining sustainable infrastructure with 4.33 described as always practiced; investment in local communities through responsible

ecotourism management, promote cultural heritage in ecotourism, adopt sustainable innovation and operation practices, maintenance of solid-waste management, adaptive management system and partnership and collaboration with different NGOs with a weighted mean of 4.22 also described as always practiced. Lastly, the indicator promote local and sustainable gastronomy got the lowest weighted mean of 4.11 among the seventeen indicators with an adjectival description of often practiced. Exploitation of natural resources and policy and regulatory challenges got the same frequency of seven (7) which ranked first followed by: accessibility to the ecotourism site and prevalence of natural calamities due to climate change with a rank of second; limited awareness and knowledge of the community on the purpose of maintaining a sustainable ecotourism site and economic pressure and short term gains both indicators have a frequency of four (4) and ranked third; soliciting local government and support and cultural and social barriers with a frequency of three (3) with a rank of fourth.

4. Conclusions

In the light of the significant findings, the following conclusions are derived: Majority of the ecotourism sites in the First District of Albay are privately owned and operating for almost eleven (11) years and as to the type of ecotourism site majority are cultural and with an approximate annual revenue of P50,000 to P100,000. Moreover, the ecotourism site owners are more aware of the employment opportunities that they can offer to the community like hotel housekeeper and resort manager. The top two sustainable tourism strategies employed by the ecotourism sites are the provision of eco-friendly environment and protection of natural resources. The top two challenges met by the ecotourism owners are the exploitation of natural resources and policy and regulatory challenges. Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the result of the study, the following recommendations are presented: Establishing Clear Guidelines, Developing and implementing standardized guidelines can help ensure consistent and sustainable ecotourism practices, Strengthening Enforcement: Enhancing the enforcement of existing regulations can deter non-compliance and promote environmental conservation, and Promoting Genuine Ecotourism: Encouraging transparency and authenticity in ecotourism operations can help combat green-washing and support sustainable practices.

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