

Ecotourism Industry in Ilijan Batangas City, Philippines: Assessing Its Effects as a Basis of Proposed Tourism Development Plan

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Abstract

Ecotourism is seen as a potential vehicle to provide environmental, socio-economic and cultural beliefs at both local and national levels. This study was conducted to assess the effects of ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas. Specifically, this study was sought to describe the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income and years of residency in Ilijan; to determine the effects of ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas in terms of environmental, economical and socio-cultural; to determine the importance of tourism development plan and to develop and market Ilijan as a tourist destination; and to propose tourism development plan to further develop the ecotourism industry of Ilijan, Batangas. This study used descriptive research method. Results showed that the respondents in Ilijan, Batangas City believed that the environmental effect of ecotourism industry in their place can help it to enhance the conservation of the marine biodiversity. Moreover, the local residents are more aware of its economical effects and perceived that this ecotourism industry can help the local residents or the owner of the establishments to generate more income. The effects of socio-cultural can help both the local residents and the tourists in imposing their quality human experiences.

Keywords: Ecotourism Industry, Business, environmental, economical and socio-cultural

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is recognized by the government as an important contributor to the generation of foreign exchange earnings, investments, revenue, employment and to the growth of the country's output. It deserves to be a top priority for national development because of the following reasons: it is a powerful and efficient industry; its impact on social development is broad and deep; it creates strong peripheral benefits; the Philippines can compete and win; and it helps maintains cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems. Tourism has grown into one of the world's major industries and has thus become an increasingly important. After several decades of rapid quantitative growth, tourism is going through a period of profound transformation. Tourists, the consumers in this industry, have started to demand a change in the conditions of production and use of tourists' services (Narasaiah 2007).

The Republic Act of 2009, also known as the Republic Act No. 9593 is a national policy for tourism which encourages the business enthusiasts to invest and employ people in the Philippines; and with this, it will also strengthen the development of the Department of Tourism and its attached agencies to effectively and efficiently implement that policy.

Ecotourism as defined is a form of nature-based tourism in the marketplace but it has also been formulated and studied as a sustainable development tool by the NGOs. The term ecotourism, therefore, refers on one hand to a concept under a set of principles, and on the other hand to a specific market segment (Wood, 2002).

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Furthermore, ecotourism is a subject of the spectrum of tourism types which make up nature-based tourism. Ecotourism is often viewed and promoted as being consistent with conservation objectives because it is a small-scale with limited ecological and social impacts. In contrast, nature-based tourism, because of its larger scale, is often used to promote national development objectives rather than conservation objectives. The demand for nature-based tourism and ecotourism has been increasing steadily. This trend is expected to continue. The key determinants of what tourists want are determined by their knowledge, their desired level of excitement, available vacation time and cost.

According to Buckley (2008), Ecotourism is widely recognized for its positive impacts to environment, Ecotourism operators and tourism lobbyists argue that the ecotourism has contributed to the economic, social and cultural development of the local communities by conserving and supporting protected areas.

Ecotourism is not merely an alternative to mass tourism, nor is it the only alternative. A rapid growth in nature tourism and tourism to protected areas has coincided with a shift in protected area management strategies towards integrated development. Tourism is one means available to protected area managers seeking to increase the economic value of a protected area and to offer sustainable opportunities for economic development to local people (Cater, 2012).

As the fastest-growing sector of the tourism industry ecotourism offers tourism companies and Third World destinations alike the prospect of capitalizing on the comparative advantage of these nations in terms of unspoiled natural environments. The opportunity for these countries to enhance their development potential by harnessing their natural resources without, at the same time, destroying them cannot be denied. What is essential, however, is the recognition that, without adequate understanding of underlying factors and careful planning and management, ecotourism may include unsustainable aspects (Wunder, 2013).

Within the new array of 'green' products and services, ecotourism claims to combine environmental responsibility with the generation of local economic benefits that will have both a development impact and serve as conservation incentives (Moscardo, 2012). Ecotourism has been advocated within the academic literature as an important community economic development strategy due to the potential economic and social benefits that the sector can generate (Caldicott and Fuller 2005). It is a mode of eco- development which represents a practical and effective means of attaining social and economic improvement for all countries.

International travel and tourism respond to market forces, particularly the growth in real income, leisure time, and development in international transportation. The continued rise in real income and leisure time in the developed countries has led to a strong demand for tourism. One study has shown that consumers in developed countries respond to a 10% increase in real income by increasing their foreign travel expenditures by 15 to 20% (Goldfarb, 2009).

Ecotourism offers benefits for local residents, conservation support, low-scale development, low visitor numbers and educational experiences. Ecotourism has attracted increasing attention in recent years, not only as an alternative to mass tourism, but as a means of economic development and environmental conservation (Schaller, 2010). In this scope, in order to be successful at and sustain ecotourism activities which local people and natural environment are at the center, first it is needed to know better the values of the people and the social environment. This demonstrates that in opening an area to ecotourism it definitely requires to begin with local organization and local people education (May, 2011).

As Drumm and Moore (2002) suggest, a good planning depends on active participation of relevant groups. Since local people would be the group that would affect and would be affected mostly by ecotourism, provision of their power and participation would be crucial. In many studies conducted recently, too, how the developments experienced in the tourism were perceived by the local people have been analyzed and attitudes of local people towards effects of tourism have been examined (Kuvan, 2010).

Tourism development planning is a series of systems of goals and overall arrangements, based on regional tourism, history, current situation and market factors. Tourism development plan by the planning scope and level of government is divided into the national tourism development planning, regional tourism

development planning and local tourism development planning (Qing-Sheng, 2011).

The unique location has made the Philippines the commercial, cultural and intellectual hub of Asia from the dawn of history (Cruz, 2003). Today, the Philippines has over 74 million inhabitants, and the country's wildlife is threatened, not just by a burgeoning population and mismanagement of environmental resources, but also by over-hunting of animal species for both commercial and subsistence use and widespread ignorance as to the larger, long-term benefits of biological resources to humans (Sustainable Tourism in the Philippines, 2007). According to DOT (2012), the overall objective of having a tourism development plan is to increase the income and employment opportunities of the destination.

Batangas City boasts for the tourism development in Ilijan. The beauty of the beach and the surroundings is indeed very much capable of attracting tourists, leading to the generation of income that will be beneficial not only to the local populace and private resort owners, but also to the local government of Ilijan, Batangas City. In the development of Ilijan as a tourist destination, certain environmental concerns must be addressed especially regarding environmental protections and waste management. At the same time, tourist statistics should be given consideration in order to create programs and activities for tourism development not only in City of Batangas but also in other Barangays especially in Ilijan. Through the support coming from the local government more scientific and more comprehensive tourism program may be organized and created in order to develop Ilijan towards becoming a tourism spot in the province of Batangas.

Ecotourism is seen as a potential vehicle to provide environmental, socio-economic and cultural beliefs at both local and national levels. For instance, the beauty of the beach and surroundings in Ilijan, Batangas is indeed very much capable of attracting tourists, leading to the generation of income that will benefit the entire community. With this foregoing statement, the researcher sees the ecotourism potential of Ilijan, Batangas under a comprehensive ecotourism program and development.

Objectives of the Study

This study assessed the effects of ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas. Specifically, this study was sought to describe the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income and years of residency in Ilijan; to determine the effects of ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas in terms of environmental, economical and socio-cultural, to determine the importance of tourism development plan and to develop and market Ilijan as a tourist destination and to propose tourism development plan to further develop the ecotourism industry of Ilijan, Batangas.

2. Method

Research Design

This study used descriptive research method. Descriptive research describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions of relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, processes that are going on; effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing. The process of descriptive research goes beyond mere gathering and tabulation of data. It involves the elements or interpretation of the meaning or significance of what is described (Calderon, 2011).

Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were 100 residents from the five Sitios of Barangay Ilijan, Batangas City, particularly Sitio Kanluran, Hulo, Hulong Bayanan, Silangan and Kabilang Ilog. They were chosen using purposive sampling procedure wherein the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the residents in random.

Instrument

The instrument was a self made questionnaire. The questionnaire used was composed of three major parts. The first part of the questionnaire is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of their age,

gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income and years of stay as a resident in Ilijan, Batangas City. The second part of the questionnaire assesses the ecotourism effects of Ilijan, Batangas in terms of environmental, economical and socio-cultural and the third part of the questionnaire pertains to the proposed tourism development plan.

Procedure

The preliminary form of the questionnaire was given to the adviser for comments and suggestions regarding the format and item content, and was validated by an English teacher. The translation of the questions to Filipino was endorsed to a Filipino teacher. The suggestions served as guidelines for the revisions of the questionnaires. A second refinement based on the feedback was made. This was followed by writing the final draft of the data gathering instrument.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized different statistical tools to interpret the data that were gathered. The percentage and frequency distribution were used to determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of their age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income and years of residency in Ilijan. Weighted Mean Distribution and Rank were used to determine the ecotourism of Ilijan, Batangas and the effects of ecotourism industry to Ilijan, Batangas in terms of environmental, economical and socio-cultural.

3. Results and Discussion

Tourism perhaps more than any industry, relies upon the integrity of a locale's natural and manmade environment, and cultural underpinnings, the sum total of which could be called a locale's heritage. However, what makes tourism 'different' to other sectors and particularly where it is a major part of the economy, is the significant impact it can have on the overall quality of life of the resident population.

Ecotourism is receiving considerable attention from international and national conservation, development and tourism. At the same time, there has been growing international concern that ecotourism should be genuinely community-based. While there are many reported incidents where forms of 'ecotourism' are not sufficiently community focused, and are having a negative impact on the environment, and where indigenous communities are not sufficient benefit, there is still a strong persistence on the practice of ecotourism and responsible tourism which should be part of wider sustainable development strategies, whether at community level or an international level (Garcia, 2012).

According to WTO, the small scale of most community-based ecotourism initiatives means that their impact, both on nature conservation and on income and employment for the community as a whole, is limited. They can be more influential and successful if they are integrated within other sustainable development initiatives at a regional and local level. With the horizontal integration within the community, the success of local ecotourism initiatives may depend on vertical integration with national level initiatives to support and promote responsible tourism. In addition to making linkages with what may exist, efforts should be made to influence national policies in favor of ecotourism, including coordination between tourism and environmental ministries and policies. Rather than being pursued in isolation, community base tourism should occur in the context of other options and programs for conservation, sustainable development and responsible tourism.

Respondents' Profile

Majority of the respondents which is thirty-four (34) percent out of one hundred (100) were 21 – 29 years old while the twenty (20) percent of them are 30 – 39 years of age. Both respondents who are 40 – 49 years old and 50 – 59 years have fifteen (15) percent out of one hundred and only eight (8) percent of the respondents are 18 years and below and 60 years and above. This shows that respondents, who are middle-aged, 21 – 39 years old, are mostly the active ones in participating in the development of the tourism program in their Barangay, because at their age they usually have the most of the ideas regarding the implementation of the development of tourism industry. Fifty-four (54) percent out of one hundred are

female on the other hand only forty-six (46) percent of the respondents are male. With this, female is more dominant than male in terms of population under the study.

Most of the respondents are married which is forty-eight (48) percent out of one hundred while thirty-six (36) of them are single. Fourteen (14) percent of them are widow/widower and only two (2) percent of the respondents are legally separated. This reveals that most of the residents in Ilijan are already married.

Twenty (29) out of a hundred are college graduate, while high school graduates are nineteen (19) percent. Thirteen (13) percent of the respondents are elementary undergraduates. On the other hand, twelve (12) percent of them are elementary graduates, and the college undergraduates are nine (9) percent. Lastly, five (5) percent of the residents took the vocational course and the other three (3) percent checked “others” which indicate that they are taking up post graduate studies. As the graph shows, most of the respondents are college graduates. Even though they are from the rural areas, the residents still have more value in education. Education is one of the most important aspects of human intelligence, although experience is still one of the best teachers.

More than one-third of the respondents which is thirty-five (35) percent out of one hundred have P5,000 and below while nineteen (19) percent of them are earning P10,000 - P14,999.99 per month. Seventeen (17) percent of the respondents earn P20,000.00 and above monthly, sixteen (16) percent have an income of P15,000 - P19,999.99 and only thirteen (13) percent of them have are earning P5,001.00 - P9,999.99. The figure shows that majority of the residents in Ilijan are earning the minimum wage because most of them only rely on farming and fishing, and likewise the primary reason why they are only earning minimum wage is because they don't want to leave their community and they already build their businesses in the area.

Out of one hundred respondents, fifty-five (55) percent of them are staying in Ilijan for 10 years and above while twenty-two (22) percent of them are staying for seven to ten years. Nineteen (19) percent of the residents have stayed in Ilijan for four to six years and only four (4) percent of them are new residents in Ilijan which ranges from one to three years. This shows that most of the respondents have been staying in Ilijan since they were born.

Table 1: Environmental Effects of Ecotourism Industry

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. It enhances the conservation of marine biodiversity.	3.38	Agree	1
2. It makes people realize the importance of environmental conservation due to their sensitivity to environmental change and abuse	3.27	Agree	6.5
3. It affects the marine biodiversity and aquamarine life.	3.32	Agree	2
4. Income and taxes from these business can be used for the conservation of natural environment of Batangas	3.30	Agree	4
5. It maintains the outdoor natural environment of Batangas and increase the health benefit of people who engage in sports activities	3.31	Agree	3
6. This promotes the aquamarine life of the Philippines to tourists	3.29	Agree	5
7. It relates in people and the natural environment	3.19	Agree	10
8. It disturbs not only the wildlife but also the habitats	3.26	Agree	8
9. Accidental discharge of oil and fuel present can have a potentially significant effect on the marine environment, due to the concentrated nature of the pollutants that may reach the water.	3.23	Agree	9
10. Elevated concentrations of copper can occur in the vicinity of marina basins and in those areas where land side boat maintenance activities take place.	3.27	Agree	6.5
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Often; Agree – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 1 highlights the environmental effects of ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas City. As seen from the table, the over-all assessment of the respondents on the environmental effects of ecotourism was “Agree” with a composite mean if 3.28. Among the items mentioned, it enhances the conversion of marine biodiversity ranked first with weighted mean score of 3.38. As the respondents envision the ecotourism in their Barangay, they believe that the conservation of marine biodiversity in Ilijan can be enhanced thru the help of their local government. It was followed by affects the marine biodiversity and aquamarine life (3.32) and maintains the outdoor natural environment of Batangas and increase the health benefit of people who engage in sports activities (3.31).

However, the items “wildlife may be disturbed not only by the boats themselves but also by the participants, particularly where the boats allow the users access to sensitive habitats”, “accidental discharge of oil and fuel present can have a potentially significant effect on the marine environment, due to the concentrated nature of the pollutants that may reach the water,” and “noise disturbance relates largely to impacts upon other people rather than impacts upon the natural environment” were the least effects with 3.26, 3.23 and 3.19, respectively.

Table 2: Economical Effects of Ecotourism Industry

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. It generates income among owners of establishments	3.41	Agree	1
2. It constitutes additional revenues such as taxes for the government	3.28	Agree	6
3. It creates job opportunities among the residents of Ilijan, Batangas	3.31	Agree	4
4. It becomes a tourist attraction and improves socio-economic of local residents.	3.24	Agree	8.5
5. It attracts tourists to go to this place and acquire hospitality, and acquire tourism services	3.38	Agree	2.5
6. It has created or resulted to the creation of establishments	3.24	Agree	8.5
7. It provides additional job opportunities and employee compensation and bonus	3.21	Agree	10
8. These expenditures on water based recreation create jobs for those who provide these goods and services	3.27	Agree	7
9. Tourists engaged in water based recreation create employment not just because there are workers needed to provide water-related services, but also because these tourists require other goods and services as well.	3.29	Agree	5
10. Most of the resorts have recognized the importance of encouraging summer visitors through their advertising budgets to attract these tourists	3.38	Agree	2.5
Composite Mean	3.30	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Often; Agree – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presents the Economical Effects of Ecotourism Industry in Ilijan, Batangas City. Among the items mentioned income generating among owners of establishments ranked 1 with the weighted mean score of 3.41, the respondents perceived that the growing industry of ecotourism in their place can give additional income to the business owners. It was followed by most tourists will prefer to go to this place and acquire hospitality tourism and other services and most of the resorts have recognized the importance of encouraging summer visitors and have large advertising budgets to attract these tourists which both got the weighted mean score of 3.38.

The respondents considered that the generation of job opportunities among the residents of Ilijan, Batangas can also affect the ecotourism industry in their place with the weighted mean score of 3.31. Apparently, the respondents feel that tourists engaged in water based recreation create employment not just because there are workers needed to provide water-related services, but also because these tourists

require other goods and services as well, with the weighted mean of 3.29. Additional revenues such as taxes for the government got a weighted mean score of 3.28. That was followed by the fact that these expenditures on water based recreation create jobs for those who provide these goods and services with a weighted mean score of 3.27.

Both the emergence of establishments with water based recreation products are sold and it becomes a tourist attraction and improves socio-economic of local residents got the weighted mean score of 3.24. Meanwhile, additional job opportunities and employee compensation and bonus ranked 10 with the weighted mean score of 3.21. As shown in the table the over-all assessment of the respondents on the economical effects of ecotourism was “Agree” with a composite mean of 3.30.

As there should be more active economic life in the municipality, the bloodstream of the economy will pass through all sectors, whether by investment or business ventures, majority of the residents, regardless of their economic status, will benefit from it. Thru tourism, the residents would be able to have the jobs they need. They can have the trainings they need according to the kind of jobs they may qualify for, other than relying only on farming and fishing as which of the majority people do.

Table 3: Socio-Cultural Effects of Ecotourism Industry

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. It improves the lifestyle both of the local residents and tourists	3.39	Agree	2
2. The residents and tourists may also use horseback riding as a means of transportation.	3.30	Agree	4
3. It imposed quality human experiences for the local residents and tourists	3.46	Agree	1
4. It brings social changes among the local residents, tourists and different organizations in Ilijan.	3.32	Agree	3
5. Local residents have social commitment to their place.	3.28	Agree	5
6. People are becoming more aware and appreciative of the first kind of transportation in the Philippines	3.19	Agree	9
7. This gives opportunity that outdoor culture will be recognized by tourists and local residents	3.25	Agree	6
8. It promotes the ecological culture of the Philippines to tourists	3.17	Agree	10
9. It opens different ideas about water based recreational culture and tourism	3.22	Agree	7
10. People will be exposed to different experiences	3.20	Agree	8
Composite Mean	3.28	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Often; Agree – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the Socio-Cultural Effects of Ecotourism Industry in Ilijan, Batangas City. As seen from the table, the over-all assessment of the respondents on the economical effects of ecotourism was “Agree” with a composite mean if 3.28. Among the ten items mentioned, it imposed quality human experiences for the local residents and tourists ranked first with the weighted mean score of 3.46, as per the respondents perception both the local residents and tourist will experience quality human experience if the ecotourism in their Barangay will be developed. It was followed by the improvement of the lifestyle both of the local residents and tourists with the weighted mean score of 3.39, while it brings social changes among the local residents, tourists and different organizations in Ilijan ranked third with the weighted mean score of 3.32. The residents and tourist may also use horseback riding as a means of transportation ranked fifth with a weighted mean score of 3.28. This implies that the respondents are aware of their commitment for their Barangay, which would be a great help in the tourism development plan.

This gives opportunity that outdoor culture will be recognized by tourists and local residents ranked sixth with the weighted mean score of 3.25, while this opens different ideas about water based recreational

culture and tourism has a weighted average of 3.22 followed by people will exposed to different experiences which ranked eighth place with the weighted mean score of 3.20. People are becoming more aware and appreciative of the first kind of transportation in the Philippines ranked ninth with the weighted mean score of 3.19, and lastly this promotes the ecological culture of the Philippines to tourists has the weighted mean score of 3.17.

The residents in Ilijan are known for their warmest hospitality even to strangers or tourists in the place. They treat every person as if he/she was already a part of their community. They respect and trust the visitors; hence they give their best welcome among their guests. Tourism gives the people more opportunity to practice value of hospitality, the trait that Filipinos are famous for worldwide.

Table 4: Tourism Development Plan with Regards to Development and Marketing of the Destination

Indicators	WM	VI
1. Implement marketing promotions	2.23	Important
2. Facilitate investments and lower business cost	1.92	Important
3. Safeguarding and develop natural and cultural resources, and vulnerable groups	1.85	Important

Legend: 2.50 – 3.00 = Most Important; 1.50 – 2.49 = Important; 1.00 – 1.49 = Least Important

As seen from Table 4, Tourism Development Plan with Regard to Development and Marketing of the Destination all items were assessed as important and implement marketing promotions ranked first with mean rank of 2.23. In the point of view of the respondents, the local government should focus first with the implementation of the marketing promotion of the ecotourism in Ilijan. It was followed by facilitating investments and lower business cost and safeguarding and develop natural and cultural resources, and vulnerable groups.

The economic potential of tourism is substantial and following marketing and promotional strategy intends to maximize the benefits tourism can generate. The promotion aims to work alongside a dedicated and professional tourism industry sector to ensure the community maintains and grows its share of the lucrative tourism market. Tourism Promotions & Marketing – With a unique combination of geography and history, the Moyne Shire has already established itself as a very popular tourist destination. In particular, holiday and festival periods bring a large influx of holidaymakers and visitors. Council Tourism Promotions and Marketing activity primarily seeks to sustain and/or increase visitor numbers and, wherever possible, encourage visitors not only to extend their length of stay, but venture further to explore the Shire’s hinterland attractions (Tourism Marketing Promotions Strategy, 2007).

Table 5: Tourism Development Plan with Regards to Improvement of the Infrastructures and Access to the Tourist Destination

Indicators	WM	VI
1. Construction of roads and bridges	2.31	Important
2. Implementation of strategic access between other destinations	2.04	Important
3. Implementation of destination infrastructure program	1.65	Important

Legend: 2.50 – 3.00 = Most Important; 1.50 – 2.49 = Important; 1.00 – 1.49 = Least Important

Table 5 illustrates the Tourism Development Plan with Regard to Improvement of the Infrastructures and Access to the Tourist Destination all items were assessed as important. The respondents believe that the construction of roads and bridges should be prioritized with the weighted mean score of 2.31. It was followed by the implementation of strategic access between other destinations and implementation of destination infrastructure program that would really help the local government in implementing the tourism development program in their place with the weighted mean score of 2.04 and 1.65 respectively.

According to Wray et al (2010), one of the major foundations of tourism is the travel or transport component. A destination is in many respects defined by its ability to provide appropriate visitor access into

a destination and dispersal throughout the destination. The dispersal of visitors throughout a region can provide economic and social benefits including improved services to the host community. Development of appropriate access for visitors to and within a destination includes consideration of a number of key factors.

Infrastructure such as accommodation, restaurants, built attractions, tours and transport are primarily developed by the private sector. Private investors are unwilling to invest in tourism facilities, however, without good airport and road infrastructure and the availability of affordable basic services such as power, water, sewerage, electricity and telecommunications, which together make tourism investments economically viable. (Tourism Policies, Plans and Strategies, 2010).

Table 6: Tourism Development Plan with Regards to Improvement of the Tourism Institutional Governance and Human Resources

Indicators	WM	VI
1. Pursue shared responsibility of national and local governments	2.3	Important
2. Develop competent, well motivated and productive workforce	1.91	Important
3. Improvement of the governance relating to safety, security and handling tourists	1.79	Important

Legend: 2.50 – 3.00 = Most Important; 1.50 – 2.49 = Important; 1.00 – 1.49 = Least Important

As shown in Table 6, Tourism Development Plan with Regards to Improvement of the Tourism Institutional Governance and Human Resources all items were assessed as important. The respondents perceived that the pursue shared responsibility of national and local governments is the most important with the weighted mean score of 2.23. It was followed by develop competent, well-motivated and productive workforce with the weighted mean score of 1.91. The respondents rated the improvement of the governance relating to safety, security and handling tourists as the least important among the three tourism development plan with the weighted mean score of 1.75.

As the Philippine National Tourism Development Plan implies, the responsibilities of the national government agencies—particularly the DOT—and the LGUs needs to be clarified, and the respective roles should be strengthened to ensure effective coordination and application of resources. In the human resources area, the capacity of the tourism education and training system (although substantial) continues to turn out graduates that do not have the required skills for entry level positions, while employers in some areas adopt employment and service charge distribution practices that discourage the development of a well-motivated and highly productive tourism workforce. Finally, the handling of tourists on arrival and departure at international airports remains problematic, while at the tourist destination center level in the LGUs, the ability of local officials to provide security, safety, order, and protect tourists from exploitation remains weak.

This program is intended to complement the access and connectivity of infrastructure and destination and product development and marketing strategies by strengthening the “soft” components of the Philippine Tourism Product – tourism institutions/organizations and human resources – that tie together the hard elements of the tourist destination such as infrastructure, facilities, and amenities.

Proposed Tourism Development Plan

This plan aims to utilize ecotourism industry in Ilijan, Batangas City to contribute to the conservation of cultural and natural resources in the said community.

Key Result Areas	Plan(s) and Project(s)	Strategies	Person/s Involved
1. Development and Marketing of the Destination			
Implement marketing promotions	Designation of barangay officials in marketing and promotion of the tourism industry	Promoting the tourism industry through advertisements.	Barangay officials / Local Government Unit
Facilitate investments and lower business cost	Monitoring of investment promotion strategy and set a comparative low cost to attract investors	Prepare a list of investment promotion activities and achieve competitive position in the industry to enhance the demand for its product or services among consumers.	Barangay officials / Local Government Unit
Safeguard and develop natural and cultural resources, and vulnerable groups	Development of its natural and cultural resources	Implementation of a policy that allows the residents to help in safeguarding the tourist destination	Barangay officials / Local Government Unit / Residents
2. Improvement of the infrastructures and access to the tourist destination			
Construction of roads and bridges	Allocation of budget for the maintenance and construction of the access areas	Get help from the concerned authorities to allot adequate budget	Barangay Officials / Local or National Government Unit
Implementation of strategic access between other destination	Expansion of the construction of the roads from Ilijan to Batangas City proper	Strategic formulation of the Barangay Officials about the strengthening of the link to other areas	Barangay Officials / Local or National Government Unit / Tourism Sector
Implementation of destination infrastructure program	Seamless connection from Ilijan to the tourism development areas	Linking Ilijan to tourism supply chain	Barangay Officials with the help of DOT – Batangas

Key Result Areas	Plan(s) and Project(s)	Strategies	Person/s Involved
<p>3. Institutional governance and human resources</p> <p>Pursue shared responsibility of national and local government</p> <p>Develop competent, well- motivated and productive workforce</p> <p>Improvement of the governance relating to safety, security and handling tourists</p>	<p>Team-up with the national government to acquire more support for the development of the tourist destination</p>	<p>Disseminate and utilize recommendations from national and local government</p>	<p>Barangay Officials / Local and National Government</p>
	<p>Implement monthly training and seminar for the local residents</p>	<p>Invite local residents to the trainings for them to be productive and well-motivated workers</p>	<p>Barangay Officials / Local Residents</p>
	<p>Hiring of additional Barangay Tanod and Bantay Dagat</p>	<p>Proper hiring and training for the people who are interested in the said position</p>	<p>Barangay Officials / Local Residents</p>

4. Conclusions

Majority of the respondents are aged 21-29 years old; more of them were female, married, college graduate, with family income usually ranging from P5, 000 and below and a resident of Ilijan for 10 years and above. The respondents in Ilijan, Batangas City believes that the environmental effect of ecotourism industry in their place can help it to enhance the conservation of the marine biodiversity. Moreover, the local residents are more aware of its economical effects and perceived that this ecotourism industry can help the local residents or the owner of the establishments to generate more income.

The effects of socio-cultural can help both the local residents and the tourists in imposing their quality human experiences. The implementation of the marketing promotions thru the help of local government can help them to the development and marketing of the destination. The construction of roads and bridges can widely help to boost the ecotourism industry in Ilijan because it can help in the improvement of the access to the tourist destination. Lastly, the pursue shared of responsibility of national and local governments can help in the improvement of the tourism institutional governance and human resources.

5. Recommendations

The local government may support the development of ecotourism in Ilijan by allotting adequate budget that can be used for promotion and maintenance of the tourist destination. The participation of the local residents in the implementation of the tourism development plan may be solicited as with their local government. The proposed Tourism Development Plan may be submitted to concerned authorities for review and implementation to maintain the quality service for the benefit of both the local residents and the tourists. Future researches on the above topic may be explored using other variables not included in the study.

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