

Tourism Brand and Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development of Bongabon, Nueva Ecija

Rowie Grace O. Saclolo

Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Philippines

Received: 20 Jan 2023; Received in revised form: 26 Apr 2023; Accepted: 03 Jun 2023; Available online: 09 Jun 2023

Abstract— This study identified problems encountered in tourism sustainability in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija. This covered the areas of economic, environmental and tourism managements aspects. Business' years of operation and services offered in tourist spots were also identified in this study. This research study used a descriptive research design, and a structured interview is used as data collection tool. Participants of the study were 5 selected owners or member of association in different tourist spots in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija. Based on the research study, tourism management aspect has the highest percentage of problems encountered, this includes the factors of crowd management and LGU and owner's participation; environmental aspect has the second highest percentage of problems encountered, this area includes nature deterioration and preservation, pollution, and construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure development; and economic aspect has the least percentage of problems encountered which includes the factors of livelihood, income and employment. Environmental Aspect is an element of an organization's activities, products or services that can interact with the environment. There are two types of environmental aspects: (i) Direct Environmental Aspect Activities over which a company can be expected to have an influence and control. For example, emissions from processes. (ii) Indirect Environmental Aspect Actual or Potential activities over which the organization can be expected to have an influence, but no control. The economic aspect refers to the importance of social responsibility, broad consideration of society and businesses, contribution to public interest, and corporate voluntary participation.

Keywords— **Brand Tourism; Crowd Management; Place Product; Sustainable Tourism Development; Strategic Plan, Tourist Destination**

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is extensively identified to be an effective medium for development. In many countries, tourism sector is contemplated as a powerful stimulator for national economies as it has a huge impact with economic sectors that is connected or associated with it (Sadiku, Selimi & Sadiku, 2017). Tourism is one of the fast-growing industries nowadays. It has a positive implication on lives of local people that may result to increased income and employment opportunities, developed public infrastructure and facilities, boosting promotion and preservation of local culture (Magboo et al., 2019)

Sustainable tourism development, is a continuous process in which it analyzes and provide the needs of the present tourists and create opportunities in different areas

such as economic, social and biological diversity my managing the resources for the future. Sustainability is envisioned as the answer for the problems in the negative impacts of tourism and through maximization of resources it holds long-term capability. The process of tourism development must cope up with the trend and match the demands and preferences of present and future tourist, as it also enhance the available tourism resources. Since tourism is a place product, it must contain three level of resources: (1) tourist attractions, which includes the natural, cultural and man-made attractions; (2) infrastructures and superstructure, that will provide support to different activities of tourism; and (3) the social and physical settings of the tourist destination, which includes the hospitality of the local people and community. The growth of tourism not only boost the economy of local government where the area

is located but it also creates opportunity for local businesses to boosts their sales on local goods and services (Liu, 2003).

Tourism as a place product, cannot stand with natural resources alone. It must be composed of three attributes: the natural resources, activities and services. These three attributes open the opportunity for business and tourism industry in the tourist destination. Sustainable tourism development, must not only focused on increasing the number of tourists who visits the destination but it must also consider the environmental and socio-cultural aspect. For sustainability, these three components must be balanced in the long-term. There are three areas in sustainable tourism development that needed to be considered: (1) Economic aspect, which includes business that operates in the tourist destinations that can provide employment to local people. (2) Environmental aspect, which includes the use and conservation of the resources from the environment; and (3) Tourism management, which includes factors that will provide tourists convenience and significant experiences. The satisfaction of the tourists is an important indicator of the sustainable development of tourism to a particular destination (Juandi, Andari & Setiyorini, 2018).

Creating the brand “tourism” and formulation of strategies for sustainable development into a place product, the town of Bongabon, a second-class municipality in the province of Nueva Ecija is widely known for its beautiful sceneries and mountain ranges one of the must-visit places is the “Labi river”. According to the local tourism office of the town, over 300,000 tourists visit the place over time. With the help of the local government, these places are continuously being developed into attractions and building different activities that would be worth visiting.

Specifically, the study was intended to:

1. Describe the tourism industry in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija in terms of:
 - 1.1 Years of operation
 - 1.2 Services offered
2. Describe the problems encountered on tourism sustainability in terms of:
 - 2.1 Economic impact

2.2 Environmental Impact

2.3 Tourism Management

3. Propose a strategic plan for sustainable development.

II. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was used for this study to gather pertinent information to arrive at the purpose of this research study. The researcher used a structured interview as a data collection tool as this method allowed the participants to elaborate, and with that provided more flexibility, range, and therefore the capacity to elicit more information from the participant. The participants of this research study are owners/members of the association of selected five (5) tourist spots in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter contains a detailed presentation and discussion of data analysis and the results of this study. 3.1 Figure 1 presents the years of operation of five (5) tourist spots in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija.

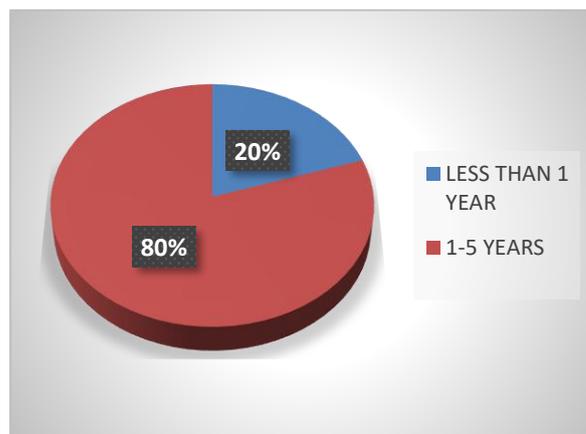


Fig.1. Tourist spots' years of operation

As shown in the figure above, among the 5 participants of the research study, 80% operates in the tourism spots for 1-5 years and 20% were operating for less than a year.

Table 1. Services offered in the tourist spots

Services Offered	Tourist Spot (Participants)					Total (f)
	1	2	3	4	5	
Venue and Accommodation	1	1	1	1	1	5
Restaurant or Food Services	1	1	0	0	0	2
Recreation	1	1	1	1	1	5
Nature Tripping	1	1	1	1	1	5

The Table 1 above shows the responses of the participants in different tourist spots with the services they offered. Venue and accommodation, recreation and nature tripping were all offered by the tourist spots, while only 2 tourist spots offer restaurant or food services.

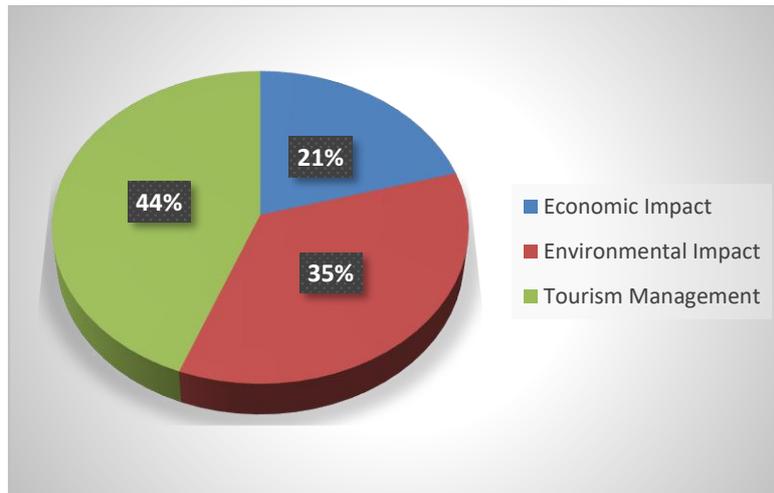


Fig.2. Problems encountered in tourist spots

3.2 The Figure 2 above shows the responses of the participants in different tourist spots with the problems they encountered. A total of eight questions were asked to the participants; 3 in economic area, 3 in environmental and 2 in tourism management. Responses are tallied and average score of responses from 5 participants is presented in figure 3 above. The result are as follows: (a) Economic Impact. This area includes the livelihood and income and employment to different tourist spots. With 21% of total tallied score, this area has the least percentage of problems encountered. According to the participants, tourism in Bongabon, Nueva Ecija is growing as it provides opportunities for the locals to be employed, and have source of livelihood. Though the volume of tourists differs in months, different business strategies were used by business owners to ensure income throughout the year. (b) Environmental Impact. This area includes three factors; (1) Nature deterioration and preservation (2) Pollution (3) Construction of tourism facilities and other infrastructures. With 35% of percentage score, environmental aspect is the second highest of problems encountered. Issues were addressed to the participants of this research study with regards to factors concerning the environmental aspect of the tourist spots. Nature deterioration and preservation, tourism indeed affect nature greatly that in order to give way for the construction of tourism facilities and other infrastructures, forest and wildlife were harmed. Environmental permits were needed to be secured by the business owners before any land, facilities and other infrastructure developments were made to the business areas. The pollution brought by solid wastes and littering is another issue concerning the environmental aspect of the

tourist spots. (c) Tourism Management. This area has the highest percentage of problems encountered with 44%. This includes Local Government Unit (LGU) and owners' participation, and crowd management. Communication between LGU and business owners is included in this aspect especially during peak seasons and calamities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the data gathered in the research study of tourism brand and strategy for sustainable tourism development of Bongabon, Nueva Ecija it is concluded as follows: Tourism can be sustainable if (1) the economic aspect of the tourist spots benefits its local community and its local people; it must not only generate income but will also provide employment to local people that may be the source of their livelihood (2) reduce the negative impact of tourism in its environment by seeking a way to reduce and avoid water, air and soil emissions and wasteful consumption of scarce resource; various developments in tourist destination has negative impact in natural resource thus, continuous effort by the owners and tourist must be present for its preservation and protection (3) proper management in different tourist spots with the participation of both government and private individuals.

The following recommendations is given based on the result and analysis of the responses of the participants of this research study:

- Tourism is a growing service industry and boosts the economy by creating many businesses, and

employment opportunities which may be a relief for poverty reduction in a tourist destination. Peak seasons like holidays, weekends, and summer break is when there is an increased number of tourists in the destinations. Tourist spots require more manpower in order for them to accommodate the tourists. Private sectors and members of associations may consider, hiring more people during those seasons.

- Market research may also help to identify various opportunities for what the tourist spots may offer during rainy seasons when there is low number of visitors. Consumers always demand for leisure or other recreational activities. Tourist spots through market research may identify what leisure or recreational activities they can offer during those seasons to ensure the visits of the tourists.
- Various policy and regulatory measures may implement to different tourist spots to ensure the proper managing of environmental resources. Since increase in number of tourists may result to greater risk of damaging the environment. These policies may include limit to the number of visitors, or restricted areas where there is great risk of damaging the environment.
- Tourists' participation must be present in nature preservation of different tourist spot areas, including private and managed by an association. It is to reduce the risk of environment deterioration. This can be done through orientation to the tourists before entering the tourists spots the proper waste disposal. Business owners must provide garbage bags and locate the proper area where it should be placed before they leave the destination. To lessen the negative impact of tourism to environment, business owners and tourist must be both participate.
- Coordination between government, public and private sectors when it comes to development planning is needed in sustainable tourism development. There is unending need for development when it comes to tourism. It is a continuous process of building both private and public infrastructures on what may drive tourists into it. Tourist spots must provide all the convenience to its tourists, the partnership of these three sectors must ensure that water and energy needs must be available. Even in waste management in tourist destinations, government participation must be present through the scheduled waste collection. Proper communication between private and government sectors must be

secure especially when there are natural calamities when the roads are not accessible to the tourists. Government sectors must provide the information to the private sectors, for them to inform their expected tourists.

- Continuous marketing efforts is also recommended since there are lots of place product available, where participation of private, public, and government must be present. A tourist destination must enhance its competitive advantage so the tourists will be attracted to visit the destination.

REFERENCES

- [1] Azam, M., Alam, M., Hafeez, M., (2018). Effect of Tourism on Environmental Pollution: Further Evidence from Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.
- [2] Juandi, V., Andari, R., Setiyorini, H., (2018). *The Influence of Sustainable Tourism Development towards Tourists' Satisfaction in Saung Angklung Udjo.*
- [3] Liu, Z. (2003). *Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique.*
- [4] Magboo, N., Blay, M., Balbastro, L., Landicho, M., Marasiga, H., Villaseñor, A., Felicen, S., (2019) *Impacts of Tourist Attraction in the Community of one City in the Philippines.*
- [5] Sadiku, L., Selemi, N., Sadiku, M., (2017). The Impact of Tourism on Economic Growth in the Western Balkan Countries: *An Empirical Analysis.*
- [6] Sunlu, U. (2003). *Environmental Impacts of Tourism.* United Nations Environment Programme. (2001). Environmental Impacts of Tourism.