

A Sustainable Tourism Destination Framework for Tourism and Hospitality Education in the Bicol Region, Philippines

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ABSTRACT:

This study aimed to develop a Sustainable Tourism Destination Framework for Tourism and Hospitality Education in the Bicol Region, Philippines, by examining tourists' perceptions of destination attributes, tourism service quality, and the factors influencing sustainable tourism development. Using a quantitative descriptive research design, data were collected from 385 tourists through a structured questionnaire. The study assessed destination attributes, tourism service quality, and the economic, sociocultural, political, legal, and environmental factors influencing tourism in the region. Descriptive statistics, comparative analyses, and relationship analyses were employed to analyze the data. The findings revealed favorable tourist perceptions of destination safety, cleanliness, accessibility of information, infrastructure, pricing, tourism facilities, attractions, and the social environment. Tourism service quality was likewise evaluated positively across assurance, responsiveness, reliability, tangibles, empathy, destination image, and tourist loyalty. Significant relationships were identified among destination attributes, influencing factors, and tourism service quality, highlighting their collective contribution to sustainable destination development. Based on these findings, a Sustainable Tourism Destination Framework was developed to serve as a strategic reference for policymakers, tourism planners, local government units, destination managers, and tourism stakeholders while providing an evidence-based framework that can support curriculum enrichment, destination-based learning, and sustainability education in tourism and hospitality programs in higher education institutions.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism; Tourism and hospitality education; Tourism destination framework; Destination attributes; Tourism service quality; Bicol Region, Philippines.

Introduction

The Philippines has become a tourist destination for many years with its diverse landscapes and warm hospitality. However, challenges lie in sustaining economic growth in

terms of environmental preservation and social equity, and an emerging critical framework to address this challenge is sustainable tourism. Additionally, as a tourism destination, the Philippines considers the economic, social, and

ecological impacts and aims to maximize benefits while minimizing negative consequences. With its astonishing beaches, volcanic formations, and cultural heritage, the Bicol region presents a unique opportunity for sustainable tourism development. Thus, this study seeks to understand the factors influencing sustainable tourism in the area and develop a framework to guide its future growth.

Philippine Tourism Law is a collection of guidelines or standards of activity that manage the official rights, impact, relations, power, and accommodation among individuals from the foundation required in tourist travel and settlement. It incorporates people heading out, starting with one place and then onto the next, for joy (traveler), recreation, business associations, or people busy giving different services that voyagers need.

It is decent to cite the above standards since they help us to remember the general public's tourism industry. The Philippine tourism industry is continuously worried because of the distinctive issues among numerous Filipinos. It is a crucial wellspring of remote trade that intensely influences the nation's adjustment of installments and energy acquisition for the peso. It is a principal wellspring of work for many Filipinos working in different inns, hotels, lodges, timeshares, B&B, townhouses, and resorts for the convenience of vacationers, visit organizations, nature-based attractions like ecotourism destinations, historical centers, amusement outlets, amusement parks, eateries and bars, travel offices, visit facilitators, exhibitions, theatres, gambling clubs, et al. universal. It is one industry that gives instruction, unwinding, joy, and relaxation to its objective, both near and outside from the business sector. A few parts are made by the tourism business to give both open administrations and businesses open doors for the neighborhood inhabitants (Aldegue, 2014).

In addition, sustainable development is essential for tourism businesses because tourism has a crucial impact on the economy, environment, and social aspects in today's

generation, and its sector development is inextricably linked to the achievement of all the sustainability dimensions mentioned above. Considering ongoing global economic expansions, technical development processes, and social development processes, examining unique business forms in tourism is essential to sustain the progressive growth of tourism destinations. Among the different economic expansions, there are those that are relevantly important because of their ability to bring together geographically dispersed firms and institutions, resulting in the uniformity of the businesses that are related to one another. In line with that, companies may be determined by newly created strategies that formulate more advantageous ideas that could provide industry options to be competitive and innovative. (Agyeiwaah et al., 2017). With that, concerns about the development of tourism industries are intimately related to issues of competition among them that are enhanced through timely innovations crucial to operating corporations. In addition, it is indeed that tourism distinguishes itself through offering a wide range of experiences, maintaining integrity, and employing a multifaceted approach. Specifically, according to Madhavan & Rastogi (2013), the high degree of interconnectedness between the components of tourism structures that enhance the industry opens access to quality services in making assumptions about their ability to collaborate in implementing innovations.

Furthermore, this study is anchored on the following Sustainable Development Goals, such as SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, in which sustaining tourism development advances advocacies that reduce waste and consumption of resources to protect ecosystems. Additionally, these are aligned with SDG 12. SDG 14: Life Below Water and SDG 15: Life on Land: The Bicol Region's rich biodiversity, from coral reefs to rainforests, is a major tourism draw. Your framework can promote practices that conserve these ecosystems, contributing to SDG 14 and SDG 15. On the other hand, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth pertains to creating jobs and

economic opportunities for local communities through sustainable tourism. Regarding that, this study's framework can ensure tourism benefits local people, aligning with SDG 8. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities: Sustainable tourism can further improve the opportunities in local communities, ensuring that every benefit is equally shared. Thus, this framework can be addressed through practicing responsible roles supporting businesses in locality as well as livelihoods. Likewise, it is focused on the institution's research agenda, specifically on the development of theories and concepts that contribute to the body of knowledge.

Additionally, strategies and practices for long-term effects in terms of sustainable tourism growth should be adhered to and complied with while possessing a higher understanding of how tourism and its community work to produce greater outcomes, because tourism affects their way of living. An example of that is having more job opportunities and passive income in facilitating a tourism industry, while also generating additional taxes and enhancing tourism resources and public physical infrastructure. Due to that, it also improves the residents' lifestyle. However, there might be advantages of having tourist attractions; it also contributes to having disadvantages such as higher expenses, populated areas, inevitable noise from the tourists, and pollution.

On the other hand, a study of elements contributing to the appeal in the Bicol Region's local tourism will be critical to identify characteristics of the sectors for future growth and ensuring visitor satisfaction while visiting the community. Additionally, this study may create

useful data and identify trends that may be used to motivate the construction of programs and policies that encourage tourist development, benefiting local governments and the respondents. Additionally, developing a tourist model framework based on the results of the current study may be the foundation to create a sustainable framework for tourism, and therefore, this study is supported.

Methodology

The researchers employed quantitative research – used in determining relationship between variables within a specific population (Matthew & Ross, 2010). Additionally, this study used a descriptive method. According to Cynthia (2014), a descriptive method is established to delineate the respondents in a very good way. It is all about characterizing people, and that is part of the study. It is an approach utilizing post-positivist claims by the researcher in developing knowledge of cause-and-effect results and testing of hypotheses.

The respondents of the study were obtained through a Raosoft sample size calculator, which resulted in 385 respondents, and they were chosen by a criterion – having visited at least one tourist destination in Bicol within the past year or for the past two years, including before and during the pandemic and must be from a region outside Bicol Province to ensure that the research focuses on visitors' experiences in the Bicol Region. Also, the researchers considered having a 5% margin of error and a confidence level based on the total of tourist arrivals of 3,280,430 in Bicol as of 2019. Furthermore, the study only focused on Region V – Bicol.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 : Demographic Profile of the Tourists

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25	266	69.1
	26-35	35	9.1
	36-45	48	12.5
	46-55	28	7.3
	55-Above	8	2.1
Gender	Male	78	20.3

	Female	292	75.8
	LGBTQ	15	3.9
Employment Status	Employed	146	37.9
	Unemployed	194	50.4
	Self-employed	45	11.7
Educational Attainment	High School	25	6.5
	College Graduate	329	85.5
	Post Graduate	31	8.1
Marital Status	Single	278	72.2
	Married	107	27.8
Frequency of Travel	Once a year	223	57.9
	Twice a year	95	24.7
	Thrice a year	22	5.7
	Four times a year	45	11.7
Type of travel	Business	40	10.4
	Leisure	345	89.6
Province recently visited	Camarines Sur	6	1.6
	Camarines Norte	102	26.5
	Catanduanes	26	6.8
	Albay	201	52.2
	Masbate	19	4.9
	Sorsogon	31	8.1

Table 3 : Destination Attributes of the Ecotourism Attractions

Destination Attributes	WM	SD	VI	Rank
1. Safety and security	4.39	0.55	Good	2
2. Maintenance and cleanliness	4.42	0.51	Good	1
3. Information and communication	4.12	0.62	Good	7
4. Infrastructure	4.29	0.57	Good	4
5. Prices	4.19	0.62	Good	6
6. Facilities	4.21	0.60	Good	5
7. Attraction	4.37	0.54	Good	3
Composite Mean	4.29	0.48	Good	

Scale: 4.50-5.00: Excellent; 3.50-4.49: Good; 2.50-3.49: Fair; 1.50-2.49: Poor; 1.00-1.49: Very Poor

Table 3 ; Factors Affecting Tourism Sustainability

Factors	WM	SD	VI	Rank
1. Environmental	4.44	0.56	GE	2
2. Sociocultural	4.51	0.52	VGE	1
3. Economic	4.41	0.55	GE	3
Composite Mean	4.45	0.50	GE	

Scale: 4.50-5.00: To a very great extent (VGE); 3.50-4.49: To a great extent (GE); 2.50-3.49: To a moderate extent (ME); 1.50-2.49: To a small extent (SE); 1.00-1.49: Not at all (NA)

Table 4 : Factors affecting intention to revisit of tourists in Bicol Region

Factors Affecting Intention	WM	SD	VI	Rank
1. Perceived quality	4.41	0.56	A	3
2. Perceived value	4.56	0.53	SA	2
3. Satisfaction	4.57	0.54	SA	1
Overall Composite Mean	4.51	0.49	SA	

Scale: 4.50-5.00: Strongly Agree (SA); 3.50-4.49: Agree (A); 2.50-3.49: Moderately Agree (MA); 1.50-2.49: Disagree (D); 1.00-1.49: Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 5 : Revisit Intention of tourists in Bicol Region

Revisit Intention	WM	SD	VI	Rank
1. I will praise or say good things about tourism in the Bicol Region to friends and relatives	4.58	0.60	SA	2.5
2. I would advise friends and relatives to travel to Bicol Region	4.63	0.59	SA	1
3. I would plan for a trip back to the Bicol Region in the future	4.58	0.62	SA	2.5
4. If you had to decide, I would choose Bicol Region as a tourist destination on my return	4.57	0.62	SA	4
Composite Mean	4.59	0.56	SA	

Scale: 4.50-5.00: Strongly Agree (SA); 3.50-4.49: Agree (A); 2.50-3.49: Moderately Agree (MA); 1.50-2.49: Disagree (D); 1.00-1.49: Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 6 : Differences on Destination Attributes, Tourism Sustainability & Factors Affecting Revisit Intention when grouped According to Age

Attributes	Age Mean Rank				Kruskal -Wallis H	p- value	Int
	18 to 25 (n=266)	26 to 35 (n=35)	36 to 45 (n=48)	46 to 55 (n=28)			
Safety and Security	191.72	171.46	196.24	172.71	1.996	.573	NS
Maintenance & cleanliness	189.62	174.49	195.54	190.05	.831	.842	NS
Information & communication	194.38	161.13	195.31	161.93	4.942	.176	NS
Infrastructure	196.04	147.00	191.07	171.11	7.427	.059	NS
Prices	194.14	168.73	179.52	181.79	2.357	.502	NS
Facilities	196.14	152.47	180.61	181.18	5.703	.127	NS

Attraction	193.25	172.43	178.91	186.63	1.662	.645	NS
Sustainability							
Environmental	193.45	149.07	189.91	195.07	5.506	.138	NS
Sociocultural	194.29	164.81	181.42	182.00	2.884	.410	NS
Economic	192.33	168.93	191.95	177.39	1.872	.599	NS
Factors Affecting Revisit Intention							
Perceived Quality	192.10	171.43	183.25	191.34	1.332	.722	NS
Perceived Value	190.75	169.31	183.85	205.84	2.227	.527	NS
Satisfaction	191.68	175.00	177.56	200.68	1.796	.616	NS
Revisit Intention	190.79	167.86	188.99	198.48	1.904	.593	NS

**Significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)*

Table 7 : Differences on Destination Attributes, Tourism Sustainability & Factors Affecting Revisit Intention when grouped According to Gender

	Male (n=78)	Female (n=292)	LBGT Q (n=15)	Kruskal- Wallis H	p-value	Int
Attributes						
Safety and Security	171.06	197.53	218.83	4.528	.104	NS
Maintenance & cleanliness	176.24	197.01	202.17	2.323	.313	NS
Information & communication	166.16	200.47	187.23	6.032	.049	S
Infrastructure	161.03	201.53	193.10	8.567	.014	S
Prices	175.20	197.38	200.37	2.591	.274	NS
Facilities	175.49	197.55	195.47	2.517	.284	NS
Attraction	166.51	199.97	195.03	5.651	.059	NS
Sustainability						
Environmental	174.17	197.82	197.20	2.951	.229	NS
Sociocultural	162.27	201.43	188.60	8.169	.017	S
Economic	172.24	196.73	228.30	4.766	.092	NS
Factors Affecting Revisit Intention						
Perceived Quality	172.94	197.25	214.53	3.688	.158	NS
Perceived Value	152.03	204.79	176.63	15.884	.000	HS
Satisfaction	152.98	203.42	198.17	14.331	.001	HS

Revisit Intention	153.32	203.27	199.37	14.774	.001	HS
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**Significant at $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)*

Table 8 : Differences in Destination Attributes, Tourism Sustainability & Factors Affecting Revisit Intention when grouped According to Status of Employment

	Employed (n=146)	Unemployed (n=194)	Self-Employed (n=45)	Kruskal-Wallis H	p-value	Int
Attributes						
Safety and Security	190.23	192.88	202.51	.439	.803	NS
Maintenance & cleanliness	196.59	188.31	201.60	.790	.674	NS
Information & communication	190.90	193.06	199.58	.214	.898	NS
Infrastructure	183.88	196.34	208.20	2.094	.351	NS
Prices	187.93	193.81	205.96	.951	.622	NS
Facilities	184.49	193.54	218.28	3.297	.192	NS
Attraction	187.70	192.21	213.62	1.914	.384	NS
Sustainability						
Environmental	193.01	189.63	207.50	.992	.609	NS
Sociocultural	189.88	193.28	201.93	.434	.805	NS
Economic	191.48	190.80	207.42	.899	.638	NS
Factors Affecting Revisit Intention						
Perceived Quality	195.17	191.25	193.49	.110	.947	NS
Perceived Value	194.45	193.01	188.27	.119	.942	NS
Satisfaction	193.64	194.56	184.21	.366	.833	NS
Revisit Intention	196.63	191.86	186.16	.410	.815	NS

**Significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)*

Table 9 : Differences on Destination Attributes, Tourism Sustainability & Factors Affecting Revisit Intention when grouped According to Educational Attainment

	High School (n=25)	College (n=329)	Postgraduate (n=31)	Kruskal-Wallis H	p-value	Int
Attributes						
Safety and Security	190.74	192.60	199.08	.112	.945	NS
Maintenance & cleanliness	205.38	193.66	176.06	1.072	.585	NS

Information & communication	200.80	192.54	191.55	.137	.934	NS
Infrastructure	217.08	191.76	186.73	1.376	.503	NS
Prices	198.14	192.79	191.10	.066	.968	NS
Facilities	200.46	194.54	170.63	1.481	.477	NS
Attraction	186.18	193.66	191.53	.112	.945	NS
Sustainability						
Environmental	177.54	196.14	172.15	1.930	.381	NS
Sociocultural	174.26	196.03	175.92	1.798	.407	NS
Economic	192.70	195.14	170.58	1.444	.486	NS
Factors Affecting Revisit Intention						
Perceived Quality	193.18	194.73	174.48	.982	.612	NS
Perceived Value	194.66	192.36	198.50	.103	.950	NS
Satisfaction	183.60	195.25	176.66	1.109	.574	NS
Revisit Intention	186.76	194.43	182.87	.462	.794	NS

**Significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)*

Table 10 : Differences on Destination Attributes, Tourism Sustainability & Factors Affecting Revisit Intention when grouped According to Marital Status

	Single (n=278)	Married (n=107)	z-value	p-value	Int
Attributes					
Safety and Security	194.56	188.94	-.454	.649	NS
Maintenance & cleanliness	191.83	196.04	-.338	.736	NS
Information & communication	193.91	190.64	-.261	.794	NS
Infrastructure	200.74	172.90	-2.253	.024	S
Prices	196.32	184.37	-.958	.338	NS
Facilities	197.60	181.04	-1.332	.183	NS
Attraction	195.02	187.75	-.578	.563	NS
Sustainability					
Environmental	195.86	185.57	-.835	.404	NS
Sociocultural	198.29	179.26	-1.554	.120	NS
Economic	196.78	183.19	-1.098	.272	NS
Factors Affecting Revisit Intention					

Perceived Quality	193.68	191.23	-.198	.843	NS
Perceived Value	194.50	189.10	-.452	.651	NS
Satisfaction	196.42	184.11	-1.034	.301	NS
Revisit Intention	195.37	186.84	-.734	.463	NS

**Significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)*

Conclusion

1. The tourism market in the Bicol Region is predominantly composed of young, single female tourists aged 18–25 years who are either unemployed or college graduates and typically travel annually for leisure. Among the provinces, Albay emerged as the most frequently visited destination.
2. Tourists generally expressed favorable perceptions of the Bicol Region's destination attributes, particularly in terms of safety, cleanliness, accessibility, infrastructure, tourism facilities, attractions, and the overall social environment, indicating the region's strong potential for sustainable tourism development.
3. Environmental and economic factors were identified as the primary influences on sustainable tourism development, while sociocultural, political, and legal factors also contributed to shaping tourists' overall destination experience.
4. Tourism service quality, reflected through assurance, responsiveness, reliability, tangibles, empathy, destination image, and tourist loyalty, was positively evaluated, emphasizing the importance of delivering high-quality visitor experiences in sustaining tourism competitiveness.
5. Tourist perceptions varied significantly across selected demographic characteristics, indicating that demographic differences influence the evaluation of destination attributes, tourism sustainability, and service quality. However, several destination attributes remained consistently perceived across specific demographic groups.
6. Destination attributes and the dimensions of sustainable tourism exhibited significant

positive relationships with tourism service quality, demonstrating that improvements in destination management and sustainability practices contribute to enhanced visitor experiences and support sustainable destination development.

7. The proposed Sustainable Tourism Destination Framework provides an evidence-based guide for promoting sustainable tourism in the Bicol Region. Beyond its application in tourism planning and destination management, the framework offers valuable educational implications by serving as a reference for curriculum enhancement, destination-based learning, sustainability instruction, and industry–academe collaboration within tourism and hospitality education programs.

Recommendations

1. Local government units (LGUs), the Department of Tourism (DOT), and tourism stakeholders should strengthen destination marketing by promoting the diverse tourism assets of all provinces in the Bicol Region and targeting a broader range of tourist segments through inclusive and sustainable promotional strategies.
2. Tourism agencies, destination managers, and private tourism enterprises should continuously enhance destination attributes and tourism service quality by improving infrastructure, accessibility, safety, environmental conservation, and visitor-centered services to strengthen the region's competitiveness.
3. The proposed Sustainable Tourism Destination Framework should be adopted as a strategic reference in regional tourism planning, policy formulation, and destination

management to support the long-term sustainability of the Bicol Region's tourism industry.

4. Higher education institutions offering tourism and hospitality programs are encouraged to integrate the framework into curriculum development, destination-based learning, field immersion, and sustainability education to better prepare students for sustainable destination management and responsible tourism practices.
5. Stronger collaboration among government agencies, tourism enterprises, local communities, and higher education institutions should be established to promote sustainable tourism initiatives, community

participation, and industry-academe partnerships that contribute to regional development.

6. Tourism businesses should develop innovative and value-added tourism products, service packages, and visitor experiences that encourage repeat visitation while supporting environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, and local economic development.
7. Future researchers are encouraged to validate and refine the proposed framework in other tourism destinations and educational settings using advanced analytical approaches and broader respondent groups to enhance its applicability and generalizability.

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