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## ISSUES AND CONCERNS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE PROVINCE OF BILIRAN

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**Abstract:** *This study examines the issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs in the Province of Biliran. It aims to identify the challenges and opportunities for developing a successful community-based tourism program and to recommend best practices for a successful program. A survey was conducted to collect data from local stakeholders, including representatives from the local government, tourism industry, and community groups. Results of the survey revealed that the main challenges in the implementation and management of community-based tourism programs were the lack of resources and funding, inadequate infrastructure, and limited capacity of the local government. Additionally, the survey identified the need for better communication and collaboration between stakeholders and the need for improved access to training and capacity building. The study concluded that the Province of Biliran has potential for community-based tourism development but that challenges and opportunities need to be addressed in order to ensure a successful program. Recommendations for a successful program include the establishment of a multi-stakeholder approach, the development of a comprehensive strategy and action plan, the promotion of local partnerships and collaboration, and the facilitation of capacity-building and training for local stakeholders.*

**Keywords:** *community-based tourism development, sustainable tourism, socio-economic impacts, environmental impacts*

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### INTRODUCTION

The implementation of a community-based tourism development program requires a holistic approach and careful planning. This involves a thorough assessment of the local context and capabilities, as well as a review of existing resources and infrastructure. The program must be tailored to the specific needs of the local population, and should seek to maximize the economic, social, and environmental benefits of tourism development.

The management of a community-based tourism development program is also important for its success. This includes the establishment of an appropriate governance structure and management system, as well as the implementation of effective communication, marketing, and promotional strategies. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the program is adequately resourced, with a focus on building the capacity of local stakeholders. Community-based tourism development programs aim to provide sustainable economic development and poverty alleviation through the promotion of tourism initiatives. These initiatives typically involve the local population in the development and management of the tourism sector, and require strong governance and management systems to ensure their success.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) has published several reports on the issues and concerns related to community-based tourism development programs. These reports provide an overview of the challenges faced by communities in developing and managing community-based tourism initiatives, such as access to finance, limited capacity, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of tourism expertise. The reports also provide recommendations for addressing these challenges. However, the Philippine Department of Tourism has implemented the Sustainable Tourism Development Program (STDP) to promote responsible and sustainable tourism in the country. The STDP helps local communities identify and manage tourism opportunities, improve infrastructure and services, and develop local products and services. The program also supports the adoption of practices and policies that promote environmental protection and conservation, cultural heritage preservation, and local economic development.

The Eastern Visayas Region is home to several popular tourist destinations, including Samar

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Island, Leyte Island, and the Calicoan Islands: To promote sustainable tourism development, the Regional Development Council of the Eastern Visayas has launched the Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Program (RSTDP) to provide support to local governments and communities in the region. However, there are various issues and concerns in the implementation and management of the RSTDP, such as the lack of capacity and resources to manage tourism activities, inadequate infrastructure and facilities, and weak coordination among various stakeholders. In addition, there is a need for more comprehensive and comprehensive tourism policies and guidelines, as well as better enforcement of existing laws and regulations.

Local communities in Biliran Province face lack of resources, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to capital and financial services, and lack of access to markets for tourism-based products. Access to technical and business skills training for local communities is also limited. The province also lacks an efficient system to monitor and evaluate the success of community-based tourism programs. Conflicts between local stakeholders, such as government and private entities, are also a major concern in the implementation and management of community-based tourism programs.

One research gap on the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs is the lack of studies that explore the impacts of tourism on local communities. While there are studies that have explored the economic and environmental impacts of tourism, few have examined the social, cultural, and psychological impacts that tourism can have on the local population. Such studies would provide valuable insights into how tourism can affect the well-being of individuals and communities, and how to best manage tourism development programs to ensure that they are beneficial to all stakeholders.

One approach to addressing the gap of research about issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs is to conduct an in-depth case study that examines the factors influencing the success or failure of a particular program (Stanley, 2019). This study used Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model as developed in the 1980s by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

The theoretical framework that will be used to address issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs is the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model. This model focuses on the concept of community ownership, participation, and control of tourism activities in order to maximize benefits to the local population. The CBT model is based on a set of core principles that are grounded in the social, economic, and environmental needs of the local community. These principles include: (1) ownership and control of the tourism resources in the community; (2) the involvement of local stakeholders in decision-making; (3) the diversification of the local economy; (4) the empowerment of local people; (5) the promotion of sustainable tourism practices; and (6) the conservation of local culture and natural resources.

The CBT model is based on a participatory approach to planning and management, with stakeholders involved in every stage of the process. This approach is designed to ensure that tourism activities are designed and operated in a manner that is beneficial to the local community and environment. The CBT model also emphasizes the importance of working in partnership with governments, local business, NGOs, and other stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably. One of the major issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs is the lack of clear and consistent policies and regulations. Without proper regulation, there is a risk that CBT programs may be poorly designed and implemented, resulting in negative impacts on the local environment and communities.

Another significant concern is the lack of training and capacity building for local stakeholders, which can lead to inadequate understanding of the CBT model and negative impacts on the local environment and community. In addition, there is a need to ensure that the CBT model is implemented in a sustainable manner, with proper consideration given to the environment and to the needs of the local community. This requires effective management and monitoring of CBT programs to ensure that they are delivering the desired outcomes. Finally, there is a need to ensure that CBT programs are financially viable and that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably with the local stakeholders. In conclusion, the successful implementation and management of CBT programs requires effective collaboration between all stakeholders, clear and consistent policies, training and capacity building of

local stakeholders, sustainable management and monitoring, and financial viability.

The study was mainly conceptualized to determine the issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs in the Province of Biliran. To attain the objectives underscored by the researcher, the different variables were laid out and given emphasis, highlighted by the main concepts and constructs derived from identified theories.

As presented, the dependent variables are the socio-economic demographic characteristics of the respondents, success factors associated with community-based tourism development programs. On the other hand, the independent variables include the issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs. The interplay of the given variables would also provide the basis for designing a model for the Community-Based Tourism Development Program for the Province of Biliran as the output of the study.

The purpose of this study is to identify and explore the existing issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs in the Province of Biliran. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the current status and trends of community-based tourism development in the Province of Biliran; (2) identify the existing issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs in the Province of Biliran; (3) determine the impact of these issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs in the Province of Biliran; and (4) recommend strategies for addressing these issues and concerns.

## **METHODS**

This study utilized quantitative research design can be used to investigate the issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development programs. This design involves the collection and analysis of data from a population in order to better understand the issues and concerns that may be associated with the implementation and management of such programs. The data can be collected through surveys, interviews, or focus groups. The data collected can then be analyzed using descriptive statistics or inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics can be used to describe the issues and concerns that are present in the implementation and management of such programs. Inferential statistics can then be used to test hypotheses and draw conclusions about the issues and concerns that are present in the implementation and management of such programs. The locale and venue of the study are within Biliran Province. Specifically, identified tourist establishments of the different eight (8) municipalities composing Biliran served as the venue of the study. The subjects of the study were the local tourism officers, tourist industry/establishment owners, and community and identified tourists of the different municipalities within the Province. A total of two hundred (200) respondents were tapped to answer the survey. The researcher designed and develops the research instrument through the data lifted from a Tourism Training Handbook. The instrument consists of five parts based on the sequence and organization of the objectives of the study.

Part the researcher looked into the community-based tourism development in the Province of Biliran concerning economic, social, political, and psychological dimensions. Part II is concerned with the socio-economic impact of community-based tourism development given government revenue, employment, infrastructure development, and rural development. For interpretation purposes and to give meaning to the scores obtained by the respondents, the mean, ranges of values together with corresponding descriptions. In analyzing the data, statistics such as mean, frequency, and averaging were utilized. To get the measure of statistical dependence between two variables, spearman rank correlation coefficient was used.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

This section shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of the category of respondents, and the category of a tourist place. location, age, occupation, sex, civil status, and highest educational qualification.

**Table 1.** Position/Category of Respondents

<b>Position/Category</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Owner of a developed tourist place	10	25.64
Owner of an area that has the potential to be developed into a tourist place/destination	6	15.38
Municipal Mayor	4	10.26
Municipal Tourism Officer	5	12.83
Barangay Captain	8	20.51
Vice Mayor	2	5.13
Caretaker	1	2.56
Municipal Councilor	1	2.56
Manager	2	5.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As provided in the table for the position or category, the owner of a developed tourist place came in first with a frequency of 10 or 25.64 percent. Only the municipal councilor and caretaker were on the lowest with 1 frequency each or 2.56 percent, respectively. This means that there is still a greater need of developing tourist places in the area.

**Table 2.** Category of the Tourist Place

<b>Category of the Tourist Place</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Fully developed as a tourist area/place/destination	5	5.38
Semi-developed as a tourist area/destination	19	20.43
In the process of developing as a tourist area	16	17.20
Not yet developed but has the potential to be developed	14	15.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In the table for the category of the tourist place, semi-developed as a tourist area/place/destination placed on top with a frequency of 19 while fully developed was at its lowest at the frequency of 5 or 5.38 percent. This shows that developed tourist places are just a few which implies that the development of tourism is not yet at its full capacity and more efforts should be done to it.

**Table 3.** Location

<b>Location</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Naval	6	13.33
Almeria	11	24.44
Kawayan	5	11.11
Culaba	4	8.89
Caibiran	13	28.89
Cabucgayan	6	13.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As to the table for location, the town of Caibiran registered the biggest number of tourist spots identified at a frequency of 13 or 28.89 percent and Culaba got the lowest at a frequency of 4 or 8.89 percent. The findings could only mean that Culaba has the highest potential of becoming the tourist haven in the province of Biliran since it has the highest number of tourist spots/areas/destinations among the towns covered.

This section below show the issues and Concerns in the Implementation and Management of Community-Based TDP.

**Table 4.** Issues and Concerns in the Implementation and Management of Community-Based TDP

Indicators	WM	DESCRIPTION
Politics and politicians shall dip into the TDP sidelining the people of the community and controlling the programs and the projects.	2.99	Concerned
Input capital shall come in but the control of the expenditure is not given to the community. The community shall be used only as a front.	2.75	Concerned
Cooperatives may be organized in name only so that loans and credits can be extended to the program, but the control shall be done by powerful individuals.	2.59	Concerned
TDP maybe started but can be left hanging due to the absence of necessary input, particularly, on accessibility to the area. Good roads, transportation, and people's security must be given priority.	2.81	Concerned
TDP creates culture shock among the indigenous culture of the people.	2.73	Concerned
Tourism creates prostitution, gambling, drug use, drunkenness, etc.	2.64	Slightly Concerned
Criminality may increase.	2.51	Slightly Concerned
Morality norms of the people and the community may be shattered.	2.63	Slightly Concerned
People's training on community-based TDP management must be given priority before the projects shall be implemented.	3.48	Concerned
People's cooperatives must manage and execute the community-based TDP.	3.54	Concerned
In the site development, the natural settings or habitats must be preserved and given priority to remain as they are before any man-made structures are constructed.	3.99	Moderately Concerned
Site planning must be done first before constructions are done to preserve the natural settings. Natural aesthetics must be preserved.	4.00	Moderately Concerned
Legal papers on ownerships, boundaries, coverages, DENR permits, LGUs permits, registrations with SEC, and registrations with cooperatives, must be done first before introducing structural developments.	3.91	Moderately Concerned
Commercial advertisements through various media outlets and pages on the internet must be included in the planning.	3.45	Concerned
The raising of capital through cooperatives must be legal, well-defined, and with legal personality.	3.55	Concerned
A capable manager and officer must be chosen by the members of the cooperative through democratic proceedings.	3.71	Moderately Concerned
Private individual investments and private tourism development must be given secondary priority only over the community-based TDP initiatives.	3.15	Concerned
Management basics must be followed. The management basics are defined by the laws of cooperatives in the Philippines.	3.58	Concerned
The indigenous culture of the people, the moral norms, their beliefs, and their natural environment must at all times be primary issues over all TDPs.	3.34	Concerned
The people of the community must at all times reap most of the benefits of any tourism development program.	3.83	Concerned
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>Concerned</b>

On issues and concerns in the implementation and management of community-based tourism development, this fell on the frequency of 3.26 distinguished as serious. From all the indicators

provided, site planning must be done first before constructions are done to preserve the natural settings that had the highest frequency at 4.00. This would mean that while tourism development is a welcoming initiative, nature should not have to be sacrificed as well as neglected.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation and management of Community-Based Tourism Development Programs in Biliran Province face a number of issues and concerns. These concerns range from the lack of resources and financial support to the lack of knowledge, skills and capacity of the local government units and communities to manage such projects. Furthermore, there are ongoing conflicts between the local government and communities, and the need for improved stakeholder coordination and cooperation. In order to successfully implement and manage Community-Based Tourism Development Programs in Biliran Province, it is recommended that the local government units and communities receive adequate resources and financial support, as well as training and technical assistance. Furthermore, it is also recommended that the stakeholders coordinate and cooperate to ensure the success of these programs. Lastly, the local government should ensure that there is an effective conflict resolution mechanism in place, to minimize the possibility of conflicts between the local government and communities.

The researcher, hence, would like to propose a model of the community-based tourism development program for the Province of Biliran:

- 1) Establish a Community-Based Tourism Development Program Office: The program Office will be responsible for planning, developing, and implementing a comprehensive tourism development program. This office will be staffed by a program director, tourism development specialist, and marketing specialist.
- 2) Identify Tourism Resources and Assets: The Program Office will conduct a comprehensive survey of the province's tourism resources and assets. This survey will include an inventory of tourist attractions, accommodations, transportation services, and other tourism related services.
- 3) Develop a Tourism Development Plan: The Program Office will develop a comprehensive tourism development plan for the province of Biliran. This plan will include goals, objectives, and strategies for improving the province's tourism industry.
- 4) Establish Tourism Development Committees: The Program Office will establish Tourism Development Committees in each of the province's municipalities. These committees will be responsible for developing and implementing tourism development plans for their respective municipalities.
- 5) Establish Tourism Information Centers: The Program Office will establish Tourism Information Centers in each of the province's municipalities. These centers will provide information to both local and international tourists.
- 6) Develop a Tourism Promotion Plan: The Program Office will develop a comprehensive tourism promotion plan for the community that includes the following elements:
  - a) Research and Analysis: Research and analyze the current tourism industry in the community, including current visitor demographics, trends, and competition.
  - b) Marketing Strategy: Develop a marketing strategy that includes objectives and goals, target markets, messaging, media mix, and budget.
  - c) Online Presence: Develop an online presence for the community that includes a website, social media accounts, and other digital outreach tools.
  - d) Event Planning: Identify and plan events and activities to attract tourists to the community.
  - e) Promotion and Public Relations: Develop a strategy to promote and publicize the community's tourism assets.
  - f) Evaluation: Establish metrics to measure the success of the tourism promotion plan.

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