

THEMATIC AREA: Environment, Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk
Reduction

TITLE : IDENTIFYING THE TOP TOURISM POTENTIALS OF METRO NAGA,
PHILIPPINES: A LOCALIZED AND HOLISTIC APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is not only for those who seek pleasure and relaxation. For the host communities, especially the developing countries that need to earn livelihood for their families. The study aims to achieve the following results: 1.) A Characterization of Metro Naga tourism in terms of economic impact; 2.) A definition of economic development as perceived by the local development practitioners, and 3.) An enumeration of tourism strategies that would best achieve the defined local economic development.

The study used perception survey conducted among development experts and it used secondary data from the Department of Tourism, economic indicators related to tourism, and MNDC's economic profile of Naga City. It used descriptive statistics and correlative analysis to generate sound results.

Findings shows that indeed there is a growing trend of tourist inflow with an annual average of 41.6% from 2000 to 2010. Tourist arrival has been largely Filipinos or local visitors. This shows that greater growth can be achieved if the needs of the local tourists will be given more attention. Data further show that there is a minimal correlation between tourist inflow and employment generation. Contrary to expectations, income from some tourism related enterprises exhibited negative correlation with tourism flow. The survey also revealed that local development projects should be general and holistic uplifting the welfare of the people and should go beyond simple economic growth.

The findings implies the following:

- Tourism Development Programs must design strategies that satisfy not only economic, but also the social needs of the people. This can be achieved by 1)planning more community and micro enterprise-based tourism products and services, 2) developing tourism assets must consider maximizing the patronage of domestic tourists, 3) optimizing the potentials of diverse ecosystem
Based on the current tourist products and services, the following tourist packages are recommended: 1) Rest and recreation packages for families, workers, and youth, 2) Heritage Center, 3) Ecotourism for adventure seekers and nature lovers, and 4) Pilgrimage tours for religious devotees
- The Role of the Educational Institutions in Local Development efforts through Tourism has to be emphasized. For Mariner's Polytechnic College, it has program offerings in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Tourism, and related courses, can help in developing those strategies through: 1) Tour Package Design for Local Communities, 2) Direct Human Resource Assistance for Community - based Tourism Enterprises. 3) Assistance in Marketing and Promotion of Tourism.

These strategic inputs to the process of planning and implementation of community based tourism packages recognizes the need for tourism to be sensitive, not just for the business needs of investors but also to the issues of equitable and inclusive growth and development. Thus, the contribution of tourism educators and institution are upgraded to a new level of participation- that of the promotion of a holistic and development approach to tourism.

- Paper presented in Taipei, Taiwan during the 18th Asia Pacific Tourism Association (APTA) Conference on June 26-29, 2012.
- Won the 1st prize in the joint Symposium of R&D Highlights of BCIEERD, BCAARRD, and BCHRD held in Bicol University of College of Agriculture and Forestry (BUCAF) on Nov.27, 2015.