



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ECOTOURISM, SOCIAL ENTERPRISE OF THE PANDIN LAKE TOURIST SERVICE COOPERATIVE, STO. ANGEL, SAN PABLO CITY, LAGUNA: ASSESSMENT AND SUGGESTED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism is a valuable vehicle to provide environmental, socio-economic, and cultural values at both local and national levels. This research is conducted to provide information for ecotourism and social enterprise government programs, activities and projects for Pandin Lake, Sto. Angel, San Pablo City, Laguna. Specifically, the study aims to assess: the ecotourism and social enterprise at the lake; describe the demographic profile of the Pandin Lake Tourist Service Cooperative as part of the Gender and Development (GAD) project; and gather Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) and Gender Disaggregated Data (GDD) in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income, and years of residency in Pandin Lake. The study used the descriptive research design. It is believed that Gender and Development (GAD) plays an important role to drive and aim for progress, and uniting similar and significant government programs, activities, and projects (PAPs). The ecological effect of ecotourism enterprise can help enhance the conservation of natural resources and improve the way of living in the community. Moreover, the residents and cooperative members are more aware of its economic effects and recognize that this ecotourism and social enterprise can help to generate additional revenue for its people, for the government, and create jobs and more business opportunities. The effects of socio-cultural status can help both the residents and the tourists in improving their quality human experience.

KEYWORDS

Ecotourism, Social Enterprise, Tourism, Tourism Development Plan, Gender and Development

1. INTRODUCTION

This document used a descriptive research method; that aims to describe the assessment of ecotourism and social enterprise in Pandin Lake, San Pablo City, Laguna, Philippines and profile of the members of Pandin Lake Tourist Service Cooperative. The tourism industry is recognized by the Philippine government as an essential sharer of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that was generated from the revenue of products and services which shares in the growth of the country's performance. The tourism industry must be one of the main concerns for national development due to its feasibility and efficiency for transformation and as an effective vehicle for revenue generation. Its impact on social development is sustainable since it follows some of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, which aim to end poverty and take action to save the planet for future endeavours.

The Republic Act No. 9593 also known as the Tourism Act of 2009 is an act of declaring a national policy for tourism as an engine of investment, employment, growth, and national development and strengthening of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and its attached agencies to implement effective and efficient policies. According to the Department of Tourism (2012), the overall objective of having a tourism development plan is to increase the income and employment opportunities of the destination. Ecotourism is seen as a potential medium to provide environmental, socio-economic, and cultural enhancement. For instance, the beauty of the natural resources of San Pablo City like the seven lakes is indeed a very promising means of attracting tourists, foremost to the generation of income that will benefit the entire city and the community. With this

foregoing statement, it is expected that the ecotourism potential of San Pablo City should be maximized with a comprehensive ecotourism program with the City Development Council.

The issuance of Cooperative Development Authority Memorandum Circular No. 2013-22 RE: Guidelines in Mainstreaming Gender and Development in the Cooperative dated: November 12, 2012, was the blazing start of the implementation of policy imperatives in mainstreaming Gender and Development (GAD) based on existing laws and policy concerning the cooperatives such as Republic Act No. 7192; Women and Development Nation Building Act, General Appropriation Act (GAA) of 1999 section 28, and the heart of Gender and Development the Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women of 2009 and lastly the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) issued Memorandum Circular No 2017-14 Re. The tools for assessing the progress of Gender Equality in primary cooperatives are supplemental to Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Memorandum Circular 2013-22.

The cited policy imperatives mandate the government institution and its instrumentalities to the institutionalization of Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) and Gender Disaggregated Data (GDD) as a basis of GAD Government Programs, Activities, and Projects (PAPs) corresponding to at least 5% of the agency budget. Most agencies' faced challenges and failed to follow and sustain such mandates of the law. The San Pablo City Cooperative Office, actively mainstreaming GAD since 2017 and one major concern of all the cooperatives is the collection of the SDD and GDD that will be the basis for approving PAPs, and its appropriation of budget. This paper aims to provide information for planning of ecotourism and social

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enterprise government programs, activities and projects for Pandin Lake, Sto. Angel, San Pablo City, Laguna. Specifically, the study aims to assess: the ecotourism and social enterprise at the lake; describe the demographic profile of the Pandin Lake Tourist Service Cooperative as part of the Gender and Development (GAD) project; and gather Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) and Gender Disaggregated Data (GDD) in terms of age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, family income, and years of residency in Pandin Lake.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental scanning is a very functional instrument to assess and evaluate the factors that may affect the present status of the enterprise. The indicators can be classified as an opportunity or a threat to the future progress of the cooperative and its community. Political, 2022 whereas newly elected government officials at both national and local level have posted on duty and gaze at the tourism sector as one of the top contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is a good indicator that ecotourism in Pandin lake has the vast chance to be considered an investment of the government, which can generate additional revenue, and also as means of performing its mandate to maintain the natural resources and provide public services in the community. Since the cooperative has a legal personality in the community it must be fully supported and provided technical assistance from the San Pablo City Cooperatives Office and Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Region IV-A.

Similar to it are other government agencies that take good care of the community such as the Office of the City Tourism and Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) which are responsible for the orderliness and well preserve of the natural resources. In the economic indicator, tourist arrivals in the Philippines increased from 206,392 in May 2022 to 254,312 in June 2022, according to Trading Economics global macro models and analysts' expectations. In the long term, the Philippines' Tourist Arrivals are projected to trend at around 300,000 by end of 2022 and 715,000 in 2023. It is an opportunity for the economy that experts and economists are positive about and have forecast an increase in the number of tourists in the Philippines from 2023 to 2025. Tourism and recreation contribute a great deal to the economy of the City of San Pablo.

The number of tourists that visit the Philippines plays an important factor as San Pablo City is one of the tourist destinations in the Southern Tagalog region. Tourists who come from other countries, or Metro Manila and other provinces need a serene place that the lake can greatly offer. According to Undersecretary, Dennis S. Mapa, Ph.D. of the National Statistician and Civil Registrar General, the largest proportion of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) was from CALABARZON at 20.7 percent out of the total number of 2.2 Million, this data is critical to consider since most of the visitors of Pandin Lake are OFW according to data gathered by the Office of the City Tourism of San Pablo.

According to the World Trade Organization of the nations, each person can work in a different country and have the opportunity to live there and have the chance to be a citizen of that country. In the Philippines, foreign companies are building up their enterprise and many Filipinos are now working in foreign companies. This means that globalization has a positive effect on our economy. One benefit of globalization is the attraction of foreign investors from different countries, which has a great impact on the Philippine economy as a whole. Aside from official business travels, it increases potential tourist demands and is a great opportunity to capture a market. For the record, despite the absence of marketing strategies the cooperative, still, had foreign visitors astonishingly visiting Pandin lake. The Cooperative as a social enterprise was affiliated with the local development council and union of cooperatives which upholds the Filipino culture and tradition that was anchored with the vision and mission of Gender and Development (GAD) and plays an integral part in gender equality, diversity, social inclusion and aims for future development.

In terms of information technology, it flows very well and helps Filipinos to have knowledge and updates about the latest trends. The impact of globalization on Philippine technology brings more positive effects because it helps to increase the economy. The reason that information technology with its up-to-date and modern use improves the flow of all company products and also minimizes the work of every Filipino, on the one hand, has a positive effect on the business horizon by developing and implementing advertising strategies to reach the firm's general market and also its specific target market by using a customized advertisement. Social Media platforms, ICT advertisements, and other search engines are powerful tools to promote the lake, pleasant facilities and amenities, quality services, and customers' feedback (Kumar 2009).

One of the major challenges of the cooperative is the low technical

competency of the members which needs immediate concern for improvement. The legal aspect must be exploited as an opportunity to progress and move forward in development. The Republic Act 9593 or the Tourism Act 2009, is an act declaring a national policy for tourism as an engine of investment, employment, growth, and national development and strengthening the Department of Tourism (DOT) and its attached agencies to implement effective and efficient policies. The State declares tourism as an essential element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance, which must be harnessed as an engine of socio-economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange, and employment, and to continue to mold and an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

The law ensures the development of Philippine tourism for the Filipino people, conserves, and promotes the heritage and national identity. It recognizes sustainable tourism development as vital to national socio-economic development by providing the appropriate support for the growth of the tourism industry. The law promotes a tourism industry that is ecological, sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, ethically, and socially equitable for local communities. It creates a favourable image of the Philippines within the global community and strengthens attraction for international and local tourists. As well as a center of world congresses and conventions, by promoting sustainable tourism anchored mainly on the country's history, culture, and natural legacies, ensuring the protection, preservation, and promotion of these resources; and also encouraging the private sector to participate in the Agri-tourism for development of countryside and preservation of rural life since our country is an agricultural demographics.

This law will develop a national action plan and work for its adoption and implementation by national and local government units. It means the government will have full support for the growth and development of the tourism industry. It also encourages activities and programs which promote tourism awareness, preserves diverse Filipino culture, traditions, and heritage, and instil a sense of history and a culture of tourism among the youth for the future generation and the entire Filipino people. Also, it ensures that tourism development protects and promotes the general well-being of the Filipino people, particularly in the area of business and investment.

The Republic Act will enhance the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data that accurately measure the economic and social impact of tourism in the country to facilitate future planning in the public and private sectors. With this, it ensures the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology through the promotion of activities geared toward environmental protection, conservation, and restoration. It also develops responsible tourism as a strategy for environmentally sound and community participatory tourism programs, enlisting the participation of local communities, including indigenous people, in conserving bio-physical and cultural diversity, and promoting environmental understanding and education. Also, it enhances the capability-building of Local Government Units (LGUs), in partnership with the private sector, in the management of local tourism projects and initiatives, thereby ensuring accessible and affordable destinations throughout the country, especially in areas that have shown strong comparative advantage.

As a cooperative, it is imperative to follow the regulating policies under the Republic Act 9520 of the Cooperative Act of the Philippines which aim for sustainable development and good management of the cooperative. The Republic Act 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women Act 2009, the heart of Gender and Development and the binding ingredients of the research paper as the mandates for the collection of Gender Statistic and Sex Disaggregated Data, that are vital in planning, programming, and policy formation of government agencies, this mandate are essential in planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of Gender and Development (GAD) in the funding of government programs, activities and projects. Since Ecotourism is our main agenda, it is critical to consider the environmental aspect. Presidential Decree No.1586 requires private firms or entities, agencies, and instrumentalities of the government to prepare environmental impact statements for every proposed project and undertaking which significantly affect the quality of the environment.

The Environment Impact Assessment System was established in 1978 and enacted to facilitate the attainment and maintenance of a rational and orderly balance between socioeconomic development and environmental protection. Environment Impact Assessment is a planning and management tool that will help the government and proponents and the affected community address the negative consequences or risks to the environment. The process assures the implementation of environment-friendly projects which apply to the tourism industry. The Republic Act No. 9003, or the Philippine Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000,

provides the legal framework for the country's systematic comprehensive and ecological solid waste management program that shall ensure the protection of public health and the environment. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, whereas goals numbers 6 up to 14 were dedicated to taking care of the environment while numbers 11 and 13 goals involved the tourism and hospitality industry.

Aside from that, the United Nations gave tribute to entrepreneurs, companies, creative individuals, and communities in marking 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. With the rise in environmental awareness, emphasizing the low-carbon era, green tourism will be the new direction for the future development of tourism. This means that throughout 2017, activities and initiatives involved in tourism and transformational power in global efforts to create a world that is cleaner and greener, more equal, and more inclusive were highlighted. The campaign "Travel. Enjoy. Respect's objective is to open the awareness of the travellers of the potential of tourism while avoiding damage to the environment, traditions, culture, heritage, and local communities.

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council has a reliable guide and maintains recent sustainability criteria for hotels, destinations, and tour operators. Our social responsibility and obligation to promote and rise in environmental awareness, emphasizing the low-carbon era, green tourism will be the new direction for the future development of tourism. In all aspects of the tourism process, "green tourism" includes tourists, hotels, attractions, tourist managers, travel agents, tour operators, and travel guides. This green tourism will protect the green environment with concepts of green consumption activities, to achieve social responsibility, economic development, and ecological sustainability in the realm. In this study, the concept of green tourism, with its success stories, will establish complete management of the green tourism market.

Thus, to build a quality environment and service industry for our children and work towards sustainable development while traveling the world combined with the latest trends. Since the landscape and body of water are equipped with a vast landscape of plants and trees, the clean and green program of the Philippines was highly anticipated and well-executed. The community also conformed to the government regulation in taking care of the environment. With its popularity, the lake was recognized as the cleanest lake in San Pablo City, Laguna. Philippine Statistics Authority said that the contribution of tourism to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of our country declined from 12.8 percent in 2019, down to 5.4 percent in 2020. The Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (TDGVA) dropped to P973.31 billion compared to 2019 at P2.51 trillion which is a 61.2 percent decrease in 2020.

Employment in the tourism sector also declined to an 18.1 percent drop with 4.68 million employees in 2020 compared to 5.72 million in 2019. The Department of Tourism (DOT) said that the recent figures have reflected the country's tourism industry amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this industry that is highly dependent on mobility and face-to-face interaction of people, the severe damage of the global pandemic crisis is both extraordinary and inevitable. With the health program and vaccination scheme being rolled out by the government, the recovery of the economy is now starting to relish; it is vital following some standard health protocols for safety reasons.

3. METHODS

This paper used the descriptive method to describe and interpret the importance of the collection of data that will be used as supporting documents in the approval of government grants, donations, programs, activities, and projects. Data plays an important role in research and development; it gives measurement and vital information that is used to analyse the current situation of the community. It was used to forecast the future development of the cooperative and the area. This business research and business plans were the results of the mixed type of research design involving quantitative and qualitative designs which warrant a neutral analysis. Important facts and information were obtained through the private and public resources used to create this research paper.

For the initial stage, all relevant information collected in tourism came from environmental scanning and thru the power of information technology. For internal sources a comprehensive detailed interview with the respondents and see the actual lives and conditions of the environment. With the admirable efforts of the City Cooperative Office and City Tourism Office of San Pablo City, an initial gathering of basic Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) and Gender Disaggregated Data (GDD) was made in the interview to gather vital information. This method was aided by a questionnaire to rush the process. Since the cooperative was established on August 19, 2019, filed cooperative documents gave substantial information that supports the claims that desire to enhance the management of the cooperative and aim for development.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The measurement of accomplishment of a new cooperative cannot give a precise evaluation since it was only created last August 19, 2019, a young organization cannot measure its progress but faces a lot of challenges and is insufficient for organizational management, marketing platform, developmental and strategic plan and also with the real measurement of success is on the tangible aspect such as financial growth. But this paper might be the burning start for the organization's growth and development. Another factor in the slowing down of its progress was the pandemic effect of the COVID 19 which disrupted the tourism and hospitality industry operations from 2020 to earlier months of 2022. Since 2017 the cooperative sector in San Pablo City has actively mainstreamed efforts of Gender and Development (GAD) thru a series of training, seminars, and workshops.

Table 1: Assessment Form for visitors in the Pandin Lake

Indicators	WM	VI
1. Does Ecotourism in Pandin Lake, provide an economic impact on the members and residents of the community?	4.26	Agree
2. Does the Ecotourism of Pandin Lake, add an opportunity to generate, revenues, for the government?	4.27	Agree
3. Does the Ecotourism of Pandin Lake, generate more jobs for the community?	4.35	Agree
4. Does the Ecotourism of Pandin, open an opportunity to establish other products or services?	4.36	Agree
5. Is Ecotourism a sustainable source of revenue in the future for the community?	4.01	Agree
6. Is the collection of Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) significantly relevant in the development of the community?	3.96	Agree
7. Does the present organization enhance its capacity and capability for good management and governance	3.92	Agree
8. Does the present organization need a developmental and marketing plan?	4.30	Agree
9. Is the community necessitating awareness of environmental conservation?	4.24	Agree
10. Is the present awareness of the community significantly relevant and able to sustain the social enterprise?	4.14	Agree
11. Is the present awareness of the community significantly relevant to solicit commitment to the community	4.08	Agree
12. Is the impact of the organization has significantly relevant in terms of Political, Economic, Social, Legal, and Environmental aspect?	4.44	Agree
GENERAL ASSESSMENT	4.20	AGREE

Legend: WM – Weighted Mean, VI – Verbal Interpretation, 4.50 – 5 = Strongly Agree, 3.50 – 4.49 = Agree, 2.50 – 3.49 = Uncertain/ Neutral, 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree, 1 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

The generation and maintenance of Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD) were a critical part of the discussion as one of the major topics as it is also an essential requirement in the appropriation of the budget using the GAD Fund. With the quantitative method of data gathering from the City Cooperative Office and City Tourism Office of San Pablo City, a collection

of appropriate data was partially complied and collected. The nature of Sex Disaggregated Data will depend on the agency and organization's demographics, nature of operations, and stakeholders. As an outcome of the data collection, the result reveals as follows, the respondents and members of the cooperative are composed of 17 women, or 43%, and 23

men, or 57% of the population of 40. The disaggregation of sex is vital for the reason that the differences in the practical needs of the population.

As to the age, it shows that the oldest member ranges from 68 years old to a 21 year old as the youngest, with a median of 44.5 years old; which means there are senior citizens in the population who belong to the marginalized sector. Civil status is composed of single at 32%, married at 52%, widow/widower at 13%, and separated at 3% of the population. The combination of a widow and separated which is 16% of the population can be categorized as marginalized, due to their responsibility as solo parents. As to sex disaggregation of civil status, it shows that the single is composed of 6 women and 7 men, married are 7 women and 14 men, and widows are composed of 5 women and 1 man categorized as separated, to sum it up the senior citizen composed of 4 women and 3 men and solo parent composed of 5 women and 3 men.

The educational attainment status of the population will give urgency for the government to act and develop an alternative course of action to improve the organization as well as the community. It shows that elementary level has counted 9 or 22% of the population, elementary graduated 2 or 5%, high school level 16 or 40%, high school graduate 3 or 7%, technical vocational graduate 3 or 8%, college-level 4 or 10% and college graduate 3 or 8% respectively. The critical level was identified from the high school level down to the elementary level, which is so alarming in the education sector of the government. For the occupational profile of the population, the majority were boat paddlers (bangkero) 16 women and 12 men, as pertains to the disaggregation of data 70% of the population or the majority depend on the ecotourism industry of Pandin Lake which is significantly relevant in the everyday livelihood.

As the other 30% are composed of 4 men as construction workers 1 woman as an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), 1 man as a Police Officer, 1 man as a welder, 2 men as fisher folks, 1 man as a vendor, and 1 man act as tourist guide respectively. Since the above-sited basic gender statistics were disclosed, a viewpoint or a vision can now glimpse what needs to be done. Who has the responsibility to be done this? And whose mainstream needs to be poured? As to the standpoint of significance in conducting a formal study, a survey was conducted to measure its relevance and participated with the visitors of Pandin Lake and experienced the pleasant ecotourism offered by the community, as result, the following table shows the collected information on this matter.

The table no. 1 determines and demonstrates the result of the general assessment or weighted mean of 4.20 which has a verbal interpretation of agree. This is evidence or support to the claim for the suggestion or message for the further conduct of future studies on this matter.

5. CONCLUSION

The Pandin Lake visitors agree that the ecotourism and social enterprises in Pandin Lake will contribute to economic sustainability in the community, that the sex disaggregation data will be relevant to community development and that visitors and resident's awareness can solicit commitment to support ecotourism and social enterprise in the community. Since there are no formal studies conducted yet, the absence of significant data is the main reason for the slow development and progress of the community. Government programs activities projects (PAPs) must be supported with data. The Gender and Development (GAD)

fund is one of the government funds that can be utilized to support this scheme, but to make this happen, the proposal requires tangible information provided by the Sex Disaggregated Data (SDD). Cooperative as a social enterprise, initiated the gathering of SDD as a mandate by the policies and can generate basic data which can be used by other government agencies to unlock the potential in digging more information that is vital to perform government PAPs including, tourism, environment, trade, education, and local governance to achieve community development and progress.

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