

Extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna Province

Aimee Laurice D. Escandor

adescandor@gmail.com

Laguna State Polytechnic University, Santa Cruz Campus, Laguna, Philippines 4009

Abstract

This study assessed the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna Province. Tourism has contributed to socio-economic growth thus this study focused on the status of implementation and effectiveness of tourism programs and projects. Data were collected from 263 respondents representing various stakeholder groups, including community residents, local government unit (LGU) tourism officers and staff, and business owners, with a diverse range of experiences in the tourism sector. The researcher used validated questionnaires and interviews to respondents of the selected towns. The analysis focused on key implementation components which were fund allocation, stakeholder participation, infrastructure development, promotion & marketing, and training & capacity building and their impact on critical effectiveness indicators such as tourist arrivals, revenue, local employment, tourist satisfaction, and program sustainability. The findings reveal statistically significant positive correlations ($p < .001$) between implementation measures and tourism outcomes, thereby rejecting the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the effective implementation and the overall success of tourism programs and projects. The study underscored the importance of comprehensive resource management, active stakeholder involvement, and strategic marketing in fostering sustainable tourism development. These insights provide valuable implications for local government and tourism authorities aiming to optimize tourism strategies and enhance economic growth in the region.

Keywords: Laguna Province; local governance; program implementation; tourism development; tourism programs and projects

1. Introduction

Tourism is a vital contributor to the Philippine economy, driving growth and development across the nation. It serves not only as a key source of income and employment but also fosters community involvement and cultural exchange. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2024), travel and tourism now account for over one-fifth (21.3%) of the country's economy, underscoring how essential this sector is in supporting local communities. This year has seen a remarkable boost in job growth, with employment in the tourism industry exceeding the pre-pandemic peak of 2019 and reaching over 9.5 million jobs, making up 20% of the national workforce. Additionally, both international and domestic visitor spending are projected to break previous records in 2024, reaching ₱715.6 billion and ₱3.7 trillion, respectively.

For many regions, a strong tourism sector creates opportunities not only in hospitality and travel but also in supporting related industries such as retail and food services. The influx of international visitors brings vital capital into local economies, allowing for reinvestment in infrastructure and community development, thereby enhancing the quality of life for residents.

The Philippines is renowned for its diverse attractions, including stunning beaches, historical sites, and lush landscapes. With colorful festivals, traditional crafts, and delectable local cuisine, the cultural

experiences offered in the Philippines highlight the country's unique heritage and warm hospitality.

Despite the positive growth, the extent of tourism initiative implementation in specific areas, such as Laguna Province, requires detailed examination to identify potential gaps, assess effectiveness, and develop strategies for sustainable development. This study aims to evaluate the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna, focusing on the promotion of local festivals and products.

1.1. Background of the Study

The tourism industry is a powerful force that shapes the economic and cultural fabric of regions around the world. It creates jobs, generates income, and encourages community involvement while facilitating cultural exchange among diverse groups. In the Philippines, tourism is a crucial sector recognized under the National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP), which serves as the backbone for promoting sustainable tourism practices throughout the country. Additionally, the Tourism Act of 2009, or Republic Act No. 9593, underscores the government's commitment to developing tourism as a vital engine for economic growth and sustainable development. This legislation places a strong emphasis on promoting local festivals and products.

In Laguna Province, the local government, alongside various stakeholders, has actively launched numerous tourism programs and projects designed to shine a spotlight on the area's unique offerings, including local products, rich cultural events, and vibrant festivals. According to the Philippine News Agency, Laguna's economy grew by 3.9%, reaching PHP1.029 trillion in 2023. The services sector, which includes industries connected to tourism, saw an impressive growth of 9.8%. Within this, the accommodation and food services industry—a vital part of tourism—expanded significantly by 17.7%. These numbers highlight the important role tourism plays in boosting the province's economy and creating jobs, especially in areas like hospitality, local services, and even Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Despite these positive developments, there were gaps in understanding how effectively these programs are being executed across different cities and municipalities. This study explored the extent of implementation of these tourism initiatives, focusing on the status of implementing the tourism programs and projects and its effectiveness.

The researcher used a quantitative method data collection through surveys from interviews. This methodology allowed the researcher to have a deep exploration of the effectiveness of these tourism programs in promoting Laguna's local offerings and preserving its cultural heritage.

The insights from this study were crucial for a wide range of stakeholders, including local government officials, academe, business owners, and community members. They helped effective practices and areas that require improvement. Furthermore, the research illuminated the obstacles that impede the successful implementation of tourism initiatives, providing practical recommendations to enhance the promotion and sustainability of tourism in the region. Lastly, this study aimed to support the ongoing growth of Laguna's tourism sector, benefiting the local economy while also preserving the province's rich cultural identity for future generations.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study outlined the relationship between the independent variables which are status of tourism programs and projects and the dependent variables which are effectiveness these programs, in the context of promoting local products and festivals in Laguna province.

1.2.1. Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory highlighted the need to identify and address the interests, needs, and roles of different groups or individuals involved in or affected by a specific program or project. In tourism, these stakeholders include local governments, businesses, community members, tourists, NGOs, and others who

play a part in shaping or benefiting from tourism development.

At its core, stakeholder theory promoted collaboration and shared responsibility. In the context of Laguna, local products and festivals are central to tourism programs—they showcase cultural heritage while boosting the local economy. Stakeholders like artisans, small business owners, festival organizers, and communities are key players in ensuring the success of these initiatives. The theory underscores the value of actively engaging these groups to maximize the benefits of tourism efforts.

Tourism programs often require the coordination of various stakeholders. Local government units (LGUs) provide funding and policy support, private businesses promote related products and services, and community members help preserve cultural identity and advocate for sustainable practices. According to stakeholder theory, aligning the interests of these groups and fostering their active participation is crucial for achieving meaningful outcomes.

However, tourism development can bring competing priorities—economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability—which makes finding balance essential. For Laguna, this means ensuring that local products and festivals are presented authentically while meeting broader economic goals. Open dialogue and compromise among stakeholders are vital to achieving this balance.

Stakeholder theory also offered a framework to evaluate how well tourism programs were implemented. For instance, the promotion of local products and festivals can be assessed by examining how effectively stakeholders are involved, the extent of community participation, and the economic benefits generated.

In essence, stakeholder theory explained how collaboration and active involvement from diverse groups influence the success of tourism initiatives. It also helped assess whether programs in Laguna were inclusive, equitable, and aligned with sustainable tourism goals, creating a path for long-term progress.

1.2.2. Sustainability Theory

Sustainability theory is all about meeting our current needs without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It emphasizes finding a balance between economic, environmental, and social factors to ensure long-term success and fairness in development. In the context of tourism, this theory supported practices that encourage economic growth while safeguarding cultural heritage and protecting natural resources.

This theory was tied directly to the study of tourism programs in selected towns in Laguna, especially when it comes to promoting local products and festivals. Local products and festivals are key to sustainable tourism because they not only showcase cultural traditions but also provide economic opportunities for local communities. By focusing on local crafts, food, and traditions, tourism can be both enriching for visitors and empowering for the local people, all while respecting the environment and cultural values.

Tourism in Laguna needs to strike a careful balance—fostering economic growth while protecting both cultural and environmental resources. Sustainability theory supported this balance by encouraging tourism activities that boost income without harming the community's identity or the environment. For example, promoting eco-friendly festival practices or sourcing local products sustainably fits perfectly with sustainable development goals.

Sustainable tourism also encourages active involvement from all stakeholders, especially the local community. By involving artisans, small business owners, and cultural organizers, tourism can create fair opportunities and help reduce inequalities. In Laguna, this means that by including residents in the decision-making process, tourism initiatives can build a stronger sense of ownership and promote sustainability within the community.

The sustainability theory offered a way to assess whether tourism programs have lasting, positive effects. In Laguna, this involves looking at how these programs impacted livelihoods, cultural preservation,

and the health of the environment. For example, creating opportunities for local crafts to thrive or minimizing waste at festivals can ensure that both the community and the environment benefit in the long run.

Finally, sustainability theory encouraged a strategic approach to tourism. It helped ensure that tourism programs are aligned with long-term goals like reducing carbon footprints, preserving heritage sites, and improving the well-being of the community. By applying sustainability principles, the study assesses whether tourism initiatives in Laguna promote inclusive growth, protect cultural and environmental resources, and pave the way for lasting prosperity. In this way, the theory guides the creation of tourism programs that are both impactful and sustainable.

1.2.3. Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Theory

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) theory is all about empowering local communities to take the lead in managing and benefiting from tourism. The key idea is that tourism should reflect the needs and aspirations of the local people, ensuring that it not only boosts economic growth but also supports social, cultural, and environmental sustainability. It emphasizes active participation, making sure that the benefits of tourism are shared fairly, especially within the community.

In the context of the study on tourism programs in selected towns in Laguna, particularly the promotion of local products and festivals, CBT theory plays a significant role.

One of CBT's main goals is to give local communities the power to shape tourism in their own towns. In Laguna, this is seen in how local artisans, farmers, and community organizers take the reins in promoting their products and festivals. By allowing them to drive the tourism experience, CBT ensures that the benefits stay within the community, fostering not just economic growth but also stronger social bonds.

A core principle of CBT is that tourism should bring tangible benefits to the local community. By focusing on local products and festivals, tourism initiatives in Laguna can create opportunities for small businesses and generate income for community members. The more local people are involved, the more they stand to gain—whether it's food vendors, artisans, or festival organizers directly benefiting from tourists, this helps strengthen the local economy.

Sustainability is another key component of CBT, as it promotes tourism that respects both the environment and the community's cultural heritage. In Laguna, this might involve eco-friendly festivals or sustainable farming practices tied to local products. The theory encourages developing tourism in a way that minimizes harm to the environment, ensuring that future generations can also benefit from it.

CBT also ensures that tourism leads to cultural and social preservation rather than exploitation. By involving the community in tourism development, it guarantees that local values, customs, and traditions are honored and passed down. In Laguna, this can be seen in how festivals and crafts are integrated into the tourism experience, with locals maintaining the authenticity of their culture.

Perhaps most importantly, CBT emphasizes inclusive decision-making, where everyone in the community has a say. This means that tourism programs in Laguna should involve all stakeholders—whether they are business owners, cultural leaders, or residents—ensuring that everyone benefits from and contributes to the growth of tourism.

By applying the principles of CBT theory, this study can assess how well Laguna's tourism programs align with the ideals of community empowerment, cultural preservation, and sustainable development. It offers a framework to understand the role of local involvement in tourism and ensures that promoting local products and festivals benefits not only the community but also the environment. Ultimately, CBT helps create tourism that is both economically successful and socially responsible, fostering a future where both the people and the place thrive.

1.2.4. Destination Image Theory

Destination Image theory is all about how potential tourists perceive a destination. These perceptions are shaped by a mix of personal experiences, what they hear from others, the media, and how a place promotes itself. The image that a destination builds can greatly influence whether people decide to visit or not. Positive images tend to draw tourists in, while negative ones may cause them to look elsewhere.

The better these cultural elements are showcased; the stronger and more appealing Laguna's destination image becomes. A positive image, built around authentic local products and festivals, can attract more visitors, create higher demand for tourism, and boost the region's overall charm.

Local products and festivals are at the heart of Laguna's identity, and when they're promoted as part of the tourism effort, they enhance the province's image as a vibrant cultural hub. Tourists are more likely to visit places that seem to offer a genuine cultural experience, and when Laguna is positioned as a place where they can immerse themselves in local traditions and craftsmanship, it influences their decision to visit.

Tourism programs that focus on local goods and events help to shape this positive image of Laguna. Through effective marketing—be it through social media campaigns, travel blogs, or other forms of outreach—Laguna's festivals and crafts can be presented as colorful, engaging, and culturally rich, which entices tourists to come.

One of the key elements of Destination Image theory is that tourists are attracted to destinations they view as unique and authentic. Laguna can reinforce this perception by showcasing its festivals and local products in a way that highlights their authenticity. When tourists believe they're experiencing something real and special, they're more likely to share positive feedback and return.

While promoting these products and events can quickly shape how Laguna is viewed, maintaining a strong and positive image requires consistent quality. The experience promised by these tourism initiatives must align with what visitors actually encounter to avoid disappointment and ensure long-lasting positive perceptions. By ensuring that festivals and local products are of high quality and easily accessible, Laguna can keep building its image as a must-visit destination.

The study can evaluate how effectively tourism programs in Laguna have been implemented by assessing whether they enhance the region's image. Are local products and festivals effectively showcasing the uniqueness of the province? Do they align with the image Laguna wants to project? Are they creating a positive impression for tourists?

In short, Destination Image theory plays a crucial role in understanding how tourism programs in Laguna, particularly those promoting local products and festivals, impact how the province is seen by potential visitors. A strong, positive destination image can increase tourist interest, support local businesses, and help develop a sustainable tourism economy. By focusing on Laguna's cultural identity, tourism programs can create an image that resonates with tourists and stands the test of time.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

The independent variables such as funding allocation, stakeholder participation, infrastructure development, promotion and marketing, and training and capacity building—play a critical role in driving key tourism outcomes such as tourist arrival, tourist revenue, local employment, tourist satisfaction, and the sustainability of tourism programs. Adequate funding enhances attractions, services, and experiences, boosting tourist interest, economic spending, and long-term program sustainability. Active stakeholder involvement ensures authentic, culturally rich experiences, increases revenue, and promotes social and environmental responsibility. Infrastructure development improves accessibility, boosts local employment, and elevates tourist satisfaction. Effective promotion attracts visitors, raises revenue, and generates employment, while training and capacity building improve service quality, leading to higher satisfaction and long-term sustainability. Together, these variables contribute to a thriving, sustainable tourism ecosystem that

benefits both the economy and the community.

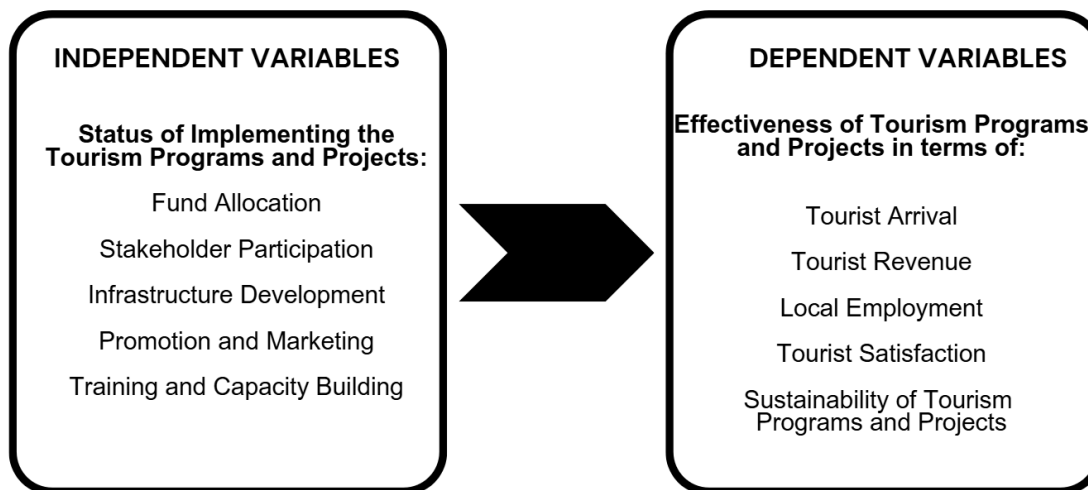


Figure 1. The Research Paradigm of the Study

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna province. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondent in terms of:
 - 1.1. Age;
 - 1.2. Gender;
 - 1.3. Town;
 - 1.4. Occupation/Representation; and
 - 1.5. Number of years in service with involvement in tourism.
2. What is the status of tourism programs and projects in terms of:
 - 2.1. Fund Allocation;
 - 2.2. Stakeholder Participation;
 - 2.3. Infrastructure Development;
 - 2.4. Promotion and Marketing; and
 - 2.5. Training and Capacity Building.
3. How effective are the tourism programs and projects in terms of:
 - 3.1. Tourist Arrival;
 - 3.2. Tourist Revenue;
 - 3.3. Local Employment;
 - 3.4. Tourist Satisfaction; and
 - 3.5. Sustainability of Tourism Programs and Projects.
4. Is there a significant relationship between the effectiveness and status implementation of tourism programs and projects?

1.5. Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship on the status of implementation and effectiveness of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna Province.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study is of great importance to a range of stakeholders, from local government agencies and community members to tourism practitioners, businesses, and academic researchers. Each group stands to benefit from the insights generated, which will support more effective and sustainable tourism development.

For local government agencies, the findings will provide valuable feedback on the success and challenges of existing tourism projects. By identifying the barriers and gaps in implementation, policymakers will be equipped to make informed, data-driven decisions for future tourism initiatives. This can lead to more effective strategies that not only promote sustainable tourism but also enhance community participation, ensuring that future policies better serve the needs of both the environment and local populations.

The study highlights the crucial role of community involvement in tourism development. By engaging local residents and capturing their perceptions and concerns, the research empowers communities. It can provide a platform for their voices to be heard, fostering a sense of pride and ownership in tourism initiatives that can enhance local culture and economic well-being. When communities are actively involved, they are more likely to support tourism projects that reflect their values and needs, leading to stronger and more inclusive growth.

For tourism practitioners and businesses, this study offers practical insights into effective tourism practices and areas where improvements are needed. By understanding how local attitudes and project implementation impact the success of tourism initiatives, businesses can refine their marketing strategies and services. This alignment with community expectations can help create more tailored and appealing offerings, driving business growth while also benefiting the local economy.

The study can contribute to academic research on tourism development, particularly the local implementation of tourism projects and the importance of community involvement. It adds to the body of knowledge on how tourism initiatives interact with local socio-economic dynamics and serves as a model for future studies in other regions. This research will help deepen the understanding of the complexities involved in tourism development and provide valuable lessons for scholars in the field.

One of the key outcomes of this research is its potential to inform future sustainable tourism practices. By examining the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism projects, the study will identify best practices for sustainable development. This can guide future initiatives that prioritize ecological preservation, the safeguarding of cultural heritage, and the promotion of responsible tourism practices, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable tourism industry that benefits both the environment and local communities.

Overall, the study will enhance understanding of how tourism unfolds in diverse local contexts. The insights gained will help foster more effective, inclusive, and sustainable tourism development, benefiting local communities, economies, and the broader tourism industry.

1.7. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focused on selected towns in Laguna Province to examine the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects focusing on the promotion of local festivals and products. The study focused on examining how these factors influence tourism development in selected towns with particular emphasis on the tourism sector's growth, economic impact, job creation, visitor experience, and long-term sustainability. The researcher analyzed available data from tourism programs and projects in these areas, taking into account

various sources such as local tourism officers, and private tourism stakeholders and community residents' insights.

By addressing these areas, the research sought to provide actionable recommendations to improve the sustainability and impact of tourism initiatives in selected towns and in Laguna province as a whole.

The scope of the study included selected towns in Laguna Province that have tourism programs aimed at local festivals and products. It also included factors such as fund allocation, stakeholder participation, infrastructure development, promotion and marketing, and capacity building trainings in these initiatives. The evaluation of the challenges faced in implementing tourism programs and their effects on local promotion efforts were also determined. And lastly, the assessment of the success and effectiveness of current tourism programs in enhancing the tourism industry in the selected towns in Laguna.

While this study aimed to provide valuable insights into tourism programs in Laguna, it also faced certain limitations like the inclusion of only selected towns in Laguna Province, which may not fully represent the entire province's tourism landscape.

This study focused on selected towns, which means it may not fully capture the broader trends or dynamics of tourism across the entire province. Additionally, the research might be limited by the availability of up-to-date data, and the long-term effects of tourism programs on sustainability may not be fully understood, especially if those programs were still in the early stages and those that might have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to time and budget constraints, data gathering was restricted to a limited number of respondents and key informants, which may not fully capture the perspectives of all tourism stakeholders in Laguna. Additionally, the study was conducted within a specific timeframe, which may limit the ability to assess long-term tourism trends and policy impacts. The availability and accuracy of secondary data sources also posed potential constraints, as some official reports may be outdated or incomplete. The depth and quality of the data available on tourism revenue, local employment, and stakeholder involvement may also impact the completeness of the analysis.

Perspectives from stakeholders, such as local businesses or community members differed and introduced potential biases in how benefits or challenges were viewed. The responses of the respondents may have been influenced by their political affiliation or personal beliefs. Additionally, their level of involvement and length of service in the town's tourism program also impacted their responses. Finally, while the study aimed to identify relationships between certain factors, establishing direct causality have been difficult due to the complex and interconnected nature of the various influences on tourism.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

To have clear understanding of this study, various key terms are defined below:

Community Engagement - The process of building relationships and facilitating communication between community members and local organizations or institutions to foster collaboration in tourism initiatives, often aimed at enhancing community well-being and empowerment.

Community Involvement - The active participation of local residents in decision-making processes, planning, and implementation of tourism projects or initiatives that affect their community, particularly in tourism development.

Community Members - Residents of areas where tourism projects are implemented, who may experience changes in their quality of life due to tourism.

Community Stakeholder - Members of a community who have a vested interest in local tourism initiatives, including residents, business owners, and local organizations.

Conceptual Framework – The visual representation that outlines the key components this study, showing how various variables relate to one another within the context of this research.

Cultural Exchange - The sharing and interaction of cultural elements, such as traditions and festivals, among different communities or countries, facilitated through tourism.

Cultural Heritage - The inherited legacy of a community, including physical artifacts, traditions, and arts that reflect its history and identity.

Dependent Variables - Variables in this study that are expected to be influenced by the independent variables, representing the outcomes or effects being measured.

Economic Contribution - The impact of tourism or other sectors on the economy, typically measured in terms of revenue generated, jobs created, and overall economic activity stimulated.

Economic Growth - An increase in the economic output of a region or country, often measured by the rise in gross domestic product (GDP) or other economic indicators.

Economic Impact - The effects of tourism activities on the local economy, including job creation, revenue generation, and stimulation of related sectors.

Economic Viability - The capacity of a tourism project to remain financially sustainable over time while benefiting the local community and economy.

Economic Vitality - The health and strength of an economy, characterized by factors such as employment levels, business activity, and overall economic performance.

Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects - The extent to which tourism initiatives achieve their intended goals and produce positive outcomes for the community.

Environmental Sustainability - Responsible management of resources and ecosystems to minimize environmental degradation resulting from tourism developments.

Evaluation and Feedback Model - A structure that emphasizes the need for ongoing assessment of tourism programs to ensure they remain relevant and effective in meeting community needs.

Fund Allocation – The distribution of financial resources to support tourism initiatives, including infrastructure, marketing, training, and sustainability programs.

Hospitality - The friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests or visitors, often associated with the tourism sector.

Implementation - The process of executing plans, projects, or policies related to tourism initiatives.

Independent Variables - Factors or conditions that are manipulated or observed to determine their effect on dependent variables in a study.

Infrastructure Development – The construction or improvement of facilities and services like transportation, accommodations, utilities, and tourist sites, which enhance accessibility, safety, and overall experience of travelers.

Local Economy - The economic system within a specific area, emphasizing businesses, jobs, and activities that contribute to the financial health of the community.

Local Employment – The jobs created within the tourism sector, directly or indirectly, including roles in hospitality, tour guiding, transportation, and retail, boosting economic opportunities for the local population.

Local Government Unit (LGU) - A political subdivision of the country, such as a municipality or city, that has the authority to govern itself and manage local affairs, including tourism development.

National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) - A strategic framework created by a government to guide the development and promotion of tourism at a national level, outlining goals, objectives, and strategies for enhancing the tourism sector.

Participation of Local Government Units - The extent of involvement of local government bodies in the execution and support of tourism initiatives.

Promotion and Marketing – Encompasses strategies and campaigns to attract tourists by highlighting destinations, activities, and experiences through various channels such as digital media, advertisements, and events, aiming to increase destination visibility and competitiveness.

Quantitative Method - A research approach that involves collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns, trends, or relationships, often used for statistical analysis.

Research Paradigm - A framework that serves as a guide for the research process, outlining the underlying theories and methodologies that shape the study.

Sustainability - Refers to practices or initiatives that meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, especially in the context of environmental conservation.

Sustainability of Tourism Projects – **The ability of tourism initiatives to balance economic, environmental, and social goals over the long term, ensuring benefits for present and future generations while minimizing impacts.**

Sustainability Practices - Specific actions or strategies that promote sustainable development, focusing on minimal environmental impact and social equity.

Sustainable Development - Development that seeks to balance economic growth with environmental protection and social equity.

Stakeholder - Individuals or organizations with an interest in a tourism initiative, including government officials, local residents, business owners, and tourism operators.

Stakeholder Participation - The active engagement of all parties involved in tourism, such as local communities, government agencies, private sectors, and tourists, in planning, decision-making, and implementation to ensure inclusive and effective tourism management.

Theoretical Framework - A structure that guides research by providing a clear set of concepts and theories that explain the relationships between variables in a study.

Tourism -The activity involving travel to and stay in places outside one's usual environment for leisure, business, or other purposes, which often includes exploring cultural sites, engaging in recreational activities, and experiencing natural environments.

Tourism Growth - An increase in tourism activity within a specific area, typically measured by metrics such as visitor numbers, revenue generation, or employment levels within the sector.

Tourism Industry - A sector encompassing all activities related to travel and hospitality, including businesses like hotels, restaurants, transport services, and attractions that cater to tourists.

Tourism Initiatives - Specific projects or actions taken to promote, develop, or enhance tourism in a particular area, aimed at increasing visitor numbers and improving the tourism experience.

Tourism Programs - Organized efforts with specific objectives in tourism, such as community engagement, cultural education, and sustainability.

Tourism Projects - Specific initiatives designed to develop or enhance tourism in a region, involving infrastructure improvements, promotional campaigns, and event organization.

Tourism Sector - A specific segment of the economy that encompasses all activities related to tourism, often distinguished by the types of services being provided, such as hospitality, travel, and entertainment.

Tourist – A visitor who engage with and experience attractions and services offered through tourism projects

Tourist Arrival – **The number of domestic or international visitors travelling to a destination within a specific period, serving as a key indicator of a destination's tourism performance.**

Tourist Destination - A specific location that attracts visitors due to its offerings, including natural attractions, cultural landmarks, and recreational activities.

Tourist Revenue – The income generated from tourist activities, including spending on accommodations, food, transportation, and attractions, contributing to the local economy.

Tourist Satisfaction – The measure of how well a destination meets or exceeds the expectations of visitors, influencing their likelihood to return and recommend the destination to others.

Training and Capacity Building – Involves equipping tourism stakeholders, especially local communities and workforce, with skills and knowledge through workshops, seminars, and formal education to improve service quality and operational efficiency.

Quantitative Method - A research approach that involves collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify patterns, trends, or relationships, often used for statistical analysis.

1.9. Review of Related Literature and Studies

This chapter was built upon a rich and diverse body of literature that looked at how tourism development interacted with local economies and fosters community involvement. As tourism increasingly became a crucial driver of economic growth, it was vital to assess how effectively these initiatives were being implemented. By understanding their impact, we can ensure that they benefit not just the industry but also the community and local culture.

1.9.1. Literature Review

This literature review dive into various frameworks and theories that relate to how tourism programs were executed. It highlighted key themes like the importance of community engagement, the economic benefits that arise from tourism activities, and the need for sustainable practices that protect the environment and local heritage.

Through the examination of previous studies and case examples, this research aimed to showcase both the achievements and the obstacles encountered in promoting Laguna's unique local products and festive celebrations. By doing so, we can better understand what works well and what doesn't in the current landscape of tourism initiatives.

Studies have shown that the successful implementation of tourism projects can lead to significant positive outcomes, including increased tourist arrivals, enhanced community pride, and improved economic vitality. For instance, Dredge and Jamal (2015) highlighted that effective tourism projects contribute not only to revenue generation but also to the social fabric of communities by fostering cultural exchange and engagement. Furthermore, Roldan et al. (2020) found that community-based tourism initiatives often yield better social and economic outcomes, enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.

Tourism plays a crucial role in driving economic growth in many countries, contributing to GDP growth, foreign exchange earnings, and infrastructure development. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) reports that tourism accounted for about 10.4% of global GDP and generated 319 million jobs, or 10% of all global employment, in 2018 (WTTC, 2019). This highlights tourism's resilience, as the sector continues to thrive even during economic challenges, underscoring its long-term significance.

In the Philippines, tourism's contribution is equally significant. The Department of Tourism (DOT) notes that tourism made up 12.7% of the national GDP in 2019, demonstrating its essential role in the country's economy (DOT, 2020). It's also a key source of foreign exchange, with international tourism receipts reaching PHP 298 billion in 2019 (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2020). This influx of revenue benefits not just the hospitality and transport sectors, but also supports industries like agriculture, retail, and manufacturing.

According to the Tourism Guidebook for Local Government Units, the development and promotion of tourism are key responsibilities assigned to Local Government Units (LGUs) under the Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160). As local governments have moved towards more participatory models of governance, they have also been encouraged to involve various stakeholders in the development and promotion of tourism at the local level.

Moreover, the National Tourism Act of 2009 (R.A. 9593) urges LGUs to create and implement a comprehensive tourism development plan, establish enforceable standards, and gather statistical data for tourism-related purposes. This local tourism development planning is designed to promote sustainable tourism practices within communities.

Research shows that tourism can be a powerful catalyst for the transformation of small communities.

Lontoc and Bacani (2021) emphasize how tourism investment in infrastructure—such as roads, utilities, and transportation—can improve residents' quality of life and attract other types of economic activity. In Laguna, for example, municipalities like Pagsanjan have seen positive economic growth thanks to their focus on eco-tourism and adventure tourism.

Tourism also fosters the growth of small businesses, creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs. From accommodation providers and local artisans to restaurants and transportation services, tourism provides avenues for entrepreneurship in towns where other industries may be scarce. Santos (2020) points out that in places like Nagcarlan, Laguna, tourism has allowed businesses such as homestays, souvenir shops, and food stalls to flourish, generating new economic opportunities for local residents and diversifying the town's economy.

Tourism has a profound impact on employment, and this influence is particularly strong in local economies. According to the World Economic Forum (2020), for every dollar a tourist spends, around 76 cents stay within the local economy, highlighting how tourism plays a crucial role in creating jobs. In small municipalities, this can mean direct employment opportunities in areas like hospitality, travel agencies, and retail, as well as indirect jobs in sectors like agriculture (such as local food suppliers) and transportation.

In the Philippines, tourism is a major source of local employment. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reports that in 2019, the tourism sector employed about 5.4 million people, many of whom worked in regional and local tourism destinations (PSA, 2020). Towns like San Pablo and Pagsanjan in Laguna, for example, offer substantial job opportunities in hospitality, tour guiding, and transportation services.

Tourism also drives the growth of local businesses, especially in sectors like food and beverage, retail, and construction. Roldan, Batumbakal, and Cuartero (2020) highlight how the influx of tourists increases demand for local products and services, which in turn leads to the establishment of new businesses in the hospitality and leisure industries. This growth is evident in Laguna, where more and more locally-owned businesses are catering to both domestic and international visitors.

Additionally, tourism-related taxes—such as hotel taxes, entrance fees, and business permits—help fund local government revenue. This revenue can then be reinvested in community development projects, infrastructure improvements, and enhanced public services. As noted by Bautista and Villanueva (2020), municipalities in Laguna, like Calamba, have seen a boost in tourism tax revenues, which help fund the tourism-related infrastructure and services that benefit both local residents and visitors.

1.9.1.1. Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism is more than just a buzzword—it's a crucial approach to tourism development that strives to balance economic growth with the preservation of the environment and respect for the local community's culture.

According to the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism rests on three key principles that are often referred to as the "triple bottom line" approach: economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability. These principles aim to create a tourism system that grows responsibly, with long-term benefits for local communities and the planet.

The idea behind economic sustainability in tourism is to ensure that tourism drives long-term economic growth without exploiting natural or cultural resources. This means fostering stable, diverse economic opportunities, particularly for small businesses and local enterprises. Sustainable tourism practices encourage reinvesting tourism revenues into local infrastructure and development, providing ongoing benefits for the community rather than short-term economic spikes (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

Environmental sustainability focuses on minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on the environment. It emphasizes responsible resource management, reducing waste, conserving biodiversity, and protecting natural ecosystems from tourism-related damage. For instance, this might involve promoting eco-friendly transportation options, reducing carbon footprints, and using renewable energy sources in tourism

facilities (Gossling, 2018). The idea is to ensure that tourism activities don't deplete the very resources that attract tourists in the first place.

Social sustainability in tourism is about ensuring that tourism benefits the local communities in a meaningful and equitable way. It involves respecting local cultures, traditions, and ways of life while ensuring that tourism development does not negatively impact the social fabric of the community. Sustainable tourism practices encourage the active involvement of local communities in decision-making processes, allowing them to maintain control over their cultural heritage and how tourism affects their daily lives (UNWTO, 2017). Social sustainability also promotes inclusivity, equity, and the overall well-being of local people.

1.9.1.2. Balancing Economic, Social, and Environmental Factors in Tourism Development

A key challenge in sustainable tourism is balancing the three pillars—economic, environmental, and social—so that tourism grows in a way that benefits everyone without compromising future generations' ability to enjoy the same resources. Successful tourism development requires collaboration between local communities, government authorities, businesses, and tourists themselves.

One of the biggest hurdles for sustainable tourism is finding ways to foster economic growth while protecting the environment. Tourism can bring significant revenue, but if it grows too rapidly, it can lead to overdevelopment and environmental degradation. To address this challenge, many destinations have adopted “green tourism” strategies that encourage businesses to reduce their environmental impact. For example, businesses might be encouraged to use renewable energy, reduce water consumption, and implement waste management practices (Sachs et al., 2019). Costa Rica is a leading example of integrating eco-tourism practices into its tourism strategy, ensuring that its rich biodiversity is protected while generating income through tourism.

While tourism can bring economic benefits, it can also lead to the dilution of local culture, overcrowding, and shifts in community dynamics. For tourism to positively contribute to social sustainability, it's important that tourism development respects local traditions and identities. This can be achieved by involving local communities in planning and decision-making, ensuring that they have a voice in how tourism is managed. Community-based tourism (CBT) is one such model, allowing local communities to directly benefit from tourism while also having control over their cultural and natural assets (Tosun, 2000). It promotes a deep respect for local heritage while providing economic opportunities.

1.9.1.3. Sustainable Tourism Practices in Local Contexts

Sustainable tourism looks different in various parts of the world, depending on local needs, resources, and priorities. Here are some examples of sustainable practices applied in specific local contexts:

Bali, one of the world's most iconic tourist destinations, has faced challenges with overdevelopment and environmental degradation. In response, the local government and businesses have adopted a range of responsible tourism practices. These include reducing plastic waste, supporting local farmers by sourcing food locally, and providing tourists with educational resources about Balinese culture. Bali's “Green Hotels” initiative encourages hospitality businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices like using solar panels and rainwater harvesting systems, which helps reduce the carbon footprint of the tourism sector (Cohen, 2018).

In Laguna, a province renowned for its hot springs, historical sites, and scenic beauty, tourism has become a key part of local development. The province has prioritized sustainable tourism by promoting eco-tourism initiatives. For instance, the local government has worked to encourage hotels and resorts to use renewable energy, implement waste reduction strategies, and promote water conservation (Department of Tourism, 2020). Laguna's focus on eco-tourism not only helps preserve its natural resources but also creates new economic opportunities for local communities.

In rural parts of the Philippines, community-based tourism (CBT) offers an alternative model for

tourism development. This model focuses on empowering local communities to manage and benefit from tourism while ensuring that their cultural and natural assets are preserved. In Banaue, for example, the Ifugao people manage the famous rice terraces and use tourism revenue to fund conservation projects for these UNESCO World Heritage-listed sites. Through CBT, the local community gains control over tourism development, allowing them to balance economic benefits with cultural preservation and environmental protection (Dela Cruz, 2017).

1.9.4. The Role of Local Governments in Tourism Planning

Local governments are vital players in the tourism planning process. They have the responsibility to ensure that tourism grows in a way that benefits everyone while protecting the environment and cultural heritage.

According to the Local Tourism Guidebook for LGUs, although Local Government Units (LGUs) hold the primary responsibility for tourism within their areas, the tourism industry thrives when planning involves collaboration across multiple sectors, engaging various local stakeholders. Ideally, a Tourism Planning Committee should be established under the Local Development Council, the mandated planning body of the LGUs, to ensure the plan is effectively implemented.

Some of the key roles local governments play include Policy Formulation and Regulation. Local governments create policies that set the tone for sustainable tourism development. These might include regulations on tourism activities, waste management, and land use.

Local governments can also facilitate community involvement by supporting local businesses, organizing capacity-building programs, and ensuring that tourism benefits are shared equitably. This helps foster a sense of ownership among local residents and ensures the community is ready to manage tourism growth.

Many local governments partner with private businesses and tourism organizations to promote their region. By helping to market the destination and attract visitors, local governments play an important role in boosting tourism revenue.

Once tourism plans are in action, it's essential for local governments to monitor their impacts regularly. This allows them to assess whether the tourism development is meeting its goals and make adjustments as needed to ensure sustainability (Dela Cruz & Ramos, 2019).

Tourism planning is a collaborative effort that requires careful attention to the needs of local communities, the environment, and the economy. By implementing these strategies, tourism can grow in a way that benefits everyone while preserving the unique characteristics of a destination for future generations.

Tourism development in the Philippines follows a comprehensive, multi-level approach that integrates national, regional, and local frameworks to foster sustainable growth. These frameworks involve a wide range of stakeholders, including local government units (LGUs), private sector organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), all working together to guide the growth of tourism in a way that benefits communities and the environment.

1.9.1.4. National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) and Its Goals

The National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) is the Philippines' primary strategy for developing tourism across the country. It sets out the country's vision, objectives, and priorities for the sector, aiming to position the Philippines as a leading tourist destination on the global stage (DOT, 2016).

The NTDP prioritizes growth that benefits local communities while respecting the environment and cultural heritage. This means ensuring that tourism brings economic opportunities to locals and fosters a deeper appreciation of local cultures.

The plan aims to improve the Philippines' competitive position in the global tourism market through

targeted promotional activities, high-quality services, and enriching experiences for visitors.

The NTDP also addresses the need for resilience in the tourism sector. This includes adopting sustainable tourism practices and offering a diverse range of tourism products to help the industry withstand challenges such as natural disasters or economic downturns.

1.9.1.5. Role of Local Government Units (LGUs) in Tourism Development

According to the Local Tourism Guidebook for Local Government Units (LGUs), they are at the heart of successful tourism development, playing a key role in shaping how tourism impacts their communities. Their involvement ensures that tourism growth is not only sustainable but also meets the unique needs and priorities of the local population. When LGUs are actively engaged in tourism planning and policy-making, they can align tourism development with local economic, environmental, and social goals, creating a tourism sector that benefits everyone—residents, businesses, and the environment. Moreover, their ability to manage and lead tourism initiatives is essential for maintaining the balance between growth and sustainability.

Local governments are at the forefront of tourism development in their areas, playing a crucial role in shaping and guiding initiatives. They are often the first to recognize the potential of tourism, making them uniquely positioned to lead efforts that match the local community's needs and goals. By understanding the area's characteristics, challenges, and opportunities, LGUs can craft tourism strategies that are both practical and sustainable. For example, they can identify key tourism attractions, assess infrastructure needs, and consider environmental factors to ensure responsible growth.

Research suggests that when local governments take an active leadership role in tourism, it leads to better long-term outcomes. Tourism becomes more closely aligned with the community's economic and social interests, ensuring that local residents benefit and that growth remains sustainable (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

LGUs are responsible for creating and enforcing tourism policies that maintain balance between growth and sustainability. They develop regulations that cover a wide range of tourism-related issues, from infrastructure development to environmental preservation. For example, policies on waste management, preservation of natural and cultural heritage, and safety regulations help ensure that tourism remains a positive force in the community without causing harm to the environment or cultural practices.

Tourism development thrives when local governments collaborate with a variety of stakeholders. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are particularly effective, combining the expertise and resources of both sectors to achieve shared goals. LGUs often work closely with the private sector, NGOs, community organizations, and government agencies to craft and implement tourism strategies that serve everyone's interests.

In Laguna, for example, local governments partner with the Department of Tourism (DOT), local tourism associations, and private enterprises to ensure that tourism initiatives benefit both visitors and residents. The Laguna Tourism Council is one such example, where collaboration between different stakeholders helps promote the region's ecotourism potential while ensuring local communities are fully engaged in the tourism economy (Laguna Provincial Government, 2022).

1.9.6. Collaboration between LGUs and Other Stakeholders

Collaboration between LGUs and other stakeholders is crucial to successful tourism development. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have proven effective in pooling resources, expertise, and local knowledge to build sustainable tourism strategies. In Laguna, for instance, LGUs work alongside local businesses, the Department of Tourism (DOT), and other organizations to craft coordinated tourism policies. This collaboration has helped position Laguna as a leading ecotourism destination, with efforts focused on preserving natural attractions like Pagsanjan Falls while promoting local businesses (Laguna Provincial

Government, 2022).

1.9.2. Related Studies

1.9.2.1. Case Studies on Successful LGU-Driven Tourism Projects

Several case studies highlight the success of LGUs in driving sustainable tourism. In Pagsanjan, Laguna, the local government's leadership has been crucial in maintaining the town's tourism appeal while focusing on environmental sustainability. Policies on waste management and environmental protection ensure that the natural attractions, like the Pagsanjan River, are preserved for future generations, while also creating local jobs and supporting businesses (Santos, 2020).

For Banaue, Ifugao, the local government in Banaue has been instrumental in balancing tourism with the preservation of the UNESCO-listed rice terraces. By working closely with local community organizations, the LGU ensures that tourism revenue contributes to conservation efforts, while providing locals with training in tour guiding and hospitality (Dela Cruz, 2017).

Tagaytay City's local government has promoted tourism through sustainable practices, like eco-friendly infrastructure and community-based tourism. The LGU has fostered collaborations with local farmers and artisans, ensuring that tourism benefits are felt at the grassroots level, and supporting environmental protection initiatives (Bautista & Villanueva, 2020).

The role of LGUs in tourism development cannot be overstated. They are the leaders, regulators, and facilitators of tourism strategies that support sustainable growth. Their involvement in planning, policy-making, and capacity-building ensures that tourism benefits the economy, society, and environment. By looking at case studies like Pagsanjan, Banaue, and Tagaytay, it's clear that LGUs can drive successful tourism development that creates lasting positive impacts for communities.

1.9.2.2. Tourism Programs and Projects at the Local Level

Local Government Units (LGUs) are essential drivers of tourism development at the community level. Their leadership helps ensure that tourism programs are designed to meet local needs while also supporting sustainable growth. By focusing on different types of tourism, LGUs create opportunities that are beneficial socially, economically, and environmentally.

In the Philippines, places like Banaue and Batanes have embraced CBT successfully. In these areas, local residents serve as tour guides, run homestays, and sell locally made handicrafts. Not only does this model create employment opportunities, but it also ensures that tourism dollars stay within the community, helping to preserve cultural practices and strengthen local pride (Dela Cruz, 2017; Rodelas, 2020).

Tourism has a broad impact on local communities, with economic benefits being the most immediate. It creates employment opportunities, boosts local business revenue, and diversifies income sources. For example, tourism creates jobs in hospitality, food services, retail, and transportation, providing new income streams for local families.

Culturally, tourism can provide the incentive for communities to preserve and showcase their traditions, arts, crafts, and festivals. LGUs often work closely with local communities to ensure that cultural heritage is not only preserved but also shared with visitors in a way that respects the local culture. This boosts the visibility of local traditions and enhances community pride (Tosun, 2000; UNESCO, 2017).

Examples of Local Government Unit (LGU) Driven Tourism Projects in the Philippines

Cebu's "One Cebu" Program is an initiative by the provincial government aimed at bringing together tourism development across the region. This program shines a light on local products and cultural experiences, encouraging participation from different municipalities. By organizing local festivals and showcasing indigenous crafts, it helps promote Cebu's culinary heritage and enables local artisans and

farmers to reach more customers. (Cebu Provincial Government, 2021)

In Lucban, Quezon, the Pahiyas Festival is a beloved annual celebration that honors the town's agricultural bounty and its patron saint. During this vibrant festival, residents display their harvests and create beautiful decorations made from rice and other local products. It's a fantastic way to promote local agriculture while drawing in tourists, which boosts the local economy and supports sustainable tourism practices. (Quezon Province Tourism Office, 2017)

Moving to Baguio City, the Panagbenga Festival, often referred to as the Flower Festival, is one of the city's most iconic events. This month-long celebration features a variety of activities, from stunning flower floats to lively street dancing. The festival highlights local flowers, crafts, and delicacies, benefiting farmers and local businesses and attracting thousands of visitors each year. (Baguio City Government, 2020)

In Dumaguete, the "Negros Oriental Tour" is a collaborative effort by the city and provincial government to promote local culture and products through guided tours. This program takes visitors to local markets, artisanal shops, and eateries, encouraging them to immerse themselves in the culture while providing artisan and farmer income boosts. (Negros Oriental Provincial Government, 2020)

La Union has also made strides with its Surfing and Local Cuisine Promotion initiative, which focuses on local surfing events and competitions against the backdrop of beautiful beaches. By partnering with local businesses, the government highlights the region's culinary offerings at surf festivals, providing a platform for local restaurants and food vendors to showcase what they have to offer. (La Union Tourism Office, 2019)

1.9.2.3. Challenges Faced by Municipalities in Implementing Tourism Programs

While tourism can offer significant benefits, it also presents a set of challenges for LGUs like funding. Developing and maintaining tourism infrastructure and programs can be expensive. Municipalities often face budget constraints and must seek additional funding from the national government or private investors. However, securing enough funding for large-scale projects can be difficult (Bautista & Villanueva, 2020).

Tourism management requires collaboration across different levels of government, as well as with private sector actors and community groups. Inadequate coordination can lead to disjointed efforts, inefficiencies, and missed opportunities. LGUs need to ensure that all stakeholders are on the same page to maximize the effectiveness of tourism initiatives (Dela Cruz, 2017).

1.9.2.4. Case Studies of Successful Tourism Project Evaluations in the Philippines (Monitoring & Evaluation)

In the Philippines, several local governments have successfully used M&E to enhance tourism sustainability. An example is Pagsanjan, Laguna. The municipality of Pagsanjan has used M&E to evaluate the impact of its river tours. By tracking environmental impact, community engagement, and the economic benefits of tourism, the local government has been able to make informed decisions that protect the river ecosystem while supporting local businesses (Santos, 2020).

The local government in Banaue, known for its UNESCO-listed rice terraces, has also applied M&E practices to assess how tourism affects cultural preservation and the environment. By monitoring visitor numbers, waste management, and conservation efforts, they've been able to ensure that tourism contributes positively to both the local community and the preservation of this cultural heritage (Dela Cruz, 2017).

1.9.2.5. Barriers and Challenges in Implementing Tourism Projects at the Local Level

While tourism development offers many benefits, local governments often face significant challenges when implementing tourism projects.

Many LGUs struggle to secure enough funding for tourism initiatives. Limited budgets can delay important infrastructure upgrades, environmental conservation programs, and community development activities (Bautista & Villanueva, 2020).

Effective tourism development requires cooperation between multiple stakeholders—national agencies, LGUs, private sector actors, and local communities. Poor coordination can result in fragmented efforts, missed opportunities, or even conflicting priorities, leading to inefficiencies (Gossling, 2018).

1.9.2.6. Overview of Tourism Initiatives in Selected Municipalities

Several municipalities in Laguna have developed targeted tourism programs that align with their unique assets.

Known for its historical significance, particularly through the José Rizal Shrine, Calamba's tourism efforts focus on promoting heritage tourism. The local government has worked to integrate Rizal's legacy into broader tourism offerings, combining cultural heritage with local community engagement (Dela Cruz, 2017). Calamba is also celebrates the "Buhayani" festival which showcases the life of our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal.

Pagsanjan is famous for its river tours and waterfalls. The local government has focused on eco-tourism and sustainability, implementing strict environmental regulations such as waste management and water quality controls. Tourism initiatives also include developing local businesses like guided tours and souvenir shops, which help ensure economic benefits for the community (Santos, 2020). Bangkero Festival is a celebration of the valuable role boatmen of Pagsanjan.

San Pablo's tourism initiatives revolve around its Seven Lakes, with a focus on preserving the natural environment while promoting eco-tourism. The local government has implemented programs to clean the lakes, raise environmental awareness, and encourage community participation through tour guiding and boat services (Rodelas, 2020). Coconut Festival highlights the wide array of coconut-based products and cuisine in San Pablo City.

1.9.3. Synthesis

Tourism development in the Philippines, particularly at the local level, represents both a promising opportunity and a complex challenge. As we look at various case studies and review the literature, it becomes clear that tourism has the potential to drive significant economic growth, improve infrastructure, and create jobs. However, realizing these benefits requires a careful, strategic approach to tourism program implementation—one that balances economic development with environmental sustainability and community well-being.

In many regions of the Philippines, tourism is a key driver of economic development. Towns like Calamba, Bay, and Pakil, which are rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage, have successfully leveraged their unique assets to attract tourists. However, research underscores the importance of planning to avoid common pitfalls like over-tourism, overcrowding, and environmental damage (Bautista & Villanueva, 2020). Effective tourism development, therefore, requires careful resource management, along with the promotion of sustainable practices that can ensure long-lasting benefits for local economies and communities.

One of the most critical lessons from successful tourism destinations is the importance of sustainability. In regions like Palawan and Bohol, integrating environmental conservation with tourism growth has been key to maintaining the integrity of natural landscapes while still benefiting from tourism revenue (Santos, 2020). Strategies such as limiting visitor numbers to fragile ecosystems, implementing effective waste management programs, and educating both tourists and locals about sustainability are all essential. Municipalities like Pagsanjan, with its eco-tourism potential (e.g., Pagsanjan Falls), can benefit from adopting similar approaches to ensure that tourism development does not come at the expense of the

environment (Rodelas, 2020).

A consistent theme in the literature is the importance of involving local communities in tourism development. In regions like Bohol and Palawan, community-based tourism has proven successful in fostering local pride, preserving culture, and ensuring that economic benefits are distributed more equitably (Dela Cruz, 2017). For municipalities in Laguna, where community engagement is crucial for long-term tourism success, involving local residents in tourism planning and decision-making ensures that tourism programs align with their needs and aspirations. When communities are actively engaged, tourism becomes a tool for empowerment, rather than a source of disruption.

Effective tourism program implementation is key to ensuring that tourism development contributes to long-term, sustainable growth. Without well-thought-out strategies, tourism can create more problems than it solves—overcrowding, environmental degradation, and social inequality are real challenges faced by many municipalities, particularly in smaller or less-developed areas. The key to avoiding these negative impacts lies in building tourism policies that integrate sustainability at their core.

For municipalities like Laguna, which are rich in natural and cultural assets, balancing tourism growth with environmental protection is especially important. The local government must ensure that tourism strategies do not simply prioritize economic gains, but also account for the preservation of natural resources and the well-being of local communities. Sustainable tourism policies, when properly implemented, can protect both the environment and the local way of life, while still fostering growth and development.

Tourism development at the municipal level, particularly in regions like Laguna, offers significant opportunities for economic growth, community empowerment, and environmental conservation. However, the success of these tourism initiatives depends on effective program implementation that prioritizes sustainability, inclusivity, and careful management. Local governments have a central role to play in ensuring that tourism contributes to long-term development without compromising the environment or local cultures.

By drawing on the lessons from successful tourism programs in regions like Bohol, Palawan, and Cebu, Laguna can adapt and apply best practices to its own context. Through sustainable tourism practices, strong community participation, and thoughtful governance, Laguna can develop a tourism industry that benefits both its residents and its visitors. Ultimately, tourism can become a powerful tool for sustainable development, creating lasting economic, social, and environmental benefits for all stakeholders involved.

2. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology used for the analysis of the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna which focused specifically on their effectiveness in promoting local festivals and products. The methodology have been designed to integrate quantitative research approaches, allowing for a thorough exploration of the complexities involved in these tourism initiatives.

2.1. Research Design

The researcher used a quantitative method approach. This allowed the researcher to come up with a good examination of tourism project implementation by providing numerical data on project outcomes of stakeholders involved.

With the use of quantitative method, the researcher gained a well-rounded understanding of how tourism programs are being implemented in the selected towns in Laguna Province. Quantitative data gave a clear, measurable insights into how effective these initiatives are.

The quantitative method approach strengthened the credibility of the findings of the study. Quantitative data also validated qualitative insights and perceptions of the respondents and helped to build a more complete picture of the tourism situation in Laguna.

Tourism programs are complex and shaped by various factors like fund allocation, stakeholder participation, infrastructure development, promotion and marketing, and training and capacity building. The quantitative method identified trends and patterns on the status of implementation and the effectiveness of tourism programs and projects.

The researcher engaged a diverse group of respondents which includes local tourism officers, tourism stakeholders/business owners, and community members. Through surveys, the researcher made this participatory approach which fostered community involvement and ownership, making the study's recommendations more relevant and actionable.

The researcher utilized the survey questionnaires and administered structured surveys to tourism officers, tourism stakeholders, business owners, and community members.

The survey was analyzed for patterns, correlations, and trends related to the implementation of tourism projects with the use of statistical methods.

The researcher also reviewed relevant documents from the local tourism officers to understand the extent of implementation of tourism programs and projects.

2.2. Population

This study included the following towns that are identified as focal points for analysis since the selected towns have an approved Local Tourism Development Plans and are also located in different parts of the province which can also showcase the potential for varied project implementations.

For the festivals and local products, the researcher conducted the study to the following towns:

Table 1. Selected towns in Laguna and their respective festivals and products

CITY/MUNICIPALITY	FESTIVALS	PRODUCTS
Municipality of Bay	Fiesta Bayeña	Monay Bae; Ornamental plants and gardening products;
Municipality of Pakil	Turumba Festival	Kakanin
City of Calamba	Buhayani Festival	Hot Spring Resort; Ube; Bulalo;

Table 1 indicates the selected towns in Laguna and their local festivals and products.

The sample size varied based on the number of respondents available, but it was sufficient to provide meaningful insights.

The researcher conducted surveys to a total of 263 respondents across the selected towns to gather data. These included:

- Local tourism officers/staff and local government unit staff;
- Business owners (e.g., from accommodation establishments, restaurants, etc.); and
- Community members (e.g., local residents)

2.3. Sampling Technique

For this study, the researcher used Purposive Sampling and selected specific towns in Laguna that have an approved Local Tourism Development Plan but are also known for their local festivals and products.

For quantitative surveys, the researcher categorized participants into strata based on their roles in tourism, such as the tourism officers, business owners, community members, and others.

2.4. Research Procedure

The research procedure for this study followed a systematic approach to ensure comprehensive data

collection, analysis, and interpretation. Upon approval by the faculty of Laguna State Polytechnic University - Sta. Cruz Main Campus, the researcher acquired and endorsement letter from the Regional Director of the Department of Tourism Region IV-A to the Provincial Governor of Laguna and the Municipal and City Mayors for the approval to conduct this study and for the ease of data gathering and conduct of survey. The purpose of the study emphasized that it will bring a great contribution to the local government of Laguna. The researcher conducted surveys with local government units' representatives such as tourism officers, business owners, and community residents that helped this study to have varied and comprehensive data gathering. An informed consent from all participants was also observed as well as to maintain confidentiality, and communicate the purpose of the study transparently since ethical approval were required by relevant authorities or institutional review boards. The respondents were given survey questionnaires which contained the demographic profile and the specific questions relevant to the data gathering. The respondents were asked to answer a Likert Scale for the responses which included a 1-5 rating system, with 5 as highest and 1 as the lowest.

2.5. Research Instrument

The primary instrument utilized for the study were the use of survey questionnaires for quantitative data.

In addition to primary data collection methods, the researcher utilized secondary data sources for an enriched analysis of the study. Secondary data provided context, background, and supplementary information that enhances the understanding of tourism dynamics in the selected towns of Laguna.

2.6. Statistical Treatment of Data

Table 2. Statistical Tools Used for the Treatment of Data

Statistical Tool	Purpose
Mean (M)	Summarized and described key characteristics of the collected data. This provides a central tendency measure of the respondents' perceptions.
Standard Deviation (SD)	Used to assess the dispersion or variability of responses around the mean, indicating consensus or divergence in stakeholders' views.
Likert Scale Interpretation	The verbal interpretation ranges were applied to categorize the mean scores.
Survey and Data Collection	Used to collect responses from participants.
Software Tools (Excel, Jamovi, SPSS)	Used to compute descriptive Statistics and tabulate results.
Pearson Correlation Coefficient (Guildford's 1973 Rule of Thumb)	Measured the strength and direction of relationship between variables.
Correlation Matrix	Used to compare multiple variables and their relationships.

Table 2 represents the statistical tools used for the treatment of data focusing on Correlation Analysis.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Table 3. Guildford's (1973) Rule of Thumb for Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient

<i>r</i>	Interpretation
< .20	Slight, almost negligible relationship
.20 - .40	Low correlation, definite but small relationship
.40 - .70	Moderate correlation, substantial relationship
.70 - .90	High correlation, marked relationship
> .90	Very high correlation, very dependable relationship

Table 3 summarizes Guildford's (1973) Rule of Thumb for interpretation of correlation coefficient (*r*).

Guilford developed the Pearson Correlation Coefficient "R" test in 1956 in an effort to quantify and analyze the linear relationship between two variables. It is used to determine whether a linear relationship between two variables exists and how strong it is (as indicated by the p-value and coefficient *r*, respectively). Only when the underlying assumptions are true is this test used.

The Rule of Thumb presented by Guildford (1973) was adopted for interpreting the relationship strength.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data according to the results and analysis formulated in the study.

3.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

According to Hammer (2011), incorporating these demographic data such as age, gender, occupation, and years of service will significantly enhance the field's understanding of both commonalities and differences present within various populations.

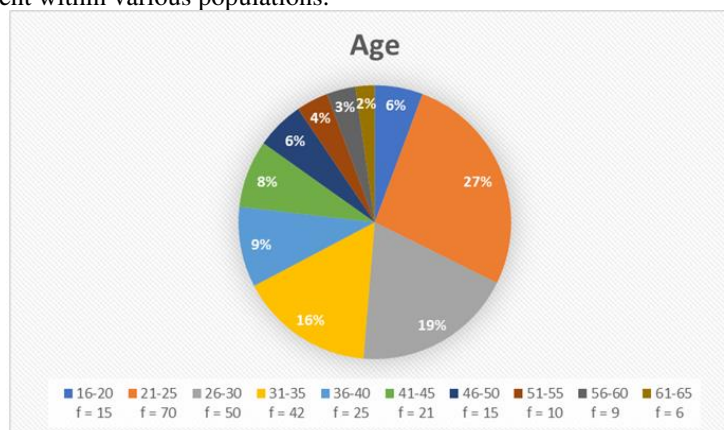


Figure 2. Distribution of Respondents Profile According to Age

Figure 2 shows that the age distribution of the 263 respondents indicates a youthful majority, with 26.6% aged 21-25 and 19.0% aged 26-30, totaling nearly 45.6% of participants between 21 and 30 years. In contrast, only 2.28% are aged 61-65, highlighting the limited representation of older adults, which may restrict the study's generalizability. This demographic bias suggests the findings largely reflect younger adults' views, potentially influenced by their distinct behaviors and preferences. The implications underscore the importance of age in demographic analysis and survey participation, as younger individuals tend to engage more in digital surveys, while older adults may participate less due to various barriers like difficulty coping with technology.

It presented demographic data from a study involving 263 respondents, highlighting a notable gender distribution among participants. Specifically, it showed that 59.3% of the respondents are female, while 40.7% are male. This indicated a higher level of female participation in the sample.

The gender imbalance observed in this data can raise concerns about potential biases in the findings. With a larger proportion of female respondents, the results may reflect predominantly female perspectives, which could skew the analysis, particularly in discussions or conclusions related to gender-sensitive issues. This imbalance has limited the generalizability of the findings to the broader population, as it may not adequately represent male viewpoints or experiences.

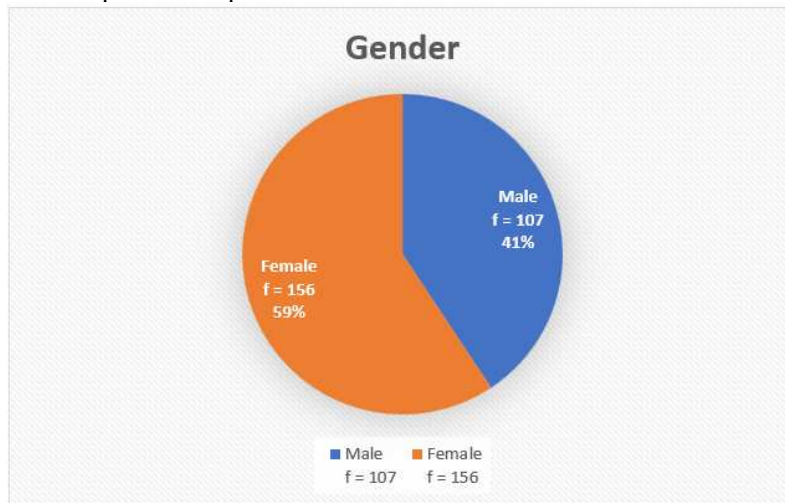


Figure 3. Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

Figure 3 illustrates the gender distribution of respondents, with 59% identified as female and 41% as male. Such a distribution highlights the potential for gender bias in the findings of the study. The predominance of female respondents influenced the results, particularly in areas sensitive to gender differences. This disparity led to questions about the representativeness of the data, as the male perspective might be underrepresented.

Figure 3 shows that respondents from three municipalities in Laguna were distributed as follows: Bay (100 respondents, 38.0%), Pakil (89 respondents, 33.8%), and Calamba (74 respondents, 28.1%). However, based on the Philippine Statistics Authority, this distribution did not align with the actual population figures: Bay comprises only 1.99% of Laguna's population, yet accounted for a disproportionately high percentage of respondents; Pakil represented 0.69% of the population but contributed 33.8% of respondents; while Calamba, with 15.96% of the population, had only 28.1% representation.

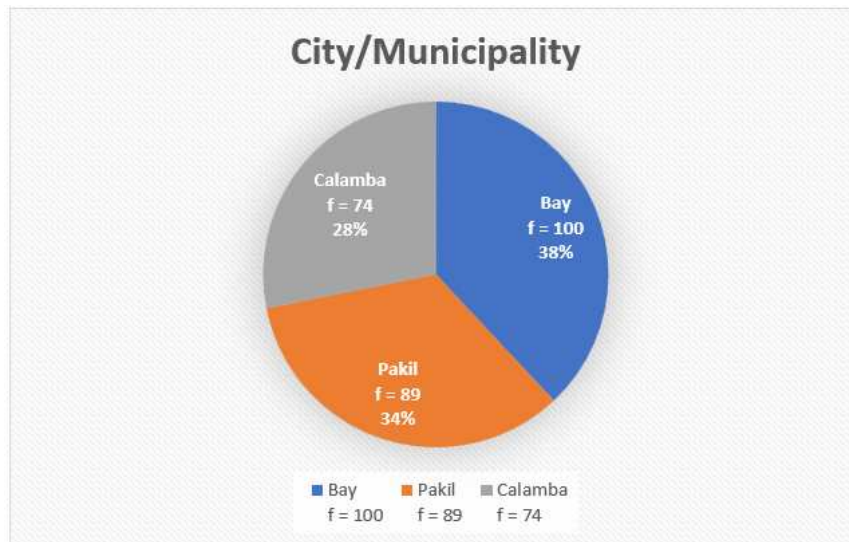


Figure 4. Distribution of Respondents According to City/Municipality

Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of survey respondents by municipality, showing that Bay accounts for 38%, Pakil 34%, and Calamba 28%. This visual representation highlighted the significant overrepresentation of respondents from Bay and Pakil compared to Calamba, suggesting potential sampling biases that affected the validity and generalizability of the study's findings.

Figure 4 emphasizes the distribution of respondents by occupation in which 60.8% were community residents, 27.4% were Local Government Unit (LGU) staff, and 11.8% were business owners. The predominance of community residents highlighted the importance of grassroots perspectives on tourism, as they experienced both benefits and drawbacks of tourism development. LGU staff, as key implementers of tourism policies, provided valuable insights into the planning and management of tourism initiatives, while business owners contributed a vital economic perspective, despite their smaller representation.

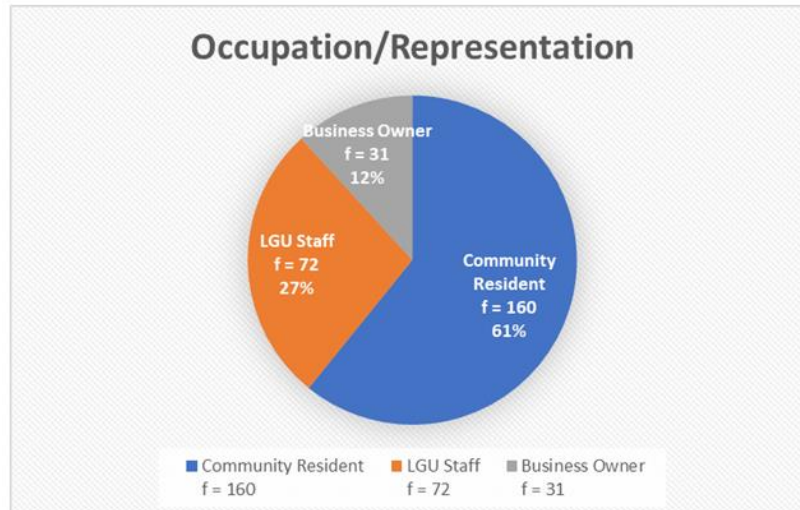


Figure 5. Distribution of Respondents According to Occupation/Representation

Figure 5 illustrates the distribution of survey respondents by occupation which comprises of 61% community residents, 27% LGU staff, and 12% business owners. This representation reinforced the study's strong emphasis on local perspectives, particularly from community residents, who played a crucial role in understanding the impacts of tourism. The inclusion of LGU staff shed light on the implementation of tourism policies, while business owners, though a smaller group, provided insights into the economic implications of tourism initiatives. Together, these perspectives were essential for evaluating the overall effectiveness and sustainability of tourism development in the area.

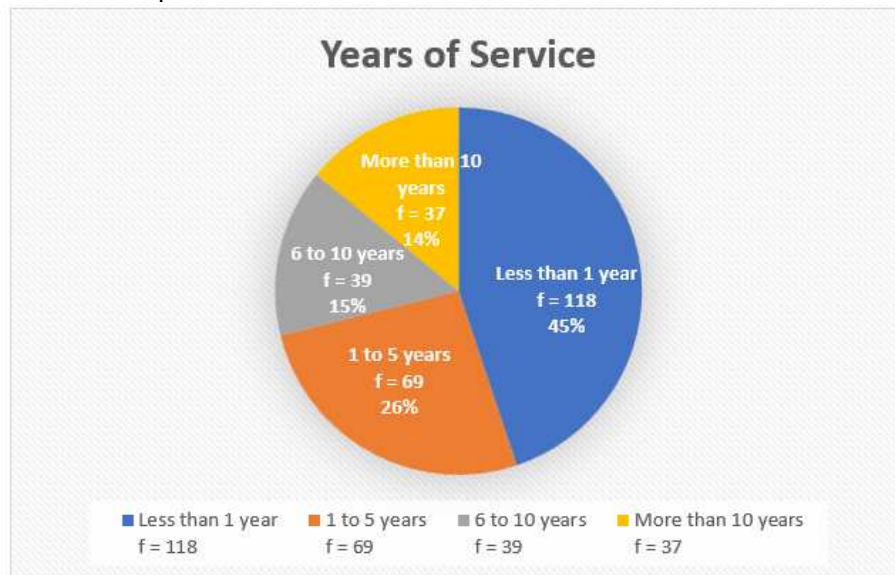


Figure 6. Distribution of Respondents According to Number of Years of Service with Involvement in Tourism

Figure 6 shows the distribution of respondents based on their years of service in tourism in which 44.9% have less than one year, 26.2% have 1 to 5 years, 14.8% have 6 to 10 years, and 14.1% have more than 10 years of experience. This distribution highlighted a significant presence of newcomers in the tourism sector, suggesting a dynamic and evolving industry landscape. The larger proportion of less experienced respondents indicated a potential for fresh perspectives, while the smaller groups of more experienced individuals offered valuable insights into the historical and institutional knowledge of tourism development. Together, these perspectives provided a comprehensive understanding of the current state and challenges within the tourism field.

4.2. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects

Table 4. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Fund Allocation

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The local government allocates sufficient funds for the promotion of festivals and local products.	3.89	1.08	Successful
2. Funding for festival promotions is effectively utilized to attract more tourists and visitors.	3.92	1.04	Successful
3. The budget for marketing and advertising local festivals and products is adequate and well-managed.	3.78	1.03	Successful
4. Additional funding is needed to further improve the visibility and reach of local festivals and product.	4.04	1.04	Successful
5. The tourism budget should prioritize funding in the following areas?			Successful
a. Infrastructure development (e.g. roads, facilities)	3.97	1.01	Successful
b. Marketing and promotions	4.02	1.03	Successful
c. Capacity building and training for tourism stakeholder	4.03	1.02	Successful
d. Environmental sustainability and conservation	4.10	1.02	Successful
e. Community engagement and participation	4.08	1.03	Successful
Overall for Fund Allocation	3.98	0.90	Successful

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Successful, 3.41–4.20 = Successful, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Successful, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Successful.

Table 4 indicates that local governments units across Laguna Province have shown they're serious about putting money where it matters most in tourism. On average, respondents rated fund allocation a robust **3.98 out of 5** "Successful" with particularly strong scores for environmental programs (*M*=4.10) and community engagement (*M*=4.08). Baseline support for festivals and local products is solid (*M*=3.89), and LGUs have demonstrated they can turn promotional budgets into real-world campaigns (*M*=3.92) and manage marketing funds wisely (*M*=3.78). Importantly, officials recognize that even more investment especially in infrastructure (*M*=3.97) and broader visibility efforts (*M*=4.04) could further amplify Laguna's appeal.

From a Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, these financial commitments represent strategic, hard-to-replicate resources that help towns differentiate themselves as unique festival and cultural destinations. New Public Management (NPM) theory underscores how performance-oriented budgeting and decentralized decision-making allow tourism officers to allocate funds directly toward measurable goals be it visitor numbers or repeat attendance. Public Choice Theory reminds us that these budget patterns reflect community and industry voices advocating for roads, training, and greener events an outcome of responsive local governance. Finally, the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) highlights that by investing in capacity building and environmental conservation, LGUs are strengthening the very financial and social assets that local families rely on for long-term resilience.

These findings don't exist in a vacuum. The National Tourism Development Plan (2016–2022) calls on LGUs to secure "sufficient resources to address infrastructure and security gaps," a mandate Laguna clearly heeds. DOT IV-A's 2021 Procurement Plan which earmarks lines like PHP 27,000 for van hire to

support festival logistics matches local perceptions of well-managed marketing funds. Major undertakings like the DPWH's 71 km Lakeshore Road Network Phase II (PHP 120 B) provide the backbone for festival access, explaining Laguna's high marks for infrastructure funding. Meanwhile, the PSA's CALABARZON RTSA data allow LGUs to benchmark their nearly-4.0 mean funding score against real-world tourism GDP gains and NEDA's RDP 2023–2028 ensures those investments dovetail with broader regional targets for jobs and sustainable growth.

In short, Laguna's "Successful" fund allocation is both a reflection of deliberate policy and the engine that drives festivals, marketing campaigns, road upgrades, training workshops, and conservation projects from blueprints into vibrant experiences on the ground.

Table 5. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Stakeholder Participation

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. Local businesses, government agencies, and community members actively participate in promoting local festivals and products.	3.99	1.08	Successful
2. Collaboration between stakeholders (e.g., government, private sector, local artisans) enhances the success of festival promotions.	4.02	1.03	Successful
3. Stakeholders are given sufficient opportunities to contribute ideas and resources for promoting local festivals and products.	3.93	1.02	Successful
4. The participation of various stakeholders positively impacts the overall visibility and reach of local festivals and products.	4.05	1.00	Successful
Overall for Stakeholder Participants	4.00	0.97	Successful

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Successful, 3.41–4.20 = Successful, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Successful, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Successful.

Table 5 indicates that stakeholder participation in Laguna's tourism programs stands out as a true community effort, with an overall "Successful" rating of **4.00 out of 5** (*SD* = 0.97). Local businesses, government agencies, and residents work hand-in-hand to promote festivals and products (*M* = 3.99–4.05 across indicators), mirroring findings from Sagada where multi-sector partnerships helped the town mitigate overtourism impacts through shared planning and resource-pooling. This inclusive approach embodies Collaborative Governance, enabling civic groups, private sponsors, and LGUs to co-design events that boost attendance and local pride.

Opportunities for idea-sharing (*M* = 3.93) have been expanded through digital forums and social media platforms, empowering residents to shape tourist offerings which is a trend also documented in rural Philippine towns where technology transforms participation into genuine empowerment. When stakeholders see tangible results such as 20 percent attendance lifts at Galing Pook-recognized festivals in which they build Social Capital of trust and reciprocity, reinforcing joint action for future events.

Under Stakeholder Theory, balancing diverse interests like government, artisans and tour operators leads to superior festival outcomes and resource efficiency. Meanwhile, New Public Management principles are evident in Laguna's creation of public–private steering committees and PPP arrangements that streamline decision-making and accountability. Together, these governance innovations blending local knowledge, digital tools, and formal partnerships demonstrate that Laguna's tourism plans are more than ink on paper:

they are living collaborations that bring festivals to life, distribute economic gains widely, and ensure sustainability for years to come.

Table 6. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Infrastructure Development

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The existing infrastructure (e.g., roads, transportation, and venues) adequately supports the promotion of local festivals and products.	3.84	0.96	Successful
2. Improved public facilities (e.g., event spaces, marketplaces, and tourism centers) contribute to the success of local festivals and product promotions.	3.98	0.96	Successful
3. The local government prioritizes infrastructure projects that enhance tourism and festival-related activities.	3.81	0.94	Successful
4. More investments in infrastructure are needed to better accommodate tourists and boost the promotion of local festivals and products.	4.06	0.91	Successful
Overall for Infrastructure Development	3.92	0.84	Successful

Note. $N=263$. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5:00 = Highly Successful, 3.41–4.20 = Successful, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Successful, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Successful.

Table 6 shows that Laguna's tourism infrastructure has come a long way, earning an overall "Successful" rating of 3.92 ($SD=0.84$) from local stakeholders which is a proof that roads, venues, and public facilities now effectively bring festivals and product showcases to life. Residents and event organizers agree that the existing network of access roads and transport links adequately supports visitor flows ($M=3.84$, $SD=0.96$), such as the smoother journey into Los Baños courtesy of DPWH's upgrade of the Mount Makiling access road, which has boosted both attendance and vendor participation at local events. Complementing these upgrades, the Tourism Road and Infrastructure Program (TRIP) has widened arterial routes to festival sites, cutting travel times and widening the circle of would-be attendees.

Beyond roads, modernized public venues, from multi-purpose amphitheaters to covered marketplaces, play a starring role in festival success ($M=3.98$, $SD=0.96$). In Rizal Ecotourism Park, a brand-new amphitheater and vendor pavilions have turned casual gatherings into professional-grade cultural showcases, earning praise from local stakeholders for raising the bar on product fairs. On the national stage, the World Economic Forum highlights how investments in airports, seaports, and intermodal hubs fuel new festival ventures across the Philippines, a trend Laguna mirrors at the provincial and municipal levels.

Laguna's priority setting for tourism infrastructure ($M=3.81$, $SD=0.94$) aligns neatly with the CALABARZON Regional Development Plan, which earmarks road widening, waterfront promenades, and cultural hubs as key to meeting regional tourism targets. On the ground, municipal budgets now routinely co-fund DPWH road projects and LGU-managed tourism center upgrades, demonstrating a Public Choice-style responsiveness to community and industry calls for better facilities.

Yet Laguna knows there's more to do: a clear majority of respondents ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.91$) believe additional investments are vital to accommodate rising visitor numbers and deepen the reach of festival

promotions. This call echoes a ScienceDirect study showing that robust infrastructure like roads, utilities, and sanitation drives tourism GDP growth, warning that without ongoing upgrades, destination competitiveness may stall. Likewise, the International Journal of Advanced Research in Tourism and Hospitality cautions that failure to expand venues and transport capacity risks plateauing visitor satisfaction and economic impact.

From a Growth Pole Theory perspective, Laguna's targeted investments act as catalysts, concentrating cultural and economic activity around sites like Pagsanjan Falls and Calamba's heritage zones, and generating spillover growth in nearby restaurants, lodgings, and artisan markets. New Public Management (NPM) principles are also evident: performance-based budgeting ensures that infrastructure grants are tied to clear KPIs which are festival attendee counts, vendor income, and visitor feedback therefore strengthening accountability. Finally, Network Governance explains how DPWH, DOT-CALABARZON, and municipal tourism offices coordinate in an inter-organizational network, streamlining procurement and minimizing duplication to make every peso count.

In short, Laguna's "Successful" infrastructure ratings tell a story of physical systems that have graduated from blueprints to bustling festival stages. By co-investing in roads, venues, and public amenities and by planning new projects through the lens of economic catalysts, performance metrics, and inter-agency networks, these towns are proving that well-designed infrastructure is the backbone that turns tourism plans into lived experiences.

Table 7. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Promotion and Marketing

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The promotion and marketing strategies for local festivals in my town effectively attract both local and international tourists.	3.96	0.96	Successful
2. The promotion and marketing strategies for local products in my town effectively attract both local and international tourists.	3.94	0.98	Successful
3. Local tourism products (e.g. food specialties, attractions) are well-promoted through various platforms such as social media, tourism events, and government initiatives.	3.95	0.97	Successful
4. There is sufficient collaboration between the local government and private sector in promoting and marketing local festivals and products.	3.91	0.95	Successful
5. The current marketing efforts for local festivals and products contribute to increased economic benefits for local businesses and communities.	3.96	0.92	Successful
Overall for Promotion and Marketing	3.94	0.87	Successful

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Successful, 3.41–4.20 = Successful, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Successful, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Successful.

Table 7 suggests that promotion and marketing have become the heartbeat of Laguna's festival and product showcases, earning an overall "Successful" rating of **3.94 (SD = 0.87)** from stakeholders who see real results in both local and international visitor interest. By harnessing social media campaigns, barangay outreach, and community websites, Laguna towns mirror best practices that drove high awareness for events like Pista ng Pelikula and regional food fairs. These grassroots-digital tactics translate into foot traffic: studies

from Los Baños' coffee and artisan bazaars show that blending online buzz with pop-up markets can lift vendor visits by up to 20 percent during festivals. Importantly, these campaigns don't stop at clicks but instead, they convert into economic gains, with well-publicized Philippine festivals shown to boost resident incomes by 15–25 percent through spending on food, souvenirs, and services.

A key to this success is public–private collaboration, rated 3.91 by respondents, where LGUs partner with tour operators, hotel groups, and artisan cooperatives to co-finance media buys and sponsorships. Under Stakeholder Theory, involving all affected parties ranging from municipal tourism officers to local artisans ensures that promotional messages ring true and tap into each group's networks for broader reach. Meanwhile, Marketing Mix (4Ps) thinking guides Laguna's "Promotion" choices, selecting the right channels (social media, travel fairs) and "Place" strategies which are timing campaigns to coincide with high-footfall weekends or cultural anniversaries. Backed by New Public Management approaches, LGUs now tie marketing budgets to clear KPIs which are trackable through web analytics and ticket sales to justify future funding and refine tactics. In practice, these integrated strategies move Laguna's tourism projects from well-crafted plans into tangible visitor increases and thriving local economies, cementing promotion and marketing as a vital dimension of implementation.

Table 8. Status of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Training and Capacity Building

Indicator		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1.	There are sufficient training and capacity-building programs provided for tourism stakeholders (e.g., local businesses, tour guides, government personnel).	3.66	1.00	Successful
2.	The training programs offered are relevant and effective in improving the skills and knowledge of individuals involved in tourism.	3.85	0.97	Successful
3.	Local tourism stakeholders are given equal opportunities to participate in training and capacity-building initiatives.	3.78	0.97	Successful
4.	There is sufficient ongoing support and follow-up training to ensure the sustainable promotion of local festivals and products.	3.78	0.98	Successful
Overall for Training and Capacity Building		3.77	0.90	Successful

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Successful, 3.41–4.20 = Successful, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Successful, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Successful.

Table 8 shows that Laguna's investment in training and capacity building has paid off: stakeholders rate these initiatives a "Successful" **3.77 out of 5** (*SD* = 0.90), signaling that local businesses, tour guides, and government personnel feel well-prepared for the demands of modern tourism. While a steady **3.66** (*SD* = 1.00) confirms ample training opportunities, the stronger **3.85** (*SD* = 0.97) shows that these programs genuinely sharpen participants' skills which ranges everything from hospitality standards to digital marketing tactics so they can adapt, innovate, and keep visitors delighted. Equitable access (*M* = 3.78, *SD* = 0.97) reassures smaller operators that no one is left behind, and ongoing support (*M* = 3.78, *SD* = 0.98) promises that knowledge gained isn't a one-and-done affair but a lifelong journey of improvement.

These efforts reflect New Public Management ideals—DOT's "Enhanced Opportunity" online modules, delivered via Zoom, tie capacity-building to recovery metrics and cost-effective digital platforms, ensuring LGU staff and guides alike can upskill even in crisis conditions. From the vantage of Human Capital Theory, each workshop and certification session becomes an asset: better-trained workers deliver standout

service, boosting Laguna's competitiveness as a festival and heritage destination. Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy) further validates Laguna's approach: by focusing on problem-centered, experiential lessons such as role-playing crisis response or managing e-booking systems which makes participants retain and apply new concepts far more effectively than in passive lectures.

Equitable participation in training dovetails with Empowerment Theory, which holds that true ownership and sustainability which blossoms only when every community member can join the conversation. The Philippines-Canada Local Government Support Program's workshops offer a blueprint: structured sessions for LGU officials, NGO reps, and local entrepreneurs create the democratic space needed for shared decision-making in tourism planning. Looking ahead, global standards like the GSTC Sustainable Tourism Training Program remind Laguna that continuous learning cycles like refresher courses, mentorships, and practical field exercises can cement best practices in areas like waste management and cultural preservation, ensuring the province's tourism gains endure for generations.

In sum, Laguna's "Successful" training scores aren't just numbers but instead they tell the story of a province committed to building its own talent pipeline. By blending NPM-style performance budgets with human-centered adult learning, and by embedding empowerment and sustainability into every lesson plan, these towns have moved well beyond token seminars into a systematic capacity-building engine that underpins every festival, tour, and heritage showcase.

4.3. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects

Table 9. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Tourist Arrival

	Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1.	The promotion of local festivals has significantly increased the number of tourists visiting my town.	3.94	1.05	Effective
2.	Marketing and promotional efforts for local products have attracted more tourists and visitors to my town.	3.95	1.04	Effective
3.	Tourist arrivals during local festivals have consistently increased due to improved promotion and marketing strategies.	3.91	1.00	Effective
4.	The visibility of local festivals and products in various promotional platforms (e.g., social media, travel fairs, advertisements) has effectively boosted tourist interest and participation.	3.98	1.00	Effective
Overall for Tourist Arrival		3.95	0.97	Effective

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective, 3.41–4.20 = Effective, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Effective.

Table 9 shows that Laguna's focused promotion and marketing efforts have translated into a tangible uplift in visitor numbers—an overall Mean of 3.95 (*SD* = 0.97), deemed "Effective" by local stakeholders. Festival promotions alone scored 3.94 (*SD* = 1.05) for boosting arrivals, echoing Luna's findings that well-organized events like the Turumba Festival generate positive word-of-mouth and repeat visits. Similarly, targeted marketing of local products received a 3.95 (*SD* = 1.04) rating, aligning with bibliometric reviews demonstrating that integrated attraction-product campaigns raise arrival rates and revenues. When respondents assessed consistency of arrival growth during events, they awarded 3.91 (*SD* = 1.00), a result in line with conversion-study methodologies showing that clear call-to-action and audience segmentation can convert

intent into actual visits. Finally, visibility on social media and at travel fairs garnered the highest score—3.98 (SD = 1.00)—underscoring digital platforms’ power in sustaining engagement and driving revisits.

From a Social Exchange Theory perspective, these high arrival metrics indicate that Laguna’s promotions have effectively conveyed net benefits—cultural enrichment and memorable experiences—that outweigh the costs of travel, motivating tourists to visit. The Marketing Mix (4Ps) lens shows LGUs have optimized “Promotion” channels and “Place” timing, scheduling campaigns during peak seasons and leveraging multiple platforms to reach both domestic and international audiences. Under Public Choice Theory, the prioritization of marketing budgets and their strong correlation with arrivals reflects elected officials responding directly to local business and community demand for tourism growth.

Benchmarking Laguna’s performance against regional data from the PSA’s CALABARZON Tourism Satellite Accounts (2024) confirms that local arrival increases ($M_{\text{overall}} = 3.95$) are on par with regional growth trends, validating the effectiveness of provincial marketing efforts. Moreover, the WTTC’s 2024 Economic Impact Report underscores that destinations with cohesive branding and data-driven promotion recover faster and enjoy sustained arrivals, a pattern Laguna exemplifies through its “Visit Laguna” digital campaigns and festival expos.

In the context of the Extent of Implementation study, Laguna’s “Effective” arrival outcomes signal high fidelity between plan and practice: well-funded marketing inputs, structured collaboration among LGUs and private partners, and robust digital-offline promotional tactics are converting strategic objectives into real-world tourist flows. This operational success underscores that Laguna’s tourism programs are not theoretical constructs but are fully realized on the ground, delivering measurable increases in visitors and setting a strong foundation for long-term tourism development.

Table 10. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Tourist Revenue

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The promotion of local festivals and products has significantly increased tourist spending in my town.	3.75	0.98	Effective
2. Tourist revenue during local festivals is higher compared to regular periods due to the marketing of local products.	3.73	1.00	Effective
3. Revenue generated from the sale of local products during festivals has contributed to the economic growth of the community.	3.78	1.01	Effective
4. Tourist spending on local products during festivals has led to the creation of more job opportunities in my town.	3.76	0.97	Effective
Overall for Tourist Revenue	3.75	0.92	Effective

Note. $N=263$. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective, 3.41–4.20 = Effective, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Effective.

The table 10 shows that Tourism in Laguna Province has become a significant engine for local economies, with stakeholders rating the effectiveness of their programs in generating visitor spending as “Effective”—an overall mean of 3.75 (SD = 0.92). Festivals in particular have proven powerful economic catalysts: respondents report that well-publicized events boost tourist spending ($M_1 = 3.75$, SD = 0.98), a pattern mirrored nationally where regional celebrations generate millions of pesos in revenues for lodging, dining, and local crafts. During festival periods, revenues surge above regular times ($M_2 = 3.73$, SD = 1.00), reflecting the Philippines’ record-high inbound tourism expenditures of ₱760.5 billion in 2024, up 9 percent year-on-year and 27 percent above 2019 levels.

Beyond one-off events, consistent product marketing—from artisanal food fairs to heritage tours—yields sustained economic growth ($M_3 = 3.78$, $SD = 1.01$). Research in the *Journal of Education, Social Sciences, and Allied Health* finds municipal festivals routinely generate significant local revenues, confirming that targeted promotion of local crafts and specialties can directly contribute to community GDP. This increased spending also translates into more jobs: the *BusinessWorld* reports that every ₱1 million of tourist expenditure supports 25.3 jobs, a multiplier effect echoed in Laguna’s survey score for job creation ($M_4 = 3.76$, $SD = 0.97$).

These outcomes are underpinned by several public administration and economic theories. Economic Multiplier Theory explains how initial tourism spending ripples through hospitality, retail, and transport sectors—amplifying income and employment. Social Exchange Theory suggests that when communities perceive net benefits from tourism such as increased household incomes during festival seasons, they support further investment in promotional activities, aligning with Laguna’s positive revenue findings. Through a Resource-Based View, local festivals and unique products act as inimitable assets that give Laguna towns a competitive edge in attracting spending visitor. From a Public Choice standpoint, LGUs appear to allocate marketing and festival budgets in response to citizen and business demands for economic growth, reflecting accountable, voter-driven fiscal policymaking. Finally, New Public Management approaches—tying budget decisions to revenue targets—have ensured sustained funding for high-impact promotional projects, reinforcing Laguna’s upward revenue trends.

In the context of the Extent of Implementation study, these “Effective” revenue indicators offer clear evidence that Laguna’s tourism initiatives are more than plans on paper: they are fully operational and producing measurable economic benefits. When promotional campaigns, event logistics, and product showcases translate directly into millions of pesos in visitor spending and hundreds of new jobs, it confirms that governance structures, stakeholder partnerships, and financial commitments are functioning as intended—hallmarks of robust implementation fidelity in Laguna’s tourism programs.

Table 11. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Local Employment

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The promotion of local festivals and products has led to an increase in local employment opportunities.	3.79	0.99	Effective
2. Local festivals have created new job opportunities for community members, especially in tourism-related sectors.	3.80	0.99	Effective
3. The marketing of local products during festivals has contributed to the growth of small businesses and local entrepreneurship.	3.84	0.98	Effective
4. Job creation as a result of local festivals and product promotions has had a positive impact on the local economy.	3.86	0.96	Effective
Overall for Local Employment	3.82	0.92	Effective

Note. $N=263$. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective, 3.41–4.20 = Effective, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Effective.

Table 11 shows that Laguna’s tourism programs have proven to be powerful engines of local job creation, earning an overall “Effective” rating of 3.82 ($SD = 0.92$) from surveyed stakeholders. Festival promotions alone scored 3.79 ($SD = 0.99$) for increasing employment opportunities, a finding echoed in Luna’s study of Los Baños’ Baños Festival, which documented how events generate both temporary and permanent positions—from stagehands and guides to artisans and food vendors—thereby bolstering the local labor market. Beyond festivals, the creation of new roles in tourism-related sectors received a 3.80

(SD=0.99) rating, aligning with broader reviews showing that regional celebrations catalyze jobs in hospitality, transport, and event management.

Marketing of local products during festivals earned 3.84 (SD=0.98) for spurring small-business growth, consistent with PinasCulture's analysis of how artisanal fairs enable micro-enterprises to scale up operations and hire extra staff. This entrepreneurial expansion is further supported by cases in Batangas, where capacity-building workshops and product marketing combined to boost vendor revenues and encourage new business start-ups in rural tourism hubs. Finally, respondents rated the overall economic impact of tourism on job creation at 3.86 (SD=0.96), reflecting the sector's multiplier effect: the WTTC reports that every ₱1 million of tourist spending supports approximately 25 jobs across sectors, a dynamic clearly at work in Laguna's communities. The PSA confirms this trend on a national scale, noting a 6.4 percent growth in tourism employment to 6.21 million jobs in 2023, highlighting tourism's role as a major employment driver.

These outcomes are grounded in Economic Multiplier Theory, which explains how initial visitor expenditures ripple through accommodation, food, transport, and crafts sectors—turning each peso spent into multiple job opportunities. Social Exchange Theory adds that communities are more likely to support tourism when they see direct livelihood benefits, matching Laguna's positive employment perceptions. From the Resource-Based View, local festivals and unique products are treated as inimitable assets; effective promotion of these assets yields competitive employment advantages for towns. Public Choice Theory suggests that LGUs channel budgets into tourism programs because they deliver visible job creation outcomes, satisfying voter and business demands for economic growth. Under New Public Management, performance-oriented budgeting ties continued funding to employment targets, ensuring that tourism initiatives remain focused on creating and sustaining jobs.

In the context of the Extent of Implementation study, these "Effective" employment metrics confirm that Laguna's tourism projects are fully operational: strategic plans and budget allocations are translating into real-world job opportunities. When festival and product promotion drive measurable increases in local employment, it demonstrates that LGUs, private partners, and community groups are successfully executing tourism programs—solidifying employment growth as a key indicator of implementation fidelity in Laguna Province's evolving tourism landscape.

Table 12. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Tourist Satisfaction

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. Tourists are generally satisfied with the variety and quality of local products available during festivals	3.89	1.01	Effective
2. The overall experience of attending local festivals meets the expectations of tourists	3.93	1.00	Effective
3. Tourists find the marketing and promotion of local festivals to be informative and helpful in planning their visit	3.89	0.99	Effective
4. The promotion of local festivals and products has made tourists more inclined to revisit the town	3.88	0.99	Effective
Overall for Tourist Satisfaction	3.90	0.96	Effective

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective, 3.41–4.20 = Effective, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Effective.

Table 12 reflects that tourist satisfaction serves as a vital indicator of the success and extent of tourism program implementation in any locality, and in the case of Laguna Province, the findings reveal a promising scenario. With an overall satisfaction mean score of *M* = 3.90 (*SD* = 0.96), tourists who participate

in local festivals across selected towns in Laguna express positive experiences that point to effective planning, coordination, and delivery of tourism services. These outcomes not only affirm the province's strategic direction but also align with established theories and empirical studies in tourism management and public administration, painting a comprehensive picture of implementation effectiveness.

Tourists visiting Laguna's vibrant festivals consistently note how these experiences meet—and often exceed—their expectations. For example, the variety and quality of local products ($M = 3.89$), including signature crafts and delicacies, reflect the meticulous efforts of local governments and stakeholders to showcase the province's cultural identity. This is no coincidence. According to the SERVQUAL Model, dimensions such as “tangibles” (like product quality) and “reliability” (consistent delivery of service) are critical drivers of satisfaction (Consortia Academia). In Biñan's *Puto Latik Festival*, for instance, visitors not only enjoy the performances but also leave with authentic cultural products—evidence that LGUs are successfully turning strategy into experience.

Moreover, the overall festival experience ($M = 3.93$) that is encompassing logistics, performances, and hospitality—emerges as the most highly rated dimension, suggesting a well-rounded implementation of tourism programming. This resonates with the Experience Economy Theory (Pine & Gilmore), which argues that consumer satisfaction is highest when immersive, memorable experiences are co-created between service providers and participants. The atmosphere in Laguna festivals is not merely entertaining, it is transformative, deepening emotional connections and cultural appreciation.

Similarly, the province scores well on informative promotion and trip planning ($M_3 = 3.89$), underscoring the role of clear, truthful marketing in building trust. This links directly to the Expectation Confirmation Theory, which posits that satisfaction increases when actual experiences match or surpass pre-visit expectations (PLOS). The consistency between what's advertised and what's delivered builds credibility, a crucial factor in shaping tourist perceptions and loyalty.

Speaking of loyalty, revisit intention ($M_4 = 3.88$) reflects the emotional resonance and perceived value that visitors attach to their experience. Grounded in Tourism Satisfaction Theory and supported by empirical findings from CALABARZON heritage studies, this suggests that tourists are not only satisfied—they're also eager to return. Behavioral economics literature, including the Kano Model, reinforces this idea: when services exceed the basic expectations and introduce “delighters” (e.g., unique local encounters), they generate stronger customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth.

These high satisfaction scores serve as a powerful validation of Laguna's tourism strategies and the extent to which programs are implemented effectively across multiple levels. From a New Public Management (NPM) perspective, Laguna exemplifies a results-oriented governance approach. Its emphasis on outcome measurement, decentralization, and customer-centric programming is evident in the strong satisfaction metrics. For instance, towns like Calamba and Los Baños have successfully transformed local assets—hot springs, heritage sites—into festival themes that attract both domestic and international tourists.

However, challenges remain. Hydrological studies have raised red flags on the over-extraction of groundwater in hot spring areas, highlighting the need for stronger regulatory mechanisms and environmental stewardship. This ties into Sustainable Development Theory, which argues that tourism growth must not compromise ecological integrity or social equity. As satisfaction-driven tourism revenue increases, it becomes even more imperative to ensure that growth does not come at the expense of long-term sustainability.

From the lens of Collaborative Governance Theory, the province's achievements also reflect effective multi-sector collaboration. Local festivals are often co-managed by LGUs, tourism councils, community cooperatives, and artisans. Such partnerships, when functioning well, improve service delivery and enhance cultural authenticity. Nevertheless, issues like inconsistent enforcement of groundwater regulations or unequal access to infrastructure in rural towns underscore the need for improved coordination among sectors.

Table 13. Effectiveness of Tourism Programs and Projects in Terms of Sustainability

Indicator	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. The tourism programs promoting local festivals and products are designed with long-term sustainability in mind	3.92	0.95	Effective
2. Local communities are actively involved in ensuring the sustainability of tourism initiatives related to festivals and products	3.91	0.97	Effective
3. The promotion of local festivals and products is supported by environmentally sustainable practices that help preserve the region's cultural and natural resources	3.89	0.96	Effective
4. There are ongoing efforts to improve and sustain the economic impact of local festivals and products for future generations	3.82	0.99	Effective
Overall for Sustainability of Programs & Projects	3.88	0.91	Effective

Note. *N*=263. *V.I.*=Verbal interpretation. 4.21–5.00 = Highly Effective, 3.41–4.20 = Effective, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 1.81–2.60 = Less Effective, 1.00–1.80 = Not at all Effective.

Table 13 shows the effectiveness of tourism programs and projects in terms of sustainability, as evidenced by mean scores ranging from 3.82 to 3.92 across four key indicators, all interpreted as “Effective” based on the study’s scale. These findings highlight a deliberate alignment with sustainability principles, particularly through the lens of theoretical frameworks such as Sustainable Tourism Theory, Community-Based Tourism (CBT), and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). For instance, the highest-rated indicator—long-term sustainability design of programs promoting local festivals and products (*M*=3.92)—reflects adherence to Sustainable Tourism Theory, which prioritizes future-oriented planning to balance resource use and cultural preservation. Similarly, active community involvement (*M*=3.91) aligns with CBT and Stakeholder Theory, emphasizing local empowerment as a driver of ownership and cultural continuity. However, the relatively high standard deviations (0.95–0.99) across indicators suggest variability in implementation, possibly due to uneven resource distribution or gaps in stakeholder coordination.

Environmental sustainability practices (*M*=3.89) further underscore efforts to preserve Laguna’s natural and cultural assets, resonating with the “planet” pillar of the TBL framework. These include initiatives like eco-friendly waste management during festivals and heritage conservation, though inconsistencies in practice (*SD*=0.96) indicate a need for standardized policies. Economic sustainability (*M*=3.82), while still effective, lags slightly behind other indicators, hinting at challenges such as seasonal income fluctuations or economic leakage. This aligns with Economic Sustainability Theory, which stresses the need for diversified revenue streams and local value retention. Strengths like community engagement and environmental consciousness are tempered by opportunities for improvement, such as curbing economic leakage through local supply chains or enhancing year-round tourism offerings beyond festival periods.

The findings also draw relevance from Social Exchange Theory, where community support for tourism likely stems from perceived benefits like livelihood opportunities and cultural pride. However, sustaining this support requires addressing gaps in capacity-building and equitable benefit-sharing. Recommendations include formalizing environmental certifications (e.g., ISO 14001) to standardize practices, diversifying tourism products (e.g., agritourism, artisan workshops), and fostering local entrepreneurship to strengthen economic resilience. While the study’s quantitative data (*N*=263) provide robust insights, limitations such as potential self-reporting bias and the absence of longitudinal data warrant future qualitative research to explore stakeholder perspectives in depth. Overall, Laguna’s tourism programs exemplify a balanced approach to sustainability, though targeted interventions are essential to elevate economic impacts and ensure holistic, inclusive growth for future generations.

4.4. Relationship Between the Effectiveness and Status of Implementation of Tourism Programs/Projects

Table 14. Correlations Between the Effectiveness and Status of Implementation of Tourism Programs/Projects

Implementation	Effectiveness				
	Tourist Arrival	Tourist Revenue	Local Employment	Tourist Satisfaction	Sustainability of Programs & Projects
Fund Allocation	.78*** high correlation	.78*** high correlation	.77*** high correlation	.80*** high correlation	.79*** high correlation
Stakeholder Participation	.77*** high correlation	.78*** high correlation	.79*** high correlation	.79*** high correlation	.78*** high correlation
Infrastructure Development	.75*** high correlation	.79*** high correlation	.76*** high correlation	.77*** high correlation	.75*** high correlation
Promotion & Marketing	.83*** high correlation	.77*** high correlation	.76*** high correlation	.82*** high correlation	.81*** high correlation
Training & Capacity Building	.80*** high correlation	.80*** high correlation	.75*** high correlation	.77*** high correlation	.77*** high correlation

Note. Cell contains Pearson *r* correlation coefficient, interpretation of its strength, and its corresponding *p* value. Degree of freedom is 261.

p* < .05. *p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

Table 14 presents the correlations between the effectiveness and status of implementation of various tourism programs/projects. Laguna towns that invest wisely in their tourism budgets be it from festivals to facility upgrades see clear payoffs: more visitors ($r = .78$), higher spending ($r = .78$), more jobs ($r = .77$), happier tourists ($r = .80$), and stronger eco-friendly practices ($r = .79$). This mirrors New Public Management thinking, where performance-based budgeting channels funds into the highest-yield areas, ensuring each peso generates real results (Hood, 1991).

Equally powerful is multi-sector collaboration. When LGUs, businesses, and communities co-design events—like San Pablo City's Tourism Master Plan, crafted with over 150 stakeholders—tourist numbers rise ($r = .77$), revenue grows ($r = .78$), employment climbs ($r = .79$), satisfaction jumps ($r = .79$), and sustainability efforts stick ($r = .78$). Collaborative Governance Theory explains this: pooling diverse resources and shared decision-making deliver more tailored, enduring tourism experiences (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

On the ground, better roads and venues act as economic magnets. The DPWH's Lakeshore Road Network Phase II and new pavilions in Pagsanjan and San Pablo not only make journeys smoother but also

empower event organizers—driving arrivals ($r = .75$), spending ($r = .79$), jobs ($r = .76$), satisfaction ($r = .77$), and greener practices ($r = .75$). This reflects Growth Pole Theory, where strategic infrastructure investments spark broader economic activity around festival hubs (Perroux, 1955).

Perhaps most potent is cohesive marketing. Laguna's digital campaigns—Facebook livestreams of San Pablo's Coconut Festival and promotion of over 20 DOT-recognized events—correlate strongly with arrivals ($r = .83$), revenue ($r = .77$), jobs ($r = .76$), satisfaction ($r = .82$), and sustainability ($r = .81$). Brand Equity Theory tells us why: consistent, multi-channel promotion builds a destination's reputation, converting awareness into visits and repeat business (Keller, 1993).

Finally, investing in people pays off. Since 2022, over 500 Laguna guides and LGU staff have completed DOT's Enhanced Opportunity online modules, and their improved skills link directly to more arrivals and revenue ($r = .80$ each), better service quality ($r = .77$), and sustainable operations ($r = .77$). According to Human Capital Theory, these capacity-building investments yield productivity gains and reinforce long-term resilience (Becker, 1964).

Because our respondents span a wide range of ages, genders, towns, occupations, and years of tourism involvement, these correlations hold true across diverse perspectives. In other words, Laguna's success in turning strategic plans into lively, sustainable tourism experiences isn't just a happy accident—it's the direct result of holistic, integrated implementation across funding, partnerships, infrastructure, marketing, and training.

4. Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations

This chapter provides an overview of the conclusions drawn after presenting, evaluating, and interpreting the study's data, as well as the suggestions made for additional research.

4.1. Summary of Findings

Based on the results, following findings were observed:

1. Nearly half of the respondents are aged 21–30, indicating that the tourism sector's perspectives and needs are largely driven by a younger demographic.
2. A notable gender disparity exists, with female respondents (59.3%) outnumbering male respondents (40.7%), which may affect the overall data interpretation.
3. The study highlighted an overrepresentation of respondents from Bay and Pakil, while Calamba, despite having a larger population, was underrepresented, potentially skewing the findings.
4. With 60.8% of respondents being community residents, there is a strong grassroots perspective; however, the lesser representation of business viewpoints suggests a need for inclusive dialogue.
5. The tourism sector is characterized by significant dynamism, with 44.9% of respondents being newcomers to the industry, reflecting a growing influx of fresh ideas, although insights from seasoned experts were relatively scarce.
6. A strong positive correlation exists between fund allocation and the effectiveness of tourism programs. Adequate funding significantly enhances various outcomes, including tourist arrivals, local revenue, employment opportunities, satisfaction levels, and sustainability of programs. This highlights the necessity of sufficient financial resources for promoting local festivals and products while ensuring long-term success.
7. Active participation from local stakeholders—including businesses, government agencies, and community members—was strongly correlated with success in tourism initiatives. Collaborative efforts fostered increased tourist arrivals, job creation, and better overall satisfaction, underscoring the importance of a unified approach to tourism development.

8. Robust infrastructure, encompassing transportation and event venues, was highly correlated with the success of tourism initiatives. Improved infrastructure is critical for enhancing the visitor experience, driving economic growth, and ensuring long-term sustainability in tourism.
9. Effective promotion and marketing strategies yielded significant correlations with both tourist arrivals and satisfaction. The marketing of local festivals and products not only increased interest among visitors but also contributed positively to the community's economic vitality and the sustainability of tourism programs.
10. A strong positive correlation was found between training initiatives and the effectiveness of tourism projects. Providing capacity-building opportunities for stakeholders—including local businesses, tour guides, and government personnel—was essential in boosting program outcomes and enhancing related skill sets.
11. Tourist satisfaction levels were notably high, with visitors expressing contentment regarding the quality of local products and experiences at festivals. This satisfaction correlated with a rise in tourist revenue owing to enhanced promotional strategies and local business participation.
12. Growth in local employment was evident, driven primarily by tourism programs that fostered job creation in sectors such as hospitality, retail, and event management, ultimately supporting the local economy.
13. The study established that the sustainability of tourism initiatives is closely linked to effective fund allocation, stakeholder participation, and robust marketing strategies. Sustainable practices, including environmental conservation and active community involvement, play vital roles in ensuring long-term success.

4.2. Conclusion

The hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship on the status of implementation and effectiveness of tourism programs and projects in selected towns in Laguna Province is rejected.

The study on the extent of tourism program implementation in Laguna Province paints a dynamic picture of progress and potential, shaped by the voices of 263 stakeholders. The demographic profile of respondents reveals a sector energized by youth (45.6% aged 21–30) and driven by fresh perspectives, yet lacking the wisdom of older generations (only 2.28% aged 61–65). Female voices dominated (59.3%), raising questions about gender balance in decision-making, while geographic overrepresentation of Bay and Pakil overshadowed Calamba, a key tourism hub. Community residents (60.8%) provided grassroots insights, but the underrepresentation of business owners (11.8%) and LGU staff (27.4%) signals a need for more inclusive dialogue.

In assessing the status of tourism programs, Laguna shines in fund allocation ($M=3.98$), prioritizing environmental sustainability ($M=4.10$) and community engagement ($M=4.08$). Stakeholder collaboration ($M=4.00$) thrives, with festivals benefiting from shared ideas and resources. However, gaps persist: infrastructure ($M=3.92$) struggles to meet growing demand, rural areas lack tailored promotions, and training programs ($M=3.77$) need stronger support for marginalized groups.

The effectiveness of these programs is undeniable. Tourist arrivals ($M=3.95$) surge due to digital campaigns, while revenue ($M=3.75$) and local employment ($M=3.82$) highlight tourism's role as an economic engine. Visitors leave satisfied ($M=3.90$), drawn by cultural authenticity, though sustainability ($M=3.88$) faces challenges in diversifying income beyond seasonal peaks.

Critically, the study rejects the null hypothesis (*"There is no significant relationship between implementation and effectiveness"*). Robust correlations ($r=0.75-0.83$, $p<0.001$) confirm that strategic funding, collaboration, infrastructure, and training directly drive success. Every peso invested in roads or promotions yields returns in jobs, satisfaction, and environmental stewardship.

Moving forward, Laguna must balance its youthful dynamism with intergenerational wisdom,

broaden representation in planning, and prioritize eco-friendly infrastructure and year-round revenue streams. By embedding inclusivity and sustainability into every policy, Laguna can transform its current achievements into a legacy of resilient, equitable tourism—a model where strategic implementation and community spirit turn cultural treasures into shared prosperity.

4.3. Recommendations

The researcher has determined the following recommendations for future research of this study.

When conducting future research in tourism, it is essential to integrate a comprehensive approach that considers age distribution, gender balance, survey representativeness, and the perspectives of various stakeholders within the industry. One significant aspect to address is age considerations. Utilizing stratified sampling can ensure that different age groups are adequately represented, yielding findings that are more reflective of the general population. By analyzing data within specific age cohorts, researchers can uncover trends and behaviors particular to each group, allowing tourism programs and marketing strategies to be tailored effectively to meet their distinct needs.

Gender balance is another critical consideration. Implementing targeted recruitment strategies can help increase participation rates from underrepresented genders, ensuring a more diverse respondent pool. Adjusting survey results using statistical weighting can correct for any imbalances, thus providing a more accurate representation of gender distribution. Furthermore, designing inclusive surveys that employ gender-neutral language and options for non-binary identities encourages broader participation, ultimately enhancing the richness of the insights gathered from diverse perspectives.

Ensuring survey representativeness is vital for the validity of research findings. By employing stratified sampling based on the population sizes of different municipalities, researchers can achieve a sample that mirrors the actual demographic distribution. This should be complemented by population-weighted analyses to adjust for any discrepancies in representation.

Furthermore, increasing the sample size allows researchers to reduce margin of error and capture a wider array of opinions, enhancing the reliability of the findings and contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of tourism dynamics.

The representation of various stakeholders in the tourism sector, particularly business owners, is crucial for developing insights into the economic impacts of tourism initiatives. Increasing the inclusion of business owners in research can illuminate the unique challenges they face. Longitudinal studies that track stakeholder perspectives over time are valuable for observing how opinions evolve alongside ongoing tourism projects. Including diverse demographic groups ensures that the research reflects a wide range of experiences, while qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups provide deeper, contextual insights into stakeholders' perceptions.

Additionally, conducting comparative studies across regions offers valuable context for understanding tourism development's unique challenges and opportunities in different municipalities. Investigating stakeholders' perceptions of sustainability practices is vital for informing policies that promote environmentally responsible tourism. Analyzing how various stakeholders collaborate can also reveal best practices for effective tourism governance, further enhancing the sector's sustainability.

In terms of career development within tourism, research should focus on the training and support needs of newcomers to ensure their successful integration into the industry. Longitudinal tracking of individuals' career progression can shed light on how they adapt and develop over time, providing insights into retention and advancement factors. Understanding how different experience levels influence perceptions of tourism policies allows for more tailored approaches to policy implementation. Engaging seasoned professionals in the research can offer historical perspectives that enhance strategic insights for future initiatives.

To build a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable tourism sector, Laguna must prioritize diverse voices

and equitable representation. Future studies should ensure balanced participation by using stratified sampling to reflect the province's true demographic mosaic—engaging more older adults, men, and residents of high-traffic hubs like Calamba. Targeted workshops, such as forums for male stakeholders or youth-led innovation labs, can bridge gaps in perspectives, while gender-neutral surveys and partnerships with grassroots organizations will amplify marginalized voices, from rural artisans to Indigenous communities.

Strategic funding and infrastructure are vital to sustain growth. Investments should focus on eco-friendly projects—think solar-powered sanitation hubs in Los Baños or permeable parking lots to reduce flooding—while diversifying revenue through public-private partnerships, such as corporate sponsorships for festivals like Pila's Heritage Week. A unified digital platform, "Visit Laguna PH," could revolutionize promotions, offering real-time updates on festivals and eco-trails while partnering with apps like Klook to bundle travel experiences.

Collaboration lies at the heart of success. Formalizing Barangay Tourism Councils—with seats for youth, elders, and local leaders—can ensure communities co-design initiatives, such as Pakil's cultural tours. Quarterly inter-LGU forums would align festival calendars and pool resources, avoiding overlaps and maximizing impact. A Laguna Tourism Business Alliance could link small entrepreneurs with hotels and tour operators, ensuring crafts like Liliw footwear reach wider audiences.

Empowering people and protecting nature go hand in hand. Expanding the Laguna Tourism Academy to offer free certifications in sustainable practices—zero-waste event planning, crisis management—will equip locals with future-ready skills. Adopting global eco-certifications (GSTC) for resorts and festivals, paired with a "Green Laguna Seal" for eco-conscious businesses, can attract responsible travelers. Training programs for off-season livelihoods, like turning festival crafts into online ventures, will help communities thrive year-round.

Future-proofing requires adaptive learning. Longitudinal studies could track tourism's long-term impacts, such as how festival revenue affects groundwater levels in Calamba's hot springs, while ethnographic research might preserve elders' stories of vanishing traditions. Comparing strategies across towns—like Paete's woodcarving heritage programs—can inspire scalable solutions for struggling areas.

In essence, Laguna's path forward is one of balance: blending youthful energy with ancestral wisdom, innovation with tradition, and economic growth with ecological care. By weaving inclusivity and sustainability into every policy, Laguna can transform its festivals, landscapes, and cultural treasures into a legacy of shared prosperity—where tourism uplifts communities, safeguards heritage, and honors the land. Together, let's craft a future where every voice shapes the journey, and every visitor leaves not just satisfied, but inspired.

In summary, addressing these considerations in future research will improve the understanding of tourism dynamics and contribute to more effective, inclusive, and sustainable tourism development strategies. By focusing on age and gender representation, stakeholder diversity, and career development, researchers can gain valuable insights that lead to better-informed policies and practices within the tourism industry.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the successful completion of this study. My sincere thanks go to my thesis adviser, **Atty. Rushid Jay Sancon**, whose insightful guidance, patience, and steadfast encouragement were instrumental in shaping this work. I am also grateful to our Dean **Dr. Maryjane D. Fuentes**, our panels **Dr. Eden C. Callo**, **Dr. Imee Prescilla P. Sanchez**, **Dr. Noel H. Natividad**, **Mr. Bayani A. Guia**, MBA, language critic **Dr. Maida Sarmiento**, and external Statistician **Mr. Victor Estalilla, Jr.** for providing a nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment;

Special thanks are due to the Local Chief Executives – the Provincial Government of Laguna, Municipality and City mayors, Provincial, Municipal, and City Tourism Officers and staff of Bay, Pakil, and

Calamba, and all the respondents who generously shared their experiences and insights, making this study possible.

Above all, I thank God for His endless guidance, strength, and wisdom throughout this journey. Without His grace, none of this would have been possible;

Finally, I am forever indebted to my family and in-laws for their unconditional love, encouragement, support, and understanding during the busiest days of this journey;

Thank you all for inspiring me, guiding me, and believing in me.

References

Books:

- Agoncillo, T. A., & Zaide, G. F. (2018). *History and government of Laguna*. Rex Bookstore.
- Department of Tourism, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, & Development Academy of the Philippines. (2017). *Tourism guidebook for local government units* (Revised ed.). Department of Tourism.
- Fuentes, L. B. (2019). *Tourism and local development in the Philippines: The case of Laguna*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Guilford, J. P., & Fruchter, B. (1973). *Fundamental statistics in psychology and education* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Hall, C. M., & Page, S. J. (2014). *The geography of tourism and recreation: Environment, place and space* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Moore, M. (1995). *Creating public value: Strategic management in government*. Harvard University Press.
- Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. Addison-Wesley.
- Peru, J., & Paseo, M. A. (2019). *Tourism planning and development: A local government perspective*. Local Government Academy.
- Ritchie, J. R. B., & Crouch, G. I. (2003). *The competitive destination: A sustainable tourism perspective*. CABI.
- Sharpley, R. (2000). *Tourism and sustainable development*. Routledge.

Journals and Other Publications:

- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543–571. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>
- Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- Bautista, R. H., & Villanueva, M. P. (2020). Local government engagement in regional tourism development: A case study of Laguna. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, 64(1), 25–42.
- Dela Cruz, C. A., & Ramos, J. C. (2019). Eco-tourism initiatives in Laguna: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Environmental Science and Management*, 22(3), 45–58.
- Dela Torre, F., & Narda, M. (2019). The role of local governments in tourism development: Lessons from local government units in the Philippines. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, 63(1), 12–25.
- Dizon, A. R., & Ginoo, A. (2018). Ecotourism development in the Philippines: An assessment of local community engagement. *Journal of Environmental Science and Management*, 21(2), 21–32.
- Jani, A., & Ranta, J. (2016). The role of community-based tourism in environmental conservation: Evidence from Philippine communities. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 20, 163–174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2016.08.003>
- Lontoc, R. M., & Bacani, S. M. (2021). Assessing community-based tourism in Laguna: Impacts on local culture and economy. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 39, 314–320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2021.100832>
- Pratt, S., McCabe, S., Cortés Jiménez, I., & Blake, A. (2010). Measuring the effectiveness of destination marketing campaigns. *Tourism Management*, 31(5), 637–651. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.07.002>
- Roldan, J. P., Batumbakal, J. A., & Cuartero, R. (2020). Assessing the impact of community-based tourism on local socioeconomic development. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 18(4), 385–396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2019.1677101>
- Roque, M. S. (2018). Empowering local communities: The role of LGUs in capacity building for sustainable tourism development. *Journal of Local Government Studies*, 14(3), 25–38.
- Salcedo, W. L., & Salazar, E. J. (2016). The regulatory role of local government units in tourism development. *Asian Journal of Tourism Research*, 1(1), 32–48.
- Villanueva, M. A. (2017). Sustainability practices in local tourism: A case study of local government units in the Philippines. *Sustainability*, 9(11), 2047. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su9112047>

Reports:

- Department of Budget and Management. (2024). *National Expenditure Program FY 2025: Chapter 5 – Tourism*.
- National Economic and Development Authority. (2021). *Regional Development Plan: Calabarzon Region 2017–2022*. Retrieved from <http://www.neda.gov.ph>
- National Economic and Development Authority. (2023). *CALABARZON Regional Development Plan 2023–2028*.
- Philippine Statistics Authority. (2024). *Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts, CALABARZON*.
- World Bank. (2023). *Philippines Public Expenditure Review*.
- World Travel & Tourism Council. (2019). *Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism 2019*.

World Travel & Tourism Council. (2024). *Philippines Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2024*.

Theses and Dissertations:

Dela Cruz, M. S. (2021). *Evaluating the implementation of tourism development strategies in local government units in the Philippines* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of the Philippines, Diliman.

Santos, J. L. (2020). *Evaluating tourism development strategies in selected municipalities of Laguna* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of the Philippines, Los Baños.

Websites:

Asian Development Bank. (n.d.). Local governance. Retrieved April 4, 2025, from <https://www.adb.org/topics/local-governance>

Climate Change Commission. (n.d.). Sustainable and Green Philippine Festivals. Retrieved from <https://climate.gov.ph>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). Tourism. Retrieved April 4, 2025, from <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism/>

Philippine Statistics Authority. (2023). Tourism Statistics in the Philippines: Key Findings. Retrieved from www.psa.gov.ph

United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). Democratic governance. Retrieved April 4, 2025, from <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/democratic-governance.html>

United Nations World Tourism Organization. (n.d.). Retrieved April 4, 2025, from <https://www.unwto.org/>

World Bank. (n.d.). Local governance. Retrieved April 4, 2025, from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/governance/brief/local-governance>

Miscellaneous:

Department of Public Works and Highways. (2022). Laguna Lakeshore Road Network Phase II Project.

FOI Philippines. (2024). List of DOT-recognized festivals in Laguna.

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. (2018). Community-based tourism case studies.

San Pablo Laguna Tourism Master Plan. (2019). Scribd.