

Assessing the community-based tourism potentials of Romblon, Philippines: A structural equation model

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ABSTRACT

Community-Based Tourism is seen for having a huge impact on rural communities in the Philippines and many countries. It is generally known for its pro-poor implications that deliver socio-cultural, ecological, and economic benefits to steer a community if directed with strong policies. CBT has a great potential on elevating the said aspects of a locality for community development. Hence, the researchers attempted to comprehensively determine the perceptions of key actors in CBT with quantitative approaches to shed light on its costs and benefits in the communities of Romblon province in the Philippines. Through quota sampling, a total of 400 residents were surveyed to determine their positive and negative perceptions towards CBT. Structural Equation Modeling was utilized as the statistical analysis tool to impute relationships on the latent variables; sustainable tourism development, politico-administrative affairs and climate, and citizen participation. The model provided empirical evidence that CBT activities positively affect the latent variables in Romblon province. The findings contributed to the great importance of politico-administrative affairs and climate as a support system to enhance tourism laws and programs. The authors, moreover, advocated for further improvements on sustainable tourism development and citizen participation. Among recommendations, in order to assist the tourism stakeholders in the development of CBT, this study proposed sustainable tourism programs focused on enhancement of the quality of life of the locals, fostering collaborations among institutions and the people, and for a sustainable growth of Romblon Province.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a transformative activity that enriches the lives of the local communities. It is an industry that is sustainably designed to bring prosperity, environmental protection, and

socio-cultural appreciation (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2013). One of the forms of sustainable tourism being promoted is community-based tourism (CBT). It is a predominant form of tourism that is viewed as an opportunity for local communities in developing countries to maximize their cultural and natural resources and generate income at the same time (Lo & Janta, 2020). Throughout the years, the participation of the local community has become a trend that is essential to the development and success of a tourism destination (Indrianto et al., 2022). CBT, as a pro-poor approach in tourism, puts emphasis on the local's role in managing and operating activities such as sports and adventure tourism, eco-tourism, heritage tourism, and agri-tourism (Sutresna et al., 2019).

The Philippines is an ideal destination for CBT. With its rich biodiversity, exquisite landscapes and seascapes, and historical and cultural attractions, the tourism industry has become the greatest asset in the country's development. In a study done by the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2018, the tourism industry contributed 12.7% to the country's Gross Domestic Product. Various provinces such as Palawan and Cavite have incorporated CBT as a way of encouraging local empowerment and producing economic benefits, each using distinct strategies for a successful implementation. In the case of Pamilacan, Bohol, one of the strategies to foster cooperation was to provide selective incentives (e.g. financial assistance and business partnerships). However, issues arose during the course of CBT such as accusations of corruption and gradual decrease in economic benefit affected by different internal and external factors (Bulilan, 2014).

Due to the remarkable growth in the tourism industry and initiative for CBT, this study aimed to investigate the potentiality and current status of Romblon province as a destination for CBT. Romblon, known as the Marble Capital of the Philippines, is situated at the center of the Philippine Archipelago. Composed of three major islands namely: Tablas, Sibuyan, and Romblon Island, the underrated province has great potential for CBT development. Attractions including Bonbon Beach, Cresta de Gallo, Lambingan Falls, Mt. Guiting-Guiting, Pawala River, and Lonos Marine Sanctuary offer breathtaking experiences and opportunities for the tourists to kayak, island hop, hike, scuba dive, stand-up paddle board, and more. With these,

CBT in Romblon can institute employment and income generation for the locals and impose a great sense of community identity. Therefore, this study examined CBT's influence on the sustainable tourism development, politico administrative affairs and climate, and citizen participation. Lastly, this study has proposed programs and projects for holistic CBT development in Romblon Province.

The results of the study are significant for CBT development in the Philippines, promoting interest for Tourism students and academic institutions to further explore its potential. For Romblon, this would serve as a guide in implementing strong policies concerning sustainable tourism development as it imposes CBT initiatives and programs in Romblon that consider all tourism stakeholders including partnerships and coordination among the local government unit (LGU), tourism operators, non-government organizations (NGO), private sector, and the local community. It can assist the LGU in fostering greater community engagement that particularly emphasizes the protection of the rights of the locals and the environment.

The scope of the study emphasized the three indicators: (a) sustainable tourism development, which was divided into economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects, (b) politico-administrative affairs and climate, and (c) citizen participation. These indicators are sufficient to prove the reality of CBT in Romblon. The participants were limited to 400 respondents from Romblon who were gathered by disseminating the Google Forms via online platforms (i.e., Facebook, Messenger) to examine their perspective.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The Sustainable Development Theory is the core basis of the framework of this study. It revolves around the key areas of development particularly the environment, culture, and society. The theory is commonly used as a mapping tool for tourism planning and development and has always been included as a fundamental element in achieving governmental and

organizational plans (Shi et al., 2019). In this study, the theoretical framework categorizes its key areas as people, profit, planet, and politico-administrative affairs which are the imperative principles of CBT to be assessed individually and considered as the determining factors of sustainable development.

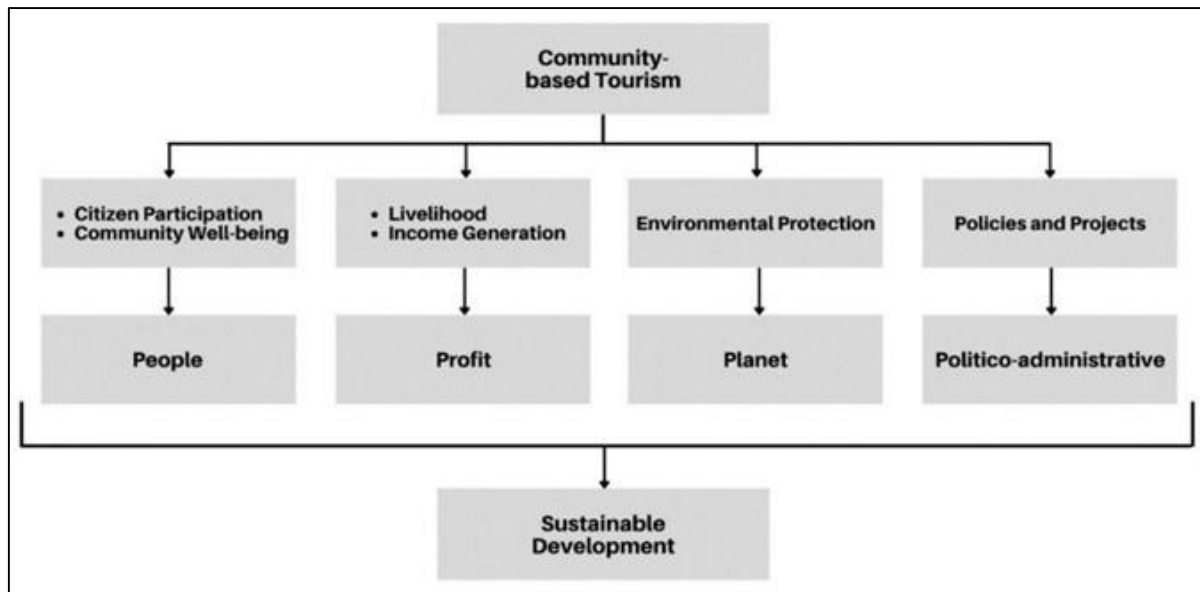


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Community-Based Tourism and Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism guarantees long-term sustainable development by ensuring that the tourism destinations do not degrade and modify the present environment (Oktavio & Indrianto, 2019). The study of Han et al. (2019) argues there is a need for an integral approach when offering tourism services to provide quality products, utilizing renewable energy to maintain ecological balance, protecting culture and customs, and giving value-based tourism products as these are some sustainable tourism qualities. CBT, alternatively, is a type of sustainable tourism with community participation as its main element to reach its objective of promoting sustainable development of the community. Its core is providing empowerment and positive well-being of the community that leads to sustainable tourism (Kayat, 2014). It requires participation from both hosts and visitors to generate economic and conservation benefits for the community and the environment (Hamzah, 2014).

Since the ratification of the United Nations Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, tourism has been identified as vital in making progress in achieving the SDGs. According to Pasanchay and Schott (2021), CBT can be a form of development to move forward and help achieve progress in poverty reduction (SDG1: No Poverty) and creating sustainable cities and communities for people to live in (SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities). It helps achieve SDG1 and SDG11 as it improves the economic and social state by creating employment and building local infrastructures beneficial to people such as better healthcare, transportation, and communication lines. Thus, CBT creates a more sustainable living environment for the community.

Concept of Community-Based Tourism in Global Context

In developing countries, CBT is the holistic approach to raise community members' standard of living. In Chiang Mai, Thailand, CBT uplifts the locals' rich cultural heritage, immerses the tourists in the host destination and provides effective crime prevention programs for everyone's safety (Lo & Janta, 2019). Through this phenomenon, the local communities are empowered to own and manage tourism enterprises (Yanes et al., 2019). According to Hamzah (2014), CBT's long-term success will solely depend on the integration of the mainstream tourism industry, focusing on private-sector-partnerships, which is why the opportunities for its development are considered as keys to sustaining it. For CBT to flourish, it is important to know the perspective of the locals towards their participation in the assessment, planning, and execution of projects together with the government for proper CBT implementation (Paladan, 2020). However, threats like corruption, conflicts in governments, poor funding, land ownership, and lack of proper infrastructure to support tourism also hinder local communities' desire to participate (Setokoe & Ramukumba, 2020). Hence, the community members must be aware of the significance of CBT and integrate their positive attitude needed for repeat visitations and tourists' satisfaction (Pham Hong et al., 2021).

Philippine Framework for Community-Based Tourism

The National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) for 2016-2022 is the cornerstone in fostering inclusive growth, reducing inequality, creating a high-trust and resilient society, and improving economic competitiveness in accordance with the Tourism Act of 2009. It serves as a guide for CBT in coordinating partnerships and tourism stakeholders in the development of livelihood projects. Also, with plans of creating a more inclusive industry, the NTDP aims to expand the participation of the community in its natural and cultural tourism products and services, especially in rural areas. Gutierrez (2019) states that the mechanisms to achieve CBT involve tourism stakeholders' participation, such as the involvement of community members in the strategy-making, cooperation with non-government organizations, and the government granting the local communities' dominant power in managing tourist destinations. According to the ASEAN CBT standards, CBT must empower the community through making partnerships with stakeholders, strengthening connections with local and regional economies to obtain accreditation from authorities, and improving social development for fair and equitably allocated benefits. Currently, there are existing CBT programs in the Philippines that improve the living condition of the locals like in Minalungao National Park, Nueva Ecija where communities generate income from tour guiding services, selling handicrafts, and preparing local cuisines for the visitors (Zuniga, 2019); and the Bojo River Village Tour in Aloguinsan, Cebu, wherein the locals showcase their rich environment and cultural heritage (Gutierrez, 2019).

CBT and Politico-Administrative Affairs and Climate

Politico-administrative affairs and climate refers to the current situation of the government which recognizes its efforts through tourism policy and strategy formulation to upbringing development in a community. Campos et al. (2011) stated in Nicaragua, various external support including national governments and its agencies support CBT. The government's involvement is essential in CBT as they contribute to community empowerment

and alleviate poverty (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2011). However, the external support should be temporary if the goal is to emancipate and empower communities for self-reliance and independence. Adi et al. (2017) highlighted the government's role in tourism development as a (a) Motivator- to motivate investors, communities, and entrepreneurs to ensure tourism business continuity; (b) Facilitator- to provide assistance in tourism projects and development where the public and private sectors can collaborate; (c) Dynamist- to create synergies for ideal development to transpire. Penglipuran Traditional Village in Bali, Indonesia proves that the government's function, if done effectively, has a beneficial impact on developing CBT specially when the government can cooperate with indigenous groups to stimulate public participation.

CBT and Its Influence on Citizen Participation

CBT is a strategy for community development in enhancing rural towns' ability to manage tourism destinations while encouraging the local community, resulting in high opportunities for employment and economic benefits for local communities with expertise and practices (Anuar ANA, & Sood NAAM, 2017). CBT projects have a structure that serves as a guide and template for community participation so locals can enjoy the maximum and long-term perks of tourism in their area (Promise, Sibiya, & Giampiccoli, 2018).

According to Phuong, Song, and Quang (2020), government involvement plays a significant role relevant to the active participation of the local community in tourism development and other tasks such as investment, business management, and job opportunities in the tourism and agriculture industry. In addition, the local community may participate in the decision-making process and equal distribution of benefits. In decision-making, the local communities have the opportunity to voice their aspirations and concerns for tourism development. CBT is also said to have a variety of positive impacts on socio-economic growth, community ownership, human capital development, unity and resilience of the community, community empowerment, and environmental contribution which all lead to

sustainable development. However, according to a qualitative study conducted in Muen Ngoen Kong Community, Chiang Mai, Thailand, there are some local people who exhibit little to no regard for tourism development despite the regular community meetings and activities for the community and its members (Lo & Janta, 2020).

The Hypothesized Model



Figure 2. Hypothesized Model

The hypothesized model demonstrates the correlation between sustainable tourism development, citizen participation, and politico-administrative affairs and climate, and their association with Community-based Tourism in the potentiality of Romblon province as a CBT destination. The interrelation between the three variables will result in community engagement, community development, and having sustainable strategies. Emphasis is given to human actions that may affect the three variables where they have their own functions and development concepts, causing the integration of the three to create the form of CBT.

3. METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Through quota sampling technique, it was proven to sample a subgroup that is of great interest in the study to have an accurate representation on produced results which outweigh any biases in the study. A total of 400 respondents, consisting of 152 males and 248 females, of legal age ranging from 18 to 73 years old from the different municipalities of Romblon province. All data were collected to produce broadly based participation profiles while maintaining confidentiality.

Instruments

Using quantitative research design, the proponents utilized a survey questionnaire as it was the most feasible way to collect data. The survey questionnaire was adapted from the dissertation study entitled "Productivity Investments in Tourism Security of a Multi-Islands Province: Analytics Approach for Holiday Destination Holistic Strategy for Community-Based Tourism Model of Romblon, the Philippines" (Andalecio & Martin, 2022) and was validated by a panel of experts. This served as the research instrument which covered the demographic profile that focuses on age, gender, and place of residence. It was divided into these sections: economic aspect, socio-cultural aspect and environmental aspect, politico-administrative affairs and climate, and citizen participation. These were measured through 4-point Likert scale based-questions where 4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree represent the level of agreement or disagreement of the respondents to the statements provided. The statements in each indicator and its parameters define and represent CBT.

Data Collection Procedure

Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to assess the instrument's reliability and consistency. The results depicted that the questionnaire passed the threshold of 0.70 or 70% which means

all the questions were acceptable. A letter of approval was addressed to the Governor's Office of Romblon and Romblon Tourism Office. The letter served as a way of both informing and asking for their consent to conduct the survey. After receiving approval, the researchers initiated the distribution of questionnaires through Google Forms, a survey administration software. The form was distributed to students and faculty members of Romblon State University, personal acquaintances, Facebook groups, and organizations coming from different towns in Romblon to reach a wider number of respondents. A total of 400 male and female respondents aging from adults to senior citizens answered the survey from October 14-19, 2021. It was determined by quota sampling method, as age and place of residence were qualifications to answer the survey. The qualifications required by the researchers from every individual that would answer the questionnaire were enough to identify and achieve the objectives of the study.

Data Analysis

Structural equation modeling is a statistical technique of family related procedures that is used to analyze structural relationships between observed variables and the latent constructs among the variables (Kline, 2011). Structural Equation Modeling was utilized to measure and analyze the structural relationships of CBT and its influence on sustainable tourism development, politico-administrative affairs and climate, and citizen participation. Mean and standard deviation were also calculated in order to quantify the variables.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the conduct of the study. The researchers adopted the questionnaire entitled "Productivity Investments in Tourism Security of a Multi-Islands Province: Analytics Approach for Holiday Destination Holistic Strategy for Community-Based Tourism Model of Romblon, the Philippines" authored by Andalecio (2022) and modified it to specifically fit the objectives of the study. Furthermore, the researchers

ensure the confidentiality of the information given by the respondents. The researchers initially asked permission and consent from the Provincial Government of Romblon before conducting the survey. The data gathered from the collection is strictly protected and shall only be used for academic purposes.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis is the most crucial element in this study to assess the potentiality and current status of Romblon province as a CBT destination. The results provide an answer to whether CBT influences sustainable tourism development, politico-administrative affairs and climate, and citizen participation. Through a quantitative research approach, the researchers have collected 400 responses from Romblomanons aged 18-73 years old. They were selected through quota sampling and given a questionnaire generated through Google Forms which took place from October 14 to 19, 2021.

Influence of Community-Based Tourism on Sustainable Tourism Development

Economic Aspect

Table 1. Economic Aspect of Sustainable Tourism Development Results

Economic Aspect	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Entrepreneurial activities inside the barangay.	3.29	0.84	Highly Influential
2. Generation of local jobs.	3.40	0.68	Highly Influential
3. Provide construction jobs for daily workers	3.36	0.70	Highly Influential
4. Provides better profit on tourism-related jobs	2.80	0.73	Influential
5. Increase in family income.	3.15	0.68	Influential
6. Transition of jobs from agriculture to tourism-related	2.84	0.82	Influential
7. Increase in the number of local products in the barangay	3.22	0.77	Influential
8. Affects movement of traffic in the area	2.46	0.83	Slightly Influential
9. Increase in cost of living.	2.70	0.86	Influential
10. Introduce new types of alternative livelihood	3.37	0.66	Highly Influential
11. Increase in the variety of handicrafts and souvenirs sold	3.54	0.62	Highly Influential
12. Increase in the number of accommodations	3.36	0.69	Highly Influential
13. Increase in the number of restaurants	3.44	0.65	Highly Influential
14. Influences on the price of house rentals.	3.13	0.77	Influential
15. Increase in the value of real estate properties	3.12	0.79	Influential
16. Increase in the number of recreational facilities	3.43	0.70	Highly Influential

Economic Aspect	Mean	SD	Interpretation
17. Prices of locally produced products and services are affected	3.16	0.74	Influential
18. Influences the development of road conditions	3.17	0.78	Influential
19. Paves way for a safer and more efficient water supply.	2.95	0.79	Influential
20. Changes the price of goods sold in local shops.	2.88	0.83	Influential
21. Improve telecommunication infrastructures.	3.21	0.74	Influential
	3.14	0.71	Influential

Legend: Not at all Influential (1.0– 1.74), Slightly Influential (1.75 – 2.49), Influential (2.50 – 3.24), Highly Influential (3.25 – 4.00)

Table 1 shows that the increase in the variety of handicrafts and souvenirs sold within the barangay through tourism development is highly influential with the strongest mean of 3.54 (SD = 0.62). With the weakest mean of 2.46 (SD = 0.83), it is perceived that tourism slows down the flow of traffic and is slightly influential. Meaning, it does not entirely affect the economic aspect of Romblon. The overall mean of 3.14 (SD = 0.71) shows that CBT positively influences Romblon in the economic aspect.

Socio-cultural

Table 2. Socio-cultural Aspect of Sustainable Tourism Development Results

Socio-cultural Aspect	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Women empowerment.	3.36	0.65	Highly Influential
2. Provides part-time jobs for youths during their free time.	3.41	0.65	Highly Influential
3. Promotes Romblomanon pride for their culture.	3.68	0.53	Highly Influential
4. Generates cultural preservation and protection.	3.48	0.63	Highly Influential
5. Increase in crime rates.	2.23	0.91	Slightly Influential
6. Eradicates local customs and culture.	2.16	0.88	Slightly Influential
7. Makes people want to stay in the community.	3.15	0.73	Influential
8. Drives the slow rate of urbanization.	2.82	0.82	Influential
9. Advances in better health services for all stakeholders.	2.97	0.75	Influential
	3.03	0.73	Influential

Legend: Not at all Influential (1.0– 1.74), Slightly Influential (1.75 – 2.49), Influential (2.50 – 3.24), Highly Influential (3.25 – 4.00)

Table 2 reveals that tourism brings a sense of local pride for the culture of Romblon province as reflected by the item indicator with the strongest mean of 3.68 (SD = 0.53). The weakest mean of 2.16 (SD = 0.88), which is interpreted as slightly influential, shows that tourism may somehow affect the local custom and culture of the province. The overall mean of 3.03 (SD = 0.73) reflects that CBT positively enhances resident's sense of pride and promotes cultural preservation.

Environmental**Table 3. Environmental Aspect of Sustainable Tourism Development Results**

Environmental Aspect	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Awareness on environmental importance	3.46	0.64	Highly Influential
2. Increase in air pollution	2.76	0.88	Influential
3. Protection and preservation of natural environment	3.17	0.71	Influential
4. Increases in noise in the area	2.82	0.88	Influential
5. Increase in land pollution	2.86	0.89	Influential
6. Cause of natural habitat disruption	2.52	0.90	Influential
	2.93	0.82	Influential

Legend: Not at all Influential (1.0– 1.74), Slightly Influential (1.75 – 2.49), Influential (2.50 – 3.24), Highly Influential (3.25 – 4.00)

Table 3 shows that tourism highly influences local community members to be more aware of the importance of their natural environment with the highest mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.64). Moreover, destruction brought by tourism to natural habitats was the least influential among the other environmental aspects with a mean of 2.52 (SD = 0.90). Thus, results clearly show that CBT has a positive influence on Romblon's environment with an overall mean of 2.93 (SD = 0.82).

Influence of Community-Based Tourism on Politico-administrative Affairs and Climate

Table 4. Politico-administrative Affairs and Climate Results

Politico-Administrative	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Promotes political and civics community participation	3.20	0.69	Influential
2. Tourism activities managed by the locals.	3.27	0.68	Highly Influential
3. Solves community problems through community legislative participation	3.21	0.70	Influential
4. Promotes community-government partnerships.	3.36	0.63	Highly Influential
5. Groups lobby for changes in regulations specific to a town or city.	3.28	0.68	Highly Influential
6. Creates corruption in the community.	2.37	0.87	Slightly Influential
7. Helps communities to monitor and police their own ranks.	3.10	0.70	Influential
8. Encourages locals to take part in planning and controlling projects.	3.19	0.70	Influential
	3.12	0.71	Influential

Legend: Not at all Influential (1.0– 1.74), Slightly Influential (1.75 – 2.49), Influential (2.50 – 3.24), Highly Influential (3.25 – 4.00)

Table 4 shows that tourism is instrumental in making partnerships between the community and the government, with the highest mean of 3.36 (SD = 0.63). Likewise, results show that tourism is only slightly influential in creating corruption in the community, with a lowest mean of 2.37 (SD = 0.87). Thus, the overall mean of 3.12 (SD = 0.71) implies that CBT is influential to a positive politico-administrative affairs and climate.

Influence of Community-Based Tourism on Citizen Participation

Table 5. Citizen Participation Results

Citizen Participation	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Effects of economic impacts on active community participation.	3.14	0.68	Influential
2. Effects of environmental impacts on active community participation.	3.16	0.70	Influential
3. Effects of socio-cultural impacts on active community participation.	3.13	0.69	Influential
4. Effects of political impacts on active community participation.	2.96	0.79	Influential
	3.10	0.72	Influential

Legend: Not at all Influential (1.0– 1.74), Slightly Influential (1.75 – 2.49), Influential (2.50 – 3.24), Highly Influential (3.25 – 4.00)

Table 5 shows that the highest factor that influences the community to actively participate in tourism activities is because of environmental impacts, with a mean of 3.16 (SD = 0.70). Moreover, out of the four indicators, politico-administrative impacts contribute least to residents' willingness to participate in tourism with a mean of 2.96 (SD = 0.79). The overall mean of 3.10 (SD = 0.72) shows that CBT positively influences and encourages citizen participation on all its indicator.

Structural Equation Modelling Result

Figure 3 demonstrates the relation of CBT to Sustainable Tourism Development and its parameters, Politico-administrative affairs and climate, and Citizen Participation through Structural Equation Model. Based on the results, CBT has a significant influence on Sustainable Tourism Development ($=0.86$ $p < 0.01$) that supported Hypothesis 1 (**H₁**), positive politico-administrative affairs and climate ($=0.83$ $p < 0.01$) that supports Hypothesis 2 (**H₂**)

and citizen participation ($=0.72$ $p < .01$) which supports Hypothesis 3 (**H₃**). Thus, all have positive coefficients that suggest the positive influence of CBT to all indicators that leads to rejecting all the hypotheses and resulting in accepting the alternative hypotheses.

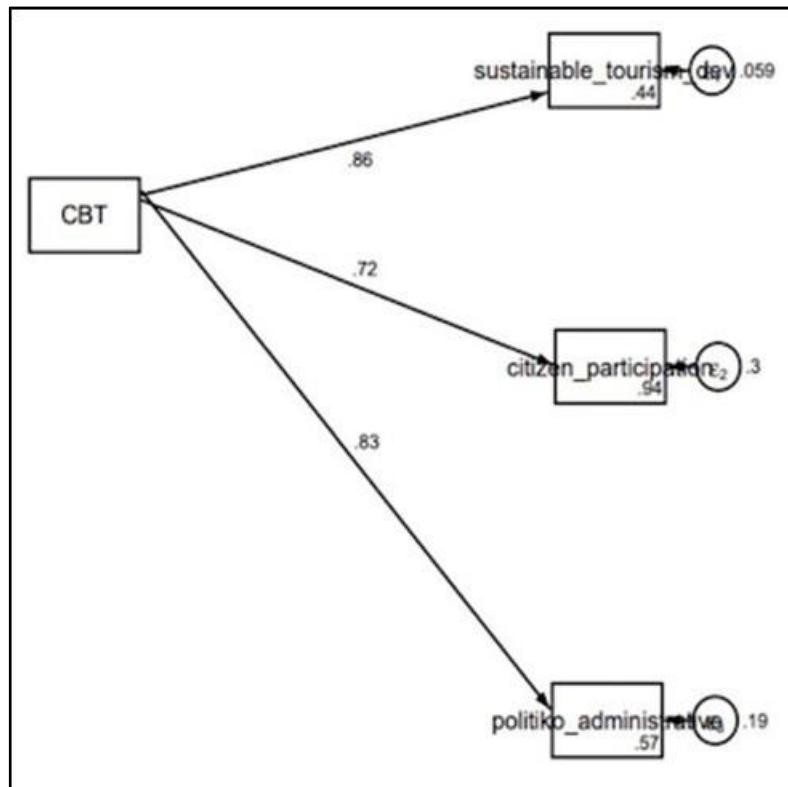


Figure 3. Structural Equation Model

Discussion

H01 showed a resulting value with a significant coefficient of 0.86 at a 1% level of significance $p < 0.01$ which leads to accepting the alternative hypothesis that CBT leads to sustainable tourism development. This can be attributed to the studies of Kayat, K. (2014) and Han et al. (2019). They emphasized that community-based tourism can ultimately be an efficient means of increasing the sustainability of the socio-ecosystem, reviving local traditions, conserving natural resources, reducing poverty, and respecting local culture in the community.

The economic aspect of sustainable tourism development demonstrates the recognized positive and negative effects of tourism in Romblon economically. The table in the results shows that the development of tourism positively influences Romblon economically,

which in result increases the variety of handicrafts and souvenirs sold as well as the number of restaurants within the barangay that are flourishing. The result agrees with the goal of CBT as a holistic approach contributing to a better standard of living for the community members (Yanes et al., 2019), as well as tackling the CBT standard, established by ASEAN, as it empowers local communities in securing socio-economic futures through food, services, and souvenirs that are profitable.

The socio-cultural aspect reflected an overall mean of 3.03. According to one of the standards established by the ASEAN, CBT must respect a destination's local culture and traditions in order to achieve a harmonious community. Through CBT, residents feel a strong sense of pride and empowerment from their culture while recognizing the benefits of it. Moreover, the results presented in the table mirror the study by Lo & Janta (2020), which states that CBT boosts a local community's cultural heritage through tourism activities or programs. With this approach, it empowers the community members to own and manage tourism enterprises related to their rich cultural heritage that is beneficial in attaining development in the province of Romblon (Yanes et al., 2019).

The results of table 3 discussed the perceived positive and negative impacts of CBT on the present condition of the environment with an overall mean of 2.93. CBT could be efficient through developing local destinations without destroying or modifying the present condition of the environment (Han et al., 2019). This entails that the natural environment is a vital criterion for tourists when traveling to a community-based tourism destination as supported by the study of Han et al. (2019). Results depicted tourism still contributes to the destruction of the natural habitat due to a partial increase in pollution. Nevertheless, CBT positively influences locals to raise awareness on the importance of their natural environment. They can find solutions for the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment (Phuong, Song & Quang, 2020).

H02 has a 0.83 coefficient which is significant at a 1% level of significance $p < 0.01$. This shows that the 2nd null hypothesis was rejected. CBT does lead to positive politico-administrative affairs and climate for every 1% increase in CBT leads to a 0.83% increase in

this variable. The studies of Campos et al. (2011), Phuong, Song & Quang (2020), and Adi et al. (2017) supported the findings with regard to this variable as a vital part for the CBT to have political influence to bring investments and job opportunities in the tourism sector and in the agricultural services. The participation of the community with support and cooperation of the government leads to enhancement in tourism policy and regulations to create partnerships and programs. Also, results showed that corruption is not a concern relating to tourism development in Romblon despite being a threat to community participation (Setokoe & Ramukumba, 2020).

H₃ stated that CBT does not lead to Citizen Participation. According to the study of Lo & Janta (2020), they agree with H₃ as some of the members of the community in Muen Ngoen Kong, Chiang Mai, Thailand are not as participative and cooperative as they are expected to be. It is mentioned that regardless of constant community meetings and activities being conducted in the community, there is not much citizen participation in the area. However, results revealed that the hypothesis was rejected exhibiting a 0.72 coefficient which is significant at a 1% level $p < 0.01$. This finding agrees with the previous study of Gutierrez (2019), Anuar ANA & Sood NAAM (2017), and Phuong, Song & Quang (2020) implying that the involvement of citizens plays an important role in achieving objective and success of CBT. In addition, it becomes a tool for community and self-development through involvement in decision-making process, equal distribution of benefits, and promotion of environmental awareness to alleviate the negative impacts brought by tourism. With this, citizen participation is influential to the development of tourism activities and the quality of life in Romblon.

The results positively align with the Sustainable Development Theory. Locals showed strong agreement that tourism brought improvement in livelihood and job opportunities leading to positive economic impact. This agrees with Pasanchay and Schott's (2021) statement that CBT is an approach that contributes to achieving UNWTO's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1: No Poverty and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. CBT shows that it helps attain these SDG's as it encourages and empowers community members to participate in tourism activities, decision-making and managing tourism destinations. These are the

critical factors to achieve sustainability in which residents must portray a positive attitude and recognize the significance of CBT (Pham Hong et al., 2021). This positive attitude may be implied according to the responses of the residents as they show strong agreement with active citizen participation.

In addition, the involvement of the government is beneficial in the process of the development of Community-based tourism and achieving sustainability. Adi et al. (2017) emphasizes the government's active role as motivators, facilitators, and dynamists of CBT. Based on the results, the residents perceive that the local government plays a positive instrumental role in CBT development. However, it also plays the least influence on citizen participation. The challenge in CBT is the perspective of communities towards their participation. This is where the role of governments as motivators come into place. Bulilan (2014) stated that CBT organizations in Pamilacan, Bohol, together with the government, offer financial assistance to locals who want to cooperate or establish their own tourism businesses. Also, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) offered training for women to enhance livelihood skills. This kind of selective incentive from the authorities motivates locals to take part in CBT development. Finally, for effective CBT implementation, Paladan (2020) affirmed that the locals must take part in the assessment, planning, and execution of projects together with the government.

The Proposed Programs and Projects for Community-Based Tourism in Romblon, Philippines

Collaboration among the tourism stakeholders and providing the local communities with numerous inclusive opportunities for improved quality of life are the ultimate purposes of establishing programs and projects in relation to CBT in Romblon province. The opposite of each tourism variable presents proposed measures and programs. These CBT projects can be beneficial for the expansion of CBT in Romblon and in assisting the tourism stakeholders particularly, the local government unit, non-government organizations, the private sector, and

the local communities. The proposed programs are situated in the appendices part of the paper.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceived positive and negative impacts brought by community-based tourism in Romblon province. Based on the results, CBT is a powerful tool to bring positive developments in the local community. The communities were able to empower themselves by socio-economic futures through food, services, and profitable souvenirs, as it increases the number of sold locally made products and helps the restaurants within the barangays to flourish. It also promotes cultural heritage through tourism programs that give residents a great sense of pride and empowerment over their culture. This sense of empowerment is shown through the job opportunities provided for the women and the youth. This leads to promoting, enhancing, and strengthening community-government partnership and relationship in Romblon. The residents oppose the idea that tourism creates corruption in the community which implies their confidence and positive relationship with the LGU. This encourages them to engage and actively participate in tourism activities particularly when it comes to the environment. As supported by the results of the study, Romblomanons have a high level of awareness of the importance of environmental preservation and protection. Despite the promising positive outcomes of CBT, negative impacts were also observed. Due to continuous tourism development, it results in the increasing prices of locally made products and real estate. The results further agree that CBT may disrupt the natural habitat and increase land and noise pollution in the province. These adverse effects are hindrances to the sustainable development of CBT in the province.

Therefore, the researchers recommend the LGU of Romblon to provide financial support to implement and enhance the proposed sustainable CBT projects in the province. These projects address pollution, poverty, unemployment, and eradication of local customs and traditions. In order for residents to take part in these, tourism-related training must be given for them to learn and further realize the benefits that CBT brings. From here, the creation

of an organization that focuses on CBT would have a holistic impact in the development of CBT. Additionally, this study may serve as a basis for further research where onsite assessments of the current situation in Romblon with local interaction must be done to help develop CBT. These may focus on other factors of communities' standard of living such as household income, gross domestic product (GDP), and improvement of infrastructure necessary for tourism. It can foster tourism linkages that result in inclusive growth as they sustain their livelihoods and community and raise more awareness on the social and cultural impacts of tourism development to the overall well-being of locals. With these, CBT can be a catalyst for change and a driving force to diversify employment, income, cultural exchange, sustainability, and a higher quality of life for locals in the province.

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Appendix A. Proposed Programs for Community-Based Tourism Development in Romblon Province

Municipal Leadership (Vision/Values/ Mission)	Service Performance Indicator/Measures	Suggested Person Responsible/ Involved	Proposed Programs
Government tourism policy, and tourism planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream poverty reduction into tourism policy, planning and strategies. It should be in accordance with the policies of related sectors of: Agriculture, telecommunications, public works and highways. • Include community involvement and benefits as key criteria in government planning decisions regarding approval for new tourism investment and initiatives. • Take a comprehensive approach to tourism development, thus explore and support if appropriate the potential of community-based ecotourism, heritage tourism, budget tourism. • Ensure the local institutions have legal powers to enter contracts. • Seek effective ways of working with the private sector. • Plan for tourism to provide both collective benefits (e.g. paid employment, opportunities for micro-enterprises, such as guiding or craft sales). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • TESDA representative • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>PARA SA MAMAMAYAN, AYANIHAN AT TURISMO (PAMBATO):</i> The LGUs shall set a regular meeting quarterly with NGOs, private sector, and community members to listen/discuss concerns, issues, priorities, plans, projects, and settle conflict, if any. Other related sectors like Agriculture, telecommunications, public works and highways should have representatives to be present at the said meetings.</p> <p>People's participation shall be a priority because the local communities are keen on the situations on the ground. The people should participate in community/barangay activities and support the local/national government.</p>
Understanding local populations in tourism growth areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate time and resources are devoted to social profiling of communities in order to identify: a) who are the poor; b) issues relating to customary tenure; and c) concerns deriving from religious /ethnic/gender/class inequalities (e.g. role of elites). • Target poorer people to ensure they benefit from growth of tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Municipal planning and Development Coordinator • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • Chairmen of the Barangays • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>PINATATAG NA BUKLURANG BAYAN: PARA SA BISITA, PARA SA KOMUNIDAD (PBB: DOUBLE UP):</i> The LGU shall target the poor and establish legislations to back up affirmative action strategies by implementing a comprehensive profiling of the whole municipality. The people shall not be side-lined in the development process; instead, they shall be empowered through knowledge and skills enhancement and access to networks. The LGU shall secure patronage of local produce to support local farmers and fisher folks.</p>
Tourism regulations/ standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regulation to protect environmental, social and cultural resources. Implement monitoring and evaluation procedures for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives 	<p><i>Pamayanan, Regulasyon at Ordinansa Tungo sa mabuting Ehemplong ng Cultura at Turismo</i></p>

Municipal Leadership (Vision/Values/ Mission)	Service Performance Indicator/Measures	Suggested Person Responsible/ Involved	Proposed Programs
	<p>tourism projects and programs, ensuring that both qualitative and quantitative indicators concerning changes to the lives of poor people are measured on an annual basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise complex regulations that provide a barrier to the establishment of small-scale enterprises, e.g. ensure that the accommodation grading system allows for 'simple' accommodation such as campsites and homestays to be promoted. • Ensure that complying with regulations does not require access to the capital city, large sums of money or complicated forms. • Remove discriminatory taxes, e.g. tax breaks to encourage investment may work against pro-poor tourism if they make it cheaper for hoteliers to import foods tax free than to source local supplies; Rank tourist establishments/reward them according to how well-integrated they are in the local economy (e.g. sourcing of goods and services) and employment conditions for their workers. • Implement fair labour laws, and health and safety laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial/municipal tourism officer coordinator • DENR representative • Barangay representatives • Local people • Non-Government Organizations 	<p>(PROTECT): A regular monitoring group or watchdogs under LGUs that shall see to it that local regulations and ordinances are being followed. This group shall focus on policies, regulations, and ordinances on culture, environment, and business in order to minimize negative social, environmental, and economic impacts of the industry.</p>
Tourism marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provincial tourism marketing body should market a wide range of tourism enterprises (e.g. small-scale enterprises, not just wildlife or beaches) to a wide range of potential customers (e.g. domestic, regional and diaspora tourists, not just international vacationers) • Provide community tourism enterprises with access to external markets via the internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • Committed Officers Making Productive Engagement in Tourism product Enhancement (COMPETE) • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>Simple, Effective and Livel Flow of Information about Eco tourism in Romblon Province thru Social Media</i> (SELFIE ROMBLON): The LGUs of each municipality in Romblon shall unite to promote the splendour of their nature. Making use and maximizing the limitless opportunities in social media, each municipality shall have enthusiastic tourism representatives to promote, develop, and enhance the marketing strategies of the island by focusing on its strengths and creating new ways or ideas to make Romblon a unique place to visit.</p>

Municipal Leadership (Vision/Values/ Mission)	Service Performance Indicator/Measures	Suggested Person Responsible/ Involved	Proposed Programs
Land-use planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure land-use planning incorporates community views, recognizes tourism as a land-use and supports multiple land-uses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal officer/coordinator • Non-Government Organizations 	<i>Tourism as an Opportunity by Organizing Land-use (TOOL):</i> The LGUs shall be the technocratic body to ensure that each tourism sites in their municipality shall be developed and maximized to create alternative forms of livelihood for the local communities where the site is based. E.G. Dagubdob Falls in Barangay Espanya, San Fernando.
Development of infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in infrastructure that will benefit local residents as well as the tourism industry, e.g. access roads, water supplies, sanitation systems. • Establish small-scale tourism infrastructure that benefits multiple business, such as marketplaces and visitor information centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal officer/coordinator • Provincial/municipal engineer/architect • DPWH • Non-Government Organizations 	<i>Turismo, Umaagapay sa Lokal na pag- Asenso at pag-Yabang ng imprastraktura para sa Romblomanon (TULAY ROMBLOMANON):</i> This program shall focus on fund raising to improve the bridges and farm to market road conditions where majority of the tourist destinations of each municipality have agricultural setting. E.g. rice fields and local farms.
Tourism training and licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide courses, licenses and exams in tourism subjects in ways that are accessible to local people, and provide qualifications that are appropriate for local enterprises: especially important are guiding skills, language skills, hospitality, site management and maintenance. • Provide training to increase the capacity of local people to manage a business enterprise, market it effectively, and provide good customer service; e.g. publish 'how to' manuals in appropriate languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal officer/coordinator • Hotel/Resort developers from private sector • TESDA • Non-Government Organizations 	<i>Making Actual Access for Youth and Adults More Knowledge and Mentoring Initiative (MAAYAM KAMI):</i> The collaborative training and educational program of the LGU, NGOs, and Private Businesses for the local community. This training program shall be implemented on an annual basis to train and educate people about tourism. (E.g. Tour guiding, Food and Beverage courses, Crafts making, Farming, etcetera).
Empowering local populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is a role for community participation in planning for tourism development. • Raise awareness about the potential and pitfalls of tourism, e.g. market surveys on tourism potential. • Disseminate information on tourism options for local communities, e.g. small- versus large-scale ventures, potential for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal officer/coordinator • Hotel/Resort developers from private sector • TESDA • Non-Government Organizations 	<i>Making Actual Access for Youth and Adults More Knowledge and Mentoring Initiative (MAAYAM KAMI):</i> The collaborative training and educational program of the LGU, NGOs, and Private Businesses for the local community. This training program shall be implemented on an annual basis to train and educate

Municipal Leadership (Vision/Values/ Mission)	Service Performance Indicator/Measures	Suggested Person Responsible/ Involved	Proposed Programs
	<p>collaboration with the private sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange study tours to the other tourism sites where people have the chance to talk to and learn from those who have attempted to engage in tourism enterprises. • Mentor people who are developing small businesses. • Ensure regulations/tenure arrangements give power to communities 		<p>people about tourism. (E.g. Tour guiding, Food and Beverage courses, Crafts making, Farming, etcetera).</p> <p>The tourism offices shall include the local community to the chain of activities of the tourists for charitable purposes.</p>
Working with the private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness among business people, tourism associations, chambers of commerce and local decision makers about the potential of tourism to alleviate poverty through both individual and communal benefits • Encourage hotels, restaurants and resorts to make their procurement practices more pro-poor by using local goods (e.g. fresh produce, soap, furnishings) and services (e.g. security, laundry), and to promote complementary businesses (e.g. hotel could advertise village-run bamboo rafting adventures). Consider a national/regional/provincial tourism award for business which maximizes their local multiplier effects. Enact policy which provides incentives for private companies to collaborate with communities (e.g. via partnerships or mentoring schemes) • Encourage hotels and lodges to adopt a human resources policy which provides security of employment, training and progression opportunities • Mediate contracts between large tourism businesses and individuals or small business owners concerning supply of goods or services (e.g. employment) • Support development of effective small and medium-sized tourism enterprises and facilitate links with existing tourism flows and products (e.g. tea shops along a hiking route used by backpackers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism Regional Office • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • Non-Government Organizations • Private Sector 	<p><i>Businesses Upbringing Locals Igniting Growth (BULIG)</i>: This collaborative initiative of the LGU with the Department of Tourism, NGOs, and tourism businesses including restaurants and lodges shall be the forefront of all collaborations. The goals shall focus specifically on improving the well-being of the local people through building linkages and networks for them.</p>

Municipal Leadership (Vision/Values/ Mission)	Service Performance Indicator/Measures	Suggested Person Responsible/ Involved	Proposed Programs
Information, staffing and extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide dedicated staff, such as community tourism officers or provincial government staff, in regions to advise and support communities initiating tourism enterprises, e.g. to provide information on business planning, and to improve the quality and competitiveness of local products. • Provide information to the formal sectors on how to work with communities and enhance local benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>Committed Officers Making Productive Engagement in Tourism product Enhancement</i></p> <p>(COMPETE): This group of tourism officers shall be in the frontline of service in promoting, marketing, and enhancing Romblon province. The assembly shall be under the office of the governor and shall be composed of individuals from the LGUs, NGOs, POs, Private Sector, and the Academe.</p> <p>SELFIE ROMBLON shall be the mechanism for promotion composed of trained personnel of COMPETE.</p>
Protected area management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage parks in ways that stimulate enterprise opportunities for neighbouring communities (e.g. craft markets, local guides) • Provide park visitors with information on local enterprises • Give neighbouring communities a tourism concession inside the park, or allow controlled extraction of certain resources. • Collect a levy from each tourist for a development fund for surrounding communities. • Build capacity so that the local communities can be involved in protected area management (e.g. sitting on parks boards) or management of communal lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Provincial/municipal tourism officer/coordinator • Provincial forester • DENR representative • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>Cajidiocam, San Fernando, Magadiwang, Alalay ng Wastong Alituntunin para sa Kalikasan</i></p> <p>(CASIMANWA PARA SA KALIKASAN): The program of the LGUs of the three municipalities that shall establish access for the local communities to participate in protected area management, planning, and promotion. (e.g. Mt. Guiting-Guiting)</p>
Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to credit for small and medium-sized enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • Sangguniang Bayan representatives • Business owners or tourism associations • Non-Government Organizations 	<p><i>Credit Access for the People for better Local Enterprises</i> (CAPABLE): The LGU shall assist the community to run viable businesses by providing credit opportunities.</p>