

Learning Tourism Destination:

Contributions towards Community Education and Social Development

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Learning Tourism Destination (LTD) is a learning organization approach that improves the sustainability of tourism destinations. This development concept advocates collaborative learning and co-creation of knowledge between the tourist and the various service providers in the destination and recognizes the capacity of societies to learn and to develop economic organizations that are relevant to its unique context. Grounded in the point of view of the local community, the goal of this research was to look at the contributions of LTD to social development, specifically in the improvement of human well-being, with emphasis on community learning that occurs among different stakeholders. The Municipality of Maribojoc was deemed an appropriate study area for the application of LTD as it was recovering from the effects of the 2013 earthquake where volunteer tourism was used as a recovery strategy. Secondary data analysis and qualitative research methods, such as community immersion, personal and key informant interviews, and workshops, were conducted in six barangays of Maribojoc to explore tourism development in the province of Bohol and in the municipality. Research findings showed that LTD has contributed to the improvement of the human well-being, specifically on continuing community education processes, as well as in terms of organization building and strengthening; environment protection and rehabilitation; and stronger linkages and partnerships among various tourism actors.

Key words: learning tourism destination, learning communities, community education, social development, Maribojoc, Bohol

Introduction

Learning Tourism Destination (LTD) is a novel development concept in the field of tourism that advocates collaborative learning and co-creation of knowledge between the tourist and the various service

providers in the destination. It is an approach that recognizes the capacity of societies to learn and to develop economic organizations that is relevant to its unique context. As an alternative to external development models, the LTD is a system where a society defines problems based on its perceptions and formulates solutions from its cultural resources in order to address situations specific to that society (Schianetz, Kavanagh, & Lockington, 2007).

LTD is part of sustainable tourism development and management, which looks at tourism's potential as an instrument of positive change. It is known to be achievable and can be realized when the "spiritual elements" of the practice of tourism take precedence over its technical and material elements. These spiritual elements include: (1) fulfillment of the human being; (2) contribution to education; (3) recognition of equality of destiny of nations; (4) liberation of the individuals in a spirit of respect for their identity and dignity; and (5) affirmation of the originality of cultures and respect for the moral heritage of people (World Tourism Organization, 1980). In order to advance sustainability in the tourism industry, approaches are needed that promote stakeholder collaboration and learning on an organizational as well as destination level. Learning on a destination level is necessary to ensure that sustainable development issues are incorporated.

In communities, where the people are always in need of new knowledge to fulfill their functions in various aspects of community life (e.g., political, economic, environmental and/or socio-cultural), non-formal education such as LTD is essential. According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (UNESCO,n.d.), non-formal education is "an addition, alternative and/or a complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals...[that] is often provided to guarantee the right of access to education for all." Key to non-formal education in the community setting—which usually happens through processes such as community-based trainings, skills demonstration, educational group discussions, exposures outside the community, and organizational development trainings that enhance skills related to planning, decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation—is how it prepares the community members to engage in community-based programs and projects which propel them to improve their current situation.

Education—including non-formal and community-based—is essential in social development. As stated by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD),

[Social development] is concerned with processes of change that lead to improvements in human well-being, social relations and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable, and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice. It includes material achievements, such as good health and **education**, and access to the goods and services necessary for decent living; and social, cultural and political achievements, such as a sense of security, dignity, the ability to be part of a community through social and cultural recognition, and political representation. (UNRISD, 2011, p.2, authors' emphasis)

This study aims to look at the contributions of LTDs to social development, specifically in the improvement of human well-being, with emphasis on community learning that occurs among different stakeholders. The research is grounded on the point of view of local peoples, local organizations, and local communities. Since the Philippine national government hopes to develop a tourism sector that will promote inclusive socio-economic growth (DOT, 2012), lessons from the creation of an LTD is furthermore an opportunity to transform the tourism industry in the target municipality into a creator of learning opportunities.

Research Problem

This research is part of a larger project entitled, "Learning Tourism Destinations: Creating functional partnerships and initiating positive change for sustainable tourism development in local economies." It aims to answer the following research questions on LTDs and their contributions to community education and social development:

1. What community learning processes have taken place in Maribojoc? Who provided trainings and what learning methods were employed?
2. How does learning among members of the organizations happen?
3. How does learning between the community members and tourists happen? What topics are shared (e.g., culture, history, environment)? What learning methods are used?
4. What is the people's evaluation of the learning methods used? What other topics still need to be learned by the community members?
5. What are the other contributions of LTDs to social development?

“Learning Tourism Destination” as a Development Concept

Tourism Destination. Rapid development of tourism due to new technologies of transport and data communications brought corresponding changes in the concept and understanding of destinations (Laws, 1995). Medlik (1993) defines tourism destinations as countries, regions, towns, or other areas visited by tourists. Throughout the year, their amenities serve their resident and working population, but at some or all times of the year, they also have temporary users—tourists. How important any geographical unit is as a tourist destination is determined by three prime factors: attractions, amenities, and accessibility, which are sometimes called tourism qualities of the destination. Vukonic (1997) examines the meaning of tourism destination in the context of growth and sustainability and defines the notion of tourism destination as “an integral and functional unit in which its particular components (such as tourist places, localities, zones, etc.) can have their own specific offering, grow and develop independently.” He further emphasizes that, regardless of the attractiveness and the capacity of their tourist offering, such areas can be called “tourism destinations” only if a great number of tourists are attracted to them.

Most destinations comprise a core of components, which is usually referred to as the “six As” framework (Buhalis, 2000, p. 98): Attractions (natural, artificial, purpose built, heritage, special events); Accessibility (entire transportation system comprising of routes, terminals, and vehicles); Amenities (accommodation and catering facilities, retailing, other tourist services); Available packages (pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals); Activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during the visit), and Ancillary services (services used by tourists such as banks, telecommunications, post, news agents, hospitals, etc.).

From LO to LTD. To aid and guide the successful transformation of destinations, learning ability, data and research capabilities, agility and adaptability should be fostered through long-term strategies for change (McLennan, Ritchie, Ruhanen, & Moyle, 2014), which can be aided by learning organizations (LOs). The concept of learning organizations (LOs) was introduced by Senge in 1990s. He defined LOs as organizations where people expand their capacity to create the results they desire, where new expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, and where people are learning how to learn together.

In the context of tourism, the LO concept is implemented by creating Learning Tourism Destinations (LTDs). An LTD is any tourism city, town, village, and surrounding area that, in the process of achieving agreed upon objectives based on sustainable development: (1) uses lifelong learning as an organizing principle for community, organizations, and individuals; (2) promotes collaboration of the economic sectors, directly and indirectly linked to tourism, civic, voluntary, and education sectors; and (3) provides an infrastructure to collect new information, disseminate, process, and apply gained knowledge (Schianetz et al., 2007).

When building LTDs, major players are identified, and their interdependencies understood. *Entrepreneurs* take responsibility for the development of tourism destination competitiveness (Komppula, 2014). The *local government* provides a supporting role as facilitators of an entrepreneurial environment for these private enterprises (Komppula, 2014). In addition, governments can facilitate the learning process by providing data and research capabilities, and even initiating collaboration through strategic planning, which all ultimately facilitate the learning process (McLennan et al., 2014). *Tourists* and *host communities* also play a role in the creation of LTDs. Despite being viewed as responsible for much of the damage to destinations, *tourists* contribute to the productivity of LTDs. Tourists can bring new knowledge by creating social opportunities where guests can share insights from cultures outside the destination. The *host communities*, composed of the local people, serve as stewards of the culture and attractions that provide the pull in tourism. Universities also contribute to the transformation of LTDs as facilitators and initiators of change. *Universities* also contribute to the transformation of LTDs as facilitator and initiator of change. Interventions of university researchers may be viewed as a form of eco-acupuncture for positive change. Eco-acupuncture are small interventions that can shift the community's ideas of what is permissible, desirable and possible and provide transformation points (Ryan, 2013).

The component learning systems of an LTD are learning individuals, learning organizations, and learning communities while its fundamental elements are: (1) Shared vision and goals; (2) Information system; (3) Continuous learning and cooperative research; (4) Co-operation (informal collaboration); (5) Co-ordination (formal collaboration); (6) Cultural exchange; (7) Participative planning and decision making; and (8) Adaptive management (Schianetz et al., 2007).

These eight elements are not fixed, complete, or static but all are highly interlinked; and promotion, implementation, and/or maintenance

of one will have a positive effect on another. Some of the elements, such as information systems and co-operation, are well established in some tourism destinations but their implementation in isolation does not realize all the benefits of an LTD. Lasting collective learning in a tourism destination can only be achieved if the organizational structure has been provided to foster learning processes (Schianetz et al., 2007).

Community Education. Millwood (2012) mapped a compilation of learning theories based on various scientific disciplines. Social learning theory combines cognitive learning theory (that learning is influenced by psychological factors) and behavioral learning theory (assumes that learning is based on responses to environmental stimuli) to describe the psycho-social functions of humans when learning occurs in the context of a social setting (Bandura, 1986). Under the organization domain is David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, where learning refers to the process of creating knowledge through the transformation of experiences (Kolb, 1984). According to the theory, knowledge acquisition is a continuous process and is gained through a variety of personal and environmental experiences. It posits that the learner must be capable of (1) reflecting on experiences, (2) conceptualizing experiences using analytical skills, and (3) decision making and problem-solving using ideas gained from the experience.

The most important challenge of Learning Tourism Destinations seems to be equipping local communities with the required knowledge, skills, and awareness to enable them to meaningfully participate in tourism development (Razzaq et al., 2013). For this concern, community education plays a major role in the development of LTDs (Luna, Ferrer, Dela Cruz, Bawagan, Magcuro, & Torres, 2009). This is a process where community members, through their community-based organizations, learn various topics important to their lives in the community, as members of a particular sector, such as farmers, fisherfolk, women, or young people and as members of a people's organization. Examples of these would be trainings on community organizing, organizational development, leadership, project development, gender sensitivity, advocacy, and specific skills trainings relevant to their livelihood, such as records management, organic farming, and sustainable agriculture and fisheries.

Various organizations, whether internal or external to the community, support the education process. Examples of these are non-government organizations which introduce new ideas and projects to the community based on the people's current situation, such as Sentro para sa Ikauunlad ng Agham at Teknolohiya (SIKAT), a non-government organization, which introduced community-based coastal resource

management projects in fishing villages, and Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), a national peasant people's organization which trains farmers' organizations on peasant advocacy (KMP, n.d.; SIKAT, n.d.).

Such education processes are guided by principles of critical consciousness as espoused by Paulo Freire (1973). These principles are as follows: collaborative learning; raising critical consciousness; learning as enhancement of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits; learning as participatory and collective; learning as two-way between the community and the facilitators or between the community and tourists; and learning as a lifelong process. The format likewise follows a participatory process of learning where community members identify their training needs, proposed schedule of training, proposed participants, etc. Support organizations implement projects with their eventual phase-out as part of the over-all plan, when community members have been trained to carry on the organizational and project development processes on their own.

Community education is complementary to other community-based activities such as community organizing and resource management. These processes have a transformative objective in mind, such that the community becomes empowered to analyze their situation, their capacities, and weaknesses and can work on projects and activities that will improve their situation, especially for the benefit of the marginalized sectors of the community (Luna et al., 2009).

Methodology

Using secondary data analysis, this study explored tourism development in the province of Bohol and in the municipality of Maribojoc. It also used qualitative research methods, such as community immersion, interviews, key informant interviews, and workshops. This research was conducted in six of the 22 barangays of Maribojoc, as follows: Agahay, Bayacabac, Poblacion, Punta Cruz, San Vicente, and Toril (Maribojoc, n.d.).

Through community immersion, informal interviews/conversations were conducted with as many types of stakeholders as possible directly and indirectly involved in the tourism development programs in the community. Observations of interactions between community members and tourists were also done, especially in terms of the learning processes that happen between them. Interviews were likewise done randomly with tourists and tour operators/guides regarding the learning process that happened while they were on tour.

Key informant interviews were conducted with the barangay chairpersons, the municipal tourism officer, and selected tour operators. A workshop on LTD and Disaster Risk Reduction was done as a response to an expressed need of community members. Focus group discussions were implemented to evaluate the tourism development program and the learning processes that have taken place, as well as come up with recommendations for a more effective and sustainable tourism development program.

Maribojoc, Bohol as a Learning Tourism Destination

Bohol is an island province in Region 7 in Central Visayas and the 10th largest island in the country. Mainland Bohol is surrounded by 72 smaller islands, the largest of which is Panglao Island facing Tagbilaran City, Bohol's capital. The province has 47 municipalities in a land area of 4,117.26 sq. km. (1,589.68 sq. mi.). It has 261 km. (162 mi.) of coastline. Its population as of the 2007 census is 1,230,110. The province is accessible by air and sea transport. Boats ply the waters to and from the country's capital city and other ports in Visayas and Mindanao.

Bohol has gently rolling terrain, ideal for commercial and industrial site development. It has beautiful landscapes, coastlines, diversified flora and fauna, religious and historic landmarks, and archaeological artifacts, all of which form the foundation of the province's tourism. Starting in 2004, Bohol has experienced a boom in tourism, making it one of the fastest growing tourist destinations in the country (PPDO, 2013).

However, in recent years, frequent world-wide natural disasters have been observed (Faulkner, 2001), bringing huge devastation to human society, life and property. With the tourism industry being one of the most susceptible and vulnerable to such disasters (Santana, 2004), the resulting challenges to the tourism sector serve as continuous reminders that crisis management should no longer be ignored, by both the destinations and the tourism companies (Glaesser, 2006).

The effect of these natural calamities on tourism has been observed in the Philippines, considered one of the world's most disaster-prone countries, vulnerable to typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions (UN OCHA, 2013). In 2013, the Philippines experienced several major natural calamities—among them, the Visayas region being hit by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in October and Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in November.

Bohol was one of the places in the Philippines that experienced the effects of both these disasters. Its geographical and cultural landscape and heritage suffered extensive damage from the powerful earthquake. Furthermore, the after-effects of Typhoon Yolanda negatively affected the tourism industry supply chain, thus creating an undesirable dent in Bohol's economy.

Maribojoc, 14 kms. away from the capital city, lies on the southwestern coast of Bohol. It has a culturally-rich heritage and a vibrant past, as well as a sprawling bay rich in bio-diverse marine life, rugged panoramic mountain ranges, rolling plains, extensive water resources, and high-grade limestone. Forest products provide an abundant source of raw materials for the municipality's native handicrafts. Prior to the destruction of the 2013 earthquake, Maribojoc had already been known for its centuries-old Church, a museum, the historical Punta Cruz Watchtower, and a Spanish-era flight of stone stairs.

Maribojoc was one of the Bohol municipalities that was severely hit by the 7.2 magnitude earthquake on 15 October 2013. Many houses were damaged, and the historical church was destroyed. The seabed was lifted more than a meter and, as a result, the coastline receded some 50 to 100 meters. A few weeks after the earthquake, the town was again affected by Typhoon Yolanda making landfall in the neighboring Cebu and Leyte Islands.

The provincial government has identified the following tourism attractions in the town of Maribojoc: Punta Cruz Watchtower in Bgy. Punta Cruz; Demonstration Organic Farm in Bgy. Bayacabac; San Vicente Mangrove (SAVIMA) forest walk in Bgy. San Vicente; Abatan river tour in Bgy. Cabawan and Bgy. Lincod; socio-cultural activities in Bgy. Toril; and church ruins in Bgy. Poblacion. After the earthquake, uplifted ridges emerged in Bgy. Punta Cruz.

The natural calamities that struck Bohol in 2013 revealed the need for approaches to encourage volunteering for disaster recovery. In the past, volunteering had already been a proven approach to mustering the needed logistical support for disaster relief operations. Recognizing this potential role of volunteers in assisting organizations to deal with calamities, volunteer tourism projects were organized to facilitate Bohol's post-disaster recovery.

To facilitate rehabilitation and recovery efforts in Maribojoc, volunteers were invited to be part of special tourism programs in earthquake-

hit villages. The inspiration likely came from similar volunteering efforts in the past. There had been several documented cases of tourists contributing to recovery efforts, such as in 2004 after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and in 2005 following a tsunami that hit Western Thailand in 2004. In these cases, volunteer tourism or “voluntourism” became recognized as a disaster recovery strategy, with many tourists choosing to use their vacation time to volunteer on recovery efforts (Crater, 2013).

In 2014, the University of the Philippines Asian Institute of Tourism engaged a community in Maribojoc for a voluntourism program with the aim of facilitating disaster recovery in the municipality. The voluntourism project was dubbed Buklod Bohol. Three batches of tourists went to Barangay Toril, Maribojoc in February, May, and October 2014. The group was composed of medical doctors, local and foreign students, and foreign guests willing to do volunteer work. This voluntourism program was packaged as a series of cultural tourism and immersion activities where both tourist volunteers and members of the local community could share time, labor, and resources to accomplish the target volunteer work. The program goals were to rebuild communities and to reconnect the host locality with the larger Philippine community through volunteering and cultural tourism. These goals were achieved by: (1) construction of traditional houses; (2) revitalizing community sources of living through cultural tourism; and (3) reaching out to local communities through community engagement and attending to the community’s health needs (Gonzalo, 2014).

Subsequent field research in 2015 and 2016 also revealed tourism patterns similar to those observed in 2014, despite the tourism programs no longer taking the form of voluntourism. New activities like firefly watching, mangrove adventure tours, educational tours of organic farms, and viewing the post-earthquake ruins and uplifted ridges had become popular.

Anchored on the community linkages and knowledge established from previous research in the province of Bohol, in general, and the municipality of Maribojoc, in particular, the municipality was deemed an excellent study area for the LTD demonstration. The effects of the natural disasters on the people of Maribojoc included diminished income, livelihood, and employment, as well as losses in terms of damaged state properties. By investigating the feasibility of establishing learning organizations that comprise an LTD, Maribojoc had the opportunity to enhance the capacity of the learning organizations and allow these organizations to adopt to change using their local resources and develop models for learning and knowledge co-creation, so that they could pursue and achieve sustainable tourism development.

Tourist Attractions and Activities in Maribojoc. For decades, tourists have been enjoying the natural and historical sights and cultural performances that Maribojoc has to offer. In recent years, firefly watching along the Abatan River has become very popular, while a river day tour takes tourists to see the nipa and mangroves along the river on board a kayak, and a mangrove adventure tour is also available in San Vicente. The Punta Cruz Watchtower offers a glimpse of history from a time when pirates would attack the local communities of Maribojoc.

An educational tour of an organic demonstration farm presents vermiculture, different kinds of herbs and their medicinal uses, and how organic pigs, chickens, goats, and cows are grown. Cultural groups showcase the local culture, by providing homestay facilities and conducting performances of the nipa dance and demonstrations of basket weaving. Since the October 2013 earthquake, tourists now see the ruins of the San Vicente Ferrer church in Bgy. Poblacion as well as the geological changes, specifically the uplifted ridges, that resulted from the movement of the fault line in Bgy. Punta Cruz.

Tour Providers. In Maribojoc, there are different types of management of tours, the primary tourist product, as follows:

1. Tours managed by government: These include the Bayacabac organic demonstration farm and the Punta Cruz Watchtower;
2. Tours managed by people's organizations: These include the San Vicente Mangrove Adventure (SAVIMA) managed by a women's organization, performances of the nipa dance by the Lincod Cultural Collective composed of young people and elderly of Bgy. Lincod, a cultural trail organized by the organizations in Bgy. Toril, a river tour offered by Abatan Lingkod Mangrove Growers Association (ALIMANGO), and a homestay arrangement managed by a local organization in Bgy. Bayacabac; and
3. Tours managed by private establishments such as the kayak firefly tour of KayakAsia in Bgy. Lincod and the motorboat firefly tour of Maribojoc Mangrove Firefly in Bgy. Cabawan.

Learning Processes of the Learning Tourism Players. *Entrepreneurs* such as the kayak tour operators and firefly tour operators make use of the lecture/demonstration method, such as using kayaks to take tourists to see the different types of mangroves important for fireflies and other fishing species. They have also learned how to diversify their enterprise, such as having a small restaurant to cater to other needs of the tourists. They also

interact with other service providers to learn more about the peculiarities of certain groups of tourists, e.g., what Koreans and Chinese prefer for their tours.

The *local government* provides the general overview of the tourism sites in their locality, identifying in the process the different tour service providers and the learning opportunities available in each destination. When funds are available, the local government may produce flyers which the tourist can read and further learn from either on site or during their downtime. Moreover, as the local government links with different tourism agencies, it provides learning opportunities as well to the service providers/entrepreneurs in their area, especially on how the local enterprises may link with service providers in other sites in the island to increase their capacities.

Host communities present a wealth of information to tourists about their community, focusing on the local history and culture, such as their songs, dances, and cuisine. They also share about the resources in their environment and how these are preserved to sustain the tourism activities. These are usually done through demonstration activities which the tourists get to participate in, such as cooking and preparing nipa wine. In Maribojoc, the tourists are specifically shown the effects of the earthquake on the communities and how these have impacted on the people's livelihood. The tourists likewise learn of the impacts of the earthquake on the geological formations in some municipalities, such as the raised sea bottom. Locals have learned to become tour guides, with some men who did not have any economic activity in the past acquiring the skills to become good tour guides. These include learning about the technical aspects of the tour, such as the types of mangroves and nipa, fireflies and their habitat, the raising of organic chickens and pigs, the medicinal uses of herbs, first aid and lifesaving techniques, as well as how to handle a paddle and maneuver a kayak. The host communities also re-learn their local songs and dances as they perform these with the guests. In essence, the host communities, composed of the local people, serve as stewards of the culture and the attractions that provide the pull for tourism in their locality.

Affirming related literature regarding tourists' role in the promotion of a learning environment, they learn how to use a kayak and keep their balance, especially when they kayak while doing the firefly tours. Tourists learn of the importance of keeping the environment sustainable and participate in planting mangroves and clean up drives. There are also instances when visitors provide the communities with additional training on organic farming.

The involvement of universities in the Maribojoc, Bohol experience, such as through the volountourism program, similarly affirms what related literature says regarding the role of universities in creating small interventions that facilitate transformation points or what Ryan (2013) called "eco-acupunctures."

Learning Activities. Community-based service providers have learned various skills, such as: being effective tour guides, dancers, singers, actors, cooks of local delicacies, housekeepers for those who offer their homes for homestay, project managers, and other staff needed to implement activities in the learning tourism destination. They have learned more about the history of their place and the attractions so that they can explain these to the tourists, such as those who visit the ruins caused by the earthquake. They mingle with individuals from various other countries, despite using "broken English"; and through their interaction with different nationalities, they have learned the specific interests of certain groups, such as Koreans preferring firefly watching, while the Chinese want to kayak through the river or to go firefly watching by kayak.

Learning exchanges also take place between the tour guide and the tourist, such as when the guide describes the various types of mangroves, the fireflies and their habitat, how to grow organic chickens and pigs, the uses of herbal medicines, and how to handle a paddle and maneuver a kayak. On the other hand, learning opportunities between the cultural performers and the tourists occur when the group members perform local dances and songs and demonstrate to the tourists how these are done; tourists then participate in the performance of dances and songs native to Bohol.

Meanwhile, the learning activities between the homestay host and the tourist emerge when host families share their village life with the visitors who stay with them for at least two nights. In the same manner, the tourists share about their lives in their own countries. Through the homestay, the hosts ensure that they converse with the visitors, entertain them, share meals and build relationships with them.

There is also learning among the members of the people's organizations. These groups have learned how to manage tourism projects through trainings provided by government, non-government organizations, and academic institutions supporting their activities. They have learned more about managing their tourism programs such as establishing a tourism network to attract more tourists; conserving and

protecting the environment such as Bohol's mangrove plantations; and organizational and finance management. They have also come to realize the importance of incorporating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in their tourism plans (e.g., considering the resiliency of buildings and having contingency plans). Among the members of the cultural group, they have learned to innovate in their performances (e.g., they created a new "earthquake dance" to show tourists the effects of the earthquake in their area).

For their part, the communities have learned how to manage their natural resources (e.g., communities along the river and coasts regularly hold a river and coastal clean-up), and how to maintain and manage their tourism facilities (e.g., the boardwalk and activity center).

Whenever time allows, the tour operators ask for feedback from the tourists about the tours and the performances, and solicit suggestions on how they can further improve their services.

Learning Methods. Community members have gained from different learning methods utilized by the institutions which helped them in their education processes. Prominent methods have been seminars, exposure visits, demonstration techniques, on-the-job learning, and informal learning sessions during organizational activities. Seminars are provided by government agencies, non-government organizations, and academic institutions on various aspects of sustainable tourism and on specific topics of their tourism activity such as management of their mangrove areas. Some of the trainings incorporate exposure visits to other communities or organizations that are implementing a program of similar nature, such as that of the organic farm.

The community members have likewise benefitted from the visits and lectures of geologists and other academics who visited their areas to survey the physical changes brought about by the earthquake. They have come to understand the impact of the movement of the fault line resulting in uplifted ridges in their area.

They also learn through demonstration techniques, as in the case of the cultural groups who acquire skills like singing, dancing, script writing, acting, and nipa-weaving. The original members of the cultural groups had to do a lot of "recall" on the dances and songs of old and how these were performed by their parents or other community members. They then showed the younger members how things are done and how they should

relate with the tourists. Demonstration is also used in the Bayacabac farm, where community members learn to prepare organic feeds, raise organic pigs, and prepare vermicast.

Other informal means of learning come through on-the-job experiences, such as learning the English language by having to communicate with the tourists using English. Through exchanges with the visitors, community members also gain exposure to other methods that can be used to conserve their natural resources, especially when the country where the tourists come from use environmentally-friendly methods.

Learning Tourism Destination and Social Development

The adoption of the LTD model provides an opportunity to transform the tourism industry through inclusive livelihood activities for stakeholders promoting tourism products and services. However, more than that, findings show that LTD contributes to social development, not just economic development. This approach has led to improvements in human well-being, specifically in continuing community education processes, one of the main goals of social development. Moreover, by emphasizing and strengthening learning processes among community organizations, community members have been able to adapt to change using their local resources as they pursue sustainable tourism development. Apart from community education, LTD contributes to social development through organization building and strengthening, environment protection and rehabilitation, and stronger linkages and partnerships among various tourism actors ultimately benefitting the local communities.

LTD and Community Education. The LTD approach has proven to be an effective mechanism for community education where collaborative learning between the tourist and various service providers takes place. The focus on community education is important since the LTD approach emphasizes that tourism should be a community effort and should redound to the benefit of the community members. Various community learning processes and activities take place in the LTD, extending across multiple actors in any tourism activity, mostly through non-formal sharing and interactions where experiences are processed to create knowledge (Kolb, 1984; Luna et al., 2009). There are also formal seminars and workshops conducted by academic institutions, non-government organizations, government agencies, and other volunteers who wish to share their knowledge on topics which are useful for the community members. These seminars enhance the knowledge and skills of the community members on

management of their tourism products, whether these be a mangrove walk or a river tour.

The community members have also learned organizational management, especially with the need to boost the morale of the members after experiencing setbacks due to the 2013 earthquake; and financial management, with their finances coming from entrance fees and other charges paid by the tourist or donations received from private organizations. Even so, community members have expressed the need for more learning activities to enable them to strengthen their tourism activities, consolidate their organizations, and strengthen themselves as a learning organization. These trainings range from basic skills like learning English to more complex knowledge on tourism planning. Various partners from the academe, non-government organizations, and government agencies are able to support them on these.

LTD and Organization Building and Strengthening. Community organizations are vital in any LTD to manage the various tourism activities in the area. In Maribojoc, the active organizations include the cultural collective, the homestay providers, and the women's organization managing the mangrove resources. The tourism activity was not the original program of the latter, but they realized that they could take advantage of the mangrove areas in their community by engaging in tourism as an additional livelihood source for members of their organization. Senge (1990, as cited in Schianetz et al., 2007) explained that, in learning organizations, people continually expand their capacity to create the desired results, their patterns of thinking are nurtured, and they continually learn how to learn together.

The application of the LTD approach in Maribojoc has shown that the community organizations are well on their way to transitioning into learning organizations where they share vision and goals, have opportunities for continuous learning, have established cooperation and coordination with various entities, and engage in participative planning and decision making (Schianetz, et al., 2007). To maintain the area as a Learning Tourism Destination, education processes towards organizational strengthening are important. The organizations can also take on new challenges—in partnership with both public and private organizations—to improve their area as a tourist destination, such as constructing rest areas and canteens.

LTD and Environment Protection and Rehabilitation. Tourism activities designed around natural resources, such as Maribojoc's mangrove and firefly tours, will only be sustainable if the resources are well maintained,

as cited by Nyaupane and Poudel (2011). The community members are conscious of this imperative, making coastal and river clean-ups a staple activity. This has generated awareness even among the younger members of the community. It is important to note that unrestrained tourism developments can diminish the tourism product and image of Maribojoc. Since tourism activities rely on the protection of environmental and socio-cultural resources for the attraction of tourists, planning is an essential activity for the success of Maribojoc as a tourism destination.

Communities are very often threatened with unwanted developments and face problems from unplanned or carelessly planned tourism expansion. To overcome these multi-faceted problems, a comprehensive tourism plan is needed to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs or disadvantages of development through the involvement of the local community who must live with the tourists and the costs and benefits they bring.

It is therefore important to examine Maribojoc's and Bohol's existing destination marketing and tourism development planning. Developing destinations like Maribojoc should consider making sustainability a core of their destination development and marketing since, despite increasing instability on a national level induced by economic, political, and environmental challenges, tourism is expected to remain a significant driver of economic growth and social development.

LTD and Partnerships. Strengthening partnerships among various stakeholders is another area important to LTD (Kompupula, 2014). This is particularly vital in Maribojoc, which is not yet part of the usual tourist routes in Bohol. It is one of those areas that need to be marketed for its unique attractions, especially after the earthquake. Major marketing tourism players such as provincial and municipal tourism officers, public and private tour operators, community organizations, and the academe play important roles towards this end.

Conclusion and Recommendations

For many tourism destinations, the most compelling reason for pursuing tourism as a development strategy is its alleged positive contribution to the local economy. However, the extent to which tourism contributes to the local economy depends on a variety of factors. As a basis for exploring the relationship between tourism and development, it is important to define not only the desired outcome of tourism, namely

development, but also the means of achieving that outcome.

The adoption of the LTD approach provides an opportunity to transform the tourism industry into inclusive livelihood activities grounded on the community situation. Exploring tourism in Maribojoc revealed that LTD has indeed been able to contribute to community education and social development.

To further strengthen the tourism activities in Maribojoc, it is recommended that the various tourism stakeholders in the municipality take stock and address the following identified challenges to sustain the community education and social development gains from the LTD approach:

1. Difficulty of some tour guides with conversing in English, which allows them to only present a regular spiel to the tourists, many of whom are foreigners, instead of carrying on light conversations and educational exchanges with them;
2. Limited time allocation for specific sites in tour packages, causing tourists to hurry from one site to the next and thus discouraging learning opportunities from more substantial interaction between tourists and locals;
3. Mostly one-way interaction (i.e., from the tour guide to the tourist), giving tourists limited opportunities to share about their lives in their own country;
4. Need for the rehabilitation of tourist areas affected by the earthquake, such as building rest areas and canteens for visitors and pilgrims who visit the church ruins, and conservation efforts for the environment, such as regular planting of mangroves;
5. Specific training needs expressed by community members and tour operators, such as marketing of the destination and their tourism products, safety measures and responding to emergency situations, mitigating and preventing possible negative impacts of tourism such as prostitution, and strengthening and consolidation of community organizations;
6. Need for a) continuous knowledge building and sharing across different tourism sites where communities can learn from each other, b) continuous training of second liners who can become potential members of the cultural collective, kayak tour guides, and others, and c) improving knowledge on and maximizing the use of various social media platforms to enhance tourism activities; and
7. Need for stronger linkages with the Bohol Tourism Office (BTO), Bohol Federated Travel Tour Operators (BOFETTO), and Bohol

Integrated Tour Guide Association (BITGA), as well as proper harmonization and coordination from the city to the barangays, and the barangays to the local organizations.

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