

Explicating the contributions of the local community on sustainable community-based tourism: the case of Barangay San Miguel, Echague, Isabela, Philippines

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Abstract | This study aims to explain the contributions of the local community to sustainable community-based tourism in Barangay San Miguel in Echague, Isabela, Philippines. In developing the research, the researchers used the qualitative-phenomenological approach through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study's key informants (n=49, conducted on March 2022) were Barangay government representatives, tourism-related business owners, members of the marginalized sector (farmers, women, youth tour guides), and members of the academe. The Repertory Grid and Thematic Network Analysis, specifically mixed development, were utilized as the research's mode of analysis. Ethical considerations were implemented by receiving a notice to proceed from the Ethics Review Committee and providing formal communication and coordination with proper authorities and related key informants. Findings reveal that a Community Contribution on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework was developed to highlight the contributions of the local community in local tourism strategic directions based on the pre-, during, and post-pandemic situation. Based on the framework, the local community's contribution was focused on the *systematic* (sustainable tourism management), *directional* (sustainable tourism governance), *interpretational* (sustainable tourism education and information dissemination), and *rational*

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(sustainable tourism philosophies and values) themes. It is recommended that the study's findings be used as one of the foundations for developing a Sustainable Tourism Development Plan concentrated on a community-based tourism.

Keywords | Community-based tourism, contribution, Echague, local community, Philippines

1. Introduction

Tourism is vital for rural development (Nooripoor et al., 2020). According to Premovic, Pejanovic, and Skataric (2018), nowadays, modern tourists are motivated to travel to rural areas, especially those with pristine resources and specific anthropogenic values and cultural entities. It also highlights the local community's contribution to providing tourism products and services to meet the tourists' needs and wants. Culture and heritage are common resources that can be developed as tourism products and services for the local community (DOT, 2016; Zerrudo, 2008). Through the efforts of the local community, rural development is possible specifically on economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects. It brings us to the dimensional application of sustainable development through tourism (Lopez-Sanz et al., 2021; Petrovic et al., 2018). Sustainable development through tourism (or Sustainable Tourism) concentrates on conserving and developing different local resources while satisfying the needs of present and future tourists, the community and its environment, the industry, and other stakeholders. In this context, tourism has become one of the major factors in promoting sustainability through positive implications for different stakeholders, such as but not limited to the local community's economic gains to support their everyday needs; job and livelihood opportunities; physical development; promotion and conservation of natural and cultural heritage resources; and natural and built environment protection (Deery, Jago & Fredline, 2012; Linderova, Scholz & Almeida, 2021; Shen et al.,

2020). It is also anchored in promoting and implementing programs and projects through sustainable development, which is in line with the initiatives of the United Nations (UN) in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2015). Due to its significance, different stakeholders supported the promotion and implementation of SDGs for tourism development through policies, programs, and projects (ASEAN, 2015; Congress of the Philippines, 2009; DOT, 2016; DOT, DILG, DENR & DAP, 2017; NEDA, 2016; NEDA 2020).

According to Tosun and Timothy (2003), Community-based Tourism (CBT) is an important development paradigm in destinations to promote and implement sustainable tourism. It has become one of the approaches on promoting sustainable development. Through its significance, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has developed CBT Standards that serve as a basis to systematically develop local communities and their resources, concentrating on sustainable tourism development (ASEAN, 2016). Community participation, through significant contributions in implementing CBT, is a common requirement that manifests at a destination. Community participation through their contributions reflects a voluntary activity that identifies citizenship and moral obligation as part of the society (Bello, Lovelock, & Carr, 2018; Gunawijaya & Pratiwi, 2018; Thetsane, 2019; Tosun, 2000; Xu et al., 2019). Common local community contributions to tourism development participation are developing tourism products and services through its operating sectors; self-governance initiative through decision-

making; and partnership and collaboration with other stakeholders (ASEAN, 2016). However, different circumstances, such as lack of interest of the community members, information and education, stakeholders' attitudes, high costs and financial resources, and hazards (natural and biological), lead to resistance and misinterpretations of developing destinations through CBT (Llupart, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). Developing countries, for instance, such as the Philippines, the invisibility of CBT activities and programs was caused by a lack of information and awareness on developing significant actions and platforms (Anore et al., 2019).

The Municipality of Echague in the Province of Isabela is a 1st class municipality (highest level of measurement for a town's economic stability) with a population of 88,410 people according to Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) (2020). The *Yogad* is an indigenous language that is still widely spoken by the locals. It is an invaluable heritage and considered endangered. Echague is basically an agricultural community. Among other economic sectors, agriculture has the highest contribution to the municipality's income and employment. Crop and livestock production are the major industries. High-value crops are grown such as rice, corn, pineapple, and banana. On the other hand, tourism as an economic activity is not well emphasized due to the absence of developed attractions despite potential and existing resources. Among the attractions present in the town, Echague boasts of two (2) potential attractions: the Dipani-ong Caves and Madadian Falls both situated at Barangay San Miguel. Barangay San Miguel has a total land area of 261 hectares. It is a rural barangay (local village), consists of seven (7) *puroks* (district or zone), within the Integrated Development Area II of Echague, Isabela.

The study aims to explain the contributions of the local community to sustainable community-based tourism in Barangay San Miguel, Echague, Isabela. By explicating the contributions of the local community of Barangay San Miguel, to sus-

tainable community-based tourism, the researchers are to determine significant attributes of implementing sustainable tourism-related programs and projects that will directly and indirectly benefit different stakeholders. It is also one way of balancing the municipality's different resources, either economic, socio-cultural, and environmental, in the context of development, conservation, and safeguarding. Additionally, the study presents the local communities' roles and responsibilities as keepers of barangay resources and as agents who create awareness for the implementation of projects and programs.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable Development, Natural, and Cultural Resources in the International and National Context

Nooripoor et al. (2020) stated that tourism is vital for rural development. It is anticipated that tourism generates positive impacts that communities can experience economically, socio-culturally, and environmentally. It is also anchored in promoting and implementing programs and projects through sustainable development, which is in line with the UNSDGs (UN, 2015). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has conceptualized the SDGs to comprehensively connect their influence in achieving tourism development (UNWTO, 2020b). Developing rural communities for tourism is anchored in SDG numbers 1 (no poverty), 8 (decent work & economic growth), and 11 (sustainable cities & communities). Rural areas' tourism development is vital for economic sustainability, socio-cultural safeguarding, and environmental conservation (Petrovic et al., 2018). Southeast Asia's sustainable tourism for rural and community development is also a priority through its existing natural and cultural he-

ritage properties (ASEAN, 2015). It is associated with one of the strategic directions under the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025, “to ensure that ASEAN tourism is sustainable and inclusive” (ASEAN, 2015, p. 8).

One of the resources for rural areas’ tourism development is the community’s culture and heritage. In the definition provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), culture is a “set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (UNESCO, 2001, p. 62). It reflects the characteristics of the community and its related traditions, customs, and beliefs. The community’s cultural identities are highly recognized for their significance and valuable aspects. These can be highlighted as the community’s heritage. Heritage is a legacy from the past, what people live with today, and what people pass on to future generations (Zerrudo, 2008). In tourism, valuable heritage properties, either tangible or intangible, can be considered a resource (Ho & McKercher, 2007). It can be used as a potential attraction or tourist site, contributing to the area’s tourism advantage. Countries promote their cultural and heritage values as their common tourism assets. For instance, in the Philippines, cultural tourism is considered the second top tourism product of the country (DOT, 2016).

In the Philippine context, through former President Rodrigo Roa Duterte’s administration’s initiative, the national government developed the *Am-Bisyon Natin 2040* or a long-term vision for the Philippines (NEDA, 2016). It is a platform that is being implemented, to promote a “strong-rooted, comfortable, and secure life” (NEDA, 2016) for Filipinos by implementing sustainable programs and projects through different sectoral initiatives. Development plans, such as the Updated Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 (NEDA, 2020) and

the National Tourism Development Plan 2016-2022 (DOT, 2016), are anchored and developed on the long-term vision to benefit different stakeholders, especially local communities. To realize this, under the Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 (Congress of the Philippines, 2009), every local government unit (LGU) is encouraged to conceptualize and develop their local tourism development or master plan, which will create a systematic environment for the implementation of different tourism and hospitality programs and projects. In this regard, the Department of Tourism (DOT) and other national government agencies have developed the Tourism Guidebook for LGUs, which guides LGUs in crafting and conceptualizing their respective tourism development or master plans (DOT, DILG, DENR & DAP, 2017).

2.2. Community-based Tourism: International and National Setting

CBT is a developmental paradigm in sustainable tourism development that influences local communities in conceptualizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating tourism products and services (Garrod, Wilson & Bruce, 2001; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Lo & Janta, 2020; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Wondirad & Ewnetu, 2019). ASEAN developed standards on the conceptualization, implementation, and monitoring of CBT through participatory approach from primary and secondary stakeholders (ASEAN, 2016). CBT empowers communities on the development of their destination and supports their needs and wants. It also assures association to the resources available in the destination, such as but not limited to nature, culture and heritage, and agriculture.

CBT is present not just in Europe, South America, and Africa. It is also common in many parts of Asia, specifically in the ASEAN region. In

Laos' Ban Nam Dee Homestay "Lantern Village," guests experience the Lantern culture and tradition such as the Baci-ceremony, taste local meals, stay with families overnight, and participate in learning paper-making from bamboo, natural dyeing and traditional weaving. Activities such as a short trek in the protected forest area, a waterfall visit, and participation in the day-to-day work of the family, are included in the package program (Laos Sustainable Tourism Network, 2017). In the Philippines, there are some CBT ventures, but the one that appeals to the international market and has been recognized by the ASEAN award-giving body, is the *Bojo Aloguinsan Ecotourism Association* (BAETAS) in Cebu. The BAETAS was formed in 2009 with the help of the local government, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and other local organizations. The operations of BAETAS have already received several international awards recognizing their initiatives that foster community-based ecotourism. In 2017, it became the recipient of the ASEAN Tourism Award (ASEANTA) for the Best Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in Southeast Asia; in 2016, it was recognized by Green Destinations as one of the 100 sustainable destinations in the world; and, in 2015, it was awarded for Best Community-based Tourism Initiative at the Tourism InSPIRE Award by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) (Quintas, 2017).

2.3. Contributions of the Community to Sustainable Community-based Tourism

Community awareness is one of the basic references for the sustainable delivery of community-based tourism. Awareness of community-based tourism principles and practical concepts could lead to initial participation and activism (Khalid et al., 2019; Sihombing et al., 2019). It motivates different stakeholders to collaborate with local community members in intensifying the development of community-based tourism, especially in rural

areas. It promotes community cohesiveness and has potential positive impacts on socio-economic and cultural aspects (Zielinski et al., 2020). In terms of local community involvement and participation, "local participation and empowerment through awareness must involve the people in all stages of the development process of sustainable community-based tourism" (Sitikarn, 2021, p. 1). It also underscored that basic possible positive impacts must be felt and given to them in return. Other local community contributions to tourism development participations are the development of tourism products and services through its operating sectors (e.g., accommodation, transportation, food and beverage, travel and tour), self-governance initiative through decision-making and partnership and collaboration with other stakeholders (ASEAN, 2016).

But over time, there are hindrances to community awareness and their motivation to provide meaningful contributions to community-based tourism. In the study by Khartishvili et al. (2020), they have developed a community-based tourism iceberg, foregrounding the problems and causes of community awareness and participation. In the study, two highlighted causes for the problems are pessimism, lack of motivation and lack of participatory learning. The identified causes on the diminishing significance of community-based tourism are rooted in the lack of awareness among local community members. Other encountered problems are the community members' lack of interest, attitudes of other stakeholders, high costs and financial resources, and hazards (natural and biological) (Llupart, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). In the research conducted by Anore et al. (2019), Calicoan Island in Guiuan, Eastern Samar, Philippines, the invisibility of community-based tourism activities and programs was caused by a lack of information and awareness on how to develop significant actions and platforms.

2.4. Barangay San Miguel, Echague, Isabela: The Case Study

Echague is a 1st class municipality in southern Isabela Province. The northern part of the city is bounded by the towns of San Isidro, Alicia, Angadanan, and San Guillermo, on the east by Dinapigue, on the south by Quirino Province, San Agustin, and Jones, and on the west by Santiago City. They are known to be the main producers of corn in the whole province of Isabela, which makes them top producers of corn coffee, corn *pastillas* (or milk candy), and native corn-based delicacies. Echague comprises 64 barangays and has a total population of 88,410 (PSA, 2020). According to the 2015 Census, San Miguel, the largest barangay in terms of land mass, comprises 669 individuals of different age groups. It represented 0.85% of the total population of Echague (Provincial Government of Isabela, 2015). Financially, the town is sustaining its resources through its revenues. According to the Provincial Government of Isabela (2015), the internal revenue allotment of Echague was estimated at USD 2,375,826.04. Local-sourced revenues generated were amounted to USD 196,715.33 while other revenues were USD 35,290.55. These has brought a total LGU income of USD 2,925,445.69 (Provincial Government of Isabela, 2015). The local economy relies on agriculture, industrial, commercial, service center, and mining. Figures 1 and 2 show the figural representation of the map of Echague and Barangay San Miguel.

The barangay also houses the only known natural archeological site named Dipanyong Cave or Sitio Jamtic, as the residents call it. Locals usually visit the archeological site without any restrictions or guidelines. The cave's beauty is fascinating with the known existence of stalactites and stalagmites. Visitors or tourists are not adequately oriented on how to properly care for the site in terms of waste management, structural capacity, and physical integrity.



Figure 1 | Figural representation of Echague, Isabela location map

Source: Gonzalez, n.d.

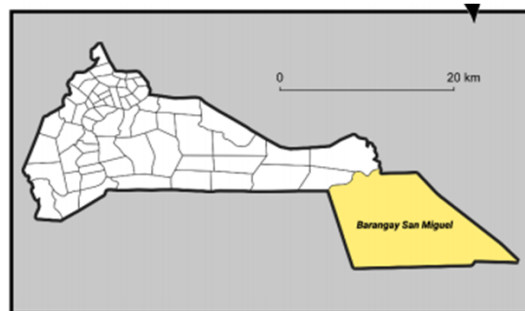


Figure 2 | Figural representation of Barangay San Miguel location map

Source: Provincial Government of Isabela, 2015

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Design

In developing the research, the researchers used the qualitative-transcendental phenomenological approach. It determines information that is qualitatively driven through different measurements and tools. Table 2 provides a tabular representation of the summarized research methodology:

Table 1 | Tabular representation of the summarized research methodology

Design	Approach	Data Measurement	Research Tools	Ethical Consideration	Data Analysis
Qualitative	Phenomenology (n=49)	Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Semi-structured Aide Memoire or Guide Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of Communication and Intent; • Virtual Consultation and Meetings; • Verbal Orientation; • Consent Forms; • Proper Citation and Referencing; and • Academic and Policy-based Research 	Repertory Grid and Thematic Network Analysis – Mixed Development (Kuchartz, 2019)

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers

3.2. Subject and Study Site

The research's study site is Barangay San Miguel, Municipality of Echague, Province of Isabela. Echague, as a 1st class municipality, is known as one of the province's top corn producers (Provincial Government of Isabela, 2015). Within the municipality, Barangay San Miguel is considered the "remotest barangay" (Dy V, 2020), but it has significant resources on ecosystem diversity, crops and landscapes. The municipality is considered as a potential tourism destination that offers nature-based and adventure tourism, which are concentrated in Barangay San Miguel. It is also considered as part of the Northern Sierra Mountain Natural Park.

To examine the study site's current situation, the researchers have identified the appropriate and associated local community members. They have determined their practices, perspectives, and opinions towards awareness of sustainable community-based tourism. The research has included a total of forty-nine (n=49) key informants as subjects. The key informants were the barangay government representatives, current and potential local business owners who are associated with tourism, food and beverage, and commercial trading, local people's organizations (women's league, tour guides, and farmers), and members from the local academe (Department of Education teachers living in the barangay).

3.3. Data Measure

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to determine and document the stakeholders' perspectives. Topics for the FGD were based on the study's objectives, specifically on the potentials and development of sustainable community-based tourism in the study site. It was done through the traditional face-to-face approach with the provision of applying the protocols and guidelines set by the local government. A guide question or semi-structured aide memoire was utilized to make the process systematic.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure and Ethical Consideration

Researchers were guided by proper step-by-step procedures with ethical standards and regulations in the systematic collection and gathering of data and information. Figure 3 showcases a figural representation of the research data collection procedures.

Before conducting the research fieldwork, proper coordination and collaboration were implemented through virtual meetings with a representative from the local community. Also, the research proposal and its associated instruments were ethically reviewed by the Philippine Normal University (PNU) Ethics Review Committee (QAC No. CC-09242018-023). Then for formality, letters of intent and invitation were disseminated to key infor-

mants, which also attached the background of the research and the consent form. If key informants agreed to cooperate in the conduct of the research, the plotting of the research fieldwork schedule was attained. The schedule was based on the availability of key informants. In this phase, written documentation and receiving copies were collected and documented. During the fieldwork phase from March 10 to 16, 2022, oral orientations were conducted to provide key informants with the project's overview and entertain questions, and clarifications. Researchers also emphasized the value of research as an academic and policy-driven exercise only. After the orientation, consent forms were distributed to be accomplished by respective

informants and collected thereafter. In this phase, researchers fully respected the decisions of those people who opted not to join the fieldwork. Voice, photo, and video recordings were made during the fieldwork. Key informants were advised and provided their consent before they commenced the FGD. After the conduct of the research fieldwork, transcriptions were conceptualized for documentation and proper analysis purposes. All documentations were kept confidential, and only the researchers could access it. Lastly, in the research writing process, statements and arguments highlighted in the findings and discussions were based on the data and information provided.

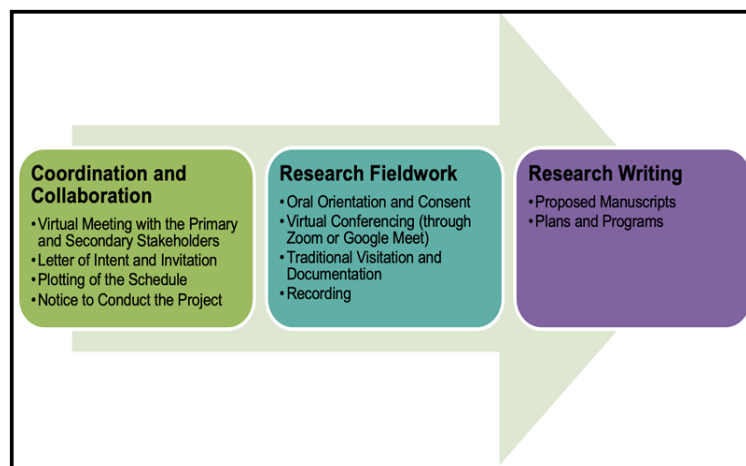


Figure 3 | Data collection procedures
Source: Conceptualized by the researchers

3.5. Mode of Analysis

In the scientific and systematic analysis of data and information, two modes or approaches were used: the Repertory Grid and Thematic Network Analysis. The Repertory Grid determines significant codes that represent the thoughts and opinions of the key informants and are in line with the study's objectives. Normally, a Repertory Grid is represented using a three-column tabular format. The first part highlighted the significant statements and arguments from the transcription

while the second column provided the *a priori* codes representing the statement and arguments. The appropriate *a priori* codes were selected based on the technical terminology and definitions from the literature and frameworks. The last column showcased the general code that could represent the similarities and differences of *a priori* codes.

After the conduct of the Repertory Grid, general codes and *a priori* codes were analyzed through Thematic Network Analysis, specifically using mixed development (Kuckartz, 2019). In a mixed de-

velopment strategy, the research background and the development of the instrument were based on theoretical frameworks and related literature. Then the developed thematic network was considered as its contributing framework. The codes were connected from one code to another based on their similarities and connectedness. It was analyzed through a mind-mapping approach.

4. Findings

In developing the research findings, the study has underscored the significance of the local community's contribution to conceptualizing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating sustainable tourism development through CBT. The research has developed the Community Contribution on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework that provides a comprehensive understanding of the associated actions delivered by the local community in promoting and implementing sustainable CBT in their destination. The framework highlights four themes, namely, *Systematic* (Sustainable Tourism Management), *Directional* (Sustainable Tourism

Governance), *Interpretational* (Sustainable Tourism Education and Information Dissemination), and *Rational* (Sustainable Tourism Philosophies and Values). Figure 4 and Table 2 show the figural and tabular representations of the framework:



Figure 4 | Community Contributions on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers

Table 2 | Tabular representation of the Themes, Categories and Significant Statements of the Framework

Themes	Categories	Significant Statements
<i>Systematic</i> (Sustainable Tourism Management)	Resource Generation Operational Tourism Management of Associated Activities Organizational Structure and Collaboration Efforts Consultation and Information Dissemination	Financial Assistance Cottage Management Communication and Coordination with Different Stakeholders
<i>Directional</i> (Sustainable Tourism Governance)	Environmental Protection Pandemic-related Responses Preservation and Sustainable Tourism Operations Management of Identified Attractions and Sites	Barangay Order and Policies Research Capacity Building
<i>Interpretational</i> (Sustainable Tourism Education and Information Dissemination)	Education Tourism Promotions	Word-of-mouth Local Culture and Heritage
<i>Rational</i> (Sustainable Tourism Philosophies and Values)	Previous Practices Current Situation Ways Forward as a Recommendation	Sustainable and Livable Barangay Sustainable Infrastructure Safety and Security Livelihood

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers

Under the *systematic* theme, local community members concentrate on resource generation, operational tourism management of associated activities, organizational structure and collaboration efforts, and consultation and information dissemination approach. Basic and associated tourism resources were provided through the guidance and support of other stakeholders (e.g., national and local government units). It was motivated by a persistent appeal from the local community. The resources generally focus on financial, agricultural materials, safety and security efforts, and infrastructure programs. The local community is also responsible for developing different tourism-related products and services, such as tours, accommodation, and food and beverage. They are also in charge of documenting tourist arrivals by manual recording. Another factor of the local community's contribution is establishing organizational structure and sustainable collaboration. It concentrates on conceptualizing people's organizations (for instance, mountain tour guides) and immense collaboration with the Barangay government and business establishments (e.g., travel and tour agencies). It is being used by the community to facilitate orderliness and sufficient implementation of their tour programs, especially for adventure-related activities. Lastly, to sustain the procedures and approaches to their practices, the local community continuously collaborates with external stakeholders, such as the Department of Tourism (DOT), for public consultations, training, and workshops. As stated by key informants:

*Sometimes, we receive some **financial assistance** or some **seeds** (for agricultural purposes).*

We all worked together to make the cottage.

*We have **constant coordination and communication with the barangay officials**, especially the Barangay Captain.*

*Some DOT personnel and those from the Municipal Office **came for a visit and called for a meeting**.*

The second theme is *directional*, which concentrates on the local community's strategy toward sustainable governance. It focuses on the community's efforts to conceptualize sustainable policies for the natural and cultural environment and associated programs and projects. The policies were conceptualized through the assistance of the local legislative body, the Municipal *Sangguniang Bayan* and the Barangay Council. The policies were developed to concentrate on environmental protection, pandemic-related responses, preservation and sustainable tourism operations, and management of identified attractions and sites. In general, the ratified policies aim to provide positive implications for the local community, specifically on income generation, cleanliness of the surrounding, safeguarding significant cultural values, and promoting human and societal rights from the resources. Through legal efforts, the community urges themselves to abide by the rules and be cautious in their actions. Aside from legislation, associated executive programs and projects were implemented. With the assistance of associated stakeholders, the local community developed livelihood opportunities; coordination on doing survey activities for land registration; site validation; and research and development from the academe sector, attendance to different seminars and workshops on disaster response and resiliency, tourism product development, and local tourism development plan. As shared by key informants:

*We issued an order regulating people's entry into San Miguel. This is to ensure mainly **environmental protection**. The **socio-cultural, tourism, scientific research aspects** were also considered to allow visitors, tourists, different agencies access to*

explore the caves.

We made ordinances on vandalism and littering inside and outside the cave.

On the part of the community, seminars for tour guides were conducted, and both Mayor and Congressman Inno helped us with the Regional Tourism Office.

*Other than that, as part of our preparation, we also give **Capability Trainings to our stakeholders**, particularly the community and those industry stakeholders to equip them.*

The local community is also aware on the significance of sustainable interpretation through education and tourism promotions. The importance of disseminating the tourism culture creates a need for primary stakeholders to promote it to other community members. The local community recognizes the significance of educating its members on how tourism can affect their lives, especially in economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and politico-administrative affairs. To continuously experience the impacts of tourism, the local community recognizes the need to develop tourism promotions. Currently, word-of-mouth and normal lifestyle practices are manifested as the local community's strategy to promote their barangay to potential tourists. As reflected by key informants:

At first, maybe, a number of people were not aware, until, little by little, people learned that there were visitors or tourists thereby giving information or preaching tourism.

In fact, the videos shown, especially those presented by Sir Louie (Municipal Tourism Officer), pale in comparison to the never-before-seen beautiful falls and lagoons, so, we stron-

gly advocate for better roads and promote other breath-taking and magnificent Sierra Madre falls.

They want to promote our barangay as they would want to earn an income.

Lastly, the *rational* theme delivers the philosophical perspective of the local community on their previous practices, current situation, and ways forward as a recommendation. The theme emphasizes the importance of the local community's opinions and suggestions as their way of contributing to the sustainable development of their destination. The local community recognized previous practices that may or may not have contributed to the success of their plans and programs. The realizations and perspectives emanated from the potentials of their area for tourism, protection and management of the natural resources and the environment, cleanliness and sanitation issues, available utilities, the legality of their land ownership, accessibility and distance of the barangay to the town proper, and safety and security issues. The other concept is the local community's recommendations. These are concentrated on infrastructure development, income and livelihood, community resource development as their tourism and hospitality products and services, technology and innovation, and sustaining partnerships with other stakeholders. As manifested from key informants:

Some properties are not yet transferred to our name.

We think further discussions are in order regarding whatever structures or establishments are built here since we also want to protect San Miguel. We would not want the same scenario of over tourism with Boracay to happen in our place.

There was a proposal; however, the

student was discouraged because of safety and security issues. We are making arrangements to improve our livelihood once we have good roads. We hope there will be tricycles or other modes of transportation to bring them to the attraction sites. If possible, whichever is better, arrangements must be made for those who would want to run their own businesses.

5. Discussion

Theoretical Implication

The Community Contribution on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework suggests four themes that could coincide with existing literature discussions through theoretical studies about sustainable CBT and its implications. It also emphasizes its differences from other published studies and its benefits. On the systematic theme, the significance of resource generation is visible in common tourism activities. Although the literature highlighted the weak participation of the community in tourism resource generation (Bello, Lovelock & Carr, 2018; Chan, Marzuki & Mohtar, 2021), the findings underscored the intensified perspectives of the local community on the significance of resources and their simple approaches on how they contributed to them. Moreover, it was reflected in the study conducted by Chatkaewnapanon and Lee (2022) that the local community wanted to develop their destination based on their resources and cultural values. Another aspect is the contribution of the local community to the operational tourism management of associated activities. Local community members became frontliners in providing basic tourism products and services to tourists by establishing different operating sectors (Godfrey &

Clarke, 2000; Rasoolimanesh & Jaafar, 2016). Local community collaboration is also significant in the implementation of a sustainable CBT. It contributes to aligning their perspectives with other stakeholders. It also showcases their coordination of organizational management and decision-making opportunities (Eyisi, Lee, & Trees, 2020). It serves to sustain consultation and information dissemination among local community members and other stakeholders. As stated by numerous researchers (Bello, Lovelock & Carr, 2018; Chan, Marzuki & Mohtar, 2021; Gunawijaya & Pratiwi, 2018; Llopert, 2022; Thetsane, 2019; Tosun, 2000; Xu et al., 2019), proper consultation and sustainable partnership must be visible between different stakeholders, especially for the local community, on promoting and strengthening CBT on rural destinations. On the other hand, under the directional theme, policy, program, and project development are prerogatives of the local community's contribution to a sustainable CBT. It was stated by Khalid et al. (2019) that the delivery of tourism policies and programs must be conducted with the local community to strengthen their sense of ownership and empowerment. In the case of Barangay San Miguel, the local community is participative in public consultations for legislative measures both from the municipal and barangay level and in the conceptualization and implementation of CBT programs and projects. The third theme concentrates on the interpretation aspect, which directs the local community to contribute to education and promotion. As a common notion from the theoretical perspective, education on tourism culture and its relevance to the common lifestyle is still a gray area. It is still a typical problem for most destinations promoting sustainable CBT (Bello, Lovelock, & Carr, 2018; Chan, Marzuki, & Mohtar, 2021; Eyisi, Lee, & Trees, 2020; Garrod, Wilson, & Bruce, 2001; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Gunawijaya & Pratiwi, 2018; Lo & Janta, 2020; Llopert, 2022; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Thetsane, 2019; Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Tosun, 2000; Wondirad

& Ewnetu, 2019; Xu et al., 2019). In the case of Barangay San Miguel, the local community members are aware of this problem. They collaborate with primary and secondary stakeholders to provide appropriate solutions through public consultation and informal education. Sustainable CBT promotion through word-of-mouth effectively disseminates significant details of the destination to potential tourists. Storytelling and personal experiences, especially from the local community, are beneficial to create an intimate approach to CBT destination marketing (Han et al., 2019). Lastly, the rational theme explicates the value of the local community's realizations, perspectives, and recommendations as contributions to CBT. It is aligned with the theoretical concept of Tosun (2006) on the typology of community participation in tourism (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018). Having personal and communal perspectives can be an introduction to spontaneous participation derived from the bottom-to-top approach. The local community is constantly needed in the decision-making process and directive on developing projects and programs based on their necessities, and wants.

Practical Implication

In the context of its application, the conceptualized framework is associated with various practical application systemic approaches to tourism development developed by international and national governmental institutions. It is comprehensively shown in Table 3 (in appendix).

The Community Contribution on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework integrated some of the identified tourism ethics based on the UNWTO Convention in 2020. The framework coincides with the significance of integrating the sustainability of the natural and cultural environment through conservation and safeguarding, the beneficial contribution of tourism to the local communities, and the responsibilities of different sta-

keholders in sustainable tourism. It was also related to the basic principles of implementing cultural heritage tourism as suggested by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Charter on Cultural Heritage Tourism (2021). The framework correlates with the significance of the local community in decision-making through participatory governance, the integration of sustainable interpretation through education and tourism promotions for visitors, and the importance of community awareness and participation in cultural heritage resource conservation. Furthermore, the significance of the framework's relevance on community collaboration, cooperation, and participation is associated with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation's (APEC) suggested framework on community-based entrepreneurship in rural tourism through digital empowerment (APEC, 2022). It encourages the local community to contribute more value-based interpretation, communal governance, and collaboration with other stakeholders. The conceptualized framework is also associated with the ASEAN CBT Standards (2016), which concentrates on the responsibility of the local community for developing different tourism products and services, such as accommodation, food and beverage, and associated tours.

In the Philippine context, the conceptualized framework adheres to the existing national legislation and executive-driven programs and projects. Through the positive response and perspectives of the local community from Barangay San Miguel, their systematic, directional, interpretational, and rational practices coincide with one of the mandates of the Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 (Congress of the Philippines, 2009). The law highlights the significance of community participation and sustainable tourism interpretation through the identities of the local community. It is also related to one of the strategic directions under the National Tourism Development Plan for 2016-2022 (DOT, 2016), which promotes inclusive and sustainable growth through tourism. Lo-

cal communities are valuable in developing tourism programs and projects based on their needs, necessities and perspectives. Lastly, it is also valuable in the National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan of the Philippine government for 2013-2022 (DENR & DOT, 2014). It concentrates on the significance of the local community ecotourism development participation and promoting its beneficial impact on the local community. It is associated with the directional theme of participatory governance and decision-making and the interpretational theme of sustainable education and tourism promotion.

6. Conclusion

The research analyzed the contributions of the local community to sustainable community-based tourism of Barangay San Miguel in Echague, Isabela, Philippines. A Community Contribution on Sustainable Tourism Development Framework was developed to highlight the contributions of the local community in local tourism strategic directions based on the pre-, during, and post-pandemic situation. Based on this framework, the local community's contribution is focused on the Systematic (sustainable tourism management), Directional (sustainable tourism governance), Interpretational (sustainable tourism education and information dissemination), and Rational (sustainable tourism philosophies and values) themes. The framework concurs with the existing theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The directional context of community participation is observed along with public consultation and involvement through minimal decision-making initiatives. It also highlighted the concept of sustainable interpretation through education and promotion which is still a concern for the local community. The community signified the importance of continuous expansion on the communal understanding of tourism and its

implications. The framework concentrated on the relevance of rational discourse from an individual perspective and communal understanding and realizations. Recommendations from the local community must be considered a priority mechanism to be one basis for the conceptualization of systematic directions and strategies. The framework also integrates the existing practical applications developed by international and national governmental institutions. As associated with practical approaches, the framework discusses the relevance of community participation and collaboration through conceptualization, implementation, and sustainability of different areas in the local CBT system. It generally provides a systematic understanding of the lived experiences of the local community's contribution to sustainable tourism development through CBT. As a recommendation, the findings can be used as a basis for developing a Sustainable Tourism and Strategic Development Plan concentrated on a community-based tourism development paradigm. It can be integrated into the development and contribution of the local community on the strategic directions, programs, and priority areas relevant to economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and politico-administrative affairs.

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Appendix

Table 3 | Interconnectivity of the conceptualized framework from different practical applications

Associated Practical Applications from the Conceptualized Framework					
Community Contribution to Sustainable Tourism Development Framework (Mercado et al., 2022)	Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics (UNWTO, 2020a)	[Proposed Final Draft] International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism (ICOMOS ICTC, 2021)	Framework of Community-Based Entrepreneurship (CBE) in Rural Tourism through Digital Empowerment (APEC, 2022)	ASEAN Community Based Tourism Standard (2016)	Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 (Congress of the Philippines)
Systematic (Resource Generation, Tourism Operational Management of Associated Activities, Organizational Structure and Collaboration Efforts, and Approaches on Consultation and Information Dissemination)	Art. 8: Tourism, a beneficial activity for host countries and communities	Principle 4: Recognize and reinforce the rights of communities, Indigenous Peoples and traditional owners by including access and engagement in participatory governance of the cultural and natural heritage commons used in tourism	Strengthen Partnership with Other Community and Stakeholders	Standards for quality tour and guiding services; Standards for ensuring quality food and beverage services;	Sec. 2, Letter i: Develop responsible tourism as a strategy for environmentally sound and community participatory tourism programs, enlisting the participation of local communities, including indigenous peoples, in conserving bio-physical and cultural diversity, promoting environmental understanding and education, providing assistance in the determination of ecotourism sites and ensuring full enjoyment of the benefits of tourism by the concerned communities
	Art. 6: Tourism, a factor of environmental sustainability; Art. 7: Tourism, a user of cultural resources and a contributor to their enhancement	Principle 3: Enhance public awareness and visitor experiences through sensitive interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage; Principle 5: Raise awareness and reinforce cooperation for cultural heritage conservation among all stakeholders involved in tourism	Strengthen the Leadership and Local Empowerment	Standards for ensuring quality accommodations Standards for ensuring the performance of (in-bound) CBT Friendly Tour Operators (FTO)	
Interpretational (Education and Promotion)	Art. 9: Responsibilities of stakeholder in tourism development	Principle 4: Recognize and reinforce the rights of communities, Indigenous Peoples and traditional owners by including access and engagement in participatory governance of the cultural and natural heritage commons used in tourism	Enhance Interpretation and Storytelling	Standards for encouraging interaction between the local community and guests	Strategy 3: Maximizing economic benefits for the host communities; Strategy 5: Strengthening institutional capacity; Strategy 6: Developing and strengthening partnerships; Strategy 7: Establishing mechanism for sustainable financing Strategy 4: Promoting and developing a culture of ecotourism
	Art. 8: Tourism, a beneficial activity for host countries and communities		Strengthen Partnership with Other Community and Stakeholders; Strengthen the Leadership and Local Empowerment; Enhance Interpretation and Storytelling	Standards for contribution to social well-being	
Rational (Realizations, Perspectives, and Recommendations)					National Ecotourism Strategy & Action Plan 2013-2022 (DENR & DOT, 2014)
					National Tourism Development Plan 2016-2022 (DOT, 2016)

Source: Conceptualized by the researchers