

Sustainability, ecotourism and marketing: Examination and marketing of ecotourism in Irawan Eco Park, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines.



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Abstract

Marketing for ecotourism can both create profit and promote the conservation of an area equally. There are previous studies that detail tangible and practical ways to promote sustainability in the tourist industry economically and ecologically. This research reviews the principal theories used to discuss how sustainability has been interpreted, and how it should be by community participation and stakeholder's direction. Interviews, observations and tourist survey in this research have digitalized local knowledge in the Filipino culture and lifestyle, where the voices from residents have drawn a picture to assess a desired ecotourism of Irawan Eco Park. This case study is located in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, the Philippines, together with the researcher's experience of Filipino culture, to suggest further actions and recommendations of improving the management of Irawan Eco Park.

Keywords: sustainability, ecotourism, marketing, Irawan Eco Park, Puerto Princesa City, Filipino.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Need of this research

Ecotourism, as a Philippine government policy, has its roots in the 20-year Philippine Tourism Master Plan (TMP). The Philippine government recognised that ecotourism could be a development strategy for reducing poverty and improving the life quality of host communities; however, TMP begun in 1989 and was completed in 1991, and was developed when “sustainable development” was not yet a buzzword. Therefore, nowhere in the TMP one can find an explicit reference to a policy or philosophy based on “sustainable tourism development. (Alampay, 2005)

The 7,107 islands of the Philippines exhibit severe poverty and most inhabitants face economic hardship because of a lack of livelihood opportunities, non-sustainable development, and inadequate transportation infrastructure and facilities (Foundation, 2009). The tourist industry in such areas can provide many opportunities to improve the livelihood of the inhabitants (Alampay, 2005). The pristine environment of Palawan is wonderful for sightseeing, beach holidays and marine sports. Its many tourist attractions include the underground river at the St Paul National Park, the karst terrain and lakes in Coron, the Tabon Caves, Quezon, Ursula Island, Bataraza, Tubattaha Reef, Cagayancillo, Calauit Island, Busuanga Island, Honda Bay, Puerto Princesa City, as well as the beaches, islands, lagoons and dive sites of El Nido, Taytay and Fin Bay, and Cuyo Island.

The capital city of Palawan, Puerto Princesa City, is known as a city in the forest. It has been noted that although tourism can raise the standard of living for its residents. It should be done in compliance with the conservation of the environment. This is the reason that the tourist office in Puerto Princesa City focus on ecotourism and community-based tourism to avoid and reduce the environmental impact from the burgeoning tourist industry, and have set sensible targets for the management of tourism. An example of this is by restricting the number of visitors to the underground river resort to 9—as its capacity.

To follow the idea of environmental conservation, Irawan Eco Park was set up as a low-impact ecotourism business on the land at Irawan River watershed in Puerto Princesa City. It is an alternative to the marine resorts of Puerto Princesa, but also protects the Irawan river, which is the main water supply for the city. The government-owned site is comprised of 3,000 hectares, and has been a protected watershed for 25 years. It covers a huge area of tropical forest rich in flora and fauna, however, no digital research result can provide what these species are.

The ideals of environmental management and providing employment for local inhabitants of Irawan have been combined in the management of the park, however, the voices from inhabitants had not been complied with management state in Irawan Eco Park, due to limited human resource and knowledge, consequently, a need of this research and local participation had appeared. Connell gave a view about local participation in 1997: not only about achieving the more efficient and more equitable distribution of material resources: it is also about the sharing of knowledge and the transformation of the process of learning itself in the service of people’s self-development’ (Connell, 1997).

The goal of the current study was to recommend better marketing strategies, such as green trips by local participation, to promote their culture and lifestyle for charming tourists and achieve long-term sustainable development.

1.2 Research questions and aim

Research questions

- How is existing situation in relation to marketing strategies in Irawan Eco Park Irawan Eco Park?
- Are there better marketing strategies able to provide by local residents?

Research aim

- Find out the existing situation in relation to marketing strategies with an aim to come up better marketing strategies for Irawan Eco Park.

2

Methodological framework

2.1 Qualitative research: open-ended interview questions

Open-ended questions were chosen to gather the interview data in this research. According to the Dervin and Dewdney's definition (Dervin & Dewdney, 1986), open-ended questions are broad and therefore require more than one or two word responses. This method which develops mostly on trust, is also perceived as less threatening, allowing an unrestrained or free response, and may be more useful with articulate users. However, the negative aspects of this approach, which had been appeared in this study, it is an extremely time consuming to both conduct and to analyse the resulting data, especially on inarticulate users.

A voice recorder and transcript were both used for data-collection and analysis. The duration of the recording is 30-45 minutes prospectively and the categories of interviewees are as below:

- One owner and two staff from the Irawan Eco Park
- Staff at Irawan Barangay Hall (community office)
- Residents at Barangay Irawan (one local resident, one indigenous tribal leader)
- City tourism officer in Puerto Princesa City
- Staff at PCSD (Palawan Council for Sustainable Development)
- Barangay chairman in rural area: Barangay Aramaywan, Narra, Palawan.
- Residents of rural area: Barangay Aramaywan, Narra, Palawan.

The purpose of interviews is to identify the current marketing status in Irawan Eco Park. The period of research was the raining season in Palawan (August to November, 2012); the raining caused some restriction of accessibility to community and the number of participants. Also, there is a small tourist survey which is also complied in this study (more details at page 13: 4.1: results).

Criteria of Questions: Sustainability

The questions were drawn by the criteria of sustainability in tourism field as following figure:



Figure: Criteria often used for sustainability in tourism (Mowforth & Munt, 2008).

1. Ecological sustainability: It has been suggested by Maldonado et al. (Maldonado, Hurtado & Saborio, 1992) determining a maximum carrying capacity of an area is an important method for accessing environmental impact and sustainability. The carrying capacity can be defined as the number of visitors to an area, which can be allowed for precipitation, vulnerability to erosion, degree of slope.
2. Social Sustainability: Social sustainability refers to the ability of a community, whether local or national, to absorb inputs, such as extra people, in both the short or long term, and to continue functioning without social disharmony. The necessary questions to be asked in this context are: Does the local community accept the activities at the ecopark? Are they willing to contribute their knowledge to the project?
3. Cultural Sustainability: Cultural sustainability refers to the ability of a community to retain or adapt the elements of their culture that distinguish them from other ethnic groups. Several questions are relevant in this context: Is there an unacceptable change in cultural adaptation coming with blooming number tourists to Palawan?
4. Economic sustainability: Mowforth and Munt consider that economic sustainability is a lesser concern than the other elements, but it should be also included in this research since an abundant income can sustain this park and help to improve living standards of local people.
5. The educational element: The maintenance and protection of the local culture should be incorporated into the tours and facilities in Irawan Eco Park. The environmental education to visitors and employees are equally important. The results of staff's interviews reveal that the only environmental messages they have been aware of is: "No littering, no taking out anything but photos, and planting trees every year."

6. Local participation: It is necessary to assess how residents participate in or with Irawan Eco Park, the majority of *Barangay* (community) Irawan support the operation of park or not, by passive attitude or self-motivated one.
7. The conservation element: Ecotourism cannot survive without conservation and a symbiotic relation must therefore be established (Budowski, 1976). This initiative of Irawan has continued for 25 years with the cooperation of the city government through the Pista Y Ang Kagueban (Feast in the Forest) project. Each year, thousands of trees are planted in Irawan forest.

Interview guide

The interview guide provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. In this study, it focuses on three issues: ecotourism, sustainability, and the participants' knowledge of Irawan.

The first issue enable us to understand how the participants perceived the increasing number of tourists to Palawan since 2011. At this aspect, the questions about social and cultural change coming with tourism bloom were also been comprised, and their opinions about management in Irawan Eco Park were be also enclosed. The second aspect is about sustainability. However, this is a very abstract idea for some inarticulate interviewees, the questions were finally rephrased from 'how do you think about sustainability' to 'do you think what is a good living style to you'. The last part of interview aims to link the first and second by investigating how much knowledge of Irawan still hasn't been transcript.

At large, this qualitative measurement gave us local people's perception and opinion about Irawan Eco Park, and the status of local life in Irawan. Before we started our interviews, some definitions of aspects have also been chosen.

- **The definition of ecotourism** : purposeful travel to natural areas to understand the culture and natural history of the environment; taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem; producing economic opportunities that make the conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people" (Garen, 2000).

Keywords: ecotourism, jobs, income, tourists.

- **The definition of sustainability**: Many participants of interviews could not understand 'sustainability', we simplified to a definition of sustainability: 'a good living style for you'. In the book "Dimensions of 'sustainability'" (Goodland & Daly, 1996) sustainability was discussed in terms of social, economic and ecological dimensions. However, since most of the participants didn't seem to understand such a complex idea, so we also use an alternative meaning: 'sustainable development should mainly help preserve the ecological systems and resources necessary for economic and social life – as an important prerequisite for meeting the future needs of humanity', which was given by Littig and Grießler (Littig & Grießler, 2005).

Keywords: sustainability, good living style, sustainable, farming, self-sufficient.

- **Participants' knowledge of Irawan**: The participants were asked about how much they know of history, culture, and ecological, social and economic situation in Irawan, their response are the cultural precious because of scarce materials can be found about this. Also, this can be used for putting into environmental tours in Irawan Eco Park.

Keywords: barangay, tribe, life, happy, living style, history.

For qualitative research, two aspects are used to differing deductive and inductive codes (characters) in the transcripts:

- Insufficient knowledge of ecotourism, sustainability and Irawan.
- Sufficient and normative suggestions for marketing.

These two characters were easily deductible from the problem of the study because they are relevant in the knowledge and opinions about Irawan Eco Park, by Wurzinger and Johansson's investigating (S. Wurzinger & M. Johansson, 2006), an understanding of people's individual knowledge of ecotourism is required to make marketing and planning efficient.

Further, these two characters are commonly used as representative of problems. However, there were some difficulties in analysing deductive codes because the three aspects 'ecotourism, sustainability and knowledge of Irawan' are interconnected and hard to be separated.

More notable sub-codes are used for better categorising in the following, According to these 11 codes the distinct characters in the transcripts were analysed at appendix 1. Also, from the participants' answers, massive local knowledge has been recorded, which could be shared as an intellectual knowledge of environmental tours in the park.

Deductive codes:

1. Knowledge of Irawan
2. System of management of Irawan Eco Park
3. System of governmental tourism strategy
4. System of Irawan Barangay
5. Participation of local people in Irawan Eco Park

Inductive codes:

1. Satisfaction of farming style, live at born place
2. Impact of tourism on culture remaining
3. Marketing strategy-1: sharing culture with tourists
4. Marketing strategy-2: ideas of ecotourism, community-based tourism
5. Marketing strategy-3: ideas of sustainability
6. Marketing strategy-4: city in the forest

2.2 Observation notes of interviews

Due to restriction of researcher numbers, there is no detailed and structured observation notes can be used in this research; however, the draft of observation notes are still incorporated, because which is only a sketch to provide another view, to show how people react behind transcripts, including their postures, emotions and even intonation. For instance, a reaction that might be seemed discriminatory may actually result from a bad humour or tiredness but which guild you to think in another way.

The observation notes can merely be a starting point for further investigation, and the interviews can make vital outcome to be explicit and valid. Details of observation notes are enclosed at appendix 2.

2.3 Tourist Survey

Aims of survey

A small tourist survey was also accomplished within this research, this could be a pilot study of future business survey for Irawan Eco Park, in order to have better understanding of tourists' intentions of visiting this park. The number of participants are 10, 5 people are Filipino tourists from outside of Palawan, another 5 people are international tourists; anyhow, an unexpected result of this survey may point out another challenge to further research in the future (more details at 4.1: results).

2.4 Barriers and constraints

In this research, due to limited resource for this research, no deep and detailed observation notes had been done. The raining caused some restriction of accessibility to community and the number of participants; however, local people all provided heartfelt help to continue this research. Except the limited time and researchers, another restriction is language barrier. Some inarticulate participants' answers can't use English to provide a fully expression, even local students and residents did translation from Tagalog and English, due to this barrier, participants and researchers may not meet the point of questions, because some Tagalog words have no alternative words can be expressed in English. It is actually the biggest limitation in this research.

For distinct strategies, four clear ways of analysis of transcripts were conducted:

1. Marketing strategy-1: sharing culture to tourists
2. Marketing strategy-2: the idea of ecotourism, community-based tourism
3. Marketing strategy-3: the idea of sustainability
4. Marketing strategy-4: the idea of 'city in the forest'

3 Geographical and cultural background

3.1 Background of Irawan

Barangay Irawan

The village community of *Barangay Irawan*, is about 10 kilometres from the city centre of Puerto Princesa and it covers a 5-kilometre stretch of the national highway. Irawan is officially divided into 7 *puroks* (districts). The *purok* is the smallest unit of governance in the Philippines and represents several households with an average of 20 to 50 residents (sometimes more depending on the particular geographical location or clustering of the houses).

The northern part of Irawan contains the *puroks* of *Purok Pag-Asa*, *Purok Freesom*, *Purok Visapa* and *Purok Pagbabago*. The western part has 14 zones, the Eastern part contains only *Purok Magsasaka*, while the Southern part contains *Purok Masagaga* and *Purok Bagong Pag-Asa*. The total land area is 2,374.09 hectares, with a population of 5,893 residents in 1,133 households. Approximately 40% of

the population are employed at government offices or in the private sector, 20% are engaged in business and 40% are engaged in farming and fishing. *Barangay Irawan* is one of the oldest Barangay in the city and is located in a mountainous and rural part of Puerto Princesa. The earliest inhabitants of the area were called the 'Tidaw' or 'Tidawan.' During the Japanese colonisation, Japanese saw many lights at night from the fires of people living in the Irawan Forest, which could account for the name Irawan, which means lamp in the Filipino language. The name of the indigenous people *Tidaw* was changed to 'Tagbanwa' and subsequently known as Irawan (Irawan, 2012).

Under the leadership of Englonga in 1912, the *Iwahig* Prison and Penal Colony were built in Irawan and the original inhabitants were forced to relocate. They searched for a new place where they could live freely, with mountainous areas, tall trees, clean water from the river and fresh air, and established a new community on the present site of Barangay Irawan.

A small number of the original Tagbanwa tribe, about 300 households, still live deep in the Irawan Forest. Most of them have a sustainable native lifestyle and some still dress in their traditional 'Bahan' (underpants). The main income for most is cutting and weaving bamboo products that are sold as curios and souvenirs to tourists. In the absence of regular employment, they plant and eat vegetables from their home gardens, and their staple food consists mainly of vegetables and sweet potato. (Irawan, 2012)

Irawan Eco Park

The Irawan Eco Park is located on protected land on the governmental property. The main aim of this park is to focus on environmental conservation rather than making money. However, as a private operator without governmental funding, to sustain a good financial situation is also the basic concern for Irawan Eco Park. The owners assert that only low-impact and community-based activities and facilities are allowed to operate in this area, they mean little impact to environment as so called 'low-impact'. In accordance with the community development, 10% of the profits are shared with the city and 5% with Irawan Barangay.

The distinct parts of Irawan Eco Park from other attractions:

- Upon arrival in Irawan Eco Park, you will be toured the facilities starting with the Irawan Cafe Art Gallery where you may view and purchase local arts and crafts created by the locals.
- Next on the itinerary would be a trip on board a traditional cart ride drawn by a *carabao* (water buffalo) up to the next stop.
- *The Hagedorn Eco-Home*. This is the home of Puerto Princesa's famous mayor, known for spearheading the eco-friendly measures that the host city has adopted to sustain the environment. Within the home you will be shown interesting collections which the mayor has been known to collect over the years.
- Upon reaching the Eco Park watershed area, your next activity will be the highly anticipated Zipline Adventure which will zoom you atop the forest canopy. The zip line at 1.3 kilometers long, which is the longest zipline ride in Asia.
- The fun however does not stop there - as soon as you finish the zipline, you will be ushered to the Skywalk Adventure. A safety harness will be attached to you as you walk wooden steps high above the forest. A truly exhilarating experience.
- After lunch or snacks, an English speaking guide will take you on the River Trail Adventure. Here you will be shown the various indigenous flora and fauna only found in Palawan.

As owner's opinion, the profit only can be expected to be fully stable after 25 years of management. The reason they chose Irawan as a lifelong career is its residential environment in nature, to balance a life with career about good residential surrounding with community, which is a win-win situation for owners and local inhabitants.

3.2 Marketing empirical situation

Marketing situation

The marketing strategy is used in Irawan Eco Park can be divided into several ways:

1. Mainly advertising and marketing are based at Facebook and tourist operator in Manila, one home page has built but including other attractions <http://forestcanopytours.com/>, not only for promoting Irawan Eco Park. Most promotes are announced on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/irawan.ecopark.3>.
2. Annual introduction brochures are taken into practice by marketing department, but due to limited budget, limited posters can be hang in the city to promote Eco Park.
3. Marketing at the crocodile farm: there is always at least one member of staff from Irawan Eco Park waiting at the nearby crocodile park to persuade customers to visit Irawan. However, they spend most of their time sitting on a bench, persuasion by words.
4. Persuading The city's tourist office to include Irawan Eco Park in the city tour guide: this application is in progress but needs to be updated weekly.
5. Visiting tour operators and hotels to sell tour packages: most of the tour operators and hotels have been contacted and informed about the facilities at Irawan Eco Park. However, no contracts between the park, travel agencies or hotels have been finalised. Informal verbal agreements have been mostly made, which the managers of Irawan Eco Park say are often not fulfilled, the employees mentioned that some tour operators never bring customers to the park.
6. Employee training in the meetings: Because of cultural differences, the foreign provide Filipino staff educational training by meetings. For example, employees give daily feedback after their work, and owners give suggestions to better doing.
7. Tricycle drivers: Staff of the Irawan Eco Park marketing department meet tricycle drivers outside the airport every week, to offer a partnership or shareholder relationship; because these agreements are informal, tricycle drivers still decide where to bring customers to elsewhere.

8. Package tour in the park:

Day tour Package 2012
Home of Asia's Longest canopy Zipline
Day tour Package / Php 1,300.00/pax 2012

* Inclusions:
Drop & Pick-up Service
Welcome Drinks
Lunch or Snacks
1.3 km. Zipline Adventure or River Massage
River Trail and Fish Feeding
Carabao Cart Ride to Hagedorn Eco-Home
Bee Farm Tour
Irawan Art Café Gallery
Skywalk
Butterfly Farm

The above information was a day tour package of Irawan Eco Park in 2012, which was printed on a simple flyer, and delivered to tourists outside of airport in Puerto Princesa City. There is limited deeper and full description after titles to attract tourists, it causes the problem of blurred understanding of activities. From a marketing-oriented view, more information might be needed to be put in after titles; the deeper information also can be posted on the website and Facebook homepage.

4 Results and Conclusion

4.1 Results

Interviews

The first concern in the transcripts is about **'sharing culture to tourists'**, the inhabitants and employees in Irawan pursue to share their own culture to tourists, which can educate tourists to respect local culture during and after visiting.

Second, the inhabitants and tourist officers assert that tourist activity should be advanced for ensuring a better life quality of community, they value **'ecotourism, community-based tourism'** as a doable way to improve local life.

Thirdly, all the participants, especially the employees in Irawan Eco Park mention to keep good environment for future generation by planting trees, stop feeding fish in the Irawan river, and doing low-impact touristic projects. Which concrete the character of **'the idea of sustainability'**.

Lastly, the employees in Irawan Eco Park address that Irawan Eco Park is a representative site of 'city in the forest' in Puerto Princesa, which includes green scene from blue ones in the coastal area.

- **Sharing culture to tourists**

1. Tour package can be combined with other attractions: such as tour of Masagana waterfall and adventure at Bonton River.
2. Selling local curios and food: Philippines Winnowing Basket. Traditional *biko* made by *malagkit* (glutinous) rice, coconut milk, sugar, and usually mashed cooked *ube* (purple yam).
3. Making Sawali for native houses: *Sawali* is a long grass, for putting on the roof of traditional houses. It can show the local architecture to tourists.
4. The introduction of indigenous culture: indigenous people in Irawan are Catholics or Christians, but they do still keep their traditional religion: Animism, it's like a religion for indigenous people but they serve trees as their gods, they do religious rituals when building a new house by elder people's blessing; prefer to cure their sickness and disease by witchdoctor & faith healers, the difference from modern medical system can also attract tourists for querying.

- **The idea of ecotourism, community-based tourism**

1. Provide employment opportunities and better livelihood to *barangays* by the part of ecotourism activities. Most of these fisher men groups have also formed an association of boat men, for example in Honda Bay, and have engaged this program.
2. To Irawan Eco Park, ecotourism can lift tourists' environmental awareness, also by using this idea, to keep good reputation for attracting tourists.

- **The idea of sustainability**

1. Continue and advertise the tree planting project online. Sustainability is to go back to the environment, the nature, for instance of the planting trees project in the forest of Puerto Princesa City: 'feast of the trees', which marked the 21st year of the festival, was led by Mayor Edward Hagedorn and winners of the Miss Earth pageant and is intended to rehabilitate 100 tree seeds, over 200 hectares of ravaged forest cover in Barangays Irawan and Sta. Lourdes by planting fast-growing fruit-bearing trees to prevent soil erosion. (Montenegro, July 5, 2012).
2. An idea to keep good environment to coming generations.
3. The residents think the good lifestyle is to keep the ways they have been following with ancestors.

- **The idea of 'city in the forest'**

1. Puerto Princesa is called 'the city in the forest', but tourists come for visiting underground river, Honda Bay and El Nido at large. Experience the forest in Puerto Princesa should be more emphasised, and Irawan Eco Park is an accessible site to show the green part of this city; this can be improved by educational tours in the park, to bring the ecological and cultural backgrounds into tours.
2. Providing abundant advertisement in the words of 'city in the forest' should be accomplished in the marketing strategy.
3. Only to operate low-impact projects in this park.

Tourist survey

The number of participants: 5 Filipino tourists, whom live outside of Palawan, another 5 people are international tourists, the details and survey items appear in the table below, the significant choices and numbers are shown in bold and shade:

Survey items		Choices	%
1	Before reading the above information, had you heard of Irawan Eco Park?	Yes	20
		No	80
1-1	If yes, please specify how:	Local travel agency	1
		Friends/Other travelers	1
2	Have you visited or are you planning to visit Irawan Eco Park?	Yes	50
		No	50
3	Which of the following activities offered in Irawan Eco Park would be most attractive to you?	Zipline	16.7
		Skywalk	25
		Jungle survival	16.7
		adventure: traditional uses of local plants	8.1
		Butterfly house	8.3
		Experiencing the life and culture of a sustainable forest community	8.3
		Bird watching	5.6
		Educational tour explaining traditional uses of local plants	11
4	Do you have interest in guided, overnight visits to remote ruin sites in the jungle near or in Irawan?	Yes	70
		No	30
4-1	If yes, which of the following accommodation types would be most attractive to you?	Native bamboo house	60
		Tents or hammocks with a thatched roof shelter (no walls) and a pit toilet	10
5	After learning that the above activities (in questions 3 and 4) are available in and around Palawan, how marketing strategies can make you like visiting Irawan Eco Park?	website	56
		from accommodation	13
		family or friends(words of mouth)	19
		Lonely Planet or other guides	13
6	If you were asked to pay an entrance fee to visit Irawan Eco Park what is the most you would be willing to pay per person?	26-50pesos	20
		51-75pesos	30
		76-100pesos or more	50
7	If you knew the entrance fee would be used to clean the village, maintain tourist attractions and employ local youth would you be willing to pay more?	Yes	90
		No	10
8	Which language would you prefer a guide to speak?	Tagalog	10
		English	80
		French/Mandarin	20
9	How long are you planning to spend in the Palawan region?	Less than 1 week	40
		7-14	40
		2 weeks	20
10	Which of the following locations in the Palawan are you planning to visit?	EI NIDO	40
		Underground River	20

		Sabang beach	5
		Puerto Princesa Bay	15
		Honda Bay	10
		Quezon (Tabon cave)	10
11	How flexible are your travel plans?	Limited	30
		Flexible	70
12	What sources do you consult when developing your itinerary?	Guide book	27
		Travel agency in your home country	6.7
		Local travel agency	6.7
		Friends or other travelers	13
		Internet	47
13	What is your daily budget for this trip (approximate)?	Less than 500 pesos	40
		500 pesos	20
		More than 100 USD	20
14	Gender:	Male	50
		Female	50
15	Age:	29-25	40
		26-30	50
		Above 30	10
16	Occupation	Interstate Truck Driver	10
		Engineer	10
		Office worker	20
		Telematics	10
		Student	40
		Businesswoman	10
17	Nationality	Australian	10
		French	10
		Taiwanese	20
		Switzerland	10
		Filipino	40
18	Native language	Australian English	10
		France French	10
		Mandarin	20
		German	10
		Tagalog	40
		Bisaya(north-west and the coast line of Borneo, Malaysia)	10

Table 1: Result of tourist survey.

From the above table, unpredictable results have appeared to interpret as following:

The participants were chosen randomly in Puerto Princesa Bay, restaurants in the downtown and Robinson's shopping mall. From background information, the gender distribution of male and female is 5/5; the range of age is 19-32; nationality includes Australian, French Taiwanese, Switzerland, and Filipino, also there is diverse variety in 6 occupations and 6 native languages.

From the content about tourists' opinions, we can see 80% haven't heard Irawan Eco Park before, and three key promoting activities in Irawan Eco Park : Ziplines, Skywalk and Jungle Survival have matched the top three attractive ones for participants; however, understanding of traditional uses of local plants and cultural tour about forest community have also taken almost 20%. Moreover, 70% of

them expect an adventure in remote sites near or in Irawan; and if they prefer native Bamboo houses for overnight staying.

For the availability of information about park, website is the first choice to probing information for traveling (56%), and Lonely Planet is the first choice to arrange accommodations and visiting sites for backpackers.

Also it's surprising to know that some participants mentioned a problem in short of travel budget, however, 50% of them still would like to pay entrance fee (76-100 pesos). Also, if they know this money is used for maintaining site and increasing employment opportunities, the percentage of will of paying money rises to 90%.

4.2 Discussion and Conclusion

The process of this internship nailed at cultural encounters, to understand and digitalize a part of Filipino culture was an endless work to do. During this study, we had privileged connection with enthusiastic tourists, and hospitable, friendly hosts in a goodwill and warm inquiry. The more authentic they present the true heart by life and culture sharing, the better possibility of marketing strategies can be generated in this research; also, the more local inhabitants and tourists appreciate and value their sustainable life and travel experience, the better potential of increasing tourists population can be rooted in the future.

This qualitative research in Palawan was affected even we can say oriented by post-colonisation era; something similar to Filipino Culture, ecotourism is a process cast in a world where relationships of power are characterised by marked centre-periphery dominance. Cater pointed out (Cater, 2006) that ecotourism might be only a western construct, it might be not even appropriate to directly copy within eastern world; because the origins of ecotourism lie in western ideology and values, and its practice is frequently dominated by Western interests, streaming on an inevitable direction, the advocacy of ecotourism as a universal template arises from western hegemony in the Philippines.

Nonetheless, we can also say by interviewees' words, which is also apparent in the transcripts, the desire to promote their culture and enthusiasm are significantly strong, 'to represent themselves, tell their own authentic stories, and let them be heard above and over the master narrative of the author' (Budowski, 1976) which is also a beneficial and most reliable way to guide tourists. The wiser management can lead by a sensible mutual understanding of their own land.

Lifestyle can shape a better world: Social, cultural and educational sustainability.

The inhabitants' lifestyle in community can absorb inputs: tourists' visiting smoothly; in the interviews, participants did not think tourists are incompatible in this community. Also, the inhabitants in Irawan are all supportive to the existence and on-going projects of Irawan Eco Park. Since the idea of this park also resemblances with the farming lifestyle, handcraft producing, food and hospitality sharing; the authentic lifestyle is attracting to ecotourists, which are the best customers Eco Park should follow up.

Ray and Anderson mention that ecotourists should be taken seriously (Ray & Anderson, 2000), which shows responsible (or eco) tourism is an explicit example of an industry done for and by responsible tourists. The results of this research also show that many participants agree with ecotourism to be incorporated into Irawan Eco Park. Upon the sharing culture and lifestyle of ecotourism, tradition customs also can pass to next generation.

Marketing purposes: Economic, ecological and local participant's sustainability.

The findings of this research can benefit marketing strategies, if previous elements can be taken into consideration in Irawan Eco Park. Media and online information still need to be advanced, to arise accessibility and presence in media is very vital to ecotourists, because restricted information could close the door of their visiting. It might be effective to attract the tourists who endorse nature, and to keep and progress this kind of tourists can drive a long-term management for Irawan Eco Park, because ecotourists are a new population to contribute a conservative environment.

From a study on Swedish tourists, (Silvia Wurzinger & Maria Johansson, 2006), the situation of natural resources management might depend on different environmental attitudes by sorts of tourists. It might be expected that ecotourists and nature tourists would be willing to accept policy instruments (such as regulating programs, energy-saving programs, measures to protect animals on-site, and entrance fees) to regulate activities.

According to the suggestion from Wurzinger and Johansson's viewpoint, the results of this study also suggest the same direction on meeting tourists and local people's interests, also from Wurzinger and Johansson's argument (S. Wurzinger & M. Johansson, 2006), to organise and establish a systematic stories by locals and indigenous is a profitable way for each side.

Further, since carrying capacity has been valued, but still, the exact number of visitors to an area still waits to be announced in the media and advertisement. The average income in the tourist industry has been increased in Puerto Princesa, sadly to say that most profit still go to the stakeholders not local employees; nevertheless, more employment opportunities can be produced if there are curious makers and agriculture farmers' joining, even some inhabitants can be professional tour guides if they can be trained properly.

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