



EVALUATING TOURISM SUPPLY AND COMPETITIVENESS OF SAN JOSE, CAMARINES SUR, PHILIPPINES TOWARDS DEVELOPING LOCAL TOURISM PLAN

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on evaluating tourism supply and competitiveness of the municipality of San Jose, Camarines Sur through Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) approach using the Tourism Rapid Assessment (TRA) tool. This strategy is used to generate new concepts that are competitive in delivering tourism and hospitality services. The value of evaluating the supply of tourism services in line with accommodation services, the structures and locations of potential tourism, accessibility, facilities and amenities contributes in the formulation of local tourism plan in the area. In the gathering of primary data, the survey questionnaire and worksheet for the focus group discussion were utilized while interview and ocular visit were used for validation. For the secondary data, the researchers used available resources such as published articles, reports from various offices and other related studies. In analyzing the data collected, the descriptive statistics was adopted. The result revealed that San Jose has an adequate tourism supply for tourism development in terms of natural values, geological formations, cultural and historical sites, beaches and accommodation facilities. It was also noted in the growing agritourism sites in the locality. However, due to pandemic, there was a sudden change in the operation where the issues and challenges cropped up, thus, competitiveness in every tourism destination is at stake. The need to strengthen the policies and guidelines on tourism development and capacitate the employee thru trainings and seminars will help improve the destination's competitiveness, hence, it is highly recommended in developing a local tourism plan.

KEYWORDS - Supply, Competitiveness, Local Tourism Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism supply and competitiveness are greatly challenging in developing a local tourism plan. The value of analyzing the supply and competitiveness of tourism services in line with the accommodation services, the structures and locations of potential tourism destinations, accessibility, facilities and amenities that contributes in the formulation of local tourism plan for the municipality of San Jose community, becomes at stake.

The supply for potential tourist destinations contributes to competitiveness of tourism destinations by providing concepts that responses positively along cultural, economic and environmental situation. The supply presents a connection to various elements, Dimoska, et.al.,(2012) [1] such as food supply and other logistics that tourists need during their stay in a particular destination, Turi, A, Goncales, G, Mocan, M, (2014) [2]. It also creates and delivers tourism experiences, Newton,(2004) [3] also figures the different dimensions in terms of available resources, the typical business environment, the laws and guidelines Balan, et.al. (2009) [4] that will sustain and ensure the value of money of the tourist, Dupyeras, et.al. (2013) [5].

It also drives the tourism landscape transformation in the field of structure, facilities and history of tourism development in the place, Gkoltsiou,A and Terkenli, T,(2012) [6] while the tourism supply in the global market becomes critical, Turi, A, Goncales, G, Mocan, M, (2014) [2] in the countryside. The competitiveness ultimate goal is to increase the income of the community which is being measured using the seven attributes such as

facilities, accessibility, quality of service, overall affordability, location image, attractiveness, climate and environment (Go-Groovers, 2000) [7].

In the recent years, tourism plays a vital role in developing countries in the Southeast Asia such as Philippines. The administration had encouraged the local government units to utilize tourism as a vehicle to promote and leverage the income of the community through Republic Act 10816. But COVID-19 pandemic changes the operations worldwide. Tourism was at height with the risen and fallen of the businesses. Many of the businesses were closed as per recommendation of the AITF. It was a sudden changed in the normal operation where structures were left in the hide. The government focused its decision making on the process of preventing the spread of COVID-19, notwithstanding sacrificing the threat on the economic side of tourism businesses.

The municipality of San Jose is on the road of developing the local tourism master plan which is geographically located adjacent to municipalities of Goa and Lagonoy at the southern part of the Province of Camarines Sur with a total population of 43,973 based on the conducted population survey of the Philippine Statistics Authority, (2020) [8]. The source of living is dominated of utilizing the agricultural land with 62.05% for paddy-irrigated riceland, 20.04% for coconut farmland, 1.73% for preserved mangrove and nipa land, while the least is 0.31% on preserved forest area as presented in the Pedo-Ecological Zone, (2010) [9].

It is also the thrust of the local government unit to support and promote RA 10816 otherwise known as the Farm Tourism and Development Act of 2016 [10]. The Department of Tourism strengthens its strategic directions to improve competitiveness and enhance tourism growth for 2030. In the study of Rebuya and Gasga (2021)[11] revealed that San Jose's advantage in developing the opportunities in tourism is the availability of tourist attractions, transportation, accommodation and other tourist activities, thus, evaluation of supply and competitiveness on tourism potential is crucial in giving the direction which will serve as the conveyance to move forward towards local tourism plans of the municipality, hence, this study.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1 Research Design

This study adopts the exploratory method of research to evaluate potential tourism supply and competitiveness through Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) [12] and the use of the Tourism Rapid Assessment (TRA) [13] tool. In the gathering of primary data, the survey questionnaire and worksheet for the focus group discussion were utilized while interview and ocular visit were used for validation. For the secondary data, the researchers used available resources such as published articles, reports from various offices and other related studies while interview and ocular visit were also conducted to validate factual data. In analyzing the gathered data, the descriptive statistics was employed.

2.2 Respondents

The respondents of the study were determined through purposive sampling. The owners, local government officials, community and local tourists were part of the study.

2.2 Location of the Study

San Jose is composed of twenty-eight (28) barangays in the mainland and one (1) far flung barangay. San Jose has a unique geographical location consists of Riceland 2,035.3787Has.; Coco and others 1,289.0415Has.; Upland 247.3680Has.; Wetland(nipa) 78.5370Has.; Sand beach 159.8957 Has.; River & Creeks 295.3368 Has.; Roads and Bridges 50.3201 with a total land area of 4,702.8146. The terrain in coastal areas is an opportunity to develop the slopes and beaches into a tourist destination. With the existing data and the potential tourism this study will focus on evaluating the supply and competitiveness of the locality as a strategy to enhance tourism potentials.

2.3 Conceptual Paradigm

The conceptual paradigm of this study was conceptualized by the authors that will serve as a model in the process of evaluating the tourism supply and competitiveness of the municipality of San Jose, Province of Camarines Sur, Philippines.

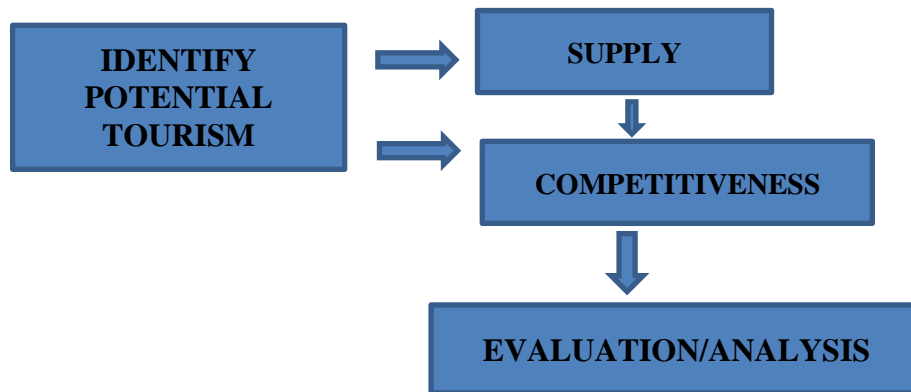


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm by the Authors

This conceptual paradigm provides the flow of the study. In identifying the potential tourism along natural values such as the geological formation, water/bodies, ecosystem and agritourism, cultural values, accommodations, infrastructure, accessibility, utilities, amenities, facilities, and activities, etc. The potential tourism supply and competitiveness will be evaluated. The identified issues and challenges and product development will serve as a guide of the policy makers in the formulation of the local tourism plan.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Potential Tourism

The supply at potential tourism destinations were attractions, accommodations, amenities and facilities and transportation are the key factors to bridge for competitiveness.



3.1.1 Natural Values

Nature Values of tourism helps the community to earn money and increases economic capability. It also encourages the locals to restore and innovate to preserve the uniqueness of the natural values and attracts tourists. Table 1 presents the natural values along geological formations, water/bodies form, ecosystem and agritourism in the area. It was noted that agri-tourism is currently moving forward having the highest number of potential agritourism sites being strengthen by activities, facilities and amenities found in every site which reflects that the municipality of San Jose potential is on agriculture.

Potential tourism in agriculture creating agriculture activities fundamental to uplift the status of farmers. This is a strategy being utilized nowadays especially those developing countries to carry out and strengthen the tourism potential activities in the locality which is also being implemented in other countries such as in United States where agritourism plays a vital role on farm diversification. This is supported by the study of Slavic, I and Schmitz, S., (2013) [14], Boys, K., and Groover, G., (2017) [15], Barbieri, C and Mshenga, P.M., (2008) [16] that indicates interface in forms and dimensions in agritourism or farm tourism business which contributed to a well-managed cultural landscape and Spanish ruins of the Moro Watch Tower, old church and old Spanish houses during the Spanish regime, Adiangao Cave and Tagas Boulevard counts on the geological attractions of the municipality which is similar to the studies on farmhouse bed and breakfast, outdoor activities and other fun

farm activities, Budiasa, W and Ambarawati, G, (2014)[17], Khanal, A. Honey, U., Omobitan, O., (2019) [18]



Busdak, Adiangao, San Jose, Camarines Sur

that encourages tourists to explore and experience.

3.1.1.1 Issues and Challenges

In the country's tourism perspective natural values of tourism destinations carried out by geological formations which is shaded with attractions that caught tourist to stay and experience the scenery of the place. San Jose is unique along natural values of tourism destinations with the natural environment impressed by the geological formation with touched of Spanish regime and the widest puddy-irrigated Riceland known as the rice granary of the district attached with agritourism activities that increases the products and services. The culture of sustaining the development along natural values needs such an attention since tourism is always at risk due to climate change and the geographical location.

Table I. Identifying Potential Tourism : Natural Values

Indicators	Potential destinations	Location	Amenities/ Facilities/Activities
1. Geological formation	*Spanish Ruin ➤ Old Moro Watch Tower ➤ Old Church ➤ Old Spanish houses *Adiangao Cave with 3 layered falls	Sabang Adiangao	Parking Area
2. Water/Bodies form	Sabang, Telegrafo, Calalahan & Tagas	Sabang, Telegrafo, Calalahan, Tagas	The longest shore from Tagas to Sabang
a. beach	beaches		
b. River	Sabang river	Sabang	
3. Ecosystem	Eco-park	Tagas	Cottages, Mangrove area (collaboration of Koica) (for development)
	Nipa rehabilitation	Dolo	
4. Agritourism	*Malou Pete farm	Ponglon	Organic farming; mushroom culture and iceberg lettuce; organic fertilizer, processed products- herbal teas and honey, fruits, flowering and vegetable production
	*Credo's Orchard Farm	Calalahan	Flowering plants, herbs and spices, vegetables and fruits
	*National Farm	Minoro	Ornamentals and vegetables
	*puddy-irrigated rice land	All sectors (rice field)	Modern technology Hand tractor Harvester

3.1.1.1 Product development

In the context of sustaining natural values of tourism destination proper policy must be development to urge the local government to promote the agritourism activities considering its strategic location that will response to the concept of promoting RA 10816 in the countryside which will be strengthened by tourism activities. However, it was noted that technical and financial assistance somehow is often neglected by the government.

3.1.2 Cultural/Religious Values

The cultural/religious values in tourism cultivate the culture diversity, tradition and customs including the lifestyles. Table 2 presents the potential tourism sites along cultural and religious values. It was shown in the table that historical has the highest number of potential sites namely: pre-seminary, Christ the King, St. Joseph Parish, Municipal Hall and old houses followed by religious: The Hinulid; food delicacies: pop rice and biko; handicraft: nipa huts; and festivities: Penafrancia Fluvial and Malasugui Festival. It was noted that historical potential tourist destination sites were greatly influenced with Spanish concepts taking into consideration the structure and design, the religious belief and its festivities.

Table 2. Identifying Potential Tourism: Cultural/Religious Values

Indicators	Potential Sites/Activities	Location
1. Historical	*Pre-seminary *Christ the King *St Joseph Parish *Municipal Hall *Old Houses (with touch of Spanish regime) *Tagas Boulevard *Hanging Bridge	Real St. San Juan San Vicente Tagas
2. Religious	*Hinulid Church	San Antonio
3. Food	*Pop Rice *Biko	Sabang Tominawog
4. Handicraft	*Nipa hut	Dolo, Sabang, Minoro
5. Festivities	*Penafrancia Fluvial *Malasugui Festival *Live Procession (Holyweek)	Sabang Sabang By parish

3.1.2.1 Issues and Challenges

Previous studies presented the cultural and religious beliefs was carried out during the time of Spanish regime that needs to be recognized as heritage tourism though at present this was not given much an attention by the local government unit. The significance of Spanish ruins contribute to the historical values of the place which was also cultivated by different festivities in the locality.

3.1.2.2 Product Development

San Jose in known as rice granary of Partido covering the main domain of the municipality as agricultural land. The community perceived that enhancement for farmers products be given an attention by the authority to increase their family income. The native delicacy of “biko” originated and operated by a family in Tominawog, and the “rice pop” in Sabang were both needs improvement on packaging but due to technical and financial capability of the that the local government unit should consider including its packaging of the products. It was also noted that these native products have been an otop in the past few years as presented in the list of by-products of the municipality but due to financial and technical support, it fails to survive specially this time of pandemic.

The result of this study along natural, cultural and religious belief implies that tourism attractiveness is the key element that inspires tourists to visit the locality. The competitiveness of tourism destinations is being ascertained by the study of Iatu and Bulai, (2011)[19] where tourism attractiveness in the region of Moldavia Romania have created gaps and understanding on supply that resulted to lack of strength of natural resources in producing overnight while Franch, M., Martini, U., Buffa, F., & Parisi, G. (2008)[20] presents the need for motivation and meet tourist expectations for competitiveness.



Spanish Ruins: Moro Church



Spanish Ruins: Moro Watch Tower

3.2 Accommodation Services

Tourism supply along accommodation services provides guest a temporary home while enjoying the scenery of the place. The accommodation services with the amenities and facilities were evaluated. Table 3 presents the accommodation services. The result shown that resorts have the highest percentage with 62.5% while the lowest were hotels and homestay both 6.25%. The resort carries the greater number of structures. In terms of rooms, table 4 shown that resort hotels have the large number of rooms with a range of 10-50 rooms as compared with homestay followed by resorts with a range of 6-10 rooms per establishments. However, aside from rooms, there were facilities and amenities include cottages, swimming pool, wifi, RTW Shop, and food and beverages. It was revealed in table 5 that among the accommodation services, resorts have the highest number of establishments while the least were hotels and homestay because of the longest shoreline in the coastal area of the municipality. It was also noted there is no hotel as classified in the permits and that all resorts including resort hotels had cottages aside from the rooms, swimming pool, wifi, restrooms and offers food and beverages. This means that as potential tourism supply increases competitiveness likewise increases as it encourages guests to stay in the area.

Table 3. Accommodation Services, N=16

Indicators	f	%	Rank
A. Hotels	1	6.25	4.5
B. Resort Hotels	2	12.5	1.5
C. Resorts	10	62.5	1
D. Pension House	2	12.5	1.5
E. Homestay	1	6.25	4.5
Total	16	100	

Legend: Indicators were based on the issued permits by authorities.

It was shown in table 3, the accommodation services present in the municipality of San Jose, namely: hotels, resort hotels, resorts, pension houses and homestay. However, the results revealed that there was only one (1) establishment classified as hotel and one (1) for homestay. This explains the need to promote the local tourism destinations for investors to invest on structures of lodging accommodation.

3.2.1 Availability of Rooms

Table 4 presents the availability of rooms along hotels, resort hotels, resorts, pension houses and homestay. It was revealed that resort hotels have the numerous rooms capacity ranges from 10-50 rooms as compared to resorts, pension houses and homestay.

Table 4. Availability of Rooms N=16

Indicators	f	%
A. Hotels	1	100.00
1. Range 10-20 rooms	0	0
2. Range 25-50 rooms	1	100.00
B. Resort Hotels	2	100.00
1. Range 10-20 rooms	1	50.00
2. Range 25-50 rooms	1	50.00
C. Resorts	10	100.00
1. Range 1-5 rooms	4	40.00
D. Pension House	2	100.00
1. Range 1-5 rooms	2	100.00
2. Range 10-15 rooms	0	0
D. Homestay	1	100.00
1. Range 1-5 rooms	1	100.00
2. Range 10-15 rooms	0	0
Total	16	100.00

3.2.2 Amenities and Facilities

The amenities and facilities of any lodging establishments encourages guest to stay away from home for pleasure. Guests travel from one place to another to gain experiences, discover places and some for-business purposes. Table 5 presents the amenities and facilities of the accommodation services. The results revealed that most of the accommodation services with clean lounges and comfort rooms, with WiFi available in hotels, resort hotels and resorts. The parking lots, entrance and exit, and place for segregation of garbage were evidenced in all accommodation services. There were four accommodation services with swimming pool and at the same time offers food and beverage services. This implies that the food and beverage services need to encourage the resort owners to strengthen their services.

Table 5. Amenities and Facilities

Indicators	f	%
1. There are cottages	12	80.00
2. There are Wifi available in the area	10	66.67
3. There are clean lounges	16	100
4. There are clean comfort rooms	16	100
5. There is a place for garbage intended for segregation	16	100
6. There is an entrance and exit	16	100
7. It has parking lots	16	100
8. It also offers food and beverage service to guests	6	40.00
9. There is a swimming pool	4	26.67

3.2.3 Issues and Challenges

Accommodation services becomes more competitive with the facilities and amenities that they offer to guest. However, due to COVID 19 pandemic the sudden change in the operation due to AITF policy, resort operations were closed except for pension house and homestay where guests had already occupied the vicinity before pandemic. Accommodation services were equipped with parking area, and wifi. However, if the restriction will be lifted, the number of rooms available will not be enough if the tourist arrivals increases, thus, competitiveness also increases.

3.2.4 Product Development

It is considered as strength to have accommodation services in every place or near to any strategic potential tourism sites. The attractiveness, the availability of amenities and facilities were on top being faced by every

establishment during its operation.

3.3 Accessibility

Potential tourism supply is at risk without accessibility. This elaborates that accessibility is a primary factor that could help tourism potential be reached by travelers. The table 6 revealed that potential tourism destinations were accessible by any mean of transportation with a less than an hour to travel from the town proper with a weighted mean of 3.5 except Adiangao cave situated at Barangay Adiangao- a far flung barangay of municipality of San Jose while the distance of attractions from one destination to another is 0-5 kilometers. This is supported by the study of Stepniak, et. al.(2013) [21], reveals that the median travel time of 120 minutes trips for business and tourism is considered as short-distance travel. This implies that accessibility is an important factor that increases competitiveness in every potential tourism sites, J.Romero, et.al (2020)[22].

Table 6: Accessibility

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
1. The potential tourism destinations were accessible all year round	4.44	Very Satisfactory
2. This can be access by any mean of transportation such as PUV or private vehicle	4.44	Very Satisfactory
3. The distance of potential tourism destinations from the town proper is less than an hour to travel	3.5	Very Satisfactory
4. The distance of attractions from one destination to another 0-5 kilometers	4.44	Very Satisfactory

3.3.1 Issues and Challenges

The increasing competitors from nearby places strikes as a challenge to any potential sites. The current COVID 19 pandemic greatly affects the transportation sector and closure of some tourism establishments. The restrictions enforced by AITF mandating the people not to visit from one place to another bring difficulty in the operation of different potential tourism sites.

3.3.2 Product Development

Accessibility is the key factor that brings the supply to every destination. It was used to augment the facilities and amenities, likewise, essential in developing tourism plan amidst pandemic.

3.4 Availability of Basic Utilities

The availability of basic utilities is necessary in promoting and sustaining tourism potential sites in the locality. This study reveals the current condition of the basic utilities in every potential tourism site such as historical structures including the hotels and resort comprises the different basic utilities such as water supply, electricity, communication, sewage system, and solid waste management system. It was noted that there is adequate power supply in all areas except in Adiangao Cave. For water supply, the presence of PWSS and free flowing water for potable water, and communication consists of Globe, Smart, D2 and P2P while there is a need to take into consideration to improve the sewage and solid management system in all areas. However, it was also found out that there is no potable water nearby Adiangao cave and along Tagas Boulevard.

3.4.1 Issues and Challenges

Based from the results had shown that though there is an available basic utility, however, there is a need to improve the basic services to make it more competitive in particular, the sewage system and solid waste management to protect the environment.

3.4.2 Product Development

Like other studies on tourism potentials, products and services, and basic utilities such as water, electricity and communication exerted efforts for marketing and promotion, hence, improvement of basic utilities for product development is necessary.

3.5 Availability of Onsite Facilities

The identified accommodation services acquired facilities and amenities for guests. It has clean and safe restrooms for women and men. It offers good accommodation facilities, clean and quality food service. Likewise, sports activities, pools, and cottages are also offered. It was also noted that identified accommodation services has directional and information signage.

3.6 Supply and Competitiveness

The natural and cultural values of potential tourism destinations in San Jose, Camarines Sur attracts tourists to visit, stay and generate income. The distance away from the City, people come and go for pleasure and experience the difference near the beach and other geological formations while for those tourist who loved its nature and silence, agritourism sites and activities is moving onward and opens opportunities to the community.

However, there are some issues that the local government should take into consideration, such as: 1. Laying down policies and guidelines recognizing the potential tourism destinations in the municipality; 2. Setting policies that would strengthen the campaign towards proper waste disposal, waste segregation, and recycling as part of the waste management program, 3. Initiating for the improvement on sewage system. 4. Strengthening the workforce thru trainings and seminars on customer service, tour guiding, housekeeping, and human relations. This is similar to the study of Kantarci, K., Uysal, M., & Magnini, V. P. (Eds.). (2014)[23], that authorities in the country have to looked to promote tourism as a way through passing legislation and committing to development programs considering Kazakh economy.

It is the interest of the study to have an in-depth analysis tourism supply against competitiveness. The study of Rebuya et.al. (2021)[24] presented the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of potential tourism sites explains that San Jose has potential destinations and that the accessibility to transportation and communication was perceived as strength for tourism development.

4. CONCLUSION

Based from the results of the study it was therefore concluded that potential tourism supply is adequate, however, due to covid 19 pandemic the tourism supply and competitiveness was affected. Indeed, result of this study could serve as reference in developing tourism plan in the municipality that will adhere and response to sustainable development goal of 2030.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended based from the result of the study that the local government unit should take into consideration the basic tourism services such as improving the accessibility, upgrading of basic services such as internet access, communication services, water facility, sewage system and waste management system.

It is highly recommended to consider the following in aid of legislation, such as: 1. Formulation of policies and guidelines recognizing the potential tourism destinations in the municipality; 2. Strengthens the campaign towards proper waste disposal, waste segregation, and recycling as part of the waste management program, 3. Initiates infrastructure projects for the improvement of the sewage system. 4. Capacitate the workforces thru trainings and seminars on customer service, tour guiding, housekeeping, and human relations.

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6.1 Authors statement

We confirm that this manuscript has not been published nor for consideration of other journals.

6.2 Funding

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6.3 Declaration of competing interest

The authors declared no competing interest.

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