

## THE ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF LARESIO LAKESIDE RESORT AND SPA

*Christine Joy Conejos, Jonah Elisha Remo, Anne Margarette Ricafrente and Troy P. Tuzon*

### Abstract

*This study aimed to study and understand the Ecotourism Development in a newly developed tourist destination, particularly its environmental, social, economic, and cultural impacts to the residents of Barangay Tadlac. The researchers used the descriptive method for research design. There are 75 respondents who participated in this study. Residents of Barangay Tadlac agreed that there are no negative impacts to the environment after the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa. Proper usage of limited resources was practiced by the locals. There are no negative effects to the local community while the residents agreed that there is available employment. However, there are minimal respondents who disagreed in increased demand for local products and enhancement of the overall life satisfaction of the residences and public utilities infrastructure and transport infrastructure improved. There are agreements in the contribution of income to the residents and it created business opportunities as well, while some residents said the resort should have more jobs for the residents of Barangay Tadlac. Lastly, cultural impacts still have a positive feedback about the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa. The cultural identity of the locals is still preserved and one of the residents said that they are practicing their tradition and customs.*

**Keywords:** Ecotourism, environmental, social, economic, cultural, development, impact

### INTRODUCTION

According to Singh (2015), ecotourism means making as little environmental impact as possible and helping to sustain the indigenous populace, thereby, encouraging the preservation of wildlife and habitats when visiting a place. This is a responsible form of tourism and tourism development which encourages going back to natural products in every aspect of life. Moreover, William (2014) states that ecotourism destinations attract eco-tourists; people who travel with an eye on sustainability and who are looking to immerse themselves in the local environment while maintaining an eco-friendly attitude. As the research shows, these tourists are willing to spend more for their accommodation.

Shrivastava (2014) expressed that ecotourism deals with living parts of natural environments. It focuses on socially responsible travel, personal growth, and environmental sustainability. Local people have a vested interest in the well-being of their community and are, therefore, more accountable to environmental

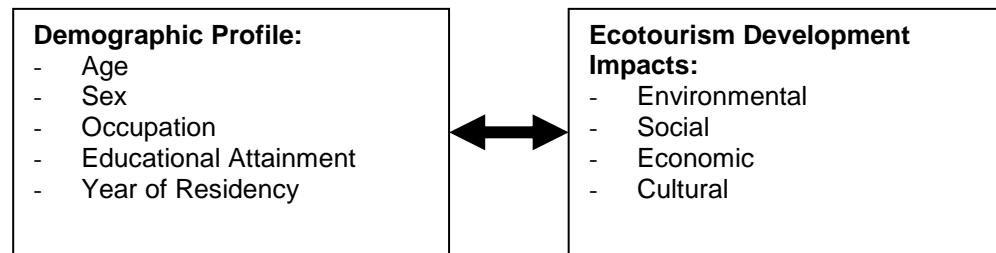
protection than multinational corporations. The lack of control, adverse impact to the environment, loss of culture and tradition, and increased contribution of communities to locally managed ecotourism create viable economic opportunities and reduce environmental issues associated with poverty and unemployment. Environmental issues arise when human activities bring impact, exceeding the limits of the physical environment and are harmful to the species and population of the surrounding ecosystem. Environmental issues do not arise individually but rather a combination of scientific, physical, personal, social, and political contexts. Environmental issues include interrelationship between the environment and the society, and the environmental effects of technological and economic problems. It is important to recognize the causes and effect of these environmental issues which will enable the decision according to the context (Aminrad et al., 2013).

In addition, road and airport construction can lead to land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats and the deterioration of scenery. Construction of hotels, recreation, and other facilities often leads to increased sewage pollution. Waste water has polluted seas and lakes surrounding tourist attractions, damaging the flora and fauna. Sewage runoff causes serious damage to coral reefs because it stimulates the growth of algae which cover the filter-feeding corals, hindering their ability to survive. Changes in salinity and siltation can have wide-ranging impacts on coastal environments. Sewage pollution can threaten the health of humans and animals. Construction of ski resort accommodation and facilities frequently requires clearing of forested land. Coastal wet lands are often drained and filled due to lack of more suitable sites for construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure. These activities can cause severe disturbance and erosion of the local ecosystem, even destruction in the long term (Belsoy, 2012).

The positive economic impact of tourism contributes to income and standard of living; improves local economy; increases employment opportunities; improves investment, development, and infrastructure spending; increases tax revenues; improves public utilities infrastructure; improves transport infrastructure; and increases opportunities for shopping. Economic impact (direct, indirect, induced spending) is widespread in the community as new business opportunities are created (Marzuki, 2012).

The study by Abdollahzadeh and Sharifzadeh (2012) indicated that positive attitudes were connected with the belief that tourism creates more jobs and opportunities for earning income, increases demand for local products, promotes agricultural markets, improves rural services, and provides a chance to have more welfare. Few studies have addressed ways that tourism enhances the over-all life satisfaction of residents in a community.

## Conceptual framework



## Objectives

This thesis aims to: (1) exhibit the demographic profile of the residents, (2) determine the Ecotourism Development Impact of Laserio Lakeside Resort and Spa in Barangay Tadlac, (3) identify if there is significant relationship between demographic profile of the respondents and the ecotourism development impacts, and (4) propose a plan of action as an implication to the result.

## METHODOLOGY

This research used the descriptive method in forms of survey and observation which gathers quantifiable information that can be used for statistical inference on the respondents through data analysis. The researchers randomly selected 75 residents from Barangay Tadlac, Los Baños, Laguna. Subsequently, they randomly distributed the survey questionnaire to the residents of Tadlac where Laserio Lakeside Resort and Spa is located. All data have been gathered from the questionnaire and the researcher gave it to the statistician for analyses and for the interpretation of the study. The researchers interpreted data thru the aid of statistician and was used as the basis for the proposed plan of action. The researchers used the Frequency and Percentage as to exhibit/determine the demographic profile. Weighted Mean is used to determine the Environmental, Social, Economic and Cultural Impacts. Pearson Chi-square Test is used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the demographic profile and the ecotourism development impacts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age

Majority or 36 percent of the respondents were 30-39 years old, 20 percent were 50 years old above, 19 percent were 40-49 years old, 13 percent were 20 years old and below, and 12 percent were 21-29 years old.

### Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender

Most of the respondents are female with a scale of 56 percent. Hence, only 44 percent of the respondents are male.

### Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of educational background

Majority or 48 percent of the respondents were high school graduates, 28 percent were high school undergraduates, 15 percent finished vocational, 5 percent were college graduates, and 4 percent were from other category.

### Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of years of residency

Majority or 73 percent of the respondents were local residents for 21 years and above, 15 percent were 16-20 years, 11 percent were 11-15 years, and only 1 percent was 11-15 years.

**Figure 1. Demographic profile in terms of occupation**

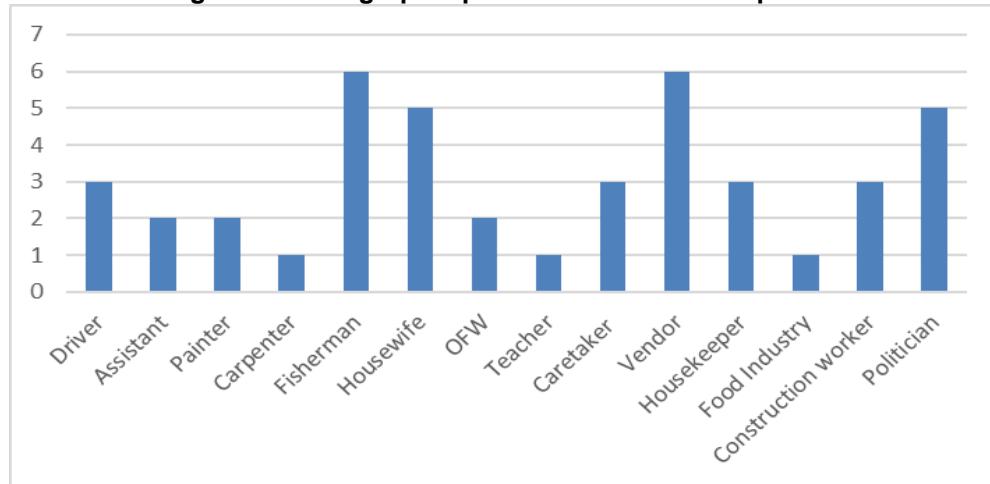


Figure 1 shows the *Residents' Profile in Terms of Occupation* which indicates that fishermen and vendors have the most number among the other jobs. Based on the results of the study, majority of the occupations of the residents in the area are fishermen and vendors because of the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa.

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## Determine the Ecotourism Development Impact

**Table 1. Ecotourism development impact to the residents of Barangay Tadlac in terms of environmental effects**

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. There was no illegal logging that happened.	3.05	Agree
2. During the construction, there was no land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats.	2.85	Agree
3. Proper usage of limited resources	3.11	Agree
4. There was no illegal dumping of garbage that happened.	2.91	Agree
5. Proper sewage disposal was practiced.	2.98	Agree
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 1 shows that the residents agreed that there was no negative impact to the environment after the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa, having a composite mean of 2.98. *Proper usage of limited resources* has the highest weighted mean of 3.11; the least one with 2.85 is *there was no land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats*. According to the residents of Barangay Tadlac, the government should properly implement the law especially those that concern the environment. Also, planting more trees is important for the protection of the land to prevent landslide and to make the road better for the tourists.

**Table 2. Ecotourism development impact to the residents of Barangay Tadlac in terms of social effects**

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Local residents did not experience discrimination from the tourists.	3.00	Agree
2. There is a peaceful relationship between the tourists and the residents.	3.04	Agree
3. After the development of the tourist destination, the number of crimes decreased.	2.78	Agree
4. There are positive, social improvements in social services, transportation, and recreational facilities.	3.09	Agree
5. There is available employment for the residents of the community.	3.16	Agree
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree*

Table 2 shows that the ecotourism development impact has no negative effects to the residents who are living in the area, and they agree to it, with a composite mean of 3.01. The residents agreed that *there is available employment for the residents of the community*, with a weighted mean of 3.16. According to the residents, the resort offers jobs to the community of Barangay Tadlac and it is very helpful for them since one of the priorities of the resort is to provide employment to residents.

**Table 3. Ecotourism development impact to the residents of Barangay Tadlac in terms of economic effects**

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Laresio Lakeside made contributions to the residents' income.	2.79	Agree
2. It created business opportunities for the residents.	2.58	Agree
3. There was an increased demand for local products.	2.22	Disagree
4. It enhanced the over-all life satisfaction of the residents in the community.	2.49	Disagree
5. The public utilities infrastructure and transport infrastructure improved.	2.43	Disagree
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>Agree</b>

*Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree*

Table 3 shows that there are some negative economic impacts, with a composite mean of 2.50. There are agreements in the *contribution to the income of the residents* and *it created business opportunities* as well. According to the residents, the resort should provide more jobs for the residents of Barangay Tadlac. For the disagreement, the residents envision the resort also giving livelihood to the residents but they are lack of financial income and knowledge on how to put up a business.

**Table 4. Ecotourism development impact to the residents of Barangay Tadlac in terms of cultural effects**

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Sustained the traditional customs and practices of the residents	2.91	Agree
2. The cultural identity of the locals is still preserved.	2.98	Agree
3. The tradition and culture of the locals are promoted to tourists.	2.81	Agree
4. There was a cultural exchange between local residents and tourists.	2.53	Agree
5. There were no differences between religious, ethnic and cultural groups	2.79	Agree
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 shows that majority of the residents agreed to the positive impacts of culture, with a composite mean of 2.80. The impact that *there was a cultural exchange between local residents and tourists* has the least weighted mean, with 2.53, and that *the cultural identity of the locals is still preserved*, with a highest weighted mean of 2.98. One of the residents said that they are practicing to preserve their traditional and customs. They also hope that there will be a good relationship between residents and tourists.

#### Determine the relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and tourism development impacts

**Table 5. Relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and tourism development impacts in terms of environmental effects**

Demographic Profile in terms of:	Pearson Chi-Square Test	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Year/s of Residency</b>	55.073	0.003	Significant
<b>Sex</b>	21.245	0.019	Significant
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	38.279	0.548	Not Significant
<b>Age</b>	48.853	0.159	Not Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05

Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship that exists between the residents' sex and number of years of residency, and to the tourism development impacts in terms of environmental effects, since its p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that tourism development impacts in terms of environmental effects depend on the respondents' sex and number of years of residency. The researchers assumed that the longer a resident stays in a place, the more that he can easily see the changes after the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa. Because more women stay in their homes as housewife and vendors, they can observe the changes in the surroundings.

**Table 6. Relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and tourism development impacts in terms of social effects**

Demographic Profile in terms of:	Pearson Chi-Square Test	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Age</b>	50.767	0.019	Significant
<b>Sex</b>	16.570	0.035	Significant
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	43.538	0.084	Not Significant
<b>Year/s of Residency</b>	32.560	0.114	Not Significant

*Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05*

Table 6 shows that there is a significant relationship that exists between the residents' age and sex to the tourism development impacts, in terms of social effects since its p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that tourism development impacts in terms of social effects are influenced by the respondents' age and sex. The researchers assumed that those aged 30-39 years old are easier to approach and ask questions, and the tourists can also ask questions easily to the women who lives in the area.

**Table 7. Relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and tourism development impacts in terms of economic effects**

Demographic Profile in terms of:	Pearson Chi – Square Test	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Age</b>	61.352	0.017	Significant
<b>Year/s of Residency</b>	52.279	0.007	Significant
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	46.983	0.208	Not Significant
<b>Sex</b>	10.290	0.415	Not Significant

*Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05*

Table 7 shows that there is a significant relationship that exists between the residents' age and number of years of residency, and to the tourism development impacts in terms of economic effects since its p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that tourism development impacts in terms of economic are based on the respondents' age and number of years of residency.

The researchers assume that the residents who are 30-39 years old are easier to be accepted in the jobs inside the resort for they know the area more. Also, the number of years of the residency can help them with their jobs in the resort for they know the history of the place.

**Table 8. Relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and tourism development impacts in terms of cultural effects**

Demographic Profile in terms of:	Pearson Chi – Square Test	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	58.829	0.028	Significant
<b>Year/s of Residency</b>	59.446	0.001	Significant
<b>Age</b>	50.562	0.122	Not Significant
<b>Sex</b>	15.293	0.122	Not Significant

*Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05*

Table 8 shows that there is a significant relationship that exists between the residents' educational attainment and the number of years of residency, and to the tourism development impacts in terms of cultural effects since its p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that tourism development impacts in terms of cultural effects are affected by the respondents' educational attainment and number of years of residency. For the significance between the educational and the number of years of residency, the researchers assumed that people who have the chance to study can differentiate the various cultures especially the tourists who will visit the resort. The residents who have stayed there for longer period can also help the tourists appreciate the different cultures in Barangay Tadlac.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that those aged between 30-39 years old were more affected by the ecotourism impacts of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa development. They also concluded that majority of women, with a percentage of 56, chose to stay at home, while men opted working to provide income for their families. Furthermore, the highest education attainment of most of the residents are being graduates in high school, with 48 percent. More so, majority of the respondents were residents of Barangay Tadlac for 21 years and above, having a percentage of 73, while zero (0) percent of the residents lived in the area for 5 years and below. Lastly, the researchers concluded that most of the occupations of residents are fishermen and vendors.

In general, the residents agreed that there was no negative impact to the environment after the development of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa and that the resort had the proper usage of limited resources. It was also pointed out that there was no negative social effect to the residents who agreed that employment was made available. The residents around the Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa

agreed that there was no economic impact and they believed that Laresio had contributed to the residents' income. Lastly, the residents still agreed that after the development of Laresio, the feedback was still positive. Even after building the Laresio, the cultural identity of the locals is still preserved.

The researchers concluded that most females who were living in the place for 21 years and above could relate more to the ecotourism development impacts in terms of environmental effects. In terms of social impacts, female residents who were 30-39 years old, were the ones who have a linkage. Furthermore, those aged 30-39 years old and living in the area for 21 years and above could really help in the tourist attraction. Lastly, residents who were high school graduates and who were living in the area for 21 years and above are more open to the cultural impacts.

### **Proposed plan of action**

<b>Area for Improvement</b>	<b>Plan of Action</b>	<b>Person/Organization Involved</b>
1. Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa provides jobs around the area and gives opportunities to the residents of Barangay Tadlac.	1. Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa needs to create more jobs and opportunities for the residents of Barangay Tadlac.	Local Government
2. Not significant majority of the residents of Barangay Tadlac only graduated in high school as the highest educational attainment.	2. Laresio should come up with programs that would motivate residents to pursue higher educational attainment.	Local Government
3. As Laresio is still developing, there are fewer amounts of trees that are being planted outside the resort.	3. Laresio should increase campaign in cleaning and greening the community to prevent land degradation.	Local Government
4. The residents lack knowledge in starting up a business.	4. Conduct lectures and seminars to residents on starting up a business in order to provide opportunities especially for Barangay Tadlac which is near Laresio.	Local Government

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5. Absence of financial support from the local government to start up a business.	5. Barangay officials should come up with proposals on the possible funding of businesses.	Local Government
6. More women are the ones who stay more in their respective houses as housewives.	6. The researchers suggest for the development of livelihood for housewives, such as creating and selling souvenirs for the tourists of Laresio Lakeside Resort and Spa.	Local Government
7. According to the residents, crime is always there.	7. Draw up a plan to prevent the crime rate to increase and disseminate further information on how to prevent crimes in the area, as well as observe strict implementation of crime-related ordinance that has corresponding punishment.	Barangay/LGU/Local Police

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