

Engagement of LGUs and Community in Tourism Development: Social Science Pedagogical Implications

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Abstract: Tourism development has long been regarded as a vital driver of economic growth, cultural preservation, and community empowerment in the Philippines. However, its success largely depends on the collaborative engagement of local government units (LGUs), communities, and the education sector. This study sought to explore how these stakeholders in the first district of Surigao del Sur contribute to tourism development and how such engagement may be pedagogically integrated into Social Sciences. Grounded on Community Participation Theory, Collaborative Governance Theory, and Transformative Learning Theory, the study emphasizes that tourism is not only merely an economic activity but also an educational platform for civic learning, governance, and sustainability. Employing a quantitative research design, the study gathered data from LGU personnel, community-based organizations, education sector representatives, and tourism establishments. Results indicated a high level of engagement across activities, projects, and educational campaigns, with the strongest participation seen in festivals, eco-tours, and awareness programs. However, weaknesses were noted in monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment, suggesting the need for more systematic approaches. Challenges such as funding limitations, policy enforcement gaps, and coordination issues were identified, yet collaboration among LGUs, schools, and communities was found to foster more sustainable and inclusive tourism outcomes. Implications highlight that tourism engagement can enrich social science pedagogy by providing authentic contexts for teaching governance, civic responsibility, and environmental stewardship. The proposed “TURISMO ESKWELA” program serves as an intervention to integrate tourism practices into classroom learning, thereby enhancing both local tourism development and social science education.

Keywords: Community Engagement, LGU Participation, Social Science Pedagogy, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism Education.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism development plays a significant role in boosting local economies, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering community engagement. In many areas, collaboration between local government units (LGUs) and communities has been key to creating tourism programs that are both sustainable and inclusive. This study focuses on how these collaborations work, with a special emphasis on their educational implications. The research underscores the need to explore not only the functional roles of stakeholders in tourism but also the pedagogical implications such engagements may have in the teaching and learning of social sciences. By linking tourism practices with social science education, the study aims to bridge local experiences with broader academic discourses on governance, sustainability, and community empowerment. Recent studies highlight the growing recognition of LGUs and communities as crucial actors in advancing sustainable tourism. For instance, Rose et al. (2022) demonstrated how community-based tourism in

Romblon can significantly contribute to socio-cultural appreciation, ecological protection, and economic empowerment when strong LGU support and community participation are present. Similarly, Sarinas et al. (2023) emphasized that LGU-managed ecotourism projects, such as TANAW de Rizal Park in Laguna, align with sustainable tourism principles but still require improvements in community involvement, capacity building, and environmental education to achieve long-term viability. In Samar, Fabillar et al. (2025) found that while locals displayed optimism toward ecotourism, knowledge gaps persisted regarding its specific benefits, underlining the importance of community education and awareness campaigns for sustainability. These findings reaffirm that LGU-community collaboration is central to achieving inclusive and sustainable tourism development in the Philippine context. Despite these promising insights, research remains limited in examining how LGU and community engagement in tourism can be pedagogically linked to the social sciences, particularly in terms of educational integration and local curriculum

development. Most recent studies have focused on the economic, environmental, and managerial aspects of community-based tourism and ecotourism (Rose et al., 2022; Sarinas et al., 2023; Fabillar et al., 2025), while little attention has been given to how these engagements can serve as a foundation for developing social science pedagogical practices at the local level. Furthermore, there is scant empirical evidence that investigates the extent of LGU and community collaboration in specific municipalities such as Cortes, Cagwait, Lanuza, Barobo, and San Agustin in Surigao del Sur, areas rich in tourism potential yet underexplored in academic literature. This research addresses this gap by examining the engagement of LGUs and communities in tourism within these municipalities, focusing on its pedagogical implications for social sciences and offering insights that connect tourism development with education and community empowerment.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to addressing persistent issues and concerns surrounding tourism development in local settings. While existing literature has highlighted the economic and ecological benefits of tourism, limited attention has been given to its educational and pedagogical dimensions, particularly within the Philippine context. By documenting and analyzing the engagement of LGUs and communities, the study offers insights that can inform both tourism policymaking and curriculum development in social sciences. For local stakeholders, the findings are expected to provide evidence-based recommendations that strengthen participatory governance, resource management, and community involvement in tourism initiatives. For the academic community, the study seeks to advance the frontier of knowledge by framing tourism engagement as not merely an economic or cultural activity, but also as a pedagogical tool that can enrich local education and community consciousness. Furthermore, this study aims to generate a dual impact: enhancing tourism development in Surigao del Sur while contributing to the integration of locally grounded experiences into the teaching and practice of social sciences.

A. Statement of the problem

This study aims to develop an education program to enhance stakeholder involvement and support sustainable tourism initiatives. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

- *What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:*
 - Age;
 - Sex;
 - Educational attainment.
 - Training in the tourism industry or field; and
 - Number of years in tourism industry service?
- *What is the extent of engagement of the LGU and community in terms of:*
 - Activities.
 - Projects;
 - Funding

- Monitoring and evaluation
- Impact assessment?
- *What is the extent of involvement of the community and education sector in tourism development programs in terms of:*
 - Community involvement;
 - LGU and DOT collaboration;
 - Educational programs and awareness campaigns;
 - Sustainable tourism practices;
 - Partnerships with private organizations and stakeholders?
- *What is the extent of the seriousness of the problems encountered in the engagement of LGU and community in the promotion of tourism in terms of:*
 - Funding and resource allocation;
 - Coordination and communication among stakeholders;
 - Policy implementation and governance;
 - Community participation and support; and
 - Environmental and sustainability concerns?
- *Is there a significant difference on the extent of involvement of LGU and community and education sector when grouped according to profile?*
- *Is there a significant relationship between extent of involvement of LGU and community and education sector in tourism development programs?*
- *What is the implication of the study to the Social Science teaching?*
- *What intervention program can be drawn based on the results of the study?*

B. Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of confidence:
 Ho1: There is no significant difference on the extent of involvement of LGU and community and education sector when grouped according to profile.
 Ho2: There is no significant relationship between extent of involvement of LGU and community and education sector in tourism development programs.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

➤ Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic factors such as age, sex, education, training, and length of service significantly influence stakeholder engagement in tourism development. Gutierrez (2024) found that women comprise about 59% of the Philippine tourism workforce but remain concentrated in low-paid and informal roles, showing that gender determines the quality of participation. Education and training likewise enhance community leadership and participation. Andalecio and Martin (2023) emphasized that tourism programs prosper when residents have higher education or targeted training, while Rose et al. (2022) noted that hospitality and entrepreneurship training encourages proactive community leadership. Length of service also correlates with engagement

and perceptions of sustainability; stakeholders with longer tourism experience display higher confidence in sustaining socio-economic benefits (Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024). Hence, demographic factors are crucial predictors of how LGUs and communities participate in tourism development.

➤ *Extent of LGU and Community Engagement*

LGU and community engagement is often gauged by participation in tourism projects benefiting residents. Escamis and Hinlayagan (2024) observed strong involvement in community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives in Marilog District, while Rose et al. (2022) reported that eco-tours and cultural programs in Romblon fostered inclusivity and trust. Funding plays a vital role; Busalla (2025) identified inconsistent financing as a major challenge, while Sarinas et al. (2023) recommended multi-source funding such as public-private partnerships to sustain tourism programs. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are equally essential. Inocente and Bacosa (2022) linked weak monitoring to environmental degradation, while Sarinas et al. (2023) found that institutionalized evaluation improved sustainability outcomes. Thus, engagement should be assessed not only through activities but also by the resources and systems that ensure long-term success.

➤ *Extent of Community and Education Sector Engagement*

Active community participation fosters inclusive and sustainable tourism. Rose et al. (2022) and Escamis and Hinlayagan (2024) showed that participatory planning enhances trust, pride, and socio-economic benefits. Collaboration between LGUs and the Department of Tourism (DOT) aligns local projects with national frameworks, improving coherence and access to funding (Andalecio & Martin, 2023). Education further strengthens engagement. Mir, Shelley, and Ooi (2024) argued that tourism resources enrich civic and environmental education, while Bastida et al. (2024) noted that higher education institutions partner with LGUs to promote tourism awareness. These initiatives cultivate skills and sustainability practices, creating synergy between community empowerment and education.

➤ *Problems Encountered in LGU–Community Engagement*

Funding constraints remain a major challenge. Busalla (2025) and Sarinas et al. (2023) reported that limited financial support hinders tourism infrastructure and sustainability. Coordination issues also persist; Aquino and Porter (2022) and Rose et al. (2022) observed weak collaboration and conflicts among stakeholders, leading to inefficiencies and reduced trust.

Environmental problems exacerbate these challenges. Inocente and Bacosa (2022) found that microplastic pollution in Surigao del Sur beaches reduces tourism value, while Sarinas et al. (2023) cited gaps in environmental education in LGU-managed projects. Collectively, these issues weaken governance, sustainability, and community confidence.

➤ *Community Engagement in Sustainable Tourism*

Community participation ensures inclusive and sustainable tourism. Cabaguig (2024) emphasized that aligning tourism with local cultural and environmental values

strengthens community identity. Bucoy and Moreno (2024) highlighted CBT's role in empowering marginalized groups and fostering accountability. Escamis and Hinlayagan (2024) found that structured dialogue builds ownership and sustainability. International studies (Learn Tourism, 2023; Miles Partnership, 2021) confirm that early community involvement, training, and stakeholder consultations lead to successful outcomes. Thus, tourism development should be co-created with communities to ensure long-term viability.

➤ *Differences by Profile Variables*

Demographic characteristics influence engagement levels. Gutierrez (2024) noted gender disparities, with men more often in leadership roles and women in service-oriented positions. Experience and age also affect confidence and participation (Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024). Education and training enhance sustainability awareness and management skills (Rose et al., 2022; Andalecio & Martin, 2023). Longer tenure builds governance knowledge, while newcomers need capacity building for effective participation. Therefore, demographic differences shape both the depth and quality of involvement in tourism programs.

➤ *Relationship Between LGU, Community, and Education Sector Involvement*

Collaboration among LGUs, communities, and the education sector drives sustainable tourism. Rose et al. (2022) observed that LGU–community partnerships improved participation and outcomes. Bastida et al. (2024) and Tomasi, Paviotti, and Cavicchi (2020) noted that universities connect governance and community through research and training aligned with sustainability goals. According to Escamis and Hinlayagan (2024) and Sarinas et al. (2023), strong institutional support and education-based capacity building enhance resilience and program success. Tourism sustainability thus depends on balanced, cross-sectoral collaboration.

➤ *Implications to Social Science Teaching*

Tourism engagement enriches social science education by contextualizing governance, sustainability, and civic participation. Mir, Shelley, and Ooi (2024) and Bastida et al. (2024) stressed that integrating tourism into curricula promotes environmental stewardship and civic responsibility. Tomasi, Paviotti, and Cavicchi (2020) highlighted that place-based learning fosters active citizenship and interdisciplinary understanding. Embedding tourism concepts in education bridges theory and practice, cultivating learners' engagement with community development.

➤ *Tourism-Based Intervention Programs*

Tourism interventions address gaps in LGU and community engagement. Rose et al. (2022) recommended capacity-building and entrepreneurship programs to strengthen community ownership. Environmental interventions, such as waste management and eco-awareness campaigns, are vital (Inocente & Bacosa, 2022; Sarinas et al., 2023). Partnerships with academia and private sectors expand sustainability reach. Gutierrez (2024) emphasized gender-sensitive support for women entrepreneurs, while Bastida et al. (2024) advocated evidence-based interventions aligned

with the Sustainable Development Goals. Effective interventions thus require multi-sectoral collaboration to ensure tourism's social equity and environmental sustainability.

➤ *Synthesis*

The literature highlights that demographic factors, LGU initiatives, community participation, and education sector involvement are central to sustainable tourism development. Stakeholder characteristics such as age, education, training, and tenure influence engagement, while activities, projects, and funding mechanisms shape LGU and community participation. Monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment are critical for accountability and environmental sustainability, and the integration of educational programs and awareness campaigns reinforces civic responsibility and cultural appreciation. Nonetheless, challenges such as limited resources, weak coordination, governance inefficiencies, and environmental degradation persist. Studies emphasize that effective tourism engagement requires synergistic collaboration among LGUs, communities, and the education sector, with inclusivity ensuring women, youth, and marginalized groups participate as empowered decision-makers. The literature further underscores that tourism cannot be viewed in isolation but must be approached holistically, incorporating social, economic, educational, and environmental dimensions. Building on these insights, the present study examines stakeholder demographics, engagement levels, challenges, and the role of education to provide a comprehensive understanding of tourism development in Surigao del Sur, with pedagogical implications for social science teaching that foster civic values, critical thinking, and environmental stewardship.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research design to objectively analyze the engagement of Local Government Units (LGUs), communities, and the education sector in tourism development within the first district of Surigao del Sur. Consistent with Creswell (2014), the quantitative approach facilitated the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to identify trends, patterns, and relationships among variables. Through structured survey questionnaires, the study ensured standardized responses and statistical reliability, enabling the formulation of data-driven conclusions regarding stakeholder participation and sustainable tourism practices.

The respondents comprised 100 purposively selected stakeholders from six municipalities—Cortes, Cagwait,

Cantilan, Bayabas, Lanuza, and Barobo—chosen for their active involvement in local tourism. Participants included LGU personnel, Sangguniang Bayan (SB) members, community-based organization representatives (fisherfolk, women's and youth groups), educators, and employees or owners of tourism establishments. The purposive sampling method, as supported by Palinkas et al. (2015), ensured the inclusion of information-rich participants who possess direct experience in tourism-related initiatives, thereby providing accurate and relevant insights for the study.

A researcher-made questionnaire served as the primary research instrument. It was developed based on the study's objectives and validated by tourism and academic experts to ensure clarity, content accuracy, and alignment with the variables under investigation. The tool was composed of four sections: (1) demographic profile of respondents, (2) extent of LGU and community engagement in tourism development, (3) participation of the community and education sector in tourism programs, and (4) seriousness of problems encountered in promoting sustainable tourism. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.948 to 0.984, confirming its internal consistency.

The data gathering procedure involved several key steps: validation of the questionnaire by experts, pilot testing in the Municipality of Cortes with 30 respondents, and refinement of items based on feedback. Formal approval was obtained from Northeastern Mindanao State University (NEMSU) and respective municipal offices prior to data collection. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires, provided orientations, and retrieved the completed forms to ensure accuracy and completeness of responses.

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical treatments. Frequency and percentage were applied to describe the demographic profile of respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of engagement and seriousness of issues encountered. To test for significant differences in stakeholder engagement based on demographic characteristics, Univariate Tests in MANOVA were employed. Furthermore, Spearman's Rho Correlation was used to examine the relationship between LGU/community engagement and the education sector's involvement in tourism development programs. These statistical analyses provided empirical evidence supporting the study's conclusions and guided the formulation of an educational program aimed at enhancing stakeholder engagement in sustainable tourism development.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Indicator	Category	LGU Personnel		Community-based Organizations		Tourism Related Establishments		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Age	18-25	6	6.00	2	2.00	2	2.00	10	10.00
	26-33	1	1.00	3	3.00	6	6.00	10	10.00
	34-41	10	10.00	10	10.00	2	2.00	22	22.00
	42-49	10	10.00	7	7.00	4	4.00	21	21.00
	50-58	11	11.00	11	11.00	4	4.00	26	26.00
	59-66	2	2.00	6	6.00	2	2.00	10	10.00
	67 and above	0	0.00	1	1.00	0	0.00	1	1.00
Sex	Male	21	21.00	10	10.00	8	8.00	39	39.00
	Female	19	19.00	30	30.00	12	12.00	61	61.00
Highest Educational Attainment	High School Graduate	4	4.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	4.00
	College Level	9	9.00	3	3.00	3	3.00	15	15.00
	College Graduate	25	25.00	33	33.00	13	13.00	71	71.00
	Post Graduate	2	2.00	4	4.00	4	4.00	10	10.00
Training in Tourism Industry?	Yes	40	40.00	40	40.00	20	20.00	100	100.00
	No	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Years in Tourism Industry Service	Less than 1 Year	8	8.00	5	5.00	3	3.00	16	16.00
	1-5 Years	11	11.00	18	18.00	8	8.00	37	37.00
	6-10 Years	10	10.00	10	10.00	2	2.00	22	22.00
	More than 10 Years	11	11.00	7	7.00	7	7.00	25	25.00

The tourism workforce in the first district of Surigao del Sur is predominantly middle-aged, reflecting stability and accumulated field experience across LGUs, community organizations, and private establishments. This concentration ensures continuity in program implementation and governance; however, the limited participation of younger stakeholders indicates potential succession gaps and underscores the need for structured youth engagement and intergenerational mentorship to maintain innovation and adaptive capacity (Sarinas et al., 2023; UN Tourism, 2023). Women constitute the majority of tourism personnel, consistent with national trends in service-oriented and community-based tourism. While this promotes economic inclusion and social visibility, leadership and decision-making roles remain largely male-dominated, revealing persistent gender hierarchies. Integrating gender-responsive leadership programs, entrepreneurial training, and capacity-building initiatives could advance empowerment and strengthen collaborative management in community-based tourism (Gutierrez, 2024). Educational attainment is generally high, with most stakeholders holding college degrees. This suggests strong potential for strategic planning, policy compliance, and sustainability-oriented practices. Yet, overrepresentation of highly educated individuals relative to

grassroots workers highlights a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Evidence from Philippine tourism contexts indicates that effective socio-economic and sustainability outcomes require pairing formal education with participatory engagement and competency-based practice (Sarinas et al., 2023; Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024). Training is widely reported among respondents, reflecting institutionalized capacity-building. Nevertheless, training's impact depends on active application, mentoring, and post-training evaluation to ensure knowledge translates into tangible outcomes. Workforce tenure is diverse, with most stakeholders serving 1–5 years, providing a balance of experience and new perspectives. Without formalized mentorship, however, critical experiential knowledge risks being lost, threatening program continuity (Andalecio & Martin, 2023). Overall, the findings portray a tourism sector rich in human capital but constrained by gaps in youth participation, gender equity in leadership, practical application of education, and knowledge transfer. Addressing these areas through mentorship, targeted capacity-building, and empowerment initiatives can enhance resilience, inclusivity, and sustainability, enabling stakeholders to navigate emerging challenges and foster long-term development in community-based tourism.

Table 2. Extent of Engagement of the LGU And Community

Category	LGU Personnel		Community-based Organizations		Tourism Related Establishments		Total	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Activities	4.08	Very Engaged	4.17	Very Engaged	3.98	Very Engaged	4.08	Very Engaged
Projects	3.84	Very Engaged	4.01	Very Engaged	3.83	Very Engaged	3.89	Very Engaged
Funding	3.71	Very Engaged	3.98	Very Engaged	3.77	Very Engaged	3.82	Very Engaged
Monitoring and Evaluation	3.74	Very Engaged	3.88	Very Engaged	3.80	Very Engaged	3.81	Very Engaged
Impact Assessment	3.62	Very Engaged	3.91	Very Engaged	3.74	Very Engaged	3.76	Very Engaged
Overall	3.80	Very Engaged	3.99	Very Engaged	3.82	Very Engaged	3.87	Very Engaged

The findings in Table 2 indicates that the highest engagement among stakeholders occurred in participatory activities, with community-based organizations exhibiting the strongest involvement compared to LGU personnel and tourism-related establishments. This suggests that tourism engagement in the first district of Surigao del Sur is primarily grassroots-driven, rooted in visible undertakings such as cultural festivals, environmental clean-ups, and eco-tourism initiatives. These activities foster local ownership, social cohesion, and livelihood opportunities, particularly for women and youth, positioning communities as co-creators rather than passive participants in tourism development. Such patterns align with broader Philippine tourism dynamics, where participatory initiatives serve as instruments for empowerment and collective identity formation. Active involvement in events and programs has been shown to enhance socio-economic sustainability, cultivate social capital, and strengthen institutional trust (Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024; Rose et al., 2022). However, high participation does not automatically translate to empowerment. Women, while prominent in operational and community roles, often remain excluded from decision-making and leadership positions. Addressing this requires institutional mechanisms that elevate community contributions from operational involvement to governance roles, ensuring equitable and transformative participation (Scheyvens, 1999; Cole, 2018). In contrast, the lowest engagement was observed in impact assessment, particularly among LGU personnel and tourism establishments. Stakeholders excel at implementing activities but lack systematic mechanisms to evaluate long-term social, economic, and environmental outcomes. This output-oriented approach prioritizes immediate results, such as event attendance or revenue generation, over sustainability indicators, including heritage preservation and community

welfare. Similar gaps have been reported nationally, where inadequate monitoring led to environmental degradation and weakened project continuity (Inocente & Bacosa, 2022; Sarinas et al., 2023). This imbalance highlights an institutional capacity gap. Many community organizations lack technical expertise for data collection and evaluation, relying instead on observable short-term metrics. Bridging this gap necessitates strategic partnerships with higher education institutions, which can provide research support, training, and evidence-based frameworks for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (Bastida et al., 2024). Integrating such practices can foster a culture of reflective governance, where data informs decision-making and enhances both ecological and socio-economic outcomes. Collectively, the findings reveal an “activity bias” across stakeholder groups: while social mobilization and participatory engagement are high, systematic reflection and outcome evaluation remain limited. For LGUs, administrative pressures prioritize quantifiable outputs; for community organizations, enthusiasm for implementation outweighs technical capacity; and for tourism establishments, profitability often overshadows sustainability. Addressing this paradox requires the institutionalization of M&E frameworks that link participation with accountability, supported by collaborative tools developed alongside academic and civil society partners. Ultimately, the disparity between strong engagement in activities and weak impact assessment underscores a developmental imbalance: Surigao del Sur’s tourism sector thrives in social participation but is constrained by limited institutional capacity. Transitioning from activity-centered to learning-oriented governance—where every initiative is both implemented and critically assessed—can transform tourism into a strategic, evidence-driven movement, ensuring sustainable outcomes for communities, the environment, and future generations.

Table 3. Extent of Involvement of the Community and Education Sector in Tourism Development Programs

Category	LGU Personnel		Community-based Organizations		Tourism Related Establishments		Total	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Community Involvement	4.00	Very Involved	4.04	Very Involved	3.91	Very Involved	3.98	Very Involved
LGU and DOT Collaboration	3.78	Very Involved	4.06	Very Involved	3.81	Very Involved	3.88	Very Involved
Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	3.93	Very Involved	4.08	Very Involved	4.24	Very Involved	4.08	Very Involved

Sustainable Tourism Practices	3.63	Very Involved	3.91	Very Involved	3.55	Very Involved	3.70	Very Involved
Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	3.77	Very Involved	3.92	Very Involved	3.55	Very Involved	3.74	Very Involved
Overall	3.82	Very Involved	4.00	Very Involved	3.81	Very Involved	3.88	Very Involved

In Table 3, the analysis of stakeholder engagement in Surigao del Sur reveals a pronounced emphasis on educational programs and awareness campaigns, which recorded the highest levels of participation across LGU personnel, community-based organizations (CBOs), and tourism-related establishments. This pattern indicates that education-oriented initiatives have emerged as the primary mechanism for promoting tourism values, civic responsibility, and environmental stewardship. For LGUs, these initiatives are reflected in policy-driven efforts such as Tourism Awareness Week, heritage campaigns, and community outreach programs. CBOs leverage eco-camps, storytelling, and cultural festivals to engage youth and transmit tourism values, while tourism establishments contribute through employee training and local awareness seminars. Collectively, this alignment highlights that sustainable tourism learning extends beyond formal classrooms into participatory community and workplace practices, fostering habitual stewardship rather than episodic engagement.

This finding resonates with contemporary perspectives on education for sustainability, which position learning as an active process that empowers citizens to make responsible environmental and cultural decisions (Mir, Shelley, & Ooi, 2024). Partnerships between LGUs and higher education institutions further reinforce this dynamic, as collaborative development of tourism awareness modules enhances community participation and sustainable practices (Bastida et al., 2024). The synergy between education and tourism thus fosters civic values, environmental accountability, and cultural empathy, establishing informed stakeholders as key drivers of resilient local tourism systems. However, the study also identified a critical gap: sustainable tourism practices exhibited the lowest levels of engagement. While stakeholders demonstrate awareness of environmental principles, consistent implementation remains limited. LGUs

often enact policies on environmental management, yet enforcement is sporadic due to resource and monitoring constraints. CBO-led initiatives, such as tree planting and recycling, tend to be episodic, whereas tourism establishments frequently prioritize operational profitability over systemic ecological responsibility. This disparity reflects a “knowing doing” gap, where awareness does not automatically translate into sustained practice, consistent with findings in Laguna (Sarinas et al., 2023) and local coastal areas (Inocente & Bacosa, 2022). This disconnects between education and practice exposes a developmental paradox: Surigao del Sur excels in citizen mobilization and awareness-raising but struggles to institutionalize sustainability measures. Addressing this requires integrative strategies linking education, collaboration, and governance. LGUs, in partnership with HEIs and the Department of Tourism, could embed sustainability indicators into monitoring systems, conduct regular audits, and provide feedback loops. Community incentives, such as recognition programs or grants, could encourage sustained ecological practices, while tourism establishments could adopt eco-certification schemes to align profitability with environmental ethics.

These findings underscore a broader theoretical insight: sustainable tourism emerges from the intersection of education, institutional reinforcement, and collaborative governance, rather than isolated interventions (Andalecio & Martin, 2023; Bastida et al., 2024). In Surigao del Sur, leveraging the strong educational foundation of stakeholders while institutionalizing sustainability measures can transform symbolic participation into accountable, evidence-based practice. This integrated approach ensures that tourism development remains inclusive, culturally grounded, and environmentally responsible, fostering resilience and long-term sustainability for the province.

Table 4. Extent of the Seriousness of the Problems Encountered in the Engagement of LGU And Community in the Promotion of Tourism

Category	LGU Personnel		Community-based Organizations		Tourism Related Establishments		Total	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Funding and Resource Allocation	2.95	Moderate Problem	3.23	Moderate Problem	3.65	Serious Problem	3.28	Moderate Problem
Coordination and Communication among Stakeholders	2.35	Minor Problem	2.87	Moderate Problem	3.29	Moderate Problem	2.84	Moderate Problem
Policy Implementation and Governance;	2.31	Minor Problem	2.72	Moderate Problem	3.37	Moderate Problem	2.80	Moderate Problem

Community Participation and Support;	2.25	Minor Problem	2.66	Moderate Problem	2.28	Minor Problem	2.40	Minor Problem
Environmental and Sustainability Concerns	2.27	Minor Problem	2.51	Minor Problem	3.32	Moderate Problem	2.70	Moderate Problem
Overall	2.43	Minor Problem	2.80	Moderate Problem	3.18	Moderate Problem	2.80	Moderate Problem

Legend: 1.00 – 1.80 = Not a Problem, 1.81 – 2.60 = Minor Problem, 2.61 – 3.40 = Moderate Problem, 3.41 – 4.20 = Serious Problem, 4.21 – 5.00 = Very Serious Problem

The results in Table 4 indicate that the overall seriousness of problems encountered in the engagement of LGUs, communities, and tourism-related establishments in tourism promotion is moderate. Among the five indicators, funding and resource allocation emerged as the most pressing challenge, particularly for tourism establishments. Financial limitations constrain the ability to upgrade facilities, adopt sustainable technologies, and sustain initiatives. LGUs reported budget dependency on Sangguniang Bayan approvals, while community-based organizations rely heavily on volunteer contributions. These results highlight that, despite enthusiasm and participation, the continuity and scalability of tourism initiatives are vulnerable to inconsistent and limited resource support. This aligns with broader Philippine tourism studies, where irregular funding streams undermine infrastructure development, marketing, and personnel training (Busalla, 2025; Sarinas et al., 2023). Yet, informal interviews revealed that volunteerism and civic pride remain high, illustrating that social capital can partially offset fiscal constraints (Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024).

Conversely, community participation and support were identified as the least serious problem. Residents actively engage in festivals, coastal clean-ups, and awareness campaigns, reflecting a strong culture of civic pride and ownership. LGU officials confirmed that mobilizing volunteers rarely encounters resistance, while tourism establishments noted that participation tends to focus on short-term events rather than long-term sustainability partnerships. These findings underscore the importance of formalizing and diversifying engagement so that episodic involvement evolves into sustained, measurable collaboration. The literature supports this notion, highlighting grassroots participation as a foundation for transparency, trust, and empowerment in local tourism governance (Rose et al., 2022; Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024). However, gendered dynamics reveal that women's extensive engagement often remains concentrated in informal and lower-paid roles, indicating a need for equitable inclusion in leadership and decision-making (Gutierrez, 2024).

The comparative analysis of stakeholder perspectives illustrates sector-specific nuances. LGUs face bureaucratic and political constraints affecting budget flexibility and planning. Community-based organizations possess local knowledge and energy but lack financial autonomy. Tourism establishments experience operational cost pressures and

limited access to institutional credit. Despite these challenges, widespread community enthusiasm constitutes a social asset that can mitigate resource gaps through cooperative projects, educational partnerships, and local enterprise initiatives. The tension between fiscal constraints and social willingness highlights a structural challenge in sustainable tourism governance: institutional capacity lags behind community engagement. Academic collaborations can bridge this gap by supporting resource mobilization, providing technical assistance, and embedding evidence-based monitoring and budgeting frameworks (Bastida et al., 2024).

Overall, the moderate seriousness of challenges underscores the potential for Surigao del Sur's tourism sector to transform existing constraints into opportunities. Strategic interventions—such as predictable funding streams, formalized intersectoral coordination, and capacity-building that converts community enthusiasm into structured, inclusive participation—can enhance governance effectiveness. The findings affirm that the province's greatest strength lies not only in its natural and cultural assets but also in the collective will of its people. By aligning social capital with institutional support, Surigao del Sur can foster sustainable, resilient, and inclusive tourism development.

➤ *Difference on the extent of Involvement of LGU and Community and Education sector when Grouped According to Profile*

The extent of involvement of LGU personnel, community-based organizations, and tourism-related establishment employees was further examined to determine whether significant differences existed when grouped according to profile variables such as age, sex, educational attainment, training in the tourism industry, and number of years of service. This analysis aimed to identify which demographic characteristics influenced variations in participation across the five dimensions of tourism development: community involvement, LGU and DOT collaboration, educational programs and awareness campaigns, sustainable tourism practices, and partnerships with private stakeholders. Establishing these differences is essential in understanding how demographic backgrounds shape levels of participation and how interventions may be tailored to the needs of specific groups. Moreover, the findings provide empirical evidence on whether certain qualifications or experiences give stakeholders an advantage in contributing more effectively to tourism development.

Table 5. Significant Difference Between Profile and the Extent of Engagement of the Community and the Education Sector using Univariate Tests in MANOVA

Group	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Df	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	F value	Pr(>F)
LGU Personnel	Community Involvement	Age	5	2.765	0.553	2.951	0.031*
		Sex	1	0.108	0.108	0.579	0.454
		Educational Attainment	3	2.689	0.896	4.784	0.009*
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.119	0.119	0.637	0.432
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	2.061	0.687	3.667	0.025*
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	Age	5	5.925	1.185	2.46	0.059
		Sex	1	0.003	0.003	0.007	0.935
		Educational Attainment	3	2.843	0.948	1.967	0.144
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.058	0.058	0.12	0.732
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	5.599	1.866	3.874	0.021*
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	Age	5	6.225	1.245	1.839	0.14
		Sex	1	0.025	0.025	0.036	0.85
		Educational Attainment	3	4.901	1.634	2.414	0.089
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.02	0.02	0.029	0.866
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	11.973	3.991	5.897	0.003*
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	Age	5	8.298	1.66	3.155	0.023
		Sex	1	0.09	0.09	0.172	0.682
		Educational Attainment	3	4.134	1.378	2.619	0.072
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.45	0.45	0.855	0.364
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	9.048	3.016	5.733	0.004*
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	Age	5	6.44	1.288	3.494	0.015*
		Sex	1	1.515	1.515	4.111	0.053
		Educational Attainment	3	2.394	0.798	2.165	0.116
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.012	0.012	0.031	0.861
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	10.279	3.426	9.295	0.000*
Community-Based Organizations	Community Involvement	Age	6	4.795	0.799	1.236	0.32
		Sex	1	0.072	0.072	0.112	0.741
		Educational Attainment	2	0.64	0.32	0.495	0.615
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	1.55	1.55	2.398	0.134
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.01	0.003	0.005	0.999
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	Age	6	6.537	1.09	1.813	0.136
		Sex	1	0.058	0.058	0.097	0.759
		Educational Attainment	2	1.112	0.556	0.925	0.409
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	1.286	1.286	2.14	0.155
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.194	0.065	0.108	0.955
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	Age	6	7.196	1.199	1.74	0.151
		Sex	1	0.117	0.117	0.17	0.684
		Educational Attainment	2	5.777	2.888	4.19	0.026*
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	1.017	1.017	1.475	0.235
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	2.925	0.975	1.415	0.261
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	Age	6	5.361	0.893	1.489	0.221
		Sex	1	0.17	0.17	0.283	0.599
		Educational Attainment	2	2.138	1.069	1.782	0.188
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.717	0.717	1.194	0.284
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.196	0.065	0.109	0.954
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	Age	6	10.689	1.781	2.674	0.037*
		Sex	1	0.025	0.025	0.037	0.849
		Educational Attainment	2	2.117	1.059	1.589	0.223
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.653	0.653	0.98	0.331
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.068	0.023	0.034	0.991
Tourism-related Establishment Employees	Community Involvement	Age	5	5.369	1.074	1.114	0.432
		Sex	1	0	0	0	0.984
		Educational Attainment	2	2.916	1.458	1.512	0.285
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.401	0.401	0.416	0.539
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.554	0.185	0.191	0.899
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	Age	5	5.972	1.194	1.317	0.357
		Sex	1	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.954
		Educational Attainment	2	5.657	2.829	3.118	0.108
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0	0	0	0.987
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	1.123	0.374	0.413	0.749
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	Age	5	7.522	1.504	2.229	0.163
		Sex	1	0.136	0.136	0.201	0.668
		Educational Attainment	2	6.438	3.219	4.769	0.049*
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.339	0.339	0.503	0.501
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.551	0.184	0.272	0.844
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	Age	5	7.88	1.576	2.888	0.1
		Sex	1	0	0	0	0.995
		Educational Attainment	2	1.14	0.57	1.045	0.401
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.298	0.298	0.547	0.484
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	1.57	0.523	0.959	0.463
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	Age	5	7.127	1.425	1.098	0.438
		Sex	1	0.011	0.011	0.008	0.93
		Educational Attainment	2	5.951	2.976	2.292	0.172
		Training in the Industry or Field	1	0.023	0.023	0.018	0.898
		No. of Years in the Tourism Industry or Field	3	0.269	0.09	0.069	0.975

In table 5, the results reveal significant differences in tourism engagement among stakeholders based on demographic profiles, indicating that participation is shaped by education, age, and years of service. In LGUs, older and more experienced officers with higher educational attainment demonstrated greater capacity to lead long-term projects, coordinate multi-agency efforts, and secure funding. Younger officers, while technologically adept and innovative, often lack the administrative experience to sustain complex initiatives. These dynamic underscores the complementary value of experience and innovation, suggesting that structured mentorship programs could balance institutional knowledge with fresh perspectives, ensuring continuity and adaptability in tourism governance (Rose et al., 2022; Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024).

For community-based organizations (CBOs), differences in involvement across demographics were minimal. Participation is driven primarily by cultural pride, livelihood opportunities, and collective motivation rather than formal education or tenure. Fisherfolk associations, women's cooperatives, and youth volunteers actively engage in festivals, awareness campaigns, and eco-activities, reflecting an inclusive, grassroots-oriented tourism culture. However, limited technical and administrative capacity constrains the sustainability of complex projects, highlighting the need for targeted capacity-building in financial management, environmental monitoring, and project evaluation (Sarinas et al., 2023; Cabaguing, 2024).

Among tourism establishments, educational attainment emerged as the primary determinant of engagement. Staff with formal training in hospitality and tourism exhibited higher involvement in awareness programs, eco-friendly initiatives, and community partnerships, whereas those relying solely on practical experience showed limited innovation and structured sustainability practices. This underscores the role of human capital in fostering professional accountability, operational excellence, and environmental responsibility, reinforcing the value of continuing education, certification programs, and institutional partnerships (Rose et al., 2022; Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024).

Interestingly, sex and prior training showed no significant differences in engagement across sectors. Gender parity in participation was observed, though women remain underrepresented in leadership and decision-making roles, indicating that numerical equality does not guarantee structural empowerment (Scheyvens, 1999; Cole, 2018, as

cited in Gutierrez, 2024). Similarly, training has become a baseline condition; its impact on engagement is contingent on practical application and mentoring to translate knowledge into measurable outcomes (Escamis & Hinlayagan, 2024; Sarinas et al., 2023).

Collectively, these findings highlight a unifying theme: education, professional experience, and social motivation are the primary drivers of engagement, while gender and formal training serve as stabilizing factors. In LGUs, tenure and education shape strategic governance; in communities, cultural pride sustains participation; and in private establishments, professional training enhances service quality and sustainability practices. This interplay suggests that sustainable tourism governance relies on integrating institutional expertise with inclusive community engagement. Policy implications include implementing mentorship and succession planning in LGUs, targeted capacity-building for CBOs, and professional development programs for tourism establishments. Pedagogically, the findings support embedding tourism governance, intersectoral collaboration, and sustainability into curricula to cultivate civic-minded learners capable of contributing to inclusive and sustainable tourism development.

➤ Relationship Between Extent of Involvement of LGU and Community and Education Sector in Tourism Development Programs

The relationship between the extent of involvement of LGU personnel, community-based organizations, and tourism-related establishments, and that of the education sector in tourism development programs, was examined using Spearman's rho correlation.

Using Spearman's rho correlation, all coefficients were found to be positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that higher engagement among LGUs and community stakeholders corresponds to higher levels of participation from the education sector. This means that the educational institutions' involvement is not independent but instead grows in strength and scope when local governments and communities are active in tourism activities, projects, funding allocations, monitoring, and impact assessments.

In other words, the education sector tends to mirror the level of enthusiasm, leadership, and coordination demonstrated by LGUs and communities, confirming that tourism development thrives most effectively when it operates as a collaborative system rather than a collection of isolated efforts.

Table 6. Relationship between Extent of Engagement of the LGU and Community and the Extent of Involved of the Community and the Education Sector using Spearman's Rho Correlation

Extent of Engagement of the LGU and Community	Extent of Involvement of the Community and the Education Sector	Spearman's rho	df	p-value
Activities	Community Involvement	0.488	98	<0.001
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	0.524	98	<0.001
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	0.438	98	<0.001
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	0.390	98	<0.001
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	0.412	98	<0.001

Projects	Community Involvement	0.433	98	<0.001
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	0.419	98	<0.001
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	0.424	98	<0.001
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	0.333	98	<0.001
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	0.497	98	<0.001
Funding	Community Involvement	0.575	98	<0.001
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	0.524	98	<0.001
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	0.529	98	<0.001
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	0.445	98	<0.001
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	0.546	98	<0.001
Monitoring and Evaluation	Community Involvement	0.554	98	<0.001
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	0.633	98	<0.001
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	0.528	98	<0.001
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	0.501	98	<0.001
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	0.517	98	<0.001
Impact Assessment	Community Involvement	0.555	98	<0.001
	LGU and DOT Collaboration	0.582	98	<0.001
	Educational Programs and Awareness Campaigns	0.540	98	<0.001
	Sustainable Tourism Practices	0.468	98	<0.001
	Partnerships with Private Organizations and Stakeholders	0.553	98	<0.001

In the table 6, analysis of the correlations among LGUs, communities, and the education sector reveals that the strongest associations occur in monitoring and evaluation ($p = 0.633$) and impact assessment ($p = 0.582$) within LGU–DOT collaborations. This indicates that educational institutions engage most actively when governance structures institutionalize accountability, documentation, and reporting. Schools and universities translate these governance mechanisms into research, assessment, and extension activities, enhancing transparency, civic participation, and sustainability outcomes. This aligns with Bastida et al. (2024) and Tomasi et al. (2020), who noted that higher education partnerships in place-based projects strengthen both practical management strategies and long-term community impact.

Funding emerged as another critical determinant, with moderate-to-high positive correlations ($p = 0.52$ – 0.58) linking resource availability to educational sector participation. Adequate financial support enables schools to integrate tourism into curricula, conduct awareness campaigns, and implement extension projects, thereby reinforcing the link between resources and sustained engagement. Conversely, limited funding undermines sustainability efforts, as observed in Surigao del Sur’s coastal tourism areas (Inocente & Bacosa, 2022), highlighting that financial allocation must be paired with consistent monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The data also underscore a reciprocal reinforcement between governance effectiveness and educational collaboration. LGU officers initiate partnerships for community-based activities such as eco-camps, heritage conservation, and awareness drives, while community organizations integrate schools and universities into grassroots projects. Tourism establishments complement these efforts through training programs and on-the-job learning. This triangular relationship illustrates a

“collaborative governance” model (Bastida et al., 2024), where stakeholder participation amplifies collective outcomes across activities, funding, monitoring, and impact assessment.

Notably, the strongest correlations in monitoring and evaluation reflect a maturing governance culture that prioritizes evidence-based planning, data reflection, and adaptive management. The education sector functions as a co-producer of knowledge, translating LGU accountability systems into learning opportunities, research outputs, and advocacy initiatives. This shift from participant to knowledge partner embodies “learning-oriented governance” (Tomasi et al., 2020), wherein tourism is managed through systematic evaluation rather than episodic events.

Implications for Social Science education are evident. Tourism in Surigao del Sur exemplifies the integration of governance, community participation, and education in promoting sustainability, heritage preservation, and civic responsibility. However, gaps in monitoring, evaluation, and practical sustainability highlight the need to contextualize Social Science teaching. Incorporating local tourism cases—such as coastal pollution challenges (Inocente & Bacosa, 2022) or the role of community–education partnerships (Bastida et al., 2024)—can make lessons more relevant, action-oriented, and grounded in lived realities, bridging the gap between abstract content and societal application.

In summary, the findings reveal a symbiotic model of engagement: LGUs provide structure and resources, communities supply cultural relevance and participation, and the education sector institutionalizes learning, assessment, and advocacy. Effective tourism governance thus depends on interdependent, multi-sectoral collaboration, where education

transforms awareness into accountability, fostering inclusive, evidence-based, and sustainable tourism development.

Table 7 Integration Matrix: Contextualizing Social Science Lessons with Tourism

Grade / Subject	Most Essential Learning Competency (MELC)	Tourism-Focused Contextualized Lesson (TURISMO ESKWELA)
Grade 7 — Araling Panlipunan	AP7HAS-Ig-1.7 — Naipapahayag ang kahalagahan ng pangangalaga sa timbang na kalagayang ekolohiko ng rehiyon.	Lesson: Local eco-clean-up + mapping of a local beach/heritage site. Students collect simple data (photos, short observation notes) and identify environmental problems caused by tourism (e.g., plastic waste).
Grade 8 — Araling Panlipunan	AP8HSK-Ie-5 — Napahahalagahan ang natatanging kultura ng mga rehiyon, bansa at mamamayan.	Lesson: Heritage trails project. Students research one local festival or craft used in tourism, produce an interpretive panel (digital or paper) that explains cultural meaning and respectful visitor behavior.
Grade 9 — Araling Panlipunan	AP9MKE-Ia-1 (basic economics) & AP9MSP-IVd-7 (role of agriculture, fishing, forestry in economy).	Lesson: Tourism value-chain investigation. Students map local economic actors (farmers, fishers, artisans, guides, vendors) who benefit from tourism; interview 1 community actor (mini fieldwork).
Grade 10 — Araling Panlipunan	Nasusuri ang kalagayan, suliranin at pagtugon sa isyung pangkapaligiran ng Pilipinas; Naipaliliwanag ang kahalagahan ng aktibong pagkamamamayan.	Lesson: Policy brief & community forum simulation. Students use local data (LGU budget for tourism, reported problems) to draft a one-page policy brief recommending monitoring/management measures (waste management, carrying capacity, heritage protection).
Senior High — UCSP (Grade 11/12)	Discuss the nature, goals and perspectives of anthropology, sociology and political science; analyze community governance and participation.	Lesson: Capstone community audit: students conduct a stakeholder map (LGU, tourism office, community orgs, schools) and propose a 2-year community tourism plan that foregrounds education and stewardship.
Senior High — Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR)	Describe regional art forms and show how festivals/performances connect to local tourism and identity.	Lesson: Students co-design a mini cultural presentation / digital exhibit with local artists and create an education kit for visitors (explain meaning, etiquette, sustainability).

➤ Proposed Educational Program

Title: TURISMO ESKWELA: Strengthening Local Capacities through Education for Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism in Surigao del Sur

The proposed program, TURISMO ESKWELA, was developed in response to the study's findings, which revealed that while Local Government Units (LGUs), communities, and schools in Surigao del Sur are active in tourism initiatives, certain gaps persist. These include limited youth involvement, inadequate knowledge of tourism laws and policies, weak coordination among stakeholders, and inconsistent sustainability efforts. Conversely, schools and teachers demonstrated strong potential as partners in promoting awareness and responsible tourism practices. Anchored on these findings, TURISMO ESKWELA aims to transform Social Science education into a practical platform for promoting sustainable and inclusive tourism. The program seeks to contextualize classroom learning by connecting it with local tourism realities—enabling students to develop cultural pride, civic responsibility, and environmental stewardship. Through localized lesson integration, policy literacy, and community engagement, the initiative reinforces education as a catalyst for sustainable tourism governance.

The program framework consists of five key components:

- Contextualized Lesson Integration – Development of at least ten localized Social Science lesson exemplars focusing on tourism, governance, and sustainability.
- Student Tourism Awareness Campaigns – Implementation of at least three student-led campaigns, such as heritage exhibits and cultural festivals, to promote youth participation in tourism.
- Policy Literacy in the Classroom – Conduct of classroom debates, simulations, and assessments to improve student understanding of tourism policies, particularly Republic Act 9593 and local ordinances.
- Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship Lessons – Integration of eco-activities such as waste segregation drives and school garden projects within Social Science instruction.
- Local History and Heritage Integration – Development of five localized modules featuring Surigao del Sur's cultural and historical assets to strengthen cultural continuity and identity.

- Implementation will be carried out over 10 months, divided into four phases:
- Orientation (Month 1): Program introduction and stakeholder engagement.
- Training (Months 2–4): Capacity-building sessions for teachers and student leaders on contextualization and tourism education.
- Implementation (Months 5–8): Execution of lessons and campaigns in participating schools.
- Evaluation (Months 9–10): Assessment of program effectiveness through feedback, student outputs, and activity documentation.

The program will be implemented by Social Science teachers in coordination with the DepEd Surigao del Sur Division, employing a blended learning approach that combines face-to-face and digital modalities.

Expected outcomes include:

- Improved contextualization of Social Science lessons;
- Increased student engagement in tourism-related civic activities;
- Enhanced policy and environmental awareness; and
- Strengthened community pride and responsibility among learners.

The estimated budget for full implementation is ₱480,000, covering orientation, training, implementation activities, digital content production, and monitoring and evaluation.

In summary, TURISMO ESKWELA operationalizes the educational implications of the study by using Social Science as a medium to build local capacities for sustainable tourism. It positions education not merely as instruction but as a dynamic instrument for community transformation, aligning classroom learning with real-world participation and sustainable development goals in Surigao del Sur.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, several conclusions can be drawn that reflect not only the present conditions of community, LGU, and education sector engagement in tourism development in Surigao del Sur, but also the deeper implications for policy, practice, and sustainability.

First, the presence of a well-educated, trained, and predominantly mid- to late-career demographic within the tourism workforce suggests a strong foundation for tourism leadership and sustainability. However, this demographic profile also implies the need for strategic succession planning

and greater inclusion of youth in long-term tourism programs to ensure continuity and innovation.

Second, while the extent of engagement among LGUs, communities, and the education sector is generally high, this level of involvement does not automatically equate to systemic efficiency. The presence of moderately serious problems in key governance and implementation areas such as policy enforcement, coordination, and funding indicates that participation is active but may lack strategic integration. This suggests a gap between engagement in activities and actual policy coherence or institutional capacity.

Third, the consistently high engagement in sustainable tourism practices and educational initiatives reflects a shared awareness of environmental responsibility and community empowerment. However, the low severity ratings of environmental and sustainability concerns may reflect an underestimation of long-term ecological risks or a lack of structured environmental monitoring. This points to the need for more proactive and data-informed approaches to tourism sustainability.

Fourth, the challenges in stakeholder coordination and community participation reveal limitations in inter-agency collaboration and grassroots mobilization. Although structures for engagement exist, the lack of unified strategies and communication mechanisms continues to hinder the full potential of tourism development. This fragmentation affects not only policy implementation but also resource sharing and project continuity across institutions. Finally, the findings validate the need for an integrated educational program that can systematize capacity-building, enhance stakeholder coordination, and institutionalize community-based tourism development. The proposed “TURISMO ESKWELA” program is not merely a response to current gaps, but a strategic intervention aimed at transforming engagement into empowered and informed participation. Education, in this context, serves not only as a knowledge-delivery mechanism but as a catalyst for behavioral change, cultural pride, and sustainable development.

In conclusion, while Surigao del Sur exhibits commendable levels of engagement in tourism development, addressing structural inefficiencies, fostering inclusive participation, and enhancing education-based interventions are essential to achieving a more responsive, resilient, and community-driven tourism sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study’s findings, several strategic recommendations are proposed to strengthen the engagement of LGUs, communities, and the education sector in tourism development in Surigao del Sur.

- Institutionalize Tourism Education. Integrating tourism-related topics into formal curricula—such as Araling Panlipunan, TLE, and MAPEH—can cultivate local pride, environmental awareness, and cultural appreciation among students. Early exposure will empower learners to become informed and active contributors to community

tourism initiatives. Complementarily, province-wide capacity-building programs should be established, offering regular training on tourism governance, policy literacy (e.g., RA 9593), financial management, sustainable practices, and participatory planning. These interventions bridge the gap between knowledge, engagement, and actionable policy implementation.

- **Strengthen Multi-Sectoral Collaboration.** LGUs should formalize municipal and barangay-level tourism councils, comprising community representatives, private sector actors, academe, and youth groups. Such platforms promote inclusive decision-making, enhance coordination, reduce redundancy, and align initiatives toward a shared tourism vision. Embedding monitoring and evaluation systems within these councils ensures that activities are assessed not just for outputs but for long-term social, economic, and environmental impacts.
- **Enhance Environmental Education and Sustainable Practices.** Although stakeholder engagement in sustainability is relatively strong, awareness of long-term ecological consequences remains limited. Targeted initiatives—such as clean-up drives, reforestation projects, ecotourism trail development, and waste management programs—should be implemented in collaboration with schools, universities, and community organizations. These activities foster ecological responsibility while enriching local tourism experiences.
- **Promote Youth and Intergenerational Participation.** Given the predominance of middle-aged tourism workers, deliberate strategies are needed to involve younger generations. Student-led tourism clubs, peer-driven awareness campaigns, and internships within local tourism offices can create pathways for intergenerational knowledge transfer and leadership continuity. Piloting an integrated educational program, “TURISMO ESKWELA,” may provide comprehensive modules on tourism awareness, policy literacy, environmental stewardship, entrepreneurship, and stakeholder collaboration. Successful pilots can be scaled province-wide to institutionalize participatory tourism education.
- **Reinforce Public–Private Partnerships and Resource Mobilization.** Persistent funding and resource gaps require collaborative solutions. LGUs are encouraged to partner with private tourism operators, entrepreneurs, and corporate stakeholders to support infrastructure, training, and promotional initiatives. These partnerships, coupled with standardized monitoring and evaluation systems, ensure that resources are efficiently allocated and tourism programs achieve measurable, sustainable outcomes.

Collectively, these recommendations aim to transform Surigao del Sur’s tourism governance from episodic engagement to an integrated, evidence-driven, and inclusive system, where education, community participation, and institutional support reinforce one another for sustainable local development

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