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AGRO-TOURISM STRATEGIES FOR FARMERS
IN BANAUE, IFUGAO: THE PHILIPPINES

JOHNNY LAURENCE SANTOS GILO

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE
MAEJO UNIVERSITY

2011

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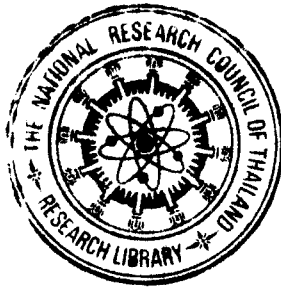
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IN BANAUE, IFUGAO: THE PHILIPPINES**



JOHNNY LAURENCE SANTOS GILO

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE**

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APPROVAL SHEET

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Title

AGRO-TOURISM STRATEGIES FOR FARMERS

IN BANAUE, IFUGAO: THE PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT**E46960**

The study aimed to design and formulate appropriate strategies geared towards the development of agro-tourism in Banaue, Ifugao. The formulated agro-tourism strategies were based on the readiness of the farmers and tourists specialty operators to participate in agro-tourism activities in terms of environmental and social attributes favorable to the development of agro-tourism in Banaue, Ifugao, existing agricultural farming practices and general tourism activities that could be associated to the development of agro-tourism in Banaue, Ifugao, and, problems and constraints inimical to agriculture and tourism activities in the area. Appropriate agro-tourism strategies will assist the local farmers on the processes and approaches appropriate for their conditions and alternative means for implementation that will override short-term goals aimed solely at profit motivations, rather, emphasize on the important future attributes that are more positive for the entire community, and, will foster the conservation of resources towards sustainability. The descriptive method of social science research was used in the study.

In terms of environmental and social attributes, Banaue, Ifugao possesses a diverse portfolio of assets- physical, human, and social- including a broad range of tangible and intangible potential resources consisting of institutions, establishments, and facilities that farmers, tourists specialty operators, and the community can draw for the adoption and implementation of agro-tourism activities as additional source of livelihood.

Existing agricultural farming practices in Banaue, Ifugao could be described as a long and tedious process with various production phases, that depicts the small scale farming operation and gives a classic example of indigenous system of farming that farmers derived from their ancestors. Majority, if not all, of farm mechanization is done manually starting from land

preparation that ends to storage and utilization where household members are the main sources of labor. The practice of organic farming is applied by farmers where the use of inorganic fertilizers, chemicals, and pesticides is nil. These indigenous or unconventional farming practices could be the key elements of interest to attract tourist for the adoption of agro-tourism strategies. On the other hand, most if not all of the general tourism activities in Banaue, Ifugao are confined to sightseeing and walk tours, whereas, tourism services are cramped to tour guiding, food and accommodation, and transportation services. Majority of the products sold to tourists are limited to small line of fine arts which are all pains-takingly-handmade. Tourist destinations are still quite underdeveloped with insufficient infrastructures and support facilities, nonetheless, the present and existing tourism activities could be the foundation support to initiate the adoption and implementation of agro-tourism services and marketing networks in Banaue, Ifugao.

The existing problems, constraints and issues inimical to agriculture and tourism activities are constituted by interlocking factors from the environment and economic pressures. Production yields of farmers are low due to limited production areas aggravated with unfavorable weather conditions, whereas, to date, the benefits of tourism are generally concentrated with the owners of tourism-related establishments. The meager economic conditions of the farmers and specialty tourist operators push them to migrate to neighboring provinces in the region or in the cities to look for greener pastures. Such situation compels an appropriate integrated system dimension approach of mutually synergized agro-tourism activities to alleviate the economic conditions of the farmers and tourist specialty operators while simultaneously supporting the protection and conservation or preservation of the Banaue rice terraces.

The designed appropriate agro-tourism strategies for farmers in Banaue, Ifugao: the Philippines, provide a multi-dimension approach to simultaneously enhance and support the agriculture and tourism sectors while recognizing and uplifting the economic opportunities of farmers and the community in Banaue, Ifugao, at the same time, sustaining indigenous farming based on farmer's own knowledge, skills, values and culture, and institution. The agro-tourism strategies are designed in such a way that a synchrony exist in its functions and benefits towards: alleviation of economic standards of farmers by improving production through agro-ecological and entrepreneurial concepts and approaches; protection, conservation and preservation of the

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environment, the Banaue rice terraces in particular, and, protection and preservation of socio-cultural heritage by promoting rural viability and mitigate urbanization and migration, hence, the need for consideration in the adoption and implementation of appropriate agro-tourism strategies for farmers in Banaue, Ifugao.

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