

# **The Role of Community-Based Tourism in Enhancing Visitor Experience in El Nido, Palawan**

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**Abstract:** *This study examined the role of community-based tourism (CBT) in enhancing visitor experiences in El Nido, Palawan, Philippines. With El Nido emerging as one of the country's most popular tourist destinations, balancing tourism growth with cultural preservation and environmental sustainability has become a pressing concern. A survey of 250 tourists—58% international and 42% domestic—was conducted to assess perceptions of authenticity, satisfaction, and engagement with CBT-related activities such as mangrove tours, homestays, and artisan workshops. Results revealed that community participation significantly enriched perceived authenticity, with tourists strongly valuing direct interaction with locals (mean = 4.42) and cultural immersion activities (mean = 4.35). Visitor satisfaction was likewise high (overall mean = 4.27), largely attributed to the hospitality of local hosts (mean = 4.48) and quality of cultural experiences (mean = 4.31). However, infrastructure support, particularly in transport and sanitation (mean = 3.76), was identified as a challenge. These findings align with prior studies emphasizing the importance of active local involvement in sustainable tourism while highlighting the need for government and private sector collaboration in infrastructure development. The study concludes that CBT offers a pathway for El Nido to achieve inclusive and sustainable tourism by simultaneously enhancing visitor satisfaction and empowering local communities. Recommendations include strengthening community capacity, improving basic facilities, and promoting El Nido's unique cultural and ecological assets globally.*

**Keywords:** Community-Based Tourism, Visitor Experience, Cultural Authenticity, Sustainable Tourism, El Nido Palawan Philippines

