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## **ABSTRACT**

In an attempt to address the gaps between ecotourism and communication, the study aimed to determine how communication factors define perception on ecotourism among residents of Lobo, Batangas. Guided by the Social Judgement Theory (SJT), it specifically sought to: (1) identify the interpersonal and mediated sources of information of Lobo, Batangas residents on ecotourism; (2) find out the messages about ecotourism they were exposed to; (3) determine their level of ego-involvement towards ecotourism; and (4) describe their current perceptions of ecotourism. Using the survey research design and convenience sampling, the study found that majority of the respondents acquired ecotourism information from tourism organizations/associations and television. In terms of ecotourism messages, most were informed about those that revolve around the nature-based tenet. As to their level of ego-involvement towards ecotourism, majority considered the concept and/or industry as highly important in their lives. They also mostly perceived ecotourism positively. It therefore concluded that communication factors define perceptions on ecotourism by being carriers of meanings that basis of how they perceive and act towards the industry. As such, it is recommended for the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Lobo, Batangas to coordinate with interpersonal and maximize mediated sources to expand the communication efforts on ecotourism. Conduct of similar studies that employ random sampling is also suggested to attain generalizability of results.

Keywords: communication factors, perception, ecotourism, residents, Lobo, Batangas