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Perception and Acceptability of Rice Cake Vendors on Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro

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ABSTRACT

The allure of a destination often lies in the unique and authentic connections with local communities. In line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 11, which advocates for sustainable cities and communities, community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as a promising approach. Recognizing the potential of CBT, this study delves into the perceptions and acceptance of this concept among community members and rice cake vendors in Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. Rice cake, bibingka in Filipino language, holds deeper significance for these vendors. It embodies their cultural heritage passed down through generations. By embracing CBT, they can transform their passion into a sustainable livelihood, not only for themselves but for their entire community and the whole tourism industry of the province. Adopting a quantitative approach, this study employs a CBT framework with a supplementing focus on community capital. Through mapping and observation of the research locale, community capital includes built, human, and political. The findings also reveal a positive correlation between the community's perception and acceptance of CBT. This encouraging outcome signifies that the community has met the first consideration of embracing CBT—they have their eyes wide open. It is therefore recommended that consistent and inclusive programs from various stakeholders be in place to enhance the existing knowledge of the CBT concept towards strong community organization building. Future researchers may assess tourists' experiences and satisfaction with the current offering of rice cake as a CBT product for planners' and policymakers' prospect program implementation.

INTRODUCTION

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many destinations are implementing new health and safety protocols, such as vaccination requirements, testing, and contact tracing. Sustainability and responsible tourism will likely be increasingly important in the years ahead. The UNWTO has identified sustainable tourism as a key priority for the industry, and many destinations are working to reduce their environmental impact and promote social and economic benefits for local communities (UNWTO). One characteristic that may be included in the sustainable tourism aspect is community-based tourism (CBT). CBT emphasizes the participation and empowerment of local communities in sustainable tourism development and management to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) (Thananusak & Suriyankietkaew, 2023). CBT focuses specifically on the participation and empowerment of local communities in tourism development and management. CBT aims to create sustainable tourism practices that benefit local communities and preserve cultural and environmental heritage, and both rely on the participation and cooperation of multiple stakeholders, including local communities, governments, and tourists.

To introduce and support the community in maximizing its potential in CBT, several approaches can be utilized. The whole community as well as planners must investigate various preparedness checklists. The first consideration

when preparing for CBT is that stakeholders should have their eyes wide open on the nature of tourism as well as its impacts. This should start by assessing the community to see if they are aware and willing to accept the concept of general tourism and specifically CBT itself. Secondly is making sure that the community has its own competitive CBT product to offer.

Naujan, officially the Municipality of Naujan, is a 1st class municipality in the province of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. It is known for its pristine beauty and historical sites. It houses some of the most important destinations in the province such as the Naujan Lake which is the fifth largest lake in the Philippines and the largest freshwater lake in the province. It is a 30-minute drive from the provincial capital, Calapan City. Additionally, this municipality can boast its nature-based tourism sites such as Turtle Island, Dao Water Lily Mini Park, Arangin Falls, Buloc-Buloc Cove among others. Historically, this municipality also situated the Bancuro Church Ruins in Naujan, popularly known as the Simbahang Bato which reflects the fervent devotion and its timeless history.

When it comes to its food and delicacy, Naujeños (people of Naujan) considered the rice cake of Pinagsabangan II, one of the 70 barangays in the municipality, to be popular. The rice cake business has been the bread and butter of the community members. It has been operating for approximately twenty years now. A total of twenty rice cake vendors are available up to this day. They

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Figure 1: Rice cake (bibingka) of Naujan usually served with ginger tea (salabat)

Source: Official Facebook page of Oriental Mindoro Provincial Tourism Office <https://www.facebook.com/share/7YHLAduRDpbn1j7Y/?mibextid=W7C7FN>

are composed of those who own stalls, and some are peddlers. Although rice cake is a food sold in different provinces all over the Philippines, rice cake vendors in Naujan have these sold 365 days a year and some offer it 24/7. Rice cake vendors managed to retain the traditional way of cooking rice cake. It is best served hot partnered with ginger tea, most known as salabat. All raw materials starting from banana leaves, rice, coconut, and the like are local businesses present and supplied in the area by its community members. Rice cake has also been widely accepted in the province since it was coined as “Bibingka ng Curva (most common and alternative term for Pinagsabangan II)” because it is where you can only find a national highway that is filled with stalls selling this product all year round. Rice cake has also impacted the lives of the families who used to sell it since they derived most of their income from it. According to an informal interview with some rice cake vendors, they normally earn Php 800/day if it’s a normal season and more or less Php 2000/day if it’s a peak season like Christmas and Lenten Week. Through that income, they can send their offspring to school and provide family necessities. Another perks of having them running their own small business is that they have more time with their family because they are not leaving their homes. Currently, most of the rice cake stalls in the community are registered businesses in the municipality and are compliant with health and sanitary permits to operate. They also have their Bibingka Vendor’s Association, however, its registration is still in the works with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

To amplify the first consideration prior to implementing CBT, this study focused on determining the community respondent’s perception and acceptability of CBT through several indicators as a prime goal before embracing this approach. There was no current research that explored CBT in this municipality, particularly through rice cake vendors. The researcher has chosen

the concept of exploring CBT in line with the goal of the provincial government in maximizing its potential to promote and develop well-managed community-based sustainable tourism organizations (CBSTOs). This time, it was through one of the longest-running food businesses in Naujan which was rice cake or bibingka in Filipino language.

Specifically, this study assessed the level of perception and acceptability of the community on CBT and tested the following hypotheses:

H0: The socio-demographic profile of the respondents does not influence their level of perception towards CBT.

H1: The socio-demographic profile of the respondents does not influence their level of acceptability towards CBT.

H2: The level of perception of the community respondents does not influence their level of acceptability towards CBT.

This study aimed to provide the necessary information such as the community’s capital and the perception and acceptability of CBT towards strong community-based sustainable tourism organization building. It may also give the needed data for the stakeholders from the local and provincial concerned units in supplementing the needed development program that may holistically benefit the community members, especially the rice cake vendors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

A community is understood as a framework for an organization. It is a delimited place where people live and meet their daily needs together while trying to pursue their collective or individual agendas (Zielinski *et al.*, 2020). Sosa *et al.* (2021) stated that community is anchored in three elements: place, interest, and attachment. People living in an area with a connection in place, with common interests and a deeper understanding and attachment of



Figure 2: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

their values, origin, well-being and higher hopes for their abilities as human assets are the essence of a community to support activities like tourism. Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to each of the UN's 17 SDGs (UNWTO), and has been identified as playing a particularly important role in the pursuit of goals 2 (Zero Hunger), 8 (Inclusive and sustainable economic growth), 12 (Sustainable consumption and production), and 14 (Sustainable use of oceans and marine resources).

In these challenging times of constant change and unexpected events, tourism needs more than ever to be sustainable by providing economic and social benefits to host communities while seeking to minimize negative impacts on the environment (Badurina, 2022). That is why different kinds of literature provided various practices of how community-based tourism (CBT) is being viewed and implemented. Community-based tourism (CBT) is a sustainable tourism concept built on collaboration, responsibility, access, ownership, and benefits. It is planned, created, owned, and managed by the community for the community. According to Badurina (2022), in practice, CBT is often used as an umbrella term for a wide range of local initiatives managed and owned by the community and for the community. Some of the certain initiatives of sustainable tourism are ecotourism and green tourism. CBT poses quite the difference because it requires the community members to plan, manage, and control tourism activities which collectively aim to provide equitable return to them. Though CBT views the importance of the differentiated member of the community to have a fair share of both economic, social, and intellectual gains from the tourism activities they holistically formulate and come up with, various studies see challenges and obstacles of CBT in the community.

The Effective Community Based Tourism: A Best Practice Manual for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Working Group used by Badurina (2022) and Say (2021) states that the first consideration when preparing for CBT is that the community needs to be assisted to comprehend the mechanisms of tourism as well as the potential impacts before deciding to initiate a tourism operation. Tourism brings some negativities in the community that members might consider not to have it. This is why the community as well as other stakeholders should have their eyes wide open. This is even possible by starting with developing the minds of the community about the concept of tourism and more likely community-based tourism itself. There is a need for careful planning, education, and awareness to achieve the balance between community development goals or vision, sustainable benefits, drivers or opportunities, and challenges brought by tourism to minimize harm from it. That is why the perception of the rice cake vendors towards community-based tourism is one of the areas that this study tried to assess. CBT, to flourish, should start with an initiative. A CBT initiative is a project program, or collective action of a group of people who belong to a community that decided to participate in or

develop together a small to medium-scale local tourism industry (Zielinski *et al.*, 2020). To handle CBT initiatives sustainably, a community must go through the processes of institutional growth and organizational building.

Because a community is said to be inclusive, differences between them are also prevalent, which according to some related studies can be a reason why some CBT fails. Making judgments regarding who should participate in CBT presents many difficulties because a community is a collection of people who frequently have conflicting objectives. Leaders of CBT initiatives should be clear with the concepts, plans, implementations that will eventually divert to the positive impacts of tourism development to the community. Community members should always have a stand on what is good for them or not. Their perception is valid. According to Saepudin *et al.* (2022), making sure the local communities remain involved in collaboration with all stakeholders and play a crucial role in managing the tourist destinations is one of the primary issues related to maintaining tourism-related enterprises run by the community. Challenges on running a CBT is supported by the study of Zielinski *et al.*, (2020) who states that when community members perceive an improvement in their quality of lives, their perceptions towards tourism are likely to be supportive and positive. Once the local community understands tourism related issues, community participation may possibly be achieved. In other words, the community's knowledge of tourism, development, and sustainability will allow locals to gain confidence in regard to participating in a tourism development project (Chatkaewnapanon & Lee, 2022). Furthermore, if the benefits from tourism are not visible and experienced, the activity loses community support because the negative impacts outweigh the benefits, which is usually a serious obstacle to tourism development (Zielinski *et al.*, 2020).

Additionally, the study of Saepudin *et al.* (2022) derived various obstacles in managing tourist initiatives in a village or community which involves: first, the need for professional and competent personnel to manage tourism are lacking in the community. It implies that human resources are one of the things to be strengthened. This is supported by Reindrawati (2023) who says that in CBT, structural barriers include lack of access to planning experts. The study also found that good and correct management should be supported in terms of science because the knowledge of tourism in some communities is still limited. Second, inability to communicate with tourists specifically in the tourist's foreign language. Thirdly, people's habits which pertain to the fear that the community members' habits may change when they become too comfortable with tourism, so they may not want to engage in farming, growing vegetables or other old activities again. It also incorporates some of the negative impacts of tourism such as the discomfort of the community as they may be disrupted with tourism activities especially on their culture and way of life. Moreover, the study of Lo and Janta (2020) states that

CBT suffers because of the lack of financial sustainability which is sometimes due to the absence of business expertise, knowledge among members and access to the market. Furthermore, security-related concerns are also prevalent such as the existence of drugs and events of theft, robbery, and begging in a destination can be perceived as harmful events to tourist flow (Lo and Janta, 2020).

This study used the concepts in understanding community perception towards CBT namely: community development goals, drivers and opportunities, sustainability, and challenges and threats from the reviewed literature as

indicators in measuring the level of perception of the community respondents including the rice cake vendors on the CBT concept.

CBT Framework

The CBT framework utilized by Aji (2020) was used in the present study. It used the same indicators to determine the acceptability of the community on CBT as follows: entrepreneurs' collaboration, community participation, social and economic development and local community business lifestyle.

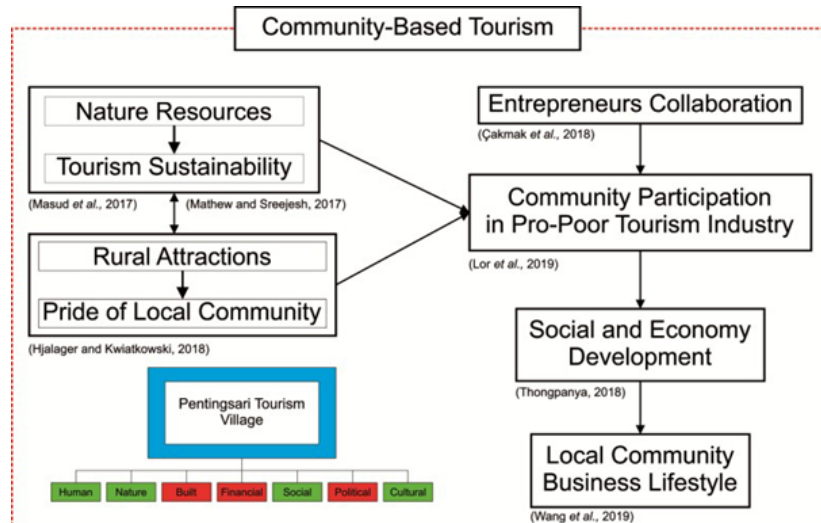


Figure 4: CBT Framework (Aji, 2020)

According to Çakmak *et al.*, (2018), entrepreneurs' collaboration is vital in increasing the knowledge in marketing, organizing, planning, and monitoring of business operations. Informal entrepreneurs may lack these, but they are highly flexible when it comes to programs or projects that may directly benefit them. Whether businesses are small or big, collaboration will greatly enhance their existing capital. These collaborations might include those applicable to the present study such as collaboration on formal training providers, academic institutions and private tourism stakeholders such as tour operators, transport companies etc.

Secondly, community participation is another factor of community-based tourism. CBT is being characterized as something that is owned, managed or co-managed by one or more community members (i.e. for the benefit and empowerment of one or more community members). This is supported by Giampiccoli (2020) which says that the process of empowerment should follow a facilitative approach where local community members not only participate, but own and control the tourism development process. Members of the community to fully grasp the advantages that they might get from CBT initiatives and development should clearly know their responsibilities as part of their participation. But before they can participate, a well-defined management plan should be disseminated and directed for the greater

good of the community. When there are benefits of CBT, challenges pertaining to community participation are also inevitable. Five challenges emerged from the study of Setokoe, T. J., & Ramukumba, T. (2020) namely: elitism, factions, greed and corruption, leadership conflict, lack of capacity to participate in development initiatives, lack of support from the government and lack of funding and infrastructure. To ensure maximum community participation, the community should be well informed and educated about tourism initiatives and there should be enough support for them to fully participate in tourism development initiatives in their area (Setokoe, T. J., & Ramukumba, T., 2020). The type and level of community participation in CBT should be decided and defined by the community.

The third indicator of CBT is social and economic development. This study will try to explore socio-economic development and contributions to the community through the perceptions of the participants with existing and future government interventions and initiatives. According to Juma & Khademi-Vidra (2019), the perceived contributions of CBT include CBT creating a market for local goods and services, providing development opportunities for young people, fostering good relations amongst local stakeholders, a sense of local pride and place, improving livelihoods and quality of life and creating jobs.

The last indicator will be the community business lifestyle which will try to determine the motivation of the respondents particularly the rice cake vendors when it comes to putting their business and engagement in entrepreneurship. According to Peters *et al.* (2019), the type of entrepreneurial motivation in tourism and hospitality is normally classified as either business-oriented or lifestyle-oriented. Those who engage in entrepreneurship due to purposes like profit and making a living are considered business-oriented. On the other side, lifestyle-oriented businesses favor customer demands and preferences over business growth and profit goals. This indicator will try to explore the perception of the rice cake vendors on their current and future insights into this potential tourism product. This study adopted the community-based tourism framework and explored the respondent's perception of the said factors.

Community Perception and Acceptability of Tourism

Tourism provides essential benefits to the local community. Community members are vulnerable to tourism changes which is why they should be asked and consulted first. Their perception is always valid. The research conducted by Ambalao *et al.* (2022) showed that tourism has crucial impacts on local communities, which can be seen from a social, cultural, and economic perspective. That is why it is righteous that before implementing any tourism-related development, the community should be involved first-hand. To address this, their perception and acceptability should be determined first. This is also suggested in the study of González & Llopis (2019) that there is a need to collect the resident's points of view before undertaking any tourism development activity. What is more, residents play a critical role in the tourism system (González & Llopis, 2019). Furthermore, Varghese & Sagar (2018) examined carefully and considered the residents' perspectives, knowledge, skills, and perceptions of tourism and found that the development of tourism (community-based tourism) will only succeed if the local communities have the capacity, desire, and willingness to embrace this kind of progress. It is also argued that having a clear understanding of the community's perceptions may not necessarily mean they will support tourism. The need to conduct a study on the fruition of tourism in a certain community started with the needs of the place to have one. It can boil from different challenges of the community in supporting such initiatives such as lack of technical know-how in tourism development, funding, among others.

Additionally, the residents' attitude toward tourism is important due to the role the residents play in the development of the destination and the quality of the tourist experience of the visitors (Moraru, 2021). Therefore, understanding the residents' attitudes and perceptions, as well as the particularities of different resident groups is of utmost importance to the sustainable development of the destination (Moraru, 2021). Additionally, according to Ambalao *et al.* (2022),

residents' attitude toward tourism development has a positive and significant effect on their support for tourism development. This concept is supported by Badurina (2022) who emphasized that community-based tourism without active "community" participation is not consistent with the basic concept and principles of CBT. Furthermore, the residents' perceptions affect tourism development (Kusherdiana, 2021). Analyzing residents' perceptions about tourism becomes crucial to make sure that they feel satisfied with their town as well as to develop a sustainable kind of tourism (Feroni *et al.*, 2019). If residents see tourism positively, they will become the best ambassadors of their communities and places of residence, through word-of-mouth communication that can generate a favorable image of the place amongst potential visitors (González & Llopis, 2019).

The current study tried to test various hypotheses as to the reviewed literature, specifically, the influences that socio-demographics may have in the community's perception and acceptability. In connection to that, according to Cardoso & Silva (2018), business-specific context influences residents' perceptions and attitudes. For instance, residents in direct businesses with continuous contact with tourists have different perceptions of tourism than those with no contact with tourists. Moraru (2021) discovered distinctions in attitudes toward tourism across professional and age groups, with gender and income showing no significant influence. The importance of residents' attitudes toward tourism stems from their role in shaping destination development and influencing the overall tourist experience. It is imperative to grasp the attitudes, perceptions, and specificities of different resident groups for the sustainable development of the destination. In terms of the factors affecting residents' acceptance of tourism, the study by Moraru *et al.* (2021) indicated a dependence on various variables and computed indexes, including the city development index, impact on residents' quality of life index, sustainable development index, and perceived intensity of contact with tourists. These findings can be valuable in enhancing local strategies related to tourism and promoting the sustainable development of the city where the study was conducted. This was also applicable to the research area as to the main aim of assessing the community awareness and acceptability of the concept of CBT before its thorough introduction. Furthermore, Al-Saad *et al.* (2018) show that the demographic profile of respondents such as education level and employment affect their perception of various tourism aspects. They also found that highly educated and employed residents perceive more negative impacts of tourism on their quality of life than others. Furthermore, the result of the study by Ambalao *et al.* (2022) found that the residents perceived benefits and perceived costs positively and significantly affect their attitude toward tourism development. The perceived benefits of residents create an effect on their attitude according to an indicator that tourism development creates employment opportunities, provides

opportunities for local business, increases the standard of living, improves the appearance of their area, improves infrastructure, provides more recreational activities for them, opportunities for socializing, and increase resident's pride in the local culture.

While there are a lot of conducted studies that tried to assess the perception and acceptability of residents to tourism, it is still very limited when it comes to CBT. The researcher hopes that this current study may add to the body of knowledge in the assessment of community perception and willingness to accept CBT as a niche of tourism acknowledging its concept and countless possibilities in maximizing the community potential and capital.

Community-Based Tourism in the Philippines

Following the Tourism Act of 2009, the National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) for 2016–2022 is the cornerstone for promoting inclusive growth, lowering inequality, building a society of high trust and resilience, and enhancing economic competitiveness. For CBT, it acts as a manual for organizing collaborations with tourism stakeholders and the creation of livelihood programs. The NTDP seeks to increase community participation in its natural and cultural tourism products and services, particularly in rural regions, as part of aspirations to build a more inclusive business. According to Gutierrez (2019), the mechanisms for achieving CBT involve the involvement of tourism stakeholders, such as community members participating in the development of strategies, working with non-governmental organizations, and the government giving local communities the monopoly power over managing tourist destinations. The ASEAN CBT criteria state that CBT must engage stakeholders, establish relationships with local and regional economies to win approval from authorities, and advance social development for benefits that are distributed fairly and equally to empower the society. There are currently CBT programs in the Philippines that help the locals live better. Examples include the Bojo River Village Tour in Aloguinsan, Cebu, where locals showcase their rich environment and cultural heritage (Gutierrez, 2019), and the Minalungao National Park in Nueva Ecija, where communities make money by providing tour guides, selling handicrafts, and preparing local cuisine for tourists (Zuniga, 2019).

Community-based tourism (CBT) in the Philippines involves the participation of the local community in the development and management of tourism activities and attractions in the area. This approach aims to promote sustainable tourism practices that benefit both tourists and the local community. In CBT, the community takes an active role in the planning, development, and management of tourism activities. This includes the creation of tourism packages that highlight the local culture and traditions, as well as the preservation of natural resources and the environment.

Various literatures supported the two types of approach

concerning tourism development. There goes the bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up is the most common practice on community development. Communities should actively partake in the planning, organizing and implementing initiatives on the ground. On the other hand, top-down is sometimes the practices of the government here in the Philippines. After determining that a particular location has tourism potential, it is typical practice for local government agencies to start developing the area right away without first performing any research. This can lead the local residents to become indifferent toward tourists, as it has made the local community unprepared to receive tourists. This is supported by the study of Andalecio *et al.* (2022) which states that there are perceived positive and negative impacts brought by community-based tourism in Romblon province. CBT is a powerful tool to bring positive developments in the local community (Andalecio *et al.*, 2022). That is why, this study explored the perception of the community when it comes to CBT to know if it influences its acceptability based on different variables as basis for future interventions, programs, and further development. This study supported the bottom-up approach which conceptualized that tourism development should start with the community-the one who is on the ground. To realize that, their perception and acceptability should be determined first.

CBT Development in Oriental Mindoro

There are two ultimate guides that this study got its support from. First, was the Provincial Tourism Development Master Plan (PTDMP) of Oriental Mindoro (2022-2027) highlights the importance of the tourism industry in the economic aspect of the province. Having been stopped for two years because of the onset of the pandemic, the province gives importance to tourism recovery by incorporating stakeholders' approaches in crafting plans for the overall improvement of the tourism industry. The Oriental Mindoro PTDMP reiterates the significance of different stakeholders that should be involved in the development of destination communities. It emphasizes the relationship between the different stakeholders such as the Provincial Government of Oriental Mindoro (PGOM), Municipal and City Tourism Office, and other private entities and business owners present in each municipality and city (Oriental Mindoro PTDMP 2022-2027 p. 22). One that supports the aim of tourism business development at the local level belongs to empowering community-based sustainable tourism organizations (CBSTOs). This is where this study would be significant in getting the pulse of the community when it comes to CBT through its potential tourism product which is rice cake.

The second guide of this study was the Provincial Tourism Code of Oriental Mindoro or the Provincial Ordinance No. 139-2022 which sets a frame of reference for utilizing tourism as a means for the province's sustainable growth and development, investment and employment,

and cultural affirmation. Generally, it represents the principles of responsible stewardship, respect for equality and human rights, continuous improvement of tourism products and services, truthfulness in its marketing and promotions, constant enhancement of industry capabilities, and promotion of teamwork and responsible collaboration among stakeholders. In support of the aim of promoting and encouraging the construction of tourism-related establishments and facilities either through public or private funding or both, the provincial government of Oriental Mindoro is uplifting the drive of its stakeholders in developing community-based tourism endeavors and undertakings (Provincial Tourism Code, 2022, p. 8). Similarly, according to the said code, under Article VII which is entitled Farm Tourism and Marine Protected Areas as Tourism Sites, Section 40 (p. 21), the provincial tourism office in coordination with local tourism offices shall organize community-based sustainable tourism organizations (CSBTOs) to manage tourism sites. Also, said offices shall also provide technical and logistical assistance in organizing CBSTOs. It is manifested by the ongoing guidance and monitoring of the provincial tourism office in developing equipped and sustained community-based tourism activities. Based on an informal interview with the Provincial Tourism Head of Oriental Mindoro, the main challenge of the project of community-based tourism is the organization aspect which may include the people and their perception towards new systems such as this niche of tourism. This is why this study aimed to become an instrument to fill the gap of that need.

Implementation of the Code is continuously carried out through the dedication and hard work of the workforce behind it. It is evidently present through the upcoming projects of both the provincial and local units and offices. Based from the document acquired through the generosity of the Provincial Tourism Head of Oriental Mindoro which was the Provincial Development Council Resolution No.5, Series of 2022 and Project Brief which aimed to favorably endorse the proposed Naujan Bibingka Food Plaza to the MIMAROPA Regional Development Council (RDC), for inclusion in the Regional Development Investment program (RDIP) 2023-2028, Department of Tourism (DOT), Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and other agencies for support and funding, delineates the significance of keeping the culture of rice cake making in the province and shift it to a safer place for both the benefit of the vendors and the customers.

In connection to the current study, based on the secondary data provided by both the Provincial Tourism Office and the barangay, the Project Brief of proposed Bibingka (rice cake) Food Plaza which outlines the budget for the rice cake vendors aim to put the product with the people in the same place provided that this objective will create a safer place for tourists and will eventually improve and

reinvent their traveler experience as emphasized in the PTDMP (2022-2027). This is a significant breakthrough for the province and especially the community in trying to formalize the industry of the rice cake vendors as well as the overall industry of local food businesses. The proposed Naujan Bibingka Food Plaza is composed of stalls, enclosed in one compound with safe parking, comfortable kiosks for eating, restrooms and other amenities for tourists and travelers. This has been brought up by the vendors but as to what is expected, they refuse the idea since one of their concerns is the changes with the location. This study has shed light on determining their perception of community-based tourism towards their acceptability which may be used by the provincial and local governments for their future program implementation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A quantitative method was used in this study. This approach was utilized through the assessment of the perception and acceptability of the community to CBT. The purpose of the survey tool was to collect quantitative data that was analyzed to better give tangibility to the issue tackled.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were community members specifically the head of the household (should be 18 year old and up), and the rice cake vendors with business permits.

Table 1: Group of Respondents

Profile	Population	Sample Size
Rice Cake Vendors	15	15
Community (Head of Household) Sitio 1	115	41
Sitio 2	92	32
Sitio 3	64	23
Sitio 4	125	44
Sitio 5	142	50
Sitio 6	115	41
Sitio 7	81	28
	734	195
	Total	210

The data shown in Table 1 are the population and sample size of the respondents. For the rice cake vendors as part of the community, purposive sampling was used and considered all available vendors with business permits as its respondents. According to Reyes-Santiago *et al.* (2022), purposive sampling was used to select respondents that were most likely to yield appropriate and useful information. Furthermore, community respondents' sample size was determined using the Slovin's Formula.

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

The community population was based on the secondary data from the barangay which was the updated number of households present. All divisions (sitios) of the barangay were utilized to get a fair share of the desired sample size.

Research Instrument

Survey tools were self-made based on the appropriateness of the reviewed literature to the community setting of the research locale. It was administered through pen and paper. The questionnaires to collect quantitative data were composed of statements from the context of related literature on CBT. It was divided into three parts. The first part covered their socio-demographic profile. The second part was composed of statements that asked for their level of perception of community-based tourism utilizing the four indicators such as community development goals, drivers and opportunities, sustainability, and challenges and threats. The third part was composed of statements that assessed their level of acceptability towards CBT through four indicators: entrepreneurs' collaboration, social and economic development, community participation, and local community business lifestyle from the CBT framework of Aji (2020).

Validity and Reliability

The validation of the self-made instrument was done by seven (7) tourism experts namely: Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT) Chief Manpower Training Division, DOT Attache from Beijing, China, MIMAROPA (Regional) Tourism Operations Officer, Oriental Mindoro Provincial Tourism Officer, two research experts from the academe, and an entrepreneur.

In this research, reliability was determined by administering ten non-respondents to answer the research questions. Cronbach's Alpha was used to check for the internal consistency of the questions from the self-made research instrument.

Table 2: Range of Reliability and its Coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha (Mohd Arof *et al.*, 2018)

Coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Level
More than 0.90	Excellent
0.80-0.89	Good
0.70-0.79	Acceptable
0.60-0.69	Questionable
0.51-0.59	Poor
Less than 0.50	Unacceptable

Table 3 presents the range of reliability and its coefficient level by Mohd Arof *et al.*, 2018. Meanwhile, the results of the reliability tests are shown in Table 4, where the overall value of Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.70 indicates the high internal consistency in the self-made questionnaire's set of data. The reliability level is at good, acceptable, and excellent levels respectively. Therefore, data gained from the pilot study indicates that it was reliable to be tested and the set question is to be retained in continuing this study.

Table 3: Reliability Test Results

Variables	Computed Values	Interpretation
Level of Perception on CBT		
Community Development Goals	0.78	Acceptable
Drivers and Opportunities	0.80	Acceptable
Sustainability	0.77	Acceptable
Challenges and Threats	0.85	Good
Level of Acceptability on CBT		
Entrepreneurs Collaboration	0.76	Acceptable
Social and Economic Development	0.82	Good
Community Participation	0.83	Good
Local Community Business Lifestyle	0.91	Excellent

Data Gathering Procedure

After the instrument has been tested for its validity and reliability, the researcher secured all research clearances such as the permit to conduct in the Provincial Government of Oriental Mindoro through its Tourism Office as well as both the municipal and barangay unit. Face-to-face administration of questionnaires for community respondents was done since most community members are situated in areas where internet connection was not stable to support online data gathering. The researcher was present during the questionnaire administration to manage respondent's clarifications and questions. It has been significantly made sure that before the questionnaire administration, participants were informed of the rationale of the study. Respondents were given the freedom to participate or not. The names of the respondents in the survey instrument were provided as an optional entry to give them the right to protect their identity. They were allotted the time to answer the question with the utmost confidentiality. Those respondents who could not write were assisted given that the integrity and fairness of the responses were holistically carried out. All the retrieved data was tabulated and analyzed after.

Statistical Treatment Data

Descriptive and inferential statistics used in this study are as follows:

Frequency and Percentage

It was used in describing the socio-demographic profile of the customer.

Sample computation of percentage for demographic profile (Age 18-25)

$$\text{Percentage} = \text{Frequency} / \text{Total Number of Population} = 17 / 100$$

$$= 0.0809 \times 100$$

$$\text{Percentage} = 8.09$$

Weighted Mean

It was used in assessing the level of perception and acceptability of the community towards CBT.

Sample Computation of Weighted Mean for mean level of perception on CBT

Weighted Mean= Total Sum of Scale (per indicator)/Total Number of Respondents

=771/210

Weighted Mean =3.67

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient or Pearson’s r

It was used in determining the relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents to their level of perception and acceptability towards CBT as well as the influence or relationship of their perception towards their acceptability to CBT.

Four-point Likert Scale

It was utilized to measure respondents’ perceptions and acceptability towards CBT by asking the level to which they rate each statement as to its impact on them.

Scaling and Quantification

Table 4 presents the scaling and quantification to measure and analyze variables in a systematic and meaningful

Table 4: Scaling and Quantification

Level of Perception of the Respondents on CBT		
Value Scale	Weighted Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.00	Highly Knowledgeable
3	2.51 – 3.50	Knowledgeable
2	1.51 – 2.50	Somewhat Knowledgeable
1	1.00 – 1.50	Not Knowledgeable at all
Level of Acceptability of the Respondents on CBT		
Value Scale	Weighted Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.00	Highly Acceptable
3	2.51 – 3.50	Acceptable
2	1.51 – 2.50	Somewhat acceptable
1	1.00 – 1.50	Not Acceptable at all

Table 5: Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Socio-Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25	17	8.10
	26-33	25	11.90
	34-41	30	14.29
	42-49	58	27.62
	50-up	80	38.10
		210	100.00

way. The assigned value scale was the numerical value that appeared in the survey instrument. Each scale corresponds to the weighted mean range which matches the verbal interpretation. In this study, a four-point Likert scale was used to measure perceptions and acceptability of CBT. This scaling and quantification helped analyze and interpret data hereafter.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through mapping and observation, community capitals of the research locale are the built, human and political capital. The community capital encompasses a range of physical infrastructure elements, including concrete roads, schools, health facilities through the barangay center, prominent landmarks, essential utilities such as electricity, water supply, and telecommunications services, including internet provision, as well as commercial establishments owned by local community members, collectively facilitating an environment conducive to enhancing the productivity levels of its residents. Next is the human capital. The community human capital is composed of the diversity of the population ranging from the youth who are engaged with capacity-building programs such as those organized by the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) up to those capability training provided by the local and provincial government units. The health center is established with professional healthcare providers’ regular visitation to make basic medical services available for the citizens, especially infants and children. Graduates coming from the community are engaged with donation drives in maintaining the school as its most important function of alleviating poverty in society. And lastly is the political capital.

The community of Pinagsabangan II is one of the most improved communities of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro when it comes to business investments making it commercialized. Determining community capital is very vital since it will aid in assessing its assets and needs eventually. The ability of the community government to garner resources for its citizens is felt and seen by the members through enhanced and easy access to services and exposure to opportunities. Since not all community capitals are currently available within the community, improvements can be made to align with the capabilities of the assets that are currently present.

Gender	Male	69	32.86
	Female	136	64.76
	LGBTQIA	5	2.38
	Prefer not to say	0	0.00
		210	100.00
Highest Educational Attainment	Elementary Undergraduate	2	0.95
	Elementary Graduate	14	6.67
	Highschool Undergraduate	31	14.76
	Highschool Graduate	61	29.05
	College Undergraduate	32	15.24
	College Graduate	62	29.52
	Post-Graduate	8	3.81
		210	100.00
Source of Income	Private	12	5.71
	Government	32	15.24
	Business Owner	58	27.62
	Seller	51	24.29
	Household help	9	4.29
	Investment	18	8.57
	None	18	8.57
	Others	12	5.71
		210	100.00
Monthly Gross Income	0-4999	90	42.86
	5000-9999	45	21.43
	10000-14999	28	13.33
	15000-19999	28	13.33
	20000-up	19	9.05
		210	100.00
Years of Residency	1-9	28	13.33
	10-19	52	24.76
	20-29	27	12.86
	30-39	78	37.14
	40-49	17	8.10
	50-59	2	0.95
	60-up	6	2.86
		210	100.00

From the conduct of the survey administration, the following results were acquired:

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 6. Characteristics such as gender, age, educational attainment, source of income, monthly gross income, and years of residency were presented.

As shown in Table 5, respondents with 50-up age comprise the highest percentage of 38.10 % with a frequency of 80, followed by ages 42-48, with a frequency of 58 encompassing a percentage of 27.62, next is ages 34-41 with a frequency of 30 partaking the percentage of 14.29, followed by ages 26-33 with a frequency of 25 with a percentage of 11.90, and lastly were the ages from 18-

25 having the frequency of 17 and a percentage of 8.10. Additionally, from the gender, 64.76 comprises female with a frequency of 136. On the other hand, 68 were male with a percentage of 32.86. Lastly, 5 among the 210 respondents belonged to LGBTQIA with a percentage of 2.38.

Moreover, for the highest educational attainment, 62 out of 210 respondents are College Graduate with a percentage of 29.52, followed by Highschool graduate with 61 frequency with a percentage of 29.05, followed by college undergraduate with 32 respondents with a percentage of 15.24, next was the highschool undergraduate with 31 and a percentage of 14.76,

next was elementary graduate with 14 frequency and a percentage of 6.67, 8 post graduate respondents with a percentage of 3.81 and 2 elementary undergraduates with a percentage of 0.95. This is an indication that as part of the gift of individuals, the community has accessible education and has subjected themselves to learning as part of the community asset analysis. A thorough analysis of the community assets would begin with the inventory of the gifts, skills, and capacities of the community's residents (Melati *et al.*, 2023).

For the source of income, 58 respondents were business owners comprising 27.62%, followed by 51 sellers comprising 24.29%, followed by 32 government employees with a percentage of 15.24, investment and no source of income got the same frequency of 18 with a percentage of 8.57 each and 12 respondents with other source of income options not provided in the questionnaire comprise 5.71%. This is an indication that the community derived most of their income from their own assets as members of the society that capacitated them as self-sufficient individuals. As part of the community capital of Pinagsabangan II, local institutions like businesses (Melati *et al.*, 2023) play a vital role in nation-building. SDG #11 aims to aid the universal aim of supporting the world's smallest unit next to the family which is the community in establishing its sustainability with no members being deprived of their own rights to accessible resources such as food and opportunities (UNWTO, 2015), through businesses.

For the monthly gross income, 90 respondents with income of 0-5999 got the highest percentage of 42.86, followed by 45 respondents with 5000-9999 monthly gross income. Respondents with 10000-14999 and 15000-19999 got the same frequencies of 28 comprising 26.66% and lastly, respondents with 20000-up monthly gross income got the lowest percentage of 9.05 with 19 frequencies. This is an indication that respondents with the highest percentage need more attention to further help them with elevating their earnings to enrich sustainability. For the years of residency, 78 respondents got the highest 37.14 percentage of 30-39 years, followed by 52 respondents who resided for 10-19 years in the community comprising 24.76%, followed by 28 respondents which comprises 13.33%, then 27 respondents who resided for 20-29 years with 12.86%, followed by 17 respondents with 8.10% who are residents for 40-49 years, and 6 respondents from 60-up years with a percentage of 2.86 and lastly 2 respondents resided for 50-59 years with a percentage of 0.95 got the lowest. It is presented that most of the respondents have lived in the community for the longest time.

Level of Perception of the Respondents on CBT in Terms of Community Development Goals

Table 6 presents the mean level of perception of CBT in terms of Community Development Goals with statement #4 getting the highest mean of 3.81 while statement #1

Table 6: The mean level of perception on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Community Development Goals

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. The establishment of CBSTOs or the formal organization for rice cake vendors may lead to more structured management for its quality and promotion to strengthen its image for the community.	3.67	5	Highly Knowledgeable
2. Community acceptance and openness to tourists may increase the popularity of tourism products like rice cake .	3.74	4	Highly Knowledgeable
3. Local government initiatives and innovative projects are essential in offering local food products such as proposing Bibingka Food Plaza.	3.77	3	Highly Knowledgeable
4. Promotion and implementation of tourism activities initiated by community leaders can lead to the achievement of long-term community goals like sustainable income.	3.81	1	Highly Knowledgeable
5. The tourism community development goals can be attained through open communication and discussion between all members of the community.	3.79	2	Highly Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	3.76		Highly Knowledgeable

got the lowest mean of 3.67 described as both highly knowledgeable. Furthermore, for this indicator, the overall mean is 3.76 depicted as highly knowledgeable. It can be assumed that the respondents are highly aware when it comes to the development goals present in the community. Setokoe and Ramukumba (2020) mentioned that to achieve maximum participation in the community, they should be well-informed and educated about tourism initiatives and there should be enough support for them

to fully participate in tourism development initiatives in their area.

Drivers and Opportunities

Table 7 presents the mean level of perception in terms of drivers and opportunities with statement #4 got the highest mean of 3.74 described as highly knowledgeable. On the other hand, statement #3 got the lowest mean of 3.64 described as highly knowledgeable. Overall,

Table 7: The mean level of perception on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Drivers and Opportunities

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. CBT can help the community attract potential connections, business opportunities, and employment.	3.67	4	Highly Knowledgeable
2. When community-based tourism is managed successfully, it can enhance the skills of members to be self-earning individuals.	3.70	3	Highly Knowledgeable
3. Community-based tourism promotes capacity building for community members from all walks of life such as our indigenous people, youth, PWD, senior citizens etc.	3.64	5	Highly Knowledgeable
4. Tourism is a provider of economic opportunities that will aid community members with various opportunities such as lodging, food, activities, and transportation among others.	3.74	1	Highly Knowledgeable
5. CBT gives the community new opportunities that may help local products attain a wider and more competitive market.	3.72	2	Highly Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	3.70		Highly Knowledgeable

this indicator got an overall mean of 3.70 which is defined as highly knowledgeable which indicates that the respondents are perceptive with the drivers and opportunities CBT can offer. According to Badurina (2022), CBT requires community members to plan, manage, and control tourism activities that collectively aim to provide equitable returns to them. To harness the revenue-generating potential of tourism, it is crucial to raise community awareness of the opportunities that

tourism activities, particularly community-based tourism (CBT), can offer. By fostering this understanding, communities can effectively identify and capitalize on existing and emerging tourism opportunities, maximizing their economic benefits.

Sustainability

Table 8 presents the mean level of perception in terms of sustainability with statement #1 got the highest mean

Table 8: The mean level of perception on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Sustainability

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. Tourism can help preserve local culture like the rice cake making in Naujan.	3.84	1	Highly Knowledgeable
2. Community-based tourism will create networks among community members, especially in formulating and implementing ideas not just for their organization but most especially for their own good.	3.695	5	Highly Knowledgeable
3. Tourism will strengthen community identity and the pride of place.	3.73	3	Highly Knowledgeable
4. CBT will contribute to poverty reduction and employment opportunities	3.81	2	Highly Knowledgeable
5. Community-based tourism will authenticate visitors' experience by local interaction in an area.	3.70	4	Highly Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	3.76		Highly Knowledgeable

of 3.84 described as highly knowledgeable. On the other hand, statement #2 got the lowest mean of 3.695 described as highly knowledgeable. This indicator got an overall mean of 3.76 described as highly knowledgeable. It is shown that the respondents are highly aware of the sustainability principles underlying CBT. Tourism needs more than ever to be sustainable by providing economic and social benefits to host communities while seeking to minimize negative impacts on the environment (Badurina, 2022). CBT, to achieve sustainability, awareness of the community should be introduced first. In that sense, it will be their foundation to better uphold the benefits of tourism and aid in minimizing the negative impacts of the activities formulated from tourism that may possibly harm the community. It is also favorable to understand that the community deserves all the favor when introducing

tourism-related activities because it is they that will be affected in the long run.

Challenges and Threats

Table 9 presents the mean level of perception in terms of challenges and threats with statement #2 as the highest with a mean of 3.55 described as highly knowledgeable. Nevertheless, statement #3 got the lowest mean of 3.31 described as knowledgeable. The overall mean is 3.41 which is described as knowledgeable. Of all the indicators assessing the level of perception of the respondents among the different areas of CBT, it got the lowest level of perception which may be due to differentiated discernment of the community regarding challenges and threats that CBT may impose. According to Saepudin *et al.* (2022), making sure the local communities remain

Table 9: The mean level of perception of CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Challenges and Threats

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. CBT and the organizations behind it may cause disruptions to the own businesses of its community members.	3.33	4	Knowledgeable
2. Tourism may induce challenges like competition among community members like the rice cake vendors.	3.55	1	Highly Knowledgeable
3. When tourists visit the community, it may cause negative effects in culture.	3.31	5	Knowledgeable
4. Tourism activities such as festivals, community engagement in tourism and building tourism infrastructure may disrupt community living.	3.48	2	Knowledgeable
5. Community-based tourism may cause benefits for selected community members only.	3.36	3	Knowledgeable
Overall Mean	3.41		Knowledgeable

involved in collaboration with all stakeholders and play a crucial role in managing tourist destinations is one of the primary issues related to maintaining tourism-related enterprises run by the community. Once issues like competition, disruption, improper distribution of tourism benefits, and tourist visitation, among stakeholders are not properly taken care of, communities might consider these threats as disturbances to their involvement in CBT.

Level of Acceptability of the Respondents on CBT in Terms of Entrepreneurs Collaboration

Table 10 presents the mean level of acceptability of CBT in terms of entrepreneurs' collaboration in which

statement #1 got the highest mean of 3.79 described as highly acceptable. Meanwhile, statement #2 got the lowest mean of 3.70. The overall mean for this indicator is 3.74 which is described as highly acceptable. It indicates that the respondents highly recognize the benefits and opportunities that efforts on entrepreneurial collaboration may offer. According to Çakmak *et al.*, (2018), entrepreneurs' collaboration is vital in increasing the knowledge in marketing, organizing, planning and monitoring of business operations. It will enhance the existing community capital and may open sustainable partnership with other stakeholders to continuously uplift CBT.

Table 10: The mean level of acceptability on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Entrepreneurs Collaboration

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. Local entrepreneurs, specifically the rice cake vendors may collaborate with other businesses to strengthen their business practices.	3.79	1	Highly Acceptable
2. Business owners like those who sell rice cakes may continuously collaborate with suppliers of raw materials such as rice, coconut, and dairy products to maintain its quality.	3.70	5	Highly Acceptable
3. Local entrepreneurs in the community may share resources and knowledge among entrepreneurs to sustain CBT.	3.76	2	Highly Acceptable
4. Local entrepreneurs like rice cake vendors may attend training and seminars that will help them widen their network in doing business to improve their products, services, and income.	3.73	3	Highly Acceptable
5. Various entrepreneurs like rice cake vendors and other tourism-related businesses such as local tour operators, tour guides, and transport companies may strengthen their involvement in making tour arrangements to enhance the tourist cultural experience.	3.71	4	Highly Acceptable
Overall Mean	3.74		Highly Acceptable

Social and Economic Development

Table 11 presents the mean level of acceptability of CBT in terms of social and economic development in which statement #4 got the highest mean of 3.82 described as highly acceptable. Meanwhile, statement #3 got the lowest mean of 3.78 described as highly acceptable. It has an overall mean of 3.80, which is described as highly acceptable. It is a clear indication that respondents

are willing to acknowledge the social and economic development intervention that may be available for them to fully sustain CBT. This is supplemented by Giampiccoli & Saayman (2018), who states that aside from community members participating as the one who manages and control CBT, especially underprivileged communities, they often lack the necessary resources and skills to proceed by themselves in a CBT development

Table 11: The mean level of acceptability on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Social and Economic Development

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. Communities may recognize the importance of and have pride in their local food as their own identities since that is the beginning of building a strong sense of sustainable CBT.	3.81	3	Highly Acceptable
2. Local business owners like rice cake vendors may recognize government initiatives for CBT like the Bibingka Food Plaza to ensure the security and safety of tourists and the sustainable growth and income of the community.	3.79	4	Highly Acceptable
3. The community may be open to CBT plans that will create economic sustainability like livelihood training (financial literacy, capacity enhancement training, and entrepreneurship), from local government and agency partners that will help uplift the living standards of the community.	3.78	5	Highly Acceptable
4. Business owners like the rice cake vendors may be willing to receive training like customer service and product development.	3.83	1	Highly Acceptable
5. The community encompassing local business owners in order to sustain CBT may play a significant role in fostering cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and promoting local culture, and heritage like the traditional way of cooking local delicacies like rice cake .	3.82	2	Highly Acceptable
Overall Mean	3.80		Highly Acceptable

therefore, external assistance is therefore often necessary. Partnering with external entities can be necessary and advantageous.

Community Participation

Table 12 presents the mean level of acceptability of CBT in terms of community participation in which statement #4 got the highest mean of 3.87 described as highly acceptable. Meanwhile, statement #1 got the lowest mean of 3.76 described as highly acceptable. It has an overall mean of 3.81 which is described as highly acceptable. The respondents have a high acceptability of the concept of community participation for the overall success of

CBT. It is also represented that the respondents wanted CBT to be inclusive. To ensure maximum community participation, the community should be well-informed and educated about tourism initiatives and there should be enough support for them to fully participate in tourism development initiatives in their area (Setokoe, T. J., & Ramukumba, T., 2020).

The type and level of community participation in CBT should be decided and defined by the community. Furthermore, Shen *et al.* (2022) pointed out that the participation of the residents in the decision-making process, additional job opportunity, and higher income should be increased.

Table 12: The mean level of acceptability on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Community Participation

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. Community members are more likely to increase their willingness to participate in tourism-related activities, such as Community-Based Tourism (CBT), when plans and ideas are collaboratively and carefully crafted and disseminated.	3.76	5	Highly Acceptable
2. The community members carry the huge responsibility and initiative of being well-organized and oriented with their effective establishment in CBT.	3.78	4	Highly Acceptable
3. The community member's participation in CBT is wholeheartedly given when community leaders are trustworthy and dedicated.	3.84	2	Highly Acceptable
4. To ignite community participation, all members of the community involving old, young, men and women, LGBTQ+, rich and poor may be included in the planning before the implementation of CBT.	3.87	1	Highly Acceptable
5. For community members to enthusiastically participate in CBT, support from all the stakeholders like government institutions (tourism and planning office, etc.), private organizations, academic institutions, local community leaders, and tourists may be felt.	3.83	3	Highly Acceptable
Overall Mean	3.81		Highly Acceptable

Local Community Business Lifestyle

Table 13 presents the mean level of acceptability of CBT in terms of local community business lifestyle in which statement #1 got the highest mean of 3.92 described as highly acceptable. On the other hand, statement #5 got the lowest mean of 3.81 described as highly acceptable. It has an overall mean of 3.88 which is described as highly acceptable. It is highly evident that the respondents highly

accept the concept of CBT with its aim of encouraging a sustained and empowered local community business lifestyle.

It is important to note that there are different motives for businesses in the community. It is significantly important that businesses not just care about profit but more so with the underlying environmental conservation as well as cultural preservation it covers.

Table 13: The mean level of acceptability on CBT as perceived by the respondents in terms of Local Community Business Lifestyle

	Mean	Rank	Verbal Description
1. Community members may engage in CBT for additional income generation	3.91	3	Highly Acceptable
2. Community members may engage in CBT for lifestyle-oriented purposes like cultural and environmental preservation, continuing the tradition of rice cake making and helping other local businesses.	3.92	1	Highly Acceptable
3. The rice cake vendors may participate in CBT as an avenue to a more formal organization that will oversee the development of the quality of their product.	3.914	2	Highly Acceptable
4. Local businesses like rice cake vendors may have a high concern for stakeholders like the welfare of community members, local suppliers, and tourists specifically in offering sustainable products not only for profit but also for continuous collaboration in doing CBT business.	3.88	4	Highly Acceptable
5. Local businesses may consistently adhere to the conservation of the environment like reducing the use of plastic waste and proper waste disposal to preserve the ecological aspect of the community which is crucial in sustaining CBT.	3.81	5	Highly Acceptable
Overall Mean	3.88		Highly Acceptable

Relationship between the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents and Their Level of Perception Towards CBT

Based on Table 14 which tries to determine the relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the community and their level of perception towards CBT, there are differentiated results as follows: Age is not significantly related to any of the indicators because it did not exceed the critical r-value; moreover, years of residency have no significant relationship with the level of perception in terms of the four indicators. This connotes that the dwelling of residents in the community does not affect their level of awareness of the concept of tourism or CBT. The result confirms H0 with these two indicators.

Whereas, profile such as gender has a significant relationship with the level of perception towards CBT in terms of sustainability. When it comes to educational attainment, it is significantly related to the level of perception towards CBT in terms of community development goals drivers, and opportunities. This may be due to the differences in their reception and understanding of the concepts provided. As to the source of income, it is significantly related to the level of perception towards CBT in terms of community development goals, drivers, and opportunities. This may be due to the varying capacities incurred by the sources of income of

the respondents. Furthermore, monthly gross income has a positive correlation with community development goals as well as with drivers and opportunities but has a negative correlation to challenges and threats. This result rejects H0 tested. This may mean that the community may have variations when it comes to the concept of CBT but there is always room for opening their minds as the first consideration to CBT according to Badurina (2022) through continuous empowerment and information transfer related to the community development goals, opportunities, sustainability principles, and the challenges and threats.

While the result of the current study imposes that there is a significant relationship between some of the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents and their level of perception towards CBT, it reverses the result of the study of Moraru (2021) which discovered that distinctions in attitudes toward tourism across professional and age groups, with gender and income showing no significant influence. The importance of residents' attitudes toward tourism stems from their role in shaping destination development and influencing the overall tourist experience. It is imperative to grasp the attitudes, perceptions, and specificities of different resident groups for the sustainable development of the destination.

Table 14: Correlational Analysis between the Socio-demographic Profile and the Level of Perception of the community to CBT

Socio-Demographic Profile	Level of Perception of the Community to CBT							
	Community Development Goals		Drivers and opportunities		Sustainability		Challenges and Threats	
	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result
Age	-0.108	NS	-0.077	NS	-0.123	NS	-0.063	NS
Gender	0.082	NS	0.090	NS	0.231	S	0.133	NS
Educational Attainment	0.204	S	0.230	S	0.064	NS	-0.063	NS
Source of Income	-0.211	S	-0.137	S	-0.159	S	0.005	NS
Monthly Gross Income	0.167	S	0.160	S	0.082	NS	-0.157	S
Years of Residency	0.053	NS	-0.099	NS	0.003	NS	0.041	NS

Critical r-value: 0.135, Degrees of freedom: 208, Level of Significance: 0.05

Relationship between the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents and Their Level of Acceptability Towards CBT

Table 15 presents the relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the community and their level of acceptability towards CBT, there are differentiated results as follows: age and gender significantly relate to the level of acceptability in terms of entrepreneurs' collaboration, social and economic development, community participation and local community business lifestyle. Educational attainment has a positive relationship with entrepreneurs' collaboration and social and economic development while no significant relationship with community participation and local business lifestyle. Additionally, the source of income significantly relates to the variables tried except community participation. Moreover, monthly gross income is significantly related to entrepreneurs' collaboration with no notable relationship with social and economic development, community participation, and local community business lifestyle. This result rejects H1. Alternatively, years of residency

have no significant relationship with the variables as to their level of acceptability towards CBT. This result confirms H1. Acceptability of the concept of CBT does not invalidate the socio-demographic profile of the community. According to the results, some variables significantly relate to some socio-demographic profile which may pose discerned possibilities like programs tailored to specific and distinctive groups.

For instance, due to varied socio-demographics age, gender, educational attainment, source of Income, and monthly gross income, the results reveal that the level of acceptability towards CBT is related.

In terms of the factors affecting residents' acceptance of tourism, the study Moraru *et al.* (2021) indicated a dependence on various variables and computed indexes, including the city development index, impact on residents' quality of life index, sustainable development index, and perceived intensity of contact with tourists. These findings can be valuable in enhancing local strategies related to tourism and promoting the sustainable development of the city where the study was conducted.

Table 15: Correlational Analysis between the Socio-demographic Profile and the Level of Acceptability of the community to CBT

Socio-Demographic Profile	Level of Acceptability of the Community to CBT							
	Entrepreneurs Collaboration		Social and economic development		Community participation		Local community business lifestyles	
	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result
Age	0.147	S	0.181	S	-0.009	NS	-0.159	S
Gender	0.296	S	0.229	S	0.200	S	0.181	S
Educational Attainment	0.226	S	0.140	S	0.008	NS	0.119	NS
Source of Income	-0.223	S	-0.294	S	-0.085	NS	-0.233	S
Monthly Gross Income	-0.179	S	-0.078	NS	-0.122	NS	0.105	NS
Years of Residency	-0.034	NS	-0.036	NS	-0.022	NS	0.015	NS

Critical r-value: 0.135, Degrees of freedom: 208, Level of Significance: 0.05

Relationship between the Respondents' Level of Perception and Acceptability Towards CBT

Table 16 presents the relationship between the

perception and acceptability of the community towards CBT. It shows that the level of perception in terms of community development goals, drivers and opportunities,

sustainability, and challenges and threats has a positive relationship with the level of acceptability in terms of indicators included in the CBT framework of Aji (2020) namely: entrepreneurs' collaboration, social and economic development, community participation, and local community business lifestyle as shown in their *r*-value exceeding 0.135 on all variables. It can be reasonably inferred that there is a meaningful connection between the level of perception and their acceptability towards CBT. This means that as the level of perception of the concept of CBT increases, there is a tendency for the level of acceptability towards CBT also increase. In practical terms, community members who actively engage in CBT initiatives and get to know its direction, as well as implementation, see challenges and threats positively, are more likely to be more collaborative, highly willing to participate in social and economic development, and empower the local business lifestyle. While there are a lot of studies that discussed the perception and attitude of the residents or the community

toward tourism, there is a limited study that tries to cover how their perception influences their acceptability towards tourism, specifically CBT. That is the gap that this study tried to fill in as a contribution to the body of knowledge alongside supplemental data to support the local and provincial interventions for the rice cake vendors.

For instance, the result of the study by Ambalao *et al.* (2022) found that the local residents' perceived benefits and perceived costs positively and significantly affect their attitude toward tourism development. The perceived benefits of residents create an effect on their attitude according to an indicator that tourism development creates employment opportunities, provides opportunities for local business, increases the standard of living, improves the appearance of their area, improves infrastructure, provides more recreational activities for them, opportunities for socializing, and increase local resident's pride in the local culture.

Table 16: Correlational Analysis between the level of Perception of the Community to CBT and the Level of Acceptability of the community to CBT

Socio-Demographic Profile	Level of Acceptability of the Community to CBT							
	Entrepreneurs Collaboration		Social and economic development		Community participation		Local community business lifestyles	
	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result	r-value	Result
Age	0.147	S	0.181	S	-0.009	NS	-0.159	S
Gender	0.296	S	0.229	S	0.200	S	0.181	S
Educational Attainment	0.226	S	0.140	S	0.008	NS	0.119	NS
Source of Income	-0.223	S	-0.294	S	-0.085	NS	-0.233	S
Monthly Gross Income	-0.179	S	-0.078	NS	-0.122	NS	0.105	NS
Years of Residency	-0.034	NS	-0.036	NS	-0.022	NS	0.015	NS

Critical *r*-value: 0.135, Degrees of freedom: 208, Level of Significance: 0.05

CONCLUSION

Pinagsabangan II, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines possesses tourism potential, aligned with Sustainable Development Goal #11. This study explores its readiness for community-based tourism (CBT), focusing on resident's perception and acceptability. Rice cake vendors, key players in the local identity, express enthusiasm for initiatives like a "Rice Cake Food Plaza" and CBSTOs. But unlocking this potential requires more than just readiness. Understanding community perception and acceptability is critical. Their perception is valid. The study found a high level of acceptance for CBT, indicating a productive ground for future programs. This presents a unique opportunity for policymakers and stakeholders to collaboratively craft programs with the community's interests as a priority. While acceptance is high, information dissemination needs improvement. The study highlights the need to address potential challenges and threats openly, ensuring transparency and building trust. Additionally, tailoring programs to specific demographics like gender and education can foster

inclusivity and maximize participation. Continuously monitoring and reporting progress is crucial for sustainable success. Understanding and addressing the evolving needs of stakeholders, especially rice cake vendors, ensures long-term benefits for the entire community. Future researchers may conduct comparative studies with other communities and investigate tourist experiences. By prioritizing community perception and ensuring equitable benefits, Pinagsabangan II may embrace CBT as a tool for sustainable development. Their journey towards SDG #11 requires collaboration and a shared vision for a sustainable future where the community's voice remains on top.

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