

PRISM OF SUSTAINABILITY: LOCALE RESIDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

Sustainable development is an integral part of sustainable tourism in the tourism industry which is primarily centered-around preserving the environment, economic benefits, and securing sociocultural aspects. Central to its success is the alignment of community perception with sustainable practices, acknowledging the importance of local standards of living. This study aims to determine the locale residents' perspective on the sustainability of tourism development in the Province of Misamis Occidental, an arising tourist destination, and to develop sustainable tourism initiatives that empower local community institutionally, economically, socio-culturally and ecologically to enhance tourist destinations. The research was conducted in five areas within District 2 of Misamis Occidental and surveyed 300 household heads from designated tourist destinations. The study employs Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of three or more independent groups, and T-test for two unrelated groups, according to profile. Further, data showed that locale residents hold a favorable view of the four sustainability dimensions, concerning the development of tourist destinations in Misamis Occidental. This implies the active participation of locale residents in promoting tourism sustainability in the province. Additionally, it indicates their observance of sustainable practices and a responsible tourism approach in the area's development. However, the province should realize the proposed sustainable tourism initiatives such as prioritizing conservation through local tourism seminars, educating both tourists and locals about preserving natural resources and heritage, while also encouraging community-owned tourism businesses and providing training programs to boost economic empowerment and sustainability within communities.

Keywords:

Sustainable Development, Sustainable Tourism Initiatives, Locale Residents, Perspective, Tourism

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most dynamic industries in the world that plays a crucial role in driving economic growth in different levels. In the operation of planning and developing tourism in a most responsible manner, it's vital to consider the balance between the requirements of the economic, socio-culture and environment. This is where sustainable tourism becomes a significant factor in enhancing customer satisfaction and promoting ecological and social benefits. Sustainable development is an integral part of sustainable tourism in the tourism industry which is primarily centered-around preserving the environment, economic benefits, and securing sociocultural aspects. These three dimensions ensures its sustainability in the long run. Several international studies have been conducted about the impacts of tourism development including the economic, sociocultural, and ecological. There is a wide range of literature dealing with the correlation between the impact of the perception of the residents and the level of tourism development. The success of the development of local tourism depends on the destination's attraction with the help of local communities by supporting it. In some developing countries, it is crucial to consider how residents in a certain community perceive tourism development.

The Philippines is a popular tourist destination known for its diverse attractions, including stunning beaches and historic cities. Tourism plays a vital role in the country's economic growth, contributing 23% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2022, totaling 7.7 trillion U.S. dollars and currently reaching 9.5 trillion U.S. dollars, (The Philippine Statistic Authority, 2023). The growth of tourism has significantly aided the country's development over the years. As tourist destinations and activities evolve towards sustainability, there is potential to improve residents' quality of life based on their perceptions. However, some host communities have not fully benefited from tourism earnings, often due to a lack of awareness and poor management of tourist destinations, leading to resident dissatisfaction.

Community perception is one of the most critical elements for the success of the sustainable tourism industry across all aspects. Few research discoveries emphasize the connection between local sustainable tourism development and how communities evaluate tourism's benefits. This underscores the importance of aligning community perceptions with sustainable tourism practices, considering their living conditions and overall satisfaction with their quality of life.

Presently, Misamis Occi-

dental is undergoing substantial development and has emerged as a leading tourism spot in the Philippines. It has witnessed a surge in tourist arrivals and the emergence of captivating attractions, offering visitors a diverse and exceptional experience. With its exquisite beaches, breathtaking waterfalls, and rich cultural heritage, Misamis Occidental has become a favored spot for travelers seeking natural beauty and a deeper understanding of local culture (JudeTheTourist, 2023). However, despite this growth, there has been a lack of empirical research papers addressing the community's perception of tourism development. In response, researchers have undertaken an investigation to explore this problem. Therefore, this study aims to determine the locale residents' perspective on the sustainability of tourism development in the Province of Misamis Occidental, an arising tourist destination, and to develop sustainable tourism initiatives that empower local community institutionally, economically, socio-culturally, and ecologically to enhance tourist destinations.

Research Questions

1. What is the demographic profile of the residents in terms of: (1) Sex, (2) Age, (3) Civil Status, (4) Employment Status, (5) Educational Attainment, and (6) Monthly Income?

2. What is the local resident's perception in terms of: (1) Institutional Dimension, (2) Economic Dimension, (3) Socio-Cultural Dimension, and (4) Ecological Dimension?

3. Is there a significant difference among locale resident's perception on sustainable tourism development when grouped according to profile?

4. Based on the study's findings, what sustainable initiatives can be proposed to empower local community institutionally, economically, socio-culturally, and ecologically to enhance tourist destination.

Theoretical Framework

This research was anchored into the theory of Spangenberg the Prism of Sustainability (PoS), depicts interlinkages between economic, socio-cultural, ecological, and institutional dimension of sustainable development (Spangenberg 2002). This model is alternatively referred to as the 'three pillar' or 'three circles model'. It is rooted on essential aspects of human society, although it does not explicitly consider 'human quality of life'. However, as the institutional dimension prioritizes the perspective on guiding, regulating, and fostering growth, it is difficult to achieve a balance among these three dimensions without including the institutional dimension (Huayhuaca et al., 2010; Spangenberg et al., 2002; Spangenberg and Valentin, 1999). Additionally, it is evi-

dent that the Prism of Sustainability theory plays a key role in shaping the research methodology by providing a framework that integrates four key dimensions: institutional, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological. This framework is designed to highlight the complex intercon-

nections among these dimensions, enabling a deeper understanding of their relationships within the study's context. The application of the theory enriches the research by offering a comprehensive lens for analyzing and interpreting the multifaceted nature of sustainability.

Conceptual Framework

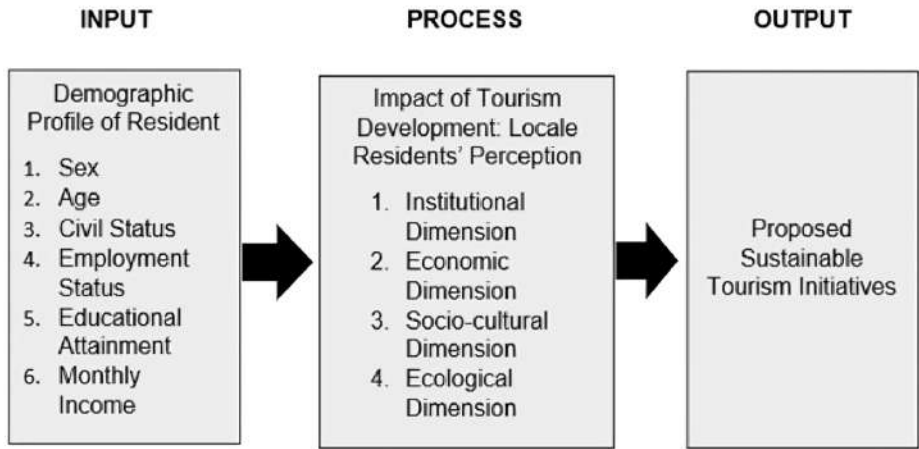


Figure 1.Schematic diagram of the study

2.0 MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The study employed the descriptive survey method to characterize the issue, phenomenon, situation, or group under investigation. This method involves asking questions to subjects and compiling their responses to gain insights into various groups. Descriptive studies aim to explore the context, specifics, and established patterns related to the issue for a comprehensive understanding (Hassan, 2024). In this

case, the research aimed to depict and understand how locale residents' perceive the sustainability of tourism development in the Province of Misamis Occidental, focusing on institutional, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological dimensions.

2.2 Research Environment

The study considered six (6) areas of investigation in District 2, Province of Misamis Occidental, Region X, namely; (1) Barangay Hoyohoy- where attractions such as Hoyohoy Highland Stone

Chapel Hotel and Adventure Park, Hoyohoy View Deck, and Asenso Global Gardens were situated, (2) Barangay Kanao Kanao, Bonifacio-had Mt. Malindang Range Natural Park, (3) Barangay Baybay Triunfo, Ozamis City- housed Fuerte de la Concepcion y del Triunfo or Cotta Fort and Birhen sa Cotta, (4) 50th District, Ozamis City- Our Lady of Immaculate Conception (5) Barangay Napangan, Piduan Valley, Don Victoriano Chiongbi-an- featured Piduan Curtain Falls.

2.3 Research Respondents

The researchers purposely selected 300 local household heads as respondents for the study, focusing on those living near developing tourist destinations. The researchers first identified the number of households in each of six barangays based on census data, calculated the total household size, and determined the sample size with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, resulting in 300 respondents. Using stratified random sampling, the respondents were distributed across the barangays: 25 from Barangay Hoyohoy, 37 from Barangay Kanao Kanao, 140 from Barangay Baybay Triunfo, 40 from Barangay 50th District, and 58 from Barangay Napangan.

2.4 Research Instrument

A questionnaire was used

as the main data collection tool in the study. Surveys gathered information from participants, which was then documented, evaluated, and analyzed to highlight the study's findings and conclusions. The questionnaire included respondent profiles and was adapted from a previous study by Obradovic et al. (2020) entitled "Residents' Perceptions of and Satisfaction with Tourism Development: A Case Study of the Uvac Special Nature Reserve, Serbia". This research study focusing on locale residents' perspectives regarding the institutional, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological aspects of tourism development in Misamis Occidental. The researchers derived the study's results through verbal interpretation of the data. The survey included various statements related to institutional, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological factors, each assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with a neutral option.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers followed off-campus requirements from the Office of Student Affairs and Services and submitted a formal request to the school's dean for permission to collect data. After receiving approval, the researchers coordinated with the mayor and barangay captains in each area to conduct the survey.

Using a list from the DOT-Northern Mindanao, the researchers identified household heads in the barangays near tourist destinations. Letters of intent were provided to respondents, inviting them to complete the survey. Once authorized, the questionnaires were distributed and responses collected. The researchers then evaluated and interpreted the data to form conclusions and sustainable tourism initiatives.

2.6 Data Analysis

The survey data collected underwent a detailed analysis plan that involved several steps and statistical techniques to derive comprehensive findings. The procedures included: (1) Slovin’s Formula, which calculated the minimum sample size needed based on an acceptable margin of error (Bobbit, 2023); (2) Simple Percentage, used to describe the respondents’ profiles in terms of sex, age, civil status, employment status, educational attainment, and monthly income; (3) Weighted Mean, which measured the mathematical average of a range of numbers; (4) T-test, used to determine statistically significant differences between the means of two unrelated groups; and (5) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), used to assess statistically significant differences between the means of three or more independent groups.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following are the findings, analysis, and interpretation of the gathered data:

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	126	42.00%
Female	174	58.00%
Total	300	100%
Age		
18-29 yrs. Old	77	25.67%
30-49 yrs. Old	136	45.33%
50 yrs. and above	87	29.00%
Total	300	100%
Civil Status		
Single	92	30.67%
Married	182	60.67%
Widowed	26	8.67%
Total	300	100%
Educational Attainment		
Elementary level	68	22.67%
Secondary level	145	48.33%
Undergraduate/c college level	66	22.00%
Post graduate	21	7.00%
Total	300	100%
Employment Status		
Employed	78	26.00%
Unemployed	122	40.67%
Students	23	7.67%
Retiree	3	1.00%
Housewife	74	24.67%
Total	300	100%
Monthly Income		

Below 10,000.00	260	86.67%
10,001.00- 15,000.00	19	6.33%
15,001.00- 20,000.00	10	3.33%
20,001.00- 25,000.00	4	1.33%
25,000.00 and above	7	2.33%
Total	300	100%

The table shows the demographic profile of the respondents. For the sex, the majority were women, comprising 174 individuals (58.00%). Conversely, the remaining 126 respondents (42.00%) were male. The finding that over half of the respondents were female indicates that women have historically played significant roles in family decision-making, household management, and financial oversight, reflecting societal norms where they are primary caretakers and organizers. Their availability often encourages participation in social surveys, whereas men typically focus on external economic pursuits, adhering to the traditional breadwinner role. This division of labor emphasizes gender-specific responsibilities within family dynamics, with women managing household affairs and men seeking livelihoods outside the home. Data from the World Bank Group (2022) shows that men have historically had higher labor force participation rates than wom-

en. While women primarily stay at home, they are active in social surveys, and existing research indicates that women are generally more open in sharing their personal views about their surroundings.

In terms of age, the majority of them were 30-49 years old, with the highest percentage of 45.33% (136), followed by 29.00% (87) for ages 50 years and above. The lowest percentage of 25.67% (77) was among those aged 18-29 years old. Most respondents belong to the 30-49 age range, which typically comprises heads of households and primary decision-makers responsible for managing family affairs and representing their households in social contexts. This age group is particularly concerned with community events and actively participates in socialization by exchanging ideas and observations. Additionally, they are known for their active participation in social surveys and value transparency in communication, preferring concise and straightforward discussions (Mahmutovic, 2021).

For the civil status, out of the (300) respondents, 92 (30.67%) were single, 182 (60.67%) were married, and 26 (8.67%) were widowed. The results further show that most respondents were married. Married individuals are often highly engaged participants in social surveys, particularly in Misamis Occidental, where the number of registered

marriages increased by 34.0 percent from 2020 to 2021, totaling 18,304 (PSA.GOV.PH, 2023). Most study respondents are married, making them more accessible for surveys due to their stable living arrangements compared to those in less stable relationships or single status. Their regular presence at home and responsibility for household decisions motivate their participation in surveys, as they seek to understand societal trends and issues that affect themselves, their families, and their communities. As parents, they are particularly invested in the well-being and future of their children, and participating in surveys allows them to influence policies and initiatives that impact their lives. Additionally, Gandhi (2014) notes that marriage is evolving into a partnership where both spouses share responsibilities in household tasks and decision-making, challenging traditional norms that primarily assigned these roles to women. This shift emphasizes the significance of shared management and highlights the societal value placed on everyday rituals, such as shared meals, which symbolize femininity while serving practical purposes (Bianchi and Milkie 2010; DeVault 1991).

For the educational attainment, out of the 300 respondents, 68 (22.67%) were at the elementary level, 145 (48.33%) were at the high school level, 66 (22.00%)

were at the undergraduate/college level, and 21 (7.00%) were at the post-graduate level. The results indicate that most respondents had not completed their education, with a majority at the high school level. This educational gap is attributed to factors such as limited access to education and financial constraints in rural areas, where residents prioritize family and limited earnings over education. In urban areas, overcrowding and insufficient educational infrastructure lead to a shortage of schools, increasing travel times and transportation costs. Despite these challenges, most respondents possess basic literacy skills, enabling them to participate in social surveys. According to Jaako (2018), educated individuals are often more experienced and familiar with participating in surveys, making them more likely to provide thoughtful and articulate responses.

For the employment status, out of the 300 respondents, 78 (26.00%) were employed, 122 (40.67%) were unemployed, 23 (7.67%) were students, 3 (1.00%) were retirees, and 74 (24.67%) were housewives. The largest portion of respondents fell into the unemployed category, consisting of heads of households with modest income sources to meet their daily needs. They chose this arrangement to ensure their family's well-being while generating income from

their properties. However, these residents faced limited job opportunities in the tourist destination they wanted to work in, largely due to the increasing population. Employment growth was insufficient to reduce unemployment, as rapid population growth and increased labor force participation contributed to the issue (R. Brooks, 2002).

For monthly income, the result shows that out of the 300 respondents, 260 (86.67%) earned below 10,000.00, 19 (6.33%) earned between 10,001-15,000.00, 10 (3.33%) earned between 15,001-20,000.00, 4 (1.33%) earned between 20,001-25,000.00, and 7 (2.33%) earned 25,000.00 and above. The results indicated that most respondents had a monthly income below ₱10,000 and primarily acted as heads of households, many of whom operated small businesses on their properties, showcasing their entrepreneurial spirit. Despite these efforts, their earnings remained under ₱10,001, revealing substantial economic challenges, particularly in rural and urban areas where high living costs, competitive job markets, and reliance on informal or irregular employment lead to financial instability. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2022), this wage discrepancy, along with dependence on the informal economy, limited job opportunities, skills mismatches, and eco-

nomie inequality, poses significant challenges for individuals striving to earn sustainable incomes.

Table 2. Locale Residents' Perception on Institutional Dimension

Items	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
A. Institutional Dimension		
1. Community residents have an opportunity to be involved in tourism decision making.	3.75	Agree
2. The communications among individuals involved in policy and decision making process is good.	3.73	Agree
3. Entrepreneurship in tourism is encouraged by local government.	3.61	Agree
4. I can access the decision making process to influence tourism development in the tourist destination area.	3.62	Agree
5. Tourism facilities are developed in cooperation with local business in the area.	3.61	Agree
6. Tourism services are developed in cooperation with local business in the area.	3.59	Agree
7. The tour guides at the tourist destination are well trained.	3.61	Agree
8. There is sufficient information available about conservation efforts for the environment in the	3.44	Agree

tourist destination.		
9. The information disseminated by the tourist destination accurately reflects the history of the tourist destination.	3.38	Neutral
AVERAGE	3.59	Agree
<i>Note:</i> Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00–1.80= Strongly Disagree; 1.81–2.61= Disagree; 2.62–3.42= Neutral; 3.43–4.23= Agree; 4.24–5.00= Strongly Agree		

The table reveals a high mean score of 3.75, indicating that community residents were actively involved in tourism decision-making. Most locals participated in meetings where they could express their opinions, contribute ideas, and influence tourism-related decisions. This involvement was crucial, as residents were most familiar with the emerging tourist destinations in their area, ensuring their perspectives were heard. According to Mak et al. (2017), when residents recognize the benefits of tourism, they are more motivated to engage, fostering a more democratic community. This active participation not only meets local expectations but also promotes sustainable tourism by leveraging the community’s collective knowledge.

However, a lower mean score of 3.38 suggests uncertainty about whether tourism information accurately reflects local history, indicating a gap in historical knowledge. Understanding a destination’s history is essential for informed

tourism planning and helps identify development opportunities that align with cultural heritage (Davkhar A, 2023). Many tourists are also motivated by the opportunity to explore a place’s history. Overall, an average score of 3.59 indicates that respondents acknowledged their role in tourism development. This underscores the significance of locale residents in sustaining tourism and fostering regional economic growth, as highlighted by Restripo and Clave (2019), who emphasize that the institutional dimension is crucial for promoting economic development and regional advancement.

Table 3. Locale Residents’ Perception on Economic Dimension

Items	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
B.Economic Dimension		
1.Tourism brings new income to local communities	3.50	Agree
2. Tourism diversifies the local economy.	3.51	Agree
3. Tourism creates job opportunities for local people.	3.62	Agree
4. Tourism creates new markets for our local products	3.57	Agree
5. Tourism is a strong economic contributor to the economy.	3.74	Agree

AVERAGE	3.59	Agree
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Note: Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00–1.80= Strongly Disagree; 1.81–2.61= Disagree; 2.62–3.42= Neutral; 3.43–4.23= Agree; 4.24–5.00= Strongly Agree

The table highlights residents' views on tourism's economic impact in Misamis Occidental. With a high mean score of 3.74, respondents recognized tourism as a significant economic driver, bringing tourists to the province and boosting local businesses through products and services. The influx of visitors positively impacts the economy, with higher tourist numbers leading to greater economic contributions.

However, the lowest mean score of 3.50 indicating some uncertainty among residents about tourism directly benefiting their incomes. As a developing province, Misamis Occidental relies on tourism to stimulate the economy, especially for businesses near tourist spots. The lower score was linked to emerging tourist areas, where some residents were less aware of tourism's economic potential. A better understanding of tourism's economic effects led to more support from residents.

On average, the economic dimension scored 3.59, showing positive perceptions of tourism's role in Misamis Occidental. It offers opportunities to sell local products and services, and could improve the province's economic status as a whole (Basile & Addeo 2010).

Table 4. Locale Residents' Perception on Socio-cultural Dimension

Items	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
C.Socio-cultural Dimension		
1. There are more educational opportunities for locals due to tourism.	3.57	Agree
2. More people visit here because of the tourist destination.	3.86	Agree
3. Tourism in the tourist destination positively influences cultural values of the area.	3.90	Agree
4. Local traditions became more important because of tourism.	3.81	Agree
5. Tourism created more jobs for women.	3.44	Agree
6. Visitors to the tourist destination are encouraged to learn about local culture.	3.82	Agree
7. Tourism operators take into consideration the concerns of local people in their management decision.	3.70	Agree
8. Tourism promotes restoration of historical site.	3.81	Agree
AVERAGE	3.74	Agree

Note: Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00–1.80= Strongly Disagree; 1.81–2.61= Disagree; 2.62–3.42= Neutral; 3.43–4.23= Agree; 4.24–5.00= Strongly Agree

The table reveals that residents of Misamis Occidental perceived tourism positively in terms of cultural impact, with a high mean score of 3.90. This indicates that tourism has helped preserve and promote local cultural practices, fostering a strong connection between tourists and the community. The province, known for its cultural diversity, benefits from cultural exchange, increasing awareness, and rejuvenating local traditions. Cultural tourism has been shown to influence tourist behavior, encouraging authentic experiences and creating lasting cultural memories (Xu, Zhang, & Nie, 2022).

However, the lowest mean score of 3.44 reflects a neutral perception regarding job creation for women in tourism, suggesting that while women recognize their potential in the industry, some destinations have limited employment opportunities for them. Creating more jobs for women, who are well-suited for service roles, is crucial for the sector's sustainability. Studies show that women excel in meeting the skills and productivity needs of the tourism industry (Thomas Baum, n.d.).

Overall, residents had an average perception score of 3.74 regarding the socio-cultural dimension, indicating that they valued and promoted cultural practices. Understanding these cultural and social factors is essential for sustainable tourism, ensuring that the

development of tourist destinations positively impacts both the community and the culture (Amoiradis, Velissariou & Stankova, 2021).

Table 5. Locale Residents' Perception on Ecological Dimension

Items	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
D.Ecological Dimension		
1. As a result of tourism, residents' awareness of ecological protection has improved.	3.97	Agree
2. Tourism in the place is developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment.	3.99	Agree
3. Tourism activity to the tourist destination is directed into areas with suitable facilities.	3.95	Agree
4. The diversity of nature in the tourist destination must be protected.	3.95	Agree
5. Good examples of ecological protection are shown at the tourist destination.	3.92	Agree
AVERAGE	3.96	Agree

Note: Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00–1.80= Strongly Disagree; 1.81–2.61= Disagree; 2.62–3.42= Neutral; 3.43–4.23= Agree; 4.24–5.00= Strongly Agree

The table shows that locale residents in Misamis Occidental had a positive view of the ecological impact of tourism, with the highest weighted mean of 3.96. This indicates that tourism has been developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment, promoting sustainability and respect for local cultures. Both residents and tourists value the importance of maintaining a balance between nature and culture.

However, the statement “Good examples of ecological protection” received a lower mean of 3.92, suggesting a lack of clear, measurable indicators for assessing ecological efforts. Overcrowded and poorly managed tourism can harm the environment, causing issues like soil erosion, resource depletion, and pollution (Kostić et al., 2016; Shaheen et al., 2019; Andlib and Salcedo-Castro, 2021). Overall, the ecological dimension received a composite mean of 3.96, reflecting agreement on the importance of prioritizing the natural and cultural environment. Conservation efforts help protect biodiversity, support local economies, and ensure long-term tourism sustainability. Engaging local communities in managing ecological impacts is crucial for the success of rural tourism (Diedrich & García-Buades, 2007).

Table 6. Locale Residents' Perception on Sustainable Tourism Development

Items	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
PRISMS OF SUSTAINABILITY		
1.Institutional Dimension	3.57	Agree
2.Economic Dimension	3.57	Agree
3.Socio-Cultural Dimension	3.74	Agree
4.Ecological Dimension	3.96	Agree
AVERAGE	3.96	Agree

Note: Hypothetical Mean Range: 1.00–1.80= Strongly Disagree; 1.81–2.61= Disagree; 2.62–3.42= Neutral; 3.43–4.23= Agree; 4.24–5.00= Strongly Agree

The table shows that locale residents of Misamis Occidental viewed the development of tourist destinations favorably across four dimensions: Institutional, Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Ecological. The Ecological Dimension received the highest mean score of 3.96, indicating strong agreement on the importance of ecological preservation for sustainable tourism. This includes promoting ecological awareness, non-harmful tourism practices, and preserving ecological diversity, which are crucial for long-term sustainability. Balech et al. (2022) emphasized the role of community involvement in achieving effective conservation and management to ensure a clean, healthy environment that supports

both human life and biodiversity.

The Socio-Cultural Dimension scored 3.74, reflecting residents' recognition of the need to preserve and promote cultural heritage through tourism. Meimand et al. (2017) noted that tourism facilitates cultural exchange and helps preserve local traditions, thus improving community image and quality of life. Support for cultural initiatives is vital for fostering a positive connection between residents and tourism.

However, the Institutional and Economic Dimensions scored lower, with both receiving a mean of 3.57. This disparity was attributed to some residents feeling marginalized and unrecognized in tourism development, especially those living near tourist destinations. Rein-drawati (2023) pointed out that the lack of information access weakens community participation. Additionally, some residents struggled to voice concerns about economic opportunities related to tourism, as noted by Andereck et al. (2017) and Mathew and Nimmi (2021).

Overall, the composite mean score of 3.96 indicated a positive view of tourism sustainability, reflecting residents' active participation and commitment to responsible tourism practices (Sariskumar & Bhavan, 2018; Nijkamp, 1999).

Table 7. Test of significant difference among locale resident's perception on sustainable tourism development when grouped according to profile

Variable	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Age	1.70	0.185	<i>Not Significant</i>
Educational Attainment	0.15	0.927	<i>Not Significant</i>
Monthly Income	0.76	0.552	<i>Not Significant</i>
Civil Status	2.14	0.119	<i>Not Significant</i>
Employment Status	0.76	0.552	<i>Not Significant</i>

Variable	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	-1.3	0.178	<i>Not Significant</i>

**significant at $\alpha=0.05$*

The table presents the results of the test for significant differences in locale residents' perceptions of sustainable tourism development based on various demographic factors. The analysis showed no significant differences across age groups, with a p-value of 0.185. This suggests that residents, regardless of age, shared consistent views on sustainable tourism development, with all age groups equally concerned about their environment (Canovas et al., 2021). Similarly, no significant difference was found for sex (p-value 0.178), meaning both males and females had similar perceptions, which aligns with previous studies (Davis et al., 1988; Ribeiro et al., 2013). Regarding educational attainment, the p-value of 0.927

indicated no significant effect on residents' perceptions, suggesting that education level did not influence attitudes toward tourism sustainability. Liu and Li (2018) and Sidali & Huber (2017) also found no link between education level and support for tourism development. Similarly, monthly income did not significantly impact perceptions, with a p-value of 0.552, indicating that residents from all income levels valued tourism development equally (Lipovcan et al., 2007). For civil status, the p-value of 0.119 showed no significant difference in perceptions, supporting the idea that marital status did not affect views on tourism development, as emphasized in previous research (Davis et al., 1988). Lastly, employment status also had no significant impact, with a p-value of 0.552, indicating that both employed and unemployed residents shared similar views on sustainable tourism (Long & Kayat, 2011). This highlights a broad, community-wide consensus on sustainable tourism goals.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the study, the locale residents of the Province of Misamis Occidental expressed a positive attitude towards developing tourist destinations in their area, indicated as agree, signifying their engagement with sustainable tourism development across dimensions

such as Institutional, Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Ecological. As part of this sustainable development effort, the province recognized the critical importance of involving locale residents in the process. This involvement aimed to implement sustainable practices and adopt a responsible approach to tourism development. The inclusive approach taken by the province acknowledges that sustainable tourism efforts should not solely focus on enhancing tourist attractions. Instead, they should also value the invaluable perspectives and insights offered by locale residents in the area. These local insights are considered essential for identifying and addressing the various challenges encountered in the pursuit of successful sustainable tourism development. Misamis Occidental may have a comprehensive strategy to address the institutional, economic, ecological, and sociocultural aspects of sustainable tourism development. The following are the tourism initiatives towards sustainable tourism development in the said province; For the (1) Institutional Dimension, Incorporate informative inscriptions about the destination and delving into the historical narratives by providing activities, talks and seminars to the community in alignment with the *R.A. 9593- The Tourism Act of 2009, Section 3, (b)- Encourage activities and programs which pro-*

mote tourism awareness, preserve the country's diverse cultures and heritage, and instill a sense of history and a culture of tourism among the youth and the populace. To enhance tourism awareness, specifically the accurate information dissemination at the tourist destinations in the province of Misamis Occidental, informative inscriptions detailing the site's history should be realized and strategically positioned for easy visibility. Local tourism authorities at all levels should engage the community by encouraging residents to learn about the tourist destinations history in their area through engaging talks or workshops. This enables locals to share insights with tourists, enriching their experiences. Additionally, providing readily available pamphlets, brochures, infographics, and other materials with detailed information about the site at entrances and other convenient locations ensures that visitors can easily access and absorb the information they need. This approach fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the destination's significance. In the (2) Economic Dimension, encourage the growth of community-owned tourism businesses and implement Community-Based Tourism Organizations to provide locale residents with livelihoods that improve their standard of living, aligning with the *Sustainable Development Goal of the Philippines No. 1, "No Poverty."* Each barangay in Misamis Occidental with emerging tourist destinations should establish a "Community-Based Tourism Organization" (CBTO) to showcase local products, skills, and crafts, thereby improving economic status. Providing training programs in hospitality, tour guiding, and other tourism-related skills equips locals for sustainable employment and enhances visitor experiences. This initiative aims to give everyone the opportunity to prosper and live productive, fulfilling lives. The (3) Socio-Cultural Dimension, promote gender equality and empower women and girls with job opportunities, supported by the *Sustainable Tourism Goal No. 5, "Gender Equality."* The Local Government Unit and the province should focus on initiatives that prioritize gender equality in hiring practices, offer training and mentorship programs tailored to women's needs, and promote entrepreneurship among women in the tourism sector through access to resources and support networks. For the (4) Ecological Dimension, fostering local partnerships for educational and conservation initiatives at tourist destinations in alignment with the *R.A. 9593- The Tourism Act of 2009, Section 3, (i) Develop responsible tourism as a strategy for ecologically sound and community participatory tourism programs, enlisting the participation of local*

communities, and promoting ecological understanding and education. Prioritize partnerships with local conservation organizations and communities to create educational exhibits and interactive experiences. Additionally, collaborate with institutions to conduct extension programs such as general cleaning, tree planting, and conservation practices within and around tourist destinations. Include components such as eco-friendly infrastructure, renewable energy demonstration, and wildlife conservation activities to demonstrate how sustainable practices are implemented. Encourage tourist participation through guided tours and volunteer activities to improve their understanding of ecological stewardship and motivate good behaviors of their stay.

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