

Potentiality of Northern Mindanao for culinary tourism: Basis for culinary framework

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Abstract

This study determined the potential of Northern Mindanao as a culinary tourism destination by assessing its culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image attributes. Quantitative descriptive method was used with survey through online and pen-and-paper as the data collection technique. There were 411 respondents who visited the region and experienced the food. The results of the test for relationships between variables showed that there was a highly significant relationship between culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness which means that the better the culinary travel experience, the better the product's potential attractiveness. There was a highly significant relationship between culinary travel experience and food image attributes which means that the better the experience on culinary travel, the more positive the food image attributes and there was a highly significant relationship between product potential attractiveness and food image attributes. This means that the better the assessment of product potential attractiveness, the more positive the food image attributes. The relationships among variables were used as basis in conceptualizing a culinary framework to give emphasis on authenticity and heritage in culinary tourism which gives connection to food image attributes and culinary travel experience. Further research may be conducted to explore the differences of the two main variables namely culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness to the profile variable age, sex, educational attainment, and employment status as it affects the potentiality of the destination for culinary tourism.

Keywords: authenticity, culinary tourism, food image, heritage, travel experience

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1. Introduction

Culinary tourism is a combination of authenticity and heritage. Destination nowadays is highlighting unique local and regional dishes to capture its culinary and cultural heritage of the place. Culinary tourism is all about discovering and developing local dishes and delicacies of a certain place and serving it as a main attraction for a destination. Culinary tourism refers to exploring various cuisines, cooking techniques while traveling. Nowadays, countries are using their authentic dishes to attract people aside from the various tourist spots. Food-related activities were created and television shows focusing on regional cookery are being adopted by their government as part of their tourism marketing as it attracts more tourists and drives them to explore the taste of the foods (Stone et al., 2019). Festivals are now including the foods that are one of the highlights of the celebration (Stone et al., 2018). Websites and other media forms are being used by the government to inform and share information on their authentic dishes and local delicacies.

The analysis of culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image will determine factors affecting culinary tourism. The culinary travel experience, including immersion, surprise, participation, fun, and education, will determine tourist satisfaction and help the government form a strategic plan for marketing. Product potential attractiveness will identify the region's heritage, authenticity, and marketing value. It will also determine the authenticity value of the destination's heirloom dishes, which will help boost tourism. Food image attributes, such as restaurant service, food taste, health and hygiene, variety, and unique cultural experience, will highlight the region's culinary image. The region's culinary tourism should focus on a variety of delicacies and native dishes, with authentic table manners and unique cultural experiences attracting tourists. The unique culture and food connection will be the main highlight of culinary tourism, bringing excitement to tourists.

Travel experience confirms that local food that was enjoyed during the travel are the deciding factor in creating remarkable products, realizing tourist satisfaction, improving the quality of life, and encourages loyalty to the food related activities (Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2020). The product potential attractiveness will recognize the importance of preserving culinary heritage, giving authentic value of food, and the various strategies in destination marketing. (Salonga & Borbon, 2021). Food image is helpful in determining the food preferences and consumption. The only food image factor that consistently predicted food preferences and consumption was found to be the food taste image (Promsivapallop & Kannaovakun, 2019). The main objective of a traveler who would like to experience culinary tourism is to indulge in various cuisines, especially the local delicacies in a certain place. Aside from experiencing new flavors, culinary tourism also enhances people's knowledge regarding the various cultural aspects related to food. The main highlight of culinary tourism is the food that is authentic and associated with its culture and heritage.

Regional cuisine is rich in culture and heritage. It provides authentic dishes and delicacies that would attract the attention of tourists. Regional cuisines serve as the image of the region in terms of food. Most of the regions in the Philippines have their own regional cuisines that are created from the local and native ingredients. Filipino foods are always promoted in the ads created by the Department of Tourism as part of its tagline “it’s more fun in the Philippines”. However, only a few regions were highlighted since the other regions was not able to determine its food image and potentiality. The culinary tourism in other region lacks information like culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image attributes. This is the main reason why other regions knowing its rich culture and food remains low and less attractive in culinary tourism. The tourists are not familiar with the culture and food in other regions. There is no evidence yet of determining culinary tourism potentiality by using culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image attributes.

Northern Mindanao is composed of five provinces which was considered the aquamarine center of the Philippines. It also has plenty of agricultural crops in Bukidnon that serve as the fruit basket of Mindanao. Northern Mindanao cuisines are very popular not only in the region but in Mindanao as a whole. A lot of a must try local dishes in Northern Mindanao are the sinuglaw and ensaymada in Misamis Oriental, adobong lumayagan, suman and broas of Misamis Occidental, chicken piyaparan and beef rendang of Lanao del Norte, the pastel of Camiguin, and lastly the adobong bakbak and binaki of Bukidnon. These authentic dishes and local delicacies serve as a great tool in promoting culinary tourism in the region and it must be highlighted. However, the region's culinary tourism lacks information regarding on its potentials factors as they are focusing on other form of tourism. They do not prioritize the culinary tourism of the region as they do not see it as booming tourism. Identifying the features strengths of its culinary will determine the potential of Northern Mindanao to serve as a destination for culinary tourism. Gastronomy has become one of the most important aspects in the development and marketing of tourism, and it allows some areas to specialize in culinary tourism.

With this information that will be gathered in this study, the researcher would like to contribute to the body of knowledge in culinary and gastronomy. The researcher would like to create information about determining the potentiality of a destination using culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image attributes. The output of the study is a culinary framework which may help the people to understand the process of determining the potentiality of its culinary tourism and identify relevant strategies to their tourism marketing plan. The researcher would like to help the region especially its Department of Tourism to make use of its culinary heritage in their tourism agenda. It will also help the region to preserve its culinary heritage and present the culture of Northern Mindanao to the tourists.

The framework may be used by the tourism sector of the region to understand fully the factors that are essential in conceptualizing the tourism plans and development of the region. The researcher also would like to help the restaurateurs or business owners to use the output of the study to determine the possible strategies in marketing authentic dishes in their business. The framework will help the restaurateurs to create an appropriate menu item that would attract guest and be able to highlight the authentic dishes of the region. Creating a culinary framework will help a potential culinary tourism destination to increase its economy and will result in more jobs for the community. Therefore, the output of this study will help the tourism industry and the economic status of the region to plan for its development and improvement.

Objectives of the Study - This study aimed to evaluate Northern Mindanao as a potential destination attraction for culinary tourism. Specifically, this study: described the profile in terms of age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, employment status, and frequency of travel; determined the factors affecting culinary travel experience in terms of immersion, surprise, participation, fun, and education; determined the factors affecting product potential attractiveness in terms of preserving culinary heritage, adding destination authenticity value, and destination marketing; determined the food image attributes as to restaurant service, food taste, health and hygiene, variety and table manners, unique cultural experience; tested the significant difference on the responses to culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image when grouped according to demographic profile; tested the significant relationship among culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image and finally; proposed a culinary framework based on the result of the study.

2. Method

Research Design - The research design used for this study was a descriptive and correlational analysis. The study used descriptive analysis to determine the status of the variables identified and correlational was used to systematically investigates relationships between two or more variables of interest. The descriptive correlation was used to test the significant relationship among the three variables to discuss the descriptive analysis and to apply of the relationship of the variables in the study.

Participants of the Study - The respondents were the regional travelers/tourists who visited Northern Mindanao. The researcher used a simple random sampling method in choosing the respondents for the study. There were 411 respondents in this study which exceeded the recommended 384 sample size of the study as calculated by the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator. The sample size was taken from the 2020 Regional Distribution of Overnight Travelers of Region X posted by the Department of Tourism. The process of choosing respondents in the study underwent a qualifier question. The qualifier questions helped the researcher determine whether the respondent qualified as regional traveler/tourist who visited and was able to eat the food in Northern Mindanao. Additional questions were discussed as to where they recently visited the region.

Data Collection Instrument - The researcher adapted three questionnaires for this study. The first questionnaire was adapted from the study by Hernández-Mogollón, et al (2020) entitled culinary travel experiences, quality of life and loyalty. The second questionnaire was adapted from the study of Salonga and Borbon (2021) entitled Potentiality of Bukidnon for culinary tourism. The third questionnaire was adapted from the study of Promsivapallop & Kannaovakun (2019) entitled Destination food image dimensions and their effects on food preference and consumption. The instrument underwent a content validation by three experts; Owner of the Ganggang Chicken, OIC-Chief Tourism Operations Officer of the Department of Tourism Region X, and Cher/owner of Tatay Liswe’s Gourmet Food. The instrument also goes through pilot testing and reliability test where the Cronbach Alpha resulted as seen in table 1

Table 1
Reliability Statistics

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
CULINARY TRAVEL EXPERIENCE	0.963	Excellent
Immersion (I)	0.838	Good
Surprise (S)	0.908	Excellent
Participation (P)	0.845	Good
Fun (F)	0.916	Excellent
Education (E)	0.913	Excellent
PRODUCT PROTENTIAL ATTRACTIVENESS	0.921	Excellent
Preserving Culinary Heritage (PCH)	0.853	Good
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value (ADAV)	0.778	Acceptable
Destination Marketing (DM)	0.903	Excellent
FOOD IMAGE ATTRIBUTES	0.952	Excellent
Restaurant service (RS)	0.846	Good
Food taste (FT)	0.827	Good
Health and hygiene (HH)	0.936	Excellent
Variety and table manners (VTM)	0.847	Good
Unique cultural experience (UCE)	0.821	Good

Data Gathering Procedure - The researcher gathered the information needed using resources like books, the internet, and published works to create baseline information on the topic. The researcher adapted a questionnaire from three published research. The researcher managed to seek permission to the main author of the adapted instrument via email. The questionnaire was sent for an expert validation of three experts and had a reliability test which resulted to excellent in three of the main variables. After the approval of the questionnaire, the researcher conducted the gathering of data. The researcher scouted for tourists who visited Northern Mindanao and were able to experience the culinary tourism by conducting preliminaries and qualifier questions. Those tourists who passed the qualifier served as the respondents of the study. The researcher used an online survey questionnaire through short link and was distributed to Facebook and Messenger. The researcher created a poster to call for respondents by generating QR Code for easy access. The poster was sent to qualified respondents only.

The researcher also used the paper and pen survey method in which the researcher visited the capital cities of the provinces in Northern Mindanao. The researcher conducted the survey inside the public mall specifically in the food court to gain more respondents. The researcher conducted an initial interview using the qualifier question to get the qualified respondents. The researcher asked help from the youth organizations in various provinces to get more respondents in the study. The data was gathered from the research instrument, tallied, and computed for interpretation.

Data Analysis - Weighted mean and rank were used to assess the factors affecting culinary travel experience in terms of immersion, surprise, participation, fun, and education; and to determine the factors affecting product potential attractiveness in terms of preserving culinary heritage, adding destination authenticity value, and destination marketing as well as to assess the food image attributes in terms of restaurant service, food taste, health and hygiene, variety and table manners, and unique cultural experience. Likewise, Spearman rho was used to test the significant relationship among the variables. All analyzes were performed using SPSS version 26.

Ethical Consideration - To respect the highly confidential nature of the survey, no names were mentioned in the report. Privacy notices were also included in the survey questionnaire to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents. The identities of the respondents were not revealed except that they were regional traveler/tourists. The results of the study were used for the said study. The result was deleted permanently to avoid duplication in the usage of the data. No opinion was given by the researchers, only information and results based on the data gathered. Consent forms were used during the data gathering to make sure that the respondents were voluntarily answered the survey. The researcher managed to seek permission to the main author of the adapted instrument via email (as seen in Appendix D).

3. Results and discussion

Table 2

Summary Table on Culinary Travel Experience

Indicators	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Immersion	4.85	Agree	5
2. Surprise	5.10	Agree	2
3. Participation	4.87	Agree	4
4. Fun	5.26	Agree	1
5. Education	4.98	Agree	3
Grand Composite Mean	5.01	Agree	

Legend: 5.50 – 6.00 = Strongly Agree (SA); 4.50 – 5.49 = Agree (A); 3.50 – 4.59 = Moderately Agree (MA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Moderately Disagree (MD); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 2 presents the summary of assessment on culinary travel experience. The resulted composite mean of 5.01 indicates that the respondents agreed in general. Fun (5.26), surprise (5.10), and education (4.98) got the highest mean value. This shows that the tourists are looking for fun when they travel in a destination focuses on culinary. Followed by surprise which means that tourists are looking for something unusual during travel. Lastly, the education which also means that tourist is into learning from the culinary travel experience.

Culinary travel experience in terms of fun got the highest ranked as it shows that the tourist during the travel enjoyed much and had a memorable experience. The culinary travel experience in the region shows an enjoyable activities or itinerary that makes the tourist feel the satisfaction they aimed in their travel. It only shows how the government’s plan to offer a culinary tourism in the region was properly made. The fun factor in the culinary travel experience is one of the most important parts as it gives the happiness of the tourists which gives a wonderful memory. The wonderful memories will also serve as the marketing of the regions culinary tourism which will help its tourism to flourished. According to Stone et al. (2018), it is necessary to create fun in the

culinary travel experience as it gives more impact in the customer satisfaction. It is necessary to determine the various characteristics and behavior of the tourists as they are the one who will going to experience the culinary travel (Back et al., 2020). The addition of the various fun filled food-related activities in the travel will surely give success to the culinary tourism of a destination (Luoh et al., 2020).

Concurrently, immersion (4.85) and participation (4.87) rated the least which shows that the tourist are looking for involvement and activities during the travel. The tourist would like to experience the culture and its foods together with fun, surprise, and education. It shows that the culinary travel experience of Northern Mindanao is having limited activities. Immersion in culinary travel experience got the least ranked in the survey which shows that the travel activities or itinerary are less in terms of immersing tourists. The immersion in the travel will give the tourists on how the culinary tourism in the regions works. This means that the immersion like getting involved with the activities or being motivated to join the event is likely with less impact as they are not properly coordinated in the travel. The activities are laid down in the itinerary but the immersion during the travel is not properly introduced and performed which makes the overall impact of its immersion in the culinary travel experience to be low. As highlighted by various scholars, involves deeply engaging tourists in local food culture, allowing them to experience the destination's culinary identity firsthand. Immersion facilitates a connection with the destination, enhancing the overall travel experience. Immersion in local food culture is a significant, as tourists often seek authentic experiences that allow them to delve into the local gastronomy and traditions (Dutta & Naumov, 2020). Richards (2021) further contends that the development of culinary tourism hinges on the fusion of culture and cuisine, suggesting that strategic promotion initiatives should capitalize on this synergy to attract visitors. According to Kaushal & Yadav (2020), that the immersion of the tourist in the culinary travel experience is an important factor. Immersion to the culture and cuisine is considered as the center point of attraction in the culinary tourism.

Table 3

Summary Table on Product Potential Attractiveness

Indicators	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Preserving Culinary Heritage	5.34	Agree	2
2. Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	5.43	Agree	1
3. Destination Marketing	5.23	Agree	3
Grand Composite Mean	5.33	Agree	

Table 3 presents the summary of assessment on product potential attractiveness. The resulted composite mean of 5.33 indicates that the respondents agreed in general. Adding destination authenticity value (5.43) and preserving culinary heritage (5.34) got the highest mean value. This shows that tourists are satisfied on how the locals make value to their food and add this to their authenticity of the destination. It also shows that they prefer to experience those dishes that are considered as part of the culinary heritage of the regions so that they can feel firsthand the culture and at the same time help preserve its heritage.

The authenticity value of a destination is a big factor as it will give the tourists an idea on how unique the tourism of the region. The addition of its authenticity value in its destination will surely help the region raise its marketing. Tourist visits a place for new experience and this authentic value of the place will give a new experience of the tourist as they will be able to experience a fresh array of foods, exotic foods and wonderful food-related activities. The destination should highlight its authentic value so that the tourists will be motivated to visit and discover new memories in the place. According to Chen et al. (2020), the authentic and unique features of the culinary and its culture of certain destination is the image of the tourism. It may bring risk to tourist due to the uniqueness of the culture and cuisines which may give unfavorable feedback from the tourist but it is a great chance to inform others with the hidden treasure of the destination (Walter, 2017). The authenticity of the destination brings a big factor in promoting tourism (Zhang et al, 2019).

Concurrently, destination marketing (5.23) rated the least which shows that the tourists are less satisfied with

the strategies made by the government in marketing its destination. The tourism of the regions must not only focus on how they will offer the destination but will also consider the aspect of pointing out its potential factors so that it will showcase its best features. Marketing is an essential tool in tourism as it will spread the information related to the destination. The tourism in the region is currently facing a not so planned destination marketing as it focuses a lot of areas in its tourism. The culinary heritage was left out in the tourism as it was not properly highlighted in its marketing strategies. The tourism sector of the region is having a little knowledge as to how it will be used in creating a culinary destination. The heirloom dishes were not properly researched. Other business owners opt to offer international cuisines as it is more saleable compared to authentic dishes. Cuisines are also innovated in a way that the authentic value of the dishes were overlapped with the international requirements which was added in the cuisines. Mixture of other cuisines were also made that resulted to a more foreign cuisines which distorted the authenticity of the Filipino dishes. The culinary festivals will help the destination competitiveness through assessing their motivation, time pressure and prior knowledge about the festival (Yang et al., 2020). The major aspect that affects the growth of the culinary tourism is the involvement of destination marketing (Okumus, 2020). The festival can affect the marketing of tourism in a destination as tourists will visit the place to celebrate (Pirnar, 2019).

Table 4

Summary Table on Food Image Attributes

Indicators	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Restaurant service	5.21	Agree	3.5
2. Food Taste	5.18	Agree	5
3. Health and hygiene	5.23	Agree	2
4. Variety and table manners	5.26	Agree	1
5. Unique Culture Experience	5.21	Agree	3.5
Grand Composite Mean	5.22	Agree	

Table 4 presents the summary of assessment on food image attributes. The resulted composite mean of 5.22 indicates that the respondents agreed in general. Variety and table manners (5.23) and health and hygiene (5.23) got the highest mean value. This shows that Northern Mindanao was offering variety of food, delicacies, and authentic dishes. The table manners as well was one of the factors that influenced the tourist to visit the place. Followed by health and hygiene which means that tourist is very particular when it comes to eating healthy and hygienic foods knowing that they will be encountering various culture-influenced-cuisine during the travel.

The variety of dishes offered in the region and its table manners is the highest in the summary which means that the tourist prefers the numerous offerings of dishes along with the experience of its table manners. This makes the tourist choose from the number of authentic dishes. This will encourage the tourist to try all the dishes which resulted to higher sales and economy as well. This strategy in marketing is very effective if the region can offer more dishes to the tourists. The importance of variety of table manners as well as the hygiene and innovative service design also emerges as significant for enhancing the dining experience. Overall, these underscore the multifaceted nature of food image and its impact on the hospitality and tourism industry. Food variety is necessary in creating food image as it builds an attractive food destination (Dao, 2019). The various table manners will determine the regions cultural aspects (Yasami et al., 2021). Including the variety of dishes and delicacies the native can offer to the tourist and its tourism. In order to market the culinary tourism of a destination they must include the culture and its cuisines including the traditional foods and table manners (Mohamed et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, “restaurant service (5.21), unique cultural experience” (5.21), and “food taste” (5.18) rated the least. This means that tourist would like to experience a good service when they dine in the restaurant. They wanted to experience new and wonderful ambiance and decoration as well as scenic views. Culinary tourism revolves around the experience of food and food service, with an emphasis on providing diners with high-quality

service in addition to delicious meals. The tourists also would like to experience unique culture in terms of the food by exploring exotic dishes, and unique cultural features. This also means that as tourist would like to experience the true food image through its flavors. The table manners of the region also brought another factor to the tourist as they were able to experience a traditional eating style which is using their hands. This is also another strategy that would arise the motivation of the tourist to visit the place. The food taste will define the image of the destination (Tomono & Tomono, 2020). According to that local food attract tourist due to its unique taste (Bjork & Kauppinen-Raisanen, 2019). There are five factors they would affect the destination food image and that is food taste (Promsivapallop & Kannaovakun, 2019). Food image attributes such as restaurant service, food taste, health and hygiene, variety and table manners, and unique cultural experience are crucial factors that influence tourists' dining experiences. While some attributes like food taste have a universal appeal, others may be influenced by cultural differences. Food taste is the most influential factor in culinary tourism (Yasami et al., 2021). Creating a comfortable and inviting atmosphere is essential for attracting tourists, as emphasized by Oh & Kim (2020), who highlight ambiance as a critical factor in customer attraction.

Table 5*Relationship Between Culinary Travel Experience and Product Potential Attractiveness*

Immersion	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Preserving Culinary Heritage	.465**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	.445**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing	.365**	0.000	Highly Significant
Surprise			
Preserving Culinary Heritage	.514**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	.462**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing	.492**	0.000	Highly Significant
Participation			
Preserving Culinary Heritage	.487**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	.483**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing	.486**	0.000	Highly Significant
Fun			
Preserving Culinary Heritage	.527**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	.455**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing	.483**	0.000	Highly Significant
Education			
Preserving Culinary Heritage	.376**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value	.374**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing	.306**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 5 displays the association between culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness. The resulted rho-values indicates a moderate direct correlation and the computed p-values were all less than the alpha level of 0.01, thus a significant relationship existed. This means that the better the culinary travel experience, the better was the product potential attractiveness. Culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness were connected to each other since that both was applicable in culinary tourism. This means that the factors in culinary travel experience related to the factors in product potential attractiveness.

The immersion and participation in culinary travel experience is necessary as it is needed in the preservation of culinary heritage by making activities related to culinary and its heritage. With these activities, the tourist tends to feel and encounter the heritage and be able to promote to others. Immersion and participation also may be an indicator in adding destinations authenticity value since that tourist will try to observe the authenticity of the foods which makes them exciting in the travel (Khairi & Darmawan, 2021). It makes the travel worth the visit because it makes them feel the authenticity of its culture and its food (Stone et al, 2018). It also gives chance to the tourist to encounter the locals and be able to witness the preparation of authentic dishes. Immersion and participation are very valuable in the creating of strategies in destination marketing. In destination marketing, activities were being identified to encourage tourist to travel. In this case, through immersion of tourists to its activities gives the destination a potential to become a culinary tourism.

The surprise and fun factor of the culinary travel experience is also connected to the preservation of culinary heritage. The story behind each dish makes the tourist excited and interested in the travel. The treasured dishes will give them idea on how to give value on preserving its culinary heritage as it gives the region and the country as well an image of its culinary (Seo et al., 2017). Surprise and fun in relation to adding destination's authenticity value is what makes the travel full of fresh activities and lovable memories. Presenting the local dishes and delicacies may give surprise and fun to the tourist which also give value to its authenticity as they were able to experience it on the travel (Sert, 2019). Encountering the local during travel is also an additional factor for surprise and fun during travel and that also gives the authentic vibe in the travel which gives them an experience of hearing the dialect. Lastly, surprise and fun are also a great strategy in conceptualizing the marketing of its destination.

Table 6
Relationship Between Culinary Travel Experience and Food Image Attributes

Immersion	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Restaurant service	.442**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.389**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.431**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.404**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.443**	0.000	Highly Significant
Surprise			
Restaurant service	.482**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.435**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.444**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.499**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.459**	0.000	Highly Significant
Participation			
Restaurant service	.505**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.495**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.435**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.500**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.481**	0.000	Highly Significant

Fun			
Restaurant service	.479**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.443**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.454**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.498**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.489**	0.000	Highly Significant
Education			
Restaurant service	.393**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.432**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.356**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.408**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.442**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 6 illustrates the association between culinary travel experience and food image attributes. The resulted rho-values indicates a moderate direct correlation and the computed p-values were all less than the alpha level of 0.01, thus a significant relationship exists. This means that the better the experience on culinary travel, the more positive was the food image attributes. Culinary travel experience was directly related to the food image attribute because the experience was dependent to how the food image attributes were being served to the tourist.

Culinary travel experience factors are connected to food taste. Tourist satisfaction will be achieved if the food taste in Northern Mindanao is commendable. The food in a destination is one of the primary goals of the tourist to experience. The food must be rich in flavors, aromatic, and tasty. The taste of the food is what makes the food image of a destination. Tourists visit a place to taste new flavors and expecting those authentic and/or exotic dishes may give them new experience in foods (Li et al., 2020). It is necessary to a destination to identify the iconic flavor they would like to create in their food image. This means that these flavors should summarized the diversity of its cuisines. In this case, the tourist destination will be identified as unique and will invite not only domestic tourists but also foreign tourist.

Culinary travel experience will become memorable if those foods being served during the travel is healthy and hygienic. Health and hygiene are the trending nowadays in culinary tourism. Tourists tend to consider the health benefits of the food they are eating during travel. The potential culinary tourism of Northern Mindanao must consider these items. On the other hand, the preparation of authentic dishes must be checked by the authorities to maintain safety to the tourists. Hygiene is a recurring issue in food industry. Maintaining the sanitation in their kitchen or even in the dining is now part of the requirements in securing sanitary permits in food establishments (Chang et al., 2021).

With this, it minimizes the contamination and promote hygienic preparation of foods. The restaurants that offer authentic dishes were advised to improve its preparation due to these requirements. Natives were also trained as to how the proper sanitation is being performed. Culinary travel experience factors will always deal with the variety of its food and table manners. The variety of cooking methods present in Northern Mindanao gives a different experience to the tourist. This makes the tourist excited as they will be able to experience various cooking methods in Northern Mindanao. With the integration of various cooking methods, it also entails a variety of food. The variety of food in Northern Mindanao is also another factor to attract the tourist. Tourist does not aim to visit a place just to experience single dish instead numerous dishes to complete the travel experience, the various eating habits is also another factor (Mohamed et al., 2020). The eating with barehand is one of its iconic table manners. It is not only famous in Northern Mindanao but identified as a Filipino table

manner. Eating with barehand is one of the practices in the various ethnic group in the region. This was used in rituals and celebrations, so it is very normal to see native people to use their hands in eating. It may be familiar to the country and international but will always be authentic to the people in Northern Mindanao.

Table 7

Relationship Between Product Potential Attractiveness and Food Image Attributes

Preserving Culinary Heritage	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Restaurant service	.489**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.544**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.517**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.566**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.545**	0.000	Highly Significant
Adding Destinations Authenticity Value			
Restaurant service	.511**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.517**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.469**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.459**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.468**	0.000	Highly Significant
Destination Marketing			
Restaurant service	.560**	0.000	Highly Significant
Food Taste	.616**	0.000	Highly Significant
Health and hygiene	.496**	0.000	Highly Significant
Variety and table manners	.582**	0.000	Highly Significant
Unique Culture Experience	.557**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 7 shows the association between product potential attractiveness and food image attributes. The resulted rho-values indicates a moderate direct correlation and the computed p-values were all less than the alpha level of 0.01, thus a significant relationship exists. This means that the better the assessment on product potential attractiveness, the more positive were the food image attributes.

Product potential attractiveness is merely connected to food image attributes as its culinary heritage, authenticity value and destination marketing are related to restaurant service, food taste, health and hygiene, variety and table manners, and unique cultural experience. The attractiveness of a certain product or destination will also depend on the various attributes in food image. This shows how heritage, culture, and marketing strategies were incorporated in the services, food, health and hygiene, and table manners.

Preserving culinary heritage is linked to food image attributes. The culinary heritage will be incorporated in the restaurant service. Putting some ambiance in the restaurant that are related to its culinary heritage as well as putting costumes in restaurants to give awareness on the culture. The use of dialect in taking orders and with the names of the menu items will also bring highlight to its culinary heritage. Food that are authentic will be part of the menu to highlight the preservation of culinary heritage (Mohd Fikri et al., 2021). The preparation of foods must follow the authentic way at the same time following the prescribed hygienic process. The inclusion of healthy option in the authentic dishes are also a big hit in the culinary tourism. The usage of table manners in the

restaurants will also help the tourism preserve its culinary heritage (Yasami et al., 2021). Offering the variety of food present in the region in various restaurant and pasalubong centers is also one of the strategies that highlight the presentation of culinary heritage. Lastly, the integration of culture in every food-related activity in the travel will greatly affect and improve the process of preserving the culinary heritage.

The adding destination authenticity value are related to food image attributes because of the innate cultural factors. Culture in restaurant ambiance, decoration and themed are being used. Culture in the food is being used as authentic dishes and delicacies are researched and identified from the ethnic groups in Northern Mindanao. The health and hygiene will also boil down to the culture. Identifying healthy options and hygienic process of cooking to attain customer satisfaction. Allowing guests or tourists to use the table manners will also give authenticity value to the culinary tourism. The collection of authentic dishes and delicacies sold in every corner of the region is a way of giving authenticity of the place (Lai et al., 2018). Lastly, the mix of various culture in the region give a unique cultural experience and would motivate tourist to stay in the place. The variety of its culture will encourage tourist to hop from one culture to another to fully understand the true value of culinary tourism in Northern Mindanao. Destination marketing will depend on the food image attributes. Highlight the food and its flavors will also help the destination marketing (Widjaja et al., 2020). Showing the healthy options during the travel and its hygienic process is a great way to encourage tourist to dine and experience culinary tourism in the region. The practice of various table manners in every food related activity is already a strategy to catch the attention of the tourists. Incorporating unique culture experience in the travel will identify the unique food image of the destination and will serve as its iconic marketing strategy (Dao, 2019).

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

The framework shows how culinary tourism in Northern Mindanao was being defined based on the result of the study. As the findings revealed a positive correlation between culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness, as well as between culinary travel experience and food image attributes, highlighted the interconnectedness of these dimensions within the realm of culinary tourism. A positive culinary travel experience enhances tourists' perceptions of a destination's culinary offerings and tourism product attractiveness. Immersive, surprising, participatory, fun, and educational experiences contribute to the destination's attractiveness, attracting more visitors and driving tourism growth. A positive culinary experience is associated with excellent restaurant service, delicious food taste, high standards of health and hygiene, diverse culinary variety, and unique cultural experiences. A favorable assessment of product potential attractiveness reinforces positive perceptions of food image attributes, enhancing tourists' satisfaction and loyalty to the destination.

Colors were being used to give more emphasis to each indicator and/or factor in culinary tourism. Yellow is considered the color for tourism; orange represents authenticity and dark green for heritage. On the other hand, food image attributes use red color as it represents food while the culinary travel experience uses the same color with culinary tourism as it represents both travel and tourism.

In the framework, culinary tourism indicators are authenticity and heritage. This means that the culinary tourism will be depending on authenticity of the food that being offered during the travel (Tiberghien et al., 2020). It shows that authentic dishes are more attractive to tourist as it gives them satisfaction and value to its food. Integration of culture will give the culinary tourism the authenticity value. On the other hand, heritage is also an indicator for defining the culinary tourism. This means that the tourist prefers to know the history behind the foods (Walter, 2017). The tourist observed that the culinary tourism in the region is influenced by its culture and tradition. The heirloom dishes coming from its ancestors or generations are being introduced to the tourists which make the culinary tourism preserve its heritage.

The food image attributes should relate on authenticity and heritage of its culinary tourism. The variety of dishes and table manners in the region is considered as the most important attributes that affects the culinary tourism (Yasami, et al., 2021). Variety of dishes is attractive to tourist and these variety of dishes are composed of authentic dishes. Tourist were satisfied with the different authentic dishes they experience during the travel.

The table manners are considered also as one of the sought unique cultures they would like to experience in the travel. Table manners like eating with their hands are one of the highly observed table manners by the tourists. Health and hygiene are considered as one of the main contributors of food image. Herbs that are used in cooking authentic dishes are healthy. Restaurant in the region has unique style of decoration and environment as well as its unique culture may also help boost the food image.

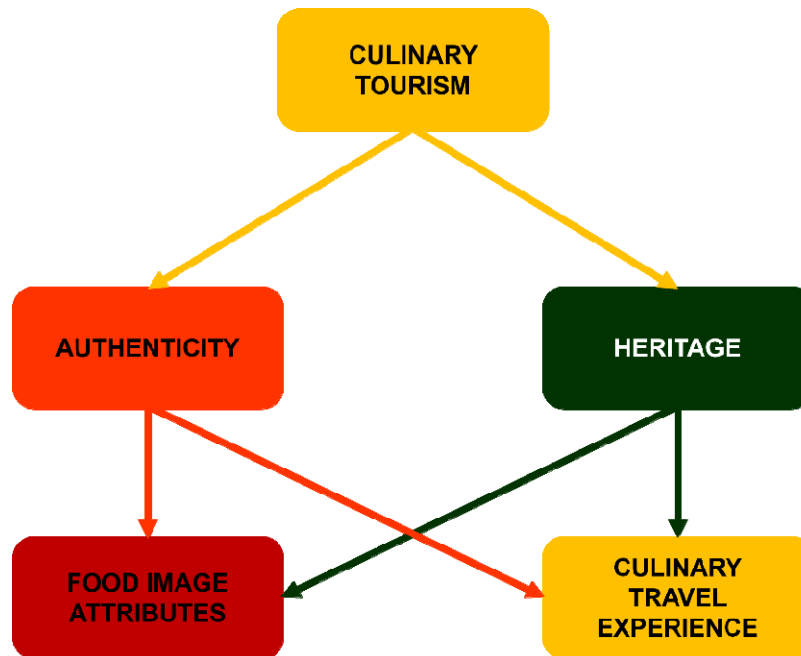


Figure 1. *Proposed culinary framework for Northern Mindanao*

The culinary travel experience can be used as a factor in assessing the culinary tourism and identify important aspects in marketing its tourism (Kaushal & Yadav, 2020). The factor affecting culinary travel experience should relate to authenticity and heritage of its culinary tourism. Tourist experienced fun during their travel which means that the tourist was able to enjoy the experience and was able to collect wonderful memories. Fun is one of the considerations of the tourist to explore a certain culinary destination since that tourist travel to certain places to experience happiness and get away with the stress.

Cultural presentations are found to be fun to the tourist while dining. This means that tourist prefer to have an entertainment when they are dining and traveling to destinations that offers culinary tourism. Surprise was considered by the tourists as another factor in culinary travel experience. Surprise in the culinary travel experience may be achieved by offering interesting stories in their food. Since heritage is the main factor in culinary tourism then those history of the authentic dishes serves as a surprise factor in the travel experience. Education was also identified as factor in the culinary travel experience which made the tourist to be interested in knowing gastronomy around the world. The authenticity of its culture and the history of the dishes may serve as a driving force for tourist who wishes to learn more of the gastronomy in the destination.

4. Conclusion and recommendation

The region's culinary tourism placed a strong emphasis on the tradition and authenticity of its cuisine. This means that there will be a variety of traditional dishes to experience, as well as the opportunity to learn about the region's culture and history through its food. The majority of tourists concurred that adding destination authenticity value would increase the product's potential attractiveness. The majority of tourists agreed on terms

like variety and table manners in terms of food image attributes. There was a highly significant relationship among culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness and food image attributes. The high significant relationship among culinary travel experience, product potential attractiveness, and food image attributes implies that people who had positive culinary travel experiences were more likely to be attracted to products that had positive food image attributes. The culinary framework was created to give emphasis on authenticity and heritage in culinary tourism which gives connection to food image attributes and culinary travel experience. The authenticity refers to the degree to which a culinary experience is genuine and true to its roots. Therefore, this culinary framework will ensure that culinary tourism experiences are authentic and have a strong connection to the local culture and heritage and to local produced products of the region.

The Department of Tourism – Region X together with the Travel and Tour Agencies (TTAs) in the region, can consider working on a tour package that covers the various spots in the region that highlight the authentic dishes. The tour can be divided into different provinces to maximize the area and give travelers time to appreciate each place. Meanwhile, their marketing strategies and development may emphasize the region's unique culinary heritage and the traditional methods and techniques used to produce and prepare food; Use social media and other digital platforms to promote the region's culinary tourism offerings to widen the reach to various audiences: domestic and international tourists. The DOT in collaboration with the **local businesses, organizations and local community**. The local restaurants, farmers, and food producers work in partnership spearheaded by the DOT may create a network that can offer authentic and high-quality culinary experiences. Through organizing culinary events and festivals to showcase the region's food and culture. Highlighting the region's cuisine during festivals and other regional-wide activities may help to create awareness and publicity for the region's culinary offerings. This is to ensure that tourists have a positive and memorable experience when visiting the culinary events of the region. This may also lead to an increase in tourism and economic benefits for the region. Further research may be conducted to explore the differences of the two main variables namely culinary travel experience and product potential attractiveness to the profile variable age, sex, educational attainment, and employment status as it affects the potentiality of the destination for culinary tourism.

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