

# Residents' empowerment, emotional solidarity and community support, and involvement in festivals in the CALABARZON region: Basis of a framework for sustainable community engagement

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## Abstract

Recognizing the significant role of festivals in the region's tourism industry, this study assessed the influence of resident empowerment and emotional solidarity on community support and involvement in festivals in the CALABARZON Region. Based on the result of the study, the researcher proposed a framework for sustainable community involvement. The study employed a quantitative correlational research design. Data was gathered from 385 residents in towns where the identified festivals in the CALABARZON Region are being held. Participants in the study, aged 18 years and older and residents for at least five years completed an adapted-modified questionnaire comprising three sections from different studies. In conducting data analysis, descriptive statistics such as weighted mean and rank were employed, along with inferential statistics including Pearson's correlation coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) and regression. The study unlocked that residents are empowered and have a strong sense of emotional solidarity with festival visitors. There exists also community support and involvement for festival tourism with attitudinal support emerging as the strongest form of support. All the dimensions of resident empowerment and emotional solidarity were found to have highly significant relationship with community support and involvement. Psychological empowerment, political empowerment, a welcoming nature, and overall emotional solidarity emerged as key predictors of community support and involvement. Based on the study's outcomes, a framework for sustainable community involvement was proposed and recommendations were put forward, emphasizing the importance of harnessing resident empowerment and emotional solidarity.

**Keywords:** resident empowerment, emotional solidarity, community support, festival tourism

## **Residents' empowerment, emotional solidarity and community support, and involvement in festivals in the CALABARZON region: Basis of a framework for sustainable community engagement**

### **1. Introduction**

Festival tourism has emerged as a vibrant and rapidly growing sector within the broader tourism industry. It has gained significant attention in recent years, as it offers unique cultural experiences and has the potential to generate economic benefit for host communities. Worldwide, festival tourism has been incorporated into many countries' tourism development plans in an effort to boost traveler arrivals and improve destination authenticity (Walker, 2019). However, a more critical perspective of festivals that goes beyond economic results is necessary as the growth of festivals has brought tensions in some places due to the emphasis on economic rather than social aspects (Finkel & Platt, 2020).

In the Philippines, festivals also play an important role in the tourism industry showcasing the nation's rich cultural heritage, diverse traditions, and vibrant local communities. The website of the Philippine's Tourism Promotions Board (2022) has a list of the major festivals celebrated annually in the country. These festivals not only celebrate religious and historical events but also serve as major attractions that draw both domestic and international tourists. Furthermore, a study conducted on festivals in the CALABARZON Region revealed that festivals serve as a significant source of community pride and identity, fostering a strong sense of belonging among the people (Luna et al., 2023). Throughout the years, modifications were made in some festivals in the CALABARZON Region to ensure the maximum participation of the residents in the celebration, which will also give them a sense of ownership and attachment to the festival. As concluded, resident participation is a major determinant for the success of each festival. (Luna et al., 2022).

The current research explores the web of relationships between resident empowerment and emotional solidarity, their impact on community support and involvement, and their function in creating the groundwork for a sustainable framework. Resident empowerment is crucial for ensuring community support and involvement in the planning and execution of festivals and events. Empowered residents are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and attachment to their community, leading to increased support for festivals (Eluwole et al., 2022). Whereas, residents' emotional solidarity, which includes attachment and positive attitudes towards tourists, played a significant role in supporting sustainable tourism development (Phuc & Nguyen, 2020). Emotional solidarity has a positive and significant effect on collaboration among stakeholders in tourism development. Finally, community support is a crucial factor for sustainable tourism development and in bridging the gap between community empowerment and sustainable tourism in a local area (Khalid et al., 2019). In the context of festivals, community support includes residents' positive attitudes, willingness to participate, and endorsement of festival development (Li et al., 2019).

The interplay between resident empowerment, emotional solidarity, community support, and involvement in the context of festival tourism remains relatively unexplored. Studies on festival tourism in the country also dwell more on its impacts and the challenges it is facing (Luna et al., 2023; Luna et al., 2022; Franciliso & Estores, 2020). The findings of the study will therefore contribute not only to academic discourse but also offer insights for tourism practitioners and policymakers seeking to cultivate sustainable tourism practices that resonate with local communities.

The findings of this research have implications for a wide range of stakeholders. Residents in the area stand to gain from having greater control over the holding of festival in their area, which will result in a more equitable distribution of benefits and less conflict between locals and visitors. The findings can be used by festival organizers, tourism authorities and policymakers to develop plans that encourage community involvement and

support the sustainability of festival tourism. The result may aid in achieving one of the goals of the National Tourism Development Plan 2023-2028 of strengthening tourism governance through close collaborations with national and local stakeholders. The enhanced theoretical framework and empirical data will be useful to academics and researchers in advancing their comprehension of community-based tourism dynamics.

In the CALABARZON Region, a multitude of towns host festivals, each characterized by its own unique theme — ranging from religious to cultural or centered around specific products. For the purposes of this study, the selection of festivals included those identified as most popular or significant by the tourism offices of their respective provinces, highlighting the distinctiveness of each area. Five festivals represent each province, with a total of 25 festivals included in this study. Notably, all these festivals have been successfully revived by their community's post-pandemic, demonstrating their resilience and sustainability. Therefore, this study endeavors to delve deep into the intricate relationships between resident empowerment, emotional solidarity, and community support and involvement in the context of festival tourism. By exploring these dimensions within the specific setting of the CALABARZON Region in the Philippines, this study aims to bridge existing gaps in knowledge and practice, fostering a more holistic and sustainable approach to festival tourism development.

**Objectives of the Study** - This study assessed the influence of resident empowerment and emotional solidarity on community support and involvement in festivals in the CALABARZON Region. More specifically, this study assessed residents' empowerment as to psychological, social, and political empowerment; assessed the respondents' emotional solidarity in terms of welcoming nature, sympathetic understanding and emotional closeness; assessed community support and involvement in terms of attitudinal support, intentional support and behavioral support; tested the influence of resident empowerment and emotional solidarity on community support and involvement; and proposed a framework for sustainable festival tourism based on the result of the study.

## 2. Methods

**Research Design** - This study employed a quantitative correlational research design, given its objective to assess the influence of emotional solidarity and resident empowerment on community support and involvement within the context of festival tourism. A quantitative methodology is specifically tailored to systematically investigate research questions that are crafted with the study's variables in mind. This approach aims to uncover explanations and predictions that can be generalized across different populations, events, and locations (Taherdoost, 2022). The selection of a correlational method was particularly fitting for the objectives of the research, as it sought to identify the extent and degree of relationships between the independent variables (emotional solidarity and resident empowerment) and the dependent variable (community support and involvement). This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how these variables interact within the festival setting.

**Participants of the Study** - Twenty-five festivals, five from each province of the CALABARZON region were included in the study, as identified by the provincial tourism offices. The participants of the study were the residents in towns where the identified festivals in the CALABARZON Region are being held. The respondents of the study are residents 18 years old and above, residing in the area for at least five years and have witnessed the festival. This information is part of the qualifying questions asked from the respondents of the study. The total number of voting population 18 years old and above in these towns and cities was determined from Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and was used as the basis of population. The researcher employed Raosoft sample size calculator with a confidence level of 95% to determine the sample size. A total of 385 respondents was calculated and with the use of stratified sampling. To enhance the representation of the resident sample, it was ensured during data gathering that residents came from distinct groups: individuals affiliated with the local government unit, encompassing both employees and officials; workers in the tourism industry; and those engaged in various other sectors or potentially unemployed at the time of the survey. This ensured a comprehensive and balanced representation across different occupational groups, contributing to the robustness

and inclusivity of the study's findings.

**Data Gathering Instrument** - The main instrument of this study is an adapted-modified questionnaire with three corresponding parts. The first part is the assessment of residents' empowerment adapted from the study of Aleshinloye et al. (2021). The second part assesses the emotional solidarity of the respondents adapted from the study of Phuc and Nguyen (2020). The last part of the questionnaire determines community support and involvement on festival tourism which is from the studies of Erul and Woosnam (2021) and Plaza-Mejia et al., (2020). The reliability testing yielded favorable outcomes, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha values indicating acceptable to good reliability across various dimensions. Specifically, resident empowerment (0.882) and its sub-variables, psychological empowerment (.844), social empowerment (0.836), and political empowerment (0.847) demonstrated good reliability. Another independent variable, emotional solidarity revealed a Cronbach alpha of 0.855, indicating good reliability. The sub-dimension of sympathetic understanding within emotional solidarity achieved a score of 0.840. Although the related dimensions of welcoming nature (0.701) and emotional closeness (0.794) presented slightly lower reliability scores, they remained within acceptable thresholds. Regarding community support and involvement (0.890), the results were equally good: attitudinal support achieved a Cronbach alpha of 0.808, intentional support scored 0.844, and behavioral support got a reliability score of 0.844.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - The study's respondents were specifically chosen from among the residents of towns and cities hosting festivals identified by the provincial tourism offices. Representative samples of residents were personally contacted at public sites (e.g., parks, government office, etc.), commercial establishments, and a few at their own houses. Data collection was conducted from January to February of 2024. The researcher collected the data using a convenient sampling with the assistance of the local government officials and local residents helping to determine the survey locations that would ensure a representative sampling of the residents. The participants were allotted ample time to thoughtfully respond to each item in the questionnaire. Subsequently, the researcher retrieves the questionnaire and expressed sincere gratitude for the participants' involvement.

**Ethical Considerations** - In the light of the increasing importance of data privacy and protection, this study adheres to the principles outlined in the Data Privacy Act of 2012. This legislation mandates the safeguarding of personal and private data, prohibiting its unauthorized disclosure. The collection, processing, and utilization of personal and other information were strictly confined to the purposes of this research. Access to collected personal data was limited exclusively to the researcher, with a stringent policy against sharing with any external parties without obtaining written consent from the concerned individuals. The questionnaire also clearly communicated the purpose of the study to all participants. Moreover, the research protocol, including data privacy measures, was subjected to a comprehensive evaluation by the university's ethics review committee.

**Data Analysis** - Weighted mean and rank were used to determine the emotional solidarity, residents' empowerment and community support and involvement. The mean scores for the response categories were interpreted according to the following: 1.00 - 1.49 - Strongly Disagree; 1.50 - 2.29 - Disagree; 2.50 - 3.49 Moderately Agree; 3.50 - 4.49 Agree; 4.50 - 5.00 Strongly Agree. Pearson-r was used to determine the relationship of resident empowerment to community support and involvement and the relationship of emotional solidarity to community support and involvement. Regression analysis was applied to test the influence of the aspects of resident empowerment and emotional solidarity to community support and involvement.

### 3. Results and discussion

The residents' empowerment is presented in Table 1. The overall mean of 4.23 indicates a general agreement among residents that they feel empowered in their community. This suggests a positive impact of the community and festival activities on residents' sense of empowerment, with psychological and social factors being particularly strong, while highlighting areas for potential growth in political engagement and influence.

Psychological empowerment is the strongest aspect as indicated by a weighted mean of 4.53, and with a verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree. This dimension which pertains to the level of pride, cultural identity, and community advocacy tendency exhibited by residents, highlights the significant influence festival tourism can exert in strengthening residents' ties to their cultural heritage, and in strengthening their community identities. This means that these events are not just for celebration but are also important moments for the community to reflect and express itself.

**Table 1**

*Assessment of Residents' Empowerment*

Sub-Variables	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Psychological Empowerment	4.53	Strongly Agree	1
Social Empowerment	4.29	Agree	2
Political Empowerment	3.86	Agree	3
Overall Mean	4.23	Agree	

This is aligned with the study of Choi et al. (2020) as regards the Drunken Dragon Festival which stresses the importance of maintaining cultural authenticity to ensure the festival remains relevant and sustainable for future generations. Berselli, et al. (2021) in their study of a music festival in Brazil determined that the festival impacts the community's pride and perceived quality of life. It creates opportunities for social exchange, leisure and recreation, fostering a sense of community and cultural pride among residents. While social empowerment follows suit, with a WM of 4.29, highlighted the importance of festival tourism in nurturing social cohesion and community spirit. This finding illustrates how festivals act as social glue, bringing residents together in shared experiences and celebrations that transcend individual differences. On the other hand, political empowerment, with a WM of 3.86, though positively regarded, reveals a more complex perspective on residents' engagement with political aspects of festival tourism. This dimension draws attention to the potential of festivals as platforms for political engagement and participation, albeit recognized to a lesser extent than psychological and social empowerment.

The study of Joo et al. (2020) justifies the need to enhance political empowerment among the residents. Their empirical evidence suggests that residents who had a higher sense of political empowerment were more likely to engage in political activities such as attending community meetings, talking to elected officials or participating in advocacy efforts regarding tourism development. Similarly, a study in Pakistan showed that community empowerment significantly influences sustainable tourism development (Khalid et al., 2019). In another study, it was found that political trust moderates residents' engagement in festival, which highlights the crucial role of local government in organizing and managing festivals (Zhang & Dai, 2023).

**Table 2**

*Assessment of Emotional Solidarity*

Sub-Variables	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Welcoming Nature	4.53	Strongly Agree	1
Sympathetic Understanding	4.28	Agree	2
Emotional Closeness	4.19	Agree	3
Overall Mean	4.33	Agree	

Table 2 presents the summary table for the assessment of residents' emotional solidarity towards tourists attending their festival. The overall mean score of 4.33, with a verbal interpretation of "Agree," indicates a strong sense of emotional solidarity among the residents. This also shows the community's effective demonstration of emotional solidarity through its welcoming nature, empathetic interactions, and the development of emotional closeness with tourists, which enhances the festival experience for visitors.

With the highest weighted mean score of 4.53, welcoming nature stands out as the strongest aspect of emotional solidarity. This suggests that residents not only agree but strongly agree that they are hospitable and open towards tourists. This characteristic is crucial for creating a positive and inviting festival atmosphere,

encouraging more visitors to attend. Sympathetic Understanding indicates that residents are able to empathize with tourists, understanding their perspectives and experiences. While slightly lower than the indicator-welcoming nature, it still shows a strong agreement, suggesting that empathy and compassion towards visitors are significant components of the community's emotional solidarity. Emotional Closeness, though ranked the lowest, still reflects a high level of agreement among residents. This shows that residents form meaningful connections with tourists, indicating that the festival serves as a bridge for building friendships and deeper emotional bonds between residents and visitors. The study of Yozukmaz et al. (2020) suggests that emotional solidarity plays a crucial role in the interactions between local residents and festival visitors, which highlighted the importance of considering social impacts when organizing festivals.

**Table 3**

*Assessment of Community Support and Involvement*

Sub-Variables	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Attitudinal Support	4.53	Strongly Agree	1
Intentional Support	4.38	Agree	2
Behavioral Support	4.15	Agree	3
Overall Mean	4.36	Agree	

Table 3 presents the summary table for the assessment of Community Support and Involvement across different dimensions of support: Attitudinal, Intentional, and Behavioral. Each dimension reflects a specific aspect of how the community supports and engages with the festival. With an overall mean of 4.36, with verbal interpretation of "Agree", it is apparent that there exists support and involvement from the community. Attitudinal support emerges as the strongest form of support, where the community's beliefs, feelings, and convictions towards the festival are most positive. This dimension includes aspects like the community's pride in the festival, support for sustainability, and desire for government advocacy. The strong agreement of the respondents indicate that they have probably seen and felt the valuable contributions that the festival brings to their community, consistent with Gannon et al. (2020) on the positive correlation between residents' perceptions of tourism and their support for its development.

Intentional support which got a weighted mean of 4.38 and a verbal interpretation of "Agree" reflects the community's plans and willingness to support the festival beyond their current attitudes. It encompasses future-oriented actions such as promoting the festival, supporting innovations, and contributing to visitor services. This finding demonstrates the satisfaction of the residents to the festival being celebrated by their community, in line with the findings of the study of Zhang et al. (2019) that festival satisfaction has an effect on the intention to continue patronizing the event. The current study also shows that the respondents feel belongingness or oneness with their community, which could also explain the intentional support that they provide to the festival. This sense of community is related to residents' intention to support future festivals according to a study made by Sirianni and Sabbagh (2020).

Behavioral Support, with a weighted mean of 4.15, ranks lowest among the three dimensions, yet agreed still by the respondents. This area covers the tangible actions taken by community members, such as volunteering, providing information to visitors, and participating in festival activities. The slightly lower score indicates that there might be barriers to participation or differences in personal capacity to engage actively, despite positive attitudes and intentions. However, their behavioral support may be explained by the community connection that exists among its members. This informal social ties facilitate individuals' local festival participation (Ahn, 2020).

Table 4 shows the relationship between different types of resident empowerment (psychological, social, and political) and various forms of community support and involvement (attitudinal support, intentional support, behavioral support, and the overall mean of community support and involvement). The correlation coefficients (rxy) alongside their p-values offer insight into the strength and statistical significance of these relationships.

**Table 4***Relationship between Resident Empowerment and Community Support and Involvement*

Variables	$r_{xy}$	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Psychological Empowerment</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.733**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.635**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.575**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.701**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Social Empowerment</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.684**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.643**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.622**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.690**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Political Empowerment</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.510**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.581**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.689**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.640**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Resident Empowerment Overall</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.706**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.693**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.715**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.757**	0.000	Highly Significant

Psychological Empowerment has strong correlations with all forms of community support and involvement, especially attitudinal support (.733). This indicates that individuals who feel psychologically empowered within their community are more likely to exhibit supportive attitudes, intentions, and behaviors towards community events. Such a bond enhances their willingness to support community events, a finding corroborated by Eluwole et al. (2022) in their examination of community festivals. Social Empowerment also shows strong correlations with various aspects of community support and involvement, particularly with behavioral support (.622), suggesting that social connections and a sense of belonging within the community enhance active participation and support for community events. As noted by McClinchey (2020), festival preparation through regular meetings, practices and festival performances encounters provides opportunities for bonding and bridging social capital. Political Empowerment has a slightly different pattern, with the strongest correlation with behavioral support (.689), highlighting that political involvement and influence in community decisions can lead to more active support and involvement in community initiatives. When residents feel politically empowered through being represented and included in the decision-making processes, they are more likely to perceive the positive impacts of tourism, leading to increased support for tourism development (Neuts et al., 2021).

Resident empowerment demonstrates a strong correlation with community support and involvement, highlighted by a significant correlation coefficient of .757. This suggests that empowerment across psychological, social, and political dimensions significantly boosts residents' participation in community activities. Such empowerment fosters a sense of pride, community bonding, self-efficacy, and control, encouraging positive interactions with visitors and enhancing the community's reputation. Choi et al. (2023) support this finding, showing that empowered residents are more inclined to engage in voluntary information sharing, assistance, and making recommendations to visitors, thereby promoting positive experiences.

Table 5 shows the relationship between emotional solidarity (welcoming nature, sympathetic understanding, emotional closeness, and overall emotional solidarity mean) and community support and involvement (attitudinal support, intentional support, behavioral support, and the overall mean of community support and involvement). The table shows that all aspects of emotional solidarity have highly significant relationship with community support and involvement.

**Table 5***Relationship between Emotional Solidarity and Community Support and Involvement*

Variables	$r_{xy}$	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Welcoming Nature</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.801**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.737**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.704**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.798**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Sympathetic Understanding</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.739**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.746**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.762**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.803**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Emotional Closeness</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.685**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.683**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.773**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.758**	0.000	Highly Significant
<b>Emotional Solidarity Overall</b>			
Attitudinal Support	.793**	0.000	Highly Significant
Intentional Support	.775**	0.000	Highly Significant
Behavioral Support	.807**	0.000	Highly Significant
Community Support and Involvement Overall Mean	.845**	0.000	Highly Significant

Welcoming nature as a dimension of emotional solidarity shows strongest relationship with attitudinal support (.801) and overall mean of community support and involvement (.798). This correlation emphasizes the importance of a community's disposition in creating a supportive atmosphere, implying that communities that value inclusivity and warmth are better at rallying support for communal efforts. Support for this argument is found in the work of Moghavemmi et al. (2017), which identifies the impact of residents' welcoming attitudes towards tourists on community support for tourism, emphasizing the importance of such traits in cultivating a positive environment that encourages support for tourism initiatives such as the organization of a festival. Similarly, Erul et al. (2020) find that a welcoming nature significantly predicts residents' attitudinal support for tourism development in Izmir, demonstrating that residents who are open and hospitable towards tourists are more likely to support tourism development positively. Similarly, the strong correlation (.803) between sympathetic understanding and community support demonstrates the importance of empathy in fostering community involvement. There are empirical research that support these findings. Joo et al. (2021) found that sympathetic understanding significantly enhances residents' support for tourism, demonstrating that individuals with greater empathy towards tourists are more inclined to endorse tourism actively.

The relationship between emotional closeness and behavioral support, indicated by a correlation of .773, highlights the significant role of emotional bonds in driving support behaviors and participation in community activities. This correlation emphasizes that emotional connections, more than mere attitudes or intentions, are pivotal in predicting tangible actions of support within communities. In a related study, Joo et al. (2021) demonstrates the significant impact of emotional closeness on residents' perspectives towards tourism, showing that stronger emotional ties lead to a more favorable view of tourism, even amidst challenges such as a pandemic. The significant influence of emotional solidarity on community support and involvement is most evident through its strong correlation with the overall mean (.845), demonstrating that emotional solidarity plays a central role in enhancing community engagement. The connection between emotional solidarity and community support for tourism is further elucidated by Munanura et al. (2021), who found that a strong sense of emotional solidarity with tourists leads to greater support for tourism development and initiatives.

As highlighted in Table 6, psychological empowerment, political empowerment, welcoming nature, and overall emotional solidarity are key predictors of community support and involvement, particularly within the context of festival tourism. This analysis suggests that when residents feel empowered, both psychologically and politically, they are more inclined to engage with and contribute positively to their communities, enhancing the



festival experience for everyone involved. The welcoming attitude of a community towards visitors, especially evident during festivals, significantly influences not only residents' engagement in local activities but also tourists' perceptions and experiences, emphasizing the critical role of creating inclusive and supportive environments.

**Table 6***Predictor of Community Support and Involvement*

Independent Variable / Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients			Interpretation
	<b>B</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	
(Constant)	0.357	2.611	0.009	Significant
Psychological Empowerment	0.173	3.698	0.000	Significant
Social Empowerment	-0.004	-0.083	0.934	Not Significant
Political Empowerment	0.089	3.193	0.002	Significant
Welcoming Nature	0.155	1.984	0.048	Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	0.141	1.943	0.053	Not Significant
Emotional Solidarity	0.367	3.052	0.002	Significant

The significant positive coefficient (0.173) for psychological empowerment suggests that enhancing individual's feelings of pride, confidence, and self-esteem through festival tourism could positively influence community support and involvement for this particular events. Aligned to this result is the study of Ranasinghe and Pradeepamali (2019) which specifically examined the impact of empowerment on residents' support for tourism using the resident empowerment through tourism scale. Their findings underscore the significance of psychological empowerment, which encompasses personal economic benefits, pride, and self-esteem, in securing residents' backing for tourism development. Political empowerment is a significant predictor of community support and involvement in tourism development, as evidenced by a coefficient of 0.089 and a significance value of 0.002. This finding emphasizes the importance of engaging residents in decision-making processes, particularly in the context of festival development. By providing residents with access to information and involving them in planning and governance, festival organizers can not only secure community support but also strengthen residents' attachment to their community.

Eluwole et al. (2022) support this notion, observing that politically empowered residents are more inclined to actively participate in festival events, motivated by a deeper sense of community connection. Similarly, Joo et al. (2019) highlights the broader impacts of political empowerment, noting that it encourages residents to engage in political actions related to tourism development, such as attending community meetings or advocating for their interests with elected officials. The welcoming nature of a community has been identified as a significant predictor of community support and involvement in festival tourism, with a coefficient of 0.155 and a significance level of 0.048. This finding suggests that communities displaying a more welcoming attitude towards visitors are more inclined to support and actively participate in tourism-related events and initiatives such as festivals. Furthermore, a welcoming nature enhances collaboration between residents and stakeholders in the tourism industry, as positive attitudes towards tourists lead to better cooperation among all parties involved in sustainable tourism development (Phuc & Nguyen, 2020). This positive disposition towards tourism is directly influenced by the community's welcoming attitude, suggesting that facilitating interactions between residents and tourists—such as participation in traditional events and festivals—can bolster this welcoming nature, thereby improving residents' well-being and their support for tourism (Wang et al., 2020).

The coefficient of 0.367 with a significance value of 0.002 indicates that emotional solidarity—a sense of connection and shared feelings among community members and between residents and tourists—plays a critical role in determining community support and involvement in festival tourism. This significant predictor shows that communities with high levels of emotional solidarity are more inclined to collectively support and participate in tourism-related activities and festivals. The significant impact of emotional solidarity extends beyond economic contributions; it signifies that the emotional and social cohesion within a community is a potent driver of festival tourism success. Communities that build strong emotional connections with visitors can more effectively utilize

these relationships for the benefit of all tourism stakeholders. This includes creating memorable tourist experiences, promoting local pride, facilitating cultural exchange, and ensuring the sustained success of tourism efforts. Furthermore, a sense of emotional connection between residents and tourists correlates with residents' positive attitudes towards supporting tourism and its initiatives (Erul et al., 2020; Munanura et al., 2021). This connection has been identified as a precursor to residents' active involvement in tourism planning (Aleshinloye, Woosnam, Erul, et al., 2021). The beneficial relationship between emotional solidarity and community support has persisted even during challenging times, such as the pandemic.

The figure 1 is the output of the study, which was based on its findings and analysis of data. It depicts the variables used in the study and their relationships. The Tiangco's Framework on Community Engagement Sustainability through Resident Empowerment and Emotional Solidarity depicts the fundamental aspects of sustainable community engagement which are emotional solidarity, welcoming nature psychological empowerment and political empowerment, which could also aid in the sustainability of festival tourism.

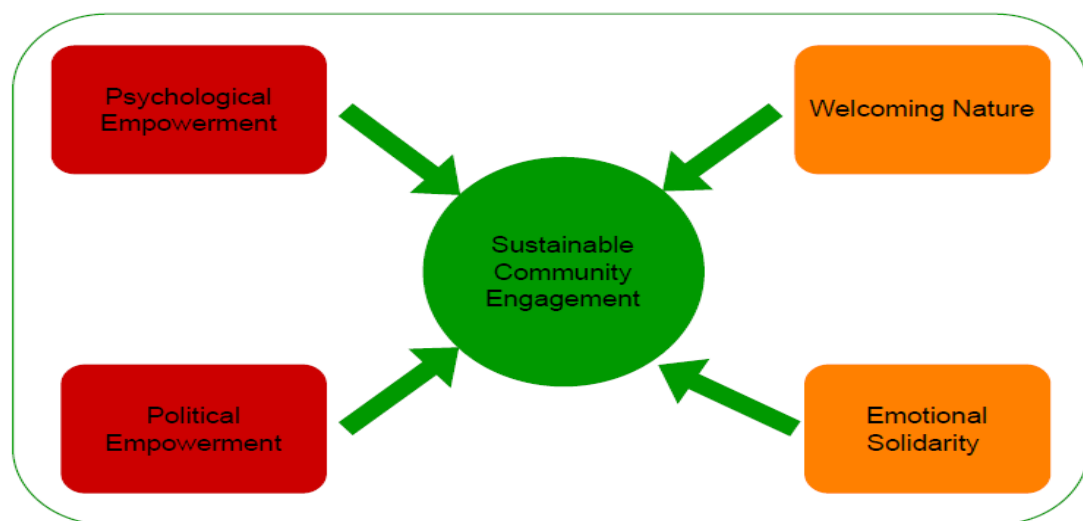


Fig. 1 Tiangco's Framework on *Community Engagement Sustainability through Resident Empowerment and Emotional Solidarity*

Several empirical studies have been undertaken to explore the impact of emotional solidarity and resident empowerment on enhancing community support and involvement. These studies highlight the roles that emotional solidarity and empowerment play in mobilizing community members towards shared goals. Building on this foundation, the current research aims to expand upon existing knowledge by integrating these two salient factors—emotional solidarity and resident empowerment—as combined predictors of community support and involvement. Specifically, the work of Aleshinloye, Woosnam, Erul, et al. (2021) undertook a comparative analysis of these factors, finding that empowerment, in particular, serves as a stronger predictor of residents' willingness to support and participate in tourism-related activities. Despite these findings, this study proposes a novel approach, suggesting that harnessing both emotional solidarity and resident empowerment simultaneously could further enhance community engagement and support. This integrated perspective offers a more holistic understanding of the mechanisms through which communities can be encouraged to actively participate in and support festival tourism, potentially leading to more sustainable and inclusive tourism development practices.

The framework provides a blueprint for designing festivals that contribute positively to the host communities through making sure that residents feel a sense of belonging and ownership of these festivals. Policymakers may use the framework to develop regulations and incentives that encourage festivals to prioritize local empowerment and social connections. There may also be a need to tailor festival activities. Understanding and integrating community preferences can create more personalized and engaging festival experiences,

fostering greater support and participation from local residents.

In order to enhance resident empowerment, local government leaders may implement educational programs and workshops to empower residents with the skills and knowledge to participate in and benefit from festival activities. This can include training in event management, hospitality, and cultural preservation. This may later encourage residents to take on leadership roles in organizing and managing festival events, which can enhance their sense of ownership and investment in the festival's success. To conclude, festival organizers should prioritize engagement with local communities from the planning stages, seeking input and collaboration to ensure the festival reflects and respects local values and needs. Moreover, the framework serves as a call to action among policymakers, festival organizers, and community leaders to collaborate in creating festival experiences that are enriching, equitable, and sustainable. By integrating the principles of the framework into the planning and execution of festivals, stakeholders can ensure that these events are truly celebratory occasions that strengthen community bonds and empower residents.

#### **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

The assessment on empowerment revealed that the festival brings a feeling of residents being empowered, particularly in terms of psychological and social aspects. There exists community support and involvement for festival tourism with attitudinal support emerging as the strongest form of support. The slightly lower score of behavioral support indicates that there might be barriers to participation or differences in personal capacity to engage actively, despite positive attitudes and intentions. Psychological, social, and political empowerment have significant relationship with community support and involvement particularly in the context of festival tourism.

All aspects of emotional solidarity have highly significant relationship with community support and involvement. The essence of a welcoming nature, sympathetic understanding, and emotional closeness within a community not only nurtures a positive environment for residents and visitors alike but also significantly influences the extent of support for and involvement in tourism and community initiatives. A framework for sustainability of festival, Tiangco's Framework on Community Engagement Sustainability through Resident Empowerment and Emotional Solidarity is proposed. The study able to propose a recommendation to increased political empowerment within their communities, particularly in relation to festival-related decision-making to ensure that their interests are represented and addressed in festival policies and initiatives. While festival organizers who usually are composed of local government officials and employees involved in tourism may partner or collaborate with schools in their locality to integrate festival history and cultural significance into the curriculum through seminars, and interactive activities such as art projects, essay contests, and school performances related to the festival themes to further elevate the pride that the residents feel toward it. This may further elevate the residents' psychological empowerment.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) may encourage festival organizers to adopt a holistic approach that prioritizes resident empowerment and emotional solidarity through the provision of guidelines, resources and incentives that will ensure the incorporation of these principles into festival programming and operations. Whereas the local government unity may develop programs that foster emotional solidarity such as facilitating cultural exchanges during festival which could help residents and visitors understand and appreciate each other's background and traditions. Future studies may supplement quantitative survey data with qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, or participant observation to gain a richer understanding of residents' experiences, perceptions and behaviors related to festival management.

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