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On the Rise of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat: Voices of the Tboli Tribe

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-qualitative study delves into the multifaceted perceptions of the Tboli indigenous community regarding the establishment of the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Titulok, Bangumbayan, Sultan Kudarat. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the research elucidates the diverse viewpoints encapsulating cultural significance, land contribution, economic prospects, environmental concerns, and community interactions. Ten purposively selected participants voiced a profound pride in showcasing their cultural heritage at the park, seeing it as a platform to preserve traditions and educate visitors about their ancestral practices. Their contributions to ancestral land were deeply intertwined with a sense of responsibility and cultural legacy. Economic empowerment emerged prominently, reflecting transformative shifts in livelihoods and economic prospects for the community, while environmental concerns underscored the delicate balance between development and conservation. Moreover, community interactions highlighted the pivotal role of the Tboli's engagement in decision-making processes, cultural integration within park initiatives, and their emphasis on sustainable development practices. Despite these insights, limitations in sample size, long-term impact assessment, and contextual generalizability were identified. This study offers valuable insights into the complex interplay between indigenous perceptions and local development initiatives, underscoring the need for culturally sensitive, inclusive, and sustainable approaches in such endeavors.

INTRODUCTION

Situated as the Philippines' second-largest and southernmost major island, Mindanao occupies a strategic position in the country's geographical landscape, bordered by the Bohol Sea to the north, the Philippine Sea to the east, and the Celebes Sea to the south. Renowned as the nation's "food basket", Mindanao's expansive and fertile terrain harbors a significant portion, over half, of the country's mineral and natural resources (Dejarne-Calalang et al., 2015; Imbong, 2020). The island accommodates extensive agricultural plantations spanning thousands of hectares dedicated to the cultivation of pineapple, banana, rubber, palm, and cacao, in addition to substantial mining endeavors (Paredes, 2020; Wenk et al., 2016). However, the rapid expansion of these corporate plantations

encroaches significantly upon communal lands, particularly the ancestral territories of the Lumad communities and domains in Mindanao (Imbong, 2020; Simbulan, 2016). Manuel et al.'s (2021) study also confirms the extensive intersection between indigenous lands and areas abundant in biodiversity. Preserving these regions would significantly aid in tackling the climate and extinction challenges (Dinerstein et al., 2020; O'Bryan et al., 2021). This implies that such a convergence underscores the pivotal contribution of indigenous communities to safeguarding biodiversity resources (Manuel et al., 2021).

The Lumad, or the Indigenous People (IP) of Mindanao, is a Cebuano term meaning "native" or "Indigenous" (Paredes, 2018). Alamon (2017) explains the political origin and implications of the

term Lumad as they “collectively confront the same systemic mechanisms of structural discrimination oftentimes with the full backing and complicity of the Philippine State . . .” Alamon (2017) also cited the words of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) under the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (RA8371) defining “Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples” ...as a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, become historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos.

The Lumad people, despite the existence of protective legislation, have disproportionately suffered from land encroachments in Mindanao, primarily driven by the expansion of agro-industrial and mining enterprises (Acosta, 2020; Imbong, 2020). It instigates profound implications, imperiling regional food security and perpetuating the displacement of peasant and Lumad communities. Despite the legal framework ostensibly safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples (IPs), epitomized by the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 (IPRA Law), these corporations persist in their incursions into sacrosanct indigenous lands.

An intriguing facet emerges from the actions of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the governmental custodian entrusted with the protection and advocacy of indigenous rights. Instances have arisen where the NCIP seemingly favors the interests of agricultural and mining conglomerates over those of the IPs, exacerbating tensions and precipitating conflicts between these corporate entities and Lumad ethnic minorities (Imbong, 2020). In earlier assertions in 2002, Alim M. Bandara, the Supreme Chief of Timuay Justice and Governance (a tribal-based self-governance of the Teduray and Lambangian in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines), shed light on a concerning trend within the Lumad

ancestral domains. His claims highlight an array of development projects that have surged across these territories, encompassing a diverse spectrum from infrastructural advancements like transportation routes, and sea, and airport renovations, to the establishment of communication facilities.

In the context of the municipality of Bagumbayan in Sultan Kudarat province, Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park (BAEAP) emerged in December 2020 amid the challenging backdrop of the pandemic in Mindanao. It has become one of the popular tourist spots in the province ever since (Doguiles, 2023). Despite the pandemic adversities, the park swiftly garnered attention from local tourists, serving as a flagship project led by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Sultan Kudarat (Miller, 2022). This initiative stands as a testament to concerted efforts aimed at revitalizing regional tourism while prioritizing sustainable and eco-conscious practices, as underscored (Mondejar, 2023). Supported initially by a budget allocation of P10 million, BAEAP rapidly gained recognition and awards, affirming its commendable performance within a brief period since its establishment. Substantial acclaim from reputable awarding bodies has firmly established BAEAP as a prominent tourist attraction within the SOCKSARGEN region. Notably, the Department of Tourism Region XII acknowledged BAEAP among the top eight most frequented tourist destinations in SOX throughout 2021, highlighting its growing significance in the regional tourism landscape (Miller, 2022).

The indigenous community residing near the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park (BAEAP) is predominantly composed of the Tboli tribe, an essential and integral part of the broader Lumad community entrenched in the region's cultural landscape. Their historical connection to the land on which BAEAP now stands is deeply entrenched, as local official records attest to the Tboli tribe's gracious contribution to this land. This act reflects a profound sense of stewardship, ownership, and heritage that the Tboli people maintain toward their ancestral territories.

The Tboli tribe signifies a cultural mosaic woven with intricate traditions, customs, and a profound reverence for their ancestral lands (Manuel, 2021). Their rich cultural identity is interwoven with exceptional craftsmanship, celebrated for its exquisite weaving techniques and

expertise in jewelry-making—a testament to their enduring cultural heritage (Gillis, 2022). Beyond the artistic expressions, the T'boli way of life is profoundly rooted in indigenous spirituality, emphasizing a harmonious coexistence with nature. Their cultural practices encompass an array of intricate dances, oral narratives passed through generations, and indigenous rituals, each weaving a narrative of their profound respect for the environment. This conveys that at the core of their identity lies a collective commitment to safeguarding their ancestral domains.

Within the discourse surrounding Lumad perceptions in Mindanao, existing research has predominantly focused on their responses to the establishment of corporate plantations. However, a noticeable gap in understanding pertains to their views regarding the emergence of an agri-eco adventure park, a strategic initiative aimed at bolstering local tourism. Imbong (2020) underscores the Lumads' resistance or the adoption of emancipatory politics in the face of their ancestral lands being transformed into corporate plantations, driven by accumulation through dispossession. Contrarily, this study presents a distinct viewpoint: the transition of their ancestral territories into an agricultural and ecologically sustainable tourist destination, overseen by local governance rather than private entities, may empower the Lumad community to uphold the intrinsic beauty of their land while safeguarding the integrity of their cultural identity.

This qualitative inquiry sought to explore the perspectives held by the T'boli community concerning the emergence of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Barangay Titulok, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat. This study's significance lies in its endeavor to unearth the specific viewpoints and sentiments of the T'boli people regarding the establishment of the adventure park within their vicinity. Understanding the T'boli community's perceptions is crucial in comprehending the nuanced interactions between local development initiatives, such as the park, and indigenous communities. Moreover, it provides insights into how such endeavors impact the cultural, social, and environmental landscapes cherished by the T'boli people. By focusing on their perceptions, this study endeavors to shed light on the complex dynamics between modern tourism initiatives and the

preservation of indigenous heritage, offering valuable insights for policymakers, local authorities, and stakeholders involved in similar development projects.

METHODS

In this study, descriptive-qualitative research was employed to investigate and describe the perceptions of the T'boli people concerning the establishment of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Titulok, Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat. A descriptive-qualitative research design emphasizes detailed descriptions, exploration, and understanding of phenomena without attempting to establish causality or test hypotheses (Kim et al., 2017). It seeks to comprehensively portray and interpret the nature, characteristics, and nuances of a specific subject or group through qualitative methods (Doyle et al., 2020). This approach aims to capture rich, context-specific data, allowing for a deeper understanding of the studied phenomenon (Mohajan, 2018; Ningi, 2022). Moreover, descriptive-qualitative research emphasizes understanding the studied phenomenon within its cultural and social context (Asaka & Awarun, 2020; Singe et al., 2022). Given the cultural significance of land and heritage for the T'boli community, this approach enabled a nuanced exploration of how the park's emergence intersected with their cultural identity and land values.

Locale and Participants

This study was conducted in Barangay Titulok, situated within the municipality of Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat province. Titulok is a specific administrative division within Bagumbayan, characterized by a population of 2,045 individuals as per the 2020 Census, accounting for 2.97% of Bagumbayan's total population. Demographically, the community in Titulok comprises 73% T'boli, 15% Ilonggo, and 7% Muslim inhabitants.

There were 10 participants in this study. They were identified based on specific inclusion criteria: individuals aged 18 years and above, living with family, and presently residing in Barangay Titulok. They were selected using a snowball sampling technique (Badlani et al., 2023; Etikan et al., 2016; Kirchherr & Charles, 2018); initially, the first three participants were chosen with the assistance of an official from the barangay. Subsequent participants were then identified by the initial participants. As

the study progressed, after the recruitment of the tenth participant, data analysis indicated data saturation (see Guest et al., 2020; Lowe et al., 2018; Mwita, 2022), signifying that additional interviews or participants yield minimal new information or insights. By the tenth participant, recurring themes and viewpoints regarding perceptions of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park among the Tboli community were consistently observed, indicating a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. This indicated that further interviews would unlikely yield significant new perspectives or information, supporting the decision to conclude data collection at that point.

Research Instrument

The semi-structured in-depth interview guide used in data collection for this study was meticulously crafted by the researchers to facilitate in-depth discussions and gather rich qualitative data. The content of this guide was organized into thematic sections to explore various aspects related to the emergence of the adventure park. It encompassed open-ended questions designed to elicit comprehensive responses from participants. The guide was divided into key sections, including opening questions to establish rapport, explain the study's purpose, and collect demographic information about the participants; questions aimed at understanding the participants' opinions, feelings, and thoughts about the establishment of the adventure park, exploring their views on its impact, significance, and implications for the Tboli community; inquiries about the cultural values, traditions, and heritage of the Tboli people, focusing on how they perceive the preservation of their cultural identity amidst the advent of the park; and probing inquiries about any challenges, concerns, or perceived threats the community might associate with the park's establishment. To ensure the guide's reliability and effectiveness, it underwent a rigorous validation process. The researchers sought validation from a qualitative research expert to ensure that the questions were comprehensive, unbiased, and aligned with the study's objectives. Additionally, the interview guide was reviewed and validated by the Dean of the Graduate School of Sultan Kudarat State University, lending credibility to the content and structure of the questions.

Data Collection

The data collection process was conducted with meticulous attention to ethical standards and involved a series of structured steps. To initiate the study, the researchers sought permission from multiple authorities, including the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative (IPMR) of the barangay, and from the Research Committee of Sultan Kudarat State University, in addition to securing clearance from the Graduate School of Sultan Kudarat State University. Clearance and formal consent were also acquired from the Municipal Mayor of Bagumbayan and the Barangay Chairperson of Titulok. Eligible participants were then informed about the study's purpose, ensuring clarity and confidentiality (each participant was given a code: Voice1, Voice2 ...Voice10) through detailed communication.

Before initiating discussions, participants were presented with a comprehensive consent form outlining the study's objectives, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without repercussions. Face-to-face interviews were personally conducted by the first author, prioritizing participant comfort and confidentiality. Each interview, lasting between 30 to 45 minutes, was recorded using a cellular phone with participants' prior consent. Ethical considerations underscored the confidentiality of responses and a commitment to respecting participants' autonomy throughout the research process (Morris et al., 2019). This rigorous adherence to ethical guidelines aimed to ensure the integrity of the study while prioritizing the well-being and informed consent of the participants.

During the interview process, recognizing the importance of clear communication and cultural sensitivity, the main author enlisted the assistance of an individual proficient in both English and the Tboli language. This translator played a pivotal role in facilitating effective communication between the researcher and the Tboli participants. Their expertise ensured that the questions posed by the main author in English were accurately translated into the Tboli language, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the inquiries by the Tboli community.

Moreover, to maintain consistency and accuracy in the data collection process, the same translator translated the interview transcripts from

the Tboli language back into English. This crucial step ensured that the translated transcripts faithfully represented the essence, nuances, and cultural intricacies conveyed during the interviews.

Data Analysis

In this study, thematic analysis was conducted following a structured approach by Clarke and Braun (2017). First, the recorded interviews and any relevant documents were transcribed verbatim. Next, the researchers engaged in familiarization with the data by reading and re-reading transcripts, noting initial ideas and patterns emerging from the data. After familiarization, a systematic coding process was undertaken, wherein segments of data relevant to the research question were labeled with descriptive codes. These codes were then collated into potential themes by grouping related codes that conveyed similar ideas or concepts. The themes were refined by reviewing and defining their boundaries, ensuring coherence and relevance to the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Participants

The participants involved in this study, identified by unique codes such as Voice1 to Voice10, represent a diverse demographic within the Tboli community. The group consists of both male and female members, spanning various age brackets from mid-20s to early 40s. The majority of the participants are married, reflecting a range of marital statuses within the community. This diverse representation, with individuals at different life stages and relationship statuses, provides a multifaceted perspective on the perceptions and experiences of the Tboli people regarding the emergence of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park.

Participant's Code	Sex	Age	Civil Status
Voice1	Male	34	Single
Voice2	Male	38	Married
Voice3	Male	35	Married
Voice4	Female	32	Married
Voice5	Female	48	Married
Voice6	Male	52	Married
Voice7	Female	47	Married
Voice8	Female	29	Married
Voice9	Male	37	Married
Voice10	Male	26	Single

RQ1: What perceptions do the Tboli people hold regarding the emergence of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Titulok, Bangumbayan, Sultan Kudarat?

Several key themes emerged from their perspectives that reflect the multifaceted perceptions held by the Tboli community regarding the emergence of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park. Their perspectives encompassed cultural pride, economic prospects, environmental considerations, and aspirations for community involvement, illustrating the complexity and depth of their viewpoints regarding this developmental endeavor.

Cultural Significance and Identity Preservation

The Tboli community viewed the adventure park's emergence as an opportunity to showcase and preserve their cultural heritage. They perceived it as a platform to exhibit their traditional practices, craftsmanship, and indigenous knowledge to a broader audience, fostering a sense of pride and identity preservation. According to one participant,

When we're given the chance to perform our tribal dances, dress in our traditional attire, and share our music at Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park, it feels like carrying our ancestors' legacy forward. Our dances are centuries-old stories woven through graceful movements, and when tourists watch us perform, it's like passing on a piece of our history (Voice2).

The park has given us a platform not just to entertain but to educate, and to let others experience the depth and beauty of our cultural heritage. Through our performances, we aim to create a connection, a shared moment where visitors can feel the heartbeat of our community (Voice4).

Wearing our traditional clothing and performing our tribal dances at the park's special events is an opportunity to keep our heritage alive. The park offers us a stage to proudly display our cultural richness. It's a joy to see visitors embracing and enjoying our traditions (Voice5).

These statements highlight the Tboli community's pride in showcasing their traditional dances, attire, and music at Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park. They view these performances as a way of preserving their ancestors' legacy, educating visitors about their culture, and joyfully sharing their heritage with others.

Land Contribution and Ownership

Participants expressed a sense of pride and ownership in contributing to the land for the park's establishment. They viewed this act as a significant contribution to regional development while maintaining a connection to their ancestral lands, fostering a sense of stewardship and responsibility. One of the striking statements was purported by Voice6, who was also the eldest among all the participants:

The decision to contribute our ancestral land for the establishment of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park wasn't merely a transaction; it was a profound act rooted in our sense of responsibility and legacy. Our forebears entrusted us with this land, and contributing it to the park was our way of honoring their heritage (Voice6).

He articulated that the significance of the land surpassed its physicality; it encapsulated the very essence of their cultural identity. Moreover, he elaborated on their perspective, emphasizing that they perceived this act as a chance to harmonize progress with deep reverence for their heritage.

Contributing the land wasn't just about development; it was about fostering a tangible link between our community's past and the aspirations for the future. It's a legacy we proudly pass down to the generations to come (Voice6).

According to two additional participants, the park embodies more than a mere physical space; it stands as a testament to their commitment to preserving their heritage and nurturing community growth.

The park isn't just a site; it's a legacy, a testament to our commitment to both our heritage and the shared growth of our community (Voice8).

I think we offered a piece of our history, a symbol of our connection to this place. It's a way of honoring our past while embracing a vision for the future, ensuring our traditions remain rooted even as progress unfolds (Voice9).

Economic Prospects and Livelihood Opportunities

The introduction of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park has brought about a transformative shift in the lives of the indigenous community, particularly the T'boli tribespeople residing in

Barangay Titulok. Through comprehensive interviews and observations, it became evident that the establishment of this park acted as a catalyst for substantial economic empowerment within the community. This is evident in the following statements:

The establishment of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park has transformed our lives. Previously, many of us were struggling with unemployment, but now, as T'boli tribespeople, we're prioritized for roles within the park. This opportunity means a steady income for our daily needs (Voice1).

Supported by another participant:

We're now selling our harvest from the farms—root crops, vegetables, fruits, kankanin, and various other products. This park has given us a platform to start small businesses, which significantly supports our community and sustains our livelihood (Voice6).

As purported by another participant, Bansada has also been instrumental in providing them, the IPs, avenues to sell their produce and start small businesses.

We're now engaged in selling our agricultural yields, including root crops, vegetables, fruits, kankanin, and more. As T'boli tribespeople, the park offers us roles within its staff, which not only prioritizes our employment but also helps to preserve and showcase our cultural products. This opportunity allows us to contribute to the local economy while also sustaining our families (Voice10).

In an enthusiastic expression, Voice7 shared: Yes, yes! The increase in our income has been remarkable. As farmers, the park's presence has altered our delivery methods; now, our farm products like durian, which used to be sent to town, find a market right here due to the influx of tourists.

These statements highlight how Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park has facilitated opportunities for indigenous people, particularly the T'boli tribes, to initiate small businesses, sell their agricultural products, and play an active role in the park's operations, contributing significantly to their livelihoods and economic empowerment.

Environmental Concerns and Conservation

There were apprehensions among some T'boli participants regarding potential environmental impacts. They expressed concerns about

maintaining ecological balance, preserving natural resources, and ensuring the park's development aligns with sustainable practices. As participants expressed:

On one side, it offers economic prospects, but on the other, we fear its ecological impact. (Voice3)
Bansada coming is good and bad for us. It can help us make money, but we worry about nature. Our forests are special for us. We want Bansada to grow without hurting nature (Voice2).

Nevertheless, to address their worries, they suggested:

We must find a balance between development and conservation. Implementing eco-friendly policies within Bansada, like waste management systems, promoting renewable energy, and fostering environmental education, can help mitigate any adverse effects on our ecosystem (Voice5).

We can do this by using good rules like keeping trash in check, helping animals, and teaching about nature (Voice2).

The participants see both benefits and concerns with the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park. While it offers economic opportunities, they worry about its impact on nature, aiming for its growth without harming the environment. To address these worries, they suggest eco-friendly practices like better waste management and nature education within the park.

RQ2: How do these perceptions shape the interactions between the local development initiatives and their indigenous community?

The perceptions held by the Tboli people regarding the emergence of Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park significantly influence the interactions between local development initiatives and their indigenous community in several ways.

Cultural Integration and Representation

The Tboli community's perceptions play a crucial role in advocating for their cultural integration within the park's initiatives. Their desire for representation and involvement shapes the park's programs, ensuring the inclusion of Tboli cultural elements. This interaction fosters mutual respect and a platform for cultural exchange.

Being part of the initiatives at Bansada allows us to actively contribute and showcase our heritage. It's a platform where our voices are heard, our dances are performed, and our crafts are admired. This interaction helps bridge the gap

between our community and visitors, fostering mutual respect and understanding (Voice3).

Our involvement in the park's programs isn't just about showcasing our traditions; it's about mutual learning. It's a chance for us to share our stories, art, and values, while also understanding and respecting the diverse cultures of the visitors. This interaction creates a meaningful cultural exchange that enriches both sides (Voice4).

At Bansada, we're not just performers; we're ambassadors of our culture. Our participation ensures that our heritage is not merely displayed but woven into the park's essence. This cultural integration allows visitors to immerse themselves in our traditions, fostering respect and appreciation (Voice5).

These statements emphasize the multifaceted nature of the Tboli community's involvement in Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park. They perceive their role as more than mere performers; they see themselves as cultural ambassadors, eager to share, preserve, and integrate their heritage into the fabric of the park's initiatives. Their engagement is portrayed as a bridge between their community and visitors, fostering mutual understanding, respect, and meaningful cultural exchange. It highlights their desire not just to showcase traditions but also to engage in a reciprocal learning process that enriches both their community and the visitors' experiences. Ultimately, their participation aims to weave their heritage into the essence of the park, allowing for deeper immersion and appreciation of their traditions by park visitors.

Community Engagement and Decision-making

The participants shared that their perceptions influence the extent to which the Tboli community is engaged in decision-making processes concerning the park. For them, if their perceptions are considered and integrated, it encourages participatory approaches, empowering the indigenous community to contribute ideas, voice concerns, and co-create initiatives aligned with their values.

When our perspectives matter at Bansada, it feels like our community is truly seen. We're not just being heard; our ideas shape the park's initiatives. It's more than involvement; it's genuine collaboration, where our values and needs are acknowledged (Voice7).

For us, being part of the decision-making process is about mutual respect. We appreciate when Bansada invites our input and considers our opinions. It's not just about having a say; it's about forging a partnership based on understanding and trust. (Voice9)

Our engagement in decisions at Bansada is essential. When our perspectives are embraced, it's a testament to the park's commitment to honoring our culture. It's a collaboration that values our heritage. (Voice10).

The participants emphasize the significance of genuine inclusion and respect for the Tboli community's input within Bansada's decision-making processes. They imply that when their perceptions and ideas are genuinely acknowledged and integrated into the park's initiatives, it's more than just having a voice—it is a meaningful collaboration. This involvement signifies a deeper recognition of their values, needs, and cultural identity within the park's framework. It signifies a partnership built on mutual respect and a commitment to honoring their heritage.

Sustainable Development Practices

The Tboli people's perceptions often emphasize sustainability and environmental stewardship. When these perceptions are heeded, it can lead to the implementation of eco-conscious practices within the park. This interaction ensures that development initiatives align with the Tboli community's values of preserving the environment.

Our culture teaches us to be stewards of the land. Bansada's initiatives that promote sustainability resonate deeply with our values. When we see efforts to minimize environmental impact and preserve resources, it's a sign that our traditions and beliefs are respected. It's not just about a park; it's about safeguarding our heritage (Voice1).

Tboli people prioritize environmental stewardship and sustainability, and they perceive Bansada's eco-conscious initiatives as a reflection of these values. When the park implements practices that align with their beliefs, it is seen as a validation of their cultural teachings. The emphasis is on the deep connection between their heritage and the responsible treatment of the land. It is not just about the park's initiatives; it's about honoring their traditions and ensuring that these values are respected and preserved for future generations.

The findings about the perceptions of the Tboli people regarding the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Sultan Kudarat unveil a rich range of views. These encompass cultural pride, economic prospects, environmental concerns, and desires for community involvement. Participants expressed pride in showcasing their cultural heritage through traditional performances, clothing, and music at the park. They also held a sense of ownership and deep emotional attachment to the land that contributed to the park, seeing it as a legacy intertwining progress and reverence for their heritage. Economic transformations were notable, with the park providing opportunities for livelihoods through agricultural sales and employment. Environmental concerns emerged too, juxtaposing the park's economic prospects against worries about ecological impacts, suggesting eco-friendly policies for sustainability.

The Tboli community's perceptions reveal a multifaceted impact of the park on cultural pride, economic empowerment, environmental stewardship, and community involvement. These insights affirm the significance of the park in preserving cultural heritage, promoting economic upliftment, raising environmental concerns, and encouraging participatory approaches. Previous studies validate the role of cultural pride in indigenous communities when given platforms for cultural representation (Ambros & Buzinde, 2021; Shay et al., 2023). Moreover, economic empowerment through community-based tourism aligns with prior research on sustainable development and indigenous livelihoods (Hoque, 2020; Jamal & Dredge, 2014). Concerns over ecological impacts corroborate previous studies emphasizing environmental conservation in development projects (Brooks et al., 2013; KC et al., 2015). The emphasis on participatory approaches aligns with literature advocating for inclusive decision-making in community development projects (Brugnach et al., 2017; Dawson et al., 2021).

The discussion illuminates how the principles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) intersect with the perceptions of the Tboli community towards the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park. These findings affirm the park's significant role in preserving cultural heritage, fostering economic upliftment, raising environmental concerns, and encouraging

participatory approaches. They align with prior research that emphasizes the impact of cultural pride on indigenous communities when provided platforms for cultural representation (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Mugambiwa, 2021). Moreover, the economic empowerment observed aligns with established studies on sustainable development and indigenous livelihoods through community-based tourism initiatives (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Golay, et al., 2021; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016). The concerns raised over ecological impacts echo existing research emphasizing environmental conservation in development projects. The emphasis on participatory approaches resonates with literature advocating for inclusive decision-making in community development initiatives.

Moreover, the findings of this study underscore the influential role of Tboli perceptions in shaping interactions between local initiatives and the indigenous community. The Tboli's desire for cultural integration influenced park programs, fostering mutual respect and a platform for cultural exchange. Furthermore, their perceptions affected community engagement and decision-making within the park, indicating the empowerment of the indigenous community to contribute ideas and shape initiatives. The Tboli community's emphasis on sustainability also influenced the park's development practices, reflecting their values of environmental preservation.

The Tboli community's perceptions significantly influence interactions between local initiatives and the indigenous community by advocating for cultural integration, promoting community engagement in decision-making, and emphasizing sustainable development practices. These perceptions underscore the importance of mutual respect, cultural representation, and environmental stewardship in the park's initiatives. These findings resonate with prior studies stressing the significance of cultural representation, participatory approaches, and environmental stewardship in promoting community engagement and sustainable development in indigenous contexts (Bavikatte & Bennett, 2015; Meadows et al., 2019; Reo et al., 2017; Thompson et al., 2020). The emphasis on mutual respect and shared decision-making aligns with existing literature advocating for community-driven initiatives and inclusive practices

in development projects (Perry, 2018; Yalegama et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the perceptions of the Tboli community surrounding the establishment of the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park in Sultan Kudarat. It delineated a nuanced array of perspectives within the Tboli community, encapsulating facets such as cultural pride, economic opportunities, environmental apprehensions, and community involvement. Participants expressed profound pride in utilizing the park as a platform for the preservation and dissemination of their cultural heritage. Moreover, the act of contributing ancestral lands for the park's establishment was construed as an embodiment of legacy and a fusion of progress with reverence for heritage. The park catalyzed economic upliftment, facilitating small-scale entrepreneurship and employment among the Tboli populace. However, these economic prospects were tempered by concerns over potential environmental ramifications, underscoring the exigency for sustainable development practices within the park. The study elucidates how these perceptions delineate the contours of interactions between local initiatives and indigenous communities, fostering cultural integration, community engagement, and a clarion call for sustainable development. It underscores the significance of respecting indigenous cultures, advocating for inclusive practices, and prioritizing environmental sustainability in development initiatives involving indigenous communities.

The study, while providing rich insights into the perceptions of the Tboli community regarding the Bansada Agri-Eco Adventure Park, contends with several limitations. Firstly, the sample size might be seen as restrictive, potentially limiting the comprehensive representation of diverse viewpoints within the Tboli community. Additionally, the study's focus primarily on perceptions might omit a deeper exploration of the long-term impacts of the park on the community, including its socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental repercussions. Furthermore, the research might have encountered challenges in completely capturing the intricacies of the cultural nuances and complexities within the Tboli community, as interpretations and

perceptions can vary significantly among individuals. The study's context-bound nature might also limit the generalizability of findings to other indigenous communities or contexts, necessitating caution in applying these insights universally. Lastly, given the dynamic nature of community perceptions and the development's evolution, the study might provide a snapshot rather than an ongoing and evolving understanding of community sentiments over time. These limitations warrant further consideration for future research endeavors to comprehensively comprehend the multifaceted dynamics of indigenous community interactions within developmental initiatives.

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