

Cultural Learning and Heritage Preservation of the Aetas in Mt. Pinatubo: A Community-Based Cultural Tourism Development Plan

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ABSTRACT

This study examined cultural learning and heritage preservation among the Aeta community of Sitio Tarukan, Mt. Pinatubo, as a basis for a community-based cultural tourism development plan. A mixed descriptive research design was employed, combining quantitative survey data with supporting qualitative interviews, observations, and community-based inquiry. Fifty Aeta community members aged 18–60 years were purposively selected based on their residence in Sitio Tarukan and their knowledge of cultural practices, community activities, or tourism. A researcher-developed questionnaire assessed cultural learning practices, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness. Frequency and percentage, weighted mean and standard deviation, and Pearson's r were used to analyze the quantitative data. Results showed high implementation of cultural learning practices ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 0.76$), heritage

preservation ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.79$), and tourists' cultural awareness ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.79$), while community involvement was comparatively lower ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.94$). The four components were significantly related to the development of community-based cultural tourism ($r = .694$, critical value = .247, $p < .01$). The findings indicate that Aeta cultural continuity is supported by intergenerational learning, elder leadership, heritage protection, respectful visitor behavior, and stronger community participation. A four-component development plan was proposed to strengthen cultural education, heritage documentation, community tourism skills, and mandatory visitor cultural orientation.

Keywords: *Aeta, community-based cultural tourism, cultural learning, heritage preservation, Indigenous tourism, Mt. Pinatubo*

INTRODUCTION

Community-based cultural tourism offers Indigenous communities an avenue to preserve cultural heritage while participating in tourism-related economic activity. For the Aeta communities surrounding Mt. Pinatubo, this approach is particularly relevant because cultural traditions, oral histories, customary practices, and relationships with ancestral landscapes are closely connected to community identity. Tourism in the area, however, has been more strongly associated with nature and adventure attractions than with Indigenous cultural learning and community governance, creating a need for tourism planning that gives greater attention to Aeta perspectives and participation.

The sustainability of cultural tourism depends on whether Indigenous communities retain meaningful control over how culture is represented, taught, and shared. Community-based tourism research has consistently emphasized local participation, benefit-sharing, community leadership, and the protection of cultural resources as central conditions for sustainable tourism (Hutnaleontina et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2022; Otivar Lo & Alejandro,

2022). These principles are important for Mt. Pinatubo because the Aeta are not merely tourism stakeholders but cultural custodians and rights-holders whose knowledge and traditions should shape tourism development.

Cultural learning is likewise critical to heritage continuity. Intergenerational transmission through elders, daily practice, storytelling, community gatherings, and culturally grounded education helps sustain identity and collective memory. Studies of Indigenous education and heritage preservation show that learning is most durable when it remains connected to community life, traditional practices, and local participation (Ancheta & Casem, 2024; Hipolito, 2024). Tourism can complement these processes when visitors encounter culture through respectful and community-controlled experiences rather than through decontextualized or commercialized representations.

The thesis identified a practical gap in integrated research on cultural learning, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness specifically among the Aeta of Sitio Tarukan. Although research has examined community-based tourism, cultural heritage, and Indigenous participation in other settings, fewer studies have assessed how these dimensions operate together in an Aeta community and how they may inform a locally grounded tourism development plan. This gap is important because tourism development that is not sufficiently community-centered may weaken participation and compromise cultural representation.

Accordingly, the study assessed the demographic profile of Aeta respondents, measured the extent of implementation of cultural learning practices, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness, tested the relationship of these components with community-based cultural tourism development, and formulated a development plan for Sitio Tarukan. The study was intended to support culturally responsive tourism planning that strengthens cultural learning, protects heritage, expands meaningful community participation, and encourages respectful visitor engagement.

Literature Review

Cultural Learning and Intergenerational Knowledge Transmission

Cultural learning in Indigenous communities is embedded in everyday practice, language, identity, social relationships, and interaction with elders. Tourism can become a learning space when cultural practices are presented through community-led activities rather than detached interpretation. The literature reviewed in the thesis highlights the importance of experiential learning, storytelling, customary practice, and Indigenous knowledge as mechanisms through which younger generations and visitors encounter cultural meaning. Ancheta and Casem (2024) further show that collaboration among educators, learners, families, and Indigenous elders can strengthen the continuity of culturally relevant learning.

Schools of Living Traditions and other community-centered educational arrangements are also important because they create structured opportunities for elders to transmit knowledge to youth. Hipolito (2024) emphasizes the role of hands-on and culturally grounded learning in sustaining traditional arts and practices. Briones et al. (2024) similarly demonstrate how Indigenous cultural practices can serve as meaningful learning resources. For the Aeta of Mt. Pinatubo, these findings support programs that connect storytelling, traditional knowledge, daily practices, and tourism-based cultural demonstrations with intergenerational learning.

Heritage Preservation and Cultural Resilience

Heritage preservation includes both tangible cultural resources and intangible traditions, such as rituals, oral histories, crafts, customary practices, sacred places, and Indigenous knowledge. Community-based tourism can support preservation when it reinforces cultural pride, encourages documentation, and creates incentives for communities to maintain traditions. Shrestha and Dangol (2022) associate community-based tourism with cultural heritage continuity, while Florentin et al. (2022) demonstrate that heritage safeguarding requires careful planning, risk awareness, and stakeholder participation.

Effective preservation also depends on local ownership and organized systems for documenting and transmitting cultural knowledge. Maldonado-Erazo et al. (2025) emphasize the value of safeguarding intangible

heritage through territorially grounded planning, while Nguyen et al. (2025) show that cultural revitalization for tourism is strongest when interpreted from an Indigenous perspective. These findings are directly relevant to the Aeta context, where the protection of sacred places, oral histories, traditional practices, and community protocols must remain under community guidance.

Community Involvement and Indigenous Tourism Governance

Community participation is a defining principle of community-based tourism because it determines whether local residents have meaningful roles in planning, decision-making, management, and benefit-sharing. Hutnaleontina et al. (2022) link community-based tourism with sustainable development and community welfare, while Rahman et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of social and cultural capital in community-focused tourism governance. These perspectives support tourism systems in which Indigenous communities participate as decision-makers rather than as peripheral service providers.

Recent studies further show that local participation can strengthen livelihood opportunities, empowerment, and resource protection. Cabaguig (2024) found that participation is central to nature-based tourism development, while De Leon et al. (2024) identify community involvement as a basis for socio-economic sustainability. Del Mundo-Angeles et al. (2024) similarly demonstrate that people-centered participation supports long-term conservation and co-management. For Sitio Tarukan, these studies reinforce the need to strengthen community representation, tourism skills, consultation processes, and locally controlled benefits.

Tourists' Cultural Awareness and Responsible Cultural Encounters

Tourists' cultural awareness influences whether cultural encounters are respectful, educational, and supportive of preservation. Cultural tourism can deepen appreciation when visitors receive accurate interpretation and engage meaningfully with host communities. Richards (2025) describes cultural tourism as an integrative form of tourism in which learning, experience, and cultural meaning intersect, while Angeles and Sarail (2024) highlight the importance of visitor perceptions in the development of heritage tourism.

Respectful behavior does not arise automatically; it can be strengthened through orientation, interpretation, cultural guidelines, and direct interaction with community members. Palangan et al. (2025) show that cultural awareness can mediate tourist experience and satisfaction, while Quang et al. (2024) emphasize equitable benefit-sharing and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in living heritage tourism. These findings support the study's emphasis on visitor orientation, permission protocols, respectful behavior, and culturally appropriate participation in Aeta tourism activities.

Community-Based Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Development

Community-based tourism is most sustainable when cultural identity, local livelihoods, resource management, and community decision-making are integrated. Otivar Lo and Alejandro (2022) proposed sustainability performance indicators for community-based tourism in Philippine settings, underscoring the need to evaluate social, economic, and environmental outcomes together. Maldonado-Erazo et al. (2022) likewise show that community tourism enterprises can contribute to sustainable rural development when local participation and community benefit are embedded in tourism systems.

Indigenous tourism adds an additional requirement: cultural authority must remain with Indigenous communities. Shrestha et al. (2025) argue for reimagining community-based Indigenous tourism through traditional knowledge, while Mohd Sukri et al. (2024) highlight the role of community participation in Indigenous tourism and sustainability. Kamarudin et al. (2024) further show how cultural heritage can support both community-based tourism and rural development when locally grounded resources are protected and mobilized responsibly.

Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed literature indicates that cultural learning, heritage preservation, community participation, and visitor awareness are mutually reinforcing dimensions of sustainable cultural tourism. Cultural learning

sustains knowledge transmission; preservation protects tangible and intangible heritage; community participation ensures local control and benefits; and visitor awareness supports respectful cultural encounters. When these dimensions operate together, tourism can become a platform for cultural continuity rather than a source of cultural erosion.

Despite this convergence, the thesis identified limited integrated evidence specific to the Aeta of Mt. Pinatubo. The present study therefore examined these four dimensions together and related them to the development of community-based cultural tourism in Sitio Tarukan. The conceptual framework below represents the study's proposed relationship among cultural learning practices, heritage preservation efforts, community participation, tourists' cultural awareness, and a community-based cultural tourism development plan.

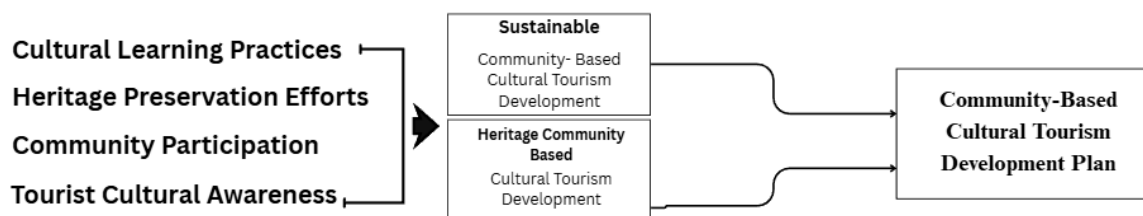


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework*

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a mixed descriptive research design that combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative component measured respondents' demographic characteristics and perceptions of cultural learning practices, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness. The qualitative component supported contextual understanding of Aeta traditions, knowledge transmission, community practices, and tourism through interviews and observations. The thesis also described the study as an exploratory descriptive case study focused on Sitio Tarukan.

Research Locale

The research was conducted in Sitio Tarukan, Barangay Sta. Juliana, Capas, Tarlac, within the Mt. Pinatubo area. The source manuscript described Sitio Tarukan as a hilltop Aeta community composed of approximately 70 families and an estimated 210 young and adult residents. The setting was selected because community members had direct experience with Aeta traditions, cultural practices, community life, and tourism activities associated with Mt. Pinatubo.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved 50 Aeta community members aged 18–60 years. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents who were recognized community members, current residents of Sitio Tarukan, and knowledgeable about or involved in Aeta customs, traditions, rituals, oral history, community events, or tourism-related activities. Participation was voluntary and required informed consent. The sampling strategy was intended to obtain culturally relevant responses from community members with direct knowledge of local conditions.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed survey questionnaire served as the primary quantitative instrument. The instrument was constructed after review of literature on cultural learning, heritage preservation, community-based tourism, and Indigenous participation. It contained sections on respondent profile, cultural learning practices, heritage

preservation efforts, community involvement in tourism, and tourists' cultural awareness. Responses to the four substantive dimensions were interpreted using a four-point Likert scale: 3.26–4.00 = Strongly Agree, 2.51–3.25 = Agree, 1.76–2.50 = Disagree, and 1.00–1.75 = Strongly Disagree.

The study also used semi-structured interviews and participant observation to obtain supporting information regarding oral histories, customs, traditional practices, community involvement, and cultural activities. The thesis included certifications from a validator and a statistician among its appendices; however, the main methodology text did not report a numerical reliability coefficient for the questionnaire.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers coordinated with the Barangay Captain and Sitio Tarukan community leaders before data collection and explained the purpose of the study as cultural preservation and community-based tourism development. Community leaders and elders assisted in identifying residents who met the study criteria. Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and that their responses would be treated confidentially.

Structured questionnaires were administered to selected Aeta residents aged 18–60 years. Assistance was provided to respondents who had difficulty reading or writing, and the thesis indicated that questionnaires could be presented in Tagalog and the native Aeta language. Semi-structured interviews with selected elders and key informants addressed oral histories, customs, traditional rituals, and tourism participation, while observations focused on cultural activities such as storytelling, crafting, and traditional ceremonies. The collected information was organized according to the four principal study dimensions.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage were used to describe age, occupation, and years of involvement in community cultural or tourism activities. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of implementation of cultural learning practices, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between these components and the development of community-based cultural tourism in Mt. Pinatubo at the .05 level of significance.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed community permission, voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality. Respondents were selected only after coordination with community leaders, and participants were informed of the study's purpose before answering the instruments. The source manuscript did not report a formal institutional ethics-board approval number; therefore, no such approval is claimed in this journal conversion. Cultural sensitivity was addressed through community coordination, respect for local knowledge, and the study's emphasis on consent and Indigenous participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The 50 respondents represented a broad adult age range. The largest age group was 18–25 years (28%), followed by 26–35 years and 56–60 years (24% each), 36–45 years (14%), and 46–55 years (10%). Farming was the dominant occupation, reported by 84% of respondents, while 16% reported other occupations. In terms of involvement in community cultural or tourism activities, 50% reported no involvement, whereas 32% had been involved for 11 years or more. The remaining respondents reported shorter periods of involvement.

Table 1. Selected Respondent Profile (N = 50)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Age 18–25	14	28%
Age 26–35	12	24%
Age 36–45	7	14%
Age 46–55	5	10%
Age 56–60	12	24%
Occupation: Farmer	42	84%
Occupation: Other	8	16%
Tourism/cultural involvement: Not involved	25	50%
Tourism/cultural involvement: 11 years and above	16	32%

The occupational profile indicates that tourism development must be considered alongside existing livelihood structures rather than as a replacement for them. The high proportion of respondents with no direct cultural-tourism involvement also points to an important participation gap. This finding is consistent with research showing that community-based tourism may generate stronger outcomes when training, leadership, and participation opportunities are distributed broadly across the community (Cabaguing, 2024; De Leon et al., 2024).

Cultural Learning Practices

Table 2. *Extent of Implementation of Cultural Learning Practices*

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Elders/community members teach youth through stories, rituals, and daily activities	3.7	0.74	Strongly Agree
Traditional knowledge is shared during gatherings, rituals, and household life	3.6	0.83	Strongly Agree
Cultural activities help youth practice traditions and develop pride	3.56	0.7	Strongly Agree
Opportunities are provided to learn and participate in Aeta customs	3.44	0.88	Strongly Agree
Continuous cultural education is important for preserving Aeta culture	3.76	0.43	Strongly Agree
Tourism activities help visitors learn about Aeta culture	3.28	0.97	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.56	0.76	Strongly Agree

Cultural learning practices obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.56 (SD = 0.76), interpreted as Strongly Agree. Continuous cultural education received the highest rating (M = 3.76), followed by the role of elders and community members in teaching younger generations (M = 3.70). The results show that respondents viewed intergenerational learning as central to cultural continuity. The comparatively lower rating for tourism as a cultural-learning mechanism (M = 3.28) suggests that tourism has potential as an educational platform but is less established than community-based transmission.

This pattern is consistent with Indigenous education literature emphasizing culturally grounded and intergenerational learning. Hipolito (2024) underscores the value of community-based cultural education, while Ancheta and Casem (2024) emphasize collaboration among community members and educational stakeholders. Briones et al. (2024) further demonstrate that Indigenous practices themselves can serve as meaningful educational resources.

Heritage Preservation

Table 3. *Extent of Heritage Preservation in Relation to Tourism*

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Community actively protects traditions, rituals, and cultural practices	3.56	0.67	Strongly Agree
Customs, rituals, stories, and legends continue to be practiced/narrated	3.36	0.88	Strongly Agree
Elders preserve and transmit Aeta cultural heritage	3.72	0.64	Strongly Agree
Sacred places, cultural sites, and traditions are treated respectfully	3.62	0.81	Strongly Agree
Tourism sometimes creates risks to culture	2.46	1.07	Disagree
Cultural knowledge is documented with consent and cultural protocols	3.5	0.68	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.37	0.79	Strongly Agree

Heritage preservation recorded an overall weighted mean of 3.37 (SD = 0.79), interpreted as Strongly Agree. The strongest indicator concerned elders' role in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage (M = 3.72), followed by respect and care for sacred places, cultural sites, and traditions (M = 3.62). Respondents disagreed that tourism sometimes creates risks to culture (M = 2.46), suggesting that the surveyed community did not generally perceive current tourism as a major cultural threat.

The strong emphasis on elders, documentation, and culturally significant sites is consistent with heritage-preservation research that prioritizes community authority and culturally grounded safeguarding (Florentin et al., 2022; Maldonado-Erazo et al., 2025). Nguyen et al. (2025) likewise show that cultural revitalization is strengthened when tourism development reflects Indigenous perspectives rather than external representations.

Community Involvement

Table 4. *Extent of Community Involvement in Tourism*

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Community members participate in tourism-related activities	2.88	1.24	Agree
Community participates in tourism planning and has decision-making power	3.0	0.97	Agree
Community members are consulted before tourism programs are implemented	3.02	1.06	Agree
Leaders/elders can approve or reject tourism activities	3.42	0.78	Strongly Agree
Tourism participation brings income, skills, projects, pride, and cultural protection	3.64	0.75	Strongly Agree
Willingness to participate in community-based cultural tourism initiatives	3.54	0.84	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	3.25	0.94	Agree

Community involvement received the lowest overall rating among the four study dimensions (M = 3.25, SD = 0.94), interpreted as Agree. Respondents strongly recognized the benefits of tourism participation (M = 3.64) and expressed willingness to participate in future initiatives (M = 3.54), but actual participation, planning, consultation, and decision-making were rated more moderately. This pattern corresponds with the demographic finding that half of the respondents reported no prior involvement in cultural or tourism activities.

The findings reinforce the core principle of community-based tourism that participation must extend beyond willingness to include actual decision-making and benefit-sharing. Hutnaleontina et al. (2022) and Rahman et al. (2022) stress the importance of community governance, while Del Mundo-Angeles et al. (2024) demonstrate the conservation value of people-centered co-management. Strengthening community skills and institutionalized participation is therefore a key area for the proposed plan.

Tourists' Cultural Awareness

Table 5. *Extent of Tourists' Cultural Awareness*

Indicator	M	SD	Interpretation
Tourists follow community rules and avoid mocking or imitating rituals	3.8	0.49	Strongly Agree
Tourists attend/read cultural orientation before activities	3.14	1.07	Agree
Tourists avoid loud behavior, inappropriate touching, and disrespectful jokes	3.66	0.69	Strongly Agree
Tourists express appreciation and understanding after visits	3.64	0.66	Strongly Agree
Tourists ask permission before photos or cultural participation	3.36	0.96	Strongly Agree
Tourists are given cultural orientation before participating	3.12	0.86	Agree
Weighted Mean	3.46	0.79	Strongly Agree

Tourists' cultural awareness obtained a weighted mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.79), interpreted as Strongly Agree. Respectful conduct received the highest rating (M = 3.80), followed by avoidance of inappropriate behavior (M = 3.66) and expressions of appreciation after visits (M = 3.64). In contrast, cultural orientation before activities received lower ratings of 3.14 and 3.12, both interpreted as Agree, indicating that formal visitor education was less consistently implemented than respectful behavior itself.

This result supports the development of standardized cultural orientation. Richards (2025) emphasizes the educational character of cultural tourism, while Palangan et al. (2025) connect cultural awareness with visitor experience. Quang et al. (2024) further highlight the importance of inclusion and benefit-sharing in living heritage contexts. Structured orientation can therefore help transform respectful behavior into a more systematic understanding of Aeta protocols and cultural meanings.

Relationship With Community-Based Cultural Tourism Development

Table 6. *Relationship Between the Study Components and Community-Based Cultural Tourism Development*

Variables	Computed r	Critical Value	p-value	Analysis
Cultural learning, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness with community-based cultural tourism development	0.694	0.247	< .01	Significant

The computed correlation coefficient was $r = .694$, exceeding the critical value of .247, with $p < .01$ at the .05 significance level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The result indicates a strong positive association between the combined community-based cultural tourism components and the development of community-based cultural tourism in Mt. Pinatubo. Because the design was descriptive and correlational, the result indicates association rather than causal influence.

The finding is consistent with community-based tourism literature showing that cultural resources, local participation, and community-centered management operate together in sustainable destination development (Oivar Lo & Alejandro, 2022; Maldonado-Erazo et al., 2022). Shrestha et al. (2025) similarly emphasize traditional knowledge as a central resource in community-based Indigenous tourism, while Mohd Sukri et al. (2024) identify participation as fundamental to culturally sustainable tourism.

Proposed Community-Based Cultural Tourism Development Plan

The thesis translated the findings into four linked program components. The plan prioritizes the areas that were strongly valued by respondents while directly addressing the comparatively lower levels of community participation and visitor orientation. It positions elders, youth, community leaders, local government, tourism agencies, and training institutions as shared implementers while maintaining the Aeta community as the central cultural authority.

Table 7. *Summary of the Proposed Community-Based Cultural Tourism Development Plan*

Key Result Area / Program	Primary Objective	Core Strategies	Success Indicators
Aeta Cultural Education Continuity Program	Sustain cultural education and intergenerational knowledge transfer	Elder-led storytelling; youth immersion; demonstrations; mentoring; cultural festivals/workshops	Youth participation and ability to explain or demonstrate Aeta traditions
Aeta Cultural Heritage Protection and Documentation Committee	Document heritage and protect sacred/culturally significant places	Audio/video documentation; cultural mapping; monitoring of sacred places; heritage seminars	Documented oral histories and practices; mapped/protected sites; increased preservation participation
Aeta Community Tourism Skills and Education Development Program	Increase community participation and tourism-linked livelihood skills	Tour-guiding training; TESDA handicraft/hospitality/homestay training; sustainability workshops	More trained guides; more tourism-linked households; stronger planning participation
Standardized Mandatory Cultural Orientation and Education Program	Strengthen respectful tourist behavior and cultural understanding	Mandatory orientation; cultural guidelines/brochures; youth cultural interpreters	Orientation attendance; respectful visitor behavior; positive visitor feedback

The proposed plan is consistent with evidence that sustainable community tourism depends on cultural continuity, locally controlled heritage, community capacity, and visitor education. Kamarudin et al. (2024) show the potential of cultural heritage to support rural community-based tourism, while Narongwit and Soodsang (2025) demonstrate how culturally grounded community products can connect heritage and local development. The plan therefore responds directly to the study's empirical strengths and gaps rather than introducing unrelated interventions.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that cultural learning, heritage preservation, community involvement, and tourists' cultural awareness are important and interrelated foundations of community-based cultural tourism among the Aeta of Sitio Tarukan, Mt. Pinatubo. Cultural learning practices were strongly implemented, particularly through continuous cultural education and the teaching role of elders. Heritage preservation was likewise strongly practiced, with elders, sacred places, cultural protocols, and documentation identified as important elements of cultural continuity. Tourists were generally perceived as culturally respectful, although formal cultural orientation was less consistently implemented.

Community involvement represented the principal area requiring further strengthening. Although respondents recognized tourism's benefits and expressed willingness to participate, actual participation in tourism activities, planning, consultation, and decision-making was more moderate. The significant positive correlation between the four components and community-based cultural tourism development ($r = .694, p < .01$) supports an integrated approach in which cultural education, heritage protection, local participation, and visitor awareness are developed together. The proposed four-component plan provides a practical framework for strengthening these areas while maintaining the Aeta community's role as cultural custodians and decision-makers.

Recommendation

The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Department of Tourism, local government units, and local cultural bodies may use the findings to strengthen culturally sensitive tourism policies, Indigenous rights protection, cultural mapping, heritage documentation, and fair community participation. Community leaders and elders should remain central to decisions regarding cultural representation, visitor access, sacred sites, documentation, and the use of traditional knowledge. Tourism programs should institutionalize consultation, consent, and equitable benefit-sharing rather than rely only on informal participation.

At the community level, the proposed cultural education, heritage protection, tourism-skills development, and visitor-orientation programs may be piloted and refined through community feedback. Partnerships with TESDA, educational institutions, tourism agencies, NGOs, and cultural organizations may support training, documentation, livelihood development, and youth participation. Future research should evaluate the proposed plan after implementation, include additional Aeta communities and age groups, examine tourist and stakeholder perspectives directly, and assess longer-term cultural, social, and economic outcomes. Because the present study was limited to Sitio Tarukan, application to other Indigenous communities should be adapted to local cultural protocols and conditions.

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