

## The culture and economic attributes of *puso* street food industry: Basis for a contextualized framework of *puso* teaching model

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### Abstract

Recognizing the cultural and economic attributes of *puso* is an essential part of Cebuano street food culture and industry that serves as the basis for a contextualized framework of *puso* teaching model. The study used a grounded theory design with interviews among 18 key research participants. The attributes of *puso* mirror a social identity in Cebu's street food industry and culture. Its orientation as a ritual object has shifted to a pragmatic orientation reflecting Cebu city's fast paced-life. Its new identification creates a changing perspective; its characteristics remain integral to the Cebuano cultural identity; its rapid changes serve as one of the bases for local government units to regulate the industry's management operations; and serve as a framework in the creation and dissemination of a contextualized teaching framework known as the Contextualized PUSO Teaching Model (CPTM). This innovative and culture-based teaching model addresses all teachers in academia to develop a sufficient grounding of cultural orientation and traditions that may warrant best learning opportunities.

**Keywords:** Cebuano lifestyle, Contextualized PUSO Teaching Model, PUSO framework, rice pourer, rice pouch-weaving, Philippines

### Introduction

Rice has played a main role in describing the culture and economic identities of Southeast Asian life as evidenced by the huge rice terraces in Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The Philippines has a way of preparing rice where coconut leaves are woven and used as pouches to be boiled in water that is called *puso* (Abiva, 2001; Inocian, 2013 & 2015). Rice-pouches are also found in other part of the Philippines but differs in names such as *langbay*, *linambay* or *lambay* (crab-like designs) of Samar; *piyoso* of Lanao; *temu* of Basilan; *tamu* in Jolo; *tam-o* of Aklan; *patupat* of Ilocos; and *ketumpat* in Tawi-Tawi (Nocheseda, 2009).

Despite this difference, the study aims to investigate *puso* as a street food industry in Cebu City. The unique way of cooking alone shows the importance of culture (Le, 2017). Hence, this cooking describes the cultural and economic attributes of *puso* street food in a qualitative descriptive design by determining its availability, affordability, and functionality; ascertaining its weaving process, rice pouring, cooking, and selling; characterizing the key informants' working condition, salary, number of years in the industry; extrapolating the connection of *puso* in the modern Cebuano lifestyle in terms of social class, time availability, and locational convenience; and serving as basis for a Contextualized *Puso* Teaching Model or CPTM.

## **Background and rationale**

Out of more than 3,000 edible plant species, only 11 have the most contribution in human food consumption (Patil *et al.*, 2012). A 60% of protein and calorie needs of humans are derived from rice as a notable crop in the farm (Cather, 2016). This makes rice as one of the primary enterprises in Southeast Asian agriculture. The huge land area of Southeast Asia falls under agricultural use. Most of the population relies on agriculture for a living (Marten, 1986). More than 90% of the world's demand for rice is produced by Southeast Asian farmers. An abundance of water and adequate heat is needed to grow rice in tropical Southeast Asian countries (Thomas & Sydenham, 2020). The vast agricultural lands in tropical Southeast Asia motivate farmers to cultivate rice. The abundance of rice is a factor why it becomes a staple that becomes an important part of Southeast Asian gastronomic diet and lifestyle.

Cultural diversity and preferences come into play in rice preparation. As a staple, there are different ways of rice cooking preparation depending on its occasion. In Cambodia, the residents use sticky rice to create *Num Om Saum*, a rice cake wrapped with a banana leaf, similar to the Cebuano *bibingka* [rice cake]. This type of delicacy is prepared for *Pchum Ben* or Ancestors' Day festival, where it is believed that pleasing the villagers' dead ancestors would bring them fertility (Nguyen, 2008). In Vietnam, *Banh Chung* and *Banh Tet* wrapped with *la dang* (arrowroot leaves) is a common delicacy served during Tet or the celebration of a Vietnamese New Year (Tran, 2020). In Indonesia, *Lontong*—a cylindrical rice cake wrapped in banana leaves is commonly paired with soup or stew (Lin & Chua, 2003). The most common theme with these delicacies is the process of wrapping these with leaves. The use of leaves could enhance the flavour and aesthetics of the food (Schmidt, 2020). Indonesia's *ketipat* and Malaysia's *ketupat* are rice dumplings wrapped with coconut fronds in diamond shapes. *Ketupat* serves as a side dish for *rendang* and *satay* (Syofyan, 2018; Inocian, 2015). To Lin & Chua (2003), "Ketupat is the centrepiece in the Hari Raya festivity in the Southeast Asian Islamic traditions."

These rice-pouches are also found in other parts of the Philippines in different names and shapes (Nocheseda, 2009). These are spotted in different street corners paired with lechon, barbecue, and *siomai* [A Filipino term for Chinese dumpling], *tuslod-buwa* [dip in bubbled spices], and *lumpia* [popiah or spring rolls] as street foods in the bustling metropolis of Cebu's capital. All types of Cebuano main dishes ranging from meat to vegetable would always have rice as its side (Alix, 2013). Rice dish has always been a part of Cebuano and the Filipinos because of its agricultural landscape. In Cebu, farmers perform rituals for abundant harvests and created a variety of *puso* in different designs (Alix, 2013; Inocian, 2013). One of the common rituals of the Cebuano upland farmers is *hikay* [meal preparation]. In *hikay*, farmers believe that the spirits protect the lands that the farmers till with *puso* as part of its ritual paraphernalia (Alix, 2013). As time passes by, the Cebuano farmers find that rice could be brought easily when made into *puso*. Its transition from a ritual object to a food commodity is brought upon by its convenience. No feast or a simple celebration would be complete without rice. Bringing huge amounts of it in large cookware would be a hard time. But with *puso*,

encasing rice inside pouches becomes an efficient way of bringing rice (Alix, 2013) for travel (Inocian, 2015).

The emergence of street foods and vendors helps the commercialization of *puso*. This encased leaf becomes a symbol of Cebuano street cuisine. The *puso* design prefers for merchandise is the *kinasing* [heart-shape] (Alix, 2013; Inocian, 2013; 2015). This type of weaving rice pouches symbolizes the *kasing-kasing* [heart], signifying the characteristic of being profound to each other. Street side barbecue stands and *inasal* [roasted stuff] corners would showcase their huge reserves of *puso*. The profit of *puso* or worth is determined by the array of colours. The younger the palm leaf being used the more delightful the worth it has; while the darker the palm leaf the lesser worth it has. This is the reason why *puso* weavers prefer to use younger palm leaves, it also signifies its freshness and the market price of the rice-pouches.

Different rituals and beliefs that go along with food make a powerful tool for reinforcing culture (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002). The importance of food in one's culture is justified by how it is being preserved. Food that embodies traditional cuisine is taught to the next generation of families. But, with the emergence of commercialization, it saddens to note that the historical and cultural significance is challenged. While the weaving of *puso* still exists in the modern context; but, the demands of modernity triggers its switch to become a commodity. Because of this, the young generation disregards its cultural background (Lebumfacil, 2012).

With this, it offers a new culture of popular street foods. Huge contribution of street vending revives the culture of *puso* that satisfies the gastronomic needs of the Cebuano middle class. But they face a sad reality because street vendors are considered informal entrepreneurs. This means they avoid paying taxes to the government; hence, they do not receive its legal protection from the government. Profits and other economic benefits of this business are only intended for the vendors (Destombes, 2010).

Cebuano lifestyle and food have shared a long tradition with each other. The Cebuano people resort to use the available resources, in order to cook good food. The availability of resources affects the way of cooking. Sometimes the food is barely cooked and at times the food is cooked slowly and requires a longer time for its preparation. With this, they also resort to the practice of food preservation (Tan, 2017). Social status also plays a role in relation to Cebuano lifestyle and food. The food to be served is dictated by the social status. Chinese Lauriat is served only to the rich Chinese customers. Hot liquid, boiled meat and noodles are served to ordinary folks (Alonso, 2009). These factors pave the way to the development of Cebuano authentic cuisine through history. Cebuano cuisine is identified as simple and ordinary (Alonso, 2009). This is not a problem for a typical Cebuano. In the modern context, the Cebuano does not mind simplicity as long as it is inexpensive and plentiful (Alonso, 2009). This also shows Cebuano's value for money.

However, there is a need to bring this street food culture to a progressive thought, where its concepts and processes are integral not by its preservation and promotion alone, but its continual utilization in the instructional process where teachers and students take lessons with cultural sense and indigenous worldviews in the parlance of education, more specifically in the teaching and the learning process. Vis-à-vis, this context supports the tweaking of the existing cultural practices to a more utilitarian perspective i.e. useful in the instructional process where both teachers and students can appreciate learning more effectively based on their cultural contexts (Estrelloso *et al.*, 2019; Tejada *et al.*, 2019; Inocian *et al.*, 2019; Pacaña *et al.*, 2019; Inocian *et al.*, 2020; Inocian, 2020; Irmano *et al.*, 2020).

A Contextualized *Puso*-Teaching Model (CPTM) is an epiphany of the result of a thorough reflection of *puso* epitomizing the Cebuano gastronomic cultural traditions. Hence, Cebuano educators can use this innovative teaching model in response to the Department of Education's call for localization and contextualization of instruction, by virtue of the Republic

Act 10533 in the implementation of basic education in the Philippines. Likewise, educators in other countries in the world could also see the relevance of CPTM parallel to their unique cultural orientations too. They may see the beauty of teaching in the context of their own cultural orientations and practices.

### **Research objectives**

This study described the attributes of *puso* as a street food culture and industry in Cebu City, Philippines and aimed to answer the following objectives: (a) Determine the cultural and economic attributes of *puso* in terms of its availability, affordability, and functionality; (b) Ascertain the weaving, rice pouring, cooking, and selling processes of *puso*; (c) Characterize the makers of *puso* in terms of their working condition, salary, and number of years in the industry; (d) Extrapolate the connection of *puso* in the modern Cebuano lifestyle in terms of social class, time availability, and locational convenience; and (e) Explore a contextualized *puso* teaching model based on the findings of the study.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Research design***

A grounded theory was employed as a primary design of the study. Creswell (2003) defined grounded theory as an attempt to discover a general, abstract theory of process and interaction from the views and perceptions of the research participants. Unstructured interviews were used to gather verbal responses, which were recorded, transcribed, and coded according to clusters and vignettes. Series of participant observations were conducted during the actual weaving, cooking, and packing of the *puso*. Observations were reflected in the field notes. Taking of photographs in the actual process of weaving and cooking was also done with permission and consent among the key informants. Interview guides, field notes, memos, video recorders and cameras were used as instruments. The interview guide contained questions on the process and flow of *puso* cooking. It also contained basic information on the status and way of living of the chosen key informants. The other set of questions was about the consumers and how *puso* became a part of their lifestyle. Field notes were utilized on the observation of the surroundings and the other factors that affected the study. Category sheets were used to cluster the informants' testimonies and verbatim accounts, which were then transcribed from the recorded audios and videos.

#### ***Respondents of the study***

The research participants were the weavers, rice pourers, cooks, vendors and consumers who were engaged in the *puso* street food industry directly or indirectly. The five weavers who were tasked in the weaving process, five rice pourers who poured rice in the woven pouches, the three cooks who managed its actual cooking, three vendors who used *puso* as a side dish, and the two consumers who indulged *puso* during their meal. Convenience sampling was used in the selection of the participants based on their characteristics, category, and availability. These characteristics include the key informants' resilience and passion for rice pouch-weaving, cooking, and selling; their traditions related to these processes; and their number of years into the weaving, cooking, and selling industry. Their selection category was determined based on high income, middle income, and low-income in terms of their *puso* livelihood earnings. Their presence during the prior appointment before the interview was conducted was highly valued whether they were available or not available at the designated time of the

interview and the actual observation of the weaving and cooking processes. The researchers consented on their terms of agreement, as regards to available time and place during the scheduled interviews. The following criteria were used in the selection of the primary key informants: weaving for more than five years, cooking, selling, distributing, and eating of *puso*. Age and gender were not considered as long as the informants weaved, poured rice pouches, cooked, delivered, and consumed *puso*.

### ***Instrumentation***

The study made use of unstructured questions listed in the Interview Guide. Two versions of the instrument: English and the vernacular Cebuano were subjected to an inter-rater validation among three social science experts among three best universities in Cebu City. Comments and suggestions among the validators were incorporated in the revision of the instrument.

### ***Data gathering procedure***

Four sites of the *puso* street food industry were identified in four barangays of Cebu City namely: Duljo, Taboan, Santo Nino, and San Antonio. These areas were selected as the first four major producers of *puso* and maintained numerous stalls. Informed Consent was secured for the planned interview. Interviews of the identified key informants were recorded; results of participant observations were reflected in the field notes; processes of *puso* cooking were photographed. Ethical consideration from the Ethics Committee of the university was secured before the study was conducted.

### ***Data analysis***

After the transcription of the verbal data, a translation from the vernacular to English was made. Narratives were coded into clusters and vignettes. Interpretation and discussion of findings were supported with memos indicated in the field work observation and the stored photographs taken during the actual participant observations. These determined the flow of the *puso* street food industry and described its cultural and economic attributes.

## **Findings and discussion**

### ***Attributes of puso in terms of availability, affordability, and functionality***

*Puso* is one of the common street foods in Cebu City. The value of this food turns out to be a major icon of identity for Cebuano. In terms of availability, bundles of *puso* are available in food stalls and street shops in the city's downtown area. *Puso* is featured in different forms and designs (Inocian, 2013; 2015; 2020). The *binaki* (frog-like), the *badbaranay* (opener-like), the *kinasing* (heart-like) designs remain visible in most stalls compared to other elaborate designs mentioned in the literature. In terms of affordability, the price of a freshly woven *puso* is based on this narrative:

*“A hundred rice pouches cost 12 PHP. We could create 500 to 700 rice pouches a day” (KI-4).*

This means that a rice pouch weaver earns 60 to 84 PHP a day. This means that a weaver must work to produce more rice pouches to gain income and meet the demands of the vendors and the consuming public. The price of the *lukay* (fronds) is also available for 1PHP for each

piece depending on the supply. The price of rice is also affordable because *puso* owners purchase local rice from the National Food Authority (NFA).

*“We use different kinds of rice; but, as much as possible, the cost would not exceed 40 pesos per kilo. We will not purchase well-milled rice because it is expensive and our profit is barely enough for our daily needs.” KI-6*

The main point in selling a *puso* is basically earning enough profit to sustain the vendors’ basic needs. Using local rice instead of commercial rice, the vendors can earn more income. In that way, they can sell *puso* that is affordable to the public. The vendor just adds up a certain amount for his or her profit. The average price of a single *puso* could range from 3PHP to 10PHP depending on its size, that is 3PHP for the small size, 5-7PHP for the medium size, and 10PHP for the large size. *Puso* vendors determine a fixed price based on customers’ demand and the profit they expect to receive. Cebuano consumers do not literally focus on what design of *puso* they eat as long as it fills up their gastronomic needs.

*“That’s why the people like eating puso because it is affordable and compact unlike the ordinary cooked rice” KI-12.*

In relation to this verbatim account, the people of Cebu are very practical in eating their meals that can make them full and it can save their pockets as well. It is better to eat *puso* than to eat ordinary cooked rice. Individuals who are fun to eat *puso* promoted a Cebuano identity in Cebu City’s street. The *puso* is basically served as a good pair for barbecue, *lechon* [roasted pig], and *siomai*. It is convenient and handy for sea travel, beach picnics, and other social outdoor events. This is made possible of the natural encasement made with coco palm leaves that once cooked, these contribute to the protection and preservation of the cooked rice inside the pouch.

### ***Puso street food industry***

Table 1. Process of production of *puso* street food

Picture/Visual presentation	Process/Steps	Description
	Step. 1 <i>Ang Paglilas</i> is the removing the midrib.	The weavers remove the midrib of the coconut fronds since only these are the primary materials in the weaving of <i>puso</i> .
	Step. 2 <i>Ang Pagla sa mga Lilas</i> is the weaving of the fronds.	The weavers get 1 or 2 fronds and start the weaving process. They wrap it in a form of triangular shape depending on the type of <i>puso</i> to be woven.



Step. 3 *Ang Pagbuhos sa Bugas* is the rice pouring

The rice pourer fills the pouches with rice. The amount of rice filled depends on the size and type of *puso*. The rice is filled in the pouches to almost a half of its size. Then, closing and locking in the lapses and openings to prevent rice from dripping.



Step. 4 *Ang Pagluto* is the *puso*-cooking

Boil the water enough to be levelled on the number of *puso* to be cooked. For small scale cooking like using the cauldron, 25-50 pieces can be cooked and for large scale like the using big barrels, almost a hundred of rice pouches are placed in it. It is cooked for around 20-30 minutes depending on the size of the pouches.



Step. 5 *Ang Pagpungpong sa mga Pusong para sa Paghatud* refers to the packing for *puso* distribution

After the cooked *puso* cooled down, it was ready to be packed in a dozen of bunches for distribution to the *suki* [buyers] of the *puso* makers. There are two ways of distributing the product. It can be delivered to the vendors or the vendors negotiate the *puso*-makers to get the cooked product.



Step. 6 *Ang Pagpamaligya sa Pusong* is the selling and eating of *Pusong*

The *puso* is sold with a pair of dishes: a barbecue, a fried chicken, a *sinugba* [broiled fish or meat] and other treats. It is sliced with a knife so the consumer can easily remove the pouches and eat the rice.

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Table 1 presents the different tasks in making *puso* from the start until the finished product. The full process is observed based on the task of different weavers, rice pourers, cooks and vendors. Synchronization of tasks is also observed since there is a concept of division of

labour. The *puso* is basically served as a good pair for barbecue, lechon, *tuslod-buwa* [dip in oil bubbles], and *siomai* [A Filipino term for Chinese dumpling]. It is convenient and handy for sea travel, beach picnics, and other social outdoor events. This is made possible of the natural encasement made with coco palm leaves that once cooked, these contribute to the protection and preservation of the cooked rice inside the pouch.

### ***The stakeholders in puso street food industry***

There are different individuals or groups of people who comprise the puso-making industry. Basically, they have different roles and tasks to perform. They are the *manglala* [weavers], the *mangbubo-bo* [rice pourers], the cook, and the vendors. These people in Taboan and Duljo area are already making *puso* for a long time and they have stayed in these villages because *puso* has been a part of their economic lifestyle. The appeal of these villages is very crucial in the puso-making industry and the vendors who sell the commodity in the populous downtown areas in Cebu City.

### ***Stakeholders' working environment***

The weavers in the Duljo area live in a poverty-stricken environment. Coping with the basic needs of life, *puso* has already been a source of income and profit in the area. Lukay [fronds] are delivered in the area from the island's southern towns and villages; this creates plenty of weavers available in the area. However, the relationships of weavers are present as they work together and weave *puso* together as indicated in the given narrative.

*"It is me, my brothers, my relatives, and others make puso." KI-2*

The concept of being a family-oriented culture is observed in the area. This supports the finding of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) on the survey of the national of the Philippines that ranks the family as the highest value of a Filipino (Villalon *et al.*, 2019). The people who weave *puso* are related to each other and create more bonding and connection among them in the community. *Puso* is not just served as a food; but it serves as a symbol of a Cebuano family orientation.

*"We are the ones who weave the rice pouches, and then our boss does the cooking and delivery. We are just weavers here." KI- 2*

The weavers are just simply workers of their boss. The boss does the other job and gives them *suhol* or income. In this industry, the idea or the presence of a manager or head always exists. Basically, the head manages the work done by their workers and laborers and gives them payment for the rendered services. There are three key informants in Category 3 (Rice pourer, Cook, & Vendor). The key informants 5 and 6 are in the Duljo area while key informant 7 is in the Taboan area. The two key informants in the Duljo area are relatives therefore there is no competition on either side. Still, poverty is observed in this area and the working place is very hard to find. However, the materials and equipment used in puso-making like big barrels are present in the area, which is slightly spacious: enough to accommodate the number of workers. There is also a place provided for the *mangbubuhos* [rice pourers] and for the cooking area.

*"There are different sizes of barrels that we use. Big and small barrels depending on how many pieces of puso will be cooked for a day"*

Within this area, big black barrels are mostly found. These are used in cooking the *puso*. The sizes of these barrels are also significant since there are a certain amount and number of *puso* that should be cooked daily. In the Taboan area, key informant 7 has her own stall or place. She manages to maintain the cleanliness and orderliness of the place. Still the same with other areas; barrels, *lukay*, and sacks of rice are also found in a designated space.

There are two key informants in this category. Both of them live in Taboan Market and their own stalls there. It is an advantage on their working place since it is a market, a centre for trade and commerce therefore it is easy for them to sell *puso*. To Arnaiz (2019), Taboan market is one of the busiest and famous markets in Cebu City and sold *buwad* [dried fish] as one of its main goods. Furthermore, *puso* can be also paired with *buwad*.

### ***The stakeholders' salary***

The salary of these weavers does not reach the minimum wage of the country. Their *suhol* [salary] is based on how many *puso* pouches are woven in a certain day. The primary basis for their income is 12PHP per one-hundred rice pouches. This simply means that they should weave 500 to a thousand of *puso* pouches so they can get 150PHP-250PHP daily. Their salary can already suffice their needs or are still insufficient depending on their economic status and lifestyle.

*“The ngohiong eatery hired us to do the weaving. But most of the time, there is a delay of our income. They just give us one-hundred pesos and it does not really supply our needs and the materials we need in weaving.” KI-1*

There are also issues on giving exact salary to the weavers. Some irregularities are observed and sometimes it abuses their rights to get enough income from their managers. However, since these weavers have no other abilities in finding work; they stick in making *puso* even though their salaries are delayed.

*“Just a small amount... Hmmm 1,000.00PHP then we took a little for the expenses and others” KI-5. We cannot really calculate. It depends on how many *puso* are delivered. No exact amount. Sometimes enough, sometimes not...” KI-6. “Very little” KI-7.*

Basically, there is no exact amount on what salary they receive per day. It also depends on the demand of the consumers. However, they can get money because there are already ready *suki* or loyal buyers of their product. There are also peak seasons where their profit is really big. It happens during Sinulog and Christmas seasons; and other special social celebrations in Cebu.

*“These key informants receive an income of 1000PHP in a day. I have a ready buyer that will get 60 pieces of *puso* from me. He will sell these *puso* in the bus terminal food stalls, besides Dunkin Donuts.” KI-8*

Key informant 8 is certain on her daily profit since she has *suki* of her product. She can get 1000PHP daily, which is already enough for her family needs and the revolving capital in weaving of *puso* in order to meet the required demands of the consumers.

*“It depends on the order of our consumers. If there are more orders, more money; but if the orders are low, then there is less profit.”KI-9*

Key Informant 9 determines her income based on the demand of her *suki*. It depends on how many pieces of *puso* are ordered in a certain day. According to her, there are also peak seasons where she can get more income like Sinulog and other events. The key informants also get a percentage of their income where they use it on the materials in weaving and in the cooking of the *puso*. *Puso* vendors' income is based on how many pieces of *puso* are sold a day. However, the vendors' income is called *tubo*, a price that is added on the commodity in order to gain a profit. These are earned by the vendors so that they can produce enough profit for their own families. Though, the income of these vendors is not stable. Their income depends on the number of customers who patronize to eat *puso* per day. When there are more customers, the larger the profit they would receive. Hence, the key informants are vendors and not owners of the stalls; they do not have ample knowledge in the *puso* business. There are two ways of selling a *puso*. The first is selling it with another dish. The second is selling it without any paired dish.”

### ***Stakeholders' number of years in puso street food industry***

The weavers have been working for some time also. Key informants 1-4 have been weaving rice pouches for almost their entire life but they start supplying *puso* to their managers for almost three years already; while key informants 2 and 3 start supplying *puso* just a few months ago. There is a big gap between the informants but their ability and pace in weaving of *puso* are almost comparable. They are very good and fast in its weaving because of the number of years' experience in the craft. The key informants started their work a long time ago. There are certain reasons why they stay in this work for so many years. Key Informant 6 engages this work for almost 35 years. Their parents start this type of business, and he and his wife manage the business now. Key Informant 7 starts this type of work during their marriage. Influence from their parents is one of the main reasons that make this type of business long-lasting. The number of years most of the informants engage in *puso* trade is dependent with the family's passion in the industry. Based on these narratives, the making of *puso* is a family line inheritance.

*“It comes from my parents then they pass this to us.” KI-8 “I have started it when I was a child; until now, I am still doing this.”KI-9*

Key Informant 8 started her business in 2008; while Key Informant 9 started this during his childhood until the moment she got married. Her life was devoted to the industry of *puso*. The two key informants learn the craft from their parents who pass this on to them. The industry of *puso* is widely known in the region and it serves as a tool for business and cultural reasons. These people use the industry for a long time; and since they do not have enough educational attainment, they stick on the system of selling *puso* more than half of their life' existence.

### ***Connection of puso to the urban lifestyle***

Social class brings the *puso* into its highest point. The demand of this commodity makes the food known and accessible by different people among the different strata of the Cebuano social class. Busy people in an urbanite lifestyle prefer to eat *puso* to avoid the hassle of longer time to cook. As a food commodity, *puso* becomes the primary choice in terms of availability

of time and location. As a choice of many individuals from all walks of life, *puso* becomes the most accessible and most practical. As narrated:

*“There are vendors who sell puso near a workplace, 50 meters away (K110). It is located less than 20 meters (K111). Very near, the place is accessible for me to walk (K112).”*

Food stalls are very common to every establishment in the locality and *puso* is the main side dish that is sold. They are commonly located from 20 to 50 meters away from the office. This is very evident that *puso* is very available since they do not walk kilometres away to take their meal. These statements from the middle, working, and upper classes characterize *puso*:

*There is a specific taste different from rice alone (K113). Aromatic and easy to eat (K15). The shape and aromatic smell of the coconut fronds (14). To save rice and to prevent spoilage (K111).*

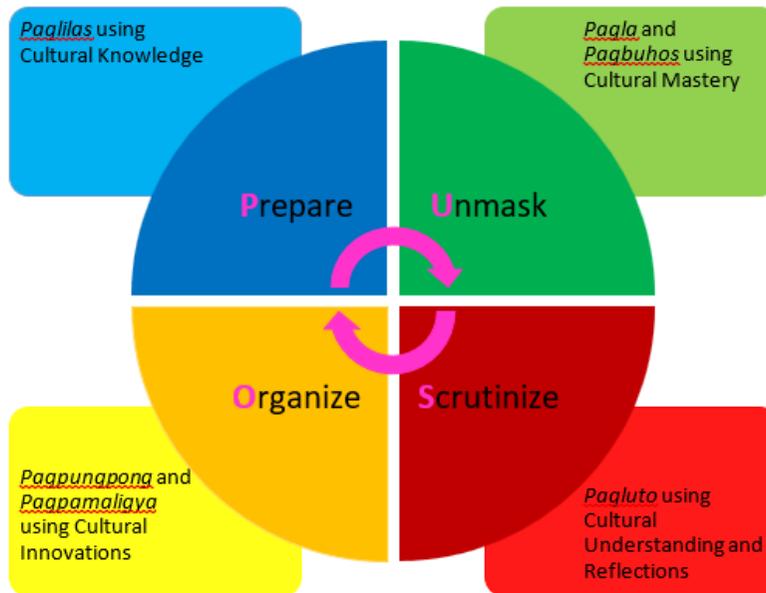
To these key informants, several pieces of *puso* have their own distinct taste and pleasant smell from ordinary steam rice that is cooked in a pot. The shape is eye catching and the texture can minimize the grains that are wasted during the eating process. This narrative presents its own distinguishable characteristics from the kind of rice cooked in the rice cooker. This industry gives the assurance of a continued patronage of *puso* as a food commodity. To Garton (1999), “Food is a central activity of mankind and one of the single most significant trademarks of a culture.” *Puso*, a Cebuano delicacy, is mainly composed of rice—a kind of staple that shapes the culture of Cebu. It is an icon of Cebuano social identity that carves a niche in the daily lives of the Cebuano community. To a food enthusiast Kurlansky (2002), “Food is not about impressing people; it is about making them feel comfortable.” This clearly supports the attributes of *puso* that describe the Cebuano resilient attitude to survive.

### ***The exploration of a contextualized puso teaching model***

The findings of the study contextualized a framework of the *Puso* Teaching Model. This contextualized framework is based on Ned Hermann’s Brain Dominance Theory (Hermann, 1996) and Bernice McCarthy’s 4MAT Application Technique (McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006), which realigns Jacques Delors’ Four Pillars of Learning in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education adopted by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Using a progressivist approach in breaking the essential meaning of *puso* as a street food to a deconstructive contextual meaning of **Prepare**, **Unmask**, **Scrutinize**, and **Organize** (PUSO) in the teaching learning process.

Figure 1 shows the visual presentation of the framework of the PUSO Teaching Model using the essential process of the actual cooking of the *puso*. **Prepare**, as the blue teaching quadrant, emphasizes the *paglilas* using the cultural knowledge that includes the cultural and economic attributes of *puso*. This quadrant allows the teacher to prepare the needed lesson contents and the expected learning outcomes with the appropriate culture-based learning activities like motivational games, songs, stories, pictures, paintings, artifacts, and other learning devices that initiates learning. **Unmask**, as the green teaching quadrant, uses the cultural knowledge learned in the first teaching quadrant in order to perform the *pagla* (weaving) and the *pagbuhos* (rice pouring). Like the unveiling of the weaving process of the *puso* and the pouring of the needed amount of rice in it need a constant practice to learn the craft, unmasking in the learning process requires to expose the learners on this cultural

mastery by harnessing their skills in the lesson to reach the required mastery through constant repetition and practice, using worksheets, and other forms of learning exercises.



Picture 1. The *puso* teaching model framework

**Scrutinize**, as the red teaching quadrant, uses the cultural knowledge and skills in acquiring the needed cultural understanding and reflections. Like the *paqluto* or actual cooking of the *puso* that needs the careful amount of water and heat in the cooking process, sifting the needed questions and the learning activities redirects the development of understanding and reflections in the learning process with maximum participation of the members of the learning teams. This context exemplifies the use of cultural-based *Tagay* (Round-Robin), *Alayon* (Group Investigation), *Yayong* (Think-Pair-Share), *Tambayayong* (Learning Together), and *Unong* (Team Assisted Individualization), which are forms of indigenized and contextualized cooperative learning strategies known as the TAYTU way (Inocian *et al.*, 2019); and other forms Cooperative Learning (CL) strategies. **Organize**, as the yellow teaching quadrant, necessitates the recognition of cultural innovations that contribute progress and development. Like the *pagpunpong* (packing) and the *pagpaligiya* (selling) of the cooked *puso* ready for stall distribution, organizing is engaging in the learners to the world of learning transfer where they organize certain activities that make learning more relevant and more sustainable by means of writing a manifesto for action, organizing a learning exhibit, presenting a play, and the like.

#### ***How educators could use this model?***

Educators worldwide can use CPTM in all fields of discipline as in a culture-based teaching and learning by engaging into the following:

1. Prepare the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the disciplines that they teach as the intended curriculum that necessitated to be unpacked. These ILOs will be interfaced with the typical cultural practices in the local village, districts or institutions.
2. Unmask these ILOs with the cultural knowledge identified in order for the learners to be provided with opportunities for practice, as regards to their cultural knowledge vis-à-vis the ILOs to be covered for the week or in any specified time intended for the development of the lesson.
3. Scrutinize the sensitivity of the applicability of the culture of the village, district or institution in the instructional process that nothing is offensive in the engagement of the learning process. Cultural integration connotes the proper use of ethical considerations in the learning process.
4. Organize meaningful Outcomes-based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) activities to achieve the culturally integrated ILOs. The principle of learner-centred instruction is the primary consideration in OBTL's organization. Table 2 serves as a guide in the effective instructional phase using CPTM.

Table 2. The contextualized *puso* teaching model

Steps in <i>Puso</i> Teaching Model	Description	Instructional Techniques
Step 1 <i>Paglilas</i>	Like the removal of the midrib from the fronds to start the weaving of the <i>puso</i> , the instructional process starts with the preparation of the content, the learning environment, the learners, and instructional materials, and the assessment tools for learning.	1) referring to standards-based and competency-based lessons 2) formulating the desired lesson objectives 3) exploring different motivational techniques that interest learners 4) structuring the classroom and learning stations 5) preparing a outcomes-based assessment
Step 2 <i>Pagla</i>	Comparable to the actual weaving process of <i>puso</i> , the teacher engages with the development of the lesson in a learner-facilitated setting in a meaningful and variety of ways.	6) showing of pictures and graphics 7) reading and listening to stories 8) singing of a song and dancing with the music 9) engaging in play and socio-drama 10) participating in debates and discussions 11) analyzing graphs, puzzles, cartoons, and comics
Step 3 <i>Pagbuhos</i>	No rice grains will be wasted in pouring inside the <i>puso</i> . This means that no single idea related to the lesson will be ignored. Ideas are woven into a nexus of connections and interconnections to deepen learning.	12) enhancing the skills through the use of cooperative learning strategies 13) integrating lessons to other fields of knowledge 14) using differentiated instruction

Step 4 <i>Pagluto</i>	The cooking of <i>puso</i> depends on the amount of temperature and time. Likewise, the instructional process needs deepening in order test if there is mastery of the skills	15) webbing of concepts to form main ideas, themes, and generalizations 16) mastering of the skills through exercises and worksheets
Step 5 <i>Pagpungpong</i>	This is the packing for <i>puso</i> for distribution to the market or stall. This is the value and application of the lesson to real life situations and to other realities in the community and the world.	17) indulging the students with reflections and valuing of the learning process 18) engaging with learning transfer 19) doing projects and research 20) engaging in community work and other civic activities
Step 6 <i>Pagpamaligya</i>	This is the selling and eating of <i>puso</i> . This is the culmination of the learning process through the use of varied forms of assessment.	21) giving of paper-and-pencil test, opinionnaire, checklist, and Likert for lesson satisfaction 22) writing for an action plan or a manifesto for continual improvement of learning.

Table 2 presents the capstone of a Contextualized *Puso* Teaching Model (CPTM) that includes: the steps, the descriptions and the suggested techniques of teaching. This capstone completes the entire curriculum cycle (Glathorn, 1987; Gray *et al.*, 2014; Inocian, 2018). The *paglilas* [stripping off the unnecessary content] initiates the cycle known as the intended phase of the curriculum with five instructional techniques. The implemented phase of CPTM characterizes the developmental section of the instructional process. This includes: the presentation of lessons in a learner-centred fashion in the *pagla* [knowledge is woven] with six techniques; the deepening of knowledge and understanding in the *pagbuhos* [knowledge is showered and nurtured to develop understanding] with three techniques; mastering and fixing of the skills learned in the *pagluto* [understanding and mastery of skills are fully cooked] with two techniques. The cycle culminates in the achieved curriculum in both *pagpungpong* with four techniques and in *pagpamaligya* with two techniques. The shaping of values and actions for common good and possible community involvement happens in the *pagpungpong* [tying the knot] that learners live in. To make learning enduring and more meaningful, they have to engage in the *pagpamaligya* [selling out learning] for possible opportunities to improve their quality of life for their sustainable development in the family and in the community as well. The end of this step is an opportunity for a teacher to begin a new set of intended phases to start a new cycle of continual improvement.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The cultural and economic attributes of *puso* mirror the Cebuano social identity in the street food industry. The essential orientation of *puso* as a ritual object in the upland areas has been shifted to a more pragmatic orientation to fit in the fast paced folk urban lifestyle of Cebuanos. Affected by changing perspectives, this leads to new identification of *puso* as a utilitarian commodity for earning income for survival, as one of the limitations of the study. This shift nuances a resilient attitude for survival among *puso* stakeholders, despite meagre income they receive in the industry. Hence, the inherited family practices and traditions of the industry shows that culture perpetuates despite changes of time and worldviews. However, regulation and governance of the *puso* street food industry may be undertaken in the next research

undertaking, in order to promote further developments for a possible tourism hub in the metropolis, recognizing the Cebuano family traditions of *puso* remains to have a paramount importance.

While the shape, size, and scent of *puso* remains an integral part of Cebuano society, its art and culture remain a symbolic icon of Cebuano society's rapid economic and social changes. These factors serve as basis in the exploration of a contextualized framework of PUSO (prepare, unmask, scrutinize, and organize) teaching quadrants for the Contextualized *Puso* Teaching Model (CPTM) contextualizing the actual steps in the weaving and cooking of *puso* as the street food industry in the bustling metro in Cebu City. PUSO as a contextualized framework nuances several implications to the industry and the academe, using the KRSP (**Knowledge** of Culture, **Skills** in Cultural Practice, **Reflections** to Cultural Contexts, and **Performance** in Cultural Innovations) Model, as a theory for Culture-based Education for Sustainable Development (Inocian, 2020). The PUSO framework vis-à-vis the KRSP Model intertwines a rationalization for glocalization movements to prevent the disappearance of local cultures against the forces of globalization such as homogenization and hybridization.

A call of massive awareness on the cultural inventories of countries constitutes the promotion of knowledge of culture by villages and institutions. Immersing and engaging into the identified culture that enhances the skills in cultural practices through seminars and workshops headed by the cultural officers or village elders who are regarded as experts with tacit knowledge. With their permissions, reflections on village or institution's cultural contexts may offer opportunities for further preservation, enhancement, promotion, and modification to make culture relevant in the changing society. Cultural workers and educators need to replicate a similar framework on PUSO based on their local contexts too. Validating the performance in any cultural innovation can provide avenues for industry and other sectors to find its meaning and relevance.

With the PUSO framework, polarization and heterogenization of local cultures will be safeguarded. The *puso* industry will be catapulted in the instructional process in the academe, as a dialectical response to make cultural globalization fair i.e. narrowing the gaps of opportunities between developed and developing countries. Local communities, business, industry, and the academe will continue forging ties and connections as partners to use this framework, in order to enhance and improve its implementation.

The government shall provide and administer programs that will develop the potentials of the food industry and to open new possibilities and innovations in the preservation, promotion and commercialization of the *puso* industry in Cebu City.

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