

Level of Knowledge Creation Process of Restaurants Setting in Catarman, Northern Samar

Mabel U. Matabia

University of Eastern Philippines, Catarman, Northern Samar, Philippines

Author Email: mabelhuy96@gmail.com

Date received: June 21, 2025

Date revised: July 10, 2025

Date accepted: July 31, 2025

Originality: 92%

Grammarly Score: 99%

Similarity: 8%

Recommended citation:

Matabia, M. (2025). Level of knowledge creation process of restaurants setting in Catarman, Northern Samar. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 3(8), 957-962. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.522>

Abstract. This study focused on determining the level of knowledge creation among restaurants in Northern Samar, particularly in the municipality of Catarman, in terms of the SECI model (socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization). Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study surveyed 190 respondents from different restaurant settings in Catarman. Data were gathered using a validated survey questionnaire and statistically analyzed using a weighted mean. The results showed that among the four dimensions, socialization has the highest overall mean, followed by internalization, underscoring the restaurant's commitment to nurturing a learning-oriented environment. The combination and externalization emphasize the importance of staff development, documentation, and brainstorming sessions that contribute to meaningful insights. The results reveal that the restaurant thrives on a strong culture of knowledge sharing, where staff are empowered not only to learn but also to contribute meaningfully to service innovation and organizational growth. These practices reflect a sustainable model for continuous improvement in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Knowledge creation; SECI model; Hospitality industry; Organizational learning; Creation process

1.0 Introduction

Catarman, Northern Samar, is steadily transforming into a budding commercial hub in Eastern Visayas. Improvements in infrastructure and accessibility have stimulated economic growth, particularly in the food service industry, where consumer demand for diverse and quality dining experiences continues to rise. However, beneath this momentum lies a mix of opportunities and persistent challenges. Of the roughly restaurants in Catarman, only 38 are registered with the Business Permits and Licensing Office, raising concerns over uneven regulatory compliance, public health, and business fairness (Sarmiento, 2022).

Despite these favorable developments, the local business environment in Catarman presents notable challenges. The sector is marked by limited competition and a lack of innovation, especially among microenterprises (Balsicas & Buno, 2023). Moreover, as these businesses grow older, a decline in performance is often observed. In the tourism sector, several establishments, particularly resorts, fail to meet the provincial Department of Tourism's standard criteria, indicating gaps in regulatory compliance and service quality that may hinder sustainable development in the hospitality and related industries (San Pedro & Marquez, 2023).

Alongside structural gaps, local restaurants, many of which are small or family-run businesses, struggle with stagnant growth, limited customer retention strategies, and lack of innovation (Ylagan & Dorado, 2020). These challenges are further intensified by shifting consumer expectations for healthier and more sustainable dining

options (Domingo & Cabañero-Verzosa, 2021). To remain relevant and competitive, restaurants must not only understand their customers but also continuously learn and adapt.

This study focuses on the knowledge creation, complementing the SECI Model in terms of socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization, providing a structured process for transforming individual insights into organizational wisdom (Choi & Lee, 2021). Recent applications of this framework in the hospitality and tourism sectors have demonstrated its potential in boosting innovation, team productivity, and strategic responsiveness (Li et al., 2019).

Despite its relevance, few studies have explored these concepts in rural Philippine contexts. While SECI implementation has been widely examined in the urban and tourism-rich settings, there is a noticeable lack of empirical research focused on Catarman. This research addresses that gap by examining how knowledge creation practices shape service quality and competitiveness among registered restaurants in Catarman. In doing so, it aims to inform more sustainable, customer-driven and knowledge-based strategies for local enterprises.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design to assess the level of knowledge creation practices in selected restaurants in Northern Samar, specifically those registered in the municipality of Catarman, in terms of the SECI model (socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization). A descriptive design is used to describe and interpret the area of interest as well as to understand the current state of knowledge-sharing behaviors and strategies. For instance, McCombes (2022) employed descriptive designs in organizational and social science research to characterize behaviors or processes.

2.2 Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants were 190 respondents drawn from the 38 officially registered restaurants in Catarman, as recorded by the Business Permits and Licensing Office as of 2023. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that only operational and government-recognized establishments directly involved in daily operations were invited to participate. This approach allowed the researcher to gather insights from those with firsthand knowledge of the organization's internal communication and learning processes.

2.3 Research Instrument

The main instrument used was a structured survey questionnaire, adapted and contextualized based on Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model (1995). The research instruments underwent content validation procedures through expert critique in business administration. To establish its adaptability to customers in Northern Samar, the instruments for the knowledge creation process were reviewed by the adviser and panel members. Content validity was established by having three Professors from UEP College of Business Administration check the items for appropriateness to local respondents. The evaluators assessed each item as either "accept", "reject", or "revise". All recommendations and suggestions were considered before developing the final instruments. The tool included items categorized under the four dimensions: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. Each statement was rated using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 – Not at all dynamic" to "5 – Very much dynamic." The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small group of respondents to ensure clarity and appropriateness.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection was conducted through face-to-face distribution of printed questionnaires, with prior coordination with restaurant management. The researcher visited each selected restaurant, explained the study objectives, and ensured informed consent was secured. Completed forms were collected on the same day or at a later agreed-upon time. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents could withdraw at any point in time.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Data were encoded and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools. Weighted means were calculated to determine the perceived level of knowledge creation for each SECI component. The interpretation of the means followed a standard qualitative range, making it easier to understand whether a process was perceived as "very

dynamic", "dynamic", "moderately dynamic", "less dynamic", or "not dynamic".

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The research study adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring that respondents' participation was voluntary and their responses were kept confidential. Respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequences, and the data collected were used strictly for academic purposes. No harm was inflicted on any participant throughout the study.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Level of Knowledge Creation Process

Socialization

Table 1 shows that the assessment of the socialization dimension in the knowledge creation process has a strong positive overall mean, interpreted as "very much dynamic". The highest rated statement highlighted the restaurant's commitment to preserving culinary heritage and promoting on-the-job learning. This is closely followed by practices such as pairing new employees with experienced mentors and encouraging open communication across staff levels, all of which reinforce the importance of experiential and informal learning in service delivery. Although sharing personal insights and informal idea swaps during casual gatherings receives lower scores, it still reflects positive engagement. These findings align with Nonaka's (1995) emphasis that tacit knowledge is often transmitted through social interaction and shared experiences in workplace settings. This pattern also supports findings from Isik et al. (2021), who found that "team culture facilitates tacit knowledge sharing through both formal and informal social interaction", particularly in hospitality settings, where everyday interaction builds trust and enables "know-how" to pass naturally across experience levels.

Table 1. *Weighted Mean on the Socialization Dimension*

Socialization	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Knowledge about traditional cooking techniques is shared among kitchen staff.	4.31	Very much dynamic
New employees are paired with experienced mentors to learn about our restaurant's practices.	4.30	Very much dynamic
We encourage open communication and social interaction among all staff levels.	4.30	Very much dynamic
We create opportunities for staff to learn from each other's customer service experiences.	4.25	Very much dynamic
Our team collaborates closely to solve complex customer service challenges.	4.22	Very much dynamic
Front-of-house and back-of-house staff regularly meet to discuss service improvements.	4.20	Very much dynamic
Our staff regularly shares personal experiences and insights.	4.19	Much dynamic
We hold informal gatherings where employees share ideas about their work.	4.17	Much dynamic
Overall Mean	4.24	Very much dynamic

Note: 4.20-5.00 very dynamic, 3.40-4.19 dynamic, 2.60-3.39 moderately dynamic, 1.80-2.59 less dynamic, 1.00-1.79 not dynamic

Externalization

Table 2 shows the externalization dimension of the knowledge creation process in restaurants, which has an overall rating as "much dynamic".

Table 2. *Weighted Mean on the Externalization Dimension*

Externalization	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Customer feedback is regularly documented and reviewed to improve services.	4.11	Much dynamic
We document successful service strategies and share them across the organization.	4.09	Much dynamic
Staff meetings include brainstorming sessions to generate new ideas for menus or service improvements.	4.07	Much dynamic
Our chefs hold cooking demonstrations to explain the rationale behind dish compositions.	4.07	Much dynamic
Employees are encouraged to articulate their tacit knowledge into formal documents.	4.06	Much dynamic
We utilize training sessions to convert individual expertise into comprehensive guidelines accessible to all staff.	4.06	Much dynamic
Standard operating procedures are updated regularly based on new insights from staff.	4.06	Much dynamic
We maintain a blog and newsletter that share insights and stories from our staff.	3.97	Much dynamic
Overall Mean	4.06	Much dynamic

This suggests that, while there is an active effort to formalize and share knowledge across the organization, there may be opportunities to further enhance these processes for greater efficiency. The highest-rated item indicates a strong commitment to listening to customers and using their input to refine restaurant operations. This aligns with Nonaka's concept of converting tacit knowledge (based on experience) into explicit knowledge (captured in documents and procedures). Another notable aspect highlights the value placed on documenting and

disseminating successful practices, a key aspect of knowledge management in service industries. However, some of the lower-rated items suggest that while there is an effort to externalize knowledge, some channels for broader dissemination may not be fully utilized. Kolyasnikov & Kelchevskaya (2020) investigated how knowledge management strategies, particularly those involving documentation and feedback, support continuous innovation and performance gains in industrial and service firms.

Combination

Table 3 illustrates the combination dimension in the knowledge creation process within restaurants and has an overall rating categorized as "much dynamic". This indicates that while the restaurant effectively integrates diverse information from various sources to enhance its operations, there is still room for improvement in streamlining and amplifying these processes. The highest-rated item demonstrates a strong commitment to integrating knowledge from various fields to improve overall performance. This aligns with the concept of combination, where existing explicit knowledge is aggregated to form new knowledge, as discussed in Nonaka's SECI model. The item "information from customer reviews and feedback is synthesized to guide menu development" indicates a dynamic approach to incorporating customer insights into menu planning, ensuring that customer preferences are reflected in the restaurant's offerings. Lower-rated items suggest that while there is an effort to integrate operational data and knowledge, the processes might not be as advanced or consistent as they could be. This is an area where the restaurant could further enhance its integration efforts, perhaps by adopting more sophisticated systems or ensuring that training is more frequent and impactful. In the study of Iqbal & Sulej (2023), the critical role of synthesizing diverse knowledge sources shows that "technology facilitates knowledge exploration and exploitation through improved communication, collaboration and absorptive capacity", thereby boosting innovation and operational efficiency.

Table 3. Weighted Mean on the Combination Dimension

Combination	Weighted mean	Interpretation
We consolidate information from various sources to improve our restaurant operations.	4.19	Much dynamic
Information from customer reviews and feedback is synthesized to guide menu development.	4.15	Much dynamic
Staff are trained on how to integrate new menu items into the system effectively.	4.11	Much dynamic
Marketing and promotional strategies are developed by combining creative ideas from all staff.	4.09	Much dynamic
Management meetings focus on integrating diverse knowledge to set strategic directions.	4.07	Much dynamic
We review and integrate global food trends into our menu planning.	4.05	Much dynamic
We use software to manage and analyze data from sales, inventory, and customer preferences.	4.04	Much dynamic
Regular training sessions are held to update staff on new operational practices.	4.01	Much dynamic
Overall Mean	4.09	Much dynamic

Internalization

Table 4 shows the internalization dimension of the knowledge creation process within restaurants classified as "much dynamic".

Table 4. Weighted Mean on the Internalization Dimension

Internalization	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Continuous improvement is an integral part of our culture; our staff is motivated to learn and grow.	4.24	Very much dynamic
Lessons learned from customer interactions are used to enhance personal service techniques.	4.21	Very much dynamic
We ensure that learning from past experiences is embedded in everyday operations.	4.21	Very much dynamic
Staff routinely use insights from feedback to improve their performance.	4.18	Much dynamic
After training sessions, staff are assessed on their ability to implement new knowledge.	4.12	Much dynamic
We simulate various service scenarios to help staff internalize different customer service tactics.	4.12	Much dynamic
New operational knowledge is practiced under supervision until it becomes a standard practice.	4.09	Much dynamic
Employees are encouraged to apply documented knowledge in their daily tasks.	4.04	Much dynamic
Overall Mean	4.15	Much dynamic

This suggests that, despite significant efforts to integrate new knowledge into daily practices, there are still areas for improvement in the effective internalization and application of knowledge from various sources by staff. The highest-rated item reflects a strong emphasis on fostering a learning culture within the restaurant. This suggests that employees are encouraged to improve continuously, which is consistent with the concept of internalization in Nonaka's SECI model, where knowledge becomes tacit and integrated into daily routines. However, lower-rated items suggest that while the restaurant has mechanisms for reinforcing new knowledge, these mechanisms

may not be consistently implemented or adequately evaluated, and that there is some reluctance or difficulty in applying formalized knowledge to daily operations, signaling a need for further reinforcement or a more structured approach to encourage its application. This pattern aligns closely with the study by Patwary et al. (2022), which confirmed the trend among staff who internalize new practices through reflection and repeated application. It significantly boosts service innovation and operational performance.

4.0 Conclusion

Based on the data gathered and discussed, restaurants in Catarman actively engage in the knowledge creation process, with a particular focus on socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization (SECI). This engagement highlights a dynamic culture of learning that supports both day-to-day responsiveness and long-term growth. This process ensures that restaurants not only respond to immediate operational needs but also foster a culture of learning and continuous improvement. It implies that active engagement in knowledge creation, especially addressing the identified gap in internalization, necessitates a transition from informal learning to structured knowledge practices. This can enhance restaurant performance by investing in formal mechanisms such as training modules, documented feedback systems, and digital knowledge repositories.

Digital and peer-driven learning systems can improve organizational learning cycles. When knowledge is internalized, it becomes an integral part of organizational routines, thereby enhancing decision-making, innovation, and adaptability. This means that businesses must integrate customer insights into structured knowledge systems to leverage their service orientation fully. There is also a role for local institutions to facilitate collaborative learning networks, enabling community-level capacity building and knowledge sharing. It emphasizes the importance of policy-makers in supporting small enterprises through localized knowledge management initiatives. Municipal agencies, in partnership with tourism and business development offices, could create community-based learning networks or provide incentives for compliance with knowledge-sharing best practices. Future studies could explore the impact of digital tools, such as knowledge management platforms or mobile apps, on knowledge internalization in small restaurants. Comparative studies between urban and rural food enterprises may also help unpack context-specific barriers and enablers of knowledge creation. Ultimately, this study confirms that fostering a knowledge-driven culture in local restaurants is not only possible but also necessary for long-term competitiveness and sustainable service delivery in rural hospitality sectors.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Ms. Mabel U. Matabia is the sole author of this study and was responsible for all aspects of the research process. The author affirms that this is her original work, reviewed and approved as final.

6.0 Funding

This work received no specific grant from any funding agency.

7.0 Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study.

8.0 Acknowledgment

The researcher would like to express their gratitude to the following individuals, without whom this book would not have been possible. Atty. Daisy Lily Balanquit, for his guidance and mentoring, for sharing his expertise, and for invaluable time. The panel of examiners: Dr. Tia Mare L. Ebdane, Dr. Jovie B. Viva, and Prof. Jane D. Sanoria, who patiently guided, helped, and encouraged her in finishing this paper; The Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Tito M. Cabili, for the constructive suggestions and assistance for improving and completing this paper, and the GS staff for always assisting. My CBA Family, Dean Emily S. Acompañado, and all members and staff for their support and encouragement. My CBA Angels friends, for always being one call away. The respondents of this study for their cooperation and time given while gathering the needed data. Finally, to my family, Husband French, my son Kalex, who served as great inspiration through the years of my academic struggle in the university; my mother-in-law, Nanay Marilou, for constantly reminding, mentoring, supporting, and believing in me; Team Uy, for always being there for me when I needed them the most. Above all, to HIM, our CREATOR, my forever inspiration, and our savior JESUS CHRIST, who provides all wisdom and strength to carry all trials along this quest of academic achievement.

9.0 References

- Balsicas, S. F. C., & Buno, C. A. L. (2023). Sustainable practices and challenges of DOT-accredited hotels in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 7(6), 808–815. Retrieved from <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/sustainable-practices>
- Domingo, D., & Cabañero-Verzosa, C. (2021). Food sustainability and Filipino consumer behavior. *Asian Journal of Business Ethics*, 10(2), 201–216. <https://tinyurl.com/5n7vwbmt>
- Iqbal, Q., & Piwowar-Sulej, K. (2023). "Sustainable leadership and heterogeneous knowledge sharing: The model for frugal innovation". *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 26(7), 655–673. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-03-2022-0144>
- İşık, C., Aydın, E., Dogru, T., Rehman, A., Alvarado, R., Ahmad, M., & Irfan, M. (2021). The nexus between team culture, innovative work behaviour and tacit knowledge sharing: Theory and evidence. *Sustainability*, 13(8), 4333.
- Kolyasnikov, M. S., Kelchevskaya, N. R. (2020). Knowledge management strategies in companies: Trends and the impact of Industry 4.0. *Upravlenec*, 11(4), 82–96. <https://doi.org/10.29141/2218-5003-2020-11-4-7>
- Li Sa, M., Chai, Y., Aik Joo, J., & Choon-Yin, S. (2019). Knowledge creation process, customer orientation and firm performance: Evidence from small hotels in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 25, 65–74. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2019.07.002>
- McCombes, S. (2022). Descriptive research design | definition, methods & examples. Scribbr.

- Patwary, A. K., Alwi, M. K., Rehman, S. U., Rabiul, M. K., Babatunde, A. Y., & Alam, M. M. D. (2022). Knowledge management practices on innovation performance in the hotel industry: Mediated by organizational learning and organizational creativity. *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-05-2022-0104>
- San Pedro, A. B., & Marquez, R. A. (2023). Business sustainability of the Department of Tourism-accredited hotels and resorts in Aurora Province, Philippines. *Journal of Tourism Studies and Hospitality Research*, 6(1), 1–8. Retrieved from <https://tinyurl.com/2x36j5zy>
- Sarmiento, K. B. (2022). Informal economy and small business registration: A study of Northern Samar entrepreneurs. *Journal of Philippine Local Governance*, 15, 43–60. <https://tinyurl.com/2m9zff8r>
- Ylagan, A. P., & Dorado, R. M. (2020). Performance decline in aging micro-enterprises: Lessons from rural Luzon. *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 14(3), 245–259. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJIE-12-2019-0095>