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The role of rural bank service delivery in strengthening local public administration on community development

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Abstract

This study examined the role of rural bank service delivery in strengthening local public administration toward community development in Laguna during the Academic Year 2025-2026 including 372 clients. Specifically, it investigates how key dimensions of financial service delivery: digital platforms, accessibility and affordability of services, innovations in customer service and financial products, support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and integration with local government units (LGUs), contribute to the maximization of public value in terms of service efficiency, economic empowerment, support for local development goals, and citizen trust and participation. The study employed a quantitative-descriptive research design using a self-constructed survey questionnaire administered to selected respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as weighted mean and standard deviation to determine the level of financial service delivery and public value, while Pearson correlation was utilized to examine relationships between variables. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis and ANOVA were applied to determine the predictive influence of financial service delivery dimensions on public value maximization. Findings reveal that rural bank service delivery is perceived to be highly effective across all dimensions, with digital platforms and accessibility receiving particularly strong evaluations. Public value indicators were also rated highly, especially in terms of economic empowerment and citizen trust. Correlation results indicate significant positive relationships between all dimensions of financial service delivery and public value, while regression analysis confirms that these variables collectively and significantly predict community development outcomes. Notably, support for SMEs and integration with LGUs emerged as strong contributors to public value maximization. The study concluded that rural banks play a critical role in strengthening local public administration by delivering inclusive, innovative, and collaborative financial services. It recommends enhancing digital innovations, expanding SME support, and strengthening partnerships with LGUs to further promote sustainable and inclusive community development.

Keywords: Rural banking, financial delivery, public value, community development, local governance, SMEs, digital banking

1. Introduction

The financial sector is becoming increasingly important in advancing sustainability, inclusion, and transparency in the changing environment of local governance and community development. Particularly in rural areas, banks have become essential organizations that connect local economies and national financial networks. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (2023) asserts that rural banks are essential tools for rural development because they offer financial services to underserved and unbanked groups such farmers, fishermen, and micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs). These banks empower people by allowing them to engage more completely in economic activity and communal life, in addition to boosting local economies through the mobilization of loans and deposits. Rural banks act as both financial intermediaries and catalysts for local advancement in the Philippine setting, where equitable financial growth continues to be a key component of sustainable development.

The way financial institutions provide their services has changed as a result of the trend toward innovation and digitalization, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. The shift toward innovation and digitalization in the delivery of financial services, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, is supported by several Philippine regulatory issuances and emerging policy directions. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through Circular No. 1105 (Series of 2020), formally established the regulatory framework for digital banks by defining their functions, prescribing minimum capitalization, and setting requirements for governance, risk management, cybersecurity, and consumer protection. This was further reinforced by Memorandum No. M-2020-047, which encouraged BSP-supervised financial institutions including rural, thrift, and cooperative banks, to adopt digital banking models and electronic payment and financial services (EPFS), allowing them to offer digital services provided they secure the appropriate licenses. Additionally, Memorandum No. M-2021-053 clarified that only banks with an official “digital bank” license may publicly identify as digital banks, although other banks may still implement digital platforms under applicable regulations. In recent years, the BSP has also drafted new rules creating a tiered regulatory framework for “digital-centric” small and mid-sized banks to ensure that prudential standards keep pace with technological innovations. Together, these policies legitimize and institutionalize the increasing digitalization of financial service delivery nationwide, enabling financial institutions even in rural and semi-urban contexts to innovate while remaining compliant with national standards.

Services are now more accessible and reasonably priced thanks to the combination of digital platforms, mobile banking, and financial technology (FinTech) solutions (Asian Development Bank, 2022). The way local governments collaborate with financial institutions to accomplish development objectives has been reinterpreted because of these changes. By improving fiscal transparency, increasing public service delivery efficiency, and raising citizen engagement in governance, effective financial service delivery based on accessibility, innovation, and integration supports local public administration (World Bank, 2021). These connections demonstrate how rural banks support community-based economic governance in addition to being profit-driven organizations.

But even with these encouraging advancements, little is known about the connection between local public administration and the provision of financial services, especially in rural areas. Few studies have looked at how banking services contribute to public value creation, which includes service efficiency, citizen trust, and support for local development initiatives (Alford et al., 2019). Previous studies have mostly focused on financial performance indicators or customer satisfaction in banking institutions (Bhattacharya et al., 2017). In the case of MariBank in Laguna, a rural bank that has expanded SME lending, used digital platforms, and collaborated with local government units (LGUs) to support equitable growth, this research gap is particularly pertinent. Determining how private institutions might support public sector governance requires an understanding of the connection between these financial advances and their wider societal consequences.

In order to overcome this gap, it is necessary to investigate the relationship between the maximization of public value and the supply of financial services, as assessed by digital accessibility, innovation, SME assistance, and LGU integration. Public value in local government refers to results that improve residents' overall well-being, such as effective service delivery, economic empowerment, and institutional confidence (Bryson et al., 2017). MariBank's financial inclusion and innovation activities may have a direct or indirect impact on these elements, helping to achieve community development objectives. The results can help determine whether rural banks are successfully advancing the inclusive governance and socioeconomic empowerment policy goal that the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 envisions (NEDA, 2023).

Thus, using MariBank in Laguna as the focus of the study, this research aims to investigate how rural banks' provision of financial services contributes to the community development. The goal of the study is to produce empirical insights that guide practice and policy by examining the connection between public value maximization and the provision of financial services. It specifically examines if improved public outcomes including service effectiveness, economic empowerment, citizen trust, and engagement are a direct result of increased access, affordability, innovation, SME assistance, and LGU integration. The goal of this study is to contribute to the discourse on how financial institutions can advance not only economic growth but also good governance and sustainable local development.

1.1. Background of the Study

In the Philippines, local government and community development have been closely linked to the development of rural banking. Serving farmers, fishermen, and microbusiness owners, rural banks have been vital financial foundations for rural development since their founding under the Rural Banks Act of 1952 (Republic Act No. 7353). Financial inclusion has gained recognition as a key component of sustainable development over time (World Bank, 2020). According to the BSP (2023), over 60% of rural banking customers originate from underserved or low-income areas, highlighting the industry's importance in grassroots development.

By providing easily accessible financial services, encouraging digital transactions, and lending money to small businesses, MariBank has played a significant role in strengthening government-led initiatives and local economic activity in Laguna. Its collaboration with LGUs promotes local investment and helps local governments achieve the development objectives specified in their plans.

The question still stands, though: how much do these financial services efforts help to the strengthening of local public administration and the maximum of public value? By examining the ways in which MariBank's financial services affect community trust in financial institutions, citizen empowerment, and effective governance, this study aims to provide an explanation.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the following theories:

Public Value Theory (Moore, 1995) posits that public institutions and by extension, organizations contributing to public welfare create value when their services enhance societal well-being, efficiency, and citizen trust. Moore (1995) emphasized that institutions must align their strategies to produce outcomes valued by citizens and society at large, while Bozeman (2019) expanded this framework to include collaborative networks between public and private sectors.

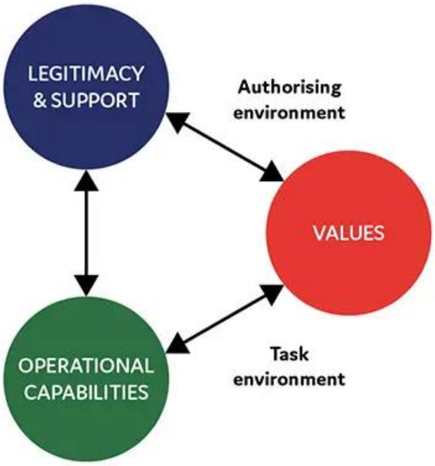

Figure 1. Public Value Theory

MariBank, though a private rural bank, operates within the public value sphere by delivering financial services that directly affect local governance outcomes. Through effective financial service delivery like digital innovations, affordability, SME support, and LGU collaboration, MariBank enhances public trust, efficiency, and local development. Thus, Public Value Theory serves as the lens through which this study examines how financial services create societal and administrative value.

Financial Intermediation Theory (Gurley and Shaw, 1955) explains how financial institutions act as intermediaries between savers and borrowers, reducing transaction costs and promoting economic stability and growth. According to Allen and Santomero (2001), intermediaries enhance efficiency by offering diversified financial products and by mitigating information asymmetry between lenders and borrowers.

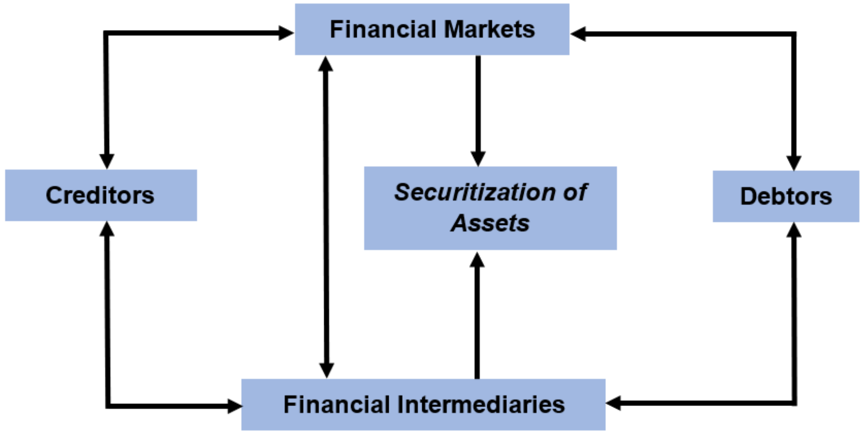

Figure 2. Financial Intermediation Theory

MariBank's operations as a rural bank facilitate the economic empowerment of citizens by providing affordable financial services and supporting SMEs. These contributions foster employment, productivity, and business expansion, which in turn align with local governance goals for development and sustainability. Hence, the theory explains the mechanism by which MariBank's service delivery translates to tangible community and governance outcomes.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 1962) posits that innovation adoption occurs through a social process influenced by the innovation's relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. The faster and more effectively innovations are adopted, the greater their impact on system performance and participation.

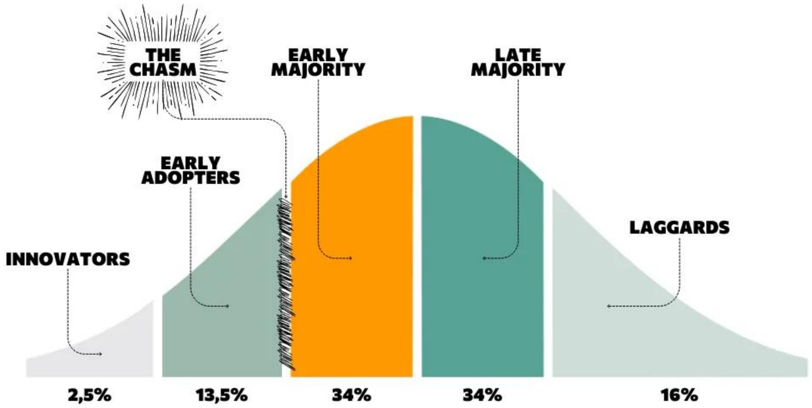

Figure 3. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory

MariBank's transition to digital platforms and other service innovations illustrates this diffusion process. By introducing accessible, affordable, and user-friendly systems, MariBank enhances citizen engagement and trust in financial institutions like key dimensions of public value maximization. This theoretical framework helps explain how technological innovations in financial service delivery can promote efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity within local governance contexts.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

This section presents the variable to be used in the study.

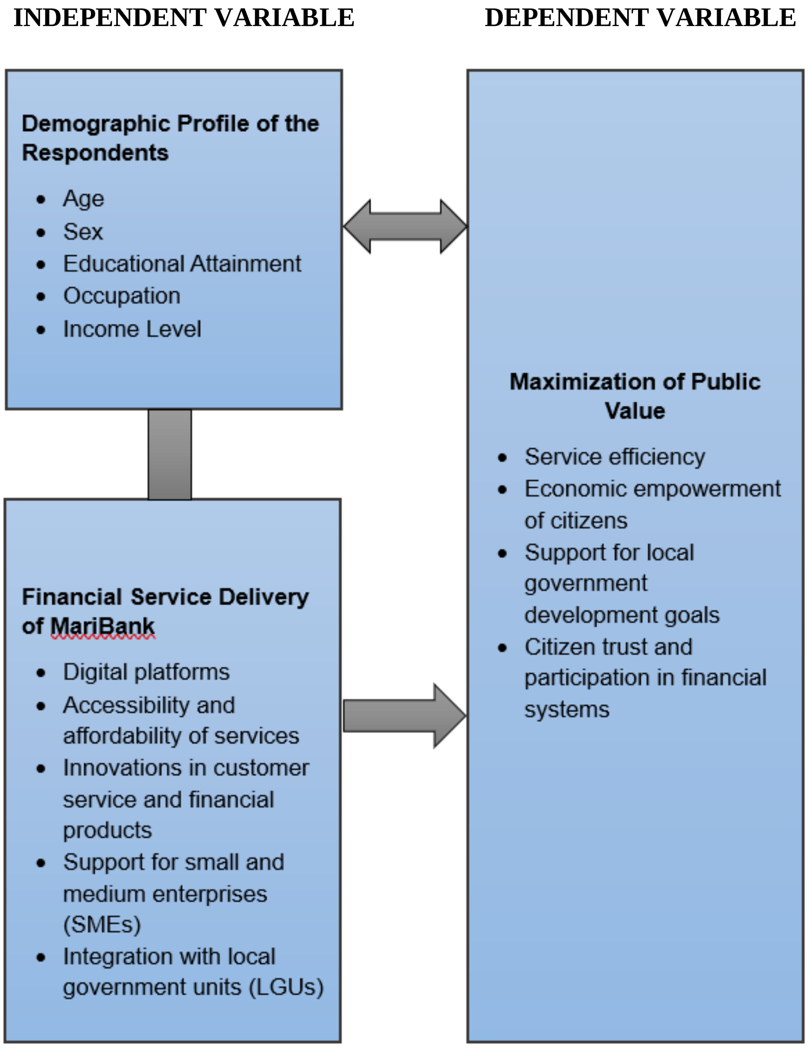

Figure 4. Research Paradigm

The independent variable contains the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, occupation, and income level; and the financial service delivery in terms of digital platforms, accessibility and affordability of services, innovations in customer service and financial products, support of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and integration with local government units (LGUs).

While the dependent variable is the maximization of public value, in terms of service efficiency, economic empowerment of citizens, support for local government development goals, and citizen trust and participation in financial systems.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study aims to identify the role of Rural Bank financial service delivery in strengthening local public administration and community development in Laguna.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
   - 1.1 age;
   - 1.2 sex;
   - 1.3 educational attainment;
   - 1.4 occupation; and
   - 1.5 income level?
2. What is the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of:
   - 2.1 digital platforms;
   - 2.2 accessibility and affordability of services;
   - 2.3 innovations in customer service and financial products;
   - 2.4 support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs); and
   - 2.5 integration with local government units (LGUs)?
3. What is the level of maximization of public value on community development in terms of:
   - 3.1 service efficiency;
   - 3.2 economic empowerment of citizens;
   - 3.3 support for local government development goals; and
   - 3.4 citizen trust and participation in financial systems?
4. Is there a significant relationship between rural bank financial service delivery and the maximization of public value in Laguna?
5. Do financial delivery services singly or collectively predict maximization of public value?
6. What plan of action may be proposed based on the results of the study?

1.5. Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between financial service delivery and the maximization of public value.

Financial delivery services do not singly or collectively predict the maximization of public value.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research, which investigates the role of Rural Bank financial service delivery in strengthening local public administration and community development in Laguna, is expected to yield valuable insights and practical benefits for the following stakeholders:

1.6.1. MariBank Management

The findings may offer a framework for evaluating their influence that goes beyond financial success. Rural banks can match their business plans with social impact objectives by determining which elements of financial service delivery like adoption of digital platforms, affordability, or assistance for SMEs have the biggest effects on the production of public value. In the banking industry, this strategy upholds the idea of corporate social responsibility (CSR), whereby financial firms serve as partners in community development to promote equitable and sustainable economic growth.

1.6.2. Local Government Units (LGUs)

The study directly benefits the community by recognizing the value of partnering with rural banks to advance financial inclusion, assist small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), and improve fiscal management. These partnerships support the goals of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Financial Inclusion Strategy Framework (2022) and the Philippine Development Plan (2023–2028), which both place a strong emphasis on incorporating financial innovation into local administration. Designing evidence-based policies that increase economic participation, lower poverty, and broaden access to public services can be influenced by knowledge of how financial institutions contribute to better service delivery.

1.6.3. Community Members and Local Entrepreneurs

They may benefit by emphasizing the readily available and cutting-edge financial services that enable people to take an active role in their communities' economies. Individuals and small companies can enhance their standard of living and support local development projects by having access to financial products like microloans, savings accounts, and digital banking systems. Additionally, citizens participate in participatory governance processes more frequently as their trust and confidence in political and financial institutions grows, which strengthens accountability and openness in public administration.

1.6.4. Future Researchers and Academics

This study contributes to the increasing body of research on emerging economies' developmental governance and public value theory. It extends the conversation on financial decentralization and collaborative governance by examining the ways in which private-sector financial mechanisms might impact public sector outcomes. This study can help public administration and finance scholars better understand how institutional collaborations between financial institutions and local government units (LGUs) promote sustainable community development. Furthermore, the framework of the study which links the provision of financial services to the maximum of public value can be applied in many locations, providing a useful resource for upcoming research and cross-regional comparisons.

1.7. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study focused on MariBank, a rural bank located in Laguna, Philippines, and analyzed its financial service delivery in relation to public value creation and local governance enhancement. The independent variable includes digital platforms, accessibility and affordability, innovations, SME support, and LGU integration, while the dependent variable focuses on service efficiency, economic empowerment, support for local government goals, and citizen trust and participation.

Respondents included MariBank employees, clients, and selected LGU officials who interact with the bank's community programs. Data were be gathered using a structured survey questionnaire utilizing a Likert scale, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's r correlation, and multiple regression analysis to test relationships and predictive strength between variables.

The study is limited to MariBank's branches in Laguna, excluding other rural banks or external financial institutions. The findings were based on self-reported data, which may introduce response bias. External factors such as macroeconomic conditions, national financial policies, and technological infrastructure are not directly analyzed. The study covers the period 2023–2025 and reflects the context of MariBank's operations during this timeframe only. Results may not be generalizable to other provinces or banking institutions with differing operational structures.

1.8. Review of Related Literature and Studies

The research review based on a variety of sources, such as books, journals, unpublished materials, and online sources, is presented in this section.

1.8.1. Related Literature

The idea of public value has become more well-known in the domains of public administration and development, highlighting the necessity for partner organizations and governmental institutions to provide services that are effective, empowering, and trusted by communities. In order to assess how rural banking services support local administration roles in community development, it is crucial to comprehend the dimensions of public value creation, which is directly impacted by institutional capacity, digital transitions, and the responsiveness of governance structures. According to Moore (2019), public institutions that successfully convert resources into socially desirable outcomes, such as enhanced service delivery, citizen empowerment, and increased trust in governance systems, create public value. This creates a theoretical framework for investigating how financial organizations, especially rural banks, support local public administration by providing effective financial services.

In terms of service efficiency, institutions have been motivated to develop operational procedures by the increasing demand in local communities for responsive public and financial services. According to Cordella et al. (2019), digital technologies boost inter-agency collaboration, cut down on bureaucratic layers, and speed up transactions to increase service efficiency. This is in line with rural banks' growing digitalization initiatives, which directly improve local government cooperation and community access to financial services. In support of this viewpoint, Gascó-Hernández (2021) highlighted that effective service delivery is essential to contemporary governance, particularly when digital platforms are employed to lessen administrative responsibilities. This means that rural banks can maximize public value in community settings by supporting LGU-led economic programs through the use of mobile apps, online banking, and automated loan processing.

Public value creation also heavily relies on the aspect of citizen economic empowerment. Sen et al. (2019) claim that because financial inclusion makes it possible for people to obtain credit, make wise financial decisions, and take part in regional economic activity, it is a crucial factor in economic empowerment. By providing credit to low-income individuals, farmers, and microentrepreneurs, groups who frequently lack access to major financial institutions, rural banks play a significant role in this field. Similarly, Demirgüç-Kunt et al. (2022) emphasized that having access to financial services increases residents' economic potential and promotes inclusive growth, poverty alleviation, and increased involvement in local development. The availability and caliber of rural bank services, which promote livelihood development and fortify the economic underpinnings of communities, influence the economic empowerment dimension, making this literature directly pertinent to the current study.

The literature on development planning highlights the significance of multisectoral cooperation in accomplishing local aims when it comes to support for local government development goals. According to Agranoff (2017), governance in the contemporary setting entails networked partnerships in which public and private organizations cooperate to achieve development goals. Such cooperative governance is demonstrated by rural banks' collaboration with LGUs through financial literacy initiatives, credit assistance for regional businesses, and digital financial transactions. In a similar vein, Bryson et al. (2015) contended that institutions that match their services with government priorities such as community welfare, entrepreneurship, and socioeconomic development maximize public value. Rural banks play a crucial role in supporting local development projects in Laguna municipalities and strengthening the ability of LGUs to provide responsive public services.

The long-term durability of public value is shaped by citizen trust and involvement in financial systems. To increase citizen participation and the legitimacy of governance, trust in institutions is crucial. According to Fukuyama (2018), trust is essential to good public administration because it fosters community cooperation, participation, and compliance. According to OECD (2020), digital financial platforms in financial systems need to be open, safe, and inclusive in order to boost public confidence and promote adoption, particularly among low-income groups. This is pertinent to the current study because the community's willingness to engage with financial systems that support local governance initiatives is influenced by rural banks' capacity to maintain transparent operations, secure client data, and offer dependable digital transactions.

In addition, Murray et al. (2020) highlighted that when institutions guarantee accountability and responsiveness in their service delivery, public participation rises. By implementing customer-centered innovations that enhance access to financial products and lower participation barriers for excluded populations, rural banks help achieve this. Additionally, Kim et al. (2021) observed that citizens are more empowered to take part in community development and governance processes when financial institutions support civic participation, such as through financial education programs and cooperation with local government units. This demonstrates how improved confidence and active citizen participation in financial and governance systems are two ways that rural bank service delivery impacts public value.

All things considered, these relevant literature sources show that the synergy of service effectiveness, economic empowerment, support for government efforts, and citizen trust is necessary to maximize public value in community development. The provision of rural bank services, which directly supports inclusive economic growth, responsive government, and active citizen participation, greatly influences these features. This highlights the importance of the current study, which explores how the provision of financial services by rural banks supports local public administration and community development in Laguna.

Digitalization, innovation, and the growing involvement of financial institutions in community development have all contributed to the recent rapid transformation of financial services delivery. The transition to digital platforms, which enable financial institutions to offer services more effectively and reach people in both urban and rural locations, is at the heart of contemporary service delivery. According to Riggins et al. (2019), digital platforms facilitate smooth financial transactions, greater transparency, and fewer operational obstacles where all of which aid regional development initiatives. This is pertinent to the current study because rural banks' adoption of digital banking systems may improve administrative cooperation with local government units (LGUs), hence bolstering public administration.

Affordability and accessibility are crucial elements of efficient financial service provision. Financial accessibility, according to Beck et al. (2018), is the capacity of citizens to get practical and reasonably priced financial solutions that satisfy their needs without prohibitive obstacles. The authors clarified that supporting inclusive financial systems, a crucial factor in assessing rural bank services in Laguna, requires reducing transaction costs and streamlining financial processes. In addition, Allen et al. (2018) contended that as excluded people depend on inexpensive financial services to engage in economic activities, affordability is essential to financial inclusion. Because rural banks are frequently the most accessible financial institutions for low-income and rural households, and because their service pricing influences the community's capacity to interact with public and financial systems, these concepts are relevant to the current research.

Financial service delivery is further improved by innovations in financial goods and customer service. Frame et al. (2018) talked about how innovation in banking enhances user experience and speeds up service delivery through automated services, customized financial tools, and digital customer assistance. These developments have a direct bearing on rural banks implementing modern technology to enhance customer service and assist local government initiatives. Similarly, Sorensen (2020) highlighted that by providing specialized financial solutions like microloans and agricultural funding, financial innovations accelerate economic development. This literature demonstrates how rural banks' introduction of new financial products enhances local economic resilience and administrative efficiency by increasing access to financial tools, which is relevant to the current study.

Another crucial aspect of financial service delivery that influences community development is financial assistance for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). SMEs depend on easily accessible loans, technical support, and financial advisory services to maintain their operations and create jobs locally, according to OECD (2021). In rural areas, where small businesses are frequently the main source of economic activity, these provisions become crucial. Similar to this, the Asian Development Bank (2020) pointed out that by providing flexible lending options and capacity-building initiatives, rural financial institutions are essential in helping SMEs expand. Because rural banks in Laguna offer SME-targeted financial products that help local economic growth and complement LGU development objectives, these talks are consistent with the current research.

Financial institutions' integration with local government units improves public governance as well as service delivery. This link was proposed by Osborne (2020) in the context of "public service ecosystems," where cooperative networks between public and private organizations result in better service outcomes. This is especially important for rural banks whose financial systems support local revenue collection, community cash transfers, and LGU-led development initiatives. Furthermore, the World Bank (2019) emphasized that strong fiscal management, increased transparency, and improved citizen access to public services are all benefits of successful integration between financial institutions and local governments. This emphasizes how important it is to comprehend Laguna's rural bank-LGU integration, especially in order to maximize community development through coordinated financial processes.

When considered collectively, the literature shows that institutional integration, SME support, innovation, accessibility, and digital advancement all influence the quality of financial service delivery. These aspects support rural banks' primary objective of bolstering local government and promoting community development. Examining how rural banks in Laguna use digital platforms, cutting-edge financial products, SME finance, and LGU partnerships to improve administrative operations and provide public value is important, as the highlighted literature confirms.

Analyzing trends in financial services, public administration participation, and community development requires an understanding of individual demographics. It is commonly acknowledged that demographic parameters, including sex, income level, occupation, and educational attainment, have a significant impact on financial behavior and access to financial institutions. Demographic traits have a significant impact on people's digital literacy and interactions with financial technologies, according to Schwab and Goldfarb (2018). This is pertinent to the current study because rural banks are adopting digital platforms that may be used differently by different demographic segments. In a similar vein, Brinton et al. (2016) highlighted how cultural expectations and gender norms impact men's and women's economic roles, influencing their engagement in community-based financial systems and access to financial resources. Because sex-based disparities may affect respondents' perceptions of rural bank services and their role in local public administration, these issues are crucial for the current study.

Financial literacy and the ability to interact with institutional procedures are also strongly influenced by educational attainment. According to Merriam et al. (2020), a higher level of education is associated with a better capacity to comprehend financial products, traverse administrative processes, and take part in communal decision-making. This directly relates to the study since people with varied educational backgrounds may view the financial services provided by rural banks differently. In support of this, Illeris (2018) noted that education has a significant role in determining social and cognitive capacity, influencing how people use traditional and digital financial services. When evaluating how residents participate in rural bank efforts and development programs funded by LGUs, especially in Laguna, education plays a crucial role.

Additionally, employment has a significant impact on how people use financial services and participate in community development. According to Richardson et al. (2019), people's financial demands, credit availability, economic stability, and propensity to deal with formal banking institutions are all influenced by their vocational roles. Due to the nature of their jobs, farmers, small company owners, and wage laborers in rural areas have different financial habits. According to this study, different occupational groups may use rural bank services differently, particularly when it comes to digital transactions, funding for SMEs, and mobilizing savings. Additionally, according to Bamber et al. (2020), occupational classification indicates productivity and economic engagement, which is consistent with assessing how financial service delivery supports more general community development objectives.

When analyzing financial access and economic empowerment, income level continues to be one of the most significant demographic characteristics. According to Stiglitz et al. (2015), people with higher incomes typically have better access to financial services and are able to engage in more economic activity. Low- to middle-class households are frequently among rural banks' customers, and their access to banking services can promote regional economic development. Furthermore, Banerjee et al. (2019) claimed that people's ability to save, borrow, invest, or take part in local development initiatives is influenced by their income. Because income level may affect how respondents use rural bank services and how these services support their economic empowerment and participation in governance, this literature is pertinent to the current study.

Smith et al. (2021), who noted that demographic profiles offer crucial insights for creating equitable financial policies, particularly in developing economies, are another piece of research emphasizing demographic aspects. Their work emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend population characteristics in order to improve public service delivery, a crucial factor for rural banks that engage with local government units. Similarly, Rotenberg et al. (2017) highlighted that demographic factors influence individuals' trust and interaction with institutions, such as local government systems and financial institutions. This validates the study's analysis of the relationship between public value maximization and demographic traits.

The critical role of financial institutions in sustaining small-scale industries is emphasized in broader Asian economic studies. Research highlights that Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) constitute over 96% of all Asian businesses, yet they remain hindered by high transaction costs and 'asymmetric information' (Yoshino & Taghizadeh-Hesary, 2024). Because most Asian economies are bank-dominant, the growth of these enterprises depends entirely on the efficiency of bank lending. This body of literature argues for the development of robust credit information infrastructures and sustainable guarantee schemes to mitigate collateral issues. Such findings provide a vital context for the current study, as it examines how MariBank’s support for SMEs in Laguna addresses these systemic financing gaps to maximize public value.

Additionally, Cornish et al. (2020) noted that adoption of digital finance is influenced by demographic considerations, particularly in rural areas where access to technology varies widely. Demographic profiling becomes critical in determining service efficacy and accessibility because digital platforms are an integral part of rural bank service delivery. Furthermore, Briggs et al. (2020) emphasized that institutional design and resource allocation are guided by demographic characteristics, especially in community development projects. Because rural banks and LGUs depend on population statistics to create programs that successfully meet community needs, this research is important.

Overall, the examined research shows that people's interactions with financial institutions and their involvement in public administration and development projects are greatly influenced by their demographic profiles. The study the role of rural bank service delivery in strengthening local public administration on community development directly benefits from these insights because it is crucial to understand respondents' sex, education, occupation, and income in order to interpret how different demographic groups interact with rural bank services and support community development.

1.8.2. Related Studies

The research highlights how effective financial service delivery adds to perceived community benefits when analyzing the maximum of public value through service efficiency. According to Tedyono et.al (2025), financial technology innovation dramatically boosts rural bank performance by directly increasing operational efficiency and lowering transaction processing costs a crucial component of service delivery that aligns with public administration objectives of effective service.

In a similar vein, Subia et. al (2022) showed through municipal service evaluation that improvements in the quality of public service delivery impact citizen satisfaction and loyalty, suggesting that effective services increase public trust and perceived value in governmental contexts. When rural banks run well, they assist wider administrative efficiency, which is essential to local public administration, in addition to streamlining their internal operations.

Access to banking services and financial inclusion are crucial for citizens' economic empowerment. Panakaje (2023) demonstrates how access to banking combined with literacy results in increased financial agency among rural people, highlighting the role of inclusive banking and financial literacy in boosting socio-economic empowerment in rural India. In line with this, Tejasmayee (2025) showed that increasing financial inclusion through rural banking and postal services stimulates rural economic growth, highlighting the important role that financial service access plays in local economic empowerment. According to Kyeyune (2025), financial literacy and cooperative financial mechanisms like SACCOs promote entrepreneurship and financial stability in rural areas, which directly improves citizens' economic empowerment and is in line with local governments' developmental goals. This body of research supports the notion that rural bank service delivery promotes economic self-sufficiency at the community level when it is inclusive and empowerment-focused.

Studies that connect the provision of financial services with more general governance outcomes also demonstrate support for local government development goals. Research on municipal public service delivery by Subia et al. (2022) demonstrates that effective and high-quality services are associated with favorable public outcomes and stronger alignment with local development objectives, even while they are not only banking-oriented. According to Exploring Citizen Satisfaction: balancing revenue generation and community engagement in municipal services (2025), citizen engagement and municipal performance toward development goals are strengthened by service quality and responsiveness in public service sectors, including finance-related services. These results highlight how rural banks support local governments' administrative objectives when they match their service strategies with their priorities, such as inclusive growth and economic initiatives.

When evaluating public value, the aspect of citizen engagement and trust in financial institutions is crucial. Trust is the cornerstone of any financial service, especially in rural contexts, and influences how communities interact with formal financial systems. Citizen Trust in E-Government Strategies (2025) demonstrates how trust in digital service platforms is closely linked to perceived public value and acceptance of services. Furthermore, the extensive body of research on financial empowerment and inclusion (Kyeyune, 2025) subtly emphasizes that greater access to banking services boosts customer confidence and involvement in financial activities. For public administrators looking to incorporate community people into financial and governance processes, these studies confirm that fostering trust through transparent, safe, and responsive banking services increases citizen participation.

These themes are further reinforced by Card MRI Rizal Bank's community initiatives (2024), which show how rural banks in the Philippines actively participate in local development programs, such as livelihood, health, and education projects, thereby fostering trust and strengthening the social contract between financial institutions and their communities (Card MRI Rizal Bank Inc., 2024). The real-world effects of this kind of community involvement show how rural bank services may produce value for the public that goes beyond simple financial transactions.

When taken as a whole, this literature demonstrates how effective, inclusive, and reliable rural bank services serve local government development objectives, increase citizen engagement in financial systems, and empower citizens economically. This corpus of work offers a theoretical and empirical basis for comprehending how rural bank service delivery supports local public administration and promotes community development. By empirically investigating the precise processes via which rural bank services impact each of these public value dimensions within the Philippine context, future study may expand on these findings.

The revolutionary impact of digital platforms in improving the delivery of financial services in rural areas has been highlighted in recent research. A thorough analysis by Mookerjee et al. (2025) demonstrates how digital banking solutions, such as mobile and internet platforms, improve the accessibility, affordability, and convenience of financial services for underprivileged rural populations while also lowering transaction costs and geographical barriers to formal banking access, important elements of service delivery that directly support inclusive local development goals. In support of this, a study on the adoption of digital banking in rural Vietnam discovered that social influence, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and facilitating conditions all had a significant impact on rural customers' intention and actual use of digital banking. This suggests that user experience and personal innovativeness are essential for successfully integrating digital platforms in rural banking systems (Discovering how personal innovativeness drives digital banking usage in rural areas, 2025). When taken as a whole, these studies highlight how rural banks' use of digital channels increases efficiency and fosters community-level involvement, strengthening the role of financial service delivery in local public administration.

Affordability and accessibility continue to be key factors when assessing the provision of financial services. According to the 2025 systematic review on mobile banking and fintech innovations in the Philippines, digital wallets and mobile banking greatly lower reliance on cash and transaction costs while boosting financial inclusion among rural users, making services more accessible and affordable (Velez, 2025). Accordingly, the Digital Banking and Financial Inclusion in Rural Economies review emphasizes how digital banking platforms democratize access by enabling account opening, fund transfers, and loan applications without the need for in-person branch visits. This is especially important for remote communities that rural banks frequently serve (Digital Banking and Financial Inclusion in Rural Economies, 2025). These results confirm that rural banks must provide more affordable and accessible financial services in order to promote fair community development.

The quality-of-service delivery is also improved by innovations in financial goods and customer service. Land Bank of the Philippines' ongoing "phygital" strategy, which combines physical service locations with digital self-service machines and partnerships that extend banking capabilities into underserved areas, demonstrates how combining technology with customer service innovation can improve user experience and responsiveness, even though specific customer service innovation studies in rural banking are less common (LANDBANK digital services, 2025). In order to lower adoption barriers and optimize the advantages of cutting-edge platforms like digital wallets and mobile banking apps, studies on FinTech and financial inclusion emphasize the significance of digital financial literacy and regulatory assistance (Amnas et al. 2024). These observations are relevant to rural banks that want to address a variety of community requirements by innovating their product offerings and customer service channels.

The provision of financial services that assist small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) is essential for boosting regional economies, and pertinent research emphasizes the relationship between government support, SME performance, and banking services. In line with the rural bank's mission to promote local enterprise growth through customized credit and financial products, Sudarnice et al. (2023) show that government support mechanisms (such as incentives and simplified credit conditions) in conjunction with bank financing improve SME performance (Bank Financing, Government Support, and SME Performance, 2025). Furthermore, adoption of digital banking is associated with financial inclusion outcomes like increased account ownership and transaction usage among SME operators, according to a recent global case study on the impact of digital banking for rural SMEs throughout the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region.

This highlights the significance of user-centric digital solutions to empower small businesses (Impact of Digital Banking on Financial Inclusion for Rural SMEs, 2025). These results imply that rural banks can be important participants in local economic development, directly supporting administrative objectives and community resilience through specialized SME support services and products.

The developmental impact of rural banking is increased when financial service delivery is integrated with local government units (LGUs) and larger public administration organizations. Policy frameworks like the Philippines' National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (2022–2028) prioritize coordinated action across government, financial institutions, and stakeholders, notwithstanding the relative lack of peer-reviewed studies especially on rural bank–LGU integration (BSP NSFI, 2022). In order to promote inclusive financial services and MSME support, this plan emphasizes the necessity of multi-stakeholder participation, including public-private partnerships, which underlines the significance of combining rural bank services with local government development objectives. Furthermore, LANDBANK's partnerships with cooperatives, associations, and local government units to provide basic banking services in underserved areas serve as an example of how alignment between banks and local administrative units can expand service outreach, promote financial inclusion, and support public sector goals for community development (LANDBANK partnerships, 2025). In order to operationalize community-oriented finance policies inside local governance, these connections are essential.

The review of the literature as a whole shows that the provision of financial services by rural banks, which are distinguished by strong digital platforms, improved accessibility and affordability, creative products and customer service, proactive support for SMEs, and cooperation with local government units, is crucial in fostering inclusive community development. These studies offer a thorough context for comprehending how rural bank service delivery mechanisms might support regional public administration initiatives and significantly contribute to long-term social and economic advancement in rural areas.

Understanding how respondents' profiles affect attitudes and participation with rural bank service delivery is directly related to the substantial body of research that shows how demographic features affect access to and usage of financial services. In the Philippine context, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' 2021 Financial Inclusion Survey Report offers nationally representative data that illustrates the relationship between financial inclusion indicators—like access to financial service providers and uptake of financial products—and characteristics like sex, income, occupation, and educational attainment (BSP, 2021). This groundbreaking study emphasizes how demographic characteristics influence financial behavior, influencing how much people interact with formal financial institutions. This is a crucial finding for examining the provision of services by rural banks and their function in the development of local communities.

Gender, education, and income levels have a substantial impact on financial behaviors and inclusion, according to research on the effects of demographic characteristics on the use of financial services. For instance, a number of international and regional studies have discovered that ownership and use of formal financial accounts are positively correlated with being female, having a higher level of education, and earning more money, whereas low income and education are frequently linked to restricted financial access (Ruey et al., 2024). These correlations show how respondents' demographics can be important factors in determining how various community segments view and use rural banking services, which can help analyze the efficacy of service delivery in bolstering local public administration.

These trends are further explained by specific study on financial literacy and demographic traits. Assessing Financial Literacy Levels Among Small-Scale Farmers in the Philippines revealed that low monthly income, different educational attainment levels, and sex distribution with a higher proportion of female farmers have a major impact on rural populations' financial capacity and decision-making (San Lorenzo farmers, 2025). This is consistent with more general findings that financial capability, a crucial mediator for successful interaction with financial services like savings, credit, or bank accounts, which are fundamental to rural bank services, is associated with educational attainment.

Gender and educational attainment have an impact on the adoption of digital financial services, according to study on the implications of demographics on formal and digital financial participation. An international study on digital financial inclusion, for example, discovered that awareness and usage of digital financial services in rural contexts are significantly influenced by education and income, with higher education and income being associated with greater adoption and utilization (Social-demographic perspective of digital services, 2024). Understanding how demographic features connect to digital uptake is essential to interpreting how service delivery helps community development, given the growing integration of digital platforms in rural bank service delivery.

Gender and education have a major impact on financial literacy levels, which in turn affect people's likelihood of using formal financial products, according to research examining demographic determinants of financial literacy and service consumption (Dewi, 2022). These results are significant because financial education and digital financial literacy programs are frequently included in rural bank service delivery, dimensions that interact with demographic traits to influence service uptake and community development outcomes.

Independent studies have also looked into how income and occupation affect financial inclusion and access. Employed people have higher rates of financial account ownership than unemployed respondents, according to a study on financial inclusion in Ilocos Norte, Philippines. This suggests that occupation and, consequently, income stability improve access to financial services (Financial Inclusion Landscape, 2024). This lends credence to the idea that assessing the efficacy and reach of rural bank service delivery in underprivileged communities heavily depends on the respondents' financial situation.

These connections are further supported by studies on the effects of demographics on income and education. Higher levels of education are linked to better socioeconomic indicators and higher household wealth, according to extensive demographic surveys like the Philippines Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (DHS Philippines, 2025). These trends are consistent with research on financial inclusion, which shows that access to and use of financial services like bank accounts, loans, and savings are influenced by income and education.

Furthermore, global results from socioeconomic studies in different settings show that public service utilization is influenced by demographic characteristics. For instance, a cross-sectional study conducted in China revealed variations in the use of public health services among gender and educational categories, supporting the idea that demographic traits have a larger impact on service participation (Impact of social capital and demographics, 2021). By analogy, this understanding may be applied to financial service research in the health sector: service use patterns are consistently shaped by demographic features in all sectors.

Further studies in the domains of financial behavior and inclusion show that differences in income and sex cause unequal access to financial resources. Discussions about worldwide financial inclusion reveal that women frequently lag behind men in the ownership and use of financial accounts, and lower-income groups encounter more obstacles when trying to access formal financial services, indicating enduring demographic disparities (Klapper, 2025). This data directly relates to the provision of services by rural banks: determining if respondents exhibit comparable demographic trends can assist put rural banks' contributions to inclusive community development into context.

Lastly, studies on consumer financial behaviors have looked at how income, gender, occupation, and education all work together to affect banking usage and financial literacy (Research on demographic influences on financial literacy level, 2023). These thorough evaluations confirm that demographic characteristics are active elements influencing financial service usage patterns, trust, and inclusion outcomes rather than just background variables. Understanding how various demographic groups react to service delivery is essential to your research on rural banks because it clarifies differences in the administrative impact and perceived public value of rural financial services.

When taken as a whole, these studies show that sex, income level, employment, and educational attainment are significant indicators of financial service knowledge and engagement, which in turn affect how people interact with rural bank services. A strong basis for analyzing how rural bank service delivery supports local public administration objectives and community development is provided by an understanding of these demographic effects. Thus, identifying demographic trends among respondents improves the study of the efficacy of service delivery and offers avenues for focused interventions to boost community outcomes and financial inclusion.

1.8.3. Synthesis

The studied research clearly shows how financial service delivery, public value creation, and demographic traits influence community development outcomes. According to Moore (2019), organizations that successfully transform resources into socially desired outcomes such as improved service delivery, citizen empowerment, and faith in governance, create public value. As local financial intermediaries, rural banks are essential to this process because they offer easily accessible, effective, and inclusive financial services that support local government activities and foster economic growth.

The studies regularly emphasize the aspects of economic empowerment, citizen trust and engagement, support for local government objectives, and service efficiency. It has been demonstrated that digital platforms, automation, and creative service mechanisms improve operational efficiency, simplify procedures, and lower bureaucratic barriers (Cordella et al. 2019). By implementing such technological solutions, rural banks increase their contribution to local public administration by facilitating collaboration with LGUs and improving their own service efficiency.

One of the most important results of providing financial services effectively is economic empowerment. Citizens' economic potential is increased by loan availability, financial literacy initiatives, and inclusive banking practices, especially for low-income people and microbusiness owners (Sen etal. 2019). By providing tailored financial products to SMEs, rural banks boost local economic activity, creating jobs and encouraging self-sufficiency (Sudarnice et al., 2023).

The literature also emphasizes how crucial alignment with local government development objectives is. When rural banks work with LGUs on community projects, digital financial transactions, and financial literacy programs, effective service delivery is maximized. This creates multisectoral partnerships that improve public administration outcomes (Agranoff, 2017).

The long-term viability of public value depends heavily on citizen engagement and confidence. According to studies (Fukuyama, 2018), transparent, secure, and inclusive financial services boost public confidence and involvement, allowing residents to actively participate in community development and governance processes. Rural banks that place a high priority on financial education and customer-centered innovations foster trust, which boosts civic engagement and fortifies local governance structures.

Lastly, demographic factors like sex, income level, occupation, and educational attainment have a big impact on participation in local development projects, digital literacy, and financial service engagement (BSP, 2021). Comprehending these demographics is crucial for analyzing how various community groups engage with rural banks and for creating focused interventions that guarantee fair access to financial services and maximize public value.

In conclusion, the body of research shows that rural bank service delivery supports LGU activities, fosters economic empowerment, increases service efficiency, and fosters citizen engagement and trust. Demographic considerations influence engagement and utilization patterns, hence mediating the effectiveness of these services. This synthesis lays the theoretical and empirical groundwork for the current investigation, highlighting the critical role rural banks play in bolstering local public administration and promoting sustainable community development in Laguna.

2. Methodology

The research methodology that was applied throughout the entire study is presented in this chapter.

This includes research procedure, research instrument, population and sampling techniques, research design, and statistical analysis of the data.

2.1. Research Design

This quantitative study employed descriptive research design employing correlation methods. The quantitative approach allows for the systematic collection of numerical data that can be analyzed statistically to determine relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The correlational method, on the other hand, seeks to determine the degree of relationship between the independent variable: financial service delivery of rural banks and the dependent variable: maximization of public value in the context of local public administration and community development in Laguna.

This design is appropriate since it aims to establish whether financial service delivery components such as digital platforms, accessibility, affordability, innovation, SME support, and LGU integration have a significant relationship with the maximization of public value in terms of service efficiency, economic empowerment, local government support, and citizen trust and participation.

2.2. Population and Sampling Technique

The respondents of the study included clients, local entrepreneurs, and partner LGU personnel who have availed of or are currently availing of MariBank's financial services in selected municipalities: Pagsanjan, Santa Cruz, Siniloan and Liliw, Laguna. These respondents represented key stakeholders who experience and assess the quality and effectiveness of rural bank financial services and their contribution to community development.

Approximately 332 respondents were targeted to ensure representativeness and statistical validity. The respondents' demographic profile was described in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, occupation, and income level, as these variables may influence perceptions of financial service delivery and public value outcomes.

Table 1 below presented the distribution of the study's population and the corresponding sample drawn from rural bank clients across four municipalities in Laguna, namely Pagsanjan, Santa Cruz, Siniloan, and Liliw. The table reflected the total number of customers or clients served within each municipality and the computed sample size derived using Yamane's Formula at a 5% margin of error, ensuring an adequate level of representativeness and statistical reliability.

Pagsanjan reflects the largest number of clients (1,088), accounting for the highest proportion of the sample with 150 respondents. This is followed by Siniloan, with a population of 745 and a sample of 104 respondents. These two municipalities provide the bulk of the study's participants due to their relatively larger client bases. Meanwhile, Liliw has a recorded population of 314 clients, resulting in a sample of 43. Santa Cruz has the smallest client population among the four (254), yielding a sample size of 35 respondents.

The total population of 2,401 clients across the four municipalities resulted in a total sample size of 332 respondents, which adheres to the requirements of Yamane's Formula. This formula is appropriate for studies where the population is known but sampling needs to be proportionally allocated to maintain equal representation. Applying the formula ensured that each municipality contributed respondents proportionate to its population size, preventing heavy skew toward municipalities with larger populations.

Overall, the distribution displayed in Table 1 demonstrates that the sampling procedure followed an objective and statistically sound approach. It allowed for fair representation of client experiences across different geographic areas within Laguna. This proportional sampling enhances the validity of the results, as it captures diverse perspectives regarding rural bank financial service delivery and its relationship to public value maximization in their respective municipalities.

Table 1. *Population and Sample of the Study*

Cluster	Municipalities	Population	Frequency
Municipalities	Pagsanjan	1088	150
	Santa Cruz	254	35
	Siniloan	745	104
	Liliw	314	43
	TOTAL	**2401**	**332**

Yamane's Formula with 5% margin of error

2.3. Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was utilized. This approach ensures proportional representation of respondents from different demographic groups and stakeholder categories (e.g., rural bank clients, SME owners, LGU personnel). According to Etikan et al (2017), stratified random sampling minimizes sampling bias and enhances data reliability, especially when the population is heterogeneous.

Each stratum (e.g., municipality or respondent type) was assigned a proportionate number of respondents based on the total population served by MariBank within the province of Laguna.

Although the nonprobability sampling used in this study may limit the generalizability of the results of the inferential statistics used, it is still useful to examine the relationships among the variables of the study.

2.4. Research Instrument

The primary data-gathering tool used in this study is a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to collect quantitative data on the role of rural bank financial service delivery in strengthening local public administration and promoting community development. The instrument was developed based on the study's conceptual framework, which focuses on the relationship between financial service delivery and the maximization of public value. The questionnaire was divided into two main parts. The first part focused on the respondents' demographic profile, which includes variables such as age, sex, educational attainment, length of service or bank engagement, and type of stakeholder (bank employee, LGU partner, or community client). These data were gathered to provide context and support for the interpretation of the main findings.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of items that measure the independent and dependent variables of the study. The independent variable, financial service delivery, was assessed through five dimensions: (1) digital platforms, (2) accessibility and affordability of services, (3) innovations in customer service and financial products, (4) support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and (5) integration with local government units (LGUs). Each dimension contained five to seven statements designed to assess how respondents perceive MariBank's practices and initiatives in delivering financial services. Meanwhile, the dependent variable, maximization of public value, was measured through indicators such as (1) service efficiency, (2) economic empowerment of citizens, (3) support for local government development goals, and (4) citizen trust and participation in financial systems. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, where 5 means Strongly Agree, 4 means Agree, 3 means Neutral, 2 means Disagree, and 1 means Strongly Disagree.

To ensure that the questionnaire effectively captures the constructs of the study, it underwent content and face validation by three experts in the fields of public administration, banking, and research methodology. Their feedback was carefully considered, and necessary revisions were made to improve the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the items. To further establish the psychometric soundness of the instrument, it was subjected to pilot testing among 20 respondents who were not part of the main study sample. The reliability of the questionnaire was statistically verified using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to measure internal consistency. The results ensured that all dimensions of the instrument met the acceptable threshold of 0.70 and above, confirming that the items consistently measure the intended variables.

The finalized questionnaire was then used to gather data from respondents in MariBank branches and partner local government units in Laguna. The tool served as the primary basis for identifying the level of financial service delivery and its relationship to the creation and maximization of public value in local communities. The structured format of the instrument enabled efficient data collection and facilitated statistical analysis aligned with the study's quantitative research design.

2.5. Research Procedures

The conduct of this study followed a systematic sequence to ensure reliability, validity, and ethical compliance throughout the research process. Initially, the researcher secured approval from the Graduate School of Laguna State Polytechnic University as part of the academic requirements for the Master of Public Administration program. Upon obtaining the endorsement from the adviser and approval from the Graduate School Dean, a formal letter of request to conduct the study was sent to the management of MariBank in Laguna, the participating local government units (LGUs), and the selected community partners. This step ensures that the study is carried out with the consent of the institutions directly involved and adheres to institutional research protocols.

Once permission is granted, the researcher proceeded with the validation of the research instrument. The survey questionnaire, developed based on the conceptual framework and reviewed literature, was subjected to content and face validation by three recognized experts in public administration, banking, and research methodology. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated to improve clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. After validation, the instrument underwent pilot testing among a small sample of respondents not included in the actual study to assess reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, ensuring internal consistency and accuracy of measurement.

Following validation, the researcher conducted the data gathering process. The administration of the survey employed a combination of online and printed questionnaires, depending on the accessibility and preference of the respondents. Coordination with MariBank branch managers and LGU focal persons was done to distribute the instruments to clients, SME owners, and partner LGU staff. Respondents were fully informed of the purpose of the study, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and asked to provide their informed consent prior to participation. Data collection was taken place over a four-week period to allow sufficient time for retrieval and verification.

After the completion of data collection, the researcher proceeded to the data organization and processing phase. Responses were tallied, encoded, and verified for completeness before being subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) or Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation was used to describe respondents' profiles and perceptions, while inferential statistics such as Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple Linear Regression were applied to test relationships and identify predictive factors among the variables.

Finally, the researcher analyzed, interpreted, and presented the findings in alignment with the research questions, conceptual framework, and hypotheses. The results were compared with related literature and studies discussed in Chapter 2 to validate or challenge existing knowledge. Ethical considerations such as the confidentiality of respondent information, voluntary participation, and truthful reporting of data will be strictly observed throughout the research process. Upon completion, a summary of the results and implications for local public administration and community development were submitted to the Graduate

School and participating institutions for reference and possible policy integration.

2.6. Statistical Treatment of Data

To ensure a rigorous and systematic analysis of the gathered information, the researchers employed various quantitative methods to interpret the data in alignment with the study's objectives.

Research Problem	***Statistical Tool used***
Quantitative Questions	
1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of: 1.1 age; 1.2 sex; 1.3 educational attainment; 1.4 occupation; 1.5 income level?	**Frequency and Percentage**
2. How may financial service delivery be described in terms of: 2.1 digital platforms; 2.2 accessibility and affordability of services; 2.3 innovations in customer service and financial products; 2.4 support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs); and 2.5 integration with local government units (LGUs)?	**Mean and Standard Deviation**
3. What is the level of maximization of public value in community development in terms of: 3.1 service efficiency; 3.2 economic empowerment of citizens; 3.3 support for local government development goals; and 3.4 citizen trust and participation in financial systems?	**Mean and Standard Deviation**
4. Is there a significant relationship between rural bank financial service delivery and the maximization of public value in Laguna?	**Correlation Coefficient**
5. Do financial delivery services collectively predict maximization of public value?	**Correlation Coefficient**

2.7. For the Scoring and Interpretation Guide

Rating Scale	**Interpretation**
4.21-5.00	Very High Implementation
3.41-4.20	High Implementation
2.61-3.40	Moderate Implementation
1.81-2.60	Low Implementation
1.00-1.81	Very Low Implementation

To give interpretation to computed Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (*r*), the following guide is adopted:

Rating Scale	Interpretation
± 0.91-1.00	Very High Positive/Negative Correlation
± 0.71-0.90	High Positive/Negative Correlation
± 0.41-0.70	Moderate Positive/Negative Correlation
± 0.21-0.40	Low Positive/Negative Correlation
± 0.01-0.20	Very Low Positive/Negative Correlation

To determine whether the correlation is statistically significant, the computed *r* value will be compared with the critical *r* value from the Pearson correlation table at a 0.05 level of significance (two-tailed test).

- If computed $r >$ critical r, reject the null hypothesis (there is a significant relationship).
- If computed $r \leq$ critical r, fail to reject the null hypothesis (no significant relationship).

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered to determine the significant relationship between rural bank financial service delivery and the maximization of public value in Laguna.

3.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The respondents' demographic profile gives a detailed image of the traits of the study participants, especially with regard to age, sex, occupation, level of education, and monthly income. These variables are crucial for comprehending the data's context and the potential effects of various sociodemographic factors on the responses.

In terms of age, the study reveals that the majority of respondents belong to the 26–33 years old bracket (44.9%), followed by those aged 42–49 years old (21.1%), while only a minimal proportion (0.6%) are aged 50 years and above. This suggests that young to middle-aged adults, who are usually in their most productive and socially engaged years, make up the majority of the sample. Guerra-Marmolejo et al. (2021) found that age has a major impact on attitudes and behaviors, with younger and middle-aged people frequently exhibiting stronger engagement and more dynamic viewpoints compared to older groups. Because elderly respondents were underrepresented in this study, it's possible that the results are more representative of modern attitudes and active community involvement than of traditional or senior viewpoints.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Educational Attainment, Occupation, and Income Level

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Age			
18-35 yo	59	17.8	3
26-33 yo	149	44.9	1
34-41 yo	52	15.7	4
42-49 yo	70	21.1	2
50 yo and above	2	0.6	5
Sex			
Male	123	37.0	2
Female	209	63.0	1
Prefer Not to Say	0	0.0	3

Educational Attainment			
Elementary Undergraduate	0	0.0	8.5
Elementary Graduate	0	0.0	8.5
Secondary Undergraduate	0	0.0	8.5
Secondary Graduate	16	4.8	4
Tertiary Undergraduate	75	22.6	3
Tertiary Graduate	131	39.5	1
Masteral Undergraduate	1	0.3	6.5
Doctoral Undergraduate	90	27.1	2
Doctoral Graduate	18	5.4	5
No Response	1	0.3	6.5
Occupation			
Self-Employed	108	32.5	2
Private Employee	111	33.4	1
Government Employee	7	2.1	4
Business Owner	104	31.3	3
No Response	2	0.6	5
Monthly Income			
10,000-20,000	46	13.9	4
20,001-30,000	52	15.7	3
30,001-40,000	83	25.0	2
40,001 and above	150	45.2	1
No Response	1	0.3	5
TOTAL	**332**	**100.0**	

With respect to sex, the results show that females constitute the majority (63.0%) of respondents, while males account for 37.0%. This disparity points to a higher female participation percentage, which could affect the study's overall conclusions. In line with this, Guerra-Marmolejo et al. (2021) discovered that gender disparities had a substantial impact on attitudes, perceptions, and levels of involvement, with women frequently showing greater responsiveness in survey-based research. This suggests that gendered viewpoints may influence the study's conclusions, especially when it comes to social awareness, community involvement, and decision-making processes.

In relation to educational attainment, the results indicate that the majority of respondents are highly educated, with 39.5% being tertiary graduates, 27.1% having reached doctoral level, and 22.6% being tertiary undergraduates. The proportion of people with secondary education levels is quite low. This implies that the respondents have a high degree of knowledge and cognitive ability to comprehend and complete the survey. This result is consistent with that of Baird et al. (2019), who emphasized the importance of education in influencing people's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. In a similar vein, Raji et al. (2025) stressed that more education is linked to more progressive and knowledgeable viewpoints. Because it shows that participants are capable of offering well-informed perspectives, the high educational background of respondents in the current study enhances the data's credibility.

In terms of occupation, the respondents are predominantly engaged in private employment (33.4%), self-employment (32.5%), and business ownership (31.3%), with only a small proportion working in the government sector (2.1%). A population that is heavily engaged in economic and entrepreneurial endeavors is reflected in this distribution. In support of this, Raji et al. (2025) pointed out that a person's employment greatly affects their attitudes and decision-making processes since it dictates how they are exposed to resources, experiences, and information. The study's high proportion of economically engaged participants indicates that the conclusions are shaped by realistic, experience-based viewpoints, especially when it comes to community involvement and economic development.

Finally, in terms of monthly income, the results show that a substantial portion of respondents belong to higher income brackets, with 45.2% earning 40,001 and above, and 25.0% earning between 30,001–40,000. This suggests that the majority of respondents' financial circumstances are comparatively steady. Kim (2015), who discovered that socioeconomic status has a major impact on behavior, access to opportunities, and decision-making, supports this conclusion. Similarly, Ramli (2025) highlighted that people's ability to engage in social and developmental activities is influenced by their income level. As a result, the study's respondents' comparatively high-income levels might encourage more proactive and resource-aware viewpoints.

Furthermore, the way these demographic factors interact supports the interpretation of the results. According to Prior et al. (2022), sociodemographic characteristics including age, gender, income, education, and occupation interact to influence people's experiences and reactions rather than acting independently. This is clear from the current study's respondents, who are primarily female, young to middle-aged, well educated, engaged in the economy, and financially secure. Such a profile points to a group that is actively involved in societal and developmental issues in addition to being able to make well-informed decisions.

Table 3. Level of Financial Service Delivery of MariBank in terms of Digital Platforms

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The rural bank provides user-friendly mobile or online banking services.	4.85	0.40	Strongly Agree
2. I can easily access my account and transactions using digital platforms.	4.82	0.39	Strongly Agree
3. The bank's digital system is secure and reliable.	4.85	0.39	Strongly Agree
4. Online transactions save me time and effort compared to in-person banking.	4.92	0.29	Strongly Agree
5. The bank regularly updates its digital services to enhance user experience.	4.91	0.29	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.87**	**0.29**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 3 presents the respondents' assessment of the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of digital platforms, revealing a consistently high level of satisfaction across all indicators.

The total weighted mean of 4.87 (*SD* = 0.29), which is read as Very High Implementation, shows that respondents think MariBank's digital banking services are very dependable, accessible, and efficient. This shows that the bank has successfully incorporated digital technologies into its service delivery, fulfilling customer expectations.

The statement "Online transactions save me time and effort compared to in-person banking" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.92, *SD* = 0.29) among the indicators, indicating that respondents place a high value on the efficiency and convenience provided by digital banking platforms. This result emphasizes how crucial time-saving features are to raising customer happiness. It suggests that consumers favor digital transactions over traditional banking because of the shorter wait times, accessibility, and general convenience.

With a mean of 4.91 (*SD* = 0.29), the statement "The bank regularly updates its digital services to enhance user experience" comes next. This suggests that respondents are aware of the bank's ongoing attempts to enhance its digital infrastructure. Maintaining competitiveness and guaranteeing client retention need frequent system changes and enhancements, especially in a fast changing digital environment.

Both "The bank's digital system is secure and reliable" and "The rural bank offers user-friendly mobile or online banking services" received a mean of 4.85 (*SD* = 0.40 and 0.39, respectively). These findings imply that respondents think the platform is reliable and simple to use. Because they have a direct impact on customers' confidence and willingness to interact with online financial services, user-friendliness and system security are essential elements of the adoption of digital banking.

The high grade for "I can easily access my account and transactions using digital platforms" (*M* = 4.82, *SD* = 0.39) further supports the bank's digital systems' usability and accessibility. This suggests that users may easily complete transactions on the platform because it is responsive and easily accessible.

A high degree of agreement among respondents is indicated by the consistently low standard deviation values (range from 0.29 to 0.40) across all categories, indicating that opinions of MariBank's digital services are consistent and overwhelmingly positive.

Perceived convenience, security, and ease of use are among the most important elements impacting customer satisfaction and uptake of digital financial services, according to research (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Additionally, new research highlights how effective digital platforms improve customer experience by speeding up transactions, enhancing accessibility, and boosting confidence in financial institutions. In digital banking systems, maintaining consumer engagement and loyalty also heavily depends on ongoing innovation and system upgrades.

Table 4 presents the respondents' assessment of the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of accessibility and affordability, indicating a generally high level of satisfaction across all indicators.

The overall weighted mean of 4.61 (*SD* = 0.55), which is read as Very High Implementation, indicates that respondents believe MariBank's services are both reasonably priced and easily accessible. This suggests that the bank is successful in providing inclusive financial services that meet the expectations of its customers, especially with regard to service availability and cost-effectiveness.

Table 4. Level of Financial Service Delivery of MariBank in terms of Accessibility and Affordability of Services

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The bank has branches or agents conveniently located near my community.	4.15	1.40	Agree
2. Banking fees and charges are affordable for local residents.	4.74	0.51	Strongly Agree
3. Services such as loans or savings accounts are easily available to customers.	4.83	0.38	Strongly Agree
4. The bank offers financial products that suit the needs of ordinary citizens.	4.70	0.53	Strongly Agree
5. Customer assistance is readily available when needed.	4.63	0.65	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.61**	**0.55**	**Very High Implementation**

"Services such as loans or savings accounts are easily available to customers" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.83, *SD* = 0.38) among the indicators, suggesting that respondents firmly believe that fundamental financial services are widely accessible. This illustrates the bank's capacity to offer necessary financial products without major obstacles, which is a crucial component of financial inclusion.

Similarly, the statement "Banking fees and charges are affordable for local residents" had a high mean of 4.74 (*SD* = 0.51). This result demonstrates that most users believe service costs are fair and within their means. Affordability plays a major role in motivating people to use formal banking institutions, particularly those from low- to middle-class backgrounds.

MariBank appears to have successfully matched its financial products with the needs and preferences of its target clientele, as seen by the indication "The bank offers financial products that suit the needs of ordinary citizens" receiving a strong rating (*M* = 4.70, *SD* = 0.53). This shows that service design is customer-centered and sensitive to market demands.

Additionally, "Customer assistance is readily available when needed" had a mean score of 4.63 (*SD* = 0.65), indicating that respondents believe the bank's support services are dependable and easily accessible. This is a crucial part of providing services since prompt support increases client happiness and trust.

However, despite still being evaluated as Agree, the statement "The bank has branches or agents conveniently located near my community" received the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.15, *SD* = 1.40). While some respondents found the bank's physical presence accessible, others may encounter constraints in proximity, as indicated by the somewhat higher standard deviation. This could suggest that despite the good performance in other categories, physical accessibility is still a problem in some places.

Research has demonstrated that price and accessibility are key factors in determining the effectiveness of financial services, especially in underserved and rural areas (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018). Participation in the formal banking industry is greatly increased by reasonable costs and simple access to financial goods. Additionally, the availability of personalized financial solutions and customer service increases user satisfaction and confidence (World Bank, 2020).

Table 5. Level of Financial Service Delivery of MariBank in terms of Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The bank regularly introduces new services to improve customer satisfaction.	4.79	0.49	Strongly Agree
2. Loan and savings programs are designed to meet community development needs.	4.55	0.50	Strongly Agree
3. Customer service staff are trained to address client concerns effectively.	4.53	0.74	Strongly Agree
4. New financial products support local entrepreneurs and small businesses.	4.46	0.80	Strongly Agree
5. The bank uses modern technology to improve service quality.	4.61	0.49	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.59**	**0.40**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 5 presents the respondents' evaluation of the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of innovations in customer service and financial products, indicating a consistently high level of agreement across all indicators.

The total weighted mean of 4.59 (*SD* = 0.40), which is translated as Very High Implementation, indicates that respondents believe MariBank is very creative in improving its services and creating financial solutions that cater to the needs of its clients. This demonstrates the bank's dedication to ongoing development and flexibility in a cutthroat financial market.

The indication with the highest mean score (*M* = 4.79, *SD* = 0.49) was "The bank regularly introduces new services to improve customer satisfaction." This suggests that the bank's proactive efforts to introduce innovations that improve the entire client experience are highly acknowledged by the respondents. In order to keep customers engaged and remain relevant in the changing financial industry, new services must be introduced on a regular basis.

The bank's successful integration of technical improvements into its operations was highlighted by the high rating (*M* = 4.61, *SD* = 0.49) given to the statement "The bank uses modern technology to improve service quality." This implies that respondents believe technology plays a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness, precision, and convenience of financial service delivery.

The statement "Loan and savings programs are designed to meet community development needs" also received a mean score of 4.55 (*SD* = 0.50), suggesting that the bank's financial products are sensitive to the community's socioeconomic needs. This illustrates a customer-focused and development-focused strategy in which financial services are customized to promote both personal and societal development.

With a mean score of 4.53 (*SD* = 0.74) for the indication "Customer service staff are trained to address client concerns effectively," it appears that most respondents believe the bank's employees are capable of offering helpful assistance. The comparatively higher standard deviation, however, suggests that there may be some variation in the responses, suggesting that different clients may have different customer service experiences.

Although it was still regarded as Strongly Agree, "New financial products support local entrepreneurs and small businesses" had the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.46, *SD* = 0.80). The greater standard deviation further suggests that respondents' perceptions vary. This could imply that even while the bank supports entrepreneurship, there is still opportunity to improve or broaden initiatives aimed at small and local businesses.

In order to improve customer happiness and foster economic growth, financial services innovation is essential. Research shows that the employment of contemporary technology in conjunction with the introduction of new financial products greatly enhances service accessibility and efficiency (Venkatesh et al., 2016). Additionally, stronger support for micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs), which are essential for regional economic development, has been associated with banking innovation (OECD, 2020). Positive client experiences and enduring customer loyalty are also greatly influenced by efficient customer service, which is backed by skilled staff.

Table 6 presents the respondents' evaluation of the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), indicating a generally strong performance with some areas for improvement.

Table 6. Level of Financial Service Delivery of MariBank in terms of Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The bank provides accessible loans or credit programs for small businesses.	4.57	0.73	Strongly Agree
2. Training or financial literacy programs are offered to SME clients.	4.00	1.17	Agree
3. The bank assists local entrepreneurs in expanding their businesses.	4.48	0.79	Strongly Agree
4. Loan processing for SMEs is fast and efficient.	4.72	0.46	Strongly Agree
5. The bank's SME programs help generate local employment.	4.43	1.09	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.44**	**0.67**	**Very High Implementation**

The overall weighted mean of 4.44 (*SD* = 0.67), which is read as Very High Implementation, indicates that respondents believe MariBank actively supports the expansion and advancement of SMEs. This illustrates how the bank uses its financial services to assist regional economic activity and encourage entrepreneurship.

"Loan processing for SMEs is fast and efficient" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.72, *SD* = 0.46) among the indicators, suggesting that respondents highly value the bank's loan processing system's efficiency. This emphasizes how crucial prompt financial support is for small enterprises, since loan approval delays can impede operations and expansion. Thus, effective processing systems increase customer satisfaction and institutional trust.

Similarly, "The bank offers accessible loans or credit programs for small businesses" had a high mean of 4.57 (*SD* = 0.73), indicating that respondents find it comparatively simple to obtain financial assistance from the bank. For SMEs to obtain the funding required for inception, expansion, or operational sustainability, this accessibility is essential.

The statement "The bank helps local entrepreneurs expand their businesses" likewise received a high assessment (*M* = 4.48, *SD* = 0.79), suggesting that respondents are aware of the bank's contribution to business expansion. This illustrates a favorable financial climate that provides chances for business owners to grow their enterprises.

Additionally, "The bank's SME programs help generate local employment" had a mean score of 4.43 (*SD* = 1.09), which indicates comparatively greater response variability even though it is still read as Strongly Agree. This implies that although many respondents agree that SME programs have a favorable effect on creating jobs, others might not have personally witnessed or experienced these advantages.

However, the criteria "Training or financial literacy programs are offered to SME clients" had the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.00, *SD* = 1.17), which is considered to be Agree. The greater standard deviation suggests that respondents may not always have access to or be aware of these services. This draws attention to a possible deficiency in non-financial support services, especially in programs aimed at enhancing entrepreneurs' capabilities.

The success of SMEs depends critically on institutional assistance, effective loan processing, and financial access. According to studies, financial institutions are essential for promoting entrepreneurship since they make financing easily accessible and help businesses grow (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, studies highlight the value of financial literacy and training initiatives in enhancing SME owners' decision-making and business sustainability (World Bank, 2020). The comparatively lower ranking in this area indicates that supplementary capacity-building measures may be strengthened even when financial assistance is excellent.

Table 7. Level of Financial Service Delivery of MariBank in terms of Integration with Local Government Units (LGUs)

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The bank collaborates with LGUs in implementing local financial programs.	4.56	0.72	Strongly Agree
2. Rural bank services support LGU-led livelihood or development initiatives.	4.65	0.71	Strongly Agree
3. The bank helps in implementing digital payment systems for LGU transactions.	4.73	0.57	Strongly Agree
4. Bank programs align with the local government’s development goals.	4.48	0.72	Strongly Agree
5. Partnerships between banks and LGUs improve financial inclusion in the community.	4.62	0.71	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.61**	**0.61**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 7 presents the respondents' assessment of the level of financial service delivery of MariBank in terms of integration with Local Government Units (LGUs), revealing a consistently strong performance across all indicators.

Respondents view MariBank as an active and dependable partner of LGUs in providing financial services and supporting local development projects, according to the total weighted mean of 4.61 (*SD* = 0.61), which is translated as Very High Implementation. This implies that the bank works well with government agencies to improve community development and financial inclusion.

The indicator with the highest mean score (*M* = 4.73, *SD* = 0.57) was "The bank helps in implementing digital payment systems for LGU transactions." This demonstrates the bank's important contribution to the advancement of digital transformation in local government operations. Adoption of digital payment methods increases convenience for constituents and local government units while also increasing efficiency and transparency.

A high grade (*M* = 4.65, *SD* = 0.71) was also given to the statement "Rural bank services support LGU-led livelihood or development initiatives," suggesting that respondents are aware of the bank's role in initiatives meant to improve local economic conditions. This shows that the bank's services and LGU-initiated community development initiatives are highly aligned.

The statement "Partnerships between banks and LGUs improve financial inclusion in the community" also received a mean score of 4.62 (*SD* = 0.71), highlighting the significance of teamwork in increasing access to financial services. This shows that MariBank and LGUs' collaborative efforts are successful in reaching marginalized communities and fostering inclusive growth.

The idea that the bank actively works with local government units is further supported by the indicator "The bank collaborates with LGUs in implementing local financial programs," which had a mean of 4.56 (*SD* = 0.72). In order to make sure that financial services are sensitive to the unique needs of communities, this cooperation is crucial.

While still regarded as Strongly Agree, "Bank programs align with the local government's development goals" had the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.48, *SD* = 0.72). This implies that even if there is typically good alignment, there can be chances to improve coordination even more and make sure that all bank activities are completely integrated with regional development goals.

A consistent degree of agreement among respondents is indicated by the relatively moderate standard deviation values (range from 0.57 to 0.72), indicating that opinions on MariBank's cooperation with LGUs are typically consistent and favorable.

To advance financial inclusion and sustainable development, collaborations between financial institutions and local governments are essential. Research has demonstrated that working with LGUs improves the effectiveness and reach of financial services, especially in underserved and rural areas (World Bank, 2020). Furthermore, the integration of digital payment systems in government transactions has been linked to improved transparency, efficiency, and accountability (OECD, 2020). Programs are guaranteed to be pertinent and sensitive to community needs when financial services are in line with local development objectives.

Table 8. Overall Level of Financial Service Delivery of Rural Banks

Indicators		*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1.	Digital Platforms	4.87	0.29	Very High Implementation
2.	Accessibility and Affordability of Services	4.61	0.55	Very High Implementation
3.	Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products	4.59	0.40	Very High Implementation
4.	Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)	4.44	0.67	Very High Implementation
5.	Integration with Local Government Units (LGUs)	4.61	0.61	Very High Implementation
Overall Weighted Mean		**4.62**	**0.23**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 8 presents the overall level of financial service delivery of MariBank as perceived by the respondents, integrating the key dimensions of digital platforms, accessibility and affordability, innovations in customer service and financial products, support for SMEs, and integration with Local Government Units (LGUs).

Respondents usually view MariBank's financial service delivery as extremely effective, efficient, and attentive to the demands of both individual clients and the community at large, according to the overall weighted mean of 4.62 (*SD* = 0.23), which is translated as Very High Implementation. This demonstrates the bank's dedication to offering complete financial services that are affordable, creative, and in line with regional development projects.

Digital Platforms had the highest mean (*M* = 4.87, *SD* = 0.29) among the sub-indicators, indicating that respondents firmly believe the bank's digital services are dependable, safe, and easy to use. In keeping with worldwide trends toward the use of digital banking, the simplicity of online and mobile banking, together with prompt upgrades to digital platforms, enables customers to complete transactions effectively and fosters convenience (Venkatesh et al., 2016).

The high means of Accessibility and Affordability of Services and Integration with LGUs (*M* = 4.61, *SD* = 0.55 and *M* = 4.61, *SD* = 0.61, respectively) indicate that respondents believe the bank is geographically accessible, provides reasonably priced financial products, and actively works with LGUs to support local development initiatives. These results highlight the significance of both strategic and physical integration in guaranteeing the provision of equitable financial services (World Bank, 2020; OECD, 2020).

With a mean score of 4.59 (*SD* = 0.40) for Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products, MariBank is acknowledged for launching new services, enhancing employee competencies, and providing financial products that satisfy customers' changing needs, including assistance for regional business owners. The research has connected banking innovation to higher customer satisfaction and local economic growth (OECD, 2020).

Lastly, although being read as Strongly Agree, Support for SMEs had the lowest mean of all the sub-indicators (*M* = 4.44, *SD* = 0.67). This indicates that there is variation in the perceived efficacy of financial literacy programs and capacity-building activities for SMEs, even if respondents believe the bank supports small enterprises through easily available loans and business assistance services. Enhancing these initiatives could help the bank play a bigger part in promoting regional economic development.

Overall, the results show that MariBank performs well in every aspect of providing financial services. The bank appears to successfully balance technological innovation, service accessibility, customer-centered solutions, support for SMEs, and strategic collaborations with LGUs, based on the consistently excellent scores across indicators. The bank's ability to provide comprehensive, community-focused financial services will be further strengthened by continued improvements in digital and customer services as well as SME programs.

Table 9. Level of Maximization of Public Value on Community Development in terms of Service Efficiency

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. Banking services are delivered promptly and accurately.	4.55	0.69	Strongly Agree
2. The bank efficiently addresses customer inquiries and complaints.	4.08	1.13	Agree
3. Digital transactions are processed without delays or technical issues.	4.56	0.75	Strongly Agree
4. Service delivery systems promote transparency and accountability.	4.77	0.54	Strongly Agree
5. The bank ensures that all clients receive equal and fair treatment.	4.36	1.17	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.46**	**0.71**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 9 presents the respondents' assessment of the level of maximization of public value on community development in terms of service efficiency, indicating a generally high level of effectiveness with some areas requiring enhancement.

The overall weighted mean of 4.46 (*SD* = 0.71), which is translated as Very High Implementation, indicates that respondents believe MariBank's service delivery is effective and helps create public value. This suggests that the bank can provide services in a way that promotes both customer pleasure and more general community development goals.

"Service delivery systems promote transparency and accountability" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.77, *SD* = 0.54) among the indicators, suggesting that respondents are highly aware of the bank's dedication to providing transparent and accountable services. Since they foster trust and guarantee that services are provided in an ethical and equitable manner, transparency and accountability are crucial elements of public value.

The indicator "Digital transactions are processed without delays or technical issues" (*M* = 4.56, *SD* = 0.75) and "Banking services are delivered promptly and accurately" (*M* = 4.55, *SD* = 0.69) closely follow. These findings demonstrate the effectiveness and dependability of the bank's operational systems, especially with regard to digital and transactional procedures. Effective service delivery lowers errors, shortens wait times, and improves the general customer experience.

A high rating (*M* = 4.36, *SD* = 1.17) was also given to the statement "The bank ensures that all clients receive equal and fair treatment," indicating that respondents usually view service delivery as inclusive and fair. The comparatively higher standard deviation, however, suggests that there is variation in experiences, suggesting that although many clients believe that things are fair, some may have experienced irregularities.

On the other hand, "The bank efficiently addresses customer inquiries and complaints" received the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.08, *SD* = 1.13), which is considered to be Agree. This suggests that while respondents are generally content, there are issues with customer service systems' efficacy and responsiveness. The greater degree of response variability also implies that customers' experiences with problem solving are inconsistent.

Key aspects of public value in service delivery are responsiveness, fairness, efficiency, and openness. Moore (2013) asserts that when organizations provide services effectively while upholding accountability and responsiveness to stakeholders, public value is maximized. According to research on service quality, customer happiness and trust are greatly impacted by timely service, dependable systems, and efficient complaint handling (Parasuraman et al., 2018). It has been demonstrated that effective digital technologies, in particular, improve service delivery by decreasing delays and increasing accessibility.

Table 10 presents the respondents' evaluation of the level of maximization of public value on community development in terms of economic empowerment of citizens, showing a very high level of agreement across all indicators.

Table 10. Level of Maximization of Public Value on Community Development in terms of Economic Empowerment of Citizens

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. Bank services help improve the financial stability of citizens.	4.78	0.49	Strongly Agree
2. Access to bank loans and savings programs improves livelihoods.	4.84	0.41	Strongly Agree
3. Financial programs promote responsible financial behavior among clients.	4.77	0.42	Strongly Agree
4. Citizens are more capable of managing personal or business finances because of bank services.	4.45	1.10	Strongly Agree
5. Rural banks contribute to reducing poverty in the community.	4.69	0.60	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.71**	**0.37**	**Very High Implementation**

According to the overall weighted mean of 4.71 (*SD* = 0.37), which is read as Very High Implementation, respondents believe MariBank is very successful in fostering community economic empowerment. This implies that the bank's financial services greatly enhance its customers' financial capabilities and well-being.

"Access to bank loans and savings programs improves livelihoods" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.84, *SD* = 0.41) among the indicators, underscoring the vital role that financial access plays in improving people's quality of life. This result emphasizes how crucial inclusive financial products are to helping people manage risks, invest in income-generating ventures, and meet their basic requirements.

The statement "Bank services help improve the financial stability of citizens" comes next, with a mean score of 4.78 (*SD* = 0.49). This suggests that respondents are well aware of the bank's contribution to stability and financial security. People can improve their entire financial situation by managing their income, savings, and expenses more effectively when they have access to trustworthy financial services.

Similarly, "Financial programs promote responsible financial behavior among clients" obtained a mean score of 4.77 (*SD* = 0.42), indicating that the bank promotes sensible financial management practices in addition to offering financial services. This illustrates how the bank helps its customers become more financially literate and capable of making wise decisions.

The indicator "Rural banks contribute to reducing poverty in the community" also had a high grade

(*M* = 4.69, *SD* = 0.60), suggesting that respondents believe the bank's services have a wider societal influence. This implies that the bank's efforts go beyond personal gains and support local economic growth.

Despite being read as Strongly Agree, "Citizens are more capable of managing personal or business finances because of bank services" had the lowest mean score (*M* = 4.45, *SD* = 1.10). While many respondents feel competent in handling their finances, some might need more help or direction, as indicated by the comparatively higher standard deviation.

One of the main forces behind economic empowerment and poverty alleviation is financial inclusion. Research has demonstrated that people can enhance their quality of life and attain financial stability by having access to banking services, such as credit and savings (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018). Additionally, good financial conduct and financial literacy are essential elements of long-term economic empowerment (World Bank, 2020). In order to reach underserved groups and promote equitable growth, rural financial institutions in particular are essential.

Table 11. Level of Maximization of Public Value on Community Development in terms of Support for Local Government Development Goals

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. The bank's initiatives support LGU efforts toward community development.	4.47	0.72	Strongly Agree
2. Bank financing helps in the realization of local infrastructure or livelihood projects.	4.37	0.66	Strongly Agree
3. The bank participates in LGU consultations and planning activities.	4.49	0.82	Strongly Agree
4. Financial programs are consistent with the municipality's development agenda.	4.48	0.72	Strongly Agree
5. Rural banks contribute to the success of local government partnerships.	4.59	0.70	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.48**	**0.65**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 11 presents the respondents' evaluation of the level of maximization of public value on community development in terms of support for local government development goals, showing a strong and positive perception across all indicators.

The overall weighted mean of 4.48 (*SD* = 0.65), which is read as Very High Implementation, shows that respondents believe MariBank successfully supports local government units' (LGUs') goals and initiatives in fostering community development. This illustrates how the bank aligns its services with municipal development priorities as a strategic partner in local governance.

"Rural banks contribute to the success of local government partnerships" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.59, *SD* = 0.70) among the indicators, indicating that respondents view MariBank as an important partner in guaranteeing the efficacy of collaborative initiatives. Financial institutions and local government units must work together to maximize community resources and provide services that meet local requirements.

MariBank is seen by respondents as actively participating in planning and decision-making processes alongside local governments, as evidenced by the mean score of 4.49 (*SD* = 0.82) for "The bank participates in LGU consultations and planning activities." Active involvement in consultations improves cooperation between financial institutions and local government units and guarantees that bank programs are sensitive to local concerns.

The indicators "The bank's initiatives support LGU efforts toward community development" (*M* = 4.47, *SD* = 0.72) and "Financial programs are consistent with the municipality's development agenda" (*M* = 4.48, *SD* = 0.72) further demonstrate that the bank aligns its services with local government goals, supporting projects and programs that benefit the larger community. This illustrates how financial services are strategically incorporated into plans for municipal development.

The statement "Bank financing helps in the realization of local infrastructure or livelihood projects" received a mean score of 4.37 (*SD* = 0.66), which is still considered to be Strongly Agree. This shows that although most respondents believe MariBank has a beneficial impact on livelihood and infrastructure projects, there might be space to boost funding or raise awareness of current efforts.

A fair degree of agreement among respondents is indicated by the comparatively moderate standard deviation values (range from 0.66 to 0.82), which suggest consistent views of the bank's role in supporting LGU development goals.

Financial institutions are essential to the development of municipal governments. Research has demonstrated that collaborations between banks and local government units (LGUs) boost community development programs, increase the efficacy of governance initiatives, and improve access to funds for local projects (World Bank, 2020; OECD, 2020). Financial resources are used effectively and in ways that create significant public value when bank services are in line with municipal development plans.

Table 12 presents the respondents' evaluation of the level of maximization of public value on community development in terms of citizen trust and participation in financial systems, indicating a very high level of confidence and satisfaction among community members.

Table 12. Level of Maximization of Public Value on Community Development in terms of Citizen Trust and Participation in Financial Systems

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. Citizens trust the rural bank as a partner in community development.	4.60	0.52	Strongly Agree
2. The bank promotes transparency and ethical financial practices.	4.73	0.53	Strongly Agree
3. Community members actively participate in bank-related programs.	4.69	0.54	Strongly Agree
4. The banks' reputation enhances citizen confidence in financial systems.	4.77	0.44	Strongly Agree
5. The bank's responsiveness strengthens its relationship with the public.	4.64	0.52	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.68**	**0.35**	**Very High Implementation**

According to the total weighted mean of 4.68 (*SD* = 0.35), which is translated as Very High Implementation, respondents view MariBank as a reliable and accommodating organization that successfully promotes public participation in financial systems. This illustrates the bank's function as a community partner that encourages trust and involvement in addition to its role as a provider of financial services.

"The banks' reputation enhances citizen confidence in financial systems" received the highest mean score (*M* = 4.77, *SD* = 0.44) among the indicators, suggesting that respondents significantly link enhanced public confidence in local financial systems with the bank's credibility. For citizens to feel comfortable utilizing banking services and taking part in official financial systems, a solid reputation is essential.

The statement "The bank promotes transparency and ethical financial practices" also obtained a mean score of 4.73 (*SD* = 0.53), indicating that respondents are aware of the bank's dedication to moral behavior and responsibility. Citizens are encouraged to rely on the bank for financial and community-related activities when it operates in a transparent and moral manner.

MariBank effectively engages citizens in programs and responds to their needs, fostering a participatory environment, according to the indicators "Community members actively participate in bank-related programs" (*M* = 4.69, *SD* = 0.54) and "The bank's responsiveness strengthens its relationship with the public" (*M* = 4.64, *SD* = 0.52). Both the availability of the bank's services and the success of its outreach initiatives are demonstrated by active engagement.

With a mean score of 4.73 (*SD* = 0.53), the statement "The bank promotes transparency and ethical financial practices" also demonstrated that respondents are aware of the bank's commitment to moral behavior and accountability. When a bank works in a transparent and ethical manner, citizens are encouraged to rely on it for financial and community-related activities.

According to the indicators "Community members actively participate in bank-related programs" (*M* = 4.69, *SD* = 0.54) and "The bank's responsiveness strengthens its relationship with the public" (*M* = 4.64, *SD* = 0.52), MariBank successfully involves citizens in programs and attends to their needs, fostering a participatory environment. Active participation demonstrates the bank's service availability as well as the effectiveness of its outreach programs.

Effective financial service delivery and the generation of public value depend on citizen participation and confidence (Moore, 2013; Venkatesh et al., 2016). According to studies, financial organizations that place a high priority on responsiveness, ethics, and transparency encourage greater levels of trust, which boosts public participation in financial initiatives. Furthermore, improved community development outcomes and sustainable local economic growth are facilitated by active engagement and trust in financial institutions (World Bank, 2020).

Table 13. Overall Level of Maximization of Public Value on Community Development

Indicators	*Mean*	*SD*	Verbal Interpretation
1. Service Efficiency	4.46	0.71	Very High Implementation
2. Economic Empowerment of Citizens	4.71	0.37	Very High Implementation
3. Support for Local Government Development Goals	4.48	0.65	Very High Implementation
4. Citizen Trust and Participation in Financial Systems	4.68	0.35	Very High Implementation
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.58**	**0.48**	**Very High Implementation**

Table 13 presents the overall level of maximization of public value on community development as perceived by the respondents, synthesizing the different dimensions of service efficiency, economic empowerment, support for local government development goals, and citizen trust and participation in financial systems.

The aggregate weighted mean of 4.58 (*SD* = 0.48), which is translated as Very High Implementation, shows that respondents believe MariBank is very successful in creating public value and favorably influencing community development. This illustrates how the bank's services transcend beyond standard financial operations and include effects on the economy, society, and governance that are advantageous to both individuals and the larger community.

Economic Empowerment of Citizens had the highest mean (*M* = 4.71, *SD* = 0.37) among the sub-indicators, indicating that respondents significantly linked MariBank's services to increased financial stability, livelihood development, responsible financial conduct, and poverty reduction. This illustrates how important financial inclusion is in enabling people to attain both individual and collective economic growth.

A high mean (*M* = 4.68, *SD* = 0.35) was also obtained for Citizen Trust and Participation in Financial Systems, suggesting that the bank effectively promotes trust, moral behavior, and community involvement. The public's relationship with the bank is strengthened by the high level of trust, which guarantees increased adoption of financial initiatives and is crucial for long-term community development.

The mean score for Support for Local Government Development Goals was 4.48 (*SD* = 0.65), indicating that MariBank participates in planning and consultations, supports local livelihood and infrastructure initiatives, and aligns its programs with municipal development objectives. The significance of collaborations between financial institutions and local government units in fostering efficient governance and optimizing public value is reflected in this strategic alignment.

Lastly, Service Efficiency had a mean of 4.46 (*SD* = 0.71), indicating that the bank provides its services in a timely, accurate, and transparent manner. The strong agreement shows that service efficiency is usually seen favorably, promoting customer satisfaction and total public value creation, although being marginally lower than other characteristics.

Public value and sustainable community development are greatly enhanced by financial institutions that place a high priority on efficiency, economic empowerment, strategic collaborations, and trust-building (Moore, 2013; Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018; World Bank, 2020). By combining these factors, banking services are guaranteed to promote wider social and economic advantages in addition to meeting personal financial demands.

Table 14 presents the significant relationships between rural bank financial service delivery and the maximization of public value in Laguna across four dimensions: service efficiency, economic empowerment of citizens, support for local government development goals, and citizen trust and participation in financial systems. The analysis used Pearson correlation coefficients to measure the strength and significance of these relationships.

The degree of financial services provided by rural banks has a substantial relationship with the maximization of public value in the province, according to all correlations that were found to be statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14. Significant Relationship between Rural Bank Financial Service Delivery and the Maximization of Public Value in Laguna

Rural Bank Financial Service Delivery		Maximization of Public Value in Laguna			
		Service Efficiency	**Economic Empowerment of Crisis**	**Support for Local Government Development Goals**	**Citizen Trust and Participation in Financial Systems**
Digital Platforms	Pearson Correlation	.298**	.590**	.302**	.625**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	332	332	332	332
Accessibility and Affordability of Services	Pearson Correlation	.670**	.785**	.799**	.382**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	332	332	332	332

Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products	Pearson Correlation	.736**	.781**	.743**	.328**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	332	332	332	332
Support for Small and Medium Enterprises	Pearson Correlation	.822**	.787**	.855**	.130**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.017
	N	332	332	332	332
Integration with Local Government Units	Pearson Correlation	.865**	.805**	.844**	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	332	332	332	332

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Digital platforms exhibit moderate to strong relationships, with the strongest correlation seen in citizen economic empowerment ($r = 0.590$, $p < .001$) and citizen trust and engagement in financial systems ($r = 0.625$, $p < .001$). This implies that digital banking services that are easy to use, dependable, and secure greatly increase citizen engagement and support better financial stability and empowerment. These results are consistent with other research highlighting the contribution of digital banking to improving client accessibility, efficiency, and confidence (Venkatesh et al., 2016; World Bank, 2020).

All characteristics of accessibility and affordability of services show substantial relationships; support for local government development goals ($r = 0.799$, $p < .001$) and economic empowerment ($r = 0.785$, $p < .001$) show especially strong links. This suggests that banking services have a major role in both individual economic growth and the execution of municipal development efforts when they are both financially and geographically accessible. This is in line with research showing the importance of inclusive financial services for poverty alleviation and community development (Demirgüç-Kunt et al., 2018).

Additionally, innovations in financial products and customer service have substantial connections with support for local government objectives ($r = 0.743$, $p < .001$) and service efficiency ($r = 0.736$, $p < .001$). This illustrates how cutting-edge banking techniques, such launching new products, enhancing customer support, and utilizing contemporary technology, improve operational effectiveness and make it easier to connect with municipal development priorities.

Overall, support for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) shows the strongest relationships, especially with support for local government development goals ($r = 0.855$, $p < .001$) and service efficiency ($r = 0.822$, $p < .001$). This emphasizes how important SMEs are to local economic growth, job creation, and community development. Improved public value outcomes are strongly correlated with robust bank support in the form of loans, training, and business help.

Lastly, all dimensions of integration with local government units (LGUs) exhibit extremely strong connections, with the strongest associations found for economic empowerment ($r = 0.805$, $p < .001$) and service efficiency ($r = 0.865$, $p < .001$). This demonstrates how bank-LGU relationships greatly increase the beneficial effects of financial services on community development, promoting both institutional effectiveness and citizen empowerment.

In conclusion, the analysis shows that every aspect of financial service delivery has a substantial and favorable impact on Laguna's public value maximization. Support for SMEs and integration with LGUs show the largest effects, indicating that targeted financial initiatives and strategic engagement are important drivers of community development results. These results support the idea that rural banks play a critical role in providing communities with both financial and social value, which is consistent with research highlighting the contribution of inclusive financial institutions to sustainable development (Moore, 2013; World Bank, 2020).

The regression model investigating the impact of rural bank financial service delivery on the maximizing of public value in Laguna is extremely significant, according to the ANOVA results. The variation in public value explained by the predictors such as Integration with LGUs (IWLGU), Digital Platforms (DP), Accessibility and Affordability of Services (AAS), Support for SMEs (SFSMES), and Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products (ICS) is represented by the regression sum of squares (SSR = 60.682), whereas the variation not explained by these predictors is represented by the residual sum of squares (SSE = 3.951).

Table 15. ***Financial Delivery Services Collectively Predict Maximization of Public Value***

Model		*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
1	Regression	60.682	5	12.136	1001.262	< .001
	Residual	3.951	326	.012		
	Total	64.633	331			

a. Dependent Variable: DV
b. Predictors: (Constant), IWLGU, DP, AAS, SFSMES, ICS

All of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the total sum of squares (SST = 64.633). The model shows that the combined effects of the five financial service delivery dimensions (IWLGU, DP, AAS, SFSMES, and ICS) significantly predict the maximization of public value in the community, with an *F*-value of 1001.262 and a significance level of p <.001. Practically speaking, this means that advancements in digital platforms, service affordability and accessibility, creative banking techniques, assistance for SMEs, and cooperation with local government units all work together to promote service effectiveness, economic empowerment, citizen participation, and total public value. These results are in line with earlier studies that highlight the significance of creative, accessible, and strategically integrated financial services in fostering economic growth and community development (Moore, 2013; World Bank, 2020). The remarkably high *F*-value emphasizes that these predictors explain a significant amount of the variation in public value outcomes, underscoring the vital role that rural banks play in promoting sustainable and equitable community development.

3.2. Proposed Plan of Action

Project ENHANCE (Empowering Networks for Holistic Advancement through Novel Community Engagement and Financial Services)

Description:

This program aims to improve the delivery of financial services by rural banks, particularly MariBank, through strengthening digital platforms, expanding accessibility and affordability, enhancing SME support, deepening collaboration with LGUs, and improving customer service systems. It is designed to maximize public value by promoting economic empowerment, service efficiency, and citizen trust.

Objectives:

1. To enhance the efficiency and reliability of digital banking platforms.
2. To increase accessibility and affordability of financial services in underserved communities.
3. To strengthen support programs for SMEs, including financial literacy and business development.
4. To improve collaboration between rural banks and LGUs for community development initiatives.

5. To enhance customer service responsiveness and complaint management systems.
6. To promote citizen trust and active participation in financial programs.

Activity	Objective	Person Responsible	Timeframe	Budget Allocation
Digital Enhancement and Innovation	***Enhance the efficiency and reliability of digital banking platforms***	***IT Department, Digital Banking Team***	***Short-term (0–6 months) for upgrades; Medium-term (6–18 months) for full rollout***	***400,000 – 600,000***
• Upgrade mobile and online banking systems for better UX and security	Improve platform reliability and security	IT Department	0-6 months	200,000
• Conduct regular system maintenance and updates	Ensure system efficiency and uptime	IT & Operations	Ongoing	100,000
• Introduce AI-assisted customer service (chatbots)	Improve responsiveness and service quality	IT Department & Customer Service	6–18 months	100,000
Financial Accessibility and Affordability Program	***Increase accessibility and affordability of financial services***	***Branch Managers, Marketing Team***	***Medium-term (6–18 months)***	***300,000 – 500,000***
• Expand banking agents/ branches in underserved areas	Promote financial inclusion	Branch Managers	6–18 months	200,000
• Review and reduce service fees	Make services more affordable	Finance Department	0–6 months	50,000
• Introduce microfinance and low-interest loans	Provide financial support to underserved clients	Lending & Credit Team	6–18 months	50,000 – 250,000
SME Development and Support Initiative	***Strengthen SME support programs***	***SME & Business Development Unit***	***Medium-term (6–18 months)***	***300,000 – 500,000***
• Conduct financial literacy & entrepreneurship training	Empower SMEs with knowledge	SME Team, Trainers	6–18 months	150,000
• Provide mentoring and business advisory services	Enhance SME growth and sustainability	SME Team, Mentors	6–18 months	100,000

• Develop customized loan packages for SMEs	Facilitate SME access to capital	Lending & Credit Team	6–18 months	50,000 – 250,000
Strengthening LGU Partnerships	***Improve collaboration between rural banks and LGUs***	***Bank Management, LGU Liaison Officer***	***Short-term (0–6 months) for agreements; Medium-term (6–18 months) for joint programs***	***100,000 – 200,000***
• Establish MOAs with LGUs	Formalize partnerships	Bank Management, LGU Officials	0–6 months	50,000
• Collaborate in livelihood, infrastructure, digital payment programs	Support community development	LGU & Program Teams	6–18 months	50,000 – 100,000
• Participate in LGU planning councils	Strengthen strategic alignment	Bank Representatives	0–18 months	50,000
Customer Service Improvement Program	***Enhance customer service responsiveness***	***Customer Service Dept., HR***	***Medium-term (6–18 months)***	***200,000 – 400,000***
• Train staff on customer relations & complaints	Improve service quality	HR & Customer Service	6–12 months	100,000
• Establish 24/7 customer support system	Increase accessibility & trust	Customer Service & IT	6–18 months	100,000 – 200,000
• Implement feedback & monitoring mechanisms	Track performance & satisfaction	Customer Service	Ongoing	50,000 – 100,000
Community Engagement & Trust-Building	***Promote citizen trust & participation***	***Marketing, Community Relations Team***	***Short-term to Long-term (0–3 years)***	***200,000 – 400,000***
• Conduct outreach & financial awareness campaigns	Educate community & increase engagement	Marketing & Branch Teams	0–18 months	100,000 – 200,000
• Promote transparency via reporting & disclosures	Build credibility and trust	Management & Marketing	Ongoing	50,000 – 100,000

• Encourage citizen participation in programs	Increase active involvement	Community Relations Team	0–18 months	50,000 – 100,000

4. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter initially discusses the research problem, respondents of the study, and the statistical treatments applied to the data of the investigation. Then it focuses on the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

4.1. Summary of Findings

The following convey the results of the evaluation:

1. The demographic profile of the respondents reveals important insights into the characteristics of the sample population. Based on the analysis, the category with the highest numerical value per variable is highlighted as the most dominant within each demographic factor.

Age. The majority of respondents fall within the 26–33 years old bracket (149 respondents, 44.9%), indicating that young adults comprise the largest portion of the population surveyed. This suggests that the program or study is reaching primarily early-career individuals who are likely active in both professional and community engagements.

Sex. In terms of gender, females represented the highest proportion of respondents (209 respondents, 63.0%), which may reflect either higher participation or engagement of women in the program or context of the study. Male respondents comprised 37.0%, while no respondents opted for "Prefer Not to Say."

Educational Attainment. The data indicates that tertiary graduates were the largest group (131 respondents, 39.5%), followed by doctoral undergraduates (90 respondents, 27.1%). This demonstrates that most respondents have completed higher education, suggesting a relatively well-educated population capable of understanding and engaging with the program or study content.

Occupation. Among occupational categories, private employees comprised the highest proportion (111 respondents, 33.4%), slightly above self-employed respondents (108 respondents, 32.5%) and business owners (104 respondents, 31.3%). This indicates a sample largely composed of individuals employed in the private sector, which may influence their access to and perspective on financial services or related interventions.

Monthly Income. The income analysis shows that the largest group of respondents earned 40,001 PHP and above per month (150 respondents, 45.2%). This suggests that nearly half of the sample belongs to a higher income bracket, which could affect their financial behaviors, service usage, and engagement with the program's initiatives.

Overall, the demographic profile suggests that the majority of respondents are young, female, well-educated, private-sector employees, and relatively high-income earners. These characteristics provide context for understanding their perceptions, behaviors, and potential responsiveness to the program or services being studied.

2. Most respondents think MariBank's overall financial service delivery is very successful, efficient, and sensitive to the requirements of both individual customers and the community. Respondents' confidence in the dependability, security, and usability of online and mobile banking services was reflected in the highest score of Digital Platforms (M=4.87) among the main aspects. The bank was evaluated highly for accessibility and affordability of services (M=4.61) and integration with local government units (LGUs) (M=4.61). This indicates that the bank is geographically accessible, provides competitively priced financial products, and actively works with local government units to encourage regional development. Innovations in Financial Products and Customer Service (M=4.59) were recognized for launching new services, enhancing employee

skills, and offering solutions that address changing client needs, such as assistance for regional business owners. Respondents thought the bank supported small businesses, especially through easily accessible loans and business help programs, even though Support for SMEs (M=4.44) had the lowest score among sub-indicators. Overall, the results (M=4.62) indicate that MariBank successfully strikes a balance between service accessibility, customer-focused solutions, technical innovation, support for SMEs, and strategic alliances with local government units.

3. The bank's substantial contribution to financial stability, livelihood development, responsible financial practices, and poverty reduction is shown in the highest rating for Economic Empowerment of Citizens (M=4.71) among the key dimensions. High esteem was also given to Citizen Trust and Participation in Financial Systems (M=4.68), suggesting that MariBank effectively fosters ethical behavior, fosters active community involvement, and creates trust. The bank's alignment with municipal development objectives, involvement in planning consultations, and donations to local infrastructure and livelihood projects (M=4.48) were all favorable indicators of support for local government development goals. Service Efficiency (M=4.46) demonstrated that the bank provides its services in a timely, accurate, and transparent manner, even though it was somewhat lower than the other dimensions.

4. The analysis shows that the maximization of public value in Laguna is positively and statistically significantly correlated with all aspects of rural bank financial service delivery. The relevance of dependable and user-friendly digital banking services is demonstrated by the moderate to strong relationships that digital platforms exhibit, especially when it comes to boosting economic empowerment and bolstering public trust and involvement. Accessibility and affordability show strong correlations, particularly with support for local government development goals and economic empowerment, underscoring the relevance of inclusive financial services in fostering individual and community development. Innovations in financial products and customer service are also strongly linked to service effectiveness and compatibility with local government goals, demonstrating the importance of contemporary banking techniques in enhancing operations and development results. Notably, assistance for SMEs shows the best correlations across variables, highlighting its crucial role in economic development, especially when it comes to local government development goals and service efficiency. In a similar vein, integration with LGUs demonstrates extremely strong connections, highlighting the significance of cooperative relationships in boosting institutional efficacy and citizen empowerment.

5. The regression analysis examining the influence of rural bank financial service delivery on the maximization of public value in Laguna indicates a highly significant model. The ANOVA results show that the variation in public value explained by the predictors—Integration with LGUs (IWLGU), Digital Platforms (DP), Accessibility and Affordability of Services (AAS), Support for SMEs (SFSMES), and Innovations in Customer Service and Financial Products (ICS)—is SSR = 60.682, while the variation not explained by these predictors is SSE = 3.951. The total variation in the dependent variable is SST = 64.633, demonstrating that the predictors account for the majority of the variance in public value outcomes.

The model yielded an F-value of 1001.262 with a significance level of p <.001, confirming that the combined effect of the five dimensions of financial service delivery significantly predicts the maximization of public value in the community. Practically, this implies improvements in digital platforms, accessibility and affordability of services, innovative banking practices, support for SMEs, and collaboration with LGUs work synergistically to enhance service efficiency, economic empowerment, citizen participation, and overall public value.

4.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. MariBank exhibits a strong dedication to offering all-inclusive, community-focused financial services.

2. MariBank successfully maximizes public value by combining effective service delivery, citizen economic empowerment, strategic support for local government objectives, and trust-building efforts.

3. The provision of financial services by rural bank plays a major role in maximizing Laguna's public value.

4. In Laguna, public value maximization is strongly and significantly influenced by the provision of financial services by rural banks.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. It is recommended that MariBank may increase its financial literacy and capacity-building initiatives in order to better assist SMEs.

2. MariBank may concentrate on optimizing operations and enhancing service delivery through process optimization, focused staff training, the integration of cutting-edge digital technology, and the establishment of reliable monitoring and feedback systems in order to further improve service efficiency.

3. To guarantee ongoing dependability, security, and user-friendliness, MariBank is advised to maintain and expand its digital platforms.

4. It is advised that MariBank keep bolstering initiatives that improve the economic empowerment of citizens, such as inclusive financial services, livelihood assistance, and financial literacy.

5. It is recommended that rural banks keep bolstering their digital platforms to improve consumer engagement, efficiency, and accessibility.

6. Rural banks adopt an integrated strategy to improve the financial services they provide by boosting support systems for SMEs, increasing accessible and inexpensive services, and consistently developing digital platforms.

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