STUDENTS' FEEDBACK: A BASIS FOR SUMMER WORK AND TRAVEL PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study aimed to evaluate the Summer Work and Travel Program of the College of Tourism Management in the University of the Assumption based on students' feedback in the aspects of (1) program and sponsors (2) job/ position (3) working conditions (4) benefits and compensation (5) management (6) housing and facilities, and, (7) the partner overseas educational and exchange programs consulting organization of the college. Quantitative method design was utilized in addressing the goals of the study. There were 67 participants for the study. Findings revealed that the participants rated the work and travel program as "very good." The work and travel program is beneficial to the students. It aids in stimulating additional learning to them through experiences they encountered in the industry which further developed their skills and competencies in which they may not experience in the four corners of the classroom. Thus, the College of Tourism Management may continue collaborating with the consulting organization in giving great opportunity to its students.

Key Terms: *feedback, travel program enhancement, work and travel*

INTRODUCTION

"Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience"

Kolb, 1984

Higher education institutions (HEIs) often find strategies to make the programs of education more effective. Sims and Sims (1995) mentioned that HEIs are always under pressure in giving effective and efficient services to the students. Students' learning is enhanced through effective and efficient teaching. At present, learning of the students may not only be taught in the four corners of the classrooms. Different strategies in teaching may be utilized by the HEIs. One type of strategy is experiential education.

The conceptual framework for experiential education dates back to the early periods of Medieval Europe (Hindman cited in Jackel, 2011). Early versions of such vocational training used to take the form of apprenticeships that ranged from five to seven years of service. These apprenticeships were used as pathways for students of a specific trade to get into a trade guild, which is an association of specialists in a specific field of work. This style of apprenticeship is still noticeable in other fields.

Experiential education makes use of experiences to teach students the competencies they need for real-world success. It includes methodologies where students are purposefully engaged with direct experience. It encompasses an array of potential experiences, including service-learning internships, academic service-learning, community service-learning, cooperative education

programs, applied practicum, and exchange programs (Kolb, 2015).

Today, college students are being offered with exchange programs abroad that provide social and cultural learning. One of the notable programs that provide this opportunity is the Tourism and Hospitality.

Tourism and hospitality has been one of the biggest industries around the world. Billions of jobs are generated each year as the industry develop airports, offer more flights, organize events, open new hotels, restaurants, theme parks, casinos and other tourism enterprises. The establishment of new businesses allows countries to enjoy several economic benefits in the forms of jobs and taxes. Apart from the economic benefits, tourism and hospitality also becomes an opportunity to raise environmental awareness and appreciation of cultures with various tourist interactions. These are perhaps the reasons of the growing number recognizing the contribution of tourism and hospitality as a catalyst for development.

With the continuous globalization and integration among nations, the industry continues to flourish. The development of information and communications technology made the world seem to be small. This enables easier movement of people between and among countries and easier flow of communication. These developments facilitate greater interaction of people of different nations, race, religion, and culture. Thus, the industry demands for labor force who can operate in multi-cultural context. As the industry continues to grow, enterprises need staff who can handle tourists who practically have diverse profile. In Asia for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN) integration eventually facilitate the free flow of information, goods and human resources among the member countries. Therefore, tourism and hospitality businesses must anticipate the need to have work force who can handle interactions with the diverse tourism markets (Kosch, 2007).

This poses the challenge to produce graduates who are equipped with the skills that are needed in an increasingly competitive industry. Apart from the self-management and technical skills, graduates must be equipped with human relations skills. Students must be aware of the fast-moving developments of the industry and must be prepared for the life ahead. This is the primary reason why courses are offered to enhance the interpersonal skills of students in multi-cultural context.

With the continuous development, Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) strive towards the internationalization of programs and updating the curriculum to be abreast with the fast-changing landscape of the industry. A wide-array of skill-sets and competencies must be developed to make sure that they provide a supply of competent workers in the hospitality and tourism industry. This calls for the need to ensure that the students are given the opportunities to maximize their learning and have a comprehensive view of the industry.

To address this need, HEIs have been integrating cultural exchange programs as part of their offerings. Moreover, Ileleji, (2008) states that these are intended to provide opportunities for the students to be immersed in a different culture in applying the technical skills learned while in school. Summer Work and Travel (SWAT) is one of the programs of cultural exchange. This program would usually

allow the students to work in tourism-related enterprises such as hotels, restaurants, country clubs, and theme parks for about three to six months. In the course of the training, the students are assigned to operational jobs such as wait staff, front office associate, room attendant, pool attendant, club associate, and ride attendant where they get the chance to be part of the operations of the partner-establishments.

According to Career Internship Abroad (CIA, 2017), "there are some benefits of cultural exchange which are beneficial to all students who may participate or have participated in such programs such as: expose the world-class practices where students experience cultural diversity; advancing hands-on training that they may gain career edge and global competitiveness; enrich paid experiences for one to discover and develop skills and potentials through a secured position and immediate monetary return of investment plus extra earnings; independent living where one deals in personal discovery by pushing outside the comfort zone; culturally-diverse network of friends and acquaintances, thus lasting connections." These indicate that cultural exchange programs are not only profit-based but also intend to provide social and cultural learning.

Among the cited benefits of the cultural exchange programs are the enhancement of the language proficiency and the human relation skills of the students. Since the students are given the opportunities for face-to-face interactions with the guests of the partner establishments, they are able to practice the daily operations of the business and can communicate effectively. Thus, these may facilitate opportunities to improve their communication skills and apply the learned technical skills.

One of the HEIs in Pampanga that offers exchange programs to tourism students is the University of the Assumption (UA) under the College of Tourism Management. The College of Tourism Management has signed partnership with a consulting organization that aids in sending the student in an exchange program. Under the Memorandum of Agreement, the tourism students may have the opportunity to participate in an exchange program which is the Summer Work and Travel Program. As stated by Ileleji, "the WAT program allows the students to work in tourism-related enterprises such as hotels, restaurants, country clubs, and theme parks for about three to six months."

The researcher, as one of the academic personnel in a higher educational institution, recognizes the importance of the Summer Work and Travel Program being offered to the BS Tourism Management students. The desire to meet the fast-changing development in the quality of education prompted her to explore a study on the Cultural Exchange Program of the College of Tourism Management.

The study aimed to evaluate the Summer Work and Travel Program offered to the BS Tourism Management students based on the following factors (1) program and sponsors (2) job/ position (3) working conditions (4) benefits and compensation (5) management (6) housing and facilities and (7) the partner overseas educational and exchange Programs Consulting Organization of the college.

The findings of the study may be useful to the following: Administration, this study may be utilized as a reference in supporting the exchange program offered to the students. Academic personnel, this could serve as a basis

for the improvement of the factors in the said program. Students, this research may motivate their interest to participate and understand the importance of an exchange program.

METHOD

The study utilized a quantitative method. There were a total of 67 respondents who were included in the study. These were the BS Tourism Management students of the University of the Assumption who participated in the Work and Travel (WAT) Program last summer 2016 and 2017.

Purposive sampling was employed on the study. The researcher used a four-point Likert scale questionnaire. Frequency distribution and weighted mean were utilized in the study. The arbitrary scale was used to interpret the mean:

1.00 – 1.74	Poor
1.75 – 2.49	Good
2.50 – 3.24	Very good
3.25 – 4.00	Excellent

RESULTS

Table 1
Profile description of the student-respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percent
Position		
Room attendant	48	71.64
Ride operator	3	4.48
Pool Attendant	2	2.99
Dishwasher	1	1.49
Breakfast Attendant	3	4.48
Utility	1	1.49
Club Associate	3	4.48
Recreation Attendant	2	2.98
Junior Suite Attendant	4	5.97
Total	**67**	**100.0**
Department		
Housekeeping	54	80.60
Ride Operator	3	4.48
Utility	1	1.49
Food and Beverage	7	10.45
Recreation	2	2.98
Total	**67**	**100.0**

Company		
Accommodation		
Hilton (Accommodation)	20	29.84
Double Tree	1	1.49
Holiday Inn	11	16.42
Springhill	1	1.49
Sheraton	6	8.96
Boardwalk	11	16.42
Ramada	1	1.49
Fairfield Inn	1	1.49
Beach Quarters	3	4.48
Theme Parks		
Cedar Point	6	8.96
Morey's Pier	3	4.48
Country Club		
Baltimore Country Club	3	4.48
Total	**67**	**100.0**

Table 1 shows that participants were placed in different job positions. Majority of the student-respondents (71.64%) are placed as room attendants; therefore, housekeeping department has the highest percentage of the placement of the student-respondents (80.60%). Student-respondents worked in different tourism-related establishments such as accommodations, theme parks, and

country clubs. Most of the student-respondents (82.08%) worked in the accommodations compared to theme parks and country clubs.

Table 2

Type of housing of the participants

Housing	Frequency	Percent
Employer-based	13	19.4
Self-based	54	80.6
Total	**67**	**100.0**

Table 2 shows that majority of the participants sourced their housing during the program. Only about 20% were provided housing by their employers.

Table 3

Mean response of the participants on the work and travel program and their sponsor in the United States of America

Program and Sponsor	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The program lives up to your expectation.	2.67	.683	Very good
2. The activities on the program stimulate your learning.	2.85	.680	Very good
3. The activities on the program are appropriate to your skills.	2.69	.679	Very good
4. The program is challenging enough to you.	3.07	.765	Very good
5. The sponsor accommodates you sufficiently.	2.70	.718	Very good
6. The sponsor was helpful with regards to your needs.	2.67	.726	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.64**		**Very good**

Table 3 reveals that the participants considered the program challenging having the highest mean of 3.07. The general weighted mean of the participants on the program and their sponsor is 2.64 (very good); however, the expectation of the students from the program and the

helpfulness of the sponsor to the needs of the participants got the lowest mean of 2.67.

Table 4
Mean response of the participants on the job or position assigned to them

Job/Position	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The positions assigned to you suit your needs in learning.	2.69	.763	Very good
2. You receive equal opportunity in your respective jobs.	2.69	.763	Very good
3. The job utilizes your skills effectively.	2.82	.737	Very good
4. The policies and procedures suitable for your welfare.	2.79	.640	Very good
5. You were satisfied with the position you are assigned to.	2.57	.743	Very good
6. The amount of work is reasonable enough to suit your lifestyles, learning, etc.	2.72	.775	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.71**		**Very good**

The general weighted mean of the participants on the job or positions assigned to them is 2.71 which is equivalent to very good. The student-respondents considered that their skills are being used well in the position given to them however; the satisfaction of the participants obtained the lowest mean of 2.57.

Table 5
Mean response of the participants on the conditions of their workplace

Working Conditions	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The physical working conditions are conducive for working and learning (Ventilation, space, learning, etc.).	2.90	.699	Very good
2. The working environment is safe, comfortable and properly equipped.	3.11	.726	Very good
3. The workplace is safe and secured.	3.22	.692	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**3.08**		**Very good**

Table 5 illustrates that the participants rated their working condition to be very good. It shows that the setting is safe for their work. The lowest mean (2.90) is the physical working conditions that include ventilation, space, and learning.

Table 6

Mean response of the participants on the benefits and compensation they received

Benefits and Compensation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. Were there enough program/facilities that attend to your needs when in work?	2.84	.709	Very good
2. Were you properly rewarded considering the amount of work you do?	2.73	.709	Very good
3. Was the Health care program sufficient enough?	2.87	.694	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.81**		**Very good**

It shows in Table 6 that the participants' rating regarding the benefits and compensation they received has a general weighted mean of 2.81 (very good). The student-respondents believe that their health care program is sufficient having a mean of 2.87 (very good).

Table 7

Mean response of the participants concerning the management in their workplace

Management	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. Were the supervisors keen on responding to the issues raised by the students?	3.01	.788	Very good
2. Were the supervisors a positive role model to the students?	3.04	.806	Very good
3. Did the management treat you with utmost respect?	3.07	.841	Very good
4. Did the management give equal treatment to all participating students?	2.97	.834	Very good
5. Did the management provide development opportunities for the students?	3.00	.759	Very good
6. Did the management encourage cooperation and teamwork?	3.13	.815	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**3.04**		**Very good**

Table 7 illustrates that management of the student-respondents in their workplace garnered a general weighted

mean of 3.04 which means very good. The giving of equal treatment to all participating students got 2.97 which is interpreted as very good

Table 8

Mean response of the participantson their housing and facilities

Housing and Facilities	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. The house conducive for living?	2.85	.702	Very good
2. The housing facilities met your needs (space, appliances, etc)?	2.75	.746	Very good
3. The housing price-worthy?	2.66	.845	Very good
4. The housing (surroundings) observe cleanliness and proper hygiene?	2.82	.737	Very good
5. You have enough freedom to take independent action when needed.	2.79	.769	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.77**		**Very good**

As shown in Table 8 the participants' housing and facilities got a general weighted mean of 2.77 which is

described as very good. Housings which considered as conducive for living obtained the highest mean of 2.85.

Table 9

Mean response of the participants regarding their consulting organization in the Philippines

Overseas Educational and Exchange Programs Consulting Organization	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
1. Was the agency providing proper communication/ instruction before, during, and after the program?	2.88	.789	Very good
2. Was the agency prompt in giving solutions/updates when problem/s arises?	2.82	.695	Very good
3. Did the agency treat you with utmost respect?	2.90	.677	Very good
4. The agency provided you the complete instruction and documents necessary for the program.	2.94	.736	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.88**		**Very good**

Table 9 indicates the mean of 2.88 for consulting organization. Based on the four-point Likert scale, the

participants regarded the consulting organization as very good.

Table 10

General weighted mean of the factors in evaluating the work and travel program

Factors	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Program and Sponsor	2.64	Very good
2. Job/ Position	2.71	Very good
3. Working Conditions	3.08	Very good
4. Benefits and Compensation	2.81	Very good
5. Management	3.04	Very good
6. Housing and Facilities	2.77	Very good
7. Agency	2.88	Very good
General Weighted Mean	**2.85**	**Very good**

The overall weighted mean of the factors in evaluating the work and travel program is 2.85 which is regarded as very good. Among the factors in the evaluation of the program, working conditions in their assigned place earned the highest mean of 3.08. On the other hand, program and sponsor accumulated the lowest mean of 2.64.

DISCUSSION

This study found that housing is a major concern among students undergoing exchange programs. Majority of the students arrange housing on their own. This implies that

majority of the employers do not provide housing for the students. Thus, students must take extra effort in looking for their house before they come to the USA. However, according to Baleva (2017), operations manager of consulting organization, lists of accredited housing were given to students that will aid in choosing the right housing for them.

According to the "US Embassy Government", work and travel (WAT) program provides foreign students the opportunity not only to work but also to live in the United States during the students' summer vacation from college or university. The program helps the participants to experience and be exposed to the culture, people, and way of life in the United States of America (USA). The participants believed that the program is beneficial not only for understanding other culture but also conducive for learning the proper skills that are needed in the industry where they will be working in the future. The program is designed to let the participants worked in their related field. This may be challenging to the students because they may put into practice the theories that they learned from the four corners of the classroom. On the other hand, the expectation of the participants on the program seems higher compared to the reality of the program. Students may have different expectations regarding a new program that they will participate. There is a huge range of opinions among students about new programs. Goodrich (2012) states that students must understand what they are expected to learn before they can take responsibility for their own learning.

Program sponsor is essential to the WAT program. According to the "US Embassy Government", "only State

Department-designated sponsors are authorized to issue the Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status, which is the basic document to support an application for an exchange visitor visa. Sponsors screen and select prospective exchange visitors based on the criteria set forth in the governing regulations (22 CFR Part 62)." The program sponsor is the support system of the WAT participants while staying in the USA. According to the "Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) of the College of Tourism Management (CTM) of the University of the Assumption (UA) and the Overseas Educational and Exchange Programs Consulting Organization (OEEPC)" (2013), program sponsors are designated by the Department of State of the United States of America to sponsor specifically selected and qualified students around the world who will participate in the student cultural exchange program. The program sponsor also must assist to the needs of the students during the program. The participants believe that the sponsors are helpful and accommodating. This implies that the program sponsor of the students has a strong compliance in their obligations as stated in the said MOA.

The result of the study shows that participants are placed in tourism-related establishments. The participants are given tourism-related positions. Therefore, the student-respondents assumed that the positions given to them are suited in their field of specialization. The students were able to practice the skills that they learned and acquired in the university. Student-respondents are equipped with the basic skills needed in the work place in tourism industry since they already finished the required course for the 3rd year BS Tourism Management students. Therefore, the participants believed that their skills were highly utilized in the positions

given to them. Based from the result, majority of the student-respondent are placed in the housekeeping department as compared to the front office department of the hotels. Baker, Hayton, and Bradley (2000), define housekeeping department as the department responsible for the management and cleanliness of guest rooms and the public areas of the hotel; they are expected to clean the guest rooms that include bathrooms as well. Therefore, the satisfactory level of the participants regarding their job is lower as compare to other factors in the job/position area.

Clerc (1989) defines working conditions and environment as "occupational safety and health and general working conditions." It is expected that each workplace must be safe not only for the guests but also for the employees. Based on the results, the students were placed to the companies that are considered to be key-players in the tourism and hospitality industry. The result shows that the student-respondents feel safe in their working environment since majority of them were placed in a 3-4 star hotel, high-end theme parks, and country club.

As indicated in the result of the study, the participants believed that they are well-compensated. Career Internship Abroad (CIA) (2017) discusses the different benefits of participating in a cultural exchange program. It emphasizes the importance of cultural and social learning through meeting different nations and the benefit of being compensated because of their job. The program focuses on providing experience to the student/s and not a profit-based program.

The result of the study shows that the supervisors in their workplace are keen enough in responding to the issues

of the participants. Bauer, Morrision, and Callister (cited in Wanberg, 2012) state that one of the important functions of a supervisor is to provide social support to the newly employed. Furthermore, Wanberg (2012) found that newly employed employees relied primarily on observing immediate supervisors and co-workers. The participants also believed that their supervisors demonstrated positive role models to them. Moreover, supervisors of the participants treated them with utmost respect. According to Fisher, cited in Wandberg (2012), support from superiors is of equal importance to the support from co-workers. The student-respondents felt that their management encourages not only individual job but also team work.

Majority of the participants arranged the place where they will stay in the USA during the program. According to Baleva (2017), the recruitment agency provided list of accredited housing to the students where they may opt to live in. The result of the study shows that their housing and facilities met their expectation, although they have to pay for the lodging fee. As discussed earlier by CIA (2017), cultural exchange program is not a profit-based program where the participants of the program are not expected to generate profit. With these statements, the participants' responses regarding the worth of the price of the rent have affected the result.

The OEEPC is essential in this program. As cited earlier in the "MOA between the OEEPC and CTM of UA (2013), the program consulting organization will act as the appointed representative in the Philippines of the USA program sponsor. The organization will accept the qualified students of the BS Tourism Management students of the

University of the Assumption. The consulting organization shall initiate, communicate, and facilitate confirmation of academe presentation, schedule presentation and/ or orientation to the students of CTM-UA. It is also the obligation of the consulting organization to consistently monitor the student's statues all throughout the program. The result shows that the consulting organization complied with the stated memorandum of agreement. However, promptness in giving solutions to the problems of the participants may be improved.

It is therefore concluded that the work and travel program of the College of Tourism Management is beneficial to the students. The program helps in stimulating additional learning to the participants through face to face experience in the industry that the participants may be working in the future. However, the satisfaction level of the participants regarding their positions may still be improved. It may also be concluded from the result that participants are placed in a safe and secured working environment which is one of the top priorities of every university that sends its students outside the country. Safety and security is one of the reasons for the increasing number of students who join the program every year. The WAT program does not only give opportunity for the participants in learning other cultures but also in gaining more experience in traveling, enhancing and developing skills that are needed in the tourism and hospitality industry, and earning income from their job. Students are also taught in affirming their own decision by arranging the place where they live and in choosing their housing that they have decided. On the other hand, those whose housing is provided by the employers may teach the students to be compliant and courteous by following the

house rules and regulations. This is in consonance with the values and attitudes of being independent, respectful, and obedient which the university is imparting to the students. Over all, the work and travel program met its objectives and may aid the university in acquiring its mission to produce students who excel in their field, imbued with values, and giving back to the community.

Several recommendations were drawn based on the results of the study. When orienting participants, the recruitment agency should clearly define the expectations of the program. The USA program sponsor should regularly schedule a general assembly of the participants to address the latter's concerns. The consulting organization may offer more job positions to the participants aside from housekeeping. The USA program sponsor must regularly monitoring the participants in their work place to check the welfare of the students. The consulting organization need to check and evaluate the housing and facilities more frequently and update their list of housing. A representative of the consulting agency should continuously communicate with the students before, during, and after the program. The College of Tourism Management should collaborate with the consulting organization regarding the process of sending the students to the work and travel program of the USA because it creates a huge opportunity for the students to acquire 21st century skills and experience the complex industry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry that may not simply be learned in the four corners of the classroom.

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SUSTAINING TRUST AND LOYALTY OF CUSTOMERS AMONG HOTEL AND RESORT ESTABLISHMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Hotel and resort establishment is one of the sectors of hospitality industry which offers services intended for customer relaxation. This study aimed to describe the opinion of the customers regarding hotel and resort management, security, amenities and facilities. The study utilized descriptive survey design. A survey questionnaire was used in gathering rich and reliable data. Informed consent forms were provided to ensure confidentiality of the participants' identity and responses. Findings show that motivation of the customers for checking-in was to have fun and relieve stress. The management should consider that their customers were their boss. It is recommended for every hotel and resort establishment that every negative comment must be treated as a guide for further improvement to sustain the trust and loyalty of the customers towards the establishment.

Key Terms: *sustainability, customer retention*

INTRODUCTION

The common aim of every tourism sector is to promote its destination and sustain the loyalty of its customers. Maintaining a good relationship between the establishment and its customers will greatly increase the chance of popularity of the destination. Improvement of the service and amenities of the establishment can be a great factor as well when competing with other companies in the business.

Customer satisfaction and gaining the trust and loyalty can lead into strong positive outcomes on customer retention (Ranaweera & Phabu, 2003). Gaining trust is generally considered to be a golden key toward a business success (Minton, 2000). Loyalty of the customer can be recognized as the dominant factor in leading the business into success (Kandampully & Suhantanto, 2000). It is also viewed as the strength of the relationship between an individual's relative attitude and repeat patronage (Dick & Basu, 1994).

One factor to look into to maintain customer satisfaction is by improving the quality of the service. Pine & Phillips (2005) concluded that having quality standards and management techniques are essential in upgrading the staff performance, such as in the case of star rating system of hotel classification. Travelers and guests of these establishments would demand world-class and professional services on notable aspects such as efficient reservation bookings, tidy and spacious rooms and well-appreciated staff attitudes (Mace, 1995.)

A hotel resort can be classified as a full service hotel if there are additional attractions or offers to make the establishment as the main destination of the travelers (Kison et al., 2013). Attraction is one of the most important components of tourism industry, providing an enjoyable experience to its customers. This would be the essence of the hotel resort establishments because they are parts of the appeal, ambiance and overall experience that the visitor wants to consume (Connell & Page, 2009).

Another factor that can be looked into relative to customer satisfaction is accommodation. Accommodation is an act of hosting guest and visitors while they are out of their natural environment or homes. Hotel resort establishments not only meet the basic needs of the guest like shelter for the night, but also add worth and experience by providing products and ancillary services (Connell & Page).

Research shows that customer satisfaction greatly increases customer loyalty and creates positive impact on a good service in terms of advertising the establishment through word of mouth (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). Connell & Page stated that satisfying guest at first visitwould result for a regular and repetitive visit, and assure the good impact to the business than seeking for new visitors.

Akbaba (2006) mentioned the five service quality dimensions which are tangibles – adequacy in service supply, understanding, caring, assurance, and convenience. Ford, Sturman and Heaton (2012) advised business entities that in gaining profit business must provide service that it are corresponding to study what the customers want, need, value, expect, and actually do.

Sigala (2005) also noted in her study that travelers nowadays are becoming price-sensitive and sophisticated. Thus, maintaining customer loyalty becomes a strategic necessity for attracting and increasing guest patronage. Because of this, customer relationship management would be a chance for the establishment to increase customer value and make systematical ways on how to satisfy every customer to acquire and sustain the relationship between two parties (Lin & Yann Su, 2010).

The significance of this study may help the business owners understand and operate their business properly by knowing the likes and dislikes of their customers. The study will also enlighten the mind of the people that having a business specifically a hotel resort is not an easy thing to have if a person does not know how to find and manage their target markets. This also explains that every person has different kinds of opinions. This study will surely be a big help to everyone, especially for those who are planning or currently managing a business.

The objectives of this study are to have ideas on how the entrepreneurs will handle the guests' needs and wants while staying inside the establishment, to identify ways on how employees will interact to the guest politely and giving the right service that the guest wants to consume and to sustain their relationship towards customers. Lastly, it also aims to identify the quality of their amenities to meet and also for the interest of the people, as well as the economic, and professional growth of the community development and for sustainability of the business.

METHOD

The research design used was descriptive-survey. This type of study was chosen, because the researcher intend to gather information regarding sustaining the customers' trust and loyalty in hotel and resort establishments. Survey method was utilized to gather data for study. A questionnaire was distributed at a given time to which respondents indicated their answers.

One hundred (100) persons who had subscribed to and/or managed the services of hotel and resort establishments were selected as participants of this study. The purposive sampling technique, a non-probability method was used wherein participants are selected based on some inclusion criteria. The criteria included having knowledge and skills on hotel and resort establishments or having previous experiences on hotel and restaurant check-ins.

The instrument used was a researcher-made survey questionnaire checklist, validated by an expert in this specific field. It consisted of three attributes namely: management, security, and amenities. The checklist includes a total of fifteen (15) questions making it five (5) questions per attribute. The instrument employed a four (4) point Likert scale. For the management attribute, the verbal interpretations were the following: 1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Agree and 4- Strongly agree. The verbal interpretation for security, amenities and facilities were as follow: 1- Unnecessary, 2- Less necessary, 3-Necessary and 4-Highly necessary.

The respondents were first interviewed to identify the probability that they can become respondents for the study.

Next, an informed consent was thoroughly discussed prior to actual signing of the form. Then, in-person distribution of instruments was utilized for the respondents. Once finished in answering the checklist, the completed questionnaire was collected.

Data from the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics specifically weighted mean. This was accomplished using Microsoft Excel. The ranges of the mean used to obtain the ranks were the following: 1.00 -1.75- Least considerable, 1.76-2.50- Less considerable, 2.51-3,25- Moderately considerable and 3,26-4.00 – Highly considerable.

RESULTS

Table 1

Insights of the participants regarding the management of a hotel & resort establishment

Attribute	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Friendliness of staffs	3.69	Highly necessary
2. Courtesy of the Receptionists	3.57	Highly necessary
3. Assigning interns	3.27	Highly necessary
4. Hotel policy sheet	3.17	Moderately necessary
5. Entrance and exit points	2.98	Moderately necessary
General Weighted Mean	**3.34**	**Highly necessary**

This table shows and the perception of the participants about the management of hotel and resort establishments. It was noted that general management of this type of business is highly necessary with an overall mean of 3. 34. It also revealed that the friendliness of staff was the most important or highly necessary with a mean of 3. 69.

On the other hand, entrance and exit points got an average mean of 2.98 percent being the lowest among the other attributes of management of a hotel & resort establishment.

Table 2

Insights of the participants regarding security of a hotel & resort establishment

Attribute	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Regular surveillance of rooms	3.47	Highly necessary
2. 24-hour CCTV coverage	3.78	Highly necessary
3. Medical Scanner on entry points	3.47	Highly necessary
4. Disallowing pets inside hotel	2.89	Moderately necessary
5. Discussing rules upon entering hotel	3.18	Moderately necessary
General Weighted Mean	**3.36**	**Highly necessary**

Table 2 presented the general impression of the respondents about security which was most important attribute that the establishment must consider. It was indicated on the table that the average mean of this attribute was highly necessary with an overall mean of 3. 36. The 24-hour surveillance of the hotel & resort establishment got the highest average mean as compared to the other questions in the attribute. Disallowing pets to enter the hotel & resort premises got an average score of 2.89 making it as the lowest among all the attributes.

Table 3

Insights of the respondents regarding amenities and facilities of a hotel & resort establishment

Attribute	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Limited operating hours of facilities	3.10	Moderately necessary
2. Suggesting interconnecting rooms	3.35	Highly necessary
3. Architectural designs of the hotel	3.28	Highly necessary
4. Having fast-food restaurants	3.20	Moderately necessary
5. Requiring membership card	2.80	Moderately necessary
General Weighted Mean	**3.15**	**Moderately necessary**

Table 3 revealed that the respondents' perceptions about the amenities and facilities of a hotel and resort establishment were moderately necessary with an overall mean of 3.15 this attribute lowest overall mean among the three tourism attribute presented in this study. Attribute number two, which was "suggesting interconnecting rooms", got the highest mean of 3.35 interpreting it as highly necessary. This attributes got the highest mean among the fine items while the lowest is requiring membership it mean of 2.80.

DISCUSSION

The main focus of the study was to develop the relationship of the establishment to its customers and also to interpret the ideas of the participants of the study. Each tourism image has five attributes to be rated based on the given direction. Based on the results provided by the respondents, management got the highest overall mean, while security got the lowest which was interpreted as moderately necessary.

Kirson, et al. (2013) explained that a hotel and resort establishment can be a primary attraction for the travellers by adding exclusive offers of amenities or facilities for tourist. In this study, the statement was held true because one of the factors that attracted tourist was the architectural design of the establishments.

Architectural design would be a great help in terms of attracting tourist to check-in probably because travelers mostly prefer places with good ambiance where they can relax and unwind.

Meanwhile, Establishments like hotels and resorts must consider maintaining the structural design of the walls, rooms, etc. for the establishment to look new and fresh. Most likely, this is the main reason of the customers to check-in to relax and feel free.

According to Chan and Lam (2013), having a high-tech security system would be a great help in terms of monitoring the activities inside the hotel. This is relevant to the study because having 24-hour CCTV tightens the security of the hotel and resort establishments.

Regular surveillance of the CCTV installed inside the hotel will definitely get the trust of the tourist. This maybe because the establishment make them feel at ease and safe while staying at the establishment.

Adding additional security and high-tech security system life scanner must be utilized at hotel premises to make sure that the customers are secured. Thus, the privacy of the customers is always protected.

On the other hand, Feng et al. (2008) concluded that encouraging employees to be friendly and provide quality service greatly increase the chance of the establishment to be popular. This agrees with the study that attentiveness and friendliness of the staff will surely get a positive result.

Friendliness and having an effective service surely get the trust of the customers. This may be explained by hospitality that makes the travelers being accepted, respected, and being valued.

In connection to this, Establishments must train the employees at least three to five months for them to become professionalism terms of accommodating and providing service to customers of the hotel resort establishment.

Meanwhile, to boost the morale of the employees, the management should give incentives to their employees like "employee of the month" on each hotel and resort department to motivate their employees to do their job properly. This helps in boosting their morale and self-worth.

To further enhance the company's reputation in terms of service, conducting surveys from the customers must be done at least once a month for the establishment to monitor

if the customers are satisfied with the service and amenities offered so the establishment can maintain its credibility.

Businesses must honor the idea and recommendation of the customers to know what they need and for them to be served well. This will avoid complaints and negative comments.

If other things that may aid the establishment in attracting more customers also plan events and activities every month like Halloween and New Year's Eve Party so that the customers will really enjoy their stay. They will now have more reasons to extend their number of days staying in the hotel

Lastly, adding recreational facilities like casino, gym, swimming, playgrounds for children, and gameroom will also be one of the factors why would the customers truly stay and consume service the establishment over again. These special features make the clients to be busy all the time by enjoying all the possible areas within the resort.

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HIGHLIGHTING THE WAKEBOARDING SPORTS TO TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to assess the awareness and interests of tourists about water sports. Descriptive type of research was employed and a structured survey questionnaire in collecting data was used. The respondents of this study consisted of 100 wakeboarders, sports enthusiasts and tourists within Pampanga who were not younger than 16 years old. Descriptive statistics survey was used to interpret the data collected. The study found that "customer benefits more" is the prime factors why water sports enthusiast chose water parks. All of the three components namely overall image, facilities of water sports and customer benefits were highly considered Attributes of a sought-after tourist destination.

Key Terms: *Wakeboarding, Sports Tourism, Customer Benefits, Overall Image, Facilities of Water Sports*

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, man has been impelled to travel because of sports – the motive, the drive, or the concern. In effect, in the last decade or so, there has been an increasing participation in a wide variety of sporting activities (Baker, 1988). Visitors, participants or onlookers, travel to places primarily to indulge and satisfy in a sporting environment.

Morar and Pop (2016) pointed out that the sport and tourism water are important assets. Since ancient times as they are being used in either physical activities or curative purposes. The water-based sport tourism activities are connected and related to surface and underground water resources, supporting this way the recreational or sport aspects (e.g. navigation, sailing, swimming, rafting), while the chemical and thermic features (underground waters, salt lakes, sea and ocean waters, etc.) support the curative aspects. Water-based facilities should be incorporated spatially and functionally in the complex sustainable development processes.

According to Davidson and Stebbins (2011), open water swimming is one of the simplest water activities and one that all aquatic recreationists are likely to engage in - not always by choice - but which is also pursued for its own sake. First are the underwater activities which include snorkeling, free diving and scuba diving. Second, board sports are next composed of surfing, windsurfing and kite boarding. In addition to this sailing which is also a wind drawn. Activity followed by fellow boating activities, with the self-propelled craft - canoeing, kayaking, whitewater rafting and rowing - and then the motorized versions. Other water

activities that involve tows are skiing and wakeboarding which put together the speed afforded by power boats with technologies and skills blended from skiing, surfing and snowboarding.

Another water sports activity is wakeboarding. It is 30-year old water sport which origins in both water skiing, surfing and snowboarding. In wakeboarding, the rider is fastened to a board and towed behind a motorboat at speeds of around 30 miles per hour. The rider can ride the surface of the water, as well as perform wakeboarding tricks behind the boat.

Wakeboarding now has numerous different offshoots and styles, including knee boarding and wake skating Boyd, 2016).

Weed (2009) examines the journeys that previous reviewers of the field of sports tourism have taken over the sports tourism research terrain. It is suggested that a clear indicator of the maturity of sports tourism as a field of study would be a 'comfortableness' with the existence of contested perspective and ideas, and a reflexive appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of research in the field, particularly in response to external challenges and critiques.

Bologlu and McCleary (1999) mentioned that the image of a tourist destination must be thoroughly investigated before product positioning attempts are undertaken. Furthermore, destination marketing efforts need to reflect regional image differences when positioning a state's tourism procedures. Though this study relates to states in the USA, transferability of its observations to other tourist destination is quite feasible.

Tourist attractions are the main motivations of tourists in visiting certain destination, and thus, they are considered to be as a very important component of tourists' destinations. Without this, a destination will have nothing to offer making it less attractive to go by. Activities in the destination that can be explored and enjoyed by tourists support tourist attractions. Tourists appreciate more the attraction if they have enjoyed those activities. This makes their experience more unforgettable and enjoyable (Libosada & Bosangit, 2007). A water park is one example of tourist attractions.

Since, the environment and setting of an attraction plays a huge part. Amenities or facilities include accommodation, food, local transport, in overall satisfaction of a customer, it is important that any business investors on there. Communications and entertainment at the destination (Cruz, 2013; Leuterio, 2007).

Brits and Reynold (2012) concluded that an understanding of the lifestyle and attitudes of today's adventure traveler can aid tourism marketers in designing their service and features to this unique target market. They found out while participating in their adventure sport, females reinforced the desire to be with others while males wanted to gain self- confidence.

This research undertaking aims to assess the awareness and interest of tourists about towed water sports. The significance of the study helps the future researchers understand the peculiarities of water sports by highlighting their features, especially wakeboarding.

METHOD

The study conducted was a descriptive type of research which involved summarizing or describing responses using frequencies and calculations; an analysis of data better termed as descriptive statistics (Khanzode, 2004).

The sampling of this study consisted of 100 wakeboarders, sports enthusiasts and tourists within Pampanga who were not younger than 16 years old. The researcher employed quantitative method for they have used structured survey questionnaire in collecting data.

The research survey of Kelley, Clark, Brown, and Sitzia (2003) survey research is an easy research because it easy to conduct. However, researcher may either research conduct a survey of poor quality rather than one of high quality and real value. This paper provides a checklist of good practice in the conduct and reporting of survey research. Its purpose is to assist the novice researcher to produce survey work to a high standard, meaning a standard at which the results will be regarded as credible.

To gather the data needed in the study, the researchers created survey forms in the form of questionnaires 100 participants composed of wakeboarders, sports enthusiasts and tourists who are familiar with wakeboarding aged 16 years old and above. The researcher chose this type of respondents because these people were already acquainted with the sports being.

The survey questionnaire was composed of three parts: overall image, facilities of water sports and customer benefits there were five statements per category make it

fifteen (15) statements all in all each indicating different perspective that can identify the respondents' positive and negative attitude on the area being studied. The respondents were asked to rate the given statements using the following scale: 4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree. The mean of the respondents' answers were taken for analysis mean frequency was computed by cross tab function and ranked. Means were interpreted using the following scheme.

Mean	Verbal Interpretation
3.26-4.00	Highly considered
2.51-3.25	considered
1.76-2.50	Not considered
1.00-1.75	Highly not considered

RESULTS

The following tables presented the mean and the verbal interpretation of the data gathered by the researcher based on the survey conducted to 100 respondents.

Table 1
Overall image of water park destination

Overall Image	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The staff in this tourist destination is friendly towards the guest.	3.32	Highly considered	5
2. This tourist destination has unique image.	3.33	Highly considered	4
3. This tourist destination respects the natural environment.	3.50	Highly considered	2
4. I think most people have a positive opinion about this tourist destination.	3.51	Highly considered	1
5. I think this tourist destination is popular.	3.36	Highly considered	3
Overall	**3.40**	**Highly considered**	**2**

Table 1 presented the data related to the overall Image of water park destination. It comprised of fine factors, all of which are highly considered by the respondents based on the data gathered. Positive opinion of the people got the

highest mean in the table with a 3.51 result. Second to this, with a mean of 3.50, is being an eco-friendly destination. Third, popularity was also highly considered giving it a 3.36 mean. Fourth, having a unique image was also highly considered by customers with a mean of 33.3. Item which got lowest mean was staff being friendly towards the guest with a mean of 3.32.

Table 2
Facilities of the water sports

Facilities of the Water Sports	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Overall quality of water sports facilities.	3.35	Highly considered	4
2. Safety and security of the place.	3.27	Highly considered	5
3. Value for money of accommodation and the restaurant.	3.36	Highly considered	3
4. Behavior and professionalism of the staff and the owner.	3.50	Highly considered	1
5. Cleanliness of the surrounding and facilities.	3.45	Highly considered	2
Overall	**3.37**	**Highly considered**	**3**

Reflected in Table 2 was the respondents' regard to facilities of water sports. Overall, the facilities' mean score is

3.37 which signify as highly considered. Specifically, the facilities' overall quality, safety and security, value of rate facilities, cleanliness of destination had a mean score of 3.35, 3.27, 3.36, and 3.45, respectively and were all highly considered. Among the five components, personality and attitudes of staff garnered the highest mean score which is 3.50.

Table 3
Customer benefits

Facilities of the Water Sports	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. The attractiveness of destination is based on customer's preference.	3.37	Highly considered	4
2. Wakeboarding is one of the exciting activities that can be an alternative outdoor activity.	3.42	Highly considered	3
3. Watersports can improve the physical health of players.	3.57	Highly considered	1
4. Water Sports improves mentality alertness, reaction times and versatility.	3.51	Highly considered	2
5. Water Sports can relieve stress and improve the alertness of a person.	3.57	Highly considered	1
Overall	**3.49**	**Highly considered**	**1**

Table 3 showed that customer benefits had the highest mean score among the three major parts of the survey questionnaire. It had a mean score of 3.49 and it was

certainly highly considered. Physical health improvements and relief on stress and improvement on the alertness of the person had highest mean score of 3.57 among the customer benefits and they were highly considered. Customer preferences, alternative outdoor activity and water sports improve mental alertness had a mean score of 3.37, 3.42, and 3.51, respectively and they were all highly considered through least among them in the attractiveness of the destination.

DISCUSSION

This chapter provided a discussion of the result in relation to relevant literature as the three feature of an attractive water sports destination were examined to identify the different perception that can provide people with the means and interests to visit water sports destination.

Cruz (2013) and Leuterio (2007), stressed the importance of facilities as a key factor in indulging more customer to come to a certain place. They pointed out that visitors and participants rely on the environment and settings of the attraction pushing them to give a good feedback for the people wanting to try these attractions.

These ideas were held true as facilities in this study got a high mean score of 3.37 it as a highly regarded aspect of in choosing a tourist destination such as wakeboarding. . This is followed by the overall image which constitute the staff, tourist destination's unique image, eco-friendly tourist destination, opinion of people, and well known tourist destination. The overall quality, safety and security, value of

rate facilities, personality and attitude of staff, and cleanliness of destination.

In addition to this, the over-all image of the water park was also noted as highly regarded. Since amenities and facilities constitute the over-all image of the park including services the staff renders, they create a positive impact on the mind of the customers.

Most importantly, one notable factor that amenities and facilities bring about is customers' benefits.

The study found that customer benefits which constitute customer's preference, alternative outdoor activity, physical health improvements, water sports improves mental alertness, relief on stress and improve alertness garnered the highest mean in the survey conducted.

Most significant among the results were the physical health improvement and relief on stress and improvement on mental alertness according to the data collected from the 100 respondents. This means that sports tourism is beneficial not only for sports enthusiasts but also for the health conscious people. Therefore these benefits encourage people to try the wakeboarding.

Tourism is believed to be an important sector that has impact on the development of a country's economy because of its capacity for income creation and generation of jobs. The ability of the national economy to gain from tourism depends on the availability of investment to develop the necessary infrastructure and on its ability to supply the needs of tourists. Hence, this paper recommends that for sports tourism especially wakeboarding to flourish, service providers should consider the following: customer benefits,

overall image, and facilities of the water sports. It is further suggested that extensive marketing strategies be employed as wakeboarding may attract several local and foreign clientele especially now that many people love to combine travel with skill enhancement. Service providers may use flyers, brochures, and banners to promote the destination. The social media may also be utilized to attract current and potential tourists.

Likewise, government support is one factor that plays an important role in wakeboarding because this sport has an element of risk.Though equipped with contingency measures, wakeboarding providers need to coordinate with the concerned authorities to maintain good community and the list of emergency numbers.

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TOURISM ADVENTURE: A STUDY OF THE AESTHETIC VALUE AND SIGNIFICANCEOF ADVENTURE PARKS IN PROMOTING PAMPANGA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to amaze and impress on the service that an adventure park can present in terms of the facilities, safety, enjoyment and the remarkable experience that will be gained not just by the adventure travelers but also by the whole tourism industry in general. The respondents of the study totals to one hundred who visited and experience adventure tourism.

Based on the result of this study, safety is a mere factor as long as the excitements were in it. The researchers concluded that the locals and tourists love to put themselves to the kind of activities with excitement and a slight scare on their body. In Pampanga, adventure is one of the growing types of tourism.

Key Terms: *adventure tourism, aesthetic value, promotion*

INTRODUCTION

According to Eleanor Roosevelt, "The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience". Living outside one's comfort zone brings about numerous benefits. This includes getting to know oneself more, boosting one's self in gaining extra ordinary experiences and opening one's eyes to the wonders of adventure that do not just let you see the beauty in meeting new things but also letting you overcome certain heart-pounding phenomena.

Tourism helps the society in all aspects, in economy, in nature, and in business. The location of Pampanga is at the center of Luzon making it far from bodies of water but the *Kapampangans* used this as an advantage and conceptualized the idea of the first-ever adventure park in the province (Cruz, 2008).

Adventure tourism is one of the industries that rapidly grow. It has obligation in the economic development of the place or location who are distant and its local resident, community, culture, economy and environment (Zurick, 1992). Based on the study of cater (2006), participants who are fond of precarious activities mostly obtain electrifying and exciting actions. Adventure tourism workers should ensure safety without pulling out the pleasure or thrill of the activity to guarantee a long-term booming business.

According to Schwab and Dustin (2013), people especially the students should engage in outdoor activities not just for leisure purposes but also to expose them to nature, do some physical activities that test their skills and to learn unusual things in the adventure park.

This study focuses on the relationship between the participants' experiences and the adventure tourism projection in current literature. Adventure tourism is not just risk and danger related. It also indicates fun, exciting events and safe experience for its customer (Kane & Tucker, 2004).

Attarain (2001) mentioned that one of the effective sources to obtain information about adventure parks development is the analysis of trends or change. Business owners of particular adventure parks can use the analysis to catch some useful information and input that may help them improve their park. This will create an advantage or strength for the park.

Burgess et al. (1988) highlighted that people, park and urban spaces are established to offer different kinds of job opportunities for the local resident living nearby the area of the park. This will help them enhance quality of the service they provide because their skills improved. To have a successful and well-known adventure park is to have an effective way of increasing the energy and eagerness to the activities being discovered in an adventure park (Cater, 2006).

The study involving the introduction of an adventure park can be enlightenment to the locals and tourists, students and adventurous people. This will give them ideas, proper learning and understanding on what to expect from an adventure park. This study may also serve as a guide to tourists on seeking adventure activities Moreover; this may aid in promoting the tourism industry in Pampanga.

The objective of this research is to describe how people view the tourism capabilities of an adventure park. It

is believed that this study can help readers, tourists, adventure lovers and tourism management students to fully understand how tourism can help in the development of the economy.

METHOD

This study was a type of quantitative research particularly descriptive research. Glass and Hopkins (1984) explained that descriptive research as a compilation of different data that can be used to depict, organize, and record the data. It is an effective method that can be used for qualitative or quantitative survey.

The respondents of the study totals to one hundred (100) participants; fifty percent (50%) of which were college students and the remaining were staff of a particular adventure site, relatives and group of friends experienced the thrilling activities of adventure parks from the aged of eighteen (18) years old and above.

Random sampling was used in the survey. The researchers selected the students, staffs and professors who already experienced and went to different adventure parks inside and outside Pampanga.

The instrument of this study was a survey questionnaire consisting of fifteen (15) items, which includes trends, safety, and facilities of an adventure park. Each item attribute consisted of five (5) questions where they were rated the item is done by putting "**X**" on the box which indicated the level of their opinion about the adventure park they have visited.

The survey questionnaires together with the informed consents were given to the potential respondents to make sure each participant answered all the attributes on the day of the gathering which was August 17, 2017 with a purpose of having a meeting after the survey. The next data gathering was taken in an adventure park with the intention of getting the consciousness of the staff and observing the activities of the park. After the data were gathered, the next mission was tally the survey questionnaires at the College Library and the final part was the encoding where the data were already tallied and placed in the Microsoft excel to compute for the mean range and give the verbal interpretation.

RESULTS

Table 1

Perceptions of the participants on how an adventure park goes along with trends

Trends	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Facts of destination	3.54	Highly considered
2. Policies and procedures	3.59	Highly considered
3. Interactive multimedia	3.48	Highly considered
4. Exceptional ideas	3.33	Highly considered
5. Futuristic advertisement	3.41	Highly considered
Overall	**3.47**	**Highly considered**

Based on Table 1, it was noted that trends was a highly considered factor respondents as regards adventure parks. It was presented that trends got a mean of 3.47. It was shown that the well-known establishments attract guests by having different ideas on promoting adventure parks for every occasion or season. Highest among these factors on trends was policies and procedures (m=3.59) and lowest was exceptional ideas (m=3.33).

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Table 2

Perceptions of the participants on how an adventure park chooses safety rather than risk

Safety	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Reduce threats	3.31	Highly considered
2. Reducing exciting rides	2.94	More considered
3. Safety is important.	3.50	Highly considered
4. Safety briefing	3.63	Highly considered
5. Age limit	3.55	Highly considered
Overall	**3.39**	**Highly considered**

Safety as shown in Table 2 is also a highly considered factor in adventure parks. Items such as *reducing threats, excitement experience, safety briefing, and having age limit* regarded as highly considered by the respondents. Only reducing exciting rides got the lowest mean of 2.94 which was verbally interpreted as more considered.

Table 3

Perceptions of the participants on how an adventure park boosts its marketing through amenities

Amenities	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Many restaurants	3.50	Highly considered
2. Parks attractiveness	3.68	Highly considered
3. Change of themes	3.41	Highly considered
4. Worth to pay	3.46	Highly considered
5. Promotion and Marketing	3.52	Highly considered
Overall	**3.51**	**Highly considered**

Table 3 proved that facilities had the highest overall mean among these tourism attributes mean of 3.51. The result of the respondents showed that the featured amenities such as restaurants, theme of the park, marketing strategies and activities were highly considered.

DISCUSSION

In an adventure tourism industry, various aspects affect the experience of customers. It may feature the leisure it may pose to possible customers and the risk or physical danger it may give to people who took this kind of

challenging activity while appreciating the aesthetic feature of the adventure park..

Based on the study of Carter (2006), people were fond of adventurous activities because of their electrifying and exciting actions. The study proved that; people love to pursue something that involves threatening and thrilling activities rather than ensuring their safety. Adventure parks should still assure the safety of the participants of the ride without reducing the excitement in it, as it is the center of attraction of the industry.

Although the three attributes received the same verbal interpretations as highly considered, it was still noted that safety isn't a major thing considered by customers.

The focus is still on the available amenities most specifically the services a theme park offers.

Nevertheless, securing the safety of the guests is still a vital aspect of an attractive adventure park.

According to Buckley (2010), adventure tourism is in need of facilities that will boost the marketing and promotion of an adventure park. In this research, this represent that the statement is held important such that in constructing facilities it did not only provide amenities, products and entertainment to advertise the business but also highlighted tourism in Pampanga. Likewise, promotional products about the facilities may increase the number of locals and tourists. This serves as the marketing strategy to hook the attention of the many.

Trends can also be beneficial for future benefit for decision making, improving and converting new program,

multimedia and policies (Attarain, 2001). Results of the study showed that trend can help people to discover new adventures on parks, since there was an expansion of new activities and ideas for the newly and modern adventure park. Creating additional activities and ideas will increase the popularity of the attraction to be more popular.

As Burgess et al. (1998) mentioned, having a large space and turning it to an adventure park can help the citizen near the area to improve their lifestyle by assisting the operation of the facilities. This study presents that both locals and tourists will gain from the existence of an adventure park in the area. Adventure park that includes more facilities and land space can support or help locals nearby since it can provide and the country on a macro-level.

On the other hand, Kane and Tucker (2004) mentioned that the notion of the risk and danger is possible in adventure parks which increase the chance of loss of life. In this statement it was held true because it is important that the locals and guests of an adventure park must be safe even though the activities are thrilling and exciting. In reducing or removing dangerous activities, guests will feel safe and comfortable to try all the activities in an adventurepark even it is less thrilling.

In this study, operators need to have counseling or discussion about ensuring the safety of the guests while implementing the activities. To further promote the adventure parks and to obtain the wants and desired satisfaction of the locals and tourists, it is suggested to construct souvenir shops, boutiques and entertainment facilities. Expressing creative ideas like entertainment games, building obstacle

course and unique exhilarating activities will gather the attention of the locals and tourists. Training and hiring the locals to work in an adventure park and putting height limit, age limit, safety briefing and checking all activities must be considered before the park opens. These are some of the precautionary measures which must be given emphasis by adventure parks owners and staff of the adventure parks. All of these ensure the promotion, safety and value of adventure parks in Pampanga.

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INLAND WATER PARKS IN THE EYES OF THE TOURISTS

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Abstract

The main thrust of this study was to determine the tourism image of a water park in the eyes of the tourists. Specifically, it aimed to evaluate the special features of water parks, their reputation and the manifested hospitality of their employees. This is a descriptive survey research where 100 respondents used for the study. These were the potential customers to water parks. The instrument was a researcher-made questionnaire which focuses on the special features, reputation and hospitality of employees. In person-distribution method was utilized. This study used computed mean for the interpretation of data. The results revealed that the resorts' added features such as the inclusion of eight waves in the swimming pool is deemed most important. Reputation and hospitality of resort personnel were also noted as more important. It was suggested that these water parks have water-related activities. It was also recommended that water park establishment must implement strict procedures for customer safety.

Key Terms: water parks, tourism image, tourists

INTRODUCTION

On a global scale, tourism is one of the most lucrative ventures. Specifically, water parks as means of tourism are popular getaways, especially during summer. As the saying goes, "Enjoy playing with water in the best possible way."

Water parks are common places visited during the summer heat. According to Sangree (2016), water park businesses keep on getting bigger and even better to be more competitive. Slides, rides and other spectacular attractions of water parks tend to be plus factors in the tourism business. Even city and private parks pull in more visitors through the introduction of exciting rides, additional visual attractions and other modes of luxuries. Overall, both indoor and outdoor parks generate solid income or revenues.

Currently, economists are interested in the evaluation of benefits from water parks and reservoirs, which are located in the metropolitan areas. During the process of searching for possible means of measuring the water parks' benefits, economists learned that the distance to population centers was the key to measurement, together with the location.

Based on the research of the Institute of Urban Studies (2015), the water park industry is diverse and developing. Municipally possessed water parks are among the quickest developing portion of the global market. Thirty-one percent of outdoor water parks are owned by government, while the other 69% are privately owned. From 2005 to 2009, participation at the biggest North American water parks expanded by around 11%, in contrast to large amusement parks with 3% only.

Water parks cater families who need quality entertainment time in an amazingly safe condition. After all

things are considered, water parks are the most secure place to have a ton of fun in the water aside from the seas, waterways, lakes and notwithstanding, swimming pools.

According to Coy and Haralson (2002), George Millay made Sea World in 1964 and took the possibility of ocean life parks to new level. He is a creative genius and the unchallenged father of the water park. In 1977, he tested the diversion business perpetually when he opened the entryways of Wet N' Wild, the main world water park. As his biographer, O'brien, composes, "Millay is a man who has transformed water into gold, a current Poseidon". He launched the present water park industry.

According to Alton (2014), one of the quickest developing stimulation settings is the water stop with a yearly development of 7% every year. The idea of the water stop today has been developed. The fame of the water stops in the worldwide market is the main pattern of note. Abu Dhabi's Yas Water World is one of the cases how water stop has been set up from a gathering of water slides to a completely themed stop. The last pattern of note is the improvement of practice stops that emphasize on the water-based action such as surfing.

According to Noland (2016), water parks execute programs like upkeep operations and work force preparing for the visitor well-being. It includes apropos government codes, necessities and operational, support staff to nearly work with the improvement and usage of the well-being strategies. They take after producer rules and use outside organizations to dependably re-investigate attractions and test and prepare representatives. It is a dependable expert industry.

Based on the study of Harris (2002), swimming pools are just big basins of water. They have the same basic way from the backyard personal pool to the wave park, wave pool. It all comes in shapes and sizes. To clean a large volume of water, it needs a combination of filtration and chemical treatment. The main difference of the types of pool is how the basin is constructed. There are several pool styles which include above-ground, fiber glass, vinyl-lined in-ground, granite, and poured-concrete pools. They all rely on the same basic plumbing and filtering systems which prove that tourists focus on the beauty of designs of the water parks.

With the surge of infrastructures in water parks, the researchers' main thrust focuses on determining the tourism image of water parks in the eyes of tourists. Specifically, this study aimed to evaluate the special features of the water parks and hospitality of their employees.

METHOD

Descriptive survey research method was utilized for this study. It is a descriptive study because it involves the researchers to gather relevant data that would provide further details regarding water parks. It is a survey because certain numbers of respondents were selected from a whole population to gather information.

There were 100 respondents for this study. These were the potential customers, clients or visitors to water parks. The survey was conducted in SM City, Pampanga.

The instrument used was a researcher-made questionnaire. It is a checklist consisting of three important

factors which are special features, reputation and hospitality. Each of the factors consists of five statements. It is based on a four-point Likert scale with verbal interpretations on the special features as: 1-Strongly dislike, 2-Dislike, 3-Like and 4-Mostly like. For the reputation and hospitality of the water park employees, the verbal interpretations are as follows: 1-Least important, 2- Less important, 3-Important and 4-Most important. The instrument was content- validated by experts.

In-person distribution method was utilized for the data collection of this research. The respondents were asked to answer the survey questionnaire. After filling out the checklist, the respondents submitted their answered instrument to the researchers.

For the data analysis, gathered information was encoded in Microsoft Excel. The processed data were then plotted into frequency distribution tables and were subjected to computation of weighted means. The ranges of the mean for the special features of water parks are 1.00-1.75 – Strongly dislike, 1.76-2.50 – Dislike, 2.51-3.25 – Like and 3.25-4.00 – Mostly like. For the reputation and hospitality of employees, the ranges are: 1.00-1.75 – Least important, 1.76-2.50 – Less important, 2.51-3.25 – Important and 3.26-4.00 – Most important.

RESULTS

In this part of the thesis, the complete results of the gathered data of information about the respondents' view on the tourism image of a water park are presented.

Table 1
Respondent's view of the special features of a water park

Special Feature	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Mini zoo inside the resort	3.31	Mostly like
2. Swimming pool which includes the design like the 8 wave pool	3.59	Mostly like
3. Activities like fire dancing and live bands every night.	3.45	Mostly like
4. Mini adventure park (Wall climbing and giant swings)	3.24	Dislike
5. Aquariums (Salt water and fresh water)	3.03	Dislike
General Weighted Mean	**3.32**	**Mostly like**

Table 1 reveals that overall, special features of an inland water resort are mostly liked by the respondents. Among these added features, inclusion of eight waves in swimming pools is deemed most liked. It is then followed by fire dancing, live bands and mini zoo.

Table 2

Perception of the respondents on reputation of a water park

Reputation	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. It is a well-known resort in Pampanga.	3.44	Highly important
2. The management is taking good care of the resort.	3.27	Highly important
3. Many people choose it over othe different resorts.	3.03	More important
4. No bad rumors about the resort	2.91	More important
5. It makes you feel excited when you go there.	2.91	More important
General Weighted Mean	**3.11**	**More important**

Table 2 uncovers that reputation is one of the most important attributes of a water park having a general weighted mean of 3.11. It shows here that the popularity is highly important to respondents. Bad rumors and the excitement of the tourists going to a waterpark got the lowest rate.

Table 3

Respondent's perception on the hospitality on a water park

Hospitality	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Making their customers feel comfortable like it is home	3.24	More important
2. Impressing them with remarkable in their stay	3.16	More important
3. They build customers service relationship.	3.03	More important
4. Provide customer loyalty and perceived quality of their service	3.01	More important
5. Meet their customers relationship	3.02	More important
General Weighted Mean	**3.09**	**More important**

Table 3 presents that overall, hospitality is more important to respondents. Making their customers feel comfortable got the highest point, followed by impressing them with remarkable stay.

DISCUSSION

This study shows that tourists prefer a water park that is popular because they want to be on trend and feel safer when visiting a place that is well-known to everyone. The word-of-mouth that provided positive impacts in a water park and the positive feedbacks a water park gets from its past visitors can

be one of the reasons why a water park becomes popular. It is very important for the tourists that a management operates its water park very well for they feel special when the management gives importance on what impression they will leave on the tourists or guests. The researchers also learned that mini-adventure parks and aquariums do not give excitement to the tourists, probably because they focus more on what is new and unique on the designs of the swimming pool. The researchers discovered that bad rumors are not that important to the tourists because often times, what is essential for them are the name of the resort and the positive feedbacks.

According to Alton (2014), the popularity of the water parks in the international market is the first trend of note. In this study, this statement is accurate for it can be seen from the results that it is important for the tourists that a water park is well known or famous to people.

Institute of Urban Studies (2015) discovered that water parks keeps on attracting tourists for many reasons. Some of these reasons include the increased of disposable income, less interest to swim in water bodies, and the "thrill" it gives especially to young tourists. Municipalities frequently discovered that serving citizens with different activities and experiences that cannot be found to a common "public pool" can result to more number of tourist arrival and increased income. Proven in this study, tourists are more willing to go to a water park that will give them an unforgettable experience and more exciting activities.

Noland (2016) noted that water parks implement programs like maintenance, operations and personnel training for the guests' safety. It involves pertinent government codes, requirements and operational maintenance staff to closely work

with the development and implementation of the safety procedures. This statement proves that water parks are operating and managing their resorts well by implementing the safety procedures for the guests.

Water parks tend to attract more tourists if they are popular because water parks are in the global market and are always on the trend. The tourists' main focus is on positive feedbacks of a water park rather than its bad name or reputation. Water parks can attract more tourists if they have new and remarkable designs on its swimming pool and facilities for they wanted to experience different activities which cannot be found on other traditional pools.

Water parks may plan some strategies on how they will make it popular to everyone by gaining positive feedbacks. When planning to establish a water park, owner/s may consider constructing an unusual design of the swimming pool and facilities that will give more excitement to tourists and that will leave them a remarkable stay in order to gain more income.

The management of water parks should give extraordinary service and show extra care to tourists to give them a memorable experience and it will give them a reason to go back. A water park also need to have special features including a mini zoo, a swimming pool that includes a design like an eight-wave pool, an act of fire dancing and live bands because these will attract the tourists.

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