

Assessment of Marketability of Tourism Management and Hospitality Programs of the Select Private College

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess the status of Tourism Management and Hospitality programs of the Select Private College in Negros Occidental in relation to the 7 P's of marketing mix elements namely: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. The research also sought to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats through SWOT analysis and the problems and issues encountered by Tourism Management and Hospitality Programs of the institution. To meet the research objectives, 265 students taking BS Tourism Management, Diploma in Travel & Tours Management, Diploma in Hotel & Restaurant Management, and Diploma in Culinary Arts programs were used as participants of the study. The descriptive survey research design was employed in gathering the data, which was collected from a self-made survey questionnaire. The statistical applications used in analyzing the data were the mean, frequency and percentage. It is concluded in this study that students assessed the current status of Tourism Management and Hospitality programs with regards to the 7 P's of marketing mix elements as fair and so the researcher find necessary actions and strategies to work on with the improvement of all the elements. Also, the SWOT analysis conducted reveals that there are more strength in the school than its weaknesses and more opportunities than threats.

Key words: Marketing Plan, 7P's SWOT matrix, Problems and issues encountered, Tourism Management and Hospitality Management

From construction to agriculture or telecommunications, the international spread of tourism has resulted in benefits for the economy and employment.

Tourism now generates as much revenue for businesses as oil exports, food products, or automobiles. In addition to exemplifying one of the primary sources of income for many developing nations, tourism has emerged as one of the major players in international commerce. This development is accompanied by an increase in destination diversity and competition around the world.

The total contribution of travel and tourism to employment, including wider effects from investment, the supply chain, and induced income impacts, was 4.232 million jobs in 2014, or 11.1% of total employment, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) . It is anticipated that this data will increase by 2.5% in 2015 to 4.338 million jobs, or 10.9% of total employment. The Philippines' travel and tourism industry is expected to support 5.613 million jobs by 2025.

In terms of tourism, agribusiness, and IT-BPO, the Province of Negros Occidental offers numerous employment opportunities. As the province's capital, Bacolod City has the potential to attract tourists and create jobs. Due to the rising number of tourists and travelers, it is anticipated that the infrastructure of hotels and restaurants will expand between 2017 and 2018. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the demand for cooks, electricians, plumbers, housekeepers, front desk workers, and cooks in tourism-related occupations. Additionally, there will be an increase in demand for English-speaking carpenters, handy craftspeople, food packaging workers, and organic farm workers. By 2020, these employment requirements are expected to rise from 1000 to 2000.

As a result, qualified training institutions are needed to meet the industry's demand for skilled workers, and interested students will enroll in tourism and hospitality-related programs to meet the industry's needs. Under

the direction of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the selected private college offers programs in tourism and hospitality, including the BS in Tourism Management and the Diploma in Travel and Tours.

Management, a TESDA-accredited Diploma in Culinary Arts, and a Diploma in Hotel and Restaurant Services. Since there are a lot of schools that offer courses in tourism and hospitality, the select private college became more eager to keep track of a larger number of students who registered for those courses.

Since the select private college has been offering the aforementioned courses for the past three years, the school has seen a decline in enrollment in tourism management and hospitality programs. The administration was concerned about this and wondered how they could advertise those programs more effectively. In fact, these programs are regarded as the department's bread and butter because they enroll the greatest number of students. The researcher proposed the study to determine whether or not the Tourism Management and Hospitality Programs can be sold.

According to Kotler and Armstrong, (2012) businesses create the marketing process in order to assimilate value for customers and cultivate strong customer relationships in order to obtain value from customers in return.

According to Siakalli's, (2015) research, the use of e-marketing in the hospitality and tourism industry opens up a whole new market for the sale of hospitality and tourism-related collegiate degrees. It has been demonstrated that many young adults choose the tourism and hospitality sector. With these young adults in mind, choosing a school or training center has been difficult, and many marketing professionals face the challenge of attracting these potential customers to their establishments. The only difference between the educational and business environments in the Philippines is their approach to marketing collegiate and university programs. When promoting programs to students who are about to enter a tertiary or college level of education, the application of the marketing mix is frequently pointed out and is a standard practice.

The impact of services on the implementation of the marketing 7 Ps can create a competitive advantage for the institutions using it, as discussed in the study by Hameed and Mustafah, (2014) which discussed the use of marketing activities with the marketing mix in creating a competitive advantage. Depending on the requirements of the company, the identified components of the marketing mix can be chosen. The combinations of these components are determined by the opportunities presented by the identified product or procedure. It has been determined that smaller financial institutions cannot employ the same marketing strategy as larger ones.

In the study by Farrall and Lindsley, (2013) the researchers summarize the necessity of employing the marketing mix when developing a set of strategies for marketing a brand or business. The methods are often referred to as the Ps. The marketing mix is made up of seven Ps. The supplier sells the product, or the range of products sold. The cost of the product or service is its value, or price. The place of distribution, the location where the product is sold, and this could also refer to the service's outlet or accessibility. Advertising is one distinct example of promotion, which deals with the manner in which the product is presented to customers in the study of Pabelona, R., & Lausa, S., (2022) findings revealed that the influence of advertisement (radio) is generally high. The degree to which an organization places its customers and clients at the center of its operations is referred to as the "people or service providers" definition. The degree to which the college or university is committed to creating a welcoming environment for students is shown by the physical evidence; the extent to which the institution runs its business operations is referred to as process. To develop a process for providing high-quality goods and services, an organization must establish a customer- or client-focused environment. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), colleges and universities in the Philippines must continue to monitor the environment and adjust their marketing mix in order to take advantage of opportunities and minimize the impact of threats. In the field of marketing, the majority of relationships between variables are situational and dynamic. The SWOT analysis is used by these institutions to combine internal marketing conditions with external forces that could have an impact on how they run their businesses.

Conducting research into the organization and the environment in which it operates is one step in the integration of enhancements to the marketing strategies employed by the institutions. The ideal format for a SWOT analysis audit would be a series of brief factual statements outlining the most important aspects of the institution's marketing efforts.

The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to evaluate every aspect of the institution's operations in order to determine its strengths, areas in which it is performing poorly, and weaknesses. The company has no control over the

opportunities and threats in the external environment. The institution may be able to identify potential opportunities that it could take advantage of and threats that could also harm business operations by recognizing these factors. It is possible for any business to compile a list of its strengths and weaknesses. By being aware of it and working toward it, a weakness can become a strength.

In a similar vein, it is of the utmost importance to be aware of the potential threats posed by other businesses as well as the opportunities that arise at various points in time.

Rovai, (2017) says that external factors like life crises, sickness, divorce, job loss, and so on can seriously undermine a student's commitment to attending college. The school's marketability and its programs may also be impacted by competition from other schools and compliance with supervision agencies' requirements.

According to a study by Schein, Wilson, and Keelan, (2013) the application of the SWOT analysis to auditing in marketing necessitates extensive data collection and extensive in-depth research. An exhaustive comprehension of the circumstance by all people who are engaged with the business tasks, including the showcasing experts, frames a premise of compelling promoting arranging and an effective undertaking.

With limited resources and increased accountability, many schools are struggling. Schools are expected to be given the freedom and responsibility to choose how education should be carried out in order to meet the goals, while national standards and common goals are expected to ensure comparability and that the school is motivated in the same direction. Schools' primary goals are to encourage students' intellectual and social growth as well as their cognitive and academic growth. However, the problems and events that take place in schools have the potential to obstruct both of these objectives. Primarily, cognitive function will be negatively impacted by the severe anguish caused by a problem that appears to be unsolvable. As a result, students won't be able to participate in new learning.

On the other hand, the most pressing issues that confront higher education today are the nature of the curriculum, how faculty time is used, how to control costs, the use of technology and distance learning, partnerships with businesses, and governance and leadership arrangements. This study's conceptual framework is the Input Process Output Model. This model is a functional graph, according to Schembri, (2012) that categorizes the inputs, outputs, and essential processing tasks required to transform inputs into outputs. Sometimes, it is also constructed to include any storage that might occur during the process. The external flow of data and materials into the process is represented by the inputs. All of the tasks needed to change the inputs are included in the processing step. The materials and data that come out of the transformation process are the outputs. Through the seven Ps of the marketing mix, the BS in Tourism Management and Hospitality programs' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as well as the challenges these programs face, were evaluated.

Objectives of The Study

This study's primary objective is to evaluate the college's Tourism Management and Hospitality programs in relation to the seven Ps of marketing—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence. Additionally, it aims to determine the four programs' advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, and threats. The identification of the issues that are encountered by tourism and hospitality programs is another objective of this study.

The objectives of the study are to address the issues that the Tourism and Hospitality programs face.

Materials and Methods

The study used a descriptive research design to get to the conclusion of the participant's perspective on the 7 Ps of the marketing mix—its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and problems—for tourism management and hospitality programs. According to Wilson, descriptive research will use observation to describe current or past phenomena. As a result, data that can be analyzed using a variety of descriptive statistics were gathered using a self-made survey questionnaire.

The 781 first- through third-year college students enrolled in the study came from four different tourism and hospitality programs and took part in the study. Using Slovin's Formula, a sample of 265 from this population was selected, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin error. Out of 265 students, 32 had already completed diploma programs. However, the researcher was able to reach them individually via social media (Facebook) and text message, where he or she explained the study and the purpose of the communication.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher gathered data by utilizing a self-made questionnaire with three sections. All of the questions were based on observations made by the school's students and teachers.

By dividing the population of each course by the total population multiplied by the sample size, the researcher used Stratified Random Sampling to determine the population proportion of each program. The researcher then used Systematic Random Sampling with a three-point interval to select the participants from the provided list who would respond to the survey questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The researcher decided to use mean range scoring to see how many participants agreed or disagreed with the various variables, including the 7Ps of the marketing mix, that could affect the marketability of the school's Tourism Management and Hospitality programs. On the other hand, problem number two, which is about the school's Tourism Management and Hospitality programs' Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, will use the frequency and percentage of the strengths and weaknesses variables to figure out the programs' internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as their external opportunities and threats, based on the responses of the participants. The researcher will identify the opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses of Tourism Management and Hospitality programs using the 2/3 rule or a frequency greater than 67%.

Problem Number 1's mean scores ranged from 1.01 to 1.50, with 1.01 being interpreted as Needs Improvement, 1.51 to 1.50 as Poor, 2.51 to 1.50 as Fair, and 3.51-4.00 as Very Good. On the other hand, the mean score range for Problem Number 3 was interpreted as Not a Problem when it was below 2.49, while scores above 2.50 were interpreted as a Problem.

Statistical Treatment

The statistical tool that was used to evaluate the tourism management and hospitality programs in terms of the seven Ps and the problems and issues that were encountered was the weighted arithmetic mean.

The Tourism Management and Hospitality programs' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were evaluated using the frequency and percentage method. Additionally, the study-appropriate marketing strategies were identified using the SWOT analysis.

Results and Discussion

According to first- through third-year college students, the current status of tourism management and hospitality programs in terms of the 7 Ps of the marketing mix.

Product

The extensive curriculum design for the Diploma in Hotel & Restaurant Management received the highest score (M=3.37), while the extensive curriculum design for the Diploma in Tourism and Travel Services received the lowest score (M=3.41) when students evaluated the product of the Tourism Management and Hospitality programs.

The hospitality and tourism management (HTM) programs in the Philippines have experienced extraordinary growth over the past two decades. The scope of hospitality and tourism has expanded with the introduction of new subjects like convention and exhibition management, special events, cruises, aviation, theme parks, private clubs, and casinos. In addition to the traditional HTM subjects of hotels and resorts, restaurants, institution management, leisure studies, and tourism, students now have many options.

Price

Table 1. *Price/Tuition Fee Difference from other Colleges and Universities Offering Hospitality & Tourism Management Programs*

Select College	University A	College B	College C
P 210.00	P 470.33	P 611.60	P 621.00

The tuition rates of select college and other private schools in Bacolod City are shown in Table 1. The lowest tuition rate is P 210.00 per unit at CASAP-Bacolod. University A, with a tuition rate of P470.33, College B, with a tuition rate of P611.60, and College C, with a tuition rate of P621.00, are next.

The data presented in this table shows that select college's tuition is competitive with that of other educational establishments that also offer the same programs.

Various researchers have referred to college tuition as a significant cost that strongly influences college choice decisions. In a similar vein, Vasigh and Hamzasee, (2004) investigated the possibility of enrollment being affected by tuition, income, financial aid, and unemployment.

Additionally, students' perceptions of the quality of the education they receive are influenced by pricing, which has an impact not only on the revenues that HEIs generate from their enrollment.

Place

Students rated the Tourism Management and Hospitality programs as Fair in terms of location. The variable with access to major interest (M=3.35) received the highest score out of all the others. However, the variable with the lowest score (M=3.30) was how easy it is to get from home to school due to the school's strategic location.

The location of the college was also found to be a significant predictor of college selection. They pointed out that the distance between a college and a student's home may also have a significant impact on their decision to enroll.

Promotion

The school's participation and championship in the field of tourism and hospitality made the school known to people, as evidenced by the Tourism Management and Hospitality programs' fair status in terms of promotion (M=3.48). This result indicates that the school's marketing strategy for the various competitions it participates in is a successful marketing tool to get students to sign up for the program.

The introduction of promotion is one of the most crucial aspects of an institution's growth. Promotion, according to Kotler and Armstrong, (2012) induces the desired response from a prospective student. The "promotion mix," which includes advertising, personal selling, general publicity, and special promotions, is becoming an increasingly important component of successful marketing plans for higher education.

People

The participants gave the hospitality and tourism management programs a fair rating in terms of people. However, faculty members' approachability and friendliness (M=3.34) received the highest rating out of all variables. However, the variable (M=3.17) that the school's administrative staff is very accommodating and quick with all transactions received a low rating. The quality of the training and services provided by the program's teachers as well as the staff's and administration's level of customer service determine the programs' efficiency and effectiveness.

Like professionals in other industries, front-line higher education professionals, such as those in student affairs or enrollment services, must provide customer service. Customers are willing to assist themselves because they are accustomed to a variety of service channels.

Process

The study's participants gave the processes of tourism management and hospitality programs a fair rating. However, in school transactions like enrollment, examination payment, clearance signing, book borrowing, etc., the quick and systematic process (The highest score was awarded (M=3.18).

A lot of schools and colleges put in a lot of effort to get the job done better. According to the research that was carried out by Cirikovic, (2014) the processes that are intrinsically employed frequently play the primary role in the establishment of an institution's competitive position. The institution is failing in its mission to provide the best service to its biggest customers, the students, if processes like the slow delivery of grades or the late processing of fees impede its progress.

The skills of the school staff will determine the quality of the process of delivering the final product, such as the release of students' grades. Additionally, the provision of the finished product necessitates the school's willingness to invest in process improvement.

Physical Evidence

The Physical Evidence status of the Tourism Management and Hospitality programs was rated as Fair.

However, comfortable classrooms and adequate lighting and ventilation received the highest rating (M=3.38). However, the students gave the comfort room the lowest rating (M=3.11).

A school needs to be able to meet the needs of its intended market, which includes its current students and customers, as well as the facilities. According to Aimin and Begum, (2012) the school's location, decor,

staff, and everything else has an impact on how satisfied its customers are. The physical evidence is dependent on the student's experience, stay, and comfort during their time at the institution.

Table 1. Summary of the Current Status of the 7 P's of Marketing Mix of Tourism Management and Hospitality Programs of the Select Private College

7 P's	M	Interpretation
1. Product	3.45	Fair
2. Price	3.35	Fair
3. Place	3.32	Fair
4. Promotion	3.42	Fair
5. People	3.25	Fair
6. Process	3.17	Fair
7. Physical Evidence	3.24	Fair
General Mean	3.31	Fair

Students enrolled in select private college tourism management and hospitality programs rated the seven Ps of the marketing mix as fair when taken as a whole. Specifically, the school's product received the highest mean (M=3.45) and was described as having fair marketability out of the seven elements of the marketing mix. However, in terms of its procedure (M=3.17), and as a result, the school would need to concentrate on improving a variety of internal procedures that would have an impact on the general level of satisfaction that students have with their experience with the select private college.

Table 2. SWOT Matrix

	Strength	Weakness
	1. Provide extensive training methods to students taking tourism and hospitality related subjects. 2. Offer low tuition fees 3. Friendly faculty and staff members 4. Accessible location 5. Student friendly campus	1. Disorganized school policy 2. Lack of external organization affiliation or membership related to tourism and hospitality programs 3. Facilities are poor for learning 4. Inconsistent implementation of tourism and hospitality programs leading to student's demotivation and disorganization
Opportunities	SO	WO
1. Implementation of tourism and hospitality programs that will motivate students to participate in every program of the school 2. Facility enhancement and development for intellectual growth of the students. 3. Tourism and hospitality organizations affiliation or memberships to widen industry understanding and knowledge of the students. 4. Well written school policies for strict implementation for the students to act accordingly.	1. Enhance and improve the tourism and hospitality facilities (S1, O3) 2. Organize and establish faculty development training and programs (S1, S3, O1)	1. Establish consistent and well-founded school policy (W1, W5, O5) 2. Put up tourism and hospitality center (W3, O3) 3. Affiliate with tourism and hospitality organizations (W2, O4)

Threats	ST	WT
1. Students consider other school to study the same programs that the school offers. 2. Competition with other schools offering the same programs in terms of facilities. 3. Competition with other schools offering the same programs in terms of faculty qualification 4. Competition with other schools offering the same programs in terms of activities related to tourism and hospitality	1. Create a strong marketing strategy to persuade students (S2, S3, S4, S5, T1, T3) 2. Organize productive and effective activities for students' participation (S1, T4)	1. Organize students' seminar in relation to trends in tourism and hospitality industry (W5, T4) 2. Renovate facilities (W3, O2)

The SWOT Matrix depicts the school's internal and external factors in Table 2. The following strategies are included in this matrix to help it improve its internal environment: 1.) Enhance and improve the facilities for tourism and hospitality Set up training for faculty development Establish a school policy that is well-supported and consistent. Join organizations that promote tourism and hospitality. In contrast, the following external environment strategies were developed in this matrix: 1.) Create an effective marketing plan to convince students. Create engaging and efficient activities that encourage student participation. Plan a seminar for students on current trends in the tourism and hospitality industry. Remodel buildings. The school's marketability of its programs could benefit from focusing on these strategies.

Table 16. *Problems Encountered of Tourism Management and Hospitality Programs of the Select Private College*

Problems Encountered	M	Interpretation
Very Poor or less improvement of facilities (e.g., tourism center, library, laboratory rooms, student lounge, etc.)	3.01	Problem
Inconsistent implementation of tourism and hospitality programs (e.g., educational tours, industry immersion, etc.)	3.11	Problem
Minimal management support	3.15	Problem
Faculty retention	3.18	Problem
General Mean	3.11	Problem

The problems and issues that were encountered in the Tourism Management and Hospitality programs are as follows: 1.) Misapplication of school policy (M = 3.22) rapid turnover of the head of the tourism and hospitality program to implement and enhance programs (M=3.22); 3.) Retention of faculty (M=3.55); 4.) Support for management is minimal (M=3.15); 5.) Programs for tourism and hospitality, such as educational tours and industry immersion, are not consistently implemented. M=3.11); and a problem with very little or no improvement to facilities (like the tourism center, library, labs, student lounge, etc.) M=3.01).

Students' perceptions of the industry and skills alignment with industry requirements are to blame for their decision to pursue a degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. The difficulties that students encountered while studying may discourage them from continuing their education. Additionally, as Price, Matzdorf, et. al., (2011) point out, it is necessary to take into account the numerous significant effects brought on by issues with school facilities. Schools should make up for what's missing, not rely on what's already there because it won't do. Facilities may be necessary to attract key employees or to provide environments that facilitate faster knowledge transfer and production. Its influence on students' perceptions is crucial to enrollment growth and retention.

Conclusion

The students' evaluations of the school's Tourism Management and Hospitality programs indicate that, in light of the findings of the study, they are in fair standing with regard to the marketing mix elements. This indicates that their products, pricing, location, promotional techniques, employees, business procedures, and environment are all satisfied. However, the institution should not be content with this outcome at any point; rather, it should work hard to achieve the best possible outcome and keep improving its programs to provide students with an excellent education and experience.

However, the students' responses to the researcher's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats suggest that the company has more strengths than weaknesses and more opportunities than threats. However, in that case, the school ought to focus on developing various methods for combining its strengths and turning its weaknesses into strengths. Additionally, the school's management ought to concentrate on external factors that enhance the school's reputation. As a result, they can use these findings to come up with the idea of using marketing strategies that will help the school gain a competitive advantage to build on its strengths. And use the challenges as an advantage to provide exceptional education and training.

Recommendation

From the results and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are given:

Policy recommendation:

Even though the marketability of the programs in tourism management and hospitality is currently considered to be fair, the marketing mix elements need to be continuously improved and worked on in order to maintain their highest marketability status.

The following are the recommended marketing strategies for this study:

1. Enhance and improve each program's curriculum to produce graduates who are productive and competitive on a global scale.
2. Investigate a few of the possible solutions to the student's and his family's tuition burden.
3. Put up road signs and posters indicating where the school is so that potential customers can easily get there. In order to inform and encourage new students to enroll in the four programs, make use of the power of the four media—print ads, television, radio, the internet, and print media.
4. When promoting the four programs, make use of the power of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
5. Engage the faculty in a variety of trainings, seminars, and immersions to keep them up to date on industry trends..
6. Create policies that will address all concerns and issues regarding student services and admission.
7. By improving the school facilities (such as the library, laboratories, and classrooms), you can provide students with a better learning environment.
8. To maintain order and discipline in the school, strictly implement the policy. Include the school's fundamental principles in the syllabus. Programs and activities related to tourism and hospitality—such as educational tours and immersion in the industry—should be consistent and help students learn more effectively.

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