

# Measuring the Resort Business Competitiveness in Batangas Province

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**Abstract** –*This research study measured the resort business competitiveness in Batangas Province, Philippines. The results reveal the competitiveness of the resorts in Batangas Province in terms of core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources and qualifying and amplifying determinants as observed by the tourists to test the significant differences in measuring the tourist destination competitiveness of the resort business when grouped according to business profile; to propose an action plan based on the results of the study.*

*This study used descriptive method with resort guest and managers/owners as participants. Data were gathered and presented using various statistical tools, based on the results majority of the resorts are not accredited by DOT, with 10,001 to 20,000 guest arrivals per year and operating for 5 to 10 years, resorts are considered competitive in terms of core resources and attractors (physiology and climate), supporting factors and resources (spirit of hospitality) and in qualifying and amplifying determinants (safety and security), oldest resort in the business industry has better understanding of surviving in the market place through facilitating the resources and an action plan was proposed to resorts owners, local government and DOT.*

**Keywords** –*Resort Business Competitiveness, Batangas Province*

## INTRODUCTION

The destination's competitiveness in the modern tourism industry have emerged, progressively changed and refined. It is evident from this work that the management of destination competitiveness is very complex. As explained by Vlahović [1], that the competitiveness of tourism destinations has an extent of forces, influences and events that set to a very difficult to manage.

The destination competitiveness has its determinants and sub-attributes. The conceptual models provide an insight into the breadth and

complexity of the attributes of destination competitiveness but have shown the relative importance or significance of the many components involved. It is quite likely that some of the attributes of destination competitiveness will be much more important than others in terms of their impact.

The Ritchie and Crouch [2] model, was presented in a manner that can measure the destination competitiveness. This theory has developed to the point that empirical study is now possible and desirable. In more recent years the conceptual models have been applied to analyze specific destinations or tourism markets. But one of the most pressing research needs is to better understand the relative importance of the attributes of competitiveness. Strategies for improving destination competitiveness must make decisions about where and how limited resources should be directed. Therefore, information which helps to identify which attributes are likely to influence competitiveness most effectively, are of considerable value.

The researcher is motivated to conduct this study to measure the competitiveness of Top 10 resorts based on the number of visitors as recognized by the Department of Tourism here in the province of Batangas. This paper will present the importance of this study to the field of academics: tourism and hospitality studies the challenges faced by the resort industry. The information provided will serve as reference learning the components of competitiveness that can be applied in all sectors of the tourism and hospitality industry. The results may be viable among the investors to improve further the product, services and other features of the resorts while, travelers help them to furnish their decision making of where to go, spend their precious time and create meaningful experiences. Moreover, to other stakeholders will provide them better insight on the role of resorts business to the locality of the province: community, municipality, business sectors and its economy. Additionally, the result of the study may

serve as a reference to sustain the current performance of the resorts in the tourism and hospitality industry of Batangas province and envisioned to extend in international spectrum.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study aims to measure the tourist destination competitiveness of resort business in Batangas Province, Philippines. Specifically to determine the profile of the Top 10 resorts in Batangas Province, in terms of DOT Accreditation, years of operation, number of tourist arrivals; to determine the level of the tourist destination competitiveness in terms of core resources and attractors, supporting factors and resources and qualifying and amplifying determinants as observed by the tourists; to test the significant differences in measuring the tourist destination competitiveness of the resort business when grouped according to business profile; to propose an action plan based on the results of the study.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **Research design**

The study used descriptive research method in gathering data, describing the essential components or variables in order to establish the relevant evidences and to validate the tourist destination competitiveness of identified resorts in Batangas province. Descriptive research is being used to determine, describe or identify what is [3].

#### **Participants**

The participants of the study consist of 305 guests/customers and resorts' owners of top 10 resorts in the Province of Batangas. The number of respondents was based on the total number of tourists arrivals dated 2016 as presented from the data released by PTCAO with an effect size of .20 using G\*Power 3.1.9 in addition the respondents were selected at random and proportionally allocated per resort. Participants are the individuals with varying experience who also reliable to make or do some judgments regarding the relative importance of each of the three main factors and sub-factors identified in the Ritchie and Crouch [2] model of destination competitiveness.

#### **Instrument**

This study has two sets of instrument to be used; one for the owners/managers of the resorts and the other set is intended for the tourists. The instrument has two parts: Part I is intended only for the resort owner/manager as to identify the DOT Accreditation,

years of operation, and, number of tourist arrivals range; Part II will measure the tourist destination competitiveness of resorts business in Batangas province in terms of core resources and attractors; supporting factors and resources and qualifying and amplifying determinants as perceived by resorts' guests and owners.

Furthermore, this research study used modified instrument. There are five major variables from model of measuring destination competitiveness used by Ritchie and Crouch [2]. However, out of five the first three variables will be presented in this questionnaire since the other two cannot be answered by the guests. It will not be common to the entire respondents of the study. The two emitted variables were the: Destination policy and planning and development as well as the destination management.

The instrument distributed to resorts' owners and their guests for pilot testing in order to validate and undergo for reliability test with the score of .918.

#### **Procedure**

The researcher secured a letter duly signed by the research adviser and approved by dean of graduate school. The purpose of the letter is to reach out the resorts' owners allowing her to conduct a research in their establishment by distributing the questionnaire to be answered by the guests and the owners as well.

The data regarding the Top 10 resorts in Batangas province and the tourist arrivals from each resort were taken from the DOT records of 2016 released recently. The researcher conducted an ocular visit to the identified resorts to gather pertinent evidences and come-up with valid, first-hand information or experiences, in order to provide a consistent and reliable result. Lastly, the gathered data will be tallied, interpreted and analyzed.

#### **Data Analysis**

This paper used different statistical tools such as frequency distribution, weighted mean, and Independent sample t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson-r. The responses were computed by getting the general average as presented by the weighted mean. While, the frequency distribution is a representation of a certain part from the total number of the resort owners and tourists. Lastly, ANOVA was used to test the significant differences in measuring the tourist destination competitiveness as perceived by the resort owners and tourists and the relationship across the three given variables measuring, the tourist destination

competitiveness was determined by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. These data were presented using the SPSS program.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the data gathered: 3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Competitive (HC); 2.50 – 3.49 = Competitive (C); 1.50 – 2.49 = Less Competitive (LC); 1.00 – 1.49 = Not Competitive (NC).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Business Profile

Business Profile	f	%
<b>DOT Accreditation</b>		
With	3	30.00
Without	7	70.00
<b>Range of Tourist Arrivals per year</b>		
10,001 – 20,000	6	60.00
20,001 – 30,000	3	30.00
40,001 – 50,000	1	10.00
<b>Years of Operation</b>		
5 to 10 years	6	60.00
11 to 15 years	2	20.00
16 years and above	2	20.00

Table 1 presents the distribution of business profile in terms of DOT accreditation, number of tourist arrivals and number of years of operation.

In terms of DOT accreditation, majority or 70 percent are without accreditation while 3 or 30 percent are accredited by DOT. This implies that there are few among the resorts submitted themselves for accreditation. More so, most of the resorts in the province of Batangas cannot comply with DOT requirements for accreditation as they need to make some improvement in their facilities, products and services and customer services.

As to the number of tourist arrivals, 6 or 60 percent of the resorts have 10,001 to 20,000 tourist arrivals followed by 20,001 to 30,000. Only 1 resort has 30,001 and above tourist arrivals per year.

Since majority of the resorts are located in the coastal area. The physical environment set-off seasonal business operation among the resorts. Especially, when most their products and services concentrated more on in water activities.

With regards to the number of years of operation, majority or 60 percent of the resorts are operating for

5 to 10 years while 11 to 15 years and 16 years and above got both 2 or 20 percent.

Based on the result, the resorts in Batangas province are stable in the sense that they can live and maintain their business for a longer period of time. Despite that most of the time they are seasonal. Resorts are able to uphold and sustain the services offered to the guests.

Demographic information provides data regarding research participants and is necessary for the determination of whether the individuals in a particular study are a representative sample of the target population for generalization purposes. Usually demographics or research participant characteristics are reported in the methods section of the research report and serve as independent variables in the research design. Demographic variables are independent variables by definition because they cannot be manipulated [4].

Table 2. Level of competitiveness as to Core Resources and Attractors (Physiography and Climate) N = 305

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Good Weather conditions	3.16	C	3
2. Unspoiled nature/green areas	3.10	C	5
3. Cleanliness of the destination	3.11	C	4
4. Pleasant built environment	3.21	C	2
5. Lively urban atmosphere	2.95	C	6
6. Quality of natural scenery and landscapes / environment	3.23	C	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 2 presents the level of competitiveness as to core resources and attractors (physiography and climate) have composite mean of for customers 3.13 verbally interpreted as competitive.

Based on the assessment of the customers the indicators with the highest weighted mean are quality of natural scenery and landscapes / environment (3.23) followed by pleasant built environment (3.21) and rank third good weather conditions (3.16) all these are interpreted as competitive.

It is essential for all resort destinations to protect their natural surroundings and show a genuine commitment to sustainable operational practices [5]

Whereas the lowest mean are cleanliness of the destination (3.11), followed by unspoiled nature/green areas (3.10) and rank third lively urban atmosphere (2.95). All are rated as competitive.

The urban atmosphere within the premise is quite far from the expectation. This atmosphere can only be

experience in the City proper. The natural atmosphere is prominent.

While, [6] described it as it provides excellent venues for all kinds of events. It is centrally located within the city, which allows easy access to a wide variety of hotels, shops and restaurants.

Table 3. Level of competitiveness as to Core Resources and Attractors (Culture and History) N = 305

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Diversity of cultural / historical attractions	2.53	C	4
2. Opportunity to experience local life	2.65	C	1
3. Desire to learn about other cultures, their ways of life, and heritage	2.49	LC	5
4. Opportunities to experience traditional ways of living	2.55	C	2.5
5. Promotion of cultural or religious events	2.43	LC	6
6. Opportunities for learning and experiencing cultural attractions	2.55	C	2.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.53</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 3 presents the level of competitiveness as to core resources and attractors (Culture and History) for customers, garnered a composite mean of 2.53 verbally interpreted as competitive.

For customers, the indicators with the highest weighted mean is: opportunity to experience local life (2.65), followed by opportunities to experience traditional ways of living and ranked third opportunities for learning and experiencing cultural attractions (2.55). All are rated as competitive.

The central tendency of travelers once they visit the place is to immerse to the local residents. Interaction with them creates opportunity to understand local language and culture. Have also the chance to taste local products and bring it home.

The culture of the region is no longer the exclusive domain of the residents. It is now, more than ever, shared with visitors. The expectations of the host and guest are thus transformed [7].

While, indicators with the lowest weight mean are diversity of cultural / historical attractions (2.53) with a verbal interpretation of competitive, followed by desire to learn about other cultures, their ways of life, and heritage (2.49), and rank third promotion of cultural or religious events has (2.43). The last two are interpreted verbally as less competitive.

In Batangas, even in other places, resorts do not concentrate much on promoting religious events and

slightly on culture by seeing their staff wearing the traditional clothes.

Travelling to sacred sites, holy places, pilgrimage destinations, and religious buildings have unique spiritual significance in hopes of experiencing elevation, transformation and attaining a new degree of wisdom among the travellers [8].

Table 4. Level of competitiveness as to Core Resources and Attractors (Mix of Activities)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Variety of adventurous, challenging and exciting outdoor trips (like hiking, camping, wall climbing, etc.)	2.83		
2. Opportunity to be close to nature	3.13	C	6
3. Opportunity to join recreational activities	2.94	C	4
4. Opportunity to participate in religious activities	2.40	LC	7
5. Opportunities for nature adventure/cultural activities	2.93	C	5
6. Diversity of athletic or water sports activities	2.99	C	2
7. Offers leisure activities	2.97	C	3
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 4 presents the level of competitiveness as to core resources and attractors (mix of activities) has a composite mean of: for customers (2.88), verbally interpreted as competitive.

Based on the perception of customers with the highest weighted mean opportunity to join recreational activities (2.94); followed by opportunity to be close to nature (3.13) and rank third offers leisure activities (2.97). All are rated as competitive.

Resorts offers not only accommodation services along with that they only have other activities that can be done in the place. Facilities place a major role in creating recreational activities where the guests can play indoor and outdoor games, water sports activities.

Perhaps the most distinguishing features of resorts are the favorable climate and wide range of recreational activities they provide. The tropical and desert climates provide relief from cold and dreary winters and the moderate mountain climates provide relief from hot and humid summers [9].

With the lowest weighted mean in the point of view of customers are opportunities for nature adventure/cultural activities (2.93); followed by variety of adventurous, challenging and exciting outdoor trips (like hiking, camping, wall climbing, etc.) (2.83) these two are interpreted verbally as

competitive and rank third opportunity to participate in religious activities (2.40) is less competitive.

Resorts' activities is very distinct to religious activities, it cannot be combined; religious activities need solemnity while resorts' activities excite the feelings and make the participants active and hyper.

Nearly every culture in human history has sought to honor the divine, the mysterious, the supernatural, or the extraordinary in some way. Most often this happens at sacred sites - special places where the physical world seems to meet the spiritual world [8].

Table 5. Level of competitiveness as to Core Resources and Attractors (Special Events)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Organize more recreational offerings, concerts and stage plays	2.42	LC	3
2. Organize sports tournament	2.35	LC	4
3. Availability of cultural and other events	2.45	LC	1
4. Evening entertainment and nightlife	2.44	LC	2
5. Conduct cultural festivals	2.29	LC	5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.39</b>	<b>LC</b>	

Table 5 reveals the level of competitiveness as to core resources and attractors (special events) obtained a composite mean for customers 2.39 with verbal interpretation of less competitive.

To customers, the indicators with highest weighted are availability of cultural and other events (2.45); followed by evening entertainment and nightlife (2.44) and rank third organize more recreational offerings, concerts and stage plays (2.42) are all less competitive.

Cultural and other events are not available all the time unless it is being requested by the customer / guest. The concentration of the many resorts is focus on highlighting the natural attractions.

The initial part of the process of defining the culture is creating a list of specific "behaviors" for the visitors to mingle with the locals. This factor helps the visitors to have good and memorable experience with the beauty by hearth of people lived in the place [10].

With the lowest weighted mean: organize sports tournament (2.35) followed by conduct cultural festivals (2.29) are all less competitive.

Cultural events are not part of the agenda of many resorts. Resort is not the venue for conducting the cultural festivals.

Culture is a high performance team that goes beyond and create impact to the local tourism.

Festival, native products and villages are the main attractions [10].

Table 6. Level of competitiveness as to Supporting Factors and Resources (Infrastructure)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Old/ historic but visually appealing	2.51	C	8
2. Modern and visually appealing	3.11	C	1
3. Maintained sidewalks, pathways and hallways	3.00	C	2
4. Provide more amenities with campgrounds	2.91	C	4
5. Accessible/hi-speed communication system	2.54	C	7
6. Convenience and accessibility of local transportation	2.76	C	6
7. Accessible road facilities and with proper signage	2.94	C	3
8. Accessibility of facilities for disabled persons	2.83	C	5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.34</b>	<b>LC</b>	

Table 6 shows the level of competitiveness as to supporting factors and resources (infrastructure) have a composite mean in customers 2.34 verbally interpreted as less competitive

For the customers with the highest weighted mean modern and visually appealing (3.11), followed by maintained sidewalks, pathways and hallways (3.00) and rank third accessible road facilities and with proper signage (2.94). All these indicators are competitive.

Sophistication of facilities motivates the customers to purchase or consume the services or products of the resorts. It has an effect on the reason to go back to the place and have a positive feedback from the customers.

The majority of the world's leading resorts have made a diversification on their facilities as they responded positively to the demands of the consumers. The resort operators harnessed their business and have succeeded in exceeding consumer expectations by providing a consistently fresh product [5].

On the other hand, with the lowest weighted mean are convenience and accessibility of local (2.76), followed by accessible/hi-speed communication system (2.76) and rank third old/ historic but visually appealing (2.51) are competitive.

In this case, majority of the respondents preferred modern structures, facilities and other services. Others

wanted old or historic inspire far away from the ambience they originally came from.

Traditionally, people divide up attractions between cultural and natural. Cultural should, but does not always, include historical attractions as well [11].

Table 7. Level of competitiveness as to Supporting Factors and Resources (Facilitating Resources)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Visitor Information Center/Tourist Information Center	3.02	C	
2. Availability of money changer	2.48	LC	
3. Pabalubongcenter and souvenir shop	2.69	C	
4. Destination links with major origin markets	2.71	C	
5. Accessibility of destination	2.93	C	
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 7 confirms the level of competitiveness as to supporting factors and resources (facilitating resources) have a composite mean on customers 2.77 verbally interpreted as competitive.

For the customers with the highest weighted mean are visitor information center/tourist information center (3.02), followed by accessibility of destination (2.93) and rank third destination links with major origin markets (2.71). These indicators are competitive.

Visitors/tourist information center is a customer support in time of need. Therefore, it is important that the person to be placed in this department is customer oriented, friendly and warmth.

A destination information center played a key role as the middleman linking tourists and suppliers to one another [12].

While with lowest weighted mean pabalubongcenter and souvenir shop (2.69) verbally interpreted as competitive and availability of money changer (2.48) is less competitive.

Within the premise of the resorts, it is seldom to see the availability of the money changer. At most, money changers are found in the city proper.

Changes in currency rates influences spending in a destination. In T&T, those same changes can sometimes also belie the true strength of one country's currency against the primary currency used by their visitors [13].

This Table 8 presents the level of competitiveness as to supporting factors and resources (spirit of hospitality) gained a composite mean of for customers 2.86 verbally interpreted as competitive.

Based on the observation of customers the indicators with the highest weighted mean are as

follows: friendly, high-spirited and hospitable local people and can communicate well with the tourist (2.91), followed by can provide pleasure and satisfaction (2.90), and rank third tourist oriented local people (2.87). All these indicators are competitive.

Table 8. Level of competitiveness as to Supporting Factors and Resources (Spirit of Hospitality)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Friendly, high-spirited and hospitable local people	2.91	C	1.5
2. Can communicate well with the tourist	2.91	C	1.5
3. Get people to stay longer	2.74	C	6
4. Tourist oriented local people	2.87	C	4
5. Delivers quality guest service	2.83	C	5
6. Can provide pleasure and satisfaction	2.90	C	3
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>C</b>	

The customer experienced the friendliness and warmth of the local people during their stay. It is a positive feedback on the part of the resort's management.

Excellent customer service begins and ends with smiling staff members, positive attitudes and helpful, friendly tones. These employees are the face of your business and the employees guests will most often see during their stay [14].

Meanwhile, with the lowest mean delivers quality guest service (2.87) and get people to stay longer (2.74).

Customers do not intent to stay longer. The purpose of their visit is to relax and unwind from busy life in their point of origin.

Young people often spend less per day than older tourists, they often stay longer, spending more in total. They also tend to spend directly with local businesses and they often make repeat visits all of which means that they deliver as much or even more value than many other market segments [15].

Table 9 shows the level of competitiveness as to qualifying and amplifying determinants (safety and security) have attained the composite mean for customers 2.88 verbally interpreted as competitive.

For customers, the indicators with the highest weighted mean security personnel are visible and always available for assistance and maintain or secure guest privacy (3.01), followed by security equipment are visible (CCTV camera, fire extinguishers etc.) (2.96) and rank third availability of fire extinguishers

and other safety equipment (2.89). All are rated as competitive.

Table 9. Level of competitiveness as to Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants (Safety and Security)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Security personnel are visible and always available for assistance	3.01	C	1.5
2. Security equipment are visible (CCTV camera, Fire extinguishers etc.)	2.96	C	3
3. Helpful police services around the area	2.51	C	5
4. Availability of fire extinguishers and other safety equipment	2.89	C	4
5. Maintain or secure guest privacy	3.01	C	1.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>C</b>	

The guest always expect that the place is safe to stay. Security personnel are expected secure the place and ready to assist the guest, and give warning if it is needed.

The staff will make sure that the privacy of the guest, it will not be violated

Safety and Security have always been two of the main concerns for tourists to visit any place. With the basic requirements of the industry is to serve people, tourism needs to ensure safety and security for its customers [16].

While, the indicators with lowest weighted mean are helpful police services around the area (2.51) as competitive.

Police officers are not usually found in the resort or it depends on the situation if it is needed. Their presence is important in the implementation of public safety assurance. The police authorities manned the public safety of the community. More so, it extends to the legal safety of tourist even the health and sanitation are included in the safe measures [16].

Table 10 expresses the level of competitiveness as to qualifying and amplifying determinants (awareness and image) attaining the composite mean for customers 2.92 verbally interpreted as competitive.

Based on the insights of customers, among the indicators with highest weighted mean are maintained natural resources and physical environment (3.04), followed by community is a destination point (3.00) and rank third practice environmental friendliness (use biodegradable products, recyclable materials) (2.99) as verbally interpreted as competitive.

Customers believed that the resorts in Batangas able to maintain the natural resources and physical appearance. As they enjoyed in through sightseeing, island hopping, scuba diving, camping and hiking.

Table 10. Level of competitiveness as to Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants (Awareness and Image)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Community is a destination point	3.00	C	2
2. Maintained natural resources and physical environment	3.04	C	1
3. Practice environmental friendliness (use biodegradable products, recyclable materials)	2.99	C	3
4. Reflect environmentalist characteristics (observe in their management system such as: switch-off lights and air-conditioned units when not in use and saving water consumption )	2.91	C	4
5. Promote historical, cultural and heritage image	2.66	C	5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>C</b>	

The environment is extremely important to tourism destination. As this is the main attractions or part of the tourist activities. The natural environment are preserved and protected by the community and of the government [17].

Meanwhile, with the lowest mean reflect environmentalist characteristics (observe in their management system such as: switch-off lights and air-conditioned units when not in use and saving water consumption) (2.91) and promote historical, cultural and heritage image (2.66) both indicators are competitive.

Customers observed the historical, cultural and heritage image to the local place during their travel. But, resort do not promote it directly.

The customers would want to take advantage of the cultural activities. Cultural tours are appreciated though it is not the main purpose of the guests visiting the resorts [8].

Table 11. Level of competitiveness as to Qualifying and Amplifying Determinants (Cost Value)

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Reasonable fees (environmental fees, entrance fees, etc.)	2.82	C	1
2. Value for money	2.78	C	2.5
3. No hidden charges	2.73	C	5
4. Appropriate prices for the services received	2.74	C	4
5. Promotes energy consumption	2.78	C	2.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 11 reveals the level of competitiveness as to qualifying and amplifying determinants (cost value) obtained the composite mean for customers 2.77 with verbal interpretation as competitive.

Based on the assessment of customers, the indicators with highest weighted mean are reasonable fees (environmental fees, entrance fees, etc.) (2.82), value for money and promotes energy consumption (2.78) and appropriate prices for the services received (2.74) all these indicators are competitive.

In customers' mind it is important to the practicality of the price. This is the primary reason or basis of their decision making.

They can be charged directly to the visitor or, alternatively, tour operator companies may purchase tickets in advance so that visitors on organized tours have the fee included in the total cost of their tour package [18].

The indicator with the lowest mean is no hidden charges (2.73) but still competitive.

The customers are very specific on the amount they need to pay. The price can influence the perspective of the consumers / guests.

In hotels, cashing in with a series of extra charges hiding in the blueprint. Some fees and surcharges are sometimes unfairly called hidden or surprise [19].

Table 12. Summary Table on the Level of Competitiveness

Indicators	Customers		
	WM	VI	R
1. Physiography and Climate	3.13	C	1
2. Culture and History	2.53	C	9
3. Mix of Activities	2.88	C	3.5
4. Special Events	2.39	LC	10
5. Infrastructure	2.83	C	6
6. Facilitating Resources	2.77	C	7.5
7. Spirit of Hospitality	2.86	C	5
8. Safety and Security	2.88	C	3.5
9. Awareness and Image	2.92	C	2
10. Cost Value	2.77	C	7.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>C</b>	

Table 12 shows the summary table on the level of competitiveness attaining the composite mean for customers 2.80 verbally interpreted as competitive.

Based on the opinion of customer the indicators with highest weighted mean are physiography and climate (3.13), followed by awareness and image (2.92) and rank third mix of activities and safety and security (2.88) are competitive.

The physiography and climate affects the decision of the customers to pursue their travel or visiting the

place. This served also as determinants of guest to pursue their travel. Bad weather has an effect on the number of tourist arrivals.

As consumer are conscious or make themselves aware about the current weather of the place visited. Also, the related environmental issues continues [5].

Meanwhile, the lowest mean are safety and security and cost value (2.77), followed by culture and history (2.53) both are competitive, rank third special events (2.39) is less competitive.

Customers travel the place because they have special event or reasons to do in the destination.

The benefits of the events will make the business lively and catchy to the guests. The events strategy is a strength of any business establishment. A successful special event can extend well beyond business success [20].

Table 13. Difference of Responses on the Level of Competitiveness as Assessed by Managers When Grouped According to Accreditation

Level of Competitiveness	t-value	p-value
Physiography and Climate	0.092	0.929
Culture and History	0.658	0.529
Mix of Activities	0.773	0.462
Special Events	0.189	0.855
Infrastructure	1.062	0.319
Facilitating Resources	0.076	0.941
Spirit of Hospitality	0.212	0.837
Safety and Security	0.745	0.477
Awareness and Image	0.645	0.565
Cost Value	1.492	0.174

Legend: \*Significant at  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$

Table 3.1 reveals the comparison on the level of competitiveness of different resort when grouped according to accreditation. It was observed that all computed  $p$ -values were all greater than 0.05 alpha level, thus the researcher fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means that whether the resort are accredited or not, their competitiveness on the above mentioned aspects are the same.

Whether the resort is accredited or not the managers perceived each variable similarly. These qualities of the resorts are important to the respondents. It served as an assets and part of the decision making of the guests. Therefore, regardless of the resorts' classification these variables of competitiveness are significant to increase the number of tourist arrivals, financial stability of the resort and basis for service innovations.



Table 14. Difference of Responses on the Level of Competitiveness as Assessed by Managers When Grouped According to Years of Operation

Level of Competitiveness	F-value	p-value
Physiography and Climate	0.284	0.761
Culture and History	3.642	0.082
Mix of Activities	2.420	0.159
Special Events	1.996	0.206
Infrastructure	1.082	0.390
Facilitating Resources	13.921*	0.004
Spirit of Hospitality	-	-
Safety and Security	4.016	0.069
Awareness and Image	1.120	0.378
Cost Value	0.420	0.673

\*Significant at  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$

As seen from Table 14, only facilitating resources shows significant difference when grouped according to years of accreditation. This was observed since the obtained  $p$ -value of 0.004 is less than 0.05 alpha level. This means that the level of competitiveness of the different resort varies as to years of their operation. It was supported using Post Hoc test that those resorts which are operating for 5 to 10 years are found to be significant.

This result implies the oldest resort in the business industry has better understanding of surviving in the market place through facilitating the resources within or outside the vicinity of the resort. The local government or the private individuals provides the necessary resources supporting the needs of the tourist. Specifically, the service of Visitor Information Center/Tourist Information Center which very visible in the place. While, the accessibility of the destination is also remarkable in the sense that most of the resorts are located in the main road or the local place itself has good road conditions.

A destination information center is important to the travelers. This served as linking source in order for them to address their concerns. The center become the middle person or entity to deliver or raise the demand of the tourist. It engaged to the local residents, establishment owners and to the tourist at most as explained by Gill [12].

On another hand, the land transportation services in the province of Batangas are readily available and passable with different forms of land transportation through public utility buses, public utility jeepneys, privately owned cars, vans, jeeps, and tricycles. For trips going to Metro Manila and neighboring provinces, the commuters can avail the public utility bus system. While, the roads and bridges

facilities are also useful for the transportation activities [21].

Table 15. Difference of Responses on the Level of Competitiveness as Assessed by Managers When Grouped According to Number of Tourist Arrivals

Level of Competitiveness	F-value	p-value
Physiography & Climate	2.591	0.144
Culture and History	0.272	0.769
Mix of Activities	0.239	0.793
Special Events	1.931	0.215
Infrastructure	1.585	0.271
Facilitating Resources	0.318	0.738
Spirit of Hospitality	-	-
Safety and Security	1.260	0.341
Awareness and Image	0.393	0.689
Cost Value	0.175	0.843

\*Significant at  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$

As seen from Table 15, only facilitating resources shows significant difference when grouped according to number of tourist arrivals. This was observed since the obtained  $p$ -value of 0.738 is greater than 0.05 alpha level. This means that the level of competitiveness of the different resort varies as to numbers of tourist arrivals. It was supported using Post Hoc test that those resorts which have higher number of tourist arrivals are found to be significant.

Tourists or guests have different perception and expectations. The ratio of having a greater number of guests has greater number of areas of concentrations of guests' interest. Bigger number of travelers create more inquiries, infrastructure and road facilities utilization are frequent, the pasalubong center become essential and money changer are part of the quality tourists' services. In Batangas, all these facilities and services are present in the town proper. However, some resorts have these in-house services.

This evolved approach to destination information centers makes them sustainable and valuable to both the local community and the incoming tourists. Today, not only do they provide information, they also generate revenue, collect data on travellers, market the destination, and engage the local community [12].

#### PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

The proposed action plan focused on areas that need to sustain its competitiveness based on the result of the study. These indicators with lowest weighted mean score per variable. It was perceived competitive however at some point moderately satisfied the customers/guests.

In terms of physiography and climate, it aims to maintain cleanliness of destination through strategically place recycling and trash receptacles; provide ample signage about “green concept”; and preserving the environment and remain properly staffed and clean on a regular schedule.

Meanwhile, in terms of culture and history, it aims to learn other cultures, their ways of life, and heritage through display of local cultural, historical and natural heritage can be included in the marketing strategy; support to existing groups for presentation of folk customs – purchasing costumes, musical instruments and audio – visual equipment; and creating a permanent and travelling exhibition of the local ethnographical, natural and cultural-historical heritage with application of audio.

When it comes to mix of activities, the action plan aims to give opportunity to join recreational activities through indoor waterparks; recreational programs for parent-child activity e.g. inflatable water playground; and family entertainment center (including features like miniature golf, laser tag, an arcade, and virtual reality games and simulators).

Whereas, in terms of special events, it aims to provide evening entertainment and nightlife through a multi-purpose theater capable of showing movies and hosting comedians and various types of musical and theatrical groups; and place a bar, nightclub, and coffee shop.

Additionally, in terms of infrastructure, it aims to maintain sidewalks, pathways and hallways through integrate designs and attractive layout.

Moreover, in terms of facilitating resources, it aims to provide money changer through in-house money changer service when it is needed.

Also, in terms of spirit of hospitality, it aims to create a plan to let people stay longer through giving them a valid reason to stay by providing several indoor and outdoor activities: waterpark, horseback riding, souvenir store, spa and massage parlor.

But in terms of safety and security, it aims to provide police services around the area through reinforce the staff awareness program that states "All staff are part of the security team" and are responsible for looking after the safety and security. However, delegate Fire/Life/Safety Officers appointed at each property whose responsibility is to monitor vigilantly. While, in terms of awareness and image, it aims to improve the community as a destination point through good marketing plan: creating social media accounts, broadcasting and television.

Furthermore, in terms of collect reasonable fees. (environmental fees, entrance fees, etc.) through including the environmental fee in the charges (add to mandated policies of the resort).

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Majority of the resorts in Batangas province are not accredited by DOT, with 10,001 to 20,000 guest arrivals per year and operating for 5 to 10 years. Resorts are considered competitive in terms of core resources and attractors (physiology and climate), supporting factors and resources (spirit of hospitality) and in qualifying and amplifying determinants (safety and security)

Oldest resort in the business industry has better understanding of surviving in the market place through facilitating resources. An action plan was proposed to resorts owners, local government and DOT.

It is recommended that the resort owners in collaboration with the local government and DOT may do reconstruction, innovations and improvement of the infrastructures and facilitating resources such as: Road facilities, money changer, visitor/tourist information centers. The resort owners may do reconstruction, innovations and improvement in the infrastructure and facilitating resources such as: signage, building / resort facilities including the facilities intended for person with disabilities. The resort owners in collaboration with local government and DOT may to come up investment activities displaying culture and history attraction and conduct special events at one or two in a month as added options or itinerary for tourists to visit within the place.

Proposed Action Plan may be implemented to improve the competitiveness of resorts as a destination. Future researchers may conduct using other variables not covered by this study such as marketing strategies, human capital and local people empowerment.

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