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PERSONAL ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the personal entrepreneurial competencies (PECs) of Hospitality Management students, aiming to enhance their entrepreneurial mindset and prepare them for future careers and business opportunities in the hospitality industry. Developing strong entrepreneurial competencies is crucial in the hospitality field, where innovation, initiative, and effective resource management are essential for success. The study employed a descriptive quantitative research design and involved thirty (30) randomly selected students from the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) program during the Academic Year 2022–2023. Data were collected using a modified researcher-made questionnaire, which was validated by experts for content and tested for reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.82). The questionnaire included items assessing ten core entrepreneurial competencies, such as goal setting, persistence, opportunity seeking, risk-taking, and demand for quality and efficiency. Results revealed that most respondents were aged 16–25 years, including 19 females and 11 males. Among the PEC indicators, goal setting, commitment to work contract, and persuasion and networking were identified as the strongest competencies, while demand for quality and efficiency was the lowest. These findings suggest that while students demonstrate motivation, initiative, and interpersonal skills, there is room for improvement in ensuring consistent quality and efficiency—an essential skill in hospitality management. The study highlights the importance of integrating entrepreneurship education and experiential learning opportunities into the curriculum to equip students with the necessary skills and mindset to succeed in a highly competitive, dynamic industry.

Keywords: Personal Interest, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Descriptive Quantitative Design, Hospitality Management

INTRODUCTION

Being a Hospitality Management student is both challenging and rewarding. It requires dedication, perseverance, and the continuous development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In today's globalized and highly competitive world, the hospitality industry demands not only competence but also commitment, creativity, innovation, and an entrepreneurial mindset. Students must be prepared to handle complex responsibilities, make informed decisions, and demonstrate professionalism while engaging with diverse clients and workplace situations.

In hospitality management, qualities such as patience, emotional intelligence, and effective communication are integral to developing personal entrepreneurial competencies (PECs). These competencies enable students to become proactive, adaptable, and capable of providing service excellence in dynamic work environments (Zhou, 2012; Driessen, 2005).



Hospitality professionals are expected to display initiative, critical thinking, and the ability to create value for their clients. In the Philippine context, where tourism continues to thrive due to its natural attractions, rich culture, and warm people, developing entrepreneurial competencies is essential. Strengthening these skills not only contributes to personal and professional growth but also aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), particularly Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, which emphasizes entrepreneurship, sustainable economic growth, and productive employment (United Nations, 2015). By fostering entrepreneurial competencies, students can contribute to a more resilient, innovative, and inclusive hospitality sector, which is critical to national development and global competitiveness.

Despite the recognized importance of entrepreneurial competencies in hospitality, existing studies in the Philippines have focused mainly on business or management students, with limited research specifically examining Hospitality Management students' PECs (Alusen, 2016; Duyan, 2019). Moreover, most studies have not investigated how these competencies relate to students' preparedness for real-world hospitality challenges or their readiness to create business opportunities. This gap underscores the need to assess and understand the personal entrepreneurial competencies of Hospitality Management students to guide curriculum improvements and experiential learning initiatives.

Entrepreneurship education provides learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to identify opportunities, manage risks, and make informed decisions (Zhou, 2012). Driessen (2005) similarly emphasizes that entrepreneurial competencies encompass both personal traits and professional skills, such as goal setting, opportunity seeking, persistence, and networking—qualities directly applicable in the hospitality industry.

Given this context, the present study explores the personal entrepreneurial competencies of Hospitality Management students at the University of the Visayas. It aims to provide insights on how these competencies can be enhanced through targeted education, experiential learning, and professional development opportunities, thereby equipping students for successful careers in hospitality and tourism.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design to assess the personal entrepreneurial competencies (PECs) of Hospitality Management students at the University of the Visayas during the Academic Year 2022–2023. The descriptive design was deemed appropriate because it allowed the researchers to gather factual, numerical data describing the students' current entrepreneurial competencies without manipulating any variables. The respondents of the study were thirty (30) Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) students selected through simple random sampling, ensuring that each student had an equal chance of being included in the study and that the results would represent the general student population. The primary data-gathering tool was a modified researcher-developed questionnaire, carefully developed based on existing literature and validated by subject-matter experts for content accuracy and clarity. The instrument consisted of two parts: the first collected respondents' demographic information (age and gender), while the second contained 55 items measuring personal entrepreneurial competencies, such as goal setting, persistence, risk-taking, opportunity seeking, and a



demand for quality and efficiency. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Never”) to 5 (“Always”). Before data collection, the instrument underwent a reliability test, yielding a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of 0.82, which indicated high internal consistency. The survey began with an informed consent section to ensure that participants voluntarily agreed to take part in the study. The data collection process was conducted systematically and ethically, ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The gathered data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, mean, and weighted mean to determine the overall level of entrepreneurial competencies among the respondents. The results of the analysis served as the basis for drawing conclusions and recommendations to strengthen the entrepreneurial education and training of Hospitality Management students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved thirty (30) Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) students from the University of the Visayas during the Academic Year 2022–2023. The demographic results revealed that the majority of the respondents were between 16 and 25 years old, comprising 19 females (63%) and 11 males (37%). This result indicates that most respondents are young adults in the early stages of their academic and professional development. According to Dyke, Fischer, and Rueber (1992), demographic factors such as age and gender may influence entrepreneurial tendencies, as younger individuals often show higher adaptability, creativity, and openness to innovation—qualities that are vital in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Table 1.

Mean Distribution and Rank of Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies (PECs)

Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies (PECs)	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Goal Setting	4.62	Always	1
Commitment to Work Contract	4.50	Usually	2
Persuasion and Networking	4.48	Usually	3
Opportunity Seeking	4.41	Usually	4
Persistence	4.39	Usually	5
Risk Taking	4.28	Usually	6
Systematic Planning and Monitoring	4.20	Usually	7
Self-Confidence	4.16	Usually	8
Information Seeking	4.10	Usually	9
Demand for Quality and Efficiency	3.85	Usually	10
Overall Weighted Mean	4.30	High Competency	

5 (4.51–5.00) – Always, 4 (3.51–4.50) – Usually, 3 (2.51–3.50) – Sometimes, 2 (1.51–2.50) – Rarely, 1 (1.00–1.50) – Never

High Competency (3.51–5.00): Students often or always demonstrate strong entrepreneurial traits such as initiative, planning, and persistence;

Moderate Competency (2.51–3.50): Students sometimes show entrepreneurial behaviors but still need further



Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies (PECs)	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
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improvement;

Low Competency (1.00–2.50): Students rarely or never exhibit entrepreneurial characteristics, indicating a need for additional training and exposure.

As presented in Table 1, the overall weighted mean of 4.30, interpreted as Usually, indicates that the Hospitality Management students of the University of the Visayas generally possess a high level of personal entrepreneurial competencies (PECs). This reflects their readiness to perform effectively in the dynamic and competitive hospitality industry, where adaptability, creativity, and initiative are essential.

Among the identified competencies, Goal Setting (WM = 4.62, Always) ranked highest, suggesting that students consistently set clear objectives and pursue them with determination. This finding indicates that students are future-oriented and value planning as a critical step toward success. As emphasized by Driessen (2005), goal setting fosters a proactive mindset, thereby enhancing entrepreneurial performance and leadership potential.

Following this, Commitment to Work Contract (WM = 4.50, Usually) ranked second, underscoring the students' strong sense of responsibility, accountability, and work ethic—qualities essential in delivering reliable service in hospitality operations. Meanwhile, Persuasion and Networking (WM = 4.48, Usually) ranked third, indicating that students can foster connections, build rapport, and collaborate effectively, all of which are indispensable for customer service and organizational success.

Conversely, Demand for Quality and Efficiency (WM = 3.85, Usually) received the lowest mean score, although still within the “Usually” range. This suggests that while students understand the importance of maintaining quality and efficiency, these competencies are not yet consistently practiced. According to Alusen (2016), prioritizing quality and operational efficiency is fundamental in the hospitality and tourism sectors, as these directly influence customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and business sustainability.

Overall, the findings reveal that UV Hospitality Management students exhibit a high level of entrepreneurial potential, particularly in leadership, initiative, and goal orientation. However, areas such as quality assurance and operational efficiency require further enhancement through curriculum enrichment, experiential learning, and industry immersion.

These results are aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG) 4 – Quality Education, which emphasizes the importance of developing skills relevant to employment, entrepreneurship, and sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Strengthening entrepreneurial competencies among students supports not only their personal growth but also the creation of a competent, innovative, and service-oriented workforce capable of advancing the Philippine hospitality and tourism industries toward sustainable progress.



CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that the Hospitality Management students of the University of the Visayas generally possess a **high level of Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies (PECs)**, as reflected by the overall weighted mean of **4.30**, interpreted as “Usually.” This indicates that students often demonstrate strong entrepreneurial traits such as goal orientation, commitment, and networking skills—attributes essential for success in the hospitality industry. Among the ten competencies, **Goal Setting** ranked highest, showing that students are capable of setting clear objectives and working toward their achievement. Meanwhile, **Demand for Quality and Efficiency** obtained the lowest mean score, implying that while students perform well overall, there is still room for improvement in maintaining consistent standards of excellence and productivity. Overall, these findings suggest that the students have strong entrepreneurial potential but would benefit from continuous development programs that enhance quality-driven practices and innovative thinking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Integrate Entrepreneurship-Focused Modules:** Incorporate more practical entrepreneurship and innovation activities into the hospitality curriculum to strengthen students’ real-world business acumen.
2. **Enhance Quality and Efficiency Training:** Provide workshops and simulations that focus on quality assurance, time management, and service efficiency to address the lowest-rated competency.
3. **Strengthen Mentorship Programs:** Pair students with industry professionals or alumni entrepreneurs to guide them in developing persistence, networking, and leadership skills.
4. **Encourage Experiential Learning:** Organize business plan competitions, internships, and entrepreneurial fairs to enhance students’ exposure to real business challenges and opportunities.

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GUEST SATISFACTION IN NEW NORMAL HOTEL LODGING IN CEBU: ASSESSING SERVICE QUALITY, AMBIANCE, AND FACILITIES TOWARD SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined guest satisfaction in hotel lodging under the new normal in Cebu during the academic year 2022–2023. Using a quantitative-descriptive research design, data were collected from 80 former hotel guests through a structured survey questionnaire that assessed satisfaction across three dimensions: service, ambiance, and facilities. Results revealed that most respondents were young working students aged 16–25 years who stayed primarily for personal relaxation. Overall, guests expressed high satisfaction, with facilities receiving the highest mean rating (3.5), followed by ambiance (3.4) and service (3.3). Respondents particularly valued visible health and safety measures, clean and sanitized rooms, and efficient service procedures. These findings indicate that maintaining strict safety compliance, enhancing staff responsiveness, and ensuring comfort in hotel spaces remain key factors in achieving guest satisfaction in the post-pandemic hospitality industry. The study recommends that hotel managers continue implementing safety protocols, strengthen staff training, and conduct periodic guest feedback assessments. Further studies are encouraged to explore long-term trends in satisfaction and post-pandemic recovery strategies across different types of lodging establishments.

Keywords: Guest Satisfaction, Hotel Lodging, New Normal, Hospitality Management, Cebu

INTRODUCTION

Guest satisfaction remains a top priority in the hospitality industry. To achieve and sustain it, hotels must continuously deliver high-quality products and services that meet travelers' evolving expectations. Among these services is hotel lodging, which offers accommodation and amenities suited to guests' varied purposes of stay—whether for business, leisure, or personal relaxation. These lodging services typically include room service, housekeeping, and valet assistance, all of which contribute to the guests' overall comfort, convenience, and memorable experience. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented disruption to the global hospitality sector. Since March 2020, hotels worldwide have faced significant operational and financial challenges due to government-imposed travel restrictions, limited guest capacity, and strict health and safety protocols. These measures, while necessary to prevent the spread of the virus, led to a dramatic decline in occupancy rates and overall revenue. The hospitality industry, which thrives on human interaction and guest experience, had to reinvent itself swiftly to survive.

Assessing guest satisfaction during and after this global crisis has therefore become essential. Ensuring that guests continue to feel safe, comfortable, and valued not only



strengthens a hotel's reputation but also demonstrates its resilience and commitment to sustainable recovery. As Tim Hentschel, CEO of Hotel Planner, noted, "consumer demand for travel was on life support," emphasizing the pandemic's severe impact on hotel operations. He predicted that international travel recovery would take several years. He recommended two key strategies for hotels: maintaining a safe, healthy environment through strict health protocols and offering flexible booking and cancellation policies to address travel uncertainties.

In Cebu City, one of the Philippines' leading tourism and hospitality hubs, hotels began to adopt "new normal" practices to regain customer trust and stabilize operations. According to Tarmoezi and Manurong (2007), a hotel is an establishment that provides lodging, food, beverages, and related services to ensure guest satisfaction. Similarly, Gössling et al. (2020) emphasized that hospitality businesses must revise their operations to safeguard both employees and customers while maintaining quality and loyalty. These adaptations include enhanced sanitation protocols, digitized services, and redesigned spaces to promote health, safety, and convenience.

As the hospitality industry transitions from pandemic survival to post-pandemic innovation, the academic year 2022–2023 marks a crucial phase of rebuilding and adaptation. This period highlights the importance of evaluating how guests perceive hotel services under the new operational standards—particularly in terms of service quality, ambiance, and facilities. Despite signs of recovery, there remains a research gap in understanding how these "new normal" practices affect guest satisfaction, especially within the local hotel industry in Cebu. This study seeks to bridge that gap by examining whether hotels' adjustments to health and safety protocols have successfully met guests' expectations and contributed to their overall satisfaction.

Moreover, this study aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), specifically Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). By analyzing guest satisfaction in post-pandemic hotel operations, the research supports the global call to promote sustainable tourism that fosters economic resilience, decent employment, and innovative service practices within the hospitality sector.

As future professionals in this field, the researchers recognize the value of investigating guest satisfaction in this evolving context. Understanding how guests perceive the quality of hotel services, ambiance, and facilities under the new standards can help hotel managers refine their strategies, ensuring a balance between health safety compliance and excellent customer experience.

The main objective of this study is to determine the level of guest satisfaction with new-standard hotel lodging in Cebu for the academic year 2022–2023. Specifically, it seeks to identify the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, nature of stay, and work status; measure the level of guest satisfaction in terms of service, ambiance, and facilities; and discuss the implications of the findings for hotel management, particularly in enhancing guest experience and sustaining satisfaction in the new typical environment.



METHODOLOGY

This study employed a **quantitative-descriptive research design**, which enabled the researchers to systematically gather and analyze numerical data to describe the level of guest satisfaction in hotel lodging under the new standard setting. The research was conducted in **Cebu**, known as the “*Queen City of the South*,” consisting of the main island and over 150 surrounding islets in the Central Visayas region—a major hub of tourism and hospitality in the Philippines. The **respondents** of the study were former hotel guests who had experienced hotel operations and health protocols implemented during the new normal period. Using **random sampling**, **80 participants** were selected to ensure fairness and unbiased representation of the target population. Data were gathered through a **structured survey questionnaire** divided into two parts: (1) the respondents’ demographic profile, including age, sex, nature of stay, and work status, and (2) a set of items measuring guest satisfaction across three key dimensions—**service, ambiance, and facilities**. Prior to data collection, respondents were provided with an **informed consent form** to ensure ethical participation.

The collected data were analyzed using **descriptive statistical tools**, including frequency, mean, and percentage, to determine and interpret the overall level of guest satisfaction among hotel guests in Cebu during the academic year 2022–2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and interprets the findings from 80 respondents on their satisfaction with hotel lodging in Cebu under the new normal. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean to assess satisfaction across service, ambiance, and facilities. Relevant studies support the discussion, highlighting how hotels adapted to post-pandemic standards and how these changes influenced guest experiences.

Table 1.
Profile of Respondents

Profile Variable	Category	(f)	(%)
Age	16–25 years	58	73%
	26–35 years	15	19%
	36 years and above	7	8%
Sex	Male	40	50%
	Female	40	50%
Civil Status	Single	61	76%
	Married/Other	19	24%
Work Status	Working students	41	51%
	Employed	24	30%
	Unemployed	15	19%



Profile Variable	Category	(f)	(%)
Purpose of Stay	Personal relaxation	46	57%
	Business/Work	18	23%
	Family/Leisure	16	20%

Source: Researcher's survey data (2022–2023)

Most respondents were aged 16–25 years (73%), primarily female (50%), and single (76%). The largest group comprised working students (51%), while the primary purpose of their hotel stay was personal relaxation (57%). These findings suggest that younger guests—especially those balancing studies and work—are more likely to seek affordable, safe accommodation for leisure and rest.

According to Han and Hyun (2018), guest satisfaction and loyalty are often influenced by demographic factors such as age, gender, and employment status, as these shape personal expectations and spending patterns. Hence, understanding demographic profiles allows hotel managers to tailor services to specific market segments, enhancing inclusivity and satisfaction.

Table 2.
 Guest Satisfaction with Service

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Staff wear face masks and face shields	3.6	Extremely Satisfied
Staff brief guests about health and safety policies	3.4	Extremely Satisfied
Guest interaction and hospitality	3.2	Satisfied
Speed and efficiency of service	3.2	Satisfied
Check-in and check-out process	3.2	Satisfied
Overall Mean	3.3	Extremely Satisfied

Respondents expressed high satisfaction with hotel services, registering an overall mean of 3.3 (Extremely Satisfied). The highest-rated item was staff wearing face masks and shields ($M = 3.6$), followed by staff briefing guests about safety policies ($M = 3.4$). These results highlight the importance of visible and consistent health compliance in maintaining guest trust and comfort.

King (1992) emphasized that customer satisfaction depends largely on employee responsiveness and proactive service behavior, factors that remain vital amid adjustments to the new normal. The results affirm that service attentiveness and safety communication play key roles in shaping guests' positive perceptions of hotel management during post-pandemic recovery.



Table 3.
 Guest Satisfaction with Ambiance

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Clean and sanitized rooms	3.6	Extremely Satisfied
Peace and order within hotel premises	3.5	Extremely Satisfied
Comfortable and relaxing environment	3.3	Satisfied
Overall atmosphere and guest experience	3.3	Satisfied
Overall Mean	3.4	Extremely Satisfied

Ambiance received an overall mean score of 3.4 (Extremely Satisfied), with guests particularly appreciative of clean, sanitized rooms ($M = 3.6$) and peace and order within the hotel ($M = 3.5$). A pleasant environment reinforces guests' sense of security and relaxation—critical factors for satisfaction in the post-pandemic setting.

According to Crîșmariu, Muntean, and Dumitrescu (2019), ambiance influences guests' emotions, comfort, and behavioral intentions, ultimately determining their likelihood of returning. This aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), as maintaining a safe and hygienic environment promotes both physical and psychological comfort for guests and staff.

Table 4.
 Guest Satisfaction with Facilities

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Properly managed entry and exit points	3.5	Extremely Satisfied
Strict compliance with public health guidelines	3.5	Extremely Satisfied
Availability of sanitizers, masks, and cleaning tools	3.5	Extremely Satisfied
Accessibility and cleanliness of shared facilities	3.4	Extremely Satisfied
Overall Mean	3.5	Extremely Satisfied

Facilities received the highest overall mean (3.5, Extremely Satisfied). Guests valued the proper management of entry and exit points and the strict enforcement of health guidelines, which fostered a sense of protection and care. The availability of sanitizers and hygiene supplies further boosted guest confidence.

These findings reinforce the idea that visible safety infrastructure—from contactless systems to sanitation protocols—remains a cornerstone of hotel satisfaction in the new normal era. This supports the UNSDG Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by promoting sustainable operational practices that protect both customers and staff (Gössling et al., 2020).



CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that guests in Cebu were delighted with hotel lodging services under the new standard setting. Among the three key dimensions evaluated—service, ambiance, and facilities—the highest level of satisfaction was observed in facilities, followed by ambiance and service. This indicates that hotels successfully created a safe and comfortable environment that met guests' expectations during the transition from pandemic restrictions to recovery. The results also suggest that the hotels' strict adherence to health and safety protocols, combined with consistent cleanliness and efficient management, contributed significantly to guest satisfaction. Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, Cebu's hospitality industry demonstrated resilience and adaptability, proving its ability to maintain service quality even under new operational standards. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of continuously assessing guest satisfaction as the industry evolves. Doing so will not only help hotel establishments sustain their recovery but also align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UNSDG) No. 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, by promoting sustainable tourism and inclusive industry development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to help improve guest satisfaction in Cebu's hotel industry under the new normal:

1. **Sustain strict health and safety measures** to uphold guest confidence and comfort.
2. **Enhance staff training programs** to maintain high-quality and responsive service.
3. **Regularly assess guest feedback** to improve service and facility standards continuously.
4. **Encourage further studies** focusing on long-term guest satisfaction trends and post-pandemic recovery strategies in the hospitality sector.

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MOALBOAL'S ECLECTIC CHARM: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF TRAVEL TRENDS AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the multifaceted appeal of Moalboal, an idyllic coastal municipality on the southwest coast of Cebu Island, renowned as the gateway to the world-famous Panagsama Beach. Positioned as a vital contributor to Cebu's tourism industry, Moalboal offers an array of resorts, restaurants, and dive shops that continue to attract local and international visitors. The research explores the economic implications of tourism, as discussed by Santos and Reyes (2018), while emphasizing the town's remarkable ecological diversity—ranging from rainforests and rivers to rich marine ecosystems—as documented by environmental experts. Central to this study is the assessment of challenges faced by Moalboal amid the disruptions brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, as examined by Estrella and Dela Cruz (2021). It further analyzes the pandemic's impact on local enterprises and tourism revenues, alongside the evolving tourism landscape in the post-pandemic context, with particular attention to the rapid proliferation of coastal resorts and their socioeconomic effects (Villanueva et al., 2022). Employing secondary data gathered from credible sources and Google Analytics tracking of tourist arrivals from 2019 to 2021, the findings reveal a notable rebound in tourism activity following the relaxation of health restrictions under the leadership of Governor Gwendolyn Garcia. The study concludes with strategic recommendations for post-pandemic recovery, including tourism diversification, capacity management, sustainable tourism adoption, infrastructure investment, and stakeholder collaboration. These insights aim to contribute to the broader discourse on Moalboal's significance in Cebu's tourism sector and its long-term potential for sustainable development.

Keywords: Moalboal, tourism, biodiversity, COVID-19 pandemic, sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

Moalboal, a serene municipality located on the southwest coast of Cebu Island, stands as the main gateway to the picturesque Panagsama Beach. This coastal haven is celebrated for its diverse array of resorts, restaurants, bars, and dive centers—establishments that have transformed it into one of Cebu's most dynamic tourism hubs. Beyond its accessibility and scenic charm, Cebu itself has long been a favored destination among retirees and travelers, both local and foreign, drawn by its rich culture and natural beauty. Researchers and tourism scholars have underscored Moalboal's vital role in shaping Cebu's tourism landscape. Gonzales and Torres (2019) identified Moalboal as a cornerstone of the province's tourism development, highlighting its blend of relaxation and adventure-oriented attractions. Beyond its underwater marvels—home to vibrant coral reefs and the famous sardine run—Moalboal's natural surroundings, including lush rainforests, rivers, canyons, and mountains, exemplify the area's ecological richness



(Lopez et al., 2020). Tourism's economic significance in Moalboal is equally evident. Santos and Reyes (2018) illustrated how diving and snorkeling activities contribute substantially to the local economy, particularly benefiting barangays Saavedra, Tuble, and Basdiot. However, Moalboal's heavy reliance on tourism made it vulnerable to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Estrella and Dela Cruz (2021) documented the pandemic's profound impact on the town's tourism sector, noting widespread losses in business revenues and employment. As the region transitions into the post-pandemic period, the rapid expansion of coastal resorts and shifting travel behaviors continue to reshape Moalboal's tourism dynamics. Villanueva et al. (2022) emphasized the need to balance economic development with social equity and environmental protection to ensure long-term sustainability. Drawing from existing literature and secondary data, this study aims to deepen the understanding of Moalboal's evolving tourism landscape. It seeks to provide valuable insights into post-pandemic recovery strategies that promote sustainable, inclusive, and resilient tourism growth—preserving Moalboal's natural charm while enhancing its role as a key driver of Cebu's tourism economy.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design and used secondary data from reputable sources, including the Department of Tourism (DOT) and relevant Local Government Units (LGUs). The research was conducted in Moalboal, Cebu, Philippines, with the primary aim of analyzing the municipality's status and performance as a major tourist destination. To effectively present and interpret the gathered data, descriptive analytics was applied. This approach enabled systematic organization, summarization, and analysis of data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships relevant to Moalboal's tourism activities. Data collection relied on online sources, particularly through Google, which serves as a valuable tool for researchers conducting web-based studies. Google Analytics was explicitly used to extract relevant information, including website traffic, referral sources, page views, visitor behavior, seasonal trends, and e-commerce metrics. These indicators provided meaningful insights into tourist behavior and engagement patterns related to Moalboal. The central objective of this data-gathering process was to track and analyze the changes in tourist arrivals from 2019 to 2021, highlighting fluctuations before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The resulting analysis aimed to support a better understanding of Moalboal's tourism recovery and its prospects for sustainable post-pandemic development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and analyzes the study's key findings based on secondary data from the Department of Tourism (DOT), Local Government Units (LGUs), and other credible sources. The discussion focuses on Moalboal's tourism landscape—highlighting its major attractions, tourist arrivals, infrastructure and support systems, hospitality enterprises, and sustainability policies. Through descriptive analysis, the results illustrate how Moalboal's rich natural resources, strong governance, and adaptive strategies have contributed to its post-pandemic tourism recovery and sustainable development.



Tourist Attractions

Table 1
Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises in Moalboal, Cebu

Category	Establishment Name	Description
Resorts & Hotels	Pescadores Suites Moalboal	Modern resort offering pool and dive packages
	Parrot Resort Moalboal	Family-friendly resort with tropical ambiance
	Quo Vadis Dive Resort	Known for professional diving programs and PADI certification
	Kasai Village Dive Resort	Luxury dive resort promoting marine conservation
	Magic Island Dive Resort	Offers personalized dive experiences and oceanfront views
Budget Lodging	Saavedra Beach Bungalow	Affordable beachfront lodging ideal for backpackers
Recreation & Leisure	Scarlet's Garden	Botanical and relaxation venue
	Moalboal Seaside Park	Family-friendly seaside recreational area
	Martina's Playtime Square	Local amusement and family area
Adventure & Travel Services	Planet Action Adventure	Adventure tours (canoeing, canyoning, trekking)
	Vaumat Travel and Tours	Travel and diving package specialist

Source: Compiled by the researcher from the Department of Tourism (DOT) Region VII and the Moalboal LGU Tourism Office (2023).

Moalboal, a fourth-class income municipality in Cebu, is among the province's 44 coastal municipalities, with approximately 73% of its residents living in coastal barangays such as Saavedra, Tuble, Basdiot, Poblacion East, Poblacion West, Tomony, Balabagon, and Tunga (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2010, as cited in Diola et al., 2020). These areas serve as the core of Moalboal's tourism economy.

Situated along Cebu's southwest coast, Moalboal has developed into a prominent dive and beach destination. Key attractions include Pescador Island, Basdaku (White Beach), Tison Canyon, and the Orchid Gallery Moalboal, each offering unique recreational experiences (Department of Tourism [DOT], 2023).

The Sardine Run near Panagsama Beach remains Moalboal's most iconic attraction, drawing local and international divers alike. Marine reserves such as Tongo, Kasai, and Ronda further enhance their ecological appeal.

According to the Manila Bulletin (2023), Moalboal ranked third among Cebu's most visited foreign destinations in 2021, welcoming 19,903 international tourists. The municipality also recorded a total of ₱1,175,910 in Environmental User Fees (EUF) in the first two months of 2023, signaling a post-pandemic tourism recovery. Mayor Inocentes Cabaron attributed this growth to the provincial government's relaxation of travel restrictions, as supported by Governor Gwendolyn Garcia (SunStar Cebu, 2023).



These findings underscore the interplay between governance and tourism development—highlighting how strategic local leadership can boost resilience and sustainability in coastal destinations.

Tourist Arrivals and the Pandemic Impact

Table 2.
Annual Tourist Arrivals in Moalboal (2015–2019)

Year	Number of Tourists	Growth Rate (%)
2015	105,432	—
2016	124,876	+18.5
2017	145,293	+16.3
2018	172,540	+18.7
2019	198,745	+15.2

Source: Department of Tourism, Region VII (2019).

Tourist arrivals in Moalboal increased steadily from 2015 to 2019, affirming its status as one of Cebu's top tourism hubs (DOT, 2019). However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 disrupted global and local tourism flows.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020) reported a 22% decline in international tourist arrivals worldwide during the first quarter of 2020, with estimated losses amounting to USD 80 billion and up to 120 million tourism-related jobs at risk.

Locally, the Department of Tourism (2021) confirmed a steep drop in arrivals across the Philippines due to travel restrictions. In Moalboal, resort and diving operations were temporarily suspended, affecting community livelihoods. Nevertheless, domestic tourism and local government initiatives cushioned the impact, revealing the town's capacity for adaptive recovery.

This result underscores the importance of crisis management and sustainable tourism diversification, both of which are vital to the resilience of destinations vulnerable to global disruptions.

Infrastructure and Tourism Support Systems

Table 3.
Infrastructure and Support Systems for Tourism in Moalboal

Sector	Provider / Organization	Role in Tourism Development
Power Supply	Cebu Electric Cooperative II (CEBECO II)	Provides a stable power supply to resorts and establishments
Water Supply	Moalboal Water District	Ensures reliable and clean water for tourism operations
Telecommunications	Globe, Smart, DITO	Provides LTE/5G coverage for connectivity
Tourism Investment	Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise	Promotes sustainable



Sector	Provider / Organization	Role in Tourism Development
Environmental Management	Zone Authority (TIEZA) & DOT	infrastructure development
	Moalboal Tourism Office	Oversees environmental compliance and EUF collection

Source: DOT Region VII; TIEZA; Moalboal LGU Reports (2023).

Strong infrastructure systems and institutional collaboration reinforce Moalboal's tourism success. Its position along the Tañon Strait, a marine biodiversity corridor, supports both ecological conservation and tourism appeal (TIEZA, 2023).

The partnership between the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) led to Moalboal's recognition as a Tourism Enterprise Zone (TEZ)—encouraging investment in eco-friendly facilities and sustainable business practices (Padronia, 2023; Cordova, 2023).

Such synergy between infrastructure development and environmental management ensures that tourism growth aligns with sustainability principles, benefiting both local communities and the natural environment.

Tourism Policies and Sustainability Measures

Table 4.
Local Tourism Policies and Sustainability Programs in Moalboal

Policy Instrument	Year	Focus Area	Key Provisions
Ordinance No. 158-2021	2021	Noise & COVID-19 Safety	Restricts loud activities; enforces pandemic health measures
Resolution No. 05-2022	2022	Public Health	Updates tourism-related health and safety standards
Resolution No. 10-2022	2022	Environmental Management	Closes Pescador Island for reef rehabilitation
Executive Orders No. 11-2020–2020, 16-2022	2020–2022	COVID-19 Response	Implements mask mandates and public guidelines
Environmental User Fee Ordinance	Ongoing	Sustainable Tourism	₱25 fee per visitor funds marine protection and community projects

Source: Municipality of Moalboal Tourism Office (2023).

Moalboal's local policies demonstrate a deliberate shift toward sustainable and regulated tourism management. The Environmental User Fee (EUF) system, in particular, provides continuous funding for conservation projects and local employment (Municipality of Moalboal, 2023). Resorts such as Kasai Village Dive Resort have integrated Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Tourism (DOT) guidelines, enforcing visitor registration, curfews, and environmental penalties for coral damage or littering (Kasai Village, 2022). Revenues from the EUF are reinvested into reef rehabilitation, waste management, and tourism infrastructure, embodying the principles of eco-conscious tourism and community-based governance. Such measures serve as best-practice models



for sustainable coastal destinations in the Philippines and beyond.

CONCLUSION

Moalboal exemplifies the delicate balance between tourism promotion and environmental preservation. Its remarkable biodiversity, scenic coastline, and renowned marine life—particularly its diving and snorkeling attractions—have established it as one of Cebu’s premier destinations. The proactive measures of local stakeholders, such as the Kasai Village Dive Resort and the implementation of the “Ordinance for New Seafarers,” reflect a progressive commitment to responsible tourism management. Likewise, the collaboration among the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), and local government units underscores a unified effort to position Moalboal not only as a biodiversity hotspot but also as a sustainable tourism investment hub in the Philippines. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of tourism-dependent economies, yet Moalboal’s adaptive governance, policy innovation, and community cooperation illustrate its resilience and recovery capacity. The adoption of the Environmental User Fee (EUF) system further demonstrates how local policies can integrate economic growth with ecological stewardship, ensuring that tourism revenues are reinvested in conservation, infrastructure, and community welfare. Overall, Moalboal’s experience offers valuable insights into the complex dynamics of managing tourism development within environmental limits. It serves as a model for other coastal communities seeking to balance economic opportunities with sustainability imperatives, highlighting the importance of good governance, community engagement, and multi-sectoral collaboration in achieving inclusive and long-term tourism growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen Moalboal’s position as a resilient and sustainable tourism destination that benefits both visitors and local communities, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Diversification of Tourism Offerings

While Moalboal is widely recognized for its marine biodiversity and water-based activities, the tourism portfolio should be broadened to include ecotourism, cultural immersion, and land-based adventure tourism. Initiatives such as forest trekking, agri-tourism, heritage tours, and local culinary experiences can attract a broader market and reduce overdependence on marine attractions.

2. Capacity Management and Sustainable Tourism Practices

Strengthening policies such as the “Ordinance for New Seafarers” and the Environmental User Fee system is essential for maintaining ecological balance. Regular carrying capacity assessments, solid waste management, and community-led conservation projects should be institutionalized to minimize the environmental footprint of tourism activities.

3. Investment in Infrastructure and Facilities

Sustainable infrastructure is vital for supporting tourism growth. Investments should prioritize transport connectivity, eco-friendly accommodations, wastewater treatment, and interpretive centers that promote environmental awareness. Green infrastructure, such as



solar-powered facilities and sustainable transport systems, should also be explored.

4. Collaboration and Partnerships

A multi-stakeholder approach is crucial for sustainable tourism. Strengthening partnerships among government agencies, private enterprises, NGOs, and local communities can enhance policy coordination, resource sharing, and innovation. Establishing a Destination Management Organization (DMO) for Moalboal may further support coordinated marketing, monitoring, and sustainable tourism governance.

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FACTORS AFFECTING SALES PERFORMANCE IN QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANTS: AN ACCOUNTING AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS IN CEBU

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the factors affecting sales performance in quick service restaurants (QSRs) in Cebu from an accounting and management perspective. It focuses on operational efficiency, cost control, and financial performance as determinants of sales success. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 15 managers/supervisors and accounting staff across major QSR chains in Cebu City. Results revealed that service efficiency, cost management, pricing strategy, and employee competence are the most significant factors influencing sales performance. The findings underscore that profitability in QSRs is not solely driven by sales volume but by the strategic alignment between operational practices and sound financial management. The study concludes that integrating accounting control mechanisms and management strategies into daily operations can optimize revenue and sustain growth in a competitive market.

Keywords: Quick Service Restaurants, Sales Performance, Accounting Management, Cost Control, Operational Efficiency, Cebu

INTRODUCTION

In the fast-paced environment of quick service restaurants (QSRs), profitability and sustainability depend not only on customer satisfaction but also on efficient accounting and management practices. The Philippine food service industry, particularly in urban centers such as Cebu City, continues to expand amid rising consumer demand for convenience and affordability (Lopez, 2023). However, with intensifying competition, inflationary pressures, and rising operational costs, maintaining consistent sales performance has become a key management challenge that requires both operational and financial discipline. From an accounting standpoint, sales performance reflects a restaurant's ability to generate revenue while maintaining cost efficiency and profitability. Hilton and Platt (2020) define sales performance as the result of effective pricing, cost control, and budgeting practices that align with strategic goals. Inaccurate expense monitoring, poor budgeting, or inefficient resource allocation can reduce gross margins and distort performance outcomes. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the financial mechanisms underlying restaurant operations is essential in improving management decisions and profitability.

In management terms, operational efficiency serves as the backbone of cost control. Kim and Lee (2021) emphasized that service speed, employee productivity, and process standardization directly contribute to sales performance by minimizing waste and optimizing time utilization. Similarly, Torres and Domingo (2023) noted that QSRs that integrate accounting tools, such as performance budgeting, variance analysis, and cost



tracking, tend to achieve greater financial stability and long-term competitiveness.

In Cebu, QSRs face unique challenges such as fluctuating inventory costs, labor shortages, and market saturation (Ramos & Gonzales, 2022). As a regional hub for tourism and commerce, Cebu City's restaurant sector operates in a demanding environment where pricing, service quality, and cost efficiency must be balanced strategically. Managers are therefore expected to apply accounting control mechanisms—such as cost-volume-profit (CVP) analysis and variance monitoring—alongside managerial strategies, such as employee training, service speed optimization, and localized marketing, to sustain profitability.

This study investigates how accounting and management factors jointly influence sales performance in Cebu's quick service restaurant industry. It seeks to identify which operational and financial dimensions most significantly contribute to sales success, offering insights for restaurant owners, accounting managers, and franchise supervisors in formulating data-driven strategies for sustainable growth.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive–correlational research design to find out how accounting and management factors affect sales performance in selected Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in Cebu. This approach helped describe current accounting and operational practices and examine how cost control, pricing, service efficiency, and other factors relate to sales outcomes. The respondents were fifteen (15) restaurant managers from different QSR chains in Cebu City. They were chosen because they are directly involved in financial and operational tasks, including budgeting, financial reporting, cost control, and sales monitoring. Their experience made them suitable sources of information on how accounting and management practices influence sales performance. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. It covered five areas: service efficiency (speed, accuracy, and timeliness), cost management (expense tracking and budget control), pricing strategy (pricing methods and discounts), employee competence (skills and productivity), and customer satisfaction (service quality and repeat patronage). The dependent variable, sales performance, was measured by profitability, revenue growth, and sales stability. Responses were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Very Low”) to 5 (“Very High”). For data analysis, descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were used to characterize the level of each factor. Pearson's r was used to determine the relationships among accounting and operational factors and sales performance. The results helped identify how accounting practices and management efficiency work together to improve profitability in QSRs.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the study's findings on the factors affecting sales performance in selected Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in Cebu. The results include the mean ratings for accounting and operational factors, along with their relationships with sales performance. The discussion highlights how these findings reflect the impact of accounting and management practices on operational efficiency and profitability.

Table 1.
 Accounting and Operational Factors Affecting Sales Performance

Factors	Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Service Efficiency	Speed of service	4.53	Very High
	Order accuracy	4.47	Very High
	Service timeliness	4.51	Very High
Sub-Mean		4.50	Very High
Cost Management	Expense monitoring	4.42	Very High
	Waste reduction	4.36	Very High
	Budget adherence	4.48	Very High
Sub-Mean		4.42	Very High
Pricing Strategy	Competitive pricing	4.29	High
	Discounts and promotions	4.31	High
	Price–value perception	4.38	Very High
Sub-Mean		4.33	High
Employee Competence	Job knowledge	4.44	Very High
	Accountability	4.39	Very High
	Productivity	4.41	Very High
Sub-Mean		4.41	Very High
Customer Satisfaction	Quality of service	4.56	Very High
	Customer loyalty	4.49	Very High
	Complaint resolution	4.54	Very High
Sub-Mean		4.53	Very High
Overall Sales Performance		4.44	Very High

The results in Table 1 reveal consistently strong performance levels across all operational and accounting-related factors, with mean scores ranging from 4.33 to 4.53, all within the “High” to “Very High” categories. The highest sub-mean was recorded in Customer Satisfaction (4.53), indicating that managers in Cebu’s quick service restaurants prioritize service quality, loyalty programs, and effective complaint handling—key drivers of repeat patronage and stable sales growth. Service Efficiency also scored very high (4.50), highlighting that Cebu-based QSRs maintain operational discipline in managing speed, order accuracy, and timeliness. From an accounting perspective, this efficiency



minimizes idle time and wastage, strengthening cost ratios and improving cash turnover cycles (Hilton & Platt, 2020). Cost Management (4.42) ranked third, reflecting strong financial monitoring practices such as expense audits, supplier evaluations, and variance reporting—signs of effective managerial accounting systems that control overheads and maintain a balance between sales and costs. As Nguyen and Cruz (2022) noted, integrating cost management into daily operations supports profit sustainability even during demand fluctuations. Employee Competence (4.41) and Pricing Strategy (4.33) also received positive evaluations, suggesting that well-trained and accountable staff contribute to consistent service delivery and sales reliability. In contrast, sound pricing strategies help maintain competitiveness without sacrificing margins by using accounting tools such as break-even analysis and contribution margin computation. The overall mean score of 4.44 (Very High) for Sales Performance signifies that QSR managers in Cebu effectively coordinate financial control with operational management, resulting in firm profitability, stable cash flow, and high customer retention. Overall, the findings imply that expense tracking promotes transparency and early variance detection, waste control enhances resource efficiency, and adherence to budgets ensures liquidity and financial stability. This integration of accounting systems with managerial decision-making enables QSRs to align operational performance with strategic financial objectives, fostering both operational excellence and fiscal responsibility.

Table 2.
 Correlation Between Accounting–Operational Factors and Sales Performance

Factors	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Service Efficiency	0.83	0.001	Very Strong Positive Correlation
Cost Management	0.81	0.002	Very Strong Positive Correlation
Pricing Strategy	0.77	0.004	Strong Positive Correlation
Employee Competence	0.74	0.006	Strong Positive Correlation
Customer Satisfaction	0.85	0.001	Very Strong Positive Correlation

The correlation results in Table 2 indicate that all accounting and operational factors have strong to very strong positive relationships with sales performance among the selected Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in Cebu. Customer satisfaction ($r = 0.85$, $p = 0.001$) and service efficiency ($r = 0.83$, $p = 0.001$) emerged as the most influential factors, underscoring that superior service quality and speed directly enhance customer loyalty and repeat patronage. This finding aligns with Kim and Lee (2021), who stated that efficient service operations and positive customer experiences significantly contribute to increased revenue in food service businesses. When customers experience quick and reliable service, their perceived value of the brand improves, which translates into higher sales frequency and market competitiveness.

Cost management also demonstrated a very strong positive correlation with sales performance ($r = 0.81$, $p = 0.002$), confirming that accounting discipline and financial monitoring are integral to sustainable profitability. Hilton and Platt (2020) emphasize that



regular cost variance analysis, budgeting, and expense control are vital managerial accounting tools that support operational decisions. In QSR operations, these practices minimize wastage, optimize supply usage, and align spending with revenue trends, ensuring long-term profitability even during fluctuating market conditions. Nguyen and Cruz (2022) further argued that accounting data serve as a decision-support system for managers, allowing timely adjustments in pricing, procurement, and marketing to maintain financial stability.

Pricing strategy ($r = 0.77$, $p = 0.004$) and employee competence ($r = 0.74$, $p = 0.006$) also exhibited strong positive correlations with sales performance. These results suggest that both market-oriented pricing and workforce effectiveness contribute meaningfully to operational outcomes. According to Lopez (2023), QSRs that use flexible pricing mechanisms—guided by accounting metrics such as break-even points and contribution margins—can maintain competitiveness without eroding profit margins. Meanwhile, highly competent employees ensure consistent service delivery, reduce operational errors, and improve customer satisfaction, thereby increasing sales productivity. From a managerial accounting perspective, the results affirm that data-driven decision-making grounded in accounting reports strengthens managers' ability to anticipate financial risks and make strategic adjustments. Expense tracking, variance reporting, and budget adherence enhance transparency and stability, while operational efficiency boosts productivity and cash flow. These outcomes reflect the concept of performance management accounting, which links financial control with operational excellence (Drury, 2018). When QSRs integrate accounting insights into their management systems, they achieve not only operational precision but also financial agility—allowing them to sustain profitability and growth in a competitive market.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both accounting and operational management factors strongly influence the sales performance of Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) in Cebu. The correlation analysis revealed that customer satisfaction, service efficiency, and cost management are the most significant predictors of sales success. These results affirm that operational excellence and financial discipline work hand in hand to drive profitability and business sustainability. From an accounting perspective, cost management practices such as budget control, expense monitoring, and variance analysis ensure that resources are efficiently utilized and financial risks are minimized. Operationally, fast and accurate service, supported by competent employees, directly enhances customer loyalty and repeat patronage—leading to improved revenue stability. The integration of accounting systems and managerial decision-making creates a synergy that transforms financial data into actionable strategies, aligning operational performance with financial objectives.

In essence, QSRs that apply sound accounting principles alongside effective management strategies achieve not only short-term profitability but also long-term organizational resilience. The findings emphasize that accounting is not merely a record-keeping function but a critical management tool for strategic decision-making, guiding QSRs toward sustainable competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving food service industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Implement Accounting-Based Performance Monitoring: QSRs should use financial dashboards and variance reports to monitor sales trends, cost fluctuations, and overall profitability in real time.
2. Strengthen Budgetary Controls and Cost Discipline: Regularly review expense adherence and cost allocations to ensure that all spending aligns with revenue targets and business objectives.
3. Enhance Managerial and Financial Competence: Provide training for restaurant managers on managerial accounting, data interpretation, and financial analysis to improve decision-making and accountability.
4. Integrate Accounting Insights into Operational Strategies: Promote collaboration between accounting and operations teams to ensure that service goals are supported by accurate financial information and resource planning.
5. Adopt Technology-Driven Accounting Systems: Utilize modern accounting software and point-of-sale analytics to automate tracking of sales, inventory, and expenses—enhancing both accuracy and responsiveness.
6. Future Research: Future studies may explore the use of digital accounting tools, AI-driven financial forecasting, and performance-based budgeting to improve QSR profitability and efficiency further.

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ASSESSING THE MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VISAYAS

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effectiveness of the marketing strategies employed by the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) Department of the University of the Visayas (UV). Specifically, it sought to determine the demographic profile of newly enrolled students, their sources of information about the program, and the factors influencing their decision to enroll. Using a descriptive quantitative approach, survey data were collected from new BSCA enrollees for the 2024–2025 academic year. Findings revealed that most students (72.2%) came from Cebu City and were 18 years old (44.2%), indicating that the program primarily attracts fresh Senior High School graduates. The top reasons for enrollment were the quality of education, institutional reputation, and family loyalty. Furthermore, 42.3% of respondents learned about the program through family members, while only 21.2% credited formal marketing efforts such as school campaigns and online postings. These results indicate that while the marketing efforts are somewhat effective, they require improvement, particularly in strengthening digital presence and community engagement. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of sustaining and enhancing UV's marketing strategies through continuous promotion, digital optimization, and alumni engagement to meet the growing economic demand for professionals in customs, logistics, and international trade.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Customs Administration, Enrollment Decision, Student Recruitment, Economic Demand

INTRODUCTION

Marketing in higher education plays a vital role in influencing students' decisions to enroll in specific academic programs and institutions. As competition among universities intensifies, effective marketing strategies have become essential not only for recruitment but also for institutional branding and sustainability (Kotler & Fox, 2018). According to Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2021), higher education institutions must understand students' needs, motivations, and decision-making behaviors to develop strategies that effectively communicate the value of their academic offerings.

In the Philippine context, the higher education sector continues to evolve in response to rapid economic growth and globalization. The customs and logistics industry, in particular, has experienced significant expansion due to increased international trade and regional integration under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic framework (Department of Trade and Industry [DTI], 2023). This economic trend has heightened the demand for competent customs brokers, freight forwarders, and trade



specialists who can manage international trade processes efficiently. Consequently, the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) program plays a crucial role in developing graduates equipped with the necessary skills in customs laws, import-export documentation, and logistics management (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2021). Given this growing demand, universities offering the BSCA program, including the University of the Visayas (UV), face the challenge of promoting their programs effectively to attract qualified students. Despite the expanding opportunities in the logistics and customs sector, some institutions still experience inconsistent enrollment trends. This issue highlights the need to assess whether existing marketing efforts effectively communicate the program's relevance and career potential. The University of the Visayas has implemented various marketing initiatives, including school-to-school campaigns, online promotions, and social media posts, to raise awareness of its BSCA program. However, it remains unclear whether these efforts effectively reach the target audience or influence students' enrollment decisions. Recent studies on student recruitment emphasize that family influence, peer networks, and institutional reputation remain dominant factors in students' school choice, especially in developing countries (Maringe, 2020; De Jager & Gbadamosi, 2021). Furthermore, the changing digital landscape has transformed how universities engage with potential students. With the increasing reliance on online platforms and social media, digital marketing has become an indispensable tool for higher education institutions (Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2018). However, many local universities have not yet fully leveraged these channels to achieve consistent visibility and engagement. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing strategies implemented by the BSCA Department of the University of the Visayas. It aims to identify the demographic characteristics of new enrollees, the sources of information that influenced their enrollment, and the factors motivating their choice of program and institution. The results of this study will serve as a basis for strategic improvement in marketing approaches to better align with students' preferences and the current economic demand for customs professionals.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative research design to evaluate the marketing effectiveness of the BSCA program at the University of the Visayas. The respondents were newly enrolled first-year students of the BSCA program for the academic year 2024–2025. Data were collected through a structured survey administered during enrollment and orientation. The questionnaire covered demographic profiles (age, location, and school of origin), sources of program information, and factors influencing enrollment decisions. Responses were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution, and results were presented in graphical form for clarity. All ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process, ensuring confidentiality, voluntary participation, and accurate representation of responses. The findings were used to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the marketing strategies and to recommend data-driven improvements for future promotional initiatives.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and interprets the demographic profile and marketing-related findings of the new students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) program at the University of the Visayas. The data highlight key aspects, including geographical origin, age distribution, year of high school graduation, school of origin, sources of program awareness, and reasons for choosing the university. These results provide a clear picture of the BSCA program's current market reach and the effectiveness of its promotional strategies. The analysis further explores how demographic patterns and marketing influences shape enrollment behavior, providing a basis for developing improved marketing approaches for the department.

Table 1.
Summary of Demographic and Marketing-Related Findings of BSCA Students

Category	f	%
Geographical Origin		
Cebu City	37	72.2
Cebu Province	9	17.3
Mandaue City	3	5.8
Lapu-Lapu City	2	3.8
Outside Cebu Province	1	1.9
Age Distribution		
18 years old	23	44.2
19 years old	7	13.5
17 & 23 years old	4 each	7.7 each
Others (20–22, 24–29)	2–1 each	3.8–1.9
Year of Graduation		
SY 2022–2023	39	75.0
SY 2019–2020	4	7.7
Others (2012–2021)	1 each	1.9 each
School of Origin		
UV System (Main, Pardo, Minglanilla)	8	15.4
Asian College of Technology	4	7.7
Others (USJR, UC, ACLC, etc.)	2–1 each	3.8–1.9
Source of Program Awareness		
Family	22	42.3
Friends	14	26.9
Walk-in / UV Campaign / Website / Facebook	3–5 each	5.8–9.6
Reasons for Choosing UV		



Category	f	%
Quality	17	33.0
Reputation	11	21.0
Loyalty	10	19.0
Others (Economic, Location, Facilities)	14	27.0

A total of 100 survey questionnaires were distributed to first-year Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) students at the University of the Visayas. Of these, 87 were completed and returned, yielding a high response rate of 87%. A response rate above 80% is generally considered reliable in educational and marketing research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), ensuring that the findings adequately represent the views of the intended group.

Demographic Profile and Market Reach. The data reveal that the majority of respondents came from Cebu City (72.2%), followed by nearby towns within Cebu Province. This concentration reflects the university's strong local presence and accessibility to students residing in urban centers. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), geographical proximity plays a crucial role in students' choice of institution, as location convenience reduces both cost and perceived risk. The University of the Visayas may capitalize on this urban concentration by enhancing city-based promotions and outreach activities, particularly through senior high school partnerships in Cebu City and nearby municipalities.

Age Distribution and Generation Behavior. Most respondents were 18 years old (44.2%), indicating that the BSCA program primarily attracts fresh senior high school graduates. This aligns with the post-K–12 educational trend in the Philippines, where students typically enter higher education at age 18 (CHED, 2021). The dominance of younger students suggests that marketing strategies should align with Generation Z's digital preferences—emphasizing online engagement, authenticity, and career-oriented messaging (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). The presence of a few older students also implies opportunities for flexible or bridging programs for working individuals seeking to shift to the logistics or customs field.

Academic Background and Institutional Loyalty. The findings show that 75% graduated in SY 2022–2023, and 15.4% were from UV System high schools. This pattern implies strong institutional loyalty and internal market retention—an essential component of sustainable enrollment strategies. As noted by Maringe (2010), brand loyalty in education is built through consistent quality, perceived reputation, and emotional connection developed during earlier educational experiences. UV's internal promotions and continuous academic guidance programs could therefore strengthen student retention across educational levels.

Program Awareness and Decision Factors. A significant portion of students learned about the program through family (42.3%) and friends (26.9%), underscoring the critical role of word-of-mouth marketing. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) emphasize that personal influence is a powerful determinant in educational decision-making, particularly among young consumers who rely on trusted social networks for advice. However, institutional sources such as the UV website and Facebook page (5.8–7.7%) contributed less, suggesting



the need to enhance digital marketing visibility and update content to engage potential enrollees more effectively.

Motivations for Enrollment. The primary reasons cited for choosing the University of the Visayas were Quality (33%), Reputation (21%), and Loyalty (19%), followed by Economic, Location, and Facilities (27%). These findings indicate that students value academic standards and institutional image over purely financial considerations. According to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), perceived educational quality and institutional reputation are among the most influential factors in students' university choice. This supports the continued need for academic excellence, faculty competence, and visible achievements as part of the university's brand positioning strategy.

Overall, the results imply that UV's market strength lies in its reputation and local accessibility, supported by strong family-based referrals. To sustain growth, the university may enhance its digital outreach, diversify marketing content, and target untapped geographic segments beyond Cebu City. The findings also suggest that students' decision-making is both emotional and practical—driven by trust, quality, and convenience rather than cost alone. Therefore, marketing campaigns that emphasize student success stories, alumni achievements, and career readiness are likely to resonate strongly with future enrollees.

Table 2.
 Factors Influencing Enrollment Decision of BSCA Students

Influencing Factor	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Personal Choice	Interest in the customs and trade field	4.56	0.61	Very High Influence
	Desire for a stable career in logistics or government service	4.49	0.67	Very High Influence
	Perception that BSCA offers diverse job opportunities	4.42	0.72	Very High Influence
	Preference for a program with global relevance	4.38	0.69	Very High Influence
	Aspiration for professional growth and advancement	4.51	0.63	Very High Influence
Average Mean		4.47	0.66	Very High Influence
Family Influence	Encouragement from parents to pursue BSCA	3.89	0.88	High Influence
	Financial support from family	3.77	0.91	High Influence
	Relatives in trade/customs field	3.68	0.93	High Influence
	Family pride associated with UV enrollment	3.92	0.79	High Influence
	Consultation with parents before enrolling	3.81	0.84	High Influence
Average Mean		3.81	0.87	High Influence
Peer Influence	Encouragement from friends who enrolled at UV	3.49	0.91	Moderate Influence
	Peer pressure to join the same	3.22	0.96	Moderate Influence



Influencing Factor	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
	program			
	Friends' positive testimonials about BSCA	3.71	0.84	High Influence
	Classmates' recommendations during SHS	3.41	0.89	Moderate Influence
	Group enrollment decisions	3.35	0.93	Moderate Influence
Average Mean		3.44	0.91	Moderate Influence
Institutional Reputation	UV's credibility and standing	4.31	0.73	Very High Influence
	High perceived quality of instruction	4.42	0.66	Very High Influence
	Relevant and professional faculty	4.28	0.70	Very High Influence
	Positive community and online feedback	4.17	0.75	High Influence
	Successful alumni in the trade industry	4.36	0.68	Very High Influence
Average Mean		4.31	0.70	Very High Influence
Economic Considerations	Affordable tuition and flexible payment terms	4.11	0.79	High Influence
	Proximity to home or transportation convenience	4.05	0.83	High Influence
	Availability of scholarships or financial aid	4.00	0.85	High Influence
	Lower living costs compared to other cities	3.94	0.81	High Influence
	The family's financial capacity to sustain studies	3.88	0.86	High Influence
Average Mean		4.00	0.83	High Influence
Overall Mean		4.00	0.79	High Influence

Out of the 100 distributed questionnaires, 52 were retrieved and valid, yielding a response rate of 52%, which falls within the acceptable range for survey-based academic research according to Fincham (2008), who notes that response rates of 50% or higher are considered adequate for descriptive analyses. This indicates that the data collected from respondents provide a sufficient basis for interpreting the factors influencing students' decision to enroll in the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) program at the University of the Visayas. As shown in Table 2, the overall mean of 4.00 (SD = 0.79) indicates that respondents generally agree that the identified factors have a strong influence on their enrollment decision. The findings highlight that while various external and internal influences affect students' choice of program, personal choice and institutional reputation emerged as the most dominant.

Personal Choice. Among all dimensions, Personal Choice ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.66$) obtained the highest mean, signifying a very high influence. This shows that students primarily enrolled in BSCA due to intrinsic motivation and a genuine interest in the field of customs, trade, and logistics. According to Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination



Theory, intrinsic motivation—doing something out of personal interest or internal satisfaction—is a key factor in academic persistence and engagement. Similarly, a study by Marquez and Dela Cruz (2021) found that personal aspirations and perceived career relevance strongly determine program selection among Filipino college students. The university may strengthen this aspect by offering career-oriented seminars and experiential learning activities that align with students' interests, thereby ensuring sustained motivation and academic success throughout their studies.

Institutional Reputation. The second most influential factor is Institutional Reputation ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.70$), which is also rated as very high in influence. This reflects students' trust in the University of the Visayas as a credible institution offering quality education and competent faculty. This result echoes the findings of Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2015), who emphasized that institutional image and perceived teaching quality significantly affect student enrollment decisions. A positive reputation fosters a sense of pride and belonging among enrollees, which, in turn, enhances institutional loyalty.

The BSCA department may continue investing in faculty development, student achievement promotion, and industry partnerships to reinforce its reputation and attract more prospective students.

Economic Considerations ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.83$) obtained a high influence interpretation. This finding indicates that affordability, scholarships, and proximity to home remain key determinants in students' decisions—consistent with Cabrera and La Nasa (2000), who observed that financial accessibility plays a decisive role in college choice, particularly in developing countries. Filipino families, who often operate within modest budgets, tend to prioritize institutions offering flexible tuition arrangements and value for money. The university should maintain accessible payment plans and expand scholarship offerings to ensure inclusivity and continued enrollment growth among economically disadvantaged students.

Family and Peer Influence. Both Family Influence ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.87$) and Peer Influence ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.91$) were interpreted as high and moderate influence, respectively. Family encouragement remains essential, aligning with the findings of Gonzales and Trinidad (2022), who reported that Filipino students often rely on familial advice when making academic decisions due to collectivist cultural values. On the other hand, peer influence was less dominant, implying that while friends' opinions matter, the final choice is largely self-driven.

Strengthening family engagement programs and student ambassador initiatives could further boost positive word of mouth and familial support for BSCA enrollees.

The collective high overall mean (4.00) underscores that students' enrollment decisions are shaped by a balanced mix of personal motivation, institutional quality, and financial considerations, with lesser but still relevant effects from family and peer factors. This suggests that the BSCA program has a strong appeal both academically and reputationally, and the university's strategic communication, affordability, and career-oriented curriculum are well-aligned with students' expectations.



CONCLUSION

The study examined the demographic and marketing-related factors influencing the enrollment decisions of Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) students at the University of the Visayas. With an 87% response rate ($n = 87$), the findings reveal that students' decisions are shaped primarily by personal motivation and institutional reputation, followed by economic considerations, family, and peer influences. The overall mean of 4.00 indicates that these factors have a substantial impact on students' program selection. The results affirm that self-determined interest in the field of customs and trade, alongside the University's established academic reputation, serves as the strongest driver of enrollment. Meanwhile, economic practicality and familial guidance continue to play vital roles in the Filipino context, where financial stability and family advice significantly shape educational pathways. Although peer influence remains moderate, it continues to reinforce group-oriented enrollment patterns typical of collectivist cultures. Overall, the BSCA program has a strong appeal among career-driven, institutionally loyal students. However, to further enhance market competitiveness, continuous improvement in marketing visibility, financial support mechanisms, and family engagement strategies is essential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conduct career seminars, customs industry immersions, and professional mentoring programs to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and long-term commitment to the field.
2. Highlight UV's academic excellence, board performance, and industry partnerships in promotional campaigns to sustain its image as a leading institution for Customs Administration education.
3. Introduce flexible tuition payment plans, merit-based scholarships, and work-study opportunities to make education more financially accessible, especially for low-income families.
4. Implement parental orientations, open-house activities, and family information drives to encourage family participation in the student decision-making process.
5. Invest in social media marketing, student testimonials, and ambassador programs to enhance online presence and leverage peer influence among prospective students.



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