

THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE AGROTOURISM
DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF MAEJO UNIVERSITY'S
AGROTOURISM LEARNING CENTERS



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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
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MARRY ANN R. NAVARETTE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
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GRADUATE SCHOOL MAEJO UNIVERSITY
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| ชื่อเรื่อง | กลยุทธ์การจัดการเพื่อการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเชิงเกษตรอย่างยั่งยืน กรณีศึกษา ศูนย์การเรียนรู้การท่องเที่ยวเชิงเกษตรมหาวิทยาลัยแม่โจ้ |
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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ ศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์และผลการดำเนินงานขององค์กรความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างคุณภาพการบริการและความพึงพอใจของผู้ใช้บริการด้านการท่องเที่ยวเชิงเกษตร การศึกษานี้ใช้เครื่องมือที่ดัดแปลงจากเครื่องมือ SERVQUAL ซึ่งได้รวบรวมจากผู้เข้าเยี่ยมชมศูนย์การเรียนรู้การท่องเที่ยวเชิงเกษตรมหาวิทยาลัยแม่โจ้ จำนวน 200 คน เพื่อกำหนดถึงคุณภาพและความพึงพอใจในบริการของศูนย์การเรียนรู้การท่องเที่ยวเชิงเกษตร มหาวิทยาลัยแม่โจ้ ในขณะที่แบบสอบถามเกี่ยวกับการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์ ซึ่งได้รวบรวมข้อมูลจากพนักงาน 25 คนที่ได้รับการคัดเลือกเพื่อตอบแบบสอบถาม สำหรับการวิเคราะห์ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างตัวแปร รวมถึง การวิเคราะห์เชิงพรรณนา ได้ดำเนินการเพื่อค้นหาคุณลักษณะพื้นฐานของการบริการจากข้อมูลที่รวบรวมได้ ผลการวิจัยพบว่าการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์มีผลกระทบอย่างมีนัยสำคัญต่อผลการดำเนินงานของศูนย์การเรียนรู้ซึ่งผลการวิจัยพิสูจน์ได้ว่าการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์และผลการดำเนินงานของศูนย์การเรียนรู้มีความสัมพันธ์ในทางเดียวกันโดยมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($F = 53.690, p < 0.05$) นอกจากนี้ยังแสดงให้เห็นว่าความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์และความสามารถในการแข่งขัน และสร้างความพึงพอใจให้กับผู้เข้าชมศูนย์การเรียนรู้ เป็นบวกอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($r = .844, p < 0.05$) ยิ่งไปกว่านั้นผลลัพธ์ยังชี้ให้เห็นว่ามีคุณลักษณะทั้ง 7 ซึ่งก็คือ การตอบสนองของพนักงาน การจับต้องได้ ความน่าเชื่อถือ การเอาใจใส่ การพัฒนาอย่างยั่งยืนที่สัมผัสได้ ความไว้วางใจ และ แนวทางปฏิบัติอย่างยั่งยืน เป็นตัวแปรที่มีนัยสำคัญ โดยคุณลักษณะทั้ง 7 นี้มีอิทธิพลในทางบวกต่อการรับรู้ถึงคุณภาพการบริการ ความพึงพอใจ และ เจตนาเชิงพฤติกรรมของนักท่องเที่ยว การศึกษาครั้งนี้สรุปได้ว่าการฝึกฝนในการจัดการเชิงกลยุทธ์มีความสัมพันธ์เชิงบวกต่อการเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพศูนย์การเรียนรู้และจะสามารถสะท้อนถึงความพึงพอใจของผู้มาเยือนและเจตนาเชิงพฤติกรรมหรือความตั้งใจของนักท่องเที่ยวได้ในที่สุด

คำสำคัญ : คุณภาพการบริการ, ความพึงพอใจของนักท่องเที่ยว, พฤติกรรมความตั้งใจของ

นักท่องเที่ยว, ผลการปฏิบัติงานของพนักงาน



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|---------------------------------------|---|
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| Author | Miss Marry Ann R. Navarette |
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| Advisory Committee Chairperson | Associate Professor Dr. Weerapon Thongma |

ABSTRACT

This study determined the nature of the relationship between strategic management and the organizational performance, the relationship between service quality and visitor satisfaction in the agrotourism sector. The study employed the modified SERVQUAL instrument that was distributed using a convenience sample technique to 200 visitors of Maejo University's Agrotourism Learning Centers to determine their perceptions of service quality and satisfaction. While a structured strategic management questionnaire was administered to, 25 employees purposively selected as respondents of the agrotourism learning centers. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to discover the underlying attribute of services and correlation analysis as well as descriptive analysis was employed to analyze the data collected. The results showed that strategic management had significant effects on the operational performance of the learning centers. This proved that there was a strong and positive relationship between strategic management practices and the learning center's operational performance ($F=53.690$, $p<0.05$). In addition, it showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between strategic management and the learning center's ability to attract and satisfy tourists ($r=.844$, $p<0.05$). Moreover, results indicated that the 7 attributes were significant that included responsiveness, tangibility, reliability, empathy, tangible sustainability, assurance, and sustainable practices. Likewise, the 7 attributes positively influence the perceptions

of service quality, tourists satisfaction and behavioral intentions. This study concluded that the practice of strategic management was positively related to boosting the learning centers performance and would eventually resonate to visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

Keywords : Service Quality, Tourist's Satisfaction, Tourist's Behavioral Intentions, Employee Performance



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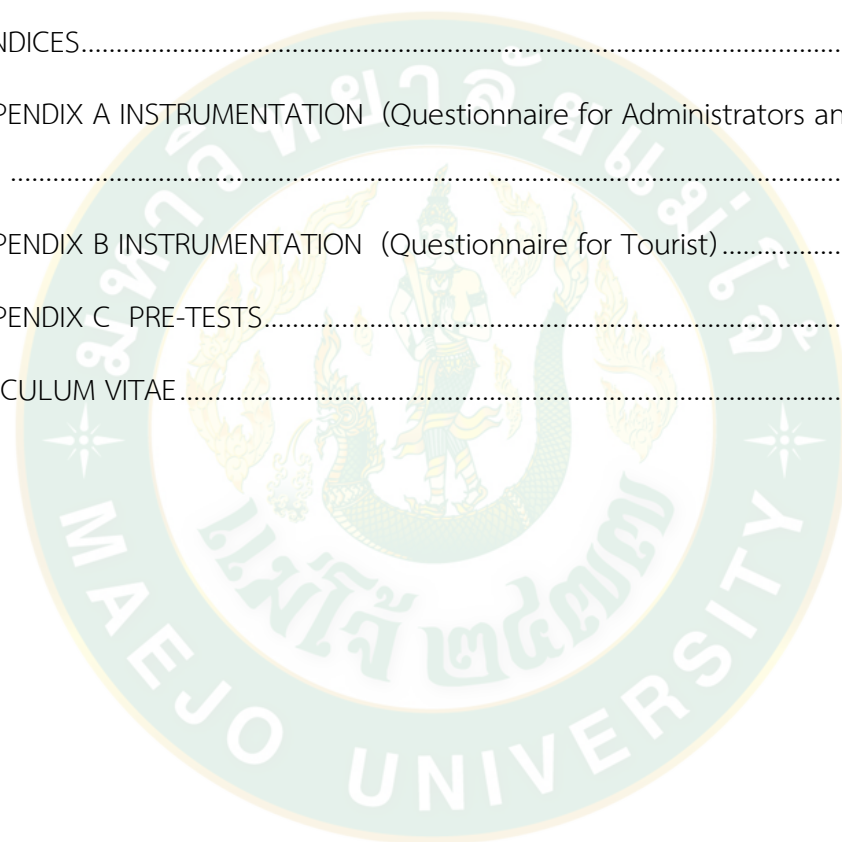


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ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
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| AMOS | - | Analysis of a Moment Structures |
| ASEAN | - | Association of Southeast Asian Nation |
| CRM | - | Customer Relationship Management |
| CSF | - | Critical Success Factor |
| EDP | - | Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm |
| FTV | - | First - time Visitors |
| GDP | - | Gross Domestic Product |
| ISO | - | International Standards Organization |
| KPI | - | Key Performance Indicators |
| LPC | - | Least – Preferred Co-worker |
| MBO | - | Management by Objectives |
| MD | - | Management Development |
| MJU | - | Major University |
| RV | - | Repeat Visitor |
| SEM | - | Structural Equation Modelling |
| SERVQUAL | - | Service Quality |
| SPSS | - | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |
| TAT | - | Tourism Authority of Thailand |
| TBL | - | Trip Bottom Line |
| TCSC | - | Training and Consulting Service Center |
| TPB | - | Theory of Planned Behavior |
| TRA | - | Theory of Reasoned Action |
| UBC | - | Unit Brand Loyalty |
| UNEP | - | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNWTO | - | United Nations World Tourism Organization |
| VS | - | Visitor Satisfaction |
| WTO | - | World Tourism Organization |
| WTTC | - | World Travel and Tourism Council |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon, which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure. According to Jafari and Ritchie (1981) tourism is an interdisciplinary and integrates a variety of subjects, disciplines and focuses and can be seen from numerous points of views and approaches. The tourism as a central study can be studied from many focuses and created into a new form of tourism development model. However, tourism development model can be made in varying forms such as focus on agriculture as agrotourism, ecology as ecotourism, culture as cultural tourism, religion as religious tourism, etc.

Formerly agrotourism was recognized as a part of ecotourism because both have similar principles to conduct nature attractions (Rilla, 1999). In this case, the history of ecotourism can also be seen as history of agrotourism. Agrotourism started from rural tourism as well. In addition, both have been identified as the fastest tourism development model in the world. They have been widely developed in developing countries as a potential development models as natural resources and support of local society economically. In the simple history of agrotourism, the development of the history itself is related to human development along with the world technologies. The experts from University of Tennessee Extension Publication discussed Agrotourism and its history by considering it as Agritainment. Agritainment (agrotourism and entertainment farming enterprises), created in 1800's, when families visited farming relatives in order to escape from the city and experience the farming.

Mostly they do not really took the holiday as a part of the agrotourism because their main focus is to release tension and get some rest during that time.

Agrotourism is gaining recognition even in the developing countries, largely owed to the increasing worldwide awareness of sustainability and environmentalism. Recognizing the importance of the tourism industry in the economic well-being of a country, governments have paid attention on campaigning for specific tourism products and destinations, with special promotions undertaken to market tourism products, such as agrotourism.

Agrotourism can be found in the literature as synonym for rural tourism or farm tourism. Thus, agrotourism includes a wide variety of activities for example tours, overnight stays, special events and festivals, on-farm stores, fee fishing and hunting, corn mazes, bird watching, self-recreational harvesting, etc. However, for the purpose of consistency, the term “agrotourism” will be used throughout this study to refer to the range of related labels, concepts, and products discussed in the literature as a whole. Agrotourism thus described in this study as a combination of agricultural tourism and products that encourages short or long-term visitors to farms or rural areas for the purpose of relaxation, enjoyment, education, and/or involvement in the activities of agricultural production and farming life. Furthermore, according to World Tourism Organization (2004), that agrotourism is part of rural tourism and relates to tourism on farms. It gives farmers options to expand their activities and receive more income. At the moment, agrotourism has been successfully developed in many countries, for instance Switzerland, New Zealand, France, Netherlands, Australia, and Austria (Rilla, 1999). According also to Esichaikul and Chansawang (2016), the agro-tourism model has been developed extensively in countries such as Australia, US, Canada, Japan as well as Thailand. Because of this agricultural model, fascinating and interesting attractions are reflected through agricultural activities.

In recent years, Thailand has become attractive to many tourists because this green country has a variety of spectacular attractions. Currently, the tourism sector is

an important contributor to the economy, bringing large amounts of revenue into the country. In fact, tourism, which is an asset to the economic growth of Thailand, is recognized as one of the major sources of foreign exchange. In Thailand, agriculture is considered as the backbone of the country. In order to gain a great amount of income from tourism, locals have to set up the idea of agrotourism based on the philosophy of sustainable development. Thailand being one of the 10 member countries in the ASEAN, has innovated ways to attract more tourists especially in agrotourism. The population of Thailand was estimated at 69 million persons in 2017, covered agricultural sector 24.863 million persons (39 percent of the total population). The total area is approximately 514,000 square kilometers. Forty-one percent of the total land area is used for agricultural purposes, thirty-one percent is forestland, and twenty-eight percent is unclassified land.

With an increasingly competitive worldwide tourism market and the importance, tourism plays in Thailand's national economy, destination managers, and tourism agencies in Thailand need to understand how specific site conditions and characteristics contribute to visitor satisfaction at both a site and destination level. This task poses some challenges because it is difficult to understand and measure visitor satisfaction because judgments of quality are subjective measurements made by a visitor based upon their own standard (Bowen and Clarke, 2002) and preconceived notions.

The high level and sustained interest in the literature related to quality and satisfaction in the tourism derives from a widely held belief that the primary managerial criterion for success should be defined in terms of level of satisfaction (Bultena and Klessig, 1969). Implicit in this belief is the notion that improvement in performance quality and satisfaction will result in retention or expansion of tourist numbers, more determined and active tourism support, and ultimately enhanced profitability and political support. Higher quality of performance and levels of satisfaction are perceived to result in increased loyalty and future visitation, greater tolerance of price increases, and an enhanced reputation. Service quality and

customer satisfaction are very important concepts that companies must understand in order to remain competitive in business and hence grow. It is very important for companies to know how to measure these constructs from the consumers' perspective in order to better understand their needs and hence satisfy them. Service quality is considered very important because it leads to higher customer satisfaction, profitability, reduced cost, customer loyalty, and retention. Research suggests that a link exists between visitor satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003).

It is imperative for individuals involved in the planning, design, and management of a destination to understand how to design and manage destinations that create positive, satisfying, and memorable experiences for those that visit (Fuchs and Weiermair, 2004). It is essential for destination managers to create an environment where First Time Visitors and Repeat Visitors are consistently satisfied. If a visitor is satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to become Repeat Visitor themselves and/or tell friends and family about their experience, which is the least expensive yet most powerful form of advertising available (Tiefenbacher et al., 2000). First Time Visitors and Repeat Visitors often times have differing motivations for visiting a site and as a result, destinations offering a variety of activities and recreational opportunities are more likely to produce high levels of satisfaction within both groups (Lau and McKercher, 2004).

The literature suggests that a correlation exists between visitor satisfaction and a visitor's choice to re-experience a product. The higher one's satisfaction level, the more likely he/she is to experience the product again and/or provide positive word-of-mouth advertising to friends and family (Oliver, 2010; Parasuraman et. al., 1988; Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003). By identifying various visitor characteristics and understanding their motivation for visiting a destination in conjunction with how and what destination characteristics contribute to higher levels of visitor satisfaction, destinations operators and managers can become better informed to develop and

maintain higher quality destinations that would promote repeat visits and the long-term success of the site (Mackoy and Osland, 2004).

The rapid changes in the environment often make it difficult for organizations to develop a competitive advantage that can be sustained for a long period. As expectations and demand for high quality visitor experiences increase, along with greater competition from existing and new destinations (both regionally and globally), the need for a coordinated and robust approach to visitor destination strategic management is vital.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Worldwide, the increase of rural tourism is three times more than tourism in general as the World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates an annual growth of approximately 6% as against 2% for tourism in general. From this tendency, it can be interpreted that the market for rural tourism has increased sharply. Additionally, according to the experts, the maturation of people leads to an increasing demand for nature and culture-related activities. Moreover, the growth of demand on tourism has now become an increasingly important alternative source of incomes for farmers and other rural inhabitants (World Tourism Organization, 2015).

According to World Tourism Organization (2015), total international arrivals to ASEAN are expected to increase to 123 million by 2020, 152 million by 2025 and 187 million by 2030. This raises issues concerned with the long-term sustainability of this growth, most especially the management of relatively static heritage tourism resources, increased distribution of direct and indirect income and employment benefits to less advantaged populations in the region. However, despite the enormous growth of agrotourism particularly in Thailand, the industry faces numerous arising challenges, due to external and internal factors in its business environment that affect its performance and efficiency. The external factors include stiff competition from neighboring countries and continuous uncertainties in the

hospitality industry life cycle. Besides that, the agrotourism operators have to deal with internal challenges that are related to efficient organizational management.

According to Asubonteng et. al. (1996), due to intense competition and the hostility of environmental factors, service quality has become a cornerstone marketing strategy for companies. This highlights how important improving service quality to organizations for survival and growth since it could help tackle these challenges they face in the competitive markets. This means that service-based companies are compelled to provide excellent services to their customers in order to have a sustainable competitive advantage. There is however, a need for these organizations to understand what service quality is in order to attain their objectives.

There is various literature focusing on the service quality evaluation of tourism service providers. However, because of the rising popularity of agrotourism, there is still a lack of research concerning how to establish an accurate service quality evaluation framework for agrotourism service providers, particularly in developing countries. Consequently, measuring service quality for a tourism destination is not an easy task because the characteristics of services are heterogeneous, inseparable, and intangible (Frochot and Hughes, 2000). In spite of a great deal of studies on the natural environmental aspects of ecotourism, mostly located in developing countries (Clifton and Benson, 2006), there is still a lack of research with respect to the assessment of service quality in agrotourism, especially in developing countries, notably in Southeast Asia.

Moreover, these agrotourism enterprises face many challenges among which the inability of local communities to combine the agricultural values with the guest – service values (Fleischer and Pizam, 1997) as well as the fact that the quality of products and services do not match customer’s expectations and demands (Sharpley, 2002). Researchers have proven that tourists to rural areas look for rest and new experiences (Iakovidou, 2000 and Albacete-Saez et al., 2007) while simply providing accommodation facilities is not sufficient to attract visitors (Sharpley, 2002) but rather active holidays with educational and natural activities (Spilanis, 2000). As

mentioned, service quality and customer satisfaction are very important concepts that service providers must understand in order to remain competitive in business and hence grow. It is very important for service providers to know how to measure these constructs from the tourists' perspective in order to better understand their needs and hence satisfy them. Service quality is considered very important because it leads to higher customer satisfaction, profitability, reduced cost, customer loyalty, and retention.

According to Ghylin, K. et. al. (2008) since company managers believe that the power of quality guarantees high profits in business, companies try to understand how to keep the quality level high at every point within production, manufacturing, and even providing services. In this study, the researcher will apply the user-based approach because the study is focus in finding out what dimensions of service quality in the learning centers are tourists satisfied with and how they perceive this service quality.

Due to the intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of a significant part of the agrotourism hospitality product, it is not easy for visitors to evaluate the quality of agrotourism services. However, monitoring their perceptions of quality is of vital importance to the viability of agrotourism providers; those agrotourism providers and organizations that demonstrate a commitment to excellent service provision will almost certainly emerge as more viable entities than their competitors will. The elements of service quality and satisfaction have both been central concerns in tourism and hospitality services marketing; improvement in guest satisfaction and service quality is assumed to result in increased profits for businesses and organizations operating in service sectors. Thus, practitioners in the agrotourism industry are interested in the roles of guest satisfaction and service quality in influencing post-consumption behaviors (Prentice et al., 1998). Factors as revisit intentions, word of mouth, and switching behavior are of interest, as they enhance future agrotourism firms' revenues and assist the development of guest loyalty. Service quality and guest satisfaction are key factors in winning market share in the

agrotourism industry; yet, it is not clear to agrotourism managers which of the two constructs is the means to an end, or even whether they are separate constructs (Haber and Lerner, 2002; Christou, 2003). For example, if they are the same construct, managers of agrotourism accommodations need to focus on improving either guest satisfaction or service quality. However, if they are two different constructs, agrotourism businesses must understand the interrelationship between them because, given limited resources, their managers might be unable to invest in improving both constructs simultaneously. Hence, a clear understanding of the relationship between the two constructs will enable agrotourism providers to know which of these factors is of greater significance in influencing the behavioral intentions of tourists.

Both service quality and guest satisfaction are important aspects of a hospitality service. The goal of agrotourism service providers is to improve both service quality and the level of guest satisfaction. However, it has been recognized that service quality is an elusive concept for researchers and practitioners to understand (Brown, 1999). The relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction is an important issue in agrotourism marketing. Understanding the relationship between them is likely to assist agrotourism organizations in determining those aspects of a service, that should be measured, which procedures should be associated with measurement of the constructs, and which are most likely to best predict the behaviors of their guests.

It is therefore fitting that the potential of agricultural tourism should be determined and evaluated. The mechanism to set standards for agricultural tourism management in Thailand is needed to give a sense of status and potential to accommodate growth and competitiveness in both the ASEAN tourism market and world tourism. Moreover, the operation of the Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers needs to be evaluated on its progress in terms of service quality. Such problems as tourist routes that lack some drive due to lack of development guidelines that is appropriate to the current situation including services of a lecturer

that does not know how to communicate with foreign tourists need to be addressed. Furthermore, some learning centers are rarely ready to welcome and cooperate in the operation. Consequently, some of the learning center's facilities are not maintained and supervised properly. In terms of marketing, there is less publicity due to limited budget that results to misunderstanding among the personnel.

For these reasons, that management should focus on the service quality that will influence the satisfaction, which, in turn, has an impact on a visitor's intention to re-patronize. In practical terms, raising tourist satisfaction could improve the learning centers competitive positioning and facilitate understanding of which factors are creating higher tourists loyalty. Therefore, it is crucial for the agrotourism heads to understand the environment of the agrotourism business and the current state of services in order to be successful. The pursuit of sustainable development and the requirement to make the societies, economies, and systems of consumption and production more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable will be the dominant challenge for management throughout the 21st century. Concern about the social and environmental impacts of business activity can be traced back through history. The conventional management mind-set that had dominated throughout the 20th century will also have to change during the 21st century.

Creating more sustainable agribusiness during the 21st century will require changes that go beyond technological innovations and new strategies to respond to the opportunities and threats created by pressing social and environmental issues. Scientific evidence demonstrates clearly that the technologies, institutions, values, and business models that generated so much unsustainable economic development during the 20th century should now be capable of delivering progress toward sustainability without radical change. Furthermore, a leader for the 21st century will need to have the ability to integrate and balance the needs of a wide variety of stakeholders, to work with competitors, non-governmental organizations, policy makers, and communities to find solutions to sustainability challenges. Actively promote standards of governance, accountability, and corporate social responsibility

that go beyond anything organizations were required to demonstrate during the last century.

This study therefore seeks to investigate the relationship between quality management, agrotourism service quality, visitor satisfaction, and future behavioral intentions. It is aimed at determining the overall service quality perceived by tourists in the different agrotourism learning centers and identify those dimensions that bring satisfaction to tourists. This will enable management to identify the most effective ways of closing service quality gaps and choose which to focus on. This will be achieved by measuring the tourist's expectations and performance on the various SERVQUAL dimensions hence evaluating the scores obtained between the tourist's expectations and perception of service experienced. This will also enable management to identify the different learning centers employee performance in terms of providing quality service to the visitors.

Likewise, the central focus of this study is to examine the relationship between service quality and satisfaction of visitors and guests at the Maejo agrotourism learning centers. The purpose of studying this is to understand the extent to which each of these concepts influences the intended future behavior of tourists. The work carried out here is aimed at viewing overall service quality and overall tourist's satisfaction as different attitudes. Thus, it aims to examine the process of how these attitudes are formed, the psychological processes that underlie them, and their behavioral consequences. Specifically, the results will assist agrotourism service providers in identifying any gaps between providers and tourists and to find out the problems related to specific services. This can also act as an effective tool to encourage long-term relationships with tourists and, subsequently, to increase destination loyalty.

In summary, the researcher's goal is to understand both the expectations and perceptions of tourists and measure them from their perspective in order to identify gaps in delivering service quality and in order to ensure customer satisfaction. As Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers expand, it is important that its

development and potential challenges be investigated extensively to ensure its sustainability. Thus, with the problems stated, this research focuses on the following research questions:

1. How do tourists perceive service quality in the different learning centers?
2. Are tourists satisfied with service quality offered by the different learning centers?
3. Are the tourists willing to re-visit the agrotourism learning centers?
4. What is the status of the Maejo strategic management practices and how effective are these strategies within the different learning centers?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to measure the current service quality of Maejo University's different learning centers and how tourist's satisfaction leads towards future behavioral intention. This study focuses on three fold objectives:

1. To analyze tourist's perception on the quality of service of Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers in terms of sustainability.
2. To identify the effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between learning centers service quality and behavioral intentions.
3. To examine Maejo University's strategic management practices in relation to employee performance and the ability to attract and satisfy tourists.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The results of the study are expected to instill awareness of the benefits of agrotourism and to specifically make:

1. The stakeholders of the MJU Agrotourism will be able to understand the present condition and appreciate the value of the development in the future.
2. The strategies for sustainable tourism development of MJU will be useful at both the policy and operational levels. Awareness on the potential of MJU agrotourism learning centers can be used as a guideline in planning the development of agricultural tourism standards both academically and professionally.
3. The development that will be implemented will boost stakeholder's morale and would give them honor in their work.
4. The results of the study can contribute to the MJU Administration in making major decisions and in the promotion of the MJU agrotourism. To encourage stakeholders to apply appropriate information in the process of tourism planning and development (e.g. decision on priorities in policy implementation and resource allocation, marketing and promotion strategy, and involvement of stakeholders).
5. The results can aid in contributing relevant information for further research.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study will focus on the different agrotourism learning centers of Maejo University. It will evaluate the potential of sustainability of Maejo University agrotourism, its service quality in terms of accommodating tourists and providing tourist activities.

At present, Maejo University has established the Sustainable Maejo Agrotourism Trails under the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center. This comprises of 15 agrotourism learning centers used as a facility for students to have actual application of knowledge and theories in agriculture. It also aimed to provide professional academic services especially in agriculture for tourists who want to visit the university.

This research includes the following Maejo Agrotourism Learning Centers:

1. The Welcome Center
2. Maejo Agricultural Museum
3. Vegetable Plantation Learning Center
4. Commercial Mushroom Production Learning Center
5. Hydroponics Vegetable Farming Learning Center
6. The Pomology Learning Center
7. Ornamental Plants Learning Center
8. Orchid Learning Center
9. Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center
10. Maejo Siam Mekong Giant Catfish and Maejo Buk Siam Hybrid Catfish Learning Center
11. Tilapia Sex Reversal Learning Center
12. Organic Waste Decomposition by Earthworms Learning Center
13. Organic Fertilizer (Composting Without Turning) Learning Center
14. Tan Khun Camp and Baan Pong Community Forest
15. Complete Circle Pig Farming Learning Center

Maejo University in collaboration with the School of Tourism Development and its umbrella office the Training and Consulting Service Center have conceptualized the different agrotourism learning centers in September 2013. It was established to market Maejo University as an agro-tourism destination and for the public to know about the area and the university. The University allocated budget to materialize the tourism project in response to the university strategy.

At present, these learning centers are now operational to welcome tourists and individuals interested to study and learn about agriculture. In order to promote the learning centers to tourists, the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center launched a website (www.tcsc.tourism.mju.ac.th). TCSC also came up with a

brochure to disseminate tourist routes to government and private agencies interested in the agrotourism sustainable trails.

Moreover, these learning centers house an exhibition of activities and visits of the royal family in the university. The museum has a collection of all the valuable items, photos, and historic information since the founding of the university. The learning centers also offer educational programs that demonstrate the knowhow of growing plants. It focuses in providing knowledge on the ways to design and plan an actual agricultural facility. It uses different technology on how to plant fruits and vegetables using a more intelligent way. It has a demonstration and hands on training for fruit tree propagation techniques, production and breeding. The learning centers also offer visitors a personal experience in actual farming. These learning centers are a place that provides rich knowledge on the Philosophy of Green Agriculture and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy of King Rama IX.

These different sustainable Maejo agrotourism trails are currently in place and serve as sites to visit when you are in the university. Based on the data gathered in 2016 from the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center, there were around 649 tourists who have visited the different learning centers. These comprises of both local and foreign tourists.

As the hospitality industry plays the biggest role in the international tourism, developing and innovating the industry is one of the crucial aspects these days. Regardless of the fact that hospitality industry can be developed in many ways, the most efficient and effective way of the development will be always the progress of the employees of the hospitality establishments or in this case an agrotourism site like the Maejo agrotourism learning centers.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The major limitation of this study is the external validation. This study will be conducted in the different Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers. The results may not be generalized to other agrotourism destinations.

The researcher is focusing on a study on the different Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers. These will include the 15 learning centers located within the Maejo University, Chiang Mai Campus. The researcher is interested in evaluating how tourists perceive service quality in the different agrotourism learning centers in general. This study will focus solely on the MJU agrotourism learning centers that offer unique attractions and activities.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

AGROTOURISTS. These are people involved in any agriculturally based operation or activities. They take part in a farm or village activities as animal and crop care, handicrafts and entertainments. These tourists take part in the activities to learn about agriculture and their way of life, culture, and tradition (World Tourism Organization, 2001).

AGROTOURISM. Agrotourism could be the crossroads of tourism and agriculture. It is a form of creative tourism or another form of alternative tourism (Robinson and Novelli, 2005). It is a form of tourism-oriented learning. Tourists may participate in activities to learn about agriculture and their way of life, culture, and tradition and utilize existing resources to generate income for the families.

Stated more technically, agrotourism can be defined as a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism in order to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purposes of entertaining and/or educating the visitors and generating income for the farm, ranch, or business owner (Eurostat, 2001).

In this study, this refers to the different learning centers of Maejo University that serve as an agricultural setting that offer set of activities, entertainment, farming experiences and education.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. Is the management of an organization's resources to achieve its goals and objectives. It involves setting objectives, analyzing the competitive environment, analyzing the internal organization, evaluating strategies and ensuring that management rolls out the strategies across the organization.

This concept promotes a systematic approach to strategy formulation that is rooted in the mission, or purpose, of the organization and tests the implementation choices and actions of the learning centers against that mission. The mission forms the direct basis for the specific targets the learning centers will select and attempt to achieve. It also defines the nature, form, and extent of evaluation of the learning centers and its environment; as well as the nature of the corporate and business level decisions it makes. Finally, the mission defines the conditions by which the learning centers will determine the success of its actions.

SUSTAINABILITY. This is the ability of the learning centers to sustain developments and changes and the ability of the organization to survive. According to World Tourism Organization (2004) sustainability is a concept that involves a number of perspectives comprising of environmental, ecological, social, cultural, and economic issues. Furthermore, according to UNWTO (2005) to apply the sustainable tourism development, the strategies should be based on a formal expression of principles for sustainable tourism. Moreover, the guidelines, techniques, and principles are presented important for national governments, destinations, and organizations, which wish to be guided by the ethics of sustainable and responsible tourism. The guidelines and principles include: community participation, stakeholder involvement, local ownership, establishment of local business linkages, sustainability of the resource base, community goals, cooperation between local attractions, businesses and tourism operators, carrying capacity, monitoring and evaluating, accountability, establishment of education and training programs, and positioning.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. Sustainable development can be understood as a dynamic balance between economic and social development on one side and environment protection on the other. In order to understand sustainable rural development, analysis of relations between agricultural business environment, local ecosystems (providing natural resources), countryside (space relations and structure), local community (social infrastructure of an area), and service providing institutions (supplies of energy, fuel, tourism services, etc.) is needed. Systems approach to rural development shall be based on an analysis of the environment, obstacles, weak points and the following features: 1. Economic activities; 2. Natural resources; 3. Technology used in agriculture; 4. Infrastructure; 5. Social capital of the rural locality; and 6. Local customs. This development will enable the learning centers and the University to maintain a state of health that is necessary for survival at a higher level of quality.

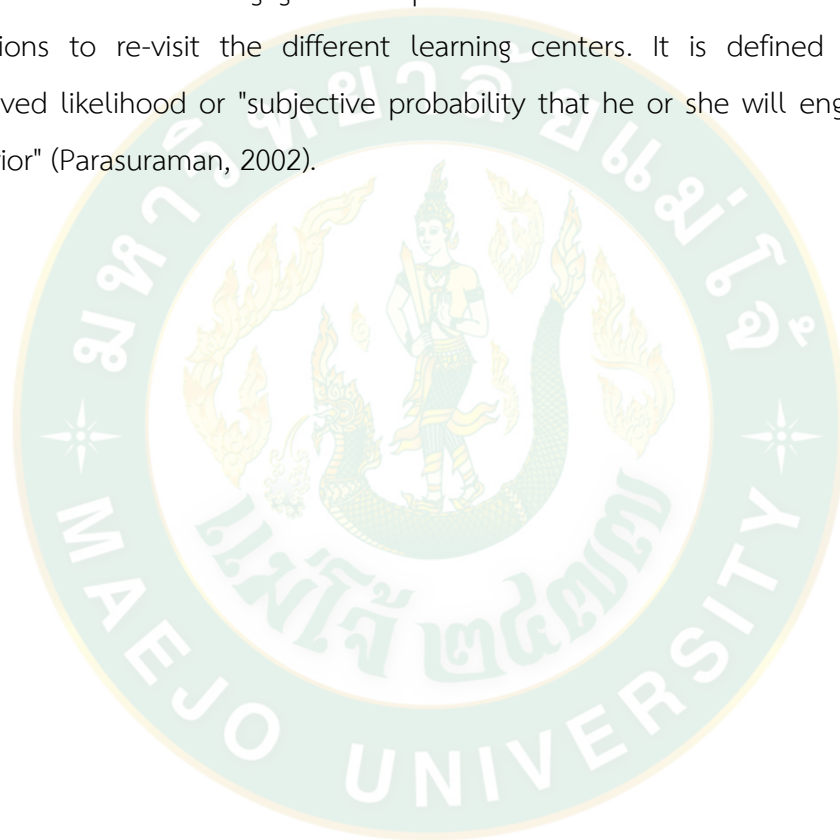
SERVQUAL. It is a multi-dimensional research instrument, designed to capture consumer expectations and perceptions of a service along the five dimensions that are believed to represent service quality. It has become the dominant measurement scale in the area of service quality.

This will be used in this study to do a gap analysis of the different learning centers' service quality performance against the service quality needs of the tourists. It takes into account the perceptions of tourists relative to the importance of service attributes.

SERVICE. This is the valuable action, deed, or effort performed by the different learning centers to satisfy a need or to fulfill a demand of the tourists. This is defined as the overall assessment of a service by the customers, (Eshghi et al., 2008) or the extent to which a service meets customer's needs or expectations (Asubonteng et al., 1996). Parasuraman et. al. (1985) defined service quality as "the discrepancy between consumers' perceptions of services offered by a particular firm and their expectations about firms offering such services."

TOURIST SATISFACTION. Was identified by a response (cognitive or affective) that pertains to a particular focus (i.e. a purchase experience and/or the associated product) and occurs at a certain time (i.e. post-purchase, post- consumption). This is the tourist's response that pertains to a particular purchase or experience associated with the different learning centers (Parasuraman, 2002).

BEHAVIORAL INTENTION. This semantic differential scale measures a tourist's stated inclination to engage in a specific behavior or in this study, the tourist intentions to re-visit the different learning centers. It is defined as a person's perceived likelihood or "subjective probability that he or she will engage in a given behavior" (Parasuraman, 2002).



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A review of the literature developed for this study is divided into two parts as follows: First, the theories, concepts, principles, and models relevant to the study and information concerning tourism, agrotourism, sustainable development, strategic management, and SERVQUAL as the main measurement tool of the study. Second, the review of related literatures relevant to the study.

THEORIES

Since the focus of this study is on the behavioral aspect of tourists towards the different learning centers and employees' behavior towards tourists and how these employees deliver quality service, behavioral theories will be used and adapted as the main theory for the study.

The first and foremost theory that will be adapted is the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). This is one of the three classic models of persuasion, and is used in communication discourse as a theory of understanding. The theory of reasoned action was developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in 1967 and was derived from previous research that began as the theory of attitude. The theory aims to explain the relationship between attitudes and behaviors within human action. TRA is used to predict how individuals will behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioral intentions. An individual's decision to engage in a particular behavior is based on the outcomes the individual expects will come as a result of performing the behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1981).

According to the theory, human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: beliefs about the likely outcomes of the behavior and the evaluations of these outcomes (behavioral beliefs), beliefs about the normative expectations of others and motivation to comply with these expectations (normative

beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior and the perceived power of these factors (control beliefs). In their respective aggregates, behavioral beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior; normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm; and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control. In combination, attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of a behavioral intention. As a rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be the person's intention to perform the behavior in question. Finally, given a sufficient degree of actual control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises. Intention is thus assumed the immediate antecedent of behavior. However, because many behaviors pose difficulties of execution that may limit volitional control, it is useful to consider perceived behavioral control in addition to intention. To the extent that perceived behavioral control is truthful, it can serve as a proxy for actual control and contribute to the prediction of the behavior in question.

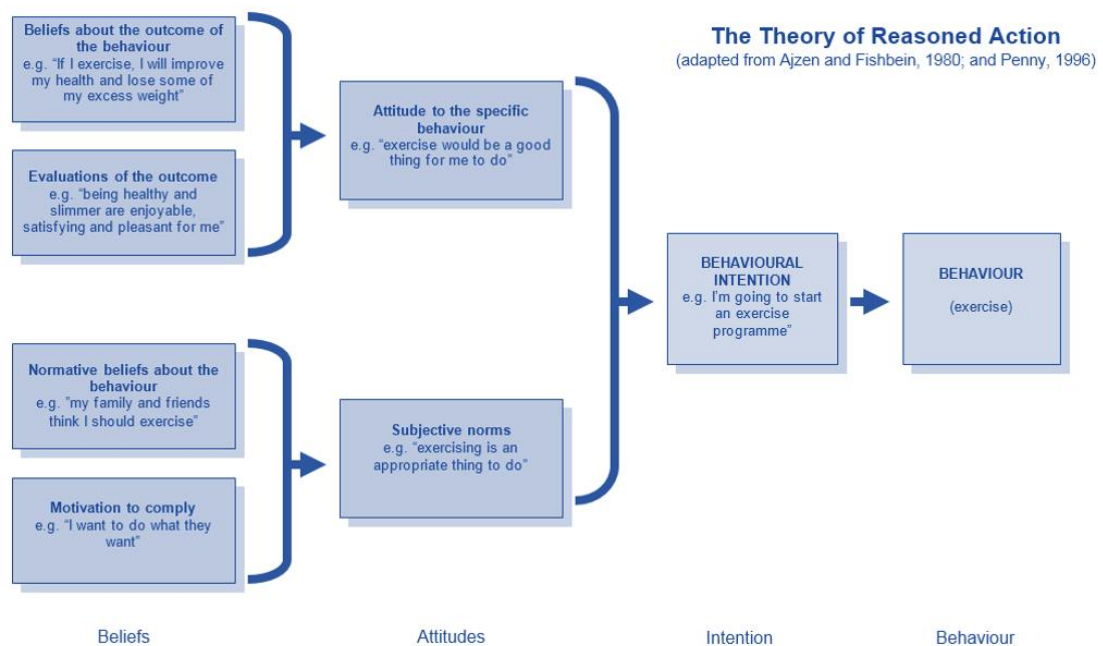


Figure 1 The Theory of Reasoned Action

Interventions designed to change behavior can be directed at one or more of its determinants: attitudes, subjective norms, or perceptions of behavioral control. Changes in these factors should produce changes in behavioral intentions and, given adequate control over the behavior, the new intentions should be carried out under appropriate circumstances. Because attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are assumed to be based on corresponding sets of beliefs, behavioral interventions must try to change the beliefs that, according to the theory, ultimately guide performance of the behavior. It is important to realize, however, that this explanatory function is associated only with salient beliefs or, to use the currently favored term, beliefs that are readily accessible in memory. Pilot work is required to identify accessible behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Respondents are given a description of the behavior and are asked a series of questions designed to elicit accessible beliefs. The responses can be used to identify personal accessible beliefs, i.e., the unique beliefs of each research participant, or to construct a list of modal accessible beliefs, i.e., a list of the most commonly held beliefs in the research population. Subjective norms are influenced by perceptions of the beliefs of those around such as parents, friends, colleagues, partners, etc. According to the TRA, this has a sense or belief about whether or not these individuals and groups would approve or disapprove of the behavior. However, there is also a need to factor in how motivated the people are to comply with their views. This can vary from one situation to another.

TRA has been applied to redefine the brand loyalty. According to the theory of reasoned action, the antecedents of purchase behavior are attitudes towards the purchase and subjective norm. In 1998, Ha conducted a study to investigate the relationships among several antecedents of unit brand loyalty (UBL) by introducing TRA. Consumers are brand loyal when both attitude and behavior are favorable. In his study, Ha developed a table indicating 8 combinations of customers' brand loyalty based on their loyalty on 3 variables – attitude towards the behavior, subjective norm, and purchase behavior is loyal. According to Ha, marketing managers should not be discouraged by a temporary disloyalty and need to strive for

grabbing brand loyalty when customers are showing loyalty to two of the three variables, but they need to re-diagnose their customers' brand loyalty when customers are showing loyalty to only one of them. The main focus should be pointed at either enhancing the consumer's attitude toward their brand or adjusting their brand to the social norms (Lyong Ha, 1998).

In 1985, Ajzen extended TRA to what he refers as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). This involves the addition of one major predictor—perceived behavioral control. This addition was introduced to account for times when people have the intention to conduct the behavior, but the actual behavior is disillusioned because of subjective and objective reasons. In the theory of planned behavior, the attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control have "important although differently weighted effects on a person's intention to behave."

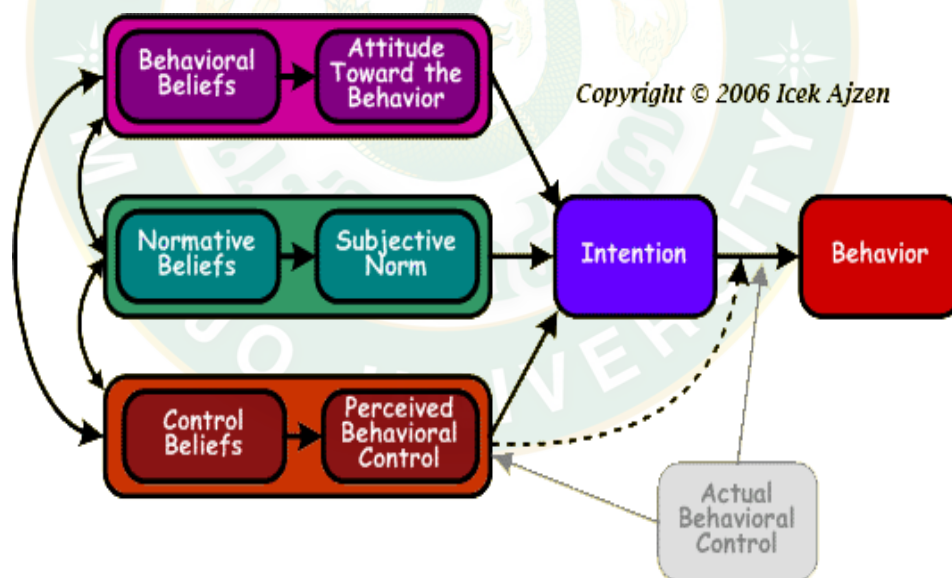


Figure 2 Planned Behavior Model (Icek Ajzen, 1985)

This theory has been applied to studies of the relations among beliefs, attitudes, behavioral intentions and behaviors in various fields such as advertising, public relations, advertising campaigns and healthcare. The theory states that

attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, together shape an individual's behavioral intentions. To understand behavioral intent, which is seen as the main determinant of behavior, the TRA looks at a person's attitudes towards that behavior as well as the subjective norms of influential people and groups that could influence those attitudes while the theory of planned behavior suggests that people are much more likely to intend to enact certain behaviors when they feel that they can enact them successfully. Increased perceived behavioral control is a mix of two dimensions: self-efficacy and controllability. Self-efficacy refers to the level of difficulty that is required to perform the behavior, or one's belief in their own ability to succeed in performing the behavior. Controllability refers to the outside factors, and one's belief that they personally have control over the performance of the behavior, or if it is controlled by externally, uncontrollable factors. If a person has high-perceived behavioral control, then they have an increased confidence that they are capable of performing the specific behavior successfully.

Each judgment and feeling occurring at the transaction level helps to define and characterize how a person views and comes to understand for himself or herself what a service should be. Parasuraman et. al. (1988) viewed VS as only being transaction specific, but others have suggested that judgments made regarding Quality of Experience lead to and directly influence Overall Satisfaction, which influences individual's Destination Selection Intentions. The stronger the visitor's psychological outcome, the more influence it has on their behavioral intentions (Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003).

Motivational theories will also be adapted in this study and the first of these is the Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Many other theorists tried to explain the importance of the human resources approach and one of these individuals was Abraham Maslow (1943). In order to get employees to work, Maslow tried to understand what motivates people. Maslow came up with five needs that need to

be satisfied at one stage before moving on to another stage. Maslow felt that needs vary from person to person and those individuals want their need fulfilled.

Physiological Needs. The first level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is physiological, which means that physical needs such as food and water need to be met before moving to the next level. If workers do not make enough money to buy food and water, then it will be hard for them to continue working.

Safety Needs. The second level is called safety. Workers need to be in a safe environment and know that their bodies and belongings will be protected. If workers do not feel secure, then they will find it hard to work efficiently. According to Maslow's basic theoretical premise, these individuals will have a harder time worrying about needs at the higher levels unless they can overcome the inherent lack of safety within these jobs.

Love, Affection, and Belongingness Needs. The third level is called love, affection, and belongingness needs. Maslow believed that if an individual met the basic physiological and safety needs, then that individual would start attempting to achieve love, affection, and belongingness needs next, "The person will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in the person's group, and the person will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal." Maslow, A. H. (1943). Maslow believed that organizations would have better worker retention and satisfaction if they kept their employees in a cohesive environment. Furthermore, if a worker feels isolated or ostracized from their environment, then he or she would feel less motivated to work, which will lead to a decrease in overall productivity.

Esteem Needs. The fourth level is called esteem, and is represented by two different sets of needs according to Maslow. First, individuals are motivated by the "desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom." (Maslow, 1943). Maslow goes on to discuss a second subset of esteem needs, "we have what we may call the desire for

reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), recognition, attention, importance or appreciation.” (Maslow, 1943). While Maslow originally separated these two lists from each other, they clearly have more in common than not. If employees do not feel that their input is valued by the organization, they will seek out other places of employment that will value their input, because humans have an intrinsic need to be appreciated for their efforts.

Self-Actualization Needs. The fifth level is called self-actualization, and it is the hardest to attain. Self-actualization “refers to the desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for a person to become actualized through potentials of the individual. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming.” Maslow goes on to explain, Maslow felt that if individuals can have their needs met in order of the levels, then they would be both motivated and seek opportunities to excel.

Overall, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs helps us understand how to motivate workers to strive for more in the organization. Hence, communication is very important, because we need to understand what our employees need in order to motivate them to work more proficiently and productively.

Secondly, the Frederick Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory. The original notion of Frederick Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory was the traditional perspectives on motivation, like Maslow’s, only looked at one side of the coin—how to motivate people. Herzberg and his original colleagues Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. S. (1959), *The Motivation to Work* theorized that what ultimately motivated individuals to work were not necessarily the same factors that led to demotivation at work. In Herzberg’s worldview, motivation on the job should lead to satisfied workers, but he theorized that satisfaction and dissatisfaction were not opposite ends of one continuum. Instead, he predicted that the factors that lead to positive job attitudes (and thus motivation) were different from the factors that lead to negative job attitudes (and thus demotivation). For the purposes of his theory, he called the factors that led to positive job attitudes motivators and those factors that

led to negative job attitudes hygiene factors. The basic motivators and hygiene factors are listed in Table 2. It can be observed that the motivators are all centered on ideas that are somewhat similar to the esteem needs and self-actualization needs of Abraham Maslow. On the other hand, the hygiene factors all examine the context of work.

| Motivators | Hygiene Factors |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Achievement | Policy and administration |
| Recognition | Micromanagement |
| Advancement | Relationships (Supervisor, Peers, & Subordinates) |
| The work itself | Job security |
| Responsibility | Personal life |
| Potential for promotion | Work conditions |
| Potential for personal growth | Status |
| Salary | |

Figure 3 Motivators and Hygiene Factors (Herzberg, 1959)

Managers were urged to create a “sense of satisfaction” among their subordinates by showing interest in the employees’ personal success and welfare to have a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, under the management theories that will be adapted in this study are the Systems Theory, which is a set of interrelated parts that function as a whole to achieve a common purpose. There are 4 components under the system approach: 1) inputs; 2) a transformation process; 3) outputs; and the 4) feedback. A system functions by acquiring inputs from the external environment, transforming them in some way, and discharging outputs back to the environment. This includes how persons interact with their environment. Systems are interrelated parts or

subsystems constituting an ordered whole. Each subsystem influences all other parts and whole system. This is useful for developing holistic view of persons in the environment. It enhances understanding of interactions between micro-macro levels of organization and further enriches contextual understanding of behavior.

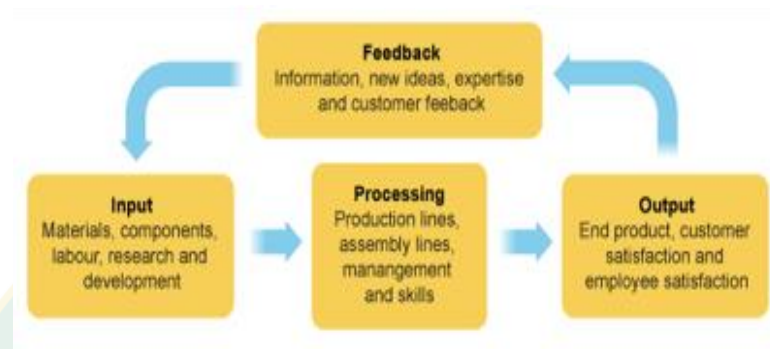


Figure 4 The Systems Approach Diagram (Daft, 1991)

The inputs are the material, human, financial, or information resources used to produce goods or services while the transformation process is management's use of production technology to change the inputs into outputs. Outputs on the other hand include the organization's products and services. Moreover, feedback is the knowledge of the results that influence the selection of the inputs that influence the next cycle of the process while the environment surrounding the organization includes the social, political, and economic force.

System approach to the rural development inevitably leads to an analysis of a multi-functionality of agriculture and to a conception of sustainable livelihoods. The concept of sustainable livelihoods emphasizes a development of needs and priorities of local people (Šimková, 2014). System approach to rural development management leads to the concept of Integrated Quality Management (IQM) of rural tourist destinations. According to this concept, improving quality in tourist destinations is an essential requirement in satisfying tourists' needs, in enhancing competitiveness of the tourism industry, and in ensuring balanced and sustainable tourism development (Šimková, 2014).

What does IQM means to tourist destinations in practice? According to Šimková (2014), tourist destination including rural destination should be:

1. “well organized, pulling together, and knowing what it wants to achieve through tourism ;
2. Concern about all the aspects of the visitors’ experience and the impact on local people and the environment;
3. Committed to monitoring and improvement as an on-going processes” (Šimková, 2014).

Moreover, Šimková (2014) further states the main roles of the IQM approach for rural tourist destinations are:

1. Cooperation on the strategy definition (clear strategy, effective communication, and partnership).
2. Delivering quality at all stages of the visitor experience (marketing and communication, quality of tourist services, information providing, local production, and gastronomy).
3. Application of effective quality management and monitoring processes (understanding visitor needs, monitoring impact on the local economy, community and the environment).

The modern tourists prefer visiting environmental-based tourism destinations, which aimed at looking for flexible vacations in natural attraction. According to Eadington and Smith (1992), agrotourism is the best alternative to be applied as it has all of qualifications mentioned above.

Another theory that will be adapted in this study is the Structural Functionalism, or, simply, functionalism, that is a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. Two theorists, Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton, were major

contributors to this perspective. Important concepts in functionalism include social structure, social functions, manifest functions, and latent functions. It is a perspective in sociology that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It asserts that human lives are guided by social structures, which are relatively stable patterns of social behavior. Social structures give shape to human lives - for example, in families, the community, and through religious organizations. Each social structure has social functions, or consequences for the operation of society as a whole.

A system is not defined by its capacity to predict or explain but by its internal logical structure; no system is necessarily useful in explanation though all explanations make use of systems. Any set of two or more variables and one or more rules of interaction is a system. Structural-functionalism meets these minimal requirements. Hence, it can be considered one of the several forms of systems analyses. It focuses upon the relationship between structures that produce functions facilitating the achievement of some goal.

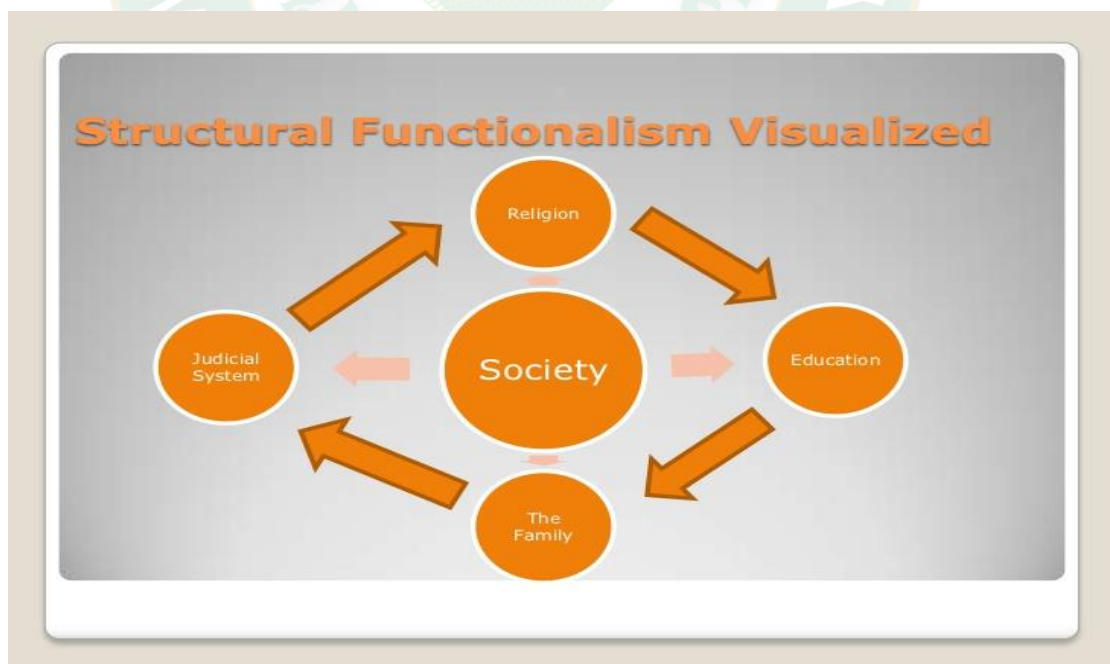


Figure 5 Structural Functional Model (Merton, 1949)

Moreover, the Triple Bottom Line (TBC) is a form of corporate social responsibility dictating that corporate leaders tabulate bottom-line results not only in economic terms (costs versus revenue) but also in terms of company effects in the social realm, and with respect to the environment. There are two keys to this idea. First, the three columns of responsibility must be kept separate, with results reported independently for each. Second, in all three of these areas, the company should obtain sustainable results. The notion of sustainability is very specific. At the intersection of ethics and economics, sustainability means the long-term maintenance of balance. As elaborated by theorists including John Elkington, here is how the balance is defined and achieved economically, socially, and environmentally:

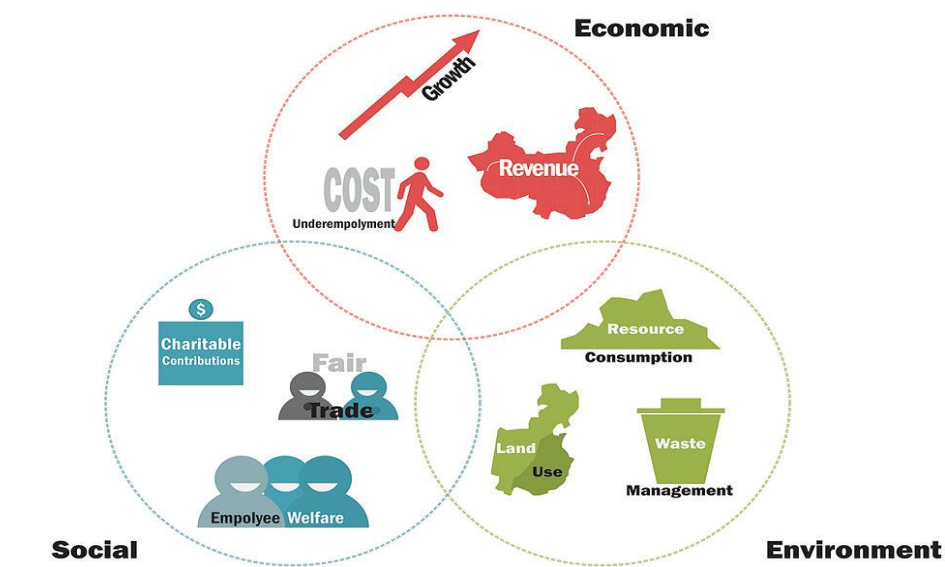


Figure 6 Trip Bottom Line Framework (Elkington, 2006)

Economic sustainability values long-term financial solidity over more volatile, short-term profits, no matter how high. Sustainability as a virtue means valuing business plans that may not lead to quick riches but that also avoid devastating losses. Corporations trying to get away with polluting the environment or other kinds of objectionable actions may, increase their bottom line in the short term. Money is saved on disposal costs. Looking further out, however, there is a risk that a later

discovery of the action could lead to catastrophic economic consequences (like personal injury lawyers filing huge lawsuits). This possibility leads immediately to the conclusion that concern for corporate sustainability in financial terms argues against the dumping.

Social sustainability values balance in people's lives and the way they live. As the imbalances grow, as the rich get richer and the poor get both poorer and more numerous, the chances that society itself will collapse in anger and revolution increase. It may indicate, however, that for a business to be stable over the long term, opportunities and subsequently wealth need to be spread out to cover as many people as possible.

The planet, environmental bottom line, or natural capital bottom line refers to sustainable environmental practices. A TBL company endeavors to benefit the natural order as much as possible or at the least do no harm and minimize environmental impact. A TBL endeavor reduces its ecological footprint by, among other things, carefully managing its consumption of energy and non-renewables and reducing manufacturing waste as well as rendering waste less toxic before disposing of it in a safe and legal manner.

Furthermore, this study also adapts basic functions of management wherein there is a search for better utilization of organizational resources and the principal management tasks of planning, organizing, leading and controlling human and other organizational resources that are needed to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. This addresses how managers and supervisors relate to their organizations in the knowledge of its goals, the implementation of effective means to get the goals accomplished and how to motivate employees to perform to the highest standard. This establishes and communicates the organization's vision, mission, values, practices, and strategies to the employees or to other interested partners. This also establishes and communicates the unit's policy and objectives with regard to quality. It establishes the short, medium and long – term detailed

objectives in order to meet the customer's needs, requirements, and expectations. It focuses on providing the value expected by the customers and other interested partners.

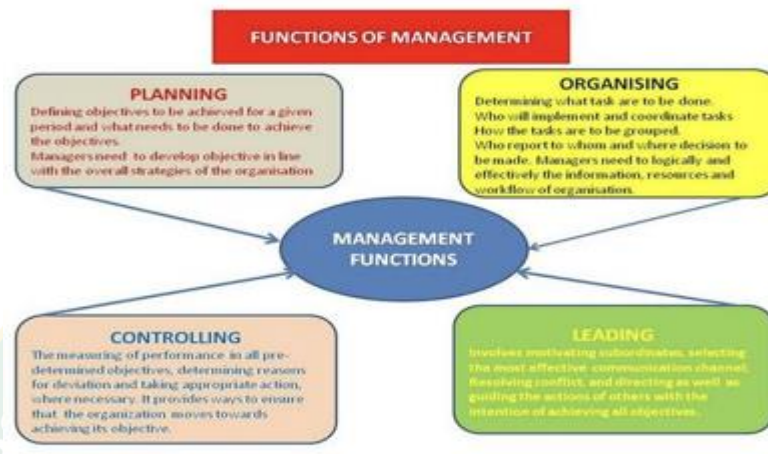


Figure 7 Management Functions (Daft, 1991)

To achieve effective tourism management, stakeholder's participation is often regarded as one of the most essential requirement. When stakeholders including local people participate in the destination management process, they will have a chance to gain benefits from the tourism in their locality, sharing their local knowledge and ideas and conserving local resources.

On the other hand, Sustainable Tourism Development and Strategic Management require the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and corrective measures whenever necessary.

The Strategic Stakeholder Management described by Berman et. al. (1999) as manager paying attention to key stakeholder relationships to maximize the stakeholder value over an uncertain period. Prudent management of firms' operating environments including relationships with their stakeholders is a part of proper

management in general. Therefore, good stakeholder management has clear instrumental value for the firms. Firms view their stakeholders as part of an environment that must be managed in order to assure revenues, profits, and ultimately to provide returns to stakeholders. In this formulation, stakeholder management is part of a company's strategy but in no way drives that strategy.

Two variants of the Strategic Stakeholder Management approach are the direct effects model and the moderation model. In the direct effects model, the attitudes and the actions of managers toward stakeholders are perceived as having a direct effect on the firm's financial performance, independent of the corporate strategy. In the moderation model, the managerial orientation toward stakeholders does influence the corporate strategy by moderating the relationship between strategy and financial performance.

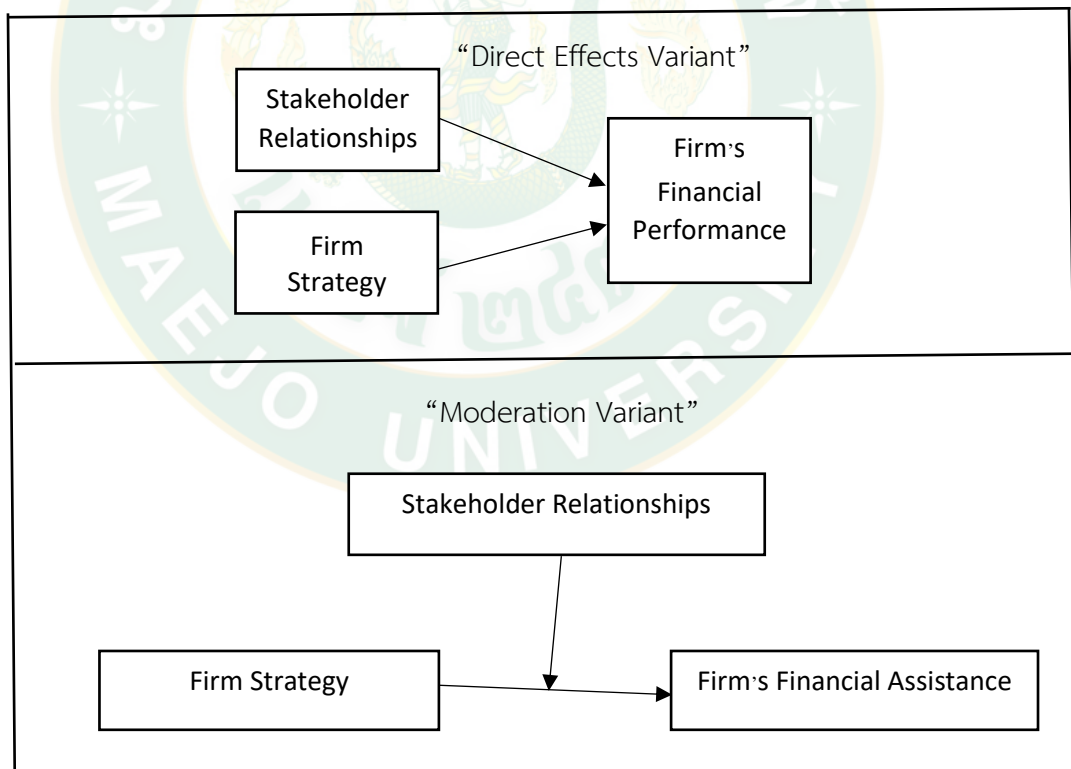


Figure 8 Strategic Stakeholder Management (Freeman, 1984)

Strategic management has been regarded as a fundamental issue that explains the success or failure of firms (Rumelt et al., 1994). This entails discovering why certain firms are successful while others are not in other words, identifying the factors of success. On top of this, since research into strategy is linked to firm operations, many tools that are now considered the staples of any analysis that have emerged from the firms themselves or from the strategic consultancies that have advised them (Pettigrew et al., 2002).

One of the management strategies applied for a successful business operation is the Management by Objectives, which relies on defining objectives for each employee, then compares, and directs their performance against the objectives, which have been set. It aims to increase the performance of the organization by matching organizational goals with the objectives of subordinates throughout the organization. Ideally, employees receive strong input to identify their objectives, time lines for completion, etc. MBO includes continuous tracking of the processes and providing feedback to reach the objectives. Peter Drucker first outlined MBO in 1954. According to Drucker, managers should avoid “the activity trap,” getting so involved in their day-to-day activities that they forget their main purpose or objective. One of the concepts of MBO was that instead of just a few top managers, all managers of the firm should participate in the strategic planning process in order to improve the implementability of the plan. Another concept of MBO is that managers should implement a range of performance systems, which are designed to help the organization to function well. Management by objectives also introduced the SMART method for checking the validity of the objectives which should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related (Drucker, 1954).

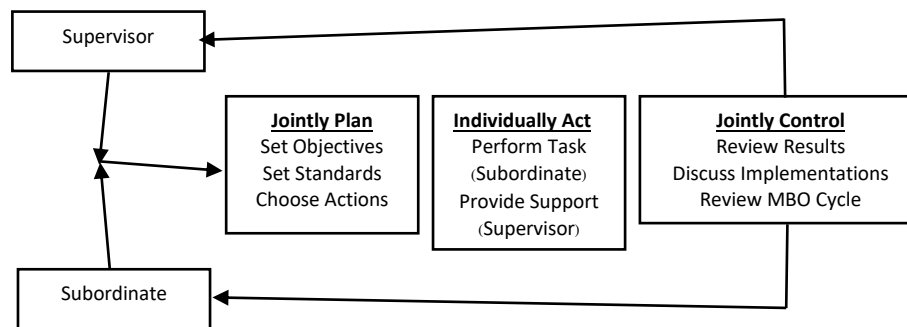


Figure 9 Management by Objectives (Drucker, 1954)

Consequently, Management Development is the process of ensuring the organization has the appropriate management competencies to meet its business objectives. This includes assessing existing skills and abilities and identifying actual and potential shortfalls and problem areas. Some approaches and techniques to Management Development are Mentoring, Coaching, Performance Appraisals, Self-Appraisals, Peer-Appraisals, Behavioral Observations Scales, Competency Assessments, Job Rotation, Professional Development, Training, and Education.

Another strategic management theory is the Theory E and Theory O, adapted from Beer and Nohria (2000).

Theory E: Theory E change strategies are aimed at realizing “Economic Value,” hence the “E.” In this “hard” approach to change, shareholder value is the only legitimate concern. Change only involves heavy use of economic incentives, drastic layoffs, downsizing, and restructuring.

Theory O: Theory O change strategies are aimed at improving the “Organization,” hence the “O.” Managers using Theory O believe that if they focus exclusively on the price of their stock, they might harm their organizations. In this “soft” approach to change, the goal is to develop Corporate Culture and human capability through individual and organizational learning. This theory is the process of changing, obtaining feedback, reflecting, and making further changes. Companies that follow this approach have a strong, long-held, commitment-based psychological contract with their employees.

Table 1 Theory of Change

| THEORY OF CHANGE | | |
|--|---|---|
| The purpose of the measures and changes | Theory (E) | Theory (O) |
| Goal | Maximizing economic value | Develop organizational capacity |
| Leadership | From top to bottom | In Collaboration |
| Change object | Management structure and systems | Organizational culture |
| Planning | Changes in planning and programming | Dramatic changes resulting from |
| Motivation | Financial incentives | The combination of the various incentives |
| The participation of consultants | Active. The use of technology and solutions developed by | Inactive. Employee involvement in the decision-making process |

Likewise, McKinsey 7-S model involves seven either interdependent factors, which are categorized as “hard,” or “soft” elements:

Table 2 McKinsey 7-S Model (Waterman Jr et al., 1980)

| Hard Elements | Soft Elements |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Strategy | Shared Values |
| Structure | Skills |
| Systems | Style |
| | Staff |

"Hard" elements are easier to define or identify and management can directly influence them: These are strategy statements; organization charts and reporting lines; and formal processes and IT systems.

"Soft" elements, on the other hand, can be more difficult to describe, and are less tangible and more influenced by culture. However, these soft elements are as important as the hard elements if the organization is going to be successful. The way

the model is presented in Figure 9 below depicts the interdependency of the elements and indicates how a change in one affects all the others.

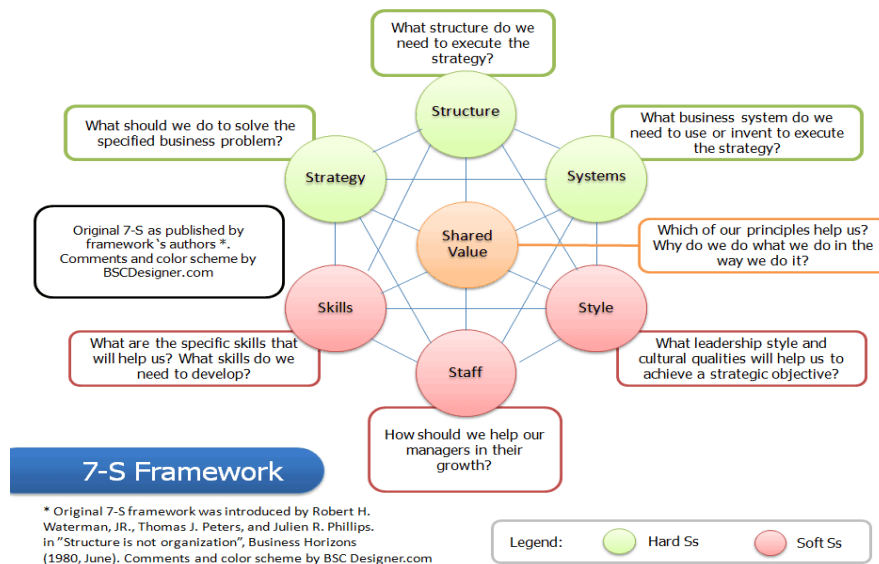


Figure 10 7-S Framework (Waterman Jr et al., 1980)

Strategy: the plan devised to maintain and build competitive advantage over the competition.

Structure: the way the organization is structured and who reports to whom.

Systems: the daily activities and procedures that staff members engage in to get the job done.

Shared Values: called "superordinate goals" when the model was first developed, these are the core values of the company that are evidenced in the corporate culture and the general work ethic.

Style: the style of leadership adopted.

Staff: the employees and their general capabilities.

Skills: the actual skills and competencies of the employees working for the company.

The Shared Values was placed in the middle of the model because it emphasizes that these values are central to the development of all the other critical elements. The company's structure, strategy, systems, style, staff, and skills all stem from why the organization was originally created, and what it stands for. The original vision of the company was formed from the values of the creators. As the values change, so do all the other elements (Cheal, 2014). The model is based on the theory that, for an organization to perform well, these seven elements need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing. So, the model can be used to help identify what needs to be realigned to improve performance, or to maintain alignment (and performance) during other types of change. Whatever the type of change – restructuring, new processes, organizational merger, new systems, change of leadership, and so on – the model can be used to understand how the organizational elements are interrelated, and so ensure that the wider impact of changes made in one area is taken into consideration.

Furthermore, the theory of competence-based strategic management is an important strategy in dealing with employees such as the Maejo University's learning centers. It is an integrative strategy theory that incorporates economic, organizational and behavioral concerns in a framework that is dynamic, systematic, cognitive and holistic (Sanchez and Heene, 2004). The core competency theory is the theory of strategy that prescribes actions to be taken by firms to achieve competitive advantage in the market place.

Marketing theory will also be adapted for this research. Marketing is the collection and analysis of data that helps companies sell products. This information helps companies make new products or change existing ones, set prices, choose distribution channels and create a brand or image in the marketplace. The data companies use marketing that include customer demographics, sales numbers, information on competitors and industry statistics.

Marketing encompasses all the functions of organizations that are aimed at formulating and providing utility and value to the end consumer. Successful

marketing is dependent on several factors including information regarding condition of the market, behavior of the target customers, knowledge regarding the major competitors present in the market, their abilities of managing the risk, ability of management to intelligently utilize organizational resources, ability of creating value in terms of quality of product and prices offered.

Marketing is a primary management function, which organizes and directs the aggregate of business activities involved in converting consumer purchasing power into effective demand for a specific product or service and in moving the product or service to the final consumer to achieve company's objectives. Effective performance of the various functions of marketing management demands the adoption of a particular business philosophy widely known as the marketing concept. The marketing concept holds that the key to achieving organizational goals consists of the company being more effective than its competitors in creating, delivering, and communicating customer value to its chosen target markets. New wave technology facilitates the widespread dissemination of information, ideas, and public opinion that enables customers to collaborate in value creation.

Technology drives globalization of political and legal, economy, and social culture landscape, which creates cultural paradoxes in the society. Technology also drives the rise of the creative market, which is more spiritual viewing the world. In order to stay relevant in the human-centric era, companies should always target the consumers as human beings. In marketing, the concept of being relevant begins with targeting the mind. This is how to position the product in the mind of the prospect relevantly. Companies should target consumer as a whole human who consists of mind, heart, and spirit.

According to Kotler et. al. (2006), marketing mix is the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market. It is the set of controllable tactical marketing tools: product, price, promotion, and place that the firm blends to produce the response the company wants in the target market. In

addition, marketing mix used by a particular firm will vary according to its resources, market conditions, and changing needs of clients.

The marketing mix strategy for the promotion of agro-tourism concept is as follows:

1) Product – the product in agro-tourism is seeing, believing, and ultimately experiencing. This experience is unique and unmatched. The experience of climbing a tree, buffalo riding in the pond and enjoying the sugarcane juice in the field itself are unique and none of the million dollar tourist centers can create and offer such experiences.

2) Price

a. Customer segment pricing – domestic and foreign tourists could be priced differently as the capacity to pay is different.

b. Location pricing – pricing in agro-tourism depends upon location and importance. Agro-tourism, which just offers agriculture and rural life as an attraction, can charge normal price. Whereas, agro-tourism spots which are very close to established tourism centers like temple, towns, hill stations, around big cities can go far little bit higher price due to added value.

c. Time pricing – agro-tourism units can charge higher during peak season and less during the rest of the year.

3) Place – the place where tourists are accommodating also influences the pricing. If the tourists are accommodated in villages itself with the farmer, the price can be less whereas accommodation in farms cost high.

4) Promotion – promotion of agro-tourism and strategic alliance can take place at three levels:

a. Alliance with airlines, tour operators and foreign embassies – this alliance brings foreign tourists and upper middle class urban tourists into agro-tourism fold. It may not be possible for individual farmers to take up this task.

b. Alliance with hotel industry – large number of domestic tourists can be attracted through alliance with the hotel industry. The hotel can be used to promote the agro-tourism concept.

c. Promotion by agro-tourism units – the promotion takes place through word of mouth and local publicity given by the agro-tourism units.

5) Policies – some of the policy initiatives of urban government would surely help in the promotion of agro-tourism

6) Positioning – ultimately agro-tourism concept has to be positioned in the minds of tourists.

7) People – all people that are directly or indirectly involved in the consumption of a service are an important part of the Extended Marketing Mix. Knowledge workers, employees, management, and consumers often add significant value to the total product or service offering.

8) Process – procedure, mechanisms and flow of activities by which services are consumed (customer management processes) are an essential element of the marketing strategy.

9) Physical Evidence – the ability and environment in which the service is delivered. Both tangible goods that help to communicate and perform the service, and the intangible experience of existing customers and the ability of the business to relay that customer satisfaction to potential customers.

Another Marketing Strategy is the 5 C's of Marketing Strategy that provides a quick checklist on some important things to consider when designing a marketing strategy:

1. Customer Needs: What needs from which clients do we seek to satisfy?
2. Company Skills: What special competencies do we possess to meet those needs?
3. Competition: Who competes with us in meeting those needs?
4. Collaborators: Who should we enlist to help us and how do we motivate them?
5. Context: What cultural, technological, and legal factors limit what is possible?

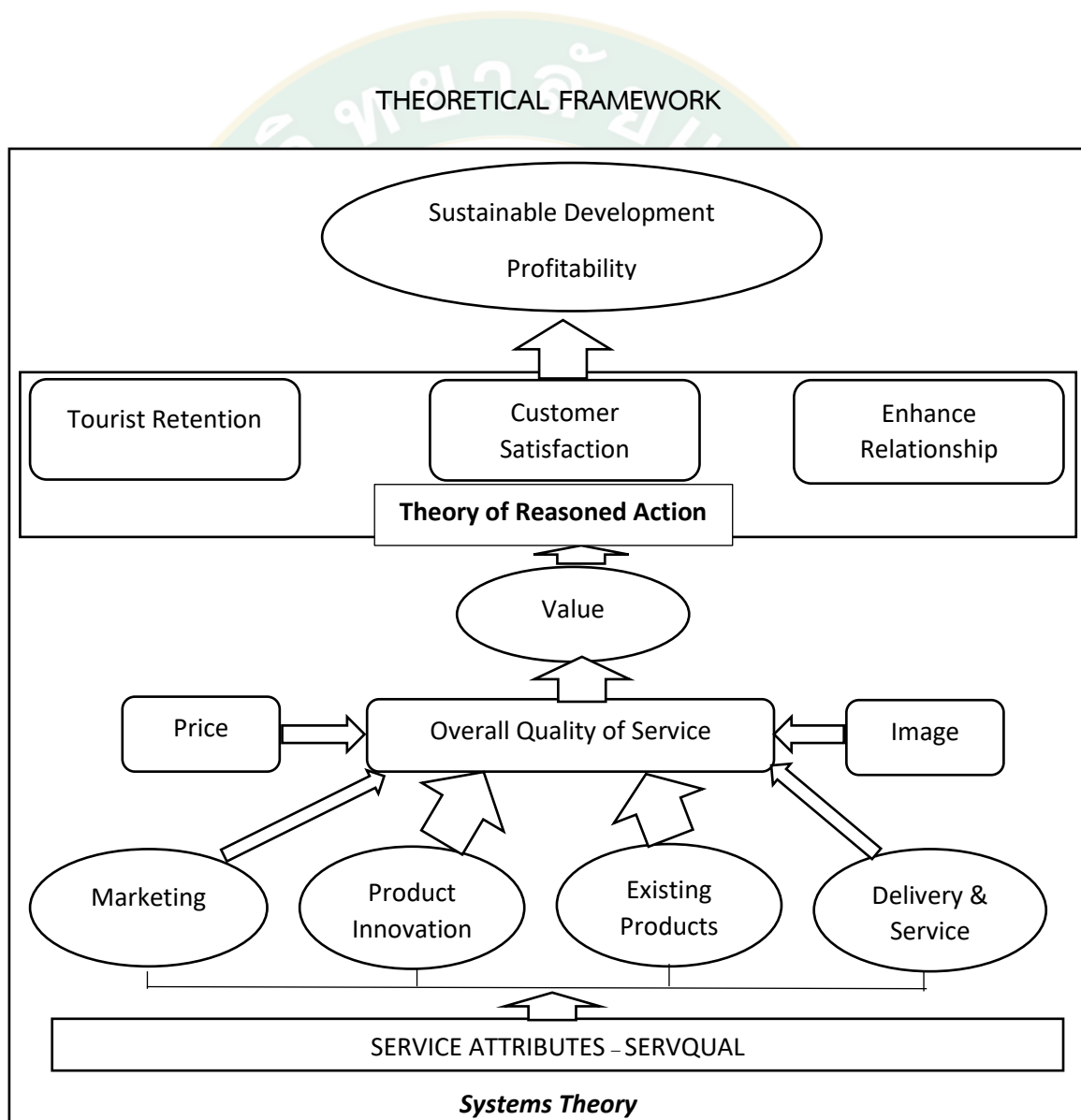


Figure 11 Theoretical Framework

This study is a descriptive research, which seeks to evaluate the potential of sustainability of Maejo University's agrotourism, the learning center's service quality, tourist satisfaction, and behavioral intentions through SERVQUAL performance indicators.

Hence, it aims to examine the process of how these attitudes are formed, the psychological processes that underlie them, and their behavioral consequences, improvement in guest satisfaction and service quality that is assumed to result in increased profits for businesses and organizations operating in service sectors. Certainly, based on studies mentioned, tourists' satisfaction provides the basis for the success of the agrotourism destinations. This also has shown to be a good predictor of future purchase behavior and is the best indicator of company's profitability. Tourist retention means keeping tourist without losing them to competitors. Hence, tourist's satisfaction should be the ultimate goal of all businesses. In this study, tourist's satisfaction will be determined thru the SERVQUAL service attributes. Further determination of the relationship in the quality of service, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intention will be tested. Feedback will then be requested from tourists. It will allow the management to measure tourist satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Perceptions of the overall management aspect of the learning centers will also be evaluated through the heads of the different learning centers. The respondents will be asked questions pertaining to the management strategy being applied by the heads of the different learning centers that leads to the quality of service rendered by the employees to their tourists.

RELATED LITERATURE

Tourism industry is becoming one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Considering its significance in the economy of many countries, the research in tourism is growing as well. Achieving to develop tourism industry, tourist satisfaction becomes a considerable goal for many countries.

Related and similar opinions described by Lobo et. al. (1999), whereas the development of agrotourism will offer opportunities for local farmers to increase their earnings and improve their lives as well as sustain their operations. The opinions can be detailed as such: (1) it educates people or society about agriculture and contribute to local economic, (2) it decrease the flood of urbanization as people are able to get jobs and earnings from agrotourism, (3) it promotes local products, and regional in marketing effort and create value added and direct-marketing and stimulate economic activity as well as give benefit to society where agro-tourism developed.

The history of agrotourism dates back in the late 1800's when people began leaving the city to come to farms to visit relatives for short stays to escape the city life. After the invention of the automobile in the 1920's, it became easier for people to travel to the rural areas. In the 1930's and 1940's, the Great Depression and World War II gave rise to the first significant interest in rural recreation. In the 1960's and 1970's, horseback riding and farm petting zoos became popular. In the late 1980's and 1990's, farm vacations, overnight stays at bed and breakfast, and commercial farm tours became popular. Today, the demand continues to grow for agrotourism.

The promotion of agrotourism in Thailand officially started in 1995. At present, more than 400 agricultural villages that have been promoted as agrotourism destinations and a number of potential communities are currently being developed for agro-tourism (Maneenetr, 2014). In the study conducted by Esichaikul and Chansawang (2016) on agritourists visiting Thailand and their motivation, research findings on travel behavior showed that the travel purpose of the majority of respondents were to visit agro tourist attractions (72.75%). 32.33% of respondents had travelled for 4-5 days in Thailand and 49.88% had spent 1-3 days in agritourist attractions. 57.97% of the respondents arranged their own trips independently while 12.70% travelled with study tour. 34.87%, 21.02%, 13.86% and 12.02% travelled with friends, family, spouse, and travel alone respectively. Most of them (34.87%) preferred to stay in homestays, whereas 24% and 13.16% stayed in budget hotels

and farm stays respectively. They travelled in private cars (39.03%), tour coaches (22.40%), and rental vans (21.25%). They preferred to visit flower/fruit demonstration farms and flower/fruit/herbal gardens the most. Their major reason to visit agro tourism attractions was the beautiful nature and fruit/flower gardens. The results of the factor analysis showed that two dimensions of motivation among these agrotourists included “agricultural experiences and skills” and “rest and relaxation” (Esichaikul and Chansawang, 2016).

In another study of Pichayakul (2014) on tourist’s interest to participate in agrotourism in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the researcher found out that from the 42 proposed agrotourism activities, there were 38 activities that more than half of the informants agreed that they would like to participate in. It is noted that there were 3 activities that every informant agreed to participate in which consisted of: 1) tasting agricultural food products; 2) buying chemical free agricultural products and 3) eating local style food. The other activities that more than 90% of the informants were interested in participating were: 1) participating in hands-on manufacturing food process in factories; 2) walking on and read signs and 3) riding horse. There were however, agrotourism activities that less than 50% of the informants would like to participate in which were: 1) playing or taking pictures at photo spot; 2) buying souvenirs; 3) buying well-known brand name of herbal medicines; and 4) seeing exhibition, respectively (Pichayakul, 2014).

There is a clear evidence based on the researches mentioned above on the potential of Thailand particularly Chiang Mai in terms of agrotourism. Since agriculture is one of the most important occupation in Thailand including Chiang Mai hence, there is need to do some innovative activities in the agriculture, which will help the local people. This study is a descriptive research that seeks to evaluate the potential of sustainability of Maejo University agrotourism learning centers. The purpose of this study is to evaluate tourism sustainability in terms of service quality through the SERVQUAL model. The researcher would like to point out the opportunity to create Maejo University’s abundant agricultural resources with its

strength of being the leading and become a high quality agrotourism destination in Chiang Mai and Thailand as a whole.

SERVICE QUALITY

A service is produced by the integration of various tangible and intangible components. This involves several employees working with a purpose to satisfy the varying wants of potential customers (guests, visitors, travelers, internal customers, and so on). Hence, a service system can be conceptualized as a production system in which various inputs are processed, transformed, and value-added to produce outputs, which provide benefits to customers (Christou, 1999). Evaluations of service quality embrace not only the service delivered, but also the way it is delivered. Thus, Gronroos (1988) suggested that there are two types of performance quality to evaluate technical quality and functional quality. The former refers to the performances that the customers receive, whereas the latter refers to the process of service delivery. Similarly, Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982) proposed the following three quality dimensions: physical quality, corporate quality, and interactive quality. It states that physical quality relates to the technical aspects of the service, the latter two dimensions emphasize the corporate image of the service organization and the interactive processes that occur between the hosts and the tourists.

In a study carried out by Johns and Howard (1998) points out that the word 'service' has many meanings which lead to some confusion in the way the concept is defined in management literature, service could mean an industry, a performance, an output or offering or a process. The researcher further argues that services are mostly described as 'intangible' and their output viewed as an activity rather than a tangible object, which is not clear because some service outputs have some substantial tangible components like physical facilities, equipment, and personnel. According to Johns and Howard (1998), a service could mean an industry, a performance, an output, an offering or a process and it is defined differently in various service industries. The differences in service industries are based on the

characteristics of service which include; intangibility, heterogeneity, perishability and inseparability. Intangibility means there is no physical product, nothing to be touched, tasted, smelled, or heard before being purchased and this therefore means that it is difficult for consumer to understand the nature of what they receive. This means that service providers must try to determine the level of intangibility of services and try to include tangible elements that could aid understanding of expectation from the consumer's perspective (Beamish and Ashford, 2007). Heterogeneity means that, difference which comes in at the level of delivery of service due the difference in human behavior of those offering services and the consumer. This is why it is difficult to determine the quality and level of service provided since consumers and service providers are different, the same consumer could act differently with the same service provider (Beamish and Ashford, 2007). Perishability means that, since services are produced and consumed at the same time implying they cannot be stored for later usage. If the service is not used then, it cannot be used again. This does not however hold in every service industry (Beamish and Ashford, 2007). Inseparability means services are consumed as they are purchased. An example is seen when a consumer is making a telephone call, he/she consumes the service while paying the charges. This implies that the consumer is involved in the production and delivery of the service meaning he/she takes special note of what is actually produced by the service provider (Beamish and Ashford, 2007).

Managing perceived service quality means that the paramount concern of tourism service providers should be to create consistency between the expected service and the perceived service to meet the tourists' expectations. To minimize the gap between the expected service and the perceived service, those people in charge of traditional marketing activities do their best to keep and fulfill their promises. It should be noted that their promises should be achievable. Hence, tourism service providers should try to provide the tourists with such a high level of quality that it be beyond the tourists' perceived expectations. In this case, the visitors are satisfied and

amazed by the quality of the perceived service, which creates a “wow” syndrome among them (Christou, 2015).

In this study, service quality can be defined as the tourist’s expectation for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perception of the service received. Tourist’s expectation serves as a foundation for evaluating service quality because, quality is high when performance exceeds expectation and quality is low when performance does not meet their expectation (Asubonteng et al., 1996). Expectation is viewed in service quality literature as desires or wants of tourist i.e., what they feel a service provider should offer rather than would offer (Parasuraman et. al., 1988). Perceived service is the outcome of the tourist’s view of the service dimensions, which are both technical and functional in nature (Grönroos, 1984). If the tourist's perception of service quality is the same as the expectation, then the tourist will be satisfied. If the tourist's perception of service quality is greater than expected, then the tourist will be very satisfied. If the tourist's perception of service quality is lower than the expectation, then the tourist will be dissatisfied. Lewis and Booms (1983) regard service quality as an assessment of whether the service delivered is compatible with the needs and requirements of customers. Parasuraman et. al. (1985) study considered service quality to be the overall evaluation of a specific service delivered by a firm because of comparing the firm’s performance with a customer’s general expectations of how firms in that industry should perform.

Since the development of service quality theory (SERVQUAL) by Parasuraman et. al. (1985), service quality has been widely researched and applied in different types of industries. Service quality has been defined as how well a consumer’s needs are met and how well the services delivered their expectations (Kotler et al., 2014). Moreover, service quality is the consumers’ evaluation of the perceived quality, instead of their satisfaction with an incident or transaction (Oliver, 2010b). Based on the tourism literatures, many researchers have suggested that service quality performance could be an appropriate measurement to test tourist satisfaction, because the tourist is likely to be satisfied when a product or service

performance is at a desired level (Oliver, 2010b; Zeithaml et al., 1993). In SERVQUAL multiple-item scales, five dimensions are identified to measure service quality, including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. In the tourism sector, service quality can be regarded as the tourist's judgment about a product or service's overall excellence or superiority (Fuchs and Weiermair, 2004; Lee et al., 2000). Perera and Vlosky (2013) also indicated that service quality is an important antecedent of tourist satisfaction. They argued that service quality highly affects a tourist's perceived value of a destination and behavioral involvement in the visit.

Parasuraman (1985) developed the SERVQUAL model in which service quality is defined as the degree of discrepancy between a customer's normative expectation of a service and his or her perceptions of service performance. The SERVQUAL model is a widely utilized instrument with demonstrated usefulness that can be used comparatively for benchmarking purposes (Bryceland and Curry, 2001). In addition, Parasuraman et al. (1985) originally acknowledged 10 dimensions of service quality, which include tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, competency, communication, credibility, security, access, courtesy, and understanding of the customer. Parasuraman et al. (1988) subsequently narrowed the attributes into five dimensions by means of factor analysis: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

When the SERVQUAL scale was developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985), their aim was to create a generic instrument for measuring service quality across a broad range of service categories. Ladhari (2009) made a critical evaluation of the last 20 years of quality and satisfaction studies and research in which he concludes that SERVQUAL's original scale should not be kept in all contexts, as it is better to adapt it or even transform it according to the industry-specific context in which the research is taking place. This implies that one generic measure of service quality is inappropriate for all services and perceived service quality is contingent upon the type of service offered (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007). Following the advancement of

service quality measurement, some tourism scholars have suggested that the role of service quality should be addressed when investigating the problem of tourist dissatisfaction and when attempting to attract new tourists or secure repeat visitors. Tourism researchers have acknowledged that providing high-quality service is one of the most important factors for success (Atilgan et al., 2003). As such, it follows that service quality assessment can determine the performance of a service provider in fulfilling the requirements of tourists according to their perceptions (Mohamed, 2007).

Dimension definition of each service quality according to Zeithaml et al. (2000):

1. “Reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
2. Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
3. Assurance is the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
4. Empathy is the caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers.
5. Tangibles are the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication, materials.”

From the definitions above, it can be analyzed that the quality of service can distinguish one service company with other service companies that sell similar service products. Performance of quality of service (tangibility, empathy, reliability, assurance, responsiveness) to companies that produce services becomes an important aspect to demonstrate the competitive advantage and quality of the company. Out of the five service quality above, according to this literature review, the one with the widest scope is reliability, as it relates to the provision of services and the promised service accurately and accountably (related to aspects of service product, people as service providers, as well as the provision of services). All matters relating to empathy, responsiveness and assurance are concerned with people.

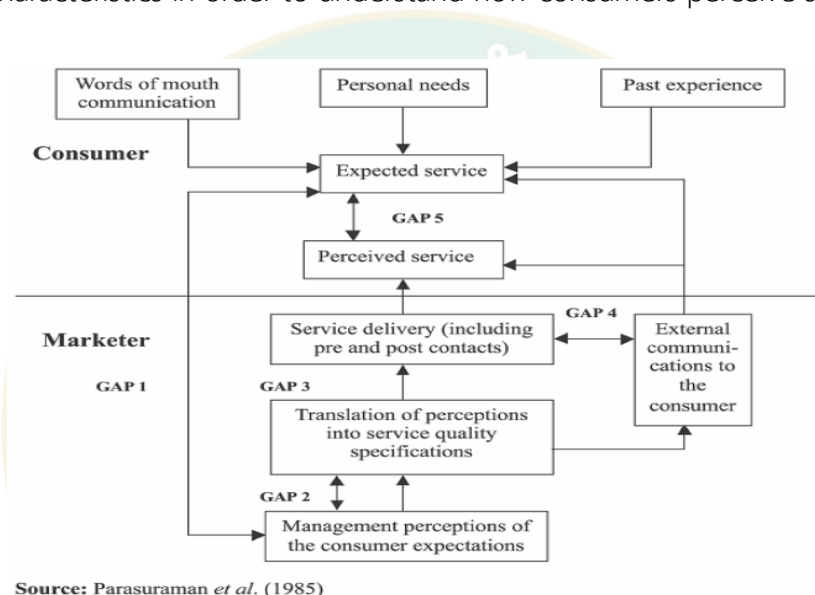
Tangibility is associated with physical evidence/physical manifestation that can be seen by the five senses. The examples of people related tangibility are appearance and body language.

Service quality in the tourism industry receives growing consideration (Hudson et al., 2004) and a majority of tourism studies use the SERVQUAL instrument to measure service quality. SERVQUAL has been utilized to measure service quality in different sectors of tourism industry such as sport tourism (Kouthouris and Alexandris, 2005), hotel (Ramsaran-Fowdar, 2007), restaurant (Qin and Prybutok, 2008), and airline tourism (Pakdil and Aydın, 2007). However, previous studies have shown that SERVQUAL does not cover all dimensions of the tourism services that are important to tourists (Akbaba, 2006; Briggs et al., 2007; Gilbert and Wong, 2003).

Apart from the five dimensions by Parasuraman et. al. (1988), scholars have debated the need for the sustainability dimension to be incorporated when measuring service quality in the context of tourism and the need to consider sustainability as one of the key factors that attract tourists to a tourism destination (Garcia-Falcon and Medina-Munoz, 1999). Tourists who have recently become more concerned about the environment are demanding environmental protection. These tourists are willing to pay additional sums of money to enjoy visiting an environmentally sustainable destination (Petrosillo et al., 2007). Dinan and Sargeant (2000) emphasized that sustainability in tourism refers to safeguarding the environment and local residents, while satisfying tourists and ensuring growth in the industry. However, as suggested by Lynn and Brown (2003), the positive influence of ecotourism can be realized only if proper management and monitoring are in place to avoid losses in biological diversity and prevent the exploitation of the local host. According to Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2003), poor quality of service delivery will build a reputation of not paying attention/treating customers well. On the other hand, reliability is the most important dimension for all consumers and focus on the improvement of the quality of service. While to Yee et al. (2008), employee

satisfaction significantly affects the quality of service and customer satisfaction, which in turn will affect the profit of the company.

According to Douglas and Connor (2003); Parasuraman et al. (1985), and Ladhari (2008), the intangible elements of a service (inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability) are the critical determinants influencing service quality perceived by a consumer. This means that a service must be well defined by the provider in terms of its characteristics in order to understand how consumers perceive service quality.



Source: Parasuraman et al. (1985)

Figure 12 Service Quality (Parasuraman et. al., 1985)

TOURIST SATISFACTION

One of the key elements of successful destination marketing is tourist satisfaction that influences the choice of destination and the decision to return (Buhalis, 2000). It is believed that in tourism, high service quality, and resulting satisfaction lead to positive word-of-mouth endorsements, referrals, and repeat visits, which ultimately affect the financial performance of suppliers associated with the tourism industry. Most tourism product providers, as well as destination management organizations, perform regular visitor satisfaction surveys. In other words, customer

satisfaction occurs when performance is higher than expected while dissatisfaction occurs when performance is lower than expected. Parasuraman et al. (1998) concluded that customers' satisfaction is led by perceived service quality and concluded that service quality is highly correlated with satisfaction and loyalty.

Tourist satisfaction with a destination, rather than with a facility is important to create repeat visits. The concept of loyalty has been recognized as one of the more important indicators of corporate success in the marketing literature (Oliver, 2010b). Devesa et al. (2010) provides evidence on the connection between satisfaction, loyalty, and profitability. On the other hand, Middleton Victor and Jackie (2001) stress that travel destinations can also be perceived as a product that can be resold (revisited) and recommended to others (friends and family who are potential tourists). Furthermore, in their study of the desirability of loyal tourists, Rufin et al. (2012) state that loyal visitors can be less price sensitive than the first time visitors can.

Organizations that consistently satisfy their customers enjoy higher retention levels and greater profitability due to increased customers' loyalty (Wicks and Roethlein, 2009). This is why it is vital to keep tourists satisfied, this can be done in different ways, and one way is by trying to know their expectations and perceptions of services offered by service providers. In this way, service quality could be assessed and thereby evaluating customer satisfaction.

Researchers further linked service quality to satisfaction by pointing out that when expected service is greater than perceived service, perceived quality is less than satisfactory and will tend towards totally unacceptable quality; when expected service equals perceived service, perceived quality is satisfactory; when expected service is less than perceived service, perceived quality is more than satisfactory and will tend towards ideal quality (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Many different theories have been developed in order to understand the process leading to consumer satisfaction, which affects attitudes and future consumption choices. These theories

generally describe some standard by which satisfaction is judged based on the perceived performance of the good or service (Yüksel and Yüksel, 2001). Among the various frameworks and theories describing consumer satisfaction is the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP) as developed by Oliver (1980). Oliver's model suggests that satisfaction is the result of differences in what a person expects to receive from a service transaction. This theory has become one of the most widely used and accepted methods describing the process of becoming satisfied and the influence satisfaction has on future consumption decisions (Yüksel and Yüksel, 2001; Tian-Cole et al., 2002). For example, before the consumption of a good or service occurs, a consumer already has expectations of anticipated benefits. These expectations are developed over time and as a result from previous experiences. Whether good or bad, expectations become the reference standard by which consumers judge the good or service. This standard, compared with their perception of how well a good or service performed, results in satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Satisfaction is experienced when expectations are met or exceeded (confirmation or positive disconfirmation) and dissatisfaction occurs when expectations fall short of what the consumer anticipated (negative disconfirmation). Any future decisions to re-experience the good or service will be influenced by the feelings of satisfaction that were derived from their consumptive experience (Yüksel and Yüksel, 2001; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003).

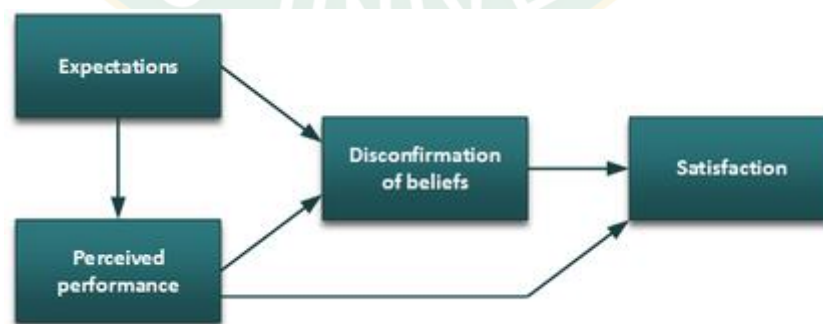


Figure 13 Expectancy Confirmation Paradigm (Oliver, 1977)

Customer satisfaction concepts has been transaction-specific, meaning it is based on the customer's experience on a particular service encounter (Cronin Jr and

Taylor, 1994) and also some think customer satisfaction is cumulative based on the overall evaluation of service experience (Jones and Suh, 2000). These highlight the fact that customer satisfaction is based on experience with service provider and the outcome of service. Customer satisfaction is considered an attitude (Yi, 1990). Furthermore, Yap and Kew (2007) found that both service quality and customer satisfaction have a positive effect on customer's behavioral intentions showing that both service quality and customer satisfaction have a crucial role to play in the success and survival of any business in the competitive market.

BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Behavioral intention is a function of both attitudes and subjective norms toward that behavior. However, the attitudes and subjective norms are unlikely to be weighted equally in predicting behavior. Depending on the individual and situation, these factors might have different impacts on behavioral intentions, thus a weight is associated with each of these factors. An intention is a plan or a likelihood that someone will behave in a particular way in specific situations whether or not they actually do so.

Nevertheless, revisit behavior is considered to be the most important manifestation of loyalty (Oliver, 2010b). The findings of many studies have suggested that it is important to consider all relevant aspects of consumer behavior that may be less prominent but nonetheless important indicators of loyalty in order to achieve a reliable assessment of customer loyalty (Chiou and Droge, 2006; Cronin et al., 2000). Based on the previous marketing researcher suggestion, Kotler et al. (2014) suggested two popular indicators: the intention to repurchase and the intention to provide positive recommendations in measuring the future behavioral intention construct. In tourism research, a similar approach is adopted, and the tourist loyalty intention is represented in terms of the intention to revisit the destination and the willingness to recommend it to friends and relatives. Research suggests that a link

exists between visitor satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003). For example, if a visitor or consumer is satisfied with their experience while at a site, they are more likely to become a repeat visitor and/or tell others about their experience by way of positive word-of-mouth advertising (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003).

Generally, there are two types of tourists that visit a site: First Time Visitors (FTV) and Repeat Visitors (RV). In order for a site to be successful, it is necessary to maintain a healthy balance between these two types of visitors (Lau and McKercher, 2004). Marketing research suggests that it is allegedly five times more expensive to reach a new customer than to maintain an existing one (Reid, 2002) as cited by Lau and McKercher (2004); and Tiefenbacher et al. (2000). This can be explained by the increased effort, difficulty, and money required in identifying potential visitors and finding ways to attract them to the destination through advertising, such as brochures, commercials, magazine ads, the web, social media sites, etc. Conversely, if visitor registries are used, visitors who have already been to a site can be easily identified for marketing purposes. These records facilitate more efficient marketing efforts because the visitor's contact information has already been obtained. Emails, coupons, and frequent visitor programs can be used to directly market to past visitors. These efforts may likely incentivize satisfied visitors to return to the site.

It is essential for destination managers to create an environment where FTV and RV are consistently satisfied. If a visitor is satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to become RV themselves and/or tell friends and family about their experience, which is the least expensive yet most powerful form of advertising available (Tiefenbacher et al., 2000). FTV and RV often times have differing motivations for visiting a destination and as a result, destinations offering a variety of activities and recreational opportunities are more likely to produce high levels of satisfaction within both groups (Lau and McKercher, 2004).

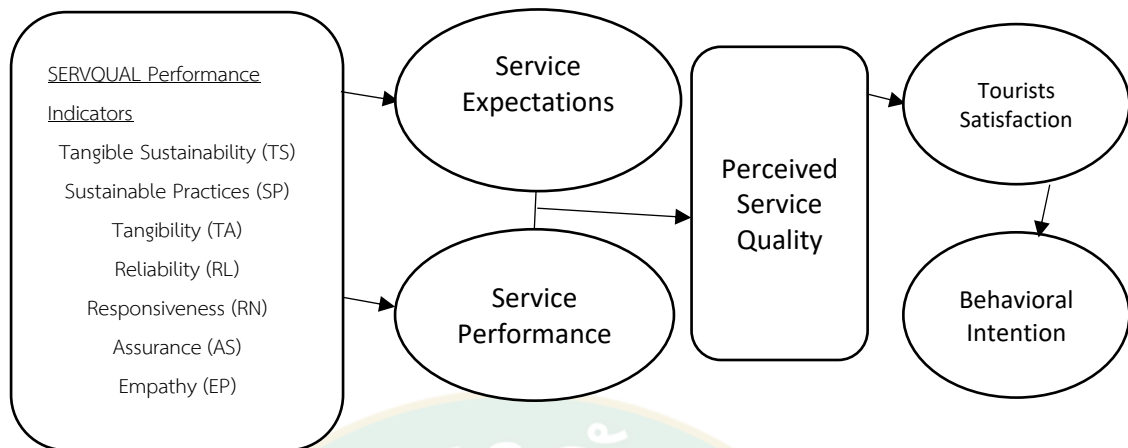


Figure 14 Relationship among Service Quality, Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intentions

The reason why Overall Satisfaction influences Destination Selection Intention is explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003). This theory assumes that since people are rational, they will use what information is available to them to make informed choices. A person's intention to act is a direct determinate of a desired behavior. In the context of tourism, if a tourist experiences overall satisfaction with a site then these feelings will become an influence upon their intention to return. Since intentions precede behavior, the tourist is likely to return to the site or at least provide favorable word-of-mouth advertising to friends and family about the site (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003).

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATION'S PERFORMANCE

Strategic management is the process and approach of specifying an organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve and attain these objectives, and allocating resources to implement the policies and plans (Muogbo, 2013). Strategic management is the process of examining both present and future environments, formulating the organization's objectives, implementing and controlling decisions focused on achieving these objectives in the present and future environments (Adeleke, 2008).

Furthermore, strategic management is the process of making decisions, planning, coordinating, and taking some actions by the top managers of a company in order to achieve set goals and objectives (Monday et. al., 2015). It is the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve the objectives. Decisions are of little use unless they are acted upon. Firms must take the necessary actions to implement their strategies.

Strategy is a very useful concept for an organization since it has many variations. Strategic planning is a road map for an organization, which helps to manage the organization. Strategic management helps an organization to determine its mission and objectives through creating and sustaining competitive advantage. Successful implementation of strategies requires effective change in an organization's culture and it is almost impossible to change an organization without a concentrated effort by management aimed at continuous improvement, open communication, and cooperation throughout the organization. Strategic management is a holistic management philosophy that strives for continuous improvement in all functions of the organization and it can be achieved only if the concept is fully utilized from the acquisition of resources to tourist's service. Strategy is a detailed plan for a business in achieving success. Since business is a high stake game, a poorly planned and executed strategic move could result in loss of millions of dollars, thousands of jobs or even bankruptcy of business. Thus, calls for strategic management in order to develop an effective strategy. Strategic management comprises of sets of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve the learning centers' objectives.

Strategic management is an on-going process that evaluates and controls the business and the industries. In which it is involved, assesses competitors, set goal and strategies to meet all existing and potential competitors. Reassesses each strategy to meet changed circumstances, new technology, new competitors, a new economic environment, or a new social financial or political environment (Muogbo, 2013).

According to Akong'o Dimba (2010), management of performance within organizations is widely accepted as being crucial in the achievement of various significant outcomes related to organizational success, including the productivity and quality of employees, their commitment and job satisfaction and consequently forms a key component of human resources management strategy and practice. In today's management practices, all business functions try to link their work methods and practices with the firm's strategy to achieve higher organizational performance. Organizational performance is described as an organization's ability to acquire and utilize its scarce resources and valuables or expeditiously as possible in the pursuit of its operational goals (Griffin, 2006).

Organizations are open systems operating in turbulent environment. They can also be conceived of as complex networks of relationships between employees and heads of different grades within and between teams. Globalization and its forces have also led to increased awareness and made customers to put pressure for better value products and services thus necessitating development of service quality strategies through the understanding of quality as perceived by the consumers of the services and products.

The globalization of travel and improved accessibility of previously remote tourist destinations are increasing competitive pressures for destination managers. Even though a tourist destination comprises several stakeholders on the supply side, tourists perceive it as a single entity. Buhalis (2000), "six A's" framework implies that visitor perception of overall destination quality is based on an assessment of individual products and services offered by a large number of tourism suppliers as well as the interactions of visitors to the employees and the local people. This multitude of contacts at the level of a tourist destination may increase the incidence of unpleasant experiences, which can lead to negative overall quality evaluations and visitor dissatisfaction. All stakeholders involved should therefore be fully aware of the consequences of quality perceptions for a destinations success. Understanding what drives visitor satisfaction represents a good basis for increasing visitor retention

and as such, important input for destination strategy development and management improvements.

Since quality in tourism is the result of a visitor's view of a bundle of service dimensions (Gronroos, 1984), his study's findings indicate that administrators have to pay attention to a wide range of destination attributes when managing destination offerings.

THAILAND AGROTOURISM

Tourism in Thailand has witnessed constant growth during the last decade. In 2015, international tourism arrivals reached 29.9 million, representing a growth of 20.44%, and international tourism receipts reached US\$ 21.4 million during January-June 2015 (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016). Being part of ASEAN Economic Community as a single economic community in 2015, ASEAN international tourist arrivals including Thailand became 107 million, representing a growth of 7-8% (ASEAN Economic Community, 2016). This creates tremendous tourism opportunities and competitiveness for Thailand by encouraging alternative tourism for international tourists. Agrotourism has been developed in Thailand because of its beautiful nature, a variety of agricultural products and rich agricultural ways of life.

Under the ASEAN Economic Community pillar, tourism is one of the priority sectors for integration in 2015. Tourism represents an important component of the economy of all ASEAN Member States especially in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand, where tourism accounts for more than 10% of GDP and contributes significant employment in their economies. According to the WTTC, in 2013, the ASEAN Member States generated US\$112.6 billion in tourism exports or foreign exchange earnings and \$294.4 billion in value added linked to the travel and tour operations, shopping, entertainment, transportation, and various other tourism-

related service occupations and productive sectors, accounting for 12.30% of regional GDP (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2016).

Thailand's agriculture expanded during the 1960's and 1970's as it had access to new land and unemployed labor. Between 1962 and 1983, the agricultural sector grew by 4.1% a year on average and in 1980; it employed over 70% of the working population. Agribusiness, both private and government owned expanded from the 1960's and subsistence farmers were partly viewed as a past relic which agribusiness could modernize. Thailand's development has been generally based on agricultural production. This agricultural sector has long been called the country's "backbone." This is because it is the most important sector in the economy. One that has generated food and living incomes for most of the Thai people. Before the manufacturing sector began to play an increasing role in the Thai economy in the late 1970's, the agricultural sector generated almost 100% of the country's export income. At present, it still constitutes a substantial share of Thai exports of almost 30%. However, its most significant aspect is that it has provided almost constant employment for the majority of Thai laborers. The agricultural sector of the country, which is mainly supported by small holders, continues to be the basis of the livelihood of the majority of its almost 70 million populations of whom about one-third is presently employed in agriculture. Although its GDP share has decreased substantially, it still accounts for 25% of total exports by value, and agricultural imports remain very small. At least 30% of the country's total land area is now used for agricultural activities.

Thailand has a total land area of 321 million rais or about 51.4 million hectares. Of this total, 133 million rais or 41% is engaged in the agricultural sector. In this regard, 68 million rais or 21% is accounted for paddy area, and 30 million rais or 10% is accounted for other croplands. Agricultural production accounts for only 9% of the GDP. Despite such small proportion, agriculture is still of great importance to the Thai economy since the majority of the population still earn their living from agriculture.

The Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy in Thailand, which is called the New Theory in Agriculture sector, is a practical way of living and engaging in agriculture that H.M. King Rama IX has initiated to help the farmers to improve their quality of life and well-being. It is divided into 3 stages, 1st stage: is widely known in the name of “The New Theory in Agriculture” which is a production for self-sufficient, 2nd stage: is to cooperate or to form a group to support production, marketing, society, and social welfare, 3rd stage: is to launch their production activities into business. The advantages of the sufficiency economy are 1) use the land with high efficiency, 2) various production, 3) reduce risks, 4) reduce cost of production, 5) increase income, 6) balance natural environment, 7) more activities, 8) reduce migration, 9) better life quality. This new theory on farming underlies the concept of self-sufficiency and the principle of moderation or the ‘Middle Way.’ The New Theory, developed to encourage small-scale farmers to apply the integrated farming system appropriate to their limited land and water resources, divides the land into four parts in the ratio of 30:30:30:10. The first 30% is for a pond as a water source to support cultivation, the second 30% is for a rice paddy, the third 30% is for crops, and the last 10% is for living space and livestock. This farming system aims to make farmers self-sufficient in the production of adequate food for household consumption, and to sell any excess crops for income (Chaipattana Foundation).

However, during this period, Thailand has become stuck in the middle-income trap and faces disparities and imbalanced development. An innovative idea of having Thailand 4.0 concept to improve the economic status of Thailand was crafted. In other words, Thailand is moving on from a country with abundant cheap, unskilled labor to an innovation, value based economy to climb to the next step of the ladder. Thailand 4.0 focuses on a value – based economy as the country needs to deal effectively with disparities and the imbalance between the environment and society. In the new concept of Thailand 4.0, the new model will change the country’s traditional farming to smart farming. Traditional SME’s to smart enterprises and traditional services to high-value services under the concept of less for more

rather than more for less. Thailand 4.0 concept is thriving in the 21st century through security, prosperity, and sustainability.

On the other hand, Thailand's characteristics is so diverse that the Northern region of Thailand is different from the other parts of the country in many ways; such as, culture, climate, geography, and way of life. Containing mountains, forested hills, dense jungle, and river valleys, the North provides locals with abundant natural resources and fertile agricultural locations and visitors with breath-taking scenery and unforgettable experiences. The upper part of the Northern region is composed of a series of mountain ranges at an elevation of around 600 to 2,000 meters above sea level. These mountainous areas are home to several hill tribes and ideal locations for growing temperature fruits and vegetables and highland agriculture. A number of organizations especially projects under Royal Initiatives, offer-helping hands to the locals in making effective use of the high elevations and cooler temperatures. These organizations and projects provide the hill tribes with better standards of living and agricultural practices that replace the traditional slash and burn practices and opium cultivation with cash crops and coffee and tea plantations.



Figure 15 Map of Chiang Mai, Thailand

Chiang Mai is the second largest province of Thailand. It is situated in the country's northern part. It is bordered by Chiang Rai to the northeast, Lampang and

Lamphun to the south, Tak to the southwest, Mae Hong Son to the west and Shan State of Burma to the north. It covers an area of approximately 20,107 km² (8,000 sq. mi.) surrounded by mountain ranges of the Thai highlands. The city of Chiang Mai was the capital of the Lanna Kingdom after its founding in 1292. It was also the center of Buddhism in Northern Thailand. 13.4% of the population in the province is members of hill tribes among them are the Hmong, Yao, Lahu, Lisu, Akha, and Karen.

Chiang Mai means “new city” and was so named because it became the new capital of the Lanna Kingdom when it was founded in 1292. Chiang Mai Province is the tourist hub of the north and one of Thailand’s most important tourist destinations. It is considered one of the most scenic provinces in the country due to its mountain ranges, valleys, flora, and fauna. Chiang Mai also is a handicrafts center, with a variety of antiques, silver jewelry, and embroidery. According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Chiang Mai had 14.1 million visitors. 4.6 million of them were foreign tourists and 9.5 million were local tourists. In 2016, tourist arrivals grew by approximately 10% or 9.1 million with most Chinese tourists to 7% increase. Tourism in Chiang Mai has been growing annually by 15% per year since 2011.

The province is located on a land of 12,566,911 rai. In 2011, the land in Chiang Mai was classified as agricultural land (1,401,902 rai or 11.16%); forest land (10,380,924 rai or 82.61%); and residential and other purposes land (784,085 rai or 6.24%) (Ongprasert).

According to TAT, the majority (80%) of the Chiang Mai people earn a living through agriculture and agricultural related professions. The second largest vocation of Chiang Mai is tourism and its directly and indirectly related jobs (Thailand). However, Chiang Mai among most tourists is a province with rich culture and prosperous natural resources. Tourists would go for tourism activities such as visiting temples, shopping, enjoying nightlife, visiting resorts, and visiting natural places such as waterfalls.

HISTORY OF MAEJO UNIVERSITY

Maejo University is a leading agricultural educational institution in Thailand with over 80 years of history and development. Academic and production of graduates who are experts in agriculture serve a large number of countries recognizing the importance of environmentally friendly agriculture. It is the cornerstone of sustainable country development being imbibed by the University.

Maejo University is situated in Chiang Mai, Thailand's second largest city. It is located at 63 Moo 4 Sansai – Phrao Road, Tambon Nonghan, Sansai District, and Chiang Mai. It is about 10 kilometers from the center of the city. It has a total land area of 14,164 rai consisting of 3 campuses: Chiang Mai (10,682 rai); Phrae Campus (1,732 rai); and Chumphon Campus (1,750 rai).

Maejo University is a state university that has developed from being initially a Northern Teachers' Training School to become one of the higher education institutions in the country. It was founded on June 7, 1934 and its history has been told and re-told through many generations particularly concerning its area of original state of wilderness, soil degradation, and malaria fever, and the development by its pioneers through hard work into its present state of being green and verdant. The ardent enthusiasm of its founders, who had the patience and strength to face the various challenges and obstacles, continued the prosperity of Maejo University as it reaches important periods of progress of the university. The university was restructured and renamed several times until it gained the status of a full-pledged public university in 1996 and since has been known as Maejo University.

Under the Ministry of Education, Maejo University is a degree-granting institute that attempts to educate students in practical agriculture, aiming to prepare the students for agricultural pursuits. Maejo strives to nurture and develop its graduates to become technically competent, besides being culturally and scholarly matured thereby able to contribute to the future of the country. The focus of Maejo is on the integration of knowledge and resources of the university to propel the university into

a truly organic tourism and agrotourism hub. To stimulate the economy and make money for local communities and create a good reputation and image for the university. Standardized service of the Maejo sustainable agrotourism trails will further promote agricultural tourism to international tourists.

This is the reason why Maejo University is pursuing its effort to promote and maintain sustainability of its agrotourism trails to benefit the university and its surrounding community. However, the management of the different learning centers and the university administration experience some problems due to the different requirements of the visitors in terms of services. Prudent initiatives are also required to maintain the sustainability of the learning centers while satisfying the needs of the tourists who visit the learning centers. Hence, the stakeholder's participation is an essential endeavor for the attainment of the goal.

Hence, there is a considerable reason to promote agrotourism in the area based on its benefits and impact on the rural areas. The purpose of this research is to have an evaluation on the status of Maejo University learning centers and how will it be developed to attract more tourists.

CONCEPTS

Phillips and Moutinho (2014) mentioned strategic planning as a fundamental tool for success and survival of a tourist destination. Contemporary developments in tourism highlight the mixed nature of the industry consisting of private firms, public agencies, and non-for-profit associations. The mixed industry aggravates the difficulties of coordinating strategic planning efforts at the destination level. Management theories and concepts main purpose is to search for better ways to utilize organizational resources and the principal management functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Another is to seek new ways to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. For many agro-tourism operators today,

making a profit depends on how well operators identify tourists need and the services these tourists expect.

As early as the 1920's, organizations began to challenge the classical autocratic philosophy of management. The key element in the Human Relations Approach is its basic objective of making organizational members feels a useful and important part of the overall effort. This process is viewed as the means of accomplishing the ultimate goal of building a cooperative and compliant work force. Participation, in this model, is a lubricant, which oils away resistance to formal authority. By discussing problems with his subordinates and acknowledging their individual needs and desires, the manager hopes to build a cohesive work team that is willing and anxious to tangle with organizational problems.

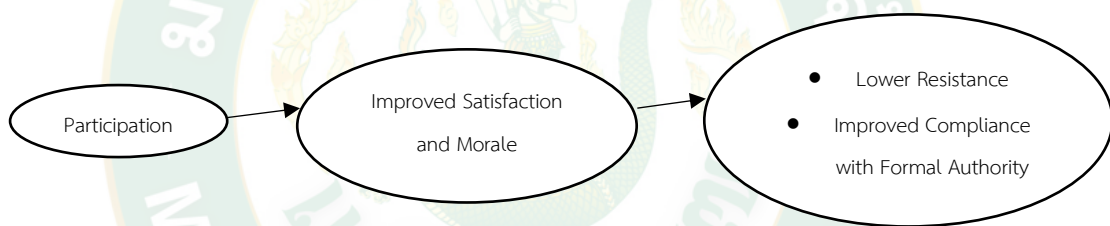


Figure 16 Human Relations Model (Mayo, 2004)

Consequently, the Human Resources Model represents a dramatic departure from traditional concepts of management. The magnitude of its departure from previous models is illustrated first in its basic assumptions concerning people's values and abilities, which focus attention on all organization members as reservoirs of untapped resources. These resources include not only physical skills and energy, but also creative ability and the capacity for responsible, self-directed, self-controlled behavior. The purpose of these practices is to improve the decision-making and total performance efficiency of the organization. The human resources model suggests that those directly involved in and affected by the decisions may actually make many decisions more efficiently.

Moreover, the human resources model does not suggest that the manager allow participation only in routine decisions. Instead, it implies that the more important the decision, the greater is his obligation to encourage ideas and suggestions from his subordinates. The crucial point at which this model differs dramatically from other models is in its explanation of the causal relationship between satisfaction and performance. In the human relations approach, improvement in subordinate satisfaction is viewed as an intervening variable, which is the ultimate cause of improved performance.

In the human resources model, the causal relationship between satisfaction and performance is viewed quite differently. Increased subordinate satisfaction is not pictured as the primary cause of improved performance; improvement results directly from creative contributions, which subordinates make to departmental decision-making, direction, and control. Subordinates' satisfaction is viewed instead as a by-product of the process—the result of their having made significant contribution to organizational success.

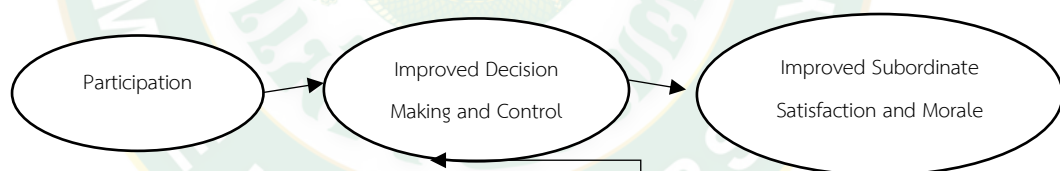


Figure 17 Human Resources Model (Miles, 1965)

In addition to these concepts is the Fiedler Contingency Model, which was created in the mid-1960s by Fred Fiedler, a scientist who studied the personality and characteristics of leaders. The model states that there is no one best style of leadership. Instead, a leader's effectiveness is based on the situation. This is the result of two factors – "leadership style" and "situational favorableness" and was later called "situational control." Identifying leadership style is the first step in using the model. Fiedler believed that leadership style is fixed, and it can be measured using a scale he developed called Least-Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) Scale. The model says that task-oriented leaders usually view their LPCs more negatively, resulting in a

lower score. Fiedler called these low LPC-leaders. He said that low LPCs are very effective at completing tasks. They are quick to organize a group to get tasks and projects done while relationship building is a low priority. However, relationship-oriented leaders usually view their LPCs more positively, giving them a higher score. These are high-LPC leaders. High LPCs focus more on personal connections, and they are good at avoiding and managing conflict. They are better able to make complex decisions.

To understand the notions of human relations and human resources is to understand Raymond Miles (Miles, 1965). Miles articulated a very clear theoretical perspective that was high on communication, high on tapping into employee resources, and high on employee input in decision making. These ideas were not his, but he did create a clear categorization scheme where he delineated between two groups of researchers whom he labeled human relations and human resources. While Miles believes these two groups exist, he also admits that these groups exist primarily in how managers interpret and apply various pioneers of the field of management, so the researchers who fall into the human relations camp often discuss concepts that seem to fall within Miles' own human resources framework. First, Miles' human resource theories posit that all workers are reservoirs of untapped resources. Miles believed that each employee comes into an organization with a variety of resources that management can tap into if they try. These resources include not only physical skills and energy, but also creative ability and the capacity for responsible, self-directed, self-controlled behavior (Miles, 1965).

Under this perspective, managers should focus on controlling employees or getting them to decisions, which are the hallmarks of scientific management and human relations. The primary task of management should be the creation of a working environment that fosters employee creativity and risk taking in an effort to maximize and tap into the resources employees bring to the job. As such, communication in this perspective must be constant and bi-directional and participation in decision-making must include both management and workers. Miles

explains that his human resources model “recognized the untapped potential of most organizational members and advocated participation as a means of achieving direct improvement in individual and organizational performance.” (Miles and Ritchie, 1971). Given these assumptions about people, the manager’s job cannot be viewed merely as one of giving direction and obtaining cooperation. Instead, his primary task becomes that of creating an environment in which the total resources of his department can be utilized.

On the other hand, strategic management ways of measuring performance are also significant in the process of evaluating the learning centers operation. The following are some of the performance measures that can be applied in the learning centers to analyze its status. The Critical Success Factor (CSF) and the Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Both of these concepts are widely used in the context of the design of relevant measurements and analysis of the goal attainment of an organization. CSF’s and KPI’s are techniques that were pioneered by D. Ronald Daniel and Jack F. Rockart. These can also be used in defining and measuring business objectives.

A CSF is a feature of the internal or external environment of an organization that has a major influence on achieving the organization’s aims while a KPI is a quantifiable gauge that an organization uses to measure its performance in terms of meeting its CSF’s.

It is also useful to understand that at least 3 levels can be distinguished to express the aims of any organization:

1. Vision/Mission – an expression of the basic reason why the organization was established and continues to exist.
2. Strategic Goals – faced with the internal and external circumstances that an organization must deal with in the next years: what should be the focus of the organization so that it can successfully pursue its vision.

3. Objectives – strategic goals are by their very nature high-level expressions or big ideas. These goals must be broken down into something more concrete and specific so that tactical plans can be devised, responsibilities assigned, and measurements made.

From a Project Management perspective, critical success factors (CSFs) are characteristics, conditions, or variables that can have a significant impact on the success of the project when properly sustained, maintained, or managed (Milosevic and Patanakul, 2005). CSF's are a way to prioritize certain tasks as the project plan is being executed. Having clear CSF's helps the project team clarify what needs to be worked on first or needs special attention, allowing people to work together to achieve the project's main objectives.

On the other hand, the Key Performance Indicator is a measurable value that demonstrates how effectively a company is achieving key business objectives. Organizations use KPIs at multiple levels to evaluate their success at reaching targets. High-level KPIs may focus on the overall performance of the enterprise, while low-level KPIs may focus on processes in departments such as sales, marketing, or a call center.

Another strategy that is used in the measurement of performance is the Customer Relationship Management. Customer relationship management (CRM) is a term that refers to practices, strategies, and technologies that companies use to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer lifecycle, with the goal of improving business relationships with customers, assisting in customer retention and driving sales growth. CRM systems are designed to compile information on customers across different channels -- or points of contact between the customer and the company -- which could include the company's website, telephone, live chat, direct mail, marketing materials, and social media. CRM systems can also give customer-facing staff detailed information on customers' personal information, purchase history, buying preferences and concerns.

Many CRM software and/or service packages exist to help companies manage the customer relationship process. In fact, salespeople tend to think of these computer programs as the be-all and end-all of CRM. However, CRM has existed for much longer than the computer – in fact, it has been around in one form or another for as long as people have been buying and selling. Computers have greatly enhanced the customer relationship management process because the key to a good CRM is uncovering and storing information about customers. The more a company knows about its customers, the better it can manage those relationships – as in the above example of supermarket rewards cards. With a typical CRM program, new leads are entered into the program's database and salespeople add notes throughout the sales cycle. It is then easy for a company to compile reports from this data that help it to design a CRM strategy that is tailored to its customers. The CRM software can also automatically send out emails to individual customers as designated by the salesperson.

In summary, understanding the concepts is of paramount importance for the agrotourism destinations to succeed. For this study, the central focus is to examine the relationship between service quality and satisfaction of tourists in the different MJU's learning centers. The purpose of studying this is to understand the extent to which each of these concepts influences the intended future behavior of tourists.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

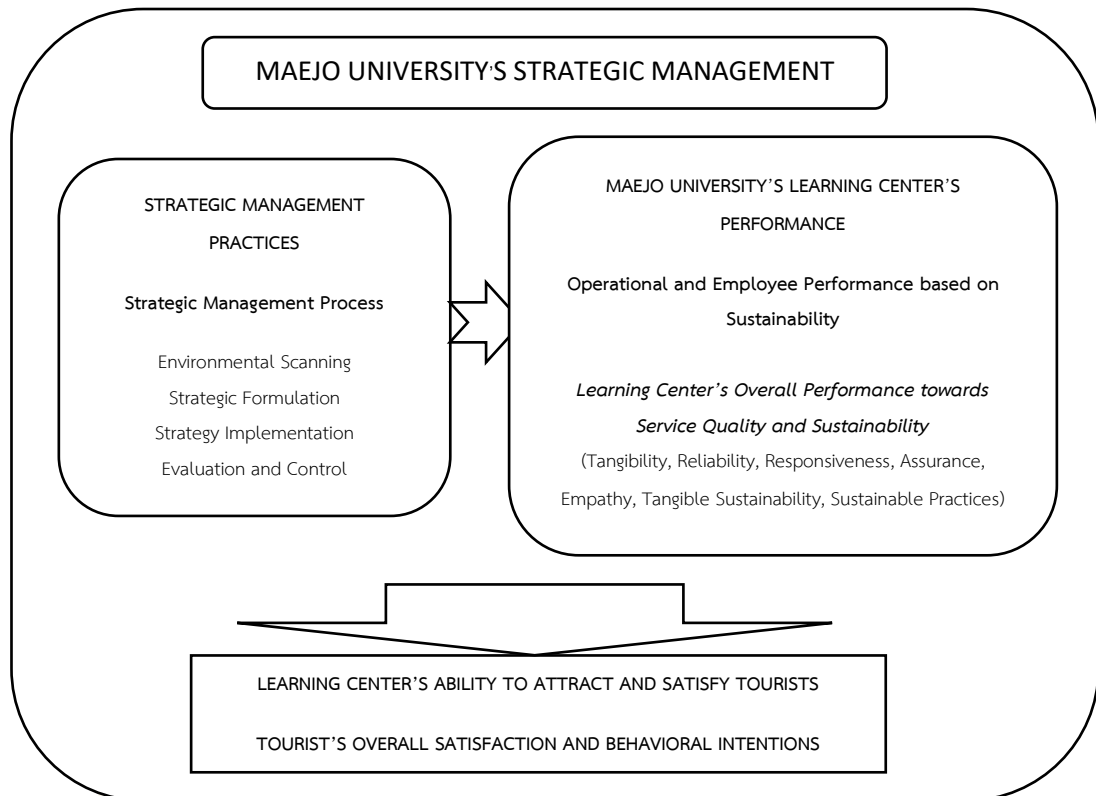


Figure 18 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 18) explains the underlying process, which is applied to guide this study. As discussed above, the SERVQUAL model is suitable for measuring service quality and tourists satisfaction of MJU agrotourism learning centers. These learning centers offering agrotourism services will be evaluated using the service quality dimensions, which will be modified with the addition of tangible sustainability and sustainable practices. This is because one cannot use a generic SERVQUAL model in this context since it may not be adequate to assess service quality in agrotourism setting and will not provide a good measure of tourists' perceptions. This is in line with Yusof et al. (2014) research on Measuring the Quality of Ecotourism Services: Case Study - Based Model Validation, where the researchers proved that tangible sustainability and sustainable practices are important measures of service quality.

The researcher will use the modified dimensions to measure both service quality and tourist satisfaction because the researcher assumes both are related (Parasuraman et. al., 1988) and tourist satisfaction is an antecedent of service quality (Negi, 2009). The SERVQUAL approach integrates the two constructs and suggests that perceived service quality is an antecedent to satisfaction (Negi, 2009). Hence, in this research, the initial 22 items of SERVQUAL model will be modified and additional items will be included to measure the perceived service quality and tourist satisfaction in the learning centers.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the above conceptual framework and objectives, the following hypotheses will be formulated.

- H1 Service quality positively affects tourists' levels of overall satisfaction
- H2 Overall agrotourism service quality is positively associated with tourist's behavioral intentions
- H3 Overall agrotourism satisfaction is positively associated with visitors' behavioral intentions
- H4 Strategic management has a significant effect on the learning center's operational performance
- H5 There is a positive relationship between strategic management and tourist's satisfaction

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is defined as highly intellectual activity used in the investigation and deals specifically with the manner in which data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted. The background of research methodology refers to philosophy of research conceived as the way in which it is formulated, the research strategy and the way in which research is conducted. The research methodology determines the framing of explanations arisen from the analysis of data and observations. It discusses the locale of the study, population and sampling procedures, measurement of variables, research instrument/s, procedures of the data collection, analysis of data, research duration, and research budgeting. In this chapter, the type of study following the procedures for data collection and the parameters that were used to evaluate the quality of study were discussed. A research methodology is the process used to address the research question.

In summary, this study is a descriptive research that is focused on the management strategy for the sustainable development of Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers. The purpose of the study was to undertake an evaluation of the status of Maejo agrotourism learning centers. Likewise, it also identified the service quality of Maejo University's learning centers; the visitor satisfaction with the relationship between learning centers service quality and behavioral intentions.

LOCALE OF THE STUDY

The locale of the study is Maejo University. It was selected for the following reasons; it is one of the biggest agricultural universities in Thailand. The university is a fast growing educational institution and considered as one of the oldest agricultural universities in Thailand. Moreover, it is where the researcher studies that provides her

an edge in the easy access to information and data. Furthermore, Chiang Mai where Maejo University is located is the second largest city in Thailand and one of the most visited city in Asia.



Figure 19 Map of Maejo University

POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

There were two sets of respondents for this study, (1) tourists who have visited the learning centers and (2) the administrators and employees of the learning centers. The tourist respondents were selected from the list of tourists who have visited the learning centers. Participants came from both domestic and international visitors of Maejo University. On the other hand, all employees, heads, and administrators directly involved in the operations of the learning centers were included in the study.

Random sampling was used in selecting tourist respondents while purposive sampling was used for the employees of the learning centers and administrators of Maejo University. The researcher chosed respondents that were information-rich or those that can provide a good evaluation of the service quality of the different learning centers. The employees and administrators of the university were considered experts who had a long-term experience on agrotourism and agrotourism

areas and management of Maejo agrotourism learning centers. These experts discussed ways to identify the performance of the different learning centers.

The method of data collection was through survey questionnaires that were designed differently for each group. The different learning centers that participated in this study are:

1. The Welcome Center
2. Maejo Agricultural Museum
3. Vegetable Plantation Learning Center
4. Commercial Mushroom Production Learning Center
5. Hydroponics Vegetable Farming Learning Center
6. The Pomology Learning Center
7. Ornamental Plants Learning Center
8. Orchid Learning Center
9. Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center
10. Maejo Siam Mekong Giant Catfish and Major Buk Siam Hybrid Catfish Learning Center
11. Tilapia Sex Reversal Learning Center
12. Organic Waste Decomposition by Earthworms Learning Center
13. Organic Fertilizer (Composting Without Turning) Learning Center
14. Tan Khun Camp and Baan Pong Community Forest
15. Complete Circle Pig Farming Learning Center

The sample size for tourist respondents was calculated based on Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where, **n** = the sample size

N = the size of population

e = margin of error (MoE); **e** = 0.05 based on the research condition

By using Yamane's formula for sample size with a margin of error of 5% and with a confidence coefficient of 95% (Yamane, 1967), the calculation from a population of 400 from previous population approximation came up with 200 tourists as the number of respondents of the study. To account or possible attrition, the number of respondents were increased to 250.

The study employed a descriptive statistics that described the relationship between variables. Descriptive statistics was used to examine the association between service quality, tourists' satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. A descriptive research design using a quantitative approach was opted for, as it is quick and can reach more respondents (Huberman and Miles, 1994; Silverman, 2013). The population of interest comprised the different tourists visiting the learning centers of Maejo University and its employees.

MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES

A survey questionnaire was employed to collect empirical data from the different Maejo agrotourism learning centers. The questions in the survey questionnaire were designed based on a review of the literature and specific characteristics of the learning centers. This was pretested and subsequently revised to ensure content validity.

The items and scales included in the questionnaire were adapted by a variety of sources. For service quality, items were adapted from SERVQUAL measurement model (Parasuraman et. al., 1988). Since overall service, quality was operationalized as an attitude within the agrotourism learning centers; it was measured using a quantitative method through a specially designed survey questionnaire for the respondents' perceptions of the overall management aspect of the learning centers.

Likewise, a 5-point Likert scale was used to obtain the respondent's perceptions on the quality of service and tourists' satisfaction provided by the different learning centers. The scale ranged from 1 = 'extremely low quality' to 5 = 'extremely high quality'. The analyses were based on the following: (I) the demographic characteristics of respondents, including their age, gender, nationality, occupation, education level, annual household income, country of residence, and length of stay; (II) respondents' perceptions of service attributes and overall service quality of the learning centers; (III) levels tourist overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

In addition to the five dimensions of service quality proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), the researcher included the sustainability attributes and sustainable practices in the improved model of SERVQUAL for ecotourism. The items of sustainability were developed through literature review of Garcia-Falcon and Medina-Muñoz (1999); Khan and Su (2003); and Yusof et al. (2014). Tourists' overall satisfaction was operationalized as an attitude towards the learning centers. However, it was postulated to be a different attitude from overall service quality. The modified measure for overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions had 17-item, 5-point Likert scale. This scale was originally adapted from Crosby and Stephens (1987) who measured consumer satisfaction with the insurance industry. Later, the scale was used in the tourism field by (Childress and Crompton, 1997).

This research had undertaken an exploratory factor analyses on the variables for service quality, tourist's satisfaction and behavioral intentions to verify or to distinguish necessary conclusions of the specified dimensionality of the scales. The exploratory factor analysis is a statistical method used to uncover the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables. It is a technique within factor analysis whose goal is to identify the underlying relationships between measured variables. This is based on the common factor model.

On the other hand, the data that were collected from the Maejo University employees and heads were examined by descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations. The purpose was to develop profiles of the total sample and to identify distributions and correlations of the variables. Descriptive statistics was calculated to ascertain the characteristics of the sample and to compare means and standard deviations for each multi-item scale. Furthermore, the hypotheses proposed in the study were tested. The constructs under study such as quality of service, quality of experience, overall tourist satisfaction, behavioral intentions, strategic management practices, and employee performance were all unobservable concepts, that the measurement of which were dependent on manifested indicators.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researcher used the SERVQUAL 5 dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy) which were subdivided into 23 statements. These questions were directed to measure service quality in the different learning centers. The researcher added two dimensions: Tangible Sustainability and Sustainable Practices, which were subdivided into 7 statements. These dimensions are in line with the measurement proposed by Garcia-Falcon and Medina-Muñoz, (1999); Khan and Su (2003); Yusof et al. (2014) for ecotourism services which could be used to measure service quality. The researcher believed that this is relevant in the case of the different learning centers.

The SERVQUAL dimensions/attributes were the main variables that were used in this study and the researcher used codes in order to ease the analysis of data that were collected. Demographic information was likewise collected from respondents and these variables were coded as well for analysis. The following were the codes of the variables used for the analysis.

Attributes (SERVQUAL Performance Indicators)

1. Tangibility (TA)

- 1.1 Physical facilities and equipment are visually aligned, in good condition and accessible
- 1.2 Adequate equipment and capacity
- 1.3 Clean environment
- 1.4 Professional appearance of the staffs
- 1.5 Information center provides relevant information

2. Reliability (RL)

- 2.1 The staff provides prompt services
- 2.2 The staff has the ability to perform the promised service/s
- 2.3 The staff shows sincere interest in solving a problem
- 2.4 The staff provides accurate information

3. Responsiveness (RN)

- 3.1 The staff provides details regarding services and products offered
- 3.2 Provision of adequate information about the service being delivered
- 3.3 Prompt response to tourists' requests
- 3.4 The host is polite, kind, and educated
- 3.5 The staff performs the service right the first time

4. Assurance (AS)

- 4.1 There is a reinforcement of tourists' confidence
- 4.2 The learning centers provide adequate and safe facilities
- 4.3 Tourists are being assisted by appropriate and trained staffs
- 4.4 Availability of experienced and competent staffs with fluent and understandable communication

5. Empathy (EP)

- 5.1 The staff provides tourists with personal attention
- 5.2 The staff understands the specific needs of tourists
- 5.3 The staff treats tourists in a friendly manner
- 5.4 The staff provides assistance in other required areas
- 5.5 Facilities are located in convenient and comfortable areas

6. Tangible Sustainability (TS)

- 6.1 There is a visual and appealing natural attraction
- 6.2 Provision of non-crowded and unspoiled attractions
- 6.3 Provide nature-based activities (e.g., fish catching, actual farming)
- 6.4 There is a minimal change to existing landforms, environment, and natural resources

7. Sustainable Practices (SP)

- 7.1 Use of natural/local resources as equipment and facilities (e.g., facilities reflect local influence)
- 7.2 There is an emphasis on recycling and reuse of products
- 7.3 The development is integrated with the local environment/culture (e.g. staffs in local costume)

On the other hand, the instrument for the tourist's satisfaction and behavioral intentions covered the following items.

Levels of Tourist Overall Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions

A. Management Practices, Policies, Infrastructure and Facilities

- 1. The employees are very dependable
- 2. The employees are competent and professional
- 3. The employees are very responsive to tourists
- 4. The learning centers have a high integrity
- 5. I am satisfied with the facilities and technology
- 6. I am satisfied with the overall service

B. Destination Price / Value

- 1. The learning centers offered good value for money
- 2. The time I spent in order to use the services is highly reasonable
- 3. The overall value of the learning centers was high
- 4. The whole experience is worth the price

C. Destination's Overall Image

1. I am satisfied with the overall image of the learning centers

D. Destination Behavioral Intention / Loyalty

1. I will definitely recommend the learning centers to friends, neighbors, relatives and co-workers

2. I will definitely say positive things about the learning centers to other people

3. I will encourage my friends and family to support the learning centers

E. Loyalty / Retention

1. I will most likely deal with the learning centers the next time I will need this kind of service

2. I will do more business with the learning centers in the future

3. I will consider the learning centers my first choice to buy, with this kind of service

Furthermore, a specially designed instrument was used to obtain the respondents' perceptions of the overall management aspect of the learning centers. It contained questions pertaining to the management strategy being applied by the heads of the different learning centers that leads to the quality of service rendered by the employees of the learning centers and their performance.

Strategic Management Process

1. **Environmental Scanning**

2. The learning center monitors, evaluates, and disseminates information from the external and internal environments to key people within the organization.

3. **Strategy Formulation**

The strategies are formulated in line with the university's mission and vision statements.

4. **Strategy Implementation**

The measures adopted for the implementation of strategies and policies have been effective.

5. Evaluation and Control

Top management obtains clear and unbiased information from Subordinates in order to evaluate and control activities and performance results.

This also included how the learning centers implemented strategies and the extent of their practice of strategic management.

Implementation of Strategies

Implementation of Strategies

1. Examine the extent of practice of strategic management process in your learning center.
2. The cooperation existing between the various internal functions of the organization when pursuing overall strategic objectives.

Another part of the questionnaire was on the strategic management and the learning centers operational performance. This looked into how strategic management affects the employees' performance.

Strategic Management and Learning Center's Operational Performance

Operational Performance

1. It boosts efficiency (reduces costs, increases productivity).
2. It enhances timely delivery of service.
3. It aids the utilization of human and material resources.
4. It brings about the innovation of products.
5. Product quality of the learning center is improved.
6. Products are based on modern technological advancements.
7. There is reliability in service delivery.
8. Solving problems or issues is effective

The last part of the employee questionnaire looked into the ability of the learning centers to attract and satisfy tourists and how employees perceived satisfaction of tourists that visited the learning centers.

Strategic Management and Learning Center's Visitor Satisfaction

Visitor Satisfaction

1. Our learning center gained market leaderships
2. Products of the learning center are readily available to the market.
3. Strategic management enhances marketing strategies and visitor retention.
4. Strategic management enhances our learning center's flexibility to respond quickly to changes in the business environments.
5. There is overall service quality as perceived by tourists
6. There is quality in visitor relationship

PRE-TESTING

Pre-testing or piloting was used to assess the clarity of the questionnaire and its suitability to the respondents. The purpose of the pretest was to statistically test the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents before a full-scale study, in order to identify any problems with the questionnaire. A pretest is deemed very important for an instrument to economically and systematically collect data. The pre-test done enabled to affirm the validity of the sample participants as well as the questions in the instrument.

This study took into account the importance of pretesting and therefore conducted the piloting to test the questionnaires. The draft of the questionnaire was tested with 30 randomly selected visitors at the learning centers in December of 2017. The questions content, wording, sequence, and instructions were tested. The

responses from the pretest were coded and analyzed with minor changes based on the results of the pretest and the final version of the questionnaire was developed.

Meanwhile, the cronbach's alpha reliability test was conducted to determine the reliability of the data collected. The cronbach's alpha value was found to be internally reliable as the values exceeded the minimum standard value. The reliability of the instrument indicates its stability or consistency over repeated measures. The scale adapted in this study has been previously used and tested for reliability in other previous research studies. The reliability coefficient was calculated to rule out any possible variations in the instrument's scale. The obtained alpha value of the instrument was .931. A coefficient alpha of .50 or higher is considered adequately reliable for group data purposes.

The value of cronbach's alpha for satisfaction and behavioral intentions were calculated to check the reliability of the instrument. The cronbach's alpha undertaken on the sample's responses to the satisfaction was .931, also indicating a high degree of internal consistency.

On the other hand, the questionnaire on strategic management obtained an alpha value of .991. The reliability coefficient was calculated to rule out any possible variations in the instrument's scale.

DATA GATHERING

Research methodology is the system of collecting data for research projects, either theoretical or practical research. Data collection is treated as a design issue to enhance the construct and internal validity of the study, as well as the external validity and reliability (Yin, 1999). It is an important aspect of any type of research study. This study used survey questionnaire since it is a good way of gathering a large amount of data. Careful attention was given in designing the survey questionnaires

since inaccurate data collection can influence the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results. This research also utilized a quantitative data collection method, which relies on random sampling and structured data collection instrument. A validated survey instrument was used to ensure that the data being collected is accurate. The modified survey questionnaire was pilot tested on the sample target group to ensure that the survey instrument is measuring what it intends to measure and is appropriate for the respondents. This also ensures that the designed instrument will fit diverse experiences into predetermined response categories. This will produce results that are easy to summarize, compare, and generalize.

In this study, a letter of consent was secured to each respective heads and administrators of the different MJU learning centers before conducting the survey. The researcher distributed the survey questionnaire forms to each identified respondents and was then collected at a specified date. Likewise, the researcher submitted a letter to request the heads of the different learning centers for access of the information.

To collect data from tourists, a survey questionnaire was distributed to individual tourist visiting the different learning centers. The survey questionnaire made use of rating scales since the study is assessing participant's behaviors. This helped simplify and quantify tourist's behaviors and attitudes. The survey participant simply checks whether each item on the list is observed, present or true or vice versa. A rating scale was more useful when a behavior needs to be evaluated. This was also true with the learning centers employees.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of analyzing data is to obtain usable and useful information. The analysis describes and summarizes the data, identify the relationships between variables, compare variables, identify the difference between variables, and forecast outcomes. In this research, the basic unit of analysis is the status of Maejo

University's agrotourism learning centers through a modified and specially designed instrument and SERVQUAL measurement model. The data were collected and recorded systematically and these were then organized so that it can be entered into the computer database. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 19. These were used in profiling the data of the different tourists and the learning centers.

To test the hypotheses, regression, correlation, t-test, and analysis of variance were used. The analysis procedure followed a two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Hatcher and Stepanski (1994). With this approach, the first step involved conducting of confirmatory analysis to examine the fitness of the measurement model to the data, and to see if the indicator variables really were measuring the underlying constructs of interest. The second step was to test the fitness of the theoretical model (the structural model) to the data. The structural model specifies causal relationships between the quality of service, tourists' satisfaction, behavioral intentions, and employee performance.

RESEARCH DURATION

This research had a duration of one year from the time the research proposal was approved by the research committee.

Table 3 Research Duration

| No | Task | No. of Days |
|----|--|-------------|
| 1 | Review of Literature and Revision of the First Three Chapters | 60 |
| 2 | Presentation and Examination | 30 |
| 3 | Preparation and Selection of the Respondents and Participants of the Study | 15 |
| 4 | Distribution of the Letters to the Different Learning Centers | 15 |
| 5 | Review of the Survey Questionnaire, Pre-testing | 15 |
| 6 | Distribution of Survey Questionnaire to Respondents | 90 |
| 7 | Collection of Survey Questionnaires | 60 |
| 8 | Data Processing and Analysis | 180 |
| 9 | Data Presentation and Defense | 90 |

Table 4 Gantt Chart of the Study

| Activities | Nov 2017 | Dec 2017 | Jan 2018 | Feb 2018 | Mar 2018 | Apr 2018 | May 2018 | June 2018 | July 2018 | Aug 2018 | Sept 2018 | Oct 2018 | Nov 2018 | Dec 2018 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Review of the Survey Questionnaire & Selection of Respondents | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distribution of Letters to the different Learning Centers | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distribution of Survey Questionnaire to Respondents | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collection of Survey Questionnaires | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | | | |
| Data Processing and Analysis | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Presentation of Data and Defense | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ |

CHAPTER IV

THE MAEJO UNIVERSITY'S AGROTOURISM LEARNING CENTERS

Maejo University has established the Sustainable Maejo Agrotourism Trails under the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center. This comprises of 15 agrotourism learning centers used as a facility for students to have actual application of knowledge and theories in agriculture. It also aimed to provide professional academic services especially in agriculture for visitors who want to visit the university. These learning centers include the following:

1. Maejo Welcome Center
2. Maejo Agriculture Museum
3. Vegetable Plantation Learning Center
4. Commercial Mushroom Production Learning Center
5. Hydroponics Vegetable Farming Learning Center
6. The Pomology Learning Center
7. Ornamental Plants Learning Center
8. Orchid Learning Center
9. Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center
10. Maejo Siam Maekong Giant Catfish and Maejo Buk Siam Hybrid Catfish Learning Center
11. Tilapia Sex Reversal Learning Center
12. Organic Waste Decomposition by Earthworms Learning Center
13. Organic Fertilizer (Composting without Turning) Learning Center
14. Tan-Khun Camp and Baan-Pong Community Forest
15. Complete Circle Pig Farming Learning Center

The University has created these different learning centers in September 2013. It allocated budget to materialize the tourism project in response to the university strategy in collaboration with the School of Tourism Development. These learning centers are now operational to welcome tourists, for those interested to

study, and learn about agriculture. To promote the learning centers to tourists, the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center launched a website (www.tcsc.tourism.mju.ac.th) to promote the agrotourism trails to the public. Furthermore, it was established to market Maejo as an agrotourism destination and for the public to know about the area. It also came up with a brochure to disseminate tourist routes to government and private agencies interested in the agrotourism sustainable trails.

These learning centers house an exhibition of activities and visits of the royal family in the campus. The museum has a collection of all the valuable items, photos, and historic information since the founding of the university. The learning centers also offer educational programs that demonstrate the knowhow of growing plants. It focuses in providing knowledge on the ways to design and plan an actual agricultural facility. It uses different technology on how to plant fruits and vegetables using a more intelligent way to grow plants. It has a demonstration and hands on training on fruit tree propagation techniques, production and breeding. The learning centers also offer visitors a personal experience in actual planting. These learning centers are a place that provides rich knowledge on the Philosophy of Green Agriculture (Sufficiency Economy).

These different sustainable Maejo agrotourism trails are currently in place and serve as sites to visit when you are in the University. Based on the data gathered in 2016 from the Tourism Training and Consulting Service Center, there were around 649 tourists who have visited the different learning centers. These comprises of both local and foreign tourists.

Among the 15 learning centers under study, the frequently visited and with most number of visitors in no particular order are:

1. Commercial Mushroom Production Learning Center
2. Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center

3. Fisheries and Organic Agriculture (Mekong Giant Catfish and Tilapia Sex Reversal Learning Centers)
4. Welcome Center
5. Orchid Learning Center
6. Organic Waste Decomposition by Earthworms Learning Center

Maejo University has continuously promoted the development and promotion of sustainable tourism around Thailand and to foreign tourists. Under the operation of the Tourism Training and Consulting Services Center of the School of Tourism and Development, Maejo University has launched a series of training courses in tourism through the cooperation and collaboration with the International Educational Cooperation Program (ECP), which is an agreement to cooperate with the universities abroad. Apart from this program, there is also an existing curriculum in tourism being offered to Chinese students. This includes languages for student's training. A specialized training course with an emphasis on educating participants on sustainable tourism. Maejo University heads the local community around the University and in the North of Thailand by supporting in every way the local community on the awareness of sustainable tourism within the community. By encouraging staff and students to provide technical support, research, academic services, and continuous education. In the future, Maejo University plans for the community tourism to gain access to the AEC as well.

This is the reason why Maejo University is pursuing its effort to promote and maintain sustainability of its agrotourism trails to benefit the University and its surrounding community. However, the management of the different learning centers and the university administration experience some problems due to the different requirements of the visitors in terms of services. Prudent initiatives are also required to maintain the sustainability of the learning centers while satisfying the needs of the

tourists who visit the centers. Hence, the stakeholder’s participation is an essential endeavor for the attainment of the goal.

THE SUSTAINABLE MAEJO AGROTOURISM TRAILS



Figure 20 Maejo University’s Agrotourism Trails

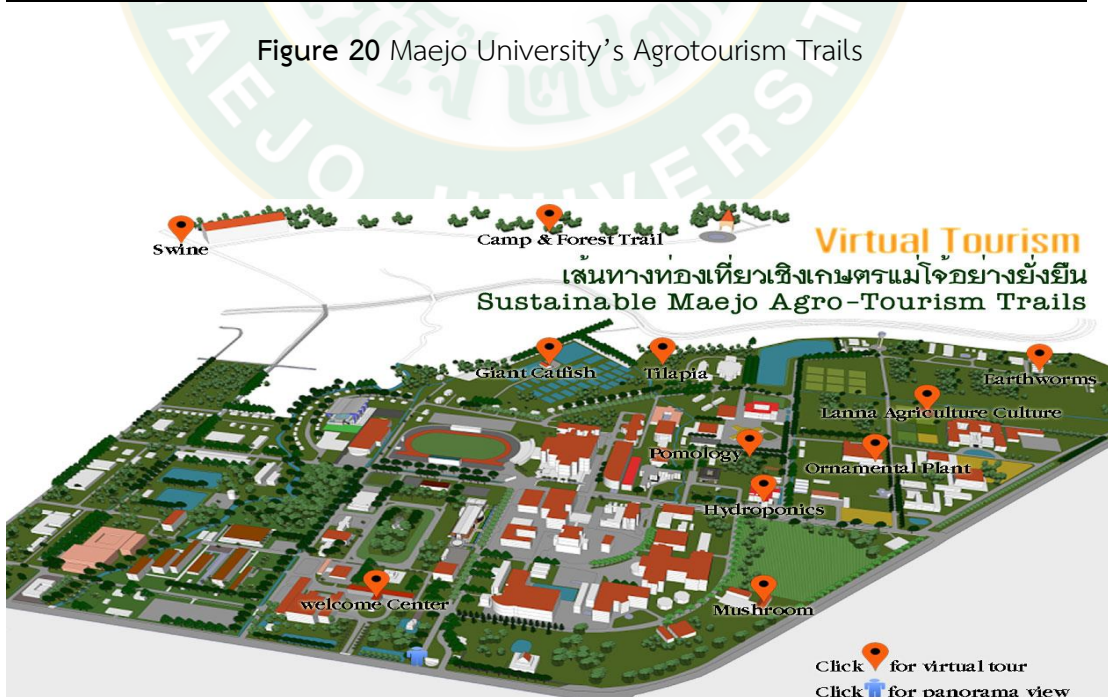


Figure 21 Maejo University’s Agrotourism Map

WELCOME CENTER



Figure 22 Welcome Center

In this center, visitors will learn about the history of Maejo University, which was founded in 1934, its founder, its organization, and the institution as a whole. In addition, there is an exhibition of activities and visits of the royal family in the campus.



Figure 23 Welcome Center Interior

MAEJO AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM



Figure 24 The Maejo Agricultural Museum Entrance

Maejo Agricultural Museum has a collection of all the valuable items, photos, and historic information since the founding of the University itself. A lounge for the principal is located in this area. It was once used to welcome Rama 9th and the Queen for visiting the Northern Normal School for Agriculture, now known as Maejo University.



Figure 25 Maejo University's Agricultural Museum Exterior

TRAIL 1 FOOD CROP ROUTE - PLANTS AND SEEDLINGS

VEGETABLE PLANTATION LEARNING CENTER



Figure 26 Vegetable Plantation Learning Center

The vegetable plantation learning center was intended to study and teach how to grow vegetables without using pesticides. This research was led by Dr. Suthep Watcharawetsaringkharm. The center has an 8 Thai rai space and plants vegetable differing from seasons. After each harvest, the soil is left to nurture for two months while they fertilize and take care of the soil for growing new vegetables.



Figure 27 Vegetable Plantation

There are different varieties of vegetables in this center such as pandan leaves, sweet basil, leek moss, white lettuce, and gymnema. Each has its own unique purpose and is collected from places around the world.

COMMERCIAL MUSHROOM PRODUCTION LEARNING CENTER



Figure 28 Commercial Mushroom Production Learning Center



Figure 29 Commercial Mushroom Production – Maejo Farm

Mushrooms are now one of the most famous economic crops. The Faculty of Agricultural Production established a learning center for mushroom production

offering the educational program on how to grow mushroom starting from composting, spawning, casing, pinning, cropping, and canning.



Figure 30 Growing Mushrooms

HYDROPONICS VEGETABLE FARMING LEARNING CENTER

This learning center demonstrates the knowhow of growing plants without soil. Instead, vegetables are grown in water or ‘hydroponics’.



Figure 31 Hydroponics Learning Center

Hydroponic technology saves water and space as well as a replacement of inappropriate soil conditions. This can be used for household purposes as well as commercial production.

THE POMOLOGY LEARNING CENTER



The Pomology Learning Center focuses on providing knowledge on the ways to design and plan an economic orchard. This center uses different technology on how to plant fruits with the help of supporting racks, growing of off-season fruits, using a more intelligent way to grow fruits and so on. It has a demonstration and hands on training on fruit tree propagation techniques, fruit trees pruning and training, off-season fruit production and potted fruit tree production for income supplements and landscaping.

The center is divided into different sections based on weather type to let visitors know the difference between tropical fruit trees, subtropical and cold weather fruit trees. The learning center also offers visitors a personal experience in planting fruit trees and tasting fruits right in the farm.



Figure 32 Pomology Learning Center

ORNAMENTAL PLANTS LEARNING CENTER



This learning center shows numerous research and knowledge on ornamental plants in terms of propagation, production, and breeding fields. It includes exhibits of various kinds of ornamental plants such as *Curcuma Alismatifolia*, *Curcuma Sparganifolia*, *Globba Winitii*, *Anthurium andraeanum*, *Saintpaulia Ionantha* (African Violet), and foliage plants for commercial production and hobbyists.



Figure 33 Ornamental Learning Center



Figure 34 Ornamental Plants

ORCHID LEARNING CENTER



Figure 35 Orchid Learning Center

Orchid Learning Center was established in 1992 in order to teach the students on orchid cultivation techniques. The learning center has launched a project on how to cultivate orchids and has carried out related academic activities such as orchid cultivation techniques to orchid lovers, especially orchids with economic value, such as Phalaenopsis.

LANNA AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE LEARNING CENTER



Figure 36 Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center

Lanna Agricultural Heritage Learning Center is a place that provides rich knowledge on the Philosophy of Green Agriculture (Sufficiency Economy). The Center covers a vast area of 14 acres (35 rai), which contains a live exhibition demonstrating local folks' wisdom based on the Economic Sufficiency Philosophy in growing rice, harvesting crops, using animals in the farm activities, and livestock feeding in a more organic way.

This was the workmanship of Maejo University researchers who gathered together to form a body of knowledge such as an exhibit of a 110+ year old Longan Tree, the planting of organic vegetables, herbs and rice, and demonstrations of local Lanna lifestyle and culture.



Figure 37 Lanna Agriculture

TRAIL 2 FISHERIES AND ORGANIC AGRICULTURE
 MAEJO SIAM MAEKONG GIANT CATFISH AND MAEJO BUK SIAM HYBRID CATFISH
 LEARNING CENTER





Figure 38 Mekong Giant Catfish



Figure 39 Mekong Giant Catfish Products

This is the research work of Associate Professor Dr. Kriangsak Mangumphan and his team that aims to improve threatened Maekong giant catfishes that are produced commercially. The Maekong giant catfishes are endangered fish in the Maekong River and it is the biggest freshwater catfish in the world. Maekong catfish has very good meat qualities and taste. Its flesh contains essential fatty acids that are very important for brain.



Figure 40 Mekong Giant Catfish Learning Center's Achievements

Currently, the Maekong giant catfish and its hybrids can be domesticated in earthen ponds and produced for commercial purposes. In addition, hybrid catfish have been genetically improved between the second generations of Maekong giant catfish and striped catfish to be “Maejo Buk Siam Hybrid Catfish” with better quality, white pink in flesh color, firm texture, and good flavor. It has also grown in economic importance and hence reduces international import of fishes and seafoods. This learning center has its main purpose of sharing knowledge with the agricultural communities around Maejo and all over Thailand.

TILAPIA SEX REVERSAL LEARNING CENTER

In this learning center, visitors will learn about sex reversal of tilapia – a kind of fish that can change gender during its life. As male tilapia grows bigger than females, tilapia can sometimes be tricked into changing its sex to increase production and sales.



Figure 41 Sex Reversal Process

This is a learning center for the students to practice their professional skills in cultivation of sex reversed tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) to increase the productivity of a quality fish species and at the same time increase their income. It is also a source of information for the public in such field.



Figure 42 The Tilapia Sex Reversal Learning Center

At present, tilapia consumption is rapidly increasing because of its good taste, high quality meat, availability, and low cost. Tilapia farming has become popular among local fish farmers because the fish are easy to farm, grow fast, and eat a diet of vegetables and cereal grains. It therefore has become a fish of high economic value – creating occupations and bringing good income to the farmers.



Figure 43 Female Tilapia with the Fertilized Eggs in Its Mouth

ORGANIC WASTE DECOMPOSITION BY EARTHWORMS LEARNING CENTER

This learning center is a home of earthworms that digest organic waste 24 hours. It produces over 3 tons of decomposed food and vegetable waste that is used by the University and the surrounding communities.



Figure 44 Organic Waste Decomposition by Earthworms Learning Center

This research work carried out by Associate Professor Anut Toncho and his team has attracted lots of attention and drawn in visits from people in agriculture sector and government agencies.

ORGANIC FERTILIZER (Composting Without Turning) LEARNING CENTER



The experts in agricultural product processing and engineering founded this learning center. It started out as a project back in 2011 by Dr. Chanawat Nitatwicht and his team for research and technology advocacy and to provide this technology to farmers and those who are interested.



Figure 45 Organic Fertilizer (Composting Without Turning) Learning Center

This technology is able to generate up to 10 tons of high quality fertilizers a month, it can be substituted for the burning of crops, which lowers the cost and danger for farmers.

TRAIL 3: ECONOMIC ANIMALS AND AGRO-ECO TOURISM

TAN-KHUN CAMP AND BAAN-PONG COMMUNITY FOREST



Figure 46 Tan-Khun Camp and Baan-Pong Community Forest

At this site, you will experience an ecotourism trail of the Baan-Pong Community Forest – a real natural forest near the city of Chiang Mai. Baan- Pong is a peaceful community where everybody knows everyone and they look after each other like a big family. In addition, a very friendly community always welcomes visitors with smiles.



Figure 47 Tan-Khun Camp and Baan-Pong Community Forest

Baan-Pong has and maintains great resources for visitors who are interested in ecotourism and cultural tourism. Visitors will enjoy learning about the natural resources, the environment, local culture, and the lifestyle of the Baan-Pong community through activities in different sites such as:

- a. Huay-Jo Reservoir
- b. Forest Trekking Trail
- c. Baan-Pong Community Development Project under His Majesty the King's Initiative
- d. Community and Lanna Culture Tour
- e. Wat Doi-Tan-Phrah-Luang
- f. Agri-ecotourism Development Center
- g. Home Stays

COMPLETE CIRCLE PIG FARMING

This site demonstrates the process of pig farming from baby pigs to breeders that includes farm management, production of feed and biogas from pig manure as well as artificial insemination.



Figure 48 Complete Circle Pig Farming Learning Center

In this learning center, visitors can find all specie of pigs that are being farmed throughout the whole of Thailand, especially the ones with high economic value.

In this center, students are taught through actual experience and to increase their awareness for animal protection and care, decreasing the difficulty for raising animals. It teaches students how to manage pigs by providing the right fodder for different needs. It is also a place for students, farmers and those with great interest to learn about pig farming.



Figure 49 Complete Circle Pig Farming Learning Center's Interior

SWINE KNOWLEDGE LEARNING CENTER

This site demonstrates the process of pig farming from baby pigs to breeders that includes farm management, production of feed and biogas from pig manure as well as artificial insemination.



Figure 50 Swine Knowledge Learning Center

These different Maejo University agrotourism trails are currently in place and serve as sites to visit when you are in the university. These are some of the pictures of the tourists who have visited Maejo University's learning centers. These tourists also have served as respondents for this research.



Figure 51 Visitors of Maejo Agrotourism Learning Centers

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF SERVICE QUALITY, TOURISTS' SATISFACTION, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

The objectives of this study is to analyze tourist's perception on the quality of service of Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers and identify the effect of tourist's satisfaction on the relationship between learning centers service quality and behavioral intentions. These constructs were analyzed based on the modified SERVQUAL attributes: Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, with the additional attributes - Tangible Sustainability and Sustainable Practices. The previous studies suggest that these attributes are significant determinants of service quality in terms of tourist's satisfaction.

To carry out this study, 300 questionnaires were emailed to those who have visited Maejo University and distributed to those who were visiting Maejo University's learning centers. 43 of the 300 questionnaires were the one emailed to visitors who have visited Maejo University's Learning Centers in the last quarter of 2016 to the last quarter of 2017. The other 257 questionnaires were distributed to tourists who had taken a trip and visited Maejo University's learning centers in mid-2017 to mid-2018. These questionnaires were distributed after the tourists have visited the learning centers and collected after it was completed on the same day. There were 200 questionnaires thoroughly filled and returned from both self-administered questionnaires and those sent through email representing 66.66% rate. This was considered an adequate sample size since other scale developers in marketing and management areas have used a sample size of 200 to analyze group data (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The final sample size for this research is 200 respondents wherein the data were analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS) version 19. The mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage were used to analyze the data from the completed questionnaires.

The demographic data of respondents is summarize in Table 5. This includes the demographic characteristics of the respondents: gender, age, marital status, nationality, educational level, main occupation, and monthly gross income, country of residence and length of stay in Chiang Mai.

Table 5 Respondents' Demographic Profile

| | | Frequency n=200 | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Gender | Male | 132 | 66.00 |
| | Female | 68 | 34.00 |
| Age | 30 years old and below | 63 | 31.50 |
| | 31-40 years old | 43 | 21.50 |
| | 41-50 years old | 47 | 23.50 |
| | 51 years old and above | 47 | 23.50 |
| Marital Status | Single | 44 | 22.00 |
| | Divorced/Separated | 14 | 7.00 |
| | Married | 141 | 70.50 |
| | Widowed | 1 | 0.50 |
| Education Level | Primary | 3 | 1.50 |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 92 | 46.00 |
| | Secondary | 71 | 35.50 |
| | Post-graduate | 34 | 17.00 |
| Nationality | Thai | 24 | 12.00 |
| | Malaysian | 25 | 12.50 |
| | Filipino | 16 | 8.00 |
| | Indonesian | 1 | 0.50 |
| | Bhutanese | 114 | 57.00 |
| | French | 20 | 10.00 |

Table 5 Continued

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----|-------|
| Main Occupation | Self-employed | 6 | 3.00 |
| | Government Employee | 142 | 71.00 |
| | Student | 22 | 11.00 |
| | Researcher | 5 | 2.50 |
| | Professional | 9 | 4.50 |
| | Administrative Job | 1 | 0.50 |
| | Farmer | 5 | 2.50 |
| | Retired | 6 | 3.00 |
| | Others | 4 | 2.00 |
| Income | 20000 and below | 119 | 59.50 |
| | 20001 – 30000 | 51 | 25.50 |
| | 30001 – 40000 | 17 | 8.50 |
| | 40001 – 50000 | 3 | 1.50 |
| | 50001 – 60000 | 4 | 2.00 |
| | 60001 – 70000 | 2 | 1.00 |
| | 70001 – 80000 | 2 | 1.00 |
| | 80001 and above | 2 | 1.00 |
| Country of Residence | Thailand | 24 | 12.00 |
| | Malaysia | 25 | 12.50 |
| | Philippines | 16 | 8.00 |
| | Indonesia | 1 | 0.50 |
| | Bhutan | 114 | 57.00 |
| | France | 20 | 10.00 |
| Length of Stay in Chiang Mai | 2 days | 15 | 7.50 |
| | 3 days | 11 | 5.50 |
| | 4 days | 11 | 5.50 |
| | 5 days | 21 | 10.50 |
| | One week | 60 | 30.00 |
| | One month | 10 | 5.00 |
| | Others | 72 | 36.00 |

The largest groups of respondents were Asians specifically the Bhutanese, since they were undergoing training in the University. Most of the respondents were first time in Maejo University. Moreover, majority of the respondents (66.00%) were male while female covered 34.00%. The highest level of education was bachelor's degree with 46.00%. About 70.00% of the respondents were married and 22.00% were single. The respondents were mostly between the ages of 18 to 30 years old with 31.00%. Most of the respondents were government employees comprising 71.00% and an earning of less than 20,000 Thai Baht a month with 59.00%. In addition, most of the respondents stay in Chiang Mai for 2 weeks at the average due to training.

SERVICE QUALITY

The objective of the analysis of the data collected from the survey is to answer the research questions that include finding out how tourists perceive service quality of the learning centers and whether these tourists are satisfied and would this lead to behavioral intentions.

In this study, service quality was analyzed by using a modified version of SERVQUAL. The range of service quality expectation items was from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). SERVQUAL, has originally 22-item, however, this study has considered a 7 dimensions with 30-items, which was based on previous researches. The SERVQUAL dimensions or attributes are main variables used in this study and were coded in order to ease the analysis of the data collected. The study included tangible sustainability and sustainable practices to complete the 7 attributes. Tangible sustainability is the agrotourism attractions fulfilling the needs of present tourists while sustainable practices are the eco-friendly activities that the learning center practices to keep the environment as well as the culture of the agrotourism destination.

Table 6 shows the mean scores of the 7 service attributes and an examination revealed that agrotourists have a hierarchy of service quality perceptions relating to the learning centers serving them. The most important service attributes appeared to be first, Responsiveness (mean= 4.25), second and third on the hierarchy were, Tangibility and Reliability (mean= 4.24), fourth was Empathy (mean= 4.20), fifth was Tangible Sustainability (mean= 4.12), sixth was Assurance (mean = 4.10), and seventh was Sustainable Practices (mean = 4.09). This suggests that each attribute was a determinant of service quality.

Table 6 Hierarchy of Service Attributes based on Mean

| Service Attributes | Mean |
|----------------------------|------|
| 1. Responsiveness | 4.25 |
| 2. Tangibility | 4.24 |
| 3. Reliability | 4.24 |
| 4. Empathy | 4.20 |
| 5. Tangible Sustainability | 4.12 |
| 6. Assurance | 4.10 |
| 7. Sustainable Practices | 4.09 |

Paired sample t-test was used to analyze the 7 service quality attributes that showed that the attributes were significantly different, suggesting that respondents distinguished between these attributes. Furthermore, Tables 7 to 13 show the means and percentages for the 7 attributes of the service quality aspect of the instrument. This was factor analyzed to reveal the attribute's characteristics and to figure out the underlying attribute of the learning centers' services.

Table 7 Empathy Attribute Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| The staff provides tourists with personal attention | 66 33.00 | 99 49.50 | 29 14.50 | 6 3.00 | - - | 4.13 |
| The staff understands the specific needs of tourists | 62 31.00 | 101 50.50 | 30 15.00 | 7 3.50 | - - | 4.09 |
| The staff treats tourists in a friendly manner | 96 48.00 | 86 43.00 | 13 6.50 | 4 2.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.36 |
| The staff provides assistance in other required areas | 76 38.00 | 96 48.00 | 25 12.50 | 3 1.50 | - - | 4.22 |
| Facilities are locates... | 71 35.50 | 103 51.50 | 22 11.00 | 4 2.00 | - - | 4.20 |

Under the empathy attribute, majority of the respondents agreed that the employees of the learning centers understand their specific needs (50.50%) while 49.50% agreed that the employees provide the tourists with personal attention.

These 2 statements under the empathy attribute have the highest percentages. In addition, the respondents also strongly agreed that the employees were friendly in dealing with them (48.00%). This was followed by respondents agreeing that the employees provide assistance in other required areas (48.00%). Although, these items were high, the empathy attribute also had one of the lowest disagree percentages with “the staff understands the specific needs of tourists” and “the staff provide assistance in other required areas” with 3.50% and 1.50% respectively. This implies that management should train the contact staffs to show empathy towards the tourists, especially when it comes to understanding their specific needs.

Table 8 Responsiveness Attribute Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| The staff provides details regarding services... | 64 32.00 | 107 53.50 | 27 13.50 | 1 0.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.16 |
| Provision of adequate information... | 56 28.00 | 117 58.50 | 25 12.50 | 2 1.00 | - - | 4.14 |
| Provides prompt response to tourists' requests | 75 37.50 | 101 50.50 | 21 10.50 | 1 0.50 | 2 1.00 | 4.23 |
| The staffs are polite... | 108 54.00 | 76 38.00 | 14 7.00 | 1 0.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.44 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|--------|------|
| The staff performs the service right the first time | 86 43.00 | 93 46.50 | 19 9.50 | 2 1.00 | - - | 4.31 |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|--------|------|

Under the 30 service quality attributes, most important to agrotourists was under the responsiveness attribute (mean= 4.25). This attribute also had the highest agreed percentage on “provision of adequate information about the service being delivered with 58.50%. With regards to the politeness, kindness, and staffs being educated, the respondents strongly agreed with 54.00%. Respondents also agreed that staffs provide details regarding the services and products being offered (53.50%). High percentage (50.50%) was observed in the respondent’s responses on the staffs providing prompt response to tourists’ requests. These were some of the most important among the responses on the responsiveness attributes. Responsiveness refers to the preparedness to help tourists and provide prompt service. This implies that agrotourism providers in order to satisfy conscious agrotourists should provide services that are courteous, informative, and convey a feeling of trust. Aside from being socially skilled, employees should be able to make visitor feel comfortable by the strong capacity for empathy, responsiveness, and compassion.

Table 9 Tangibility Attribute Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| Physical facilities and equipment are visually... | 61 30.50 | 111 55.50 | 25 12.50 | 2 1.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.15 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| Adequate equipment and capacity | 58 29.00 | 108 54.00 | 29 14.50 | 4 2.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.09 |
| Clean environment | 92 46.00 | 92 46.00 | 15 7.50 | - - | 1 0.50 | 4.37 |
| Professional appearance of the staffs | 95 47.50 | 88 44.00 | 16 8.00 | - - | 1 0.50 | 4.38 |
| Information center provides relevant information | 79 39.50 | 96 48.00 | 20 10.00 | 3 1.50 | 2 1.00 | 4.23 |

Majority of the respondents under tangibility attribute agreed with “physical facilities and equipment are visually aligned, in good condition and accessible” (55.50%) and “adequate equipment and capacity” (54.00%). Moreover, professional appearance of the staffs was strongly agreed upon by the respondents with 47.50% and clean environment with 46.00%. Within the tangibility attribute, about 45.00% expressed a strong feeling that staffs should show a professional appearance and management should provide a clean environment for agrotourists with mean of 4.38 and 4.37 respectively. Agrotourists also expected to receive a relevant information from the staffs with 48.00% agreeing on it. This implies that agrotourists were looking for adequate facilities, and equipment that are in good condition and accessible.

Table 10 Reliability Attribute Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| The staff provides prompt services | 87 43.50 | 89 44.50 | 22 11.00 | 2 1.00 | - - | 4.30 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------|------|
| The staff has the ability to perform... | 71 35.50 | 101 50.50 | 24 12.00 | 4 2.00 | - - | 4.20 |
| The staff shows sincere interest... | 79 39.50 | 93 46.50 | 24 12.00 | 4 2.00 | - - | 4.23 |
| The staff provides accurate information | 81 40.50 | 91 45.50 | 23 11.50 | 5 2.50 | - - | 4.24 |

Within the reliability attribute, the item “the staff has the ability to perform the promised service” was the most agreed by the respondents (50.50%). On the other hand, the item “the staff provides prompt service/s” had been strongly agreed by the agrotourists (43.50%). This item had high strongly agreed and agreed percentages. It cannot be overemphasized that agrotourists expect staffs to solve the problems and to show that they are willing and ready to serve them. Agrotourism management should train, encourage, and reward employees to convey a sense of credibility and compassion toward the tourists.

Table 11 Tangible Sustainability Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| There is a visual and appealing natural attractions | 90 45.00 | 85 42.50 | 22 11.00 | 3 1.50 | - - | 4.31 |
| Provision of non- | 64 32.00 | 99 49.50 | 27 13.50 | 9 4.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.08 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| crowded... | | | | | | |
| Provide nature-based activities | 71 35.50 | 90 45.00 | 27 13.50 | 7 3.50 | 5 2.50 | 4.07 |
| There is a minimal change in existing landforms... | 65 32.50 | 95 47.50 | 28 14.00 | 6 3.00 | 6 3.00 | 4.03 |

Lower percentages were noted under tangible sustainability. Although, the item “provision of non-crowded and unspoiled attractions” had the highest agreed percentage of 49.50% under this attribute. Agrotourists gave importance on this aspect for the tangible sustainability attribute. This was followed by the item “provide nature-based activities” wherein respondents agreed with 45.00%. Based on the values of the tangible sustainability attribute, it can be interpreted that agrotourists give importance on the preservation and protection of the environment and the physical landforms. Therefore, agrotourists expect the learning centers to plan for the developments that are environmentally friendly.

Table 12 Assurance Attribute Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| There is a reinforcement of tourist's confidence | 62 31.00 | 96 48.00 | 38 19.00 | 4 2.00 | - - | 4.08 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------|
| The learning centers provides adequate... | 74 37.00 | 105 52.50 | 20 10.00 | 1 0.50 | - - | 4.26 |
| Tourists are being assisted by appropriate... | 61 30.50 | 112 56.00 | 19 9.50 | 7 3.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.13 |
| Availability of experienced and competent... | 61 30.50 | 83 41.50 | 41 20.50 | 13 6.50 | 2 1.00 | 3.94 |

Assurance was the attribute that had the highest percentage of items with disagreed statements from the respondents among the 7 attributes of quality service. In addition, this attribute also had the highest percentage of disagreed statement among the 30-items in the service quality construct. The item “availability of experienced and competent staffs with fluent and understandable communication” had a 6.50% disagreement from the agrotourists. Since the learning centers have limitations, agrotourists experience problems including communications and cultural differences. On the other hand, the item that had the highest agreed percentage was “tourists are being assisted by appropriate and trained staffs” with a percentage of 56.00%. This implies that the learning centers should strive to be competent in terms of communication since it is very important especially in handling tourists. This should be taken into account since most of the tourists visiting the learning centers are foreign visitors.

Table 13 Sustainable Practices Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| Use of natural/local resources as equipment and facilities | 69 34.50 | 89 44.50 | 28 14.00 | 8 4.00 | 6 3.00 | 4.03 |
| There is an emphasis on recycling and reuse of product | 61 30.50 | 105 52.50 | 27 13.50 | 5 2.50 | 2 1.00 | 4.09 |
| The development is integrated with the local environment | 68 34.00 | 101 50.50 | 25 12.50 | 4 2.00 | 2 1.00 | 4.14 |

Sustainable practices was the seventh attribute to complete the service quality construct. A closer examination showed that within the sustainable practices attribute, the two items that received the most agreed values were “there is an emphasis on recycling and reuse of products” and “the development is integrated with the local environment/culture” with 52.50% and 50.50% respectively. There should be efforts made by the management to train the front-line staffs and implement sustainable practices toward the learning centers.

Looking at the mean scores and percentages, the majority of the respondents perceived the learning center attributes offer satisfactory services given the high percentages of agreed and strongly agreed quality service practices of the learning centers. However, there were items such as “availability of experienced and competent staffs with fluent and understandable communication” that the respondents perceived as low with a mean score of 3.94. This is low compared with other items on staffs’ competencies due to language barriers between the service provider and the tourists.

The results of service quality perceptions of agrotourists in this study were found to be different compared to other related studies. The most important service attributes for agrotourists in this study was found to be responsiveness. Almost 5 out of 5 of those surveyed strongly expected practical agrotourism activities. Since agrotourists emphasized seeing and saving natural habitats and undisturbed areas, the importance given to environmental issues in this study is not surprising. Due to agrotourists sensitivity, they tend to prefer services that were environmentally friendly. These results were evident in the hierarchy mentioned on Table 6 that sustainable practices and tangible sustainability were on the other end of the hierarchy.

Based on the result obtained in this study, agrotourism destinations that wish to attract agrotourists should see that their facilities are appropriate and safe for the environment and use equipment or technology that minimizes degradation. In other words, it appears that 4 out of 5 agrotourists expected the destination to have facilities located in unpolluted environments using indigenous or local material and expertise. Although, agrotourism is an exponent of sustainable tourism, it is expected to have development that respects the system that has direct positive impact on the environment.

Some of the techniques that can help promote environmental practices include use of alternative energy sources, conservation of water, reduction of wastage, use of local indigenous materials, application of local know-how, efficient waste disposable systems, and recycling of resources. These techniques can also be identified with the greening of the agricultural sector and making it organic, minimizing use of chemicals. Many agrotourism destination facilities, in order to be cost efficient and to create a positive marketing image, they are incorporating environmentally positive measures to conserve resources (Khan and Su, 2003).

TOURISTS SATISFACTION

The purpose of analyzing and exploring the satisfaction of tourists is to understand the complex relationships between service quality perceptions, tourists' satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. This construct was measured using a Likert scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This was divided into 3 parts: A is the management practices, policies, infrastructure, and facilities; B is the destination value and price; and; C is the destination's overall image.

Table 14 shows the means and percentages of the items under the tourists overall satisfaction constructs.

Table 14 Frequencies, Percentages and Mean Scores of Tourists Overall Satisfaction

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| Management Practices, Policies, Infrastructure and Facilities | | | | | | |
| The employees | 63 31.50 | 104 52.00 | 26 13.00 | 5 2.50 | 2 1.00 | 4.10 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| are very dependable | | | | | | |
| The employees are competent and professional | 75 37.50 | 98 49.00 | 16 8.00 | 4 2.00 | 7 3.50 | 4.15 |
| The employees are very responsive to tourists | 99 49.50 | 88 44.00 | 10 5.00 | 3 1.50 | - - | 4.41 |
| The learning centers have a high integrity | 86 43.00 | 99 49.50 | 11 5.50 | 3 1.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.33 |
| I am satisfied with the facilities and technology | 90 45.00 | 98 49.00 | 10 5.00 | 2 1.00 | - - | 4.38 |
| I am satisfied with the overall service | 84 42.00 | 102 51.00 | 9 4.50 | 4 2.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.32 |
| Destination Price/Value | | | | | | |
| The learning center offered good value for money | 69 34.50 | 100 50.00 | 25 12.50 | 4 2.00 | 2 1.00 | 4.15 |
| The time I spent in order | 63 31.50 | 117 58.50 | 14 7.00 | 5 2.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.18 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| to use the services is highly reasonable | | | | | | |
| The overall value of the learning center was high | 79 39.50 | 103 51.50 | 14 7.00 | 3 1.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.28 |
| The whole experience is worth the price | 94 47.00 | 93 46.50 | 10 5.00 | 2 1.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.38 |
| Destination's Overall Image | | | | | | |
| I am satisfied with the overall image of the learning centers | 100 50.00 | 85 42.50 | 11 5.50 | 3 1.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.40 |

In the aspect of tourists overall satisfaction, under the management practices, policies, infrastructures and facilities, most of the items have high scores with almost 5 out of 5 respondents agreeing on the items. The items “the employees are very dependable” and “I am satisfied with the overall service” have the highest agreed percentage of 52.00% and 51.00% respectively. This showed that agrotourists give importance on how they are treated by the learning center’s employees. Looking at the percentages and mean scores on Table 14, the majority of the respondents perceived that the learning centers offered satisfactory services.

Moreover, most of the tourists were satisfied with the learning center's price and value with the item "the time I spent in order to use the services is highly reasonable" with a 58.50% of the respondents agreed on it. The items, "the overall value of the learning centers was high" followed by "the learning centers offered good value for money" with 51.50% and 50.00% respectively. It cannot be overemphasized that agrotourists learned about the value of the learning centers. While the items under the destination's price and value were high, it cannot be overelaborated that the learning centers need to further enhance product offerings for greater value.

In addition, the overall image of the learning centers had one of the highest percentages among the tourists' satisfaction construct. The results showed that 50.00% of the respondents strongly agreed with their satisfaction on the overall image of the learning centers.

TOURISTS BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Behavioral intentions (BI) is a person's perceived likelihood or "subjective probability that he or she will engage in a given behavior". BI is behavior-specific and operationalized by direct questions such as "I intend to [behavior]," with Likert scale response choices to measure relative strength of intention. Intention has been represented in measurement by other synonyms (e.g., "I plan to [behavior]") and is distinct from similar concepts such as desire and self-prediction. Ajzen (1991) argued that behavioral intentions reflect how hard a person is willing to try, and how motivated he or she is, to perform the behavior. In this study, the behavioral intentions construct was divided into 2 categories: A – the destination behavioral intentions and loyalty and B – the loyalty and retention. This was operationalized with Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This was pertaining to loyalty commitment, revisit intentions and recommendation.

Table 15 shows the level of tourist's behavioral intentions.

Table 15 Frequencies, Percentages, and Mean Scores of Tourist's Behavioral Intentions

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| Destination's Behavioral Intentions / Loyalty | | | | | | |
| I will definitely recommend the learning centers to friend... | 98 49.00 | 88 44.00 | 10 5.00 | 2 1.00 | 2 1.00 | 4.39 |
| I will definitely say positive things about the learning centers... | 96 48.00 | 89 44.50 | 10 5.00 | 4 2.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.37 |
| I will encourage my friends and family to support the learning centers | 97 48.50 | 92 46.00 | 9 4.50 | 1 0.50 | 1 0.50 | 4.42 |
| Loyalty / Retention | | | | | | |
| I will most likely deal with the learning centers... | 89 44.50 | 94 47.00 | 14 7.00 | 2 1.00 | 1 0.50 | 4.34 |
| I will do more business with the learning center in the future | 88 44.00 | 88 44.00 | 24 12.00 | - - | - - | 4.32 |
| I will consider the learning centers my first choice to buy ... | 87 43.50 | 81 40.50 | 30 15.00 | 2 1.00 | - - | 4.26 |

On the aspect of tourists' behavioral intentions and loyalty, 49.00% of tourists strongly agreed on the loyalty to the learning centers and will encourage

friends and family to support the learning centers (48.50%). This was followed by the item “I will definitely say positive things about the learning centers to other people with a 48.00% strongly agreed respondents.

Moreover on the loyalty and retention, among the items that have the highest percentage was the item “I will most likely to deal with the learning centers the next time I will need this kind of service” with 47.00% of the respondents agreeing on this. This was followed by the item “I will do more business with the learning centers in the future with a 44.00% strongly agreeing agrotourists. The last item under this construct was “I will consider the learning centers my first choice to buy, with this kind of service” with a 43.50% strongly agreeing respondents. Technically, the results of the behavioral intentions speak that agrotourists were satisfied beyond their expectations and will definitely recommend and revisit the learning centers in the future.

HYPOTHESES TESTING OF SERVICE QUALITY, OVERALL SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

The main purpose of statistics is to test a hypothesis. This is a way to test results to see if it has meaningful outcomes. A research hypothesis is a specific, clear, and testable proposition or predictive statement about the possible outcome of a scientific research study based on a particular property of a population, such as presumed differences groups on a particular variable or relationships between variables.

In testing the hypothesis of this study, relating to the effects of the constructs, correlation, regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and t-test were undertaken to test for significant relations between the variables.

Tables 16, 17 and 18 show the t-test results of the service quality constructs among the 7 attributes: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangible sustainability, sustainable practices, and its 30 item service attributes. These tables were used for the analysis of the hypotheses.

Table 16 T-test of the 7 Service Attributes

| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | |
|----|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|-----------|
| | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| TA | 34.518 | 199 | .000 | 1.24400000 | 1.1729325 | 1.3150675 |
| RL | 32.254 | 199 | .000 | 1.24375000 | 1.1677100 | 1.3197900 |
| RN | 34.846 | 199 | .000 | 1.25700000 | 1.1858656 | 1.3281344 |
| AS | 27.595 | 199 | .000 | 1.10125000 | 1.0225533 | 1.1799467 |
| EP | 30.380 | 199 | .000 | 1.20100000 | 1.1230439 | 1.2789561 |
| TS | 25.112 | 199 | .000 | 1.12500000 | 1.0366592 | 1.2133408 |
| SP | 23.248 | 199 | .000 | 1.09000000 | .9975434 | 1.1824566 |

Table 16 shows that the 7 service attributes were significantly affecting the service quality. The measures were both significant $0.00 < p=0.05$. The values proved that there was a correlation among the 7 service attributes and service quality.

Table 17 T-test Result of the Service Quality

| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|-------|
| | T | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Physical facilities and equipment are visually...(TA1) | 22.982 | 199 | .000 | 1.145 | 1.05 | 1.24 |
| Adequate equipment and capacity(TA2) | 20.698 | 199 | .000 | 1.090 | .99 | 1.19 |
| Clean environment(TA3) | 29.033 | 199 | .000 | 1.370 | 1.28 | 1.46 |
| Professional appearance of the staffs(TA4) | 28.841 | 199 | .000 | 1.380 | 1.29 | 1.47 |
| Information center provides relevant information (TA5) | 22.686 | 199 | .000 | 1.235 | 1.13 | 1.34 |
| The staff provides prompt services(RL) | 26.246 | 199 | .000 | 1.305 | 1.21 | 1.40 |
| The staff has the ability to perform... (RL2) | 23.446 | 199 | .000 | 1.195 | 1.09 | 1.30 |
| The staff shows sincere interest... (RL3) | 23.713 | 199 | .000 | 1.235 | 1.13 | 1.34 |
| The staff provides accurate information(RL4) | 23.325 | 199 | .000 | 1.240 | 1.14 | 1.34 |
| The staff provides details regarding services... (RN1) | 23.273 | 199 | .000 | 1.160 | 1.06 | 1.26 |
| Provision of adequate information... (RN2) | 24.509 | 199 | .000 | 1.135 | 1.04 | 1.23 |
| Provides prompt response to tourists' requests(RN3) | 23.676 | 199 | .000 | 1.230 | 1.13 | 1.33 |
| The staffs are polite... (RN4) | 29.515 | 199 | .000 | 1.445 | 1.35 | 1.54 |
| The staff performs the service right the first time(RN5) | 27.181 | 199 | .000 | 1.315 | 1.22 | 1.41 |
| There is a reinforcement of tourist's confidence(AS1) | 20.116 | 199 | .000 | 1.080 | .97 | 1.19 |

Table 17 Continued

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------|-----|------|-------|------|------|
| The learning centers provides adequate... (AS2) | 27.349 | 199 | .000 | 1.260 | 1.17 | 1.35 |
| Tourists are being assisted by appropriate... (AS3) | 21.032 | 199 | .000 | 1.125 | 1.02 | 1.23 |
| Availability of experienced and competent... (AS4) | 14.329 | 199 | .000 | .940 | .81 | 1.07 |
| The staff provides tourists with personal attention(EP1) | 20.850 | 199 | .000 | 1.125 | 1.02 | 1.23 |
| The staff understands the specific needs of tourists(EP2) | 19.986 | 199 | .000 | 1.090 | .98 | 1.20 |
| The staff treats tourists in a friendly manner(EP3) | 26.098 | 199 | .000 | 1.360 | 1.26 | 1.46 |
| The staff provides assistance in other require areas(EP4) | 24.095 | 199 | .000 | 1.225 | 1.12 | 1.33 |
| Facilities are locates... (EP5) | 23.968 | 199 | .000 | 1.205 | 1.11 | 1.30 |
| There is a visual and appealing natural attractions(TS1) | 25.531 | 199 | .000 | 1.310 | 1.21 | 1.41 |
| Provision of non-crowded... (TS2) | 18.563 | 199 | .000 | 1.080 | .97 | 1.19 |
| Provide nature-based activities(TS3) | 16.455 | 199 | .000 | 1.075 | .95 | 1.20 |
| There is a minimal change in existing landforms... (TS4) | 15.801 | 199 | .000 | 1.035 | .91 | 1.16 |
| Use of natural/local resources as equipment and facilities(SP1) | 15.274 | 199 | .000 | 1.035 | .90 | 1.17 |
| There is an emphasis on recycling are reuse of product(SP2) | 19.498 | 199 | .000 | 1.090 | .98 | 1.20 |
| The development is integrated with the local environment(SP3) | 20.614 | 199 | .000 | 1.145 | 1.04 | 1.25 |

Table 18 Correlations of Service Quality, Visitor Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intentions

| | | Correlations | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | TA | RL | RN | AS | EP | TS | SP | A | B | C | D | E |
| TA | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .613** | .599** | .553** | .474** | .377** | .411** | .513** | .528** | .474** | .475** | .425** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| RL | Pearson Correlation | .613** | 1 | .680** | .599** | .589** | .383** | .422** | .547** | .530** | .465** | .526** | .440** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| RN | Pearson Correlation | .599** | .680** | 1 | .556** | .593** | .401** | .456** | .551** | .560** | .470** | .506** | .468** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| AS | Pearson Correlation | .553** | .599** | .556** | 1 | .702** | .607** | .582** | .582** | .609** | .545** | .544** | .538** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| EP | Pearson Correlation | .474** | .589** | .593** | .702** | 1 | .549** | .576** | .607** | .659** | .570** | .593** | .574** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| TS | Pearson Correlation | .377** | .383** | .401** | .607** | .549** | 1 | .701** | .600** | .596** | .436** | .472** | .505** |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 18 Continued

| | | Correlations | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | TA | RL | RN | AS | EP | TS | SP | A | B | C | D | E |
| SP | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .411** .000 200 | .422** .000 200 | .456** .000 200 | .582** .000 200 | .576** .000 200 | .701** .000 200 | 1 200 | .585** .000 200 | .632** .000 200 | .575** .000 200 | .467** .000 200 | .478** .000 200 |
| A | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .513** .000 200 | .547** .000 200 | .551** .000 200 | .582** .000 200 | .607** .000 200 | .600** .000 200 | .585** .000 200 | 1 200 | .706** .000 200 | .633** .000 200 | .651** .000 200 | .619** .000 200 |
| B | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .528** .000 200 | .530** .000 200 | .560** .000 200 | .609** .000 200 | .659** .000 200 | .596** .000 200 | .632** .000 200 | .706** .000 200 | 1 200 | .676** .000 200 | .648** .000 200 | .589** .000 200 |
| C | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .474** .000 200 | .465** .000 200 | .470** .000 200 | .545** .000 200 | .570** .000 200 | .436** .000 200 | .575** .000 200 | .633** .000 200 | .676** .000 200 | 1 200 | .653** .000 200 | .501** .000 200 |
| D | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .475** .000 200 | .526** .000 200 | .506** .000 200 | .544** .000 200 | .593** .000 200 | .472** .000 200 | .467** .000 200 | .651** .000 200 | .648** .000 200 | .653** .000 200 | 1 200 | .650** .000 200 |
| E | Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed) N | .425** .000 200 | .440** .000 200 | .468** .000 200 | .538** .000 200 | .574** .000 200 | .505** .000 200 | .478** .000 200 | .619** .000 200 | .589** .000 200 | .501** .000 200 | .650** .000 200 | 1 200 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Tables 16, 17 and 18 show the relationships of the service quality, visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions constructs. The results showed significance among the variables and the items in each variable that correlate with each other. The correlations showed a significant correlation. These results also stated whether the hypotheses were supported or not. Basis of the data in the hypotheses were Tables 16, 17 and 18.

Hypothesis 1 – Service quality positively affects tourists’ levels of overall satisfaction.

Table 19 Service Quality on its Relationship with Tourists Level of Overall Satisfaction

| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|--------|
| | T | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| total | 39.032 | 199 | .000 | 1.25266 | 1.1894 | 1.3159 |

Table 19 shows the relationship between service quality and tourists’ levels of overall satisfaction. Based on the results in Table 19, learning centers service quality demonstrated a direct effect on the relationship with visitor satisfaction. The Sig (2-tailed)/2 equals to 0.000 is less than the level of significance ($p < 0.05$), which rejects the null hypothesis (H_0). Therefore, service quality positively affects tourists’ levels of overall satisfaction. The hypothesized relationship were supported, service quality was a significant predictor of visitor satisfaction.

Furthermore, all 7 attributes have a significant linkage with visitors overall satisfaction. However, the strongest linkage was with empathy attribute with an R

square of .509. This attribute had a much stronger linkage with satisfaction than did the other 6 attributes.

Table 20 Empathy and Visitors Overall Satisfaction

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Empathy | .713 ^a | .509 | .507 | .35767 |
| Sustainable Practices | .652 ^a | .425 | .422 | .38711 |
| Tangibility | .574 ^a | .329 | .326 | .41800 |
| Reliability | .595 ^a | .354 | .351 | .41027 |
| Responsiveness | .606 ^a | .367 | .363 | .40623 |
| Assurance | .670 ^a | .449 | .446 | .37904 |
| Tangible Sustainability | .616 ^a | .379 | .376 | .40223 |

The findings indicated that the data from the measure of service quality had a significant effect on tourist's perceptions of overall agrotourism service quality. The measures were both significant because Sig (2-tailed)/2 equals to 0.000 which is less than the level of significance $p < 0.05$, which rejects the H₀. Therefore, quality of experience positively affects tourists' perceptions of overall agrotourism service quality. The better fit of the observed measures meant that hypothesis 1 was confirmed and supported.

For this interrelationship leading to satisfaction, it modeled service quality as a direct determinant. The results consistently supported the hypothesis, as service quality in the overall sample was significant predictor of satisfaction. The parameter estimate for the relationship of the service quality and visitor satisfaction was strong and consistent with the suggested direction in the hypothesis. Previous studies have suggested that service quality directly and significantly influences satisfaction (Baker and Crompton, 2000).

Hypothesis 2 - Overall agrotourism service quality is positively associated with tourist's behavioral intentions

To support the foregoing findings, an analysis looking at the behavioral intentions among the visitors of the learning centers was undertaken.

Table 21 Analysis of Variance of Overall Agrotourism Service Quality and Tourist's Behavioral Intentions

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 25.897 | 1 | 25.897 | 383.288 | .000 ^a |
| Residual | 13.378 | 198 | .068 | | |
| Total | 39.274 | 199 | | | |

Table 21 shows the analysis of variance result of hypothesis 2. The results indicated that the service quality value path was consistently significant in the overall attributes. Since Sig (1-tailed) equals to 0.000 that is less than the level of significance, which is, $p < 0.05$ that rejects H0. Therefore, overall agrotourism service quality is positively associated with tourist's behavioral intentions and the proposed hypothesis was confirmed and supported.

Table 22 Hypothesis 2 Regression Result

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .812 ^a | .659 | .658 | .25993 | 1.698 |

The result in Table 22 further favored hypothesis 2 as it indicated a significant path with the service quality, R square = .659 with behavioral intentions. An analyses of the industry yielded similar results, as service quality was significantly related to behavioral intentions. Accordingly, several studies have showed service quality as an antecedent to behavioral intentions and found a significant link (Bitner, 1990, Boulding et al., 1993, Zeithaml et al., 1996). Other evidences have also been gathered in other fields for the direct impact of quality perception on customers' behavioral intentions (Gooding, 1995).

A significant link between service quality and behavioral intentions would imply that destination managers have a direct means of influencing visitors' post experience behavior, and thereby the ability to mitigate the possibly detrimental effects of external factors influencing visitor satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 – Overall agrotourism satisfaction is positively associated with visitors' behavioral intentions.

Table 23 Level of Significance of Overall Agrotourism Satisfaction and Visitors' Behavioral Intentions

| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|--------|
| | T | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Part3 | 36.801 | 199 | .000 | 1.32503 | 1.2540 | 1.3960 |

Table 23 shows the significance of overall tourist's satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The result shows that Sig (2-tailed)/2 equals to 0.000, which is less than the level of significance, which is, $p < 0.05$ that rejects the null hypothesis (H_0).

Therefore, overall agrotourism satisfaction was positively associated with visitor's behavioral intentions.

Behavioral intentions consisted of two items – as repurchase intention and recommendation intention. The evidence for the significant impact of satisfaction on behavioral intentions arises from different service industries and previous studies (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Bitner, 1990, Woodside et al., 1989). The results proved the positive relationship between tourist's satisfaction and behavioral intentions that supported the hypothesis.

This therefore conclude that service quality and visitor satisfaction have significant correlation with behavioral intentions. Both constructs were directly related to behavioral intentions. Chi and Qu (2008) arrived at a similar conclusion that service quality attributes and overall satisfaction are both determinants of behavioral intentions and loyalty. In other words, the relationship between quality and loyalty was partly mediated by overall satisfaction. Likewise, service quality and satisfaction both influenced tourist's behavior, whereby service quality affects behavior directly through satisfaction (Baker and Crompton, 2000). Moreover, in the study of Chen and Tsai (2007) on investigating structural relationships between service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions for air passengers, it stated that both perceived value and satisfaction have significant positive effects on behavioral intentions. Both satisfaction and perceived value were direct antecedents of behavioral intentions (Cronin et al., 2000). Research studies have established the antecedent, mediating and consequent relationships among customer perceptions of service quality, customer satisfaction, value, and post-purchase behavioral intentions (Zeithaml et al., 1996, Baker and Crompton, 2000, Cronin et al., 2000). Theory suggested that increasing customer retention is a major key to the ability of a service provider to generate profits (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

CHAPTER VI

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF MAEJO UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

The study of the strategic management aspect of the learning centers was done by conducting a survey with the heads and employees of the different learning centers of Maejo University. A structured strategic management questionnaire was administered to 30 employees. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents during the first to the second quarter of 2018. 25 questionnaires were thoroughly filled and returned representing 83.33% rate.

The data analysis for the strategic management construct included the background and the demographic profiles of the respondents. Part II, III, IV and V examined the strategic management practices of the different learning centers and its effect on employees' performance and their capability of delivering quality service to tourists. The statements for Part II, IV, and V of the survey questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale – strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. While Part III, also used a 5-point Likert scale but with different measures – excellent, good, fair, poor, and very poor. Higher analysis and tests such as correlation were done using SPSS version 19.

The analysis in Table 24 shows that majority of the respondents (64.00%) were male while female covered 36.00%. The highest level of education was postgraduate degree with 60.00%. About 60.00% of the respondents were married and 40.00% were single. The respondents were mostly between the ages of 40 to more than 50 years old with 64.00%. In addition to their academic and professional qualifications, most of the respondents occupied top management positions with good years of service in the University with 60.00%.

Table 24 Respondents' Demographic Profile

| | | n=25 | % |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------|--------|
| Gender | Male | 16 | 64.00 |
| | Female | 9 | 36.00 |
| Age | 30 years old below | 3 | 12.00 |
| | 31-40 years old | 6 | 24.00 |
| | 41-50 years old | 7 | 28.00 |
| | More than 51 years old | 9 | 36.00 |
| Marital Status | Single | 10 | 40.00 |
| | Married | 15 | 60.00 |
| Nationality | Thai | 25 | 100.00 |
| Academic Qualifications | Bachelor's Degree | 8 | 32.00 |
| | Postgraduate: Ph.D. | 15 | 60.00 |
| | Postgraduate : MA | 2 | 8.00 |
| Designation | Upper Management | 15 | 60.00 |
| | Middle Management | 8 | 32.00 |
| | Technical Staff | 2 | 8.00 |

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Strategic management provides overall direction to an organization and involves specifying the organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve those objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the plans. The results in this study, suggested that there is relationship among the constructs.

Tables 25 to 26 show the percentages of strategic management process, implementation of strategies, operational performance and the learning centers ability to attract and satisfy tourists.

Table 25 Strategic Management Process Frequencies and Percentages

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| Environmental Scanning | 4 16.00 | 7 28.00 | 14 56.00 | - - | - - | 3.60 |
| Strategy Formulation | 2 8.00 | 14 56.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.72 |
| Strategy Implementation | 3 12.00 | 9 36.00 | 13 52.00 | - - | - - | 3.60 |
| Evaluation and Control | 3 12.00 | 8 32.00 | 14 56.00 | - - | - - | 3.56 |

The analysis in Table 25 shows that respondents indicated that the learning centers conduct environmental scanning with 28.00% of the respondents agreed on the item. While 56.00% of them agreed that, the strategies were formulated in line with the university's vision and mission statements. 36.00% of the respondents also agreed that strategies were implemented and in place. This revealed that the learning centers practiced strategic management as indicated by the results. This also showed that respondents agreed on the learning centers clear strategic goals and encourage participation of employees in decision-making. The respondents also indicated 32.00% agreement that the learning centers regularly engaged in the evaluation and control of the learning centers' activities and performance results. This showed that the learning centers adequately employed the tools of environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and

evaluation and control to keep such in good shape. The results of this study were quite contrary to the findings of (Muogbo, 2013).

Table 26 Implementation of Strategies Frequencies and Percentages

| Item and Mean | Excellent (freq. and %) | Good (freq. and %) | Fair (freq. and %) | Poor (freq. and %) | Very Poor (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| Implementation : Examine the extent of practice of strategic management process in your learning center | 5 20.00 | 13 52.00 | 7 28.00 | - - | - - | 3.92 |
| Implementation : The cooperation existing between the various internal functions of the organization when pursuing overall strategic objectives | 1 4.00 | 11 44.00 | 13 52.00 | - - | - - | 3.52 |

On the other hand, Table 26 shows the results on the implementation of strategies. The respondents agreed that the management examine the extent of

practice of strategic management process in the learning centers (50.00%). While 44.00% of the respondents agreed that there is cooperation existing between the various internal functions of the organization when pursuing overall strategic objectives with a mean score of 3.52.

Table 27 Learning Centers' Operational Performance Frequencies and Percentages

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| It boosts efficiency | 1 4.00 | 14 56.00 | 10 40.00 | - - | - - | 3.64 |
| It enhances timely delivery of service | 3 12.00 | 13 52.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.76 |
| It aids the utilization of human and material resources | 3 12.00 | 13 52.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.76 |
| It brings about the innovation of products | 3 12.00 | 10 40.00 | 12 48.00 | - - | - - | 3.64 |
| Product quality of the learning center is improved | 2 8.00 | 14 56.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.72 |
| Products are based on modern technological advancements | 2 8.00 | 12 48.00 | 11 44.00 | - - | - - | 3.64 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|-------------|--------|--------|------|
| There is reliability in service delivery | 3 12.00 | 12 48.00 | 10 40.00 | - - | - - | 3.72 |
| Solving problems or issues is effective | 2 8.00 | 12 48.00 | 11 44.00 | - - | - - | 3.64 |

The analysis in Table 27 shows the effect of strategic management process on the operational performance of the learning centers. The respondents indicated that strategic management boosts their learning centers efficiency; it reduces costs and increases productivity. This was confirmed by a percentage value of 56.00%. 52.00% the respondents agreed that strategic management aids the timely delivery of service of the learning centers, which was attested to by a mean value of 3.76. However, only 13.00% of the respondents agreed that strategic management aids in the utilization of human and material resources and this was confirmed by a mean value of 3.76. This item showed a very low percentage which should be addressed by the administration. The analysis further revealed that the 40.00% respondents agreed that strategic management brings about the innovation of products. In addition, 56.00% of the respondents agreed that product quality of the learning centers is improved. This depicted that almost all the respondents indicated that strategic management improves the product quality of their learning center. Furthermore, 48.00% of the respondents agreed that through strategic management, the learning centers products were based on modern technological advancements and solving problems or issues is effective. This was also attested to by 3.64 mean value for both items. These results were consistent with Muogbo (2013) and Covin and Slevin (1989). According to Monday et al. (2015), their study showed that large-scale manufacturing firms adequately engage the tools of strategic management to gain competitive advantages.

Table 28 Learning Centers Ability to Attract and Satisfy Tourists Frequencies and Percentages

| Item and Mean | Strongly Agree (freq. and %) | Agree (freq. and %) | Neutral (freq. and %) | Disagree (freq. and %) | Strongly Disagree (freq. and %) | Mean |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| Our learning center gained market leaderships | 1 4.00 | 10 40.00 | 14 56.00 | - - | - - | 3.48 |
| Products of learning center are readily available to the market | 3 12.00 | 14 56.00 | 8 32.00 | - - | - - | 3.80 |
| Strategic management enhances marketing strategies and visitors retention | 2 8.00 | 13 52.00 | 10 40.00 | - - | - - | 3.68 |
| Strategic management enhances our learning center's flexibility to | 2 8.00 | 10 40.00 | 13 52.00 | - - | - - | 3.56 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|--------|--------|------|
| respond quickly to changes in the business environment | | | | | | |
| There is overall service quality as perceived by tourists | 3 12.00 | 13 52.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.76 |
| There is quality in visitor relationship | 3 12.00 | 13 52.00 | 9 36.00 | - - | - - | 3.76 |

The analysis in Table 28 showed the effect of strategic management on the learning centers' ability to attract and satisfy tourists. The analysis showed that majority of the respondents agreed that their learning centers gained market leadership due to strategic management practices (40.00%). Results also showed that 56.00% of the respondents agreed that the learning centers' products were readily available in the market, and it was confirmed by a mean value of 3.80. Besides these, 40.00% of the respondents agreed that strategic management enhances flexibility to respond quickly to changes in the agrotourism environments while 52.00% of the respondents agreed that strategic management enhances the marketing strategies and visitor retention. The items "there is overall service quality as perceived by tourists" and "there is quality in visitor relationship" both have a 52.00% agreed responses from the respondents.

HYPOTHESES TESTING FOR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The purpose of this part of the study is to validate the conceptual framework for strategic management construct. This included the strategic management process, implementation of the strategies, learning center's operational performance, and its ability to attract and satisfy tourists. This was done to test the proposed hypothesis through correlation.

Table 29 to 31 show the means and standard deviations of the different parts of the strategic management construct, levels of significance and correlation to test the hypotheses.

Table 29 Mean and Standard Deviation of Strategic Management Practices

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-------|----|------|----------------|-----------------|
| Part2 | 25 | 3.62 | .658 | .132 |
| Part4 | 25 | 3.69 | .617 | .123 |
| Part3 | 25 | 3.72 | .597 | .119 |
| Part5 | 25 | 3.67 | .592 | .118 |

Table 30 Correlations of Strategic Management Process, Strategies, Operational Performance and the Learning Center's Ability to Attract and Satisfy Tourists

| | | Part2 | Part4 | Part3 | Part5 |
|-------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Part2 | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .837** | .832** | .844** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Part4 | Pearson Correlation | .837** | 1 | .915** | .971** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Part3 | Pearson Correlation | .832** | .915** | 1 | .939** |

| | | | | | |
|-------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Part5 | Pearson Correlation | .844** | .971** | .939** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |

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

Table 31 Significance Level of Strategic Management

| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|----|-----------------|-----------------|---|-------|
| | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Part2 | 4.712 | 24 | .000 | .620 | .35 | .89 |
| Part4 | 5.594 | 24 | .000 | .690 | .44 | .94 |
| Part3 | 6.035 | 24 | .000 | .720 | .47 | .97 |
| Part5 | 5.685 | 24 | .000 | .673 | .43 | .92 |

Hypothesis 1 - Strategic management has a significant effect on the learning centers' operational performance.

To test the hypothesis 1 of this study “strategic management has a significant effect on the learning centers’ operational performance, the level of practice of strategic management and the operational performance of the learning centers were regressed. From the analysis on Tables 29, 30 and 31, it showed that there was a positive relationship between strategic management process and the learning centers operational performance because Sig is equals to 0.000, which is less than the level

of significance, which is $p < 0.05$. This rejects H_0 ; therefore, strategic management had significant effect on the learning center's operational performance.

Table 32 Test on Strategic Management Process and Learning Center's Operational Performance (R Square Result)

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .837 ^a | .700 | .687 | .368 | 2.533 |

Furthermore, the analysis of the R Square in Table 32 showed that strategic management practice had a significant effect on the learning centers operational performance. The results proved that there was a strong and positive relationship between strategic management and the operational performance of the learning centers (R square = .700). This implies that strategic management is directly related to the learning centers operational performance and that as the level of practice of strategic management increased, the operational performance of the learning centers increased. Table 33 also shows the analysis of variance for the strategic management process and the learning centers operational performance that showed significance among the variables ($F=53.690$, $p<0.05$).

Table 33 ANOVA of Strategic Management Process and the Learning Centers Operational Performance

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 7.274 | 1 | 7.274 | 53.690 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 3.116 | 23 | .135 | | |
| | Total | 10.390 | 24 | | | |

These results were consistent with previous similar studies by Covin and Slevin (1989) and Muogbo (2013) which revealed that strategic management enhanced operational performance as well as the structural development of the

organizations. These results were also consistent with the study of Monday, et. al. (2015), they concluded that strategic management had a significant effect on the firms' business performance. In addition, strategic management had a positive relationship with the firms' operational performance.

Hypothesis 2 - There is a positive relationship between strategic management and the ability to attract and satisfy tourists

Table 34 Test on the Strategic Management Process and Learning Center's Ability to Attract and Satisfy Tourists

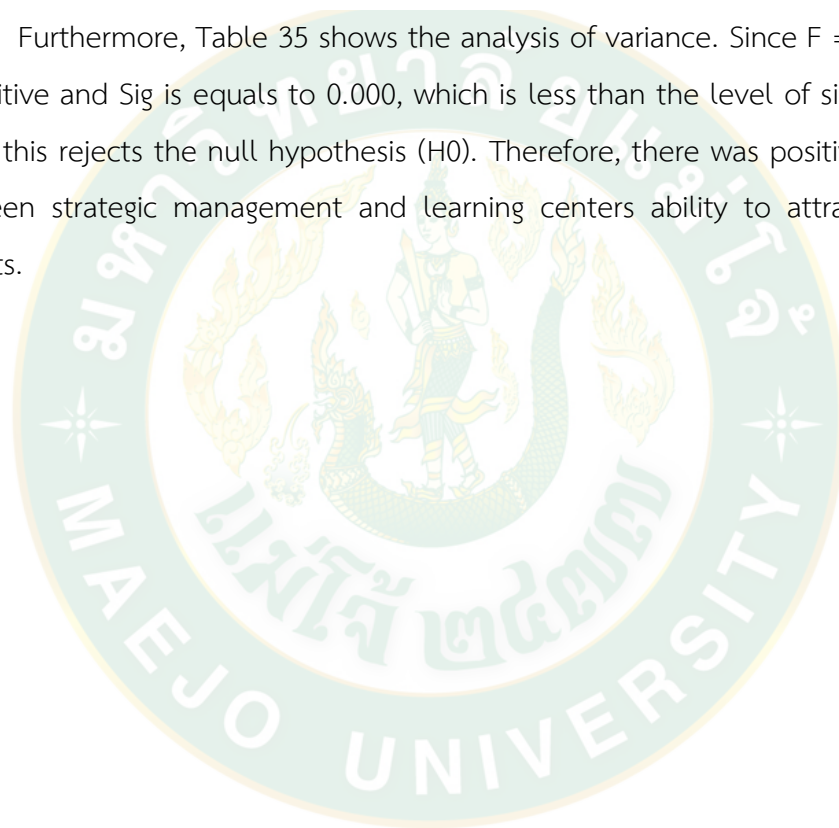
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .844 ^a | .713 | .701 | .360 | 2.785 |

To test the hypothesis 2 of the study "there is a positive relationship between strategic management and learning centers ability to attract and satisfy tourists," correlation analysis was ran in Table 34. The results showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between strategic management and the ability of the learning centers to attract and satisfy tourists (R square = .713, $p < 0.05$). This implies that strategic management is directly related to learning center's ability to attract and satisfy tourists; that is, as strategic management practice increases, the level of the ability to attract and satisfy tourists also increases. As noted by Dauda et al. (2010), strategic management process enhances firm's market share and competitive advantage.

Table 35 ANOVA of Strategic Management Process and Learning Center's Ability to Attract and Satisfy Tourists

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Regression | 7.410 | 1 | 7.410 | 57.185 | .000 ^a |
| Residual | 2.980 | 23 | .130 | | |
| Total | 10.390 | 24 | | | |

Furthermore, Table 35 shows the analysis of variance. Since $F = 57.185$ which is positive and Sig is equals to 0.000, which is less than the level of significance ($p < 0.05$), this rejects the null hypothesis (H_0). Therefore, there was positive relationship between strategic management and learning centers ability to attract and satisfy tourists.



CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic management is an extremely important aspect of organizational management. Strategic management and planning create a comprehensive set of procedures that will govern the future decisions of the organization. By creating this type of structured operation, organizations are able to improve their efficiency, reduce their expenses, and consolidate their initiatives. Most organizations form strategic planning; they have a series of initiatives and an idea of their goals. Nevertheless, where most organizations falter is in their strategic management.

The strategic process begins with strategic planning, at which point the organization decides upon its mission statement and objectives. Through the process of strategic planning, an organization will identify its major hurdles and determine the best ways to take advantage of its resources and environment. Once this is complete, the strategic management process begins. Here, the organization will need to determine both short-term and long-term methods to leverage its resources in order to meet its goals.

Strategic management and strategic planning give an organization a direction to move in. Employees, managerial staff, and upper-level management will all be working together to achieve goals. Through this focus, the organization can ensure that their operations are as efficient and effective as possible. The decision making process is further streamlined because the organization knows exactly what it is working towards and what it needs to accomplish these goals. Tourists can be very powerful in terms of influencing and dictating the agrotourism service providers.

Nevertheless, management should define strategy, vision, mission, and objectives of the organization as well as actual and future potentials of the agrotourism from its position to the local and international tourism. Accordingly, there are many opportunities where organization can progress and heighten

knowledge of tourism management; one is through systematic approach and development of strategic competitive advantages. The development of modern tourism features such as strategic purpose, professionalism, efficiency, innovation, creativity, and sustainable development will eventually lead to a new, enriched, and unique tourism product.

Moreover, tourists' satisfaction should be considered a vital component of any organization because it provides a metric that can be used to measure and improve organization's performance from tourist's perspective. It is not only a leading indicator of consumer repurchases intentions and loyalty, but it is also a great way to understand if they will become long-term repeat customers or even advocates. On the other hand, it can also provide the initial warning signs that a tourist is unhappy and potentially at risk of leaving. With all this considered, tourist satisfaction can provide businesses with crucial information to understand what aspects are successful and where improvements need to be made.

When tourists spend money, they are likely to return to a business they know and with which they have a positive association. Quality customer service is therefore directly linked to customer retention. Ultimately, all employees should focus on enhancing customer loyalty. Simply stated, if customers had a positive customer experience, they will come back; if they do not, they are bound to move on to a competitor. Ultimately, developing a positive relationship with tourists through high-quality service should benefit the organization. Tourists have the power to influence organizations with what they want and that provided them with great experience.

SUMMARY

This study presented a relationship model between service quality, overall tourist's satisfaction, and behavioral intentions for the Maejo University's learning centers and its strategic management practices. From the evidence, the analysis

showed that service quality and overall tourist's satisfaction were found to have direct influenced on tourist's behavioral intentions. This study also showed that the practice of strategic management was positively related to boosting the learning center's performance and would eventually vibrate to visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

Moreover, the findings showed that agrotourists distinguished between the 7 service attributes and showed a hierarchy of service quality perception. The highest on the hierarchy of service quality was responsiveness and the lowest was sustainable practices. This implies that agrotourists place more emphasis on staffs competencies and how these employees deal with tourists. The processes of service delivery such as friendliness, courtesy, efficiency, reliability, staff competence, etc. and the outcomes of services such as facilities, educational activities combined with leisure create quality in tourism. Likewise, agrotourists look for appropriate facilities and equipment or development that is integrated with the local environment and culture. This can be interpreted that environmental issues such as respect for the environment were considered also by agrotourists.

In addition, the results of this study revealed 7 service attributes: responsiveness, tangibility, reliability, empathy, tangible sustainability, assurance, and sustainable practices were the outcome of the hierarchy based on respondent's degree of importance. Evidence showed that the agrotourists service quality perception of the learning centers were comparable to the values reported by other studies. It is also clear that the learning center visitors were sensitive towards service quality; that service quality attributes were found to be significant and influenced the visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions; and that, service quality directly influenced behavioral intentions (commitment, revisit intentions, and recommendations). Based on the results tested for visitor satisfaction and its effect to behavioral intentions, it was found out to be significant and had influenced behavioral intentions.

On the other hand, the analysis obtained from the respondents of Maejo University's heads and employees of the learning centers and the interpretation of the tested hypotheses, it was found that there was a significant relationship between strategic management and learning center's performance. In addition, strategic management was practiced to a significant extent in the different leaning centers of Maejo University. Although, the results were on the average compared to other similar studies that found high mean values and percentages. It is important for the learning centers to practice strategic management since it is a genuine tool for improving the performance of the organization and would eventually lead to visitor satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Visitor perceptions of the quality of a tourist's destination, satisfaction with their experience and the resulting behavioral intentions are vital for successful destination management and marketing. This simply indicates that an integrated and holistic managerial approach is required within the organization. The learning center's offerings should be shaped in an ongoing process of evaluating visitor's quality perceptions regarding destination attributes, visitor's satisfaction, and their future behavioral intentions. Therefore, a tourist supply at the destination level should not be looked upon as a bundle of just destination attributes, but rather as a product of integrated marketing efforts directed towards creating visitor satisfaction and loyalty.

The purpose of analyzing and exploring the satisfaction of tourists is to understand the complex relationships between these variables. In the study of Monday et al. (2015), they recommended that organizations, whether manufacturing or service, should give adequate attention to strategic management, as it is a critical success factor for improving performance.

Moreover, Table 36 summarizes the test results done for the proposed hypotheses. The tests showed that the proposed hypotheses were confirmed and supported.

Table 36 Summary of the Hypotheses Testing Results

| Number | Hypotheses | Testing Results |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| H1 | Service Quality Affects Tourists' Levels of Overall Satisfaction | Supported |
| H2 | Overall Agrotourism Service Quality Affects Tourist's Behavioral Intentions | Supported |
| H3 | Overall Agrotourism Satisfaction Affects Tourist's Behavioral Intentions | Supported |
| H4 | Strategic Management has a Significant Effect on the Learning Centers Operational Performance | Supported |
| H5 | There is a Positive Relationship between Strategic Management and Tourist's Satisfaction | Supported |

IMPLICATIONS

This study presented unique contributions to the existing body of knowledge on strategic management practices of agrotourism providers and the analysis on the quality of service they provide to visitors and their satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The study had answered the research objectives in evaluating the service quality, overall satisfaction, and behavioral intentions, as well as the strategic management practices of the university and its effect on the performance of employees providing services to tourists.

Furthermore, the study findings have implications on resources planning. This takes into account the importance of the human resources in pursuing the goals of the organization. Based on the findings, tourists were keen to service providers who are empathetic, one that understands their specific needs, and provides them with personal attention. This implies that management should train the employees especially those in contact with tourists to show empathy towards their visitors. Likewise, tourists looked for a more responsive service provider. The one that

provides a prompt response to tourist's requests. It cannot be overemphasized that agrotourists expect staffs to solve the problems and show that they are ready and willing to serve them. This implies that agrotourism service providers in order to satisfy conscious agrotourists, should provide services that are courteous, informative, and convey a feeling of trust between them. Aside from social skills, employees should be able to make visitor feel comfortable by the strong capacity for empathy, responsiveness, and compassion. Agrotourism management should train, encourage, and reward employees to convey a sense of credibility and compassion toward the tourists. Since the learning centers have limitations, agrotourists experienced problems including communication and cultural differences. The learning centers should strive to be competent in terms of communications since it is very important especially in handling tourists. This should be taken into account since most of the tourists visiting the learning centers are foreign visitors.

The results of the behavioral intentions construct showed that the agrotourists were satisfied with the service beyond their expectations and will definitely recommend and revisit the learning centers. While the agrotourists were highly satisfied with the service and experience they have with the learning centers, it cannot be overemphasized that the learning centers need to further enhance product offerings for greater value.

Likewise, agrotourists gave importance on the preservation and protection of the environment. This was due to agrotourists sensitivity that they tend to prefer services that are environmentally friendly. The learning centers should see that their facilities are appropriate and safe for the environment and should use equipment or technology that minimizes degradation. There should be efforts by the management to train the front-line employees to implement sustainable practices toward the learning centers. Therefore, agrotourists expect the learning centers to plan for the developments that are environmentally friendly.

On the other hand, this study should enable the university to build a trusting and committed workforce that will have long-term benefits, which in turn, should

provide higher productivity levels, improve financial performance, and overall learning center's enhancement. This study emphasizes on the importance accorded to strategic management practices in the organizations.

Furthermore, the research findings will contribute to the body of knowledge in strategic management and service quality hence; this will provide vital information to the administrators on the organizational benefits associated with loyal, committed employees. Through effective strategic management, agrotourism providers can maintain high employee satisfaction leading to satisfied visitors and positive agrotourism performance. Study implications will contribute towards agrotourism continual pursuit for growth, affluence, success, and sustainable development.

This concludes the main idea of the theories that established the relationship between strategic management to its employees performance that eventually resonate to the provision of quality service and therefore contribute to the satisfaction of the tourists. With respect to practical contributions, the findings of the study can be used as a guideline by the University management to improve the quality of service towards the clients of Maejo University, particularly, its visitors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the learning centers should make it a matter of policy to give adequate attention to strategic management with focus on organization's core resources, capabilities, and systems in order to create advantages. Developments should focus on some environmentally friendly measures that can be implemented to satisfy the service quality perceptions of tourists. This can be summarized as follows:

1. management that is conscious toward the protection of the environment. Agrotourism in relation to sustainable tourism is expected to have development that respects the system that has direct positive impact on the environment.
2. provide facilities that are based on modern yet practical technological advancements but still harmonious with nature. These can also be identified with the greening and having an organic mind set.
3. policies and practices that minimize strain on nature. Some of the techniques that can help promote good environmental practices that include use of alternative energy sources, water conservation, reduction of wastage, use of local indigenous materials, application of local expertise, and efficient waste disposal systems.
4. recycling, reusing, and reducing resources, although this is an ongoing project of the University and the Green Office.
5. employees who are trained and well informed of the University's objectives. This is because some learning center employees were not quite familiar with their purpose and that of the learning centers objectives.
6. training accessibility for employees to instill a quality service to tourists with a feeling of trust, confidence and with good communication skills.
7. budget allocations for each learning center enough to support and meet its needs.
8. service quality measures designed based on tourists perspectives.

These service areas can be improved by operational changes, training programs, and internal marketing back up by adequate and appropriate resources. The learning centers should ensure that the services offered to the tourists in promotional activities are delivered as promised. In addition, once a desired service quality is achieved to satisfy the perceptions of tourists, efforts should be made to maintain it over repeated service encounters, since satisfaction over time results into perception of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1998).

While there are many other factors of interest that can be suggested for future research, it could explore on the support group or the tourists service center. Further study could involve the relationship among employees, heads and administrators. The research on impact of strategic management on the employee performance and competencies that would lead to quality service, overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions would assists the university administration to plan well on the strategies being implemented to the different learning centers and that build a trusting and committed employees.

Maejo University with its strategic roadmap to committing and becoming an organic, green and eco-university and strategizing to achieve these goals before 2029, will have an advantage to becoming a leading agricultural university in Thailand. The culture of sustainable development within the organization will be the greatest asset of the University if properly implemented. Although Maejo University (MJU) is an agriculturally based higher education institute, with its goal, to be a university that connects with people, communities, and countries will contribute to progress. The University of Life which is MJU's target to serve the global community with the emphases on agriculture-based development (good agricultural practice, food safety and security, sustainable food production, organic agriculture, nature and environmental conservation (environmentally sustainable agriculture); tradition and culture preservation, technologically educated and up-to-date green and smart technology will be of great advantage.

Maejo University has been aggressive in its efforts to promote green, organic and be an eco-university in the future. This can be attributed to the mission, vision and objectives of the University. Its philosophy is to focus on the development of people who possess wisdom, persistence, perseverance, and moral integrity for the prosperity of Thai people in an agricultural-based society. As Maejo University invest in human resources development, it is expected that employees possess expertise in agriculture, commit to living the local wisdom and local agriculture of friendliness, trust and hospitality, and development of agricultural resources. With these being

stated, there are high hopes that the Univeristy's goal of becoming a leading destination will be achieved in the near future.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A INSTRUMENTATION

(Questionnaire for Administrators and Employees)

Dear Respondents,

The researcher is conducting a study on the Strategic Management for Sustainable Agrotourism Development: A Case Study of the Maejo University's Agrotourism Learning Centers. The purpose of this study is to measure the current service quality of Maejo University's different learning centers and how tourist's satisfaction leads towards future behavioral intention. This paper focuses on three fold objectives:

1. To analyze tourist's perception on the quality of service of Maejo University's agrotourism learning centers in terms of sustainability.
2. To identify the effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between learning centers service quality and behavioral intention.
3. To examine Maejo University's strategic management practices in relation to employee performance and tourists' satisfaction.

This survey is very important and your opinion would be appreciated. The researcher would be grateful if you could spare some time to respond to the survey. Rest assured that any information provided will be used strictly for academic purposes only and it will be kept and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Truly yours,

Marry Ann R. Navarette

Ph.D. Student

School of Tourism Development

Maejo University, Chiang Mai

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ADMINISTRATORS AND EMPLOYEES OF MAEJO
UNIVERSITY'S LEARNING CENTERS**

PART I. SOCIO - DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Gender Male Female
2. Age (if it is a year and 6 months older, please write the higher age)

3. Marital Status Single Married
 Divorced/Separated Widowed
4. Nationality Thai Others: pls. specify _____
5. Academic Secondary Bachelor's Degree
Qualifications Postgraduate: pls. specify _____
6. Designation Upper Management Technical Staff
 Middle Management Others: pls. specify _____
7. Professional Qualifications

8. Work Experience

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS: For each question, please select one response from the columns on the right that best indicates your organization's current performance. Please answer the survey according to your organization's overall maturity on each topic. Tick your level of agreement with the following scales where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 5 stands for strongly agree. If your level of agreement is less strong, tick one of the numbers in the middle.

PART II. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

1–Strongly Disagree 2–Disagree 3–Neutral 4–Agree 5–Strongly Agree

| Environmental Scanning | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| The learning center monitors, evaluates and disseminates information from the external and internal environments to key people within the organization. | | | | | |
| Strategy Formulation | | | | | |
| The strategies are formulated in line with the university's mission and vision statements. | | | | | |
| Strategy Implementation | | | | | |
| The measures adopted for the implementation of strategies and policies have been effective. | | | | | |
| Evaluation and Control | | | | | |
| Top management obtain clear and unbiased information from Subordinates in order to evaluate and control activities and performance results. | | | | | |

PART III. IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES

1 – Very Poor 2 – Poor 3 – Fair 4 – Good 5 – Excellent

| Implementation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Examine the extent of practice of strategic management process in your learning center. | | | | | |
| The cooperation existing between the various internal functions of the organization when pursuing overall strategic objectives. | | | | | |

PART IV. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING CENTER'S OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

1–Strongly Disagree 2–Disagree 3–Neutral 4–Agree 5–Strongly Agree

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Operational Performance | | | | | |
| It boosts efficiency (reduces costs, increases productivity). | | | | | |
| It enhances timely delivery of service. | | | | | |
| It aids the utilization of human and material resources. | | | | | |
| It brings about the innovation of products. | | | | | |
| Product quality of the learning center is improved. | | | | | |
| Products are based on modern technological advancements. | | | | | |
| There is reliability in service delivery. | | | | | |
| Solving problems or issues is effective | | | | | |

PART V. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING CENTER'S VISITOR SATISFACTION

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

| Visitor Satisfaction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Our learning center gained market leaderships | | | | | |
| Products of the learning center are readily available to the market. | | | | | |
| Strategic management enhances marketing strategies and visitor retention. | | | | | |
| Strategic management enhances our learning center's flexibility to respond quickly to changes in the business environments. | | | | | |
| There is overall service quality as perceived by tourists | | | | | |
| There is quality in visitor relationship | | | | | |

Comments and Suggestions:

APPENDIX B
INSTRUMENTATION
(Questionnaire for Tourist)

Dear Respondents,

The researcher is conducting a study on the Strategic Management for Sustainable Agrotourism Development: A Case Study of the Maejo University's Agrotourism Learning Centers. The purpose of this study is to measure the current service quality of Maejo University's different learning centers and how tourist's satisfaction leads towards future behavioral intention. This paper focuses on three fold objectives:

1. To analyze tourist's perception on the quality of service of Maejo University's agro-tourism learning centers in terms of sustainability.
2. To identify the effect of tourists' satisfaction on the relationship between learning centers service quality and behavioral intention.
3. To critically review the challenges and limitations of the Maejo University's agro-tourism learning centers strategic management and design a management strategy for sustainable tourism development.

This survey is very important and your opinion would be appreciated. The researcher would be grateful if you could spare some time to respond to the survey. Rest assured that any information provided will be used strictly for academic purposes only and it will be kept and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Truly yours,

Marry Ann R. Navarette

Ph.D. Student

School of Tourism Development

Maejo University, Chiang Mai

PART I. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Gender Male Female
2. Age (if your age is already 6 months older, please write the higher age)
- _____
3. Marital Status Single Married
 Divorced/Separated Widowed
4. Nationality Chinese Taiwanese Bhutanese
 Thai Korean Lao
 Malaysian Indonesian Cambodian
 Filipino Vietnamese Others:
 pls. specify _____
5. Educational Level Primary Secondary
 Bachelor's Degree Postgraduate: pls. specify

6. Main Occupation Self-employed Education – Researcher
 Farmer Government Employee
 Professional Businessman
 Student Administrative Job
 Retired Others, pls. specify:

7. Monthly Gross _____
 Income
8. Country of Residence Thailand Lao PDR China
 Indonesia Cambodia Taiwan
 Malaysia Korea Vietnam
 Philippines Bhutan Others:
 pls. specify _____

9. Length of Stay Overnight 2 days 3 days
 in Chiang Mai 4 days 5 days One week
 One month Others: pls. specify _____

PART II. RESPONDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE ATTRIBUTES AND OVERALL SERVICE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING CENTERS

Based on your experiences as a tourist, please think about the kind of tourist destination that would deliver excellent quality of service. Listed below are the attributes pertaining to the learning centers services. The researcher would like to know how important each of these attributes to you when you evaluate the learning centers' quality of service. Please tick your level of agreement with the following statements where 1 stands for the attribute that is strongly disagreeable and 5 stands for the attribute that is strongly agreeable. If your level of agreement is less strong, tick one of the numbers in the middle. There is no right or wrong answers.

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

| ATTRIBUTES (SERVQUAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Tangibility (TA) | | | | | |
| 1.1 Physical facilities and equipment are visually aligned, in good condition and accessible | | | | | |
| 1.2 Adequate equipment and capacity | | | | | |
| 1.3 Clean environment | | | | | |
| 1.4 Professional appearance of the staffs | | | | | |
| 1.5 Information center provides relevant information | | | | | |
| 2. Reliability (RL) | | | | | |
| 2.1 The staff provides prompt services | | | | | |
| 2.2 The staff has the ability to perform the promised service/s | | | | | |
| 2.3 The staff shows sincere interest in solving a problem | | | | | |
| 2.4 The staff provides accurate information | | | | | |

| 3. Responsiveness (RN) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 3.1 The staff provides details regarding services and products offered | | | | | |
| 3.2 Provision of adequate information about the service being delivered | | | | | |
| 3.3 Provides prompt response to tourists' requests | | | | | |
| 3.4 The staffs are polite, kind, and educated | | | | | |
| 3.5 The staff performs the service right the first time | | | | | |
| 4. Assurance (AS) | | | | | |
| 4.1 There is a reinforcement of tourist's confidence | | | | | |
| 4.2 The learning centers provide adequate and safe facilities | | | | | |
| 4.3 Tourists are being assisted by appropriate and trained staffs | | | | | |
| 4.4 Availability of experienced and competent staffs with fluent and understandable communication | | | | | |
| 5. Empathy (EP) | | | | | |
| 5.1 The staff provides tourists with personal attention | | | | | |
| 5.2 The staff understands the specific needs of tourists | | | | | |
| 5.3 The staff treats tourists in a friendly manner | | | | | |
| 5.4 The staff provides assistance in other required areas | | | | | |
| 5.5 Facilities are located in convenient and comfortable areas | | | | | |
| 6. Tangible Sustainability (TS) | | | | | |
| 6.1 There is a visual and appealing natural attractions | | | | | |
| 6.2 Provision of non-crowded and unspoiled attractions | | | | | |
| 6.3 Provide nature-based activities (e.g., fish catching, actual farming) | | | | | |
| 6.4 There is a minimal change in existing landforms, environment, and natural resources | | | | | |

| 7. Sustainable Practices (SP) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.1 Use of natural/local resources as equipment and facilities (e.g., facilities reflect local influence) | | | | | |
| 7.2 There is an emphasis on recycling and reuse of products | | | | | |
| 7.3 The development is integrated with the local environment/culture (e.g. staffs in local costume) | | | | | |

PART III. LEVELS OF TOURIST OVERALL SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Please check (✓) and rate the following statements based on your experiences at the learning centers using the following scales:

1–Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3–Neutral 4–Agree 5–Strongly Agree

| Management Practices, Policies, Infrastructure and Facilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| The employees are very dependable | | | | | |
| The employees are competent and professional | | | | | |
| The employees are very responsive to tourists | | | | | |
| The learning centers have a high integrity | | | | | |
| I am satisfied with the facilities and technology | | | | | |
| I am satisfied with the overall service | | | | | |
| Destination Price / Value | | | | | |
| The learning centers offered good value for money | | | | | |
| The time I spent in order to use the services is highly reasonable | | | | | |
| The overall value of the learning centers was high | | | | | |
| The whole experience is worth the price | | | | | |
| Destination's Overall Image | | | | | |
| I am satisfied with the overall image of the learning centers | | | | | |

| Destination Behavioral Intention / Loyalty | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| I will definitely recommend the learning centers to friends, neighbors, relatives and co-workers | | | | | |
| I will definitely say positive things about the learning centers to other people | | | | | |
| I will encourage my friends and family to support the learning centers | | | | | |
| Loyalty / Retention | | | | | |
| I will most likely deal with the learning centers the next time I will need this kind of service | | | | | |
| I will do more business with the learning centers in the future | | | | | |
| I will consider the learning centers my first choice to buy, with this kind of service | | | | | |

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

APPENDIX C

PRE-TESTS

Reliability and Validity Test for Administrators and Employee's Questionnaire

Case Processing Summary

| | | N | % |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid | 25 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 25 | 100.0 |

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure



Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .991 | .992 | 24 |

Summary Item Statistics

| | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | Range | Maximum / Minimum | Variance | N of Items |
|------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|-------------------|----------|------------|
| Item Means | 3.674 | 3.480 | 3.920 | .440 | 1.126 | .010 | 24 |

Item-Total Statistics

| | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Squared Multiple Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|---|
| Environmental Scanning | 84.58 | 184.540 | .823 | . | .991 |
| Strategy Formulation | 84.46 | 187.674 | .841 | . | .991 |
| Strategy Implementation | 84.58 | 185.776 | .826 | . | .991 |
| Evaluation and Control | 84.62 | 184.747 | .876 | . | .991 |
| Implementation : Examine the extent of practice of strategic management process in your learning center | 84.26 | 185.270 | .860 | . | .991 |
| Implementation : The cooperation existing between the various internal functions of the organization when pursuing overall strategic objectives | 84.66 | 187.752 | .878 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : It boosts efficiency | 84.54 | 188.136 | .881 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : It enhances timely delivery of service | 84.42 | 184.829 | .939 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : It aids the utilization of human and material resources | 84.42 | 184.829 | .939 | . | .991 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|---------|------|---|------|
| Operational Performance : It brings about the innovation of products | 84.54 | 183.788 | .944 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : Product quality of the learning center is improved | 84.46 | 186.313 | .926 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : Products are based on modern technological advancements | 84.54 | 185.424 | .943 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : There is reliability in service delivery | 84.46 | 184.390 | .942 | . | .991 |
| Operational Performance : Solving problems or issues is effective | 84.54 | 185.424 | .943 | . | .991 |
| Visitor Satisfaction : Our learning center gained market leaderships | 84.70 | 187.897 | .869 | . | .991 |
| Visitor Satisfaction : Products of learning center are readily available to the market | 84.38 | 185.835 | .906 | . | .991 |
| Visitor Satisfaction : Strategic management enhances marketing strategies and visitors retention | 84.50 | 186.158 | .914 | . | .991 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|---------|------|---|------|
| Visitor Satisfaction : Strategic management enhances our learning center's flexibility to respond quickly to changes in the business environment | 84.62 | 186.670 | .850 | . | .991 |
| Visitor Satisfaction : There is overall service quality as perceived by tourists | 84.42 | 184.829 | .939 | . | .991 |
| Visitor Satisfaction : There is quality in visitor relationship | 84.42 | 184.829 | .939 | . | .991 |
| Part2 | 84.56 | 185.626 | .900 | . | .991 |
| Part4 | 84.49 | 185.354 | .980 | . | .991 |
| Part3 | 84.46 | 186.449 | .945 | . | .991 |
| Part5 | 84.51 | 185.978 | .983 | . | .991 |

Reliability and Validity Test for Tourist's Questionnaire

Case Processing Summary

| | | N | % |
|-------|-----------------------|-----|-------|
| Cases | Valid | 200 | 100.0 |
| | Excluded ^a | 0 | .0 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.0 |

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .974 | .976 | 61 |

Item Statistics

| | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|-----|-----------|----------------|-----|
| TA1 | 4.1450000 | .70459725 | 200 |
| TA2 | 4.0900000 | .74476397 | 200 |
| TA3 | 4.3700000 | .66732798 | 200 |
| TA4 | 4.3800000 | .67667529 | 200 |
| TA5 | 4.2350000 | .76989525 | 200 |
| RL1 | 4.3050000 | .70316942 | 200 |
| RL2 | 4.1950000 | .72081403 | 200 |
| RL3 | 4.2350000 | .73653746 | 200 |
| RL4 | 4.2400000 | .75181522 | 200 |
| RN1 | 4.1600000 | .70490029 | 200 |
| RN2 | 4.1350000 | .65491954 | 200 |
| RN3 | 4.2300000 | .73471014 | 200 |
| RN4 | 4.4450000 | .69236685 | 200 |
| RN5 | 4.3150000 | .68418972 | 200 |
| AS1 | 4.0800000 | .75926439 | 200 |
| AS2 | 4.2600000 | .65155400 | 200 |
| AS3 | 4.1250000 | .75646294 | 200 |
| AS4 | 3.9400000 | .92774108 | 200 |
| EP1 | 4.1250000 | .76307695 | 200 |
| EP2 | 4.0900000 | .77128099 | 200 |

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| EP3 | 4.3600000 | .73696376 | 200 |
| EP4 | 4.2250000 | .71899916 | 200 |
| EP5 | 4.2050000 | .71098700 | 200 |
| TS1 | 4.3100000 | .72562570 | 200 |
| TS2 | 4.0800000 | .82279094 | 200 |
| TS3 | 4.0750000 | .92392814 | 200 |
| TS4 | 4.0350000 | .92631816 | 200 |
| SP1 | 4.0350000 | .95831458 | 200 |
| SP2 | 4.0900000 | .79058531 | 200 |
| SP3 | 4.1450000 | .78553186 | 200 |
| A1 | 4.1050000 | .79190312 | 200 |
| A2 | 4.1500000 | .91195301 | 200 |
| A3 | 4.4150000 | .65950720 | 200 |
| A4 | 4.3300000 | .69535429 | 200 |
| A5 | 4.3800000 | .63054575 | 200 |
| A6 | 4.3200000 | .70003589 | 200 |
| B1 | 4.1500000 | .78778361 | 200 |
| B2 | 4.1800000 | .70717784 | 200 |
| B3 | 4.2800000 | .70290138 | 200 |
| B4 | 4.3800000 | .69859874 | 200 |
| C1 | 4.4000000 | .70888121 | 200 |
| D1 | 4.3900000 | .72145860 | 200 |
| D2 | 4.3750000 | .71899916 | 200 |
| D3 | 4.4150000 | .65184315 | 200 |
| E1 | 4.3400000 | .69773503 | 200 |
| E2 | 4.3200000 | .67815890 | 200 |
| E3 | 4.2650000 | .74670129 | 200 |
| total_TA | 4.2440000 | .50966932 | 200 |
| total_RL | 4.2437500 | .54533051 | 200 |
| total_RN | 4.2570000 | .51014925 | 200 |

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| total_AS | 4.1012500 | .56438336 | 200 |
| total_EP | 4.2010000 | .55907228 | 200 |
| total_TS | 4.1250000 | .63354709 | 200 |
| total_SP | 4.0900000 | .66306397 | 200 |
| total_A | 4.2760000 | .54563043 | 200 |
| total_B | 4.2475000 | .58401551 | 200 |
| total_C | 4.4000000 | .70888121 | 200 |
| total_D | 4.3933333 | .59942276 | 200 |
| total_E | 4.3083333 | .59397449 | 200 |
| Part2 | 4.1802857 | .44425025 | 200 |
| Part3 | 4.3250333 | .50918630 | 200 |

Summary Item Statistics

| | Mean | Minimum | Maximum | Range | Maximum / Minimum | Variance | N of Items |
|------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|-------------------|----------|------------|
| Item Means | 4.234 | 3.940 | 4.445 | .505 | 1.128 | .014 | 61 |

Item Statistics

| | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| TA1 | 254.1024857 | 705.171 | .529 | .973 |
| TA2 | 254.1574857 | 707.746 | .433 | .974 |
| TA3 | 253.8774857 | 706.080 | .534 | .973 |
| TA4 | 253.8674857 | 709.495 | .430 | .974 |
| TA5 | 254.0124857 | 704.890 | .489 | .973 |
| RL1 | 253.9424857 | 706.506 | .494 | .973 |

| | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---------|------|------|
| RL2 | 254.0524857 | 703.715 | .555 | .973 |
| RL3 | 254.0124857 | 705.373 | .500 | .973 |
| RL4 | 254.0074857 | 701.413 | .590 | .973 |
| RN1 | 254.0874857 | 706.312 | .498 | .973 |
| RN2 | 254.1124857 | 703.311 | .625 | .973 |
| RN3 | 254.0174857 | 703.442 | .551 | .973 |
| RN4 | 253.8024857 | 706.670 | .497 | .973 |
| RN5 | 253.9324857 | 707.021 | .494 | .973 |
| AS1 | 254.1674857 | 703.146 | .540 | .973 |
| AS2 | 253.9874857 | 705.515 | .564 | .973 |
| AS3 | 254.1224857 | 701.355 | .587 | .973 |
| AS4 | 254.3074857 | 696.088 | .582 | .973 |
| EP1 | 254.1224857 | 699.352 | .632 | .973 |
| EP2 | 254.1574857 | 699.868 | .613 | .973 |
| EP3 | 253.8874857 | 702.928 | .563 | .973 |
| EP4 | 254.0224857 | 703.606 | .559 | .973 |
| EP5 | 254.0424857 | 701.022 | .636 | .973 |
| TS1 | 253.9374857 | 701.172 | .618 | .973 |
| TS2 | 254.1674857 | 703.293 | .492 | .973 |
| TS3 | 254.1724857 | 696.342 | .580 | .973 |
| TS4 | 254.2124857 | 704.166 | .416 | .974 |
| SP1 | 254.2124857 | 700.739 | .469 | .974 |
| SP2 | 254.1574857 | 697.956 | .643 | .973 |
| SP3 | 254.1024857 | 699.946 | .599 | .973 |
| A1 | 254.1424857 | 700.013 | .592 | .973 |
| A2 | 254.0974857 | 701.675 | .475 | .974 |
| A3 | 253.8324857 | 703.602 | .612 | .973 |
| A4 | 253.9174857 | 700.582 | .663 | .973 |
| A5 | 253.8674857 | 702.187 | .684 | .973 |

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------|---------|------|------|
| A6 | 253.9274857 | 700.718 | .654 | .973 |
| B1 | 254.0974857 | 698.145 | .641 | .973 |
| B2 | 254.0674857 | 702.236 | .606 | .973 |
| B3 | 253.9674857 | 698.101 | .723 | .973 |
| B4 | 253.8674857 | 699.770 | .682 | .973 |
| C1 | 253.8474857 | 697.920 | .722 | .973 |
| D1 | 253.8574857 | 701.635 | .610 | .973 |
| D2 | 253.8724857 | 700.542 | .641 | .973 |
| D3 | 253.8324857 | 701.249 | .689 | .973 |
| E1 | 253.9074857 | 700.863 | .653 | .973 |
| E2 | 253.9274857 | 703.403 | .600 | .973 |
| E3 | 253.9824857 | 703.523 | .540 | .973 |
| total_TA | 254.0034857 | 706.427 | .693 | .973 |
| total_RL | 254.0037357 | 704.019 | .731 | .973 |
| total_RN | 253.9904857 | 705.129 | .741 | .973 |
| total_AS | 254.1462357 | 701.236 | .800 | .973 |
| total_EP | 254.0464857 | 701.119 | .812 | .973 |
| total_TS | 254.1224857 | 700.916 | .720 | .973 |
| total_SP | 254.1574857 | 699.267 | .734 | .973 |
| total_A | 253.9714857 | 701.355 | .824 | .973 |
| total_B | 253.9999857 | 699.378 | .833 | .973 |
| total_C | 253.8474857 | 697.920 | .722 | .973 |
| total_D | 253.8541524 | 701.014 | .759 | .973 |
| total_E | 253.9391524 | 702.448 | .720 | .973 |
| Part2 | 254.0672000 | 702.458 | .968 | .973 |
| Part3 | 253.9224524 | 700.311 | .923 | .973 |

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME Marry Ann Recentes Navarette

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Ph.D. in Tourism Development
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2004 – 2012
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June 15, 1999 – March 30, 2000

A large, semi-transparent watermark of the Maejo University logo is centered on the page. The logo is circular with a green border containing the university's name in Thai script at the top and 'MAEJO UNIVERSITY' in English at the bottom. The center features a golden figure of a deity or guardian spirit.

College Instructor

St. Anthony's College

San Jose, Antique, Philippines

