Casinos in Our Community

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# Abstract

The issue of a casino in our community is a controversial one. Many have opinions regarding this topic. This research paper will discuss the economic and social benefits surrounding the casino industry and present findings gathered from the small island community of Saipan regarding the presence of a casino.

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# Casinos in Our Community

A while back, I read an article about Tinian Dynasty’s casino being shut down and fined millions of dollars for breaking U.S. regulations. When I was living on Rota, I remembered talk of a casino being up and running, but then all of a sudden, there was no casino. Here on Saipan, there is a casino up and running. It makes me wonder what will be the end result of this casino and how it’s going to affect the people and the community along the way. I chose the topic question: What kind of impact does the casino have on the community? I would like to conduct research about the economic advantages and disadvantages of the casino, as well as what can be done to ensure that it is successful.

My original plan was to conduct interview with members of the gaming commission and hopefully owners of the casino as well. I would also like to take a step towards interviewing local businesses to assess how much the casino has affected their businesses and themselves personally. I’ve come across articles on local newspapers, magazines and blogs. I hope to get credible information from secondary sources such as newspaper articles, magazine articles and the internet.

In time, I hope to make this research paper both credible and appealing to those who choose to read it.

**Background**

Eadington (1999) says,

“The present trends suggest casino-style gaming is moving or will be moving from site specific destination resort megaasinos serving broad markets like Las Vegas and Atlantic City, to urban and suburban casinos and entertainment centers that are smaller and more differentiated and that serve a more localized market and then on to various gaming opportunities in the home or the neighborhood.”

**Literature Review**

The topic of the casino presence within the CNMI has been one of popular discussion. While some scrutinize the casino’s presence, others continue to accept it with open arms. This literature review will highlight the economic advantages and disadvantages of the casino industry as a whole and determine how it affects society in general. This literature review will analyze actions taken by Best Sunshine International in regards to the community while also discussing the outcome of the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino to exemplify one way that the casino industry can affect small communities.

According to Eddington (1999), the value of casino gambling lies in what it can do for people rather than for what it is. Gambling is a controversial issue; there are bound to be differing opinions about whether or not it is “good” for the community in which it lies. With that in mind, let us consider the pros and the cons surrounding the industry.

# *Casino industry: the economic advantages*

Eadington (1999) lists jobs, tourism and improvements of economic status as benefits of a casino. Eadington (1999) states that places who legalize casinos can be considered “poor in resources or under economic duress.” With the addition of a casino, there can be enhancements in revenue, more investments in the community and economic developments.

## *Casino industry: the economic disadvantages*

Wan (2012) states that when a casino is established in rural or developing area, it does not create job opportunities. The reason why is because most workers in those places aren’t considered “skilled workers.” Operators of the casino industry then bring in their own skilled workers, therefore, the unemployment rate does not change (Garrett, 2004). The casino industry is also capable of hurting local businesses. Customers are taken away and businesses suffer.

***Casino industry: the social benefits***

Social benefits include tourism and economic wellbeing (Wan, 2012).

***Casino industry: the social disadvantages***

Wan (2012) states that an increase in crime rates, traffic and overcrowding were among some of the social disadvantages mentioned by citizens of the Macao. Another disadvantage of the casino industry is how it impacts an individual. The image of a casino promotes excessive gambling, increases crime issues and encourages excessive spending (Eadington, 1999). Money has the ability to change how a person acts and that’s exactly what casinos do.

***Best Sunshine International: Operating casino on Saipan***

In recent times, Best Sunshine has become increasingly powerful within the Saipan community. Their faces and their name can be found everywhere. The biggest reminder of who they are lies in Garapan, where their busywork takes places. As of now, Best Sunshine is operating out of a little casino but it is their plan to be operating from a much larger scale in the near future.

***Tinian Dynasty Casino & its effect on a small island community***

The Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino opened in 1998, with so many promises in store. The hotel and casino would become the ideal destination for visitors from all over the world, seeking a tropical vacation in paradise. The hotel would contain hundreds of deluxe guest rooms, several business suites and a couple of presidential suites. The casino would recreate an almost authentic 16th century renaissance period vibe and contain table games and machines.

On August 2015, after 18 years of success and some downfall, the Tinian Dynasty casino came to its end (Perez, 2016). The shutdown of the Tinian Dynasty Casino resulted in an extreme loss for the island, which depended on the casino and the tourism it attracted as one of its primary sources of income.

The closing of the hotel and casino resulted in a huge number of residents being unemployed. Many of Dynasty’s employees were workers from overseas; Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand and the Philippines. Unemployment and the fact that they haven’t been paid their share of wages has left them stranded and hopelessly waiting. Many of them rely on the help of the kind people in the community to get by (Perez, 2016).

# Research Questions

1. How does the casino affect the community?
2. Should citizens be concerned about the casino industry’s presence in a small community?

## Methodology

Upon finding out on the first day of orientation that there was a research paper to be constructed within the semester, it was already evident that despite what topic was chosen, it would still be a difficult and time-consuming task. In order for things to get done, there was a specific format and steps to be followed through.

1. Choose a topic
2. Read information from various resources
3. Collect information
4. Cite your sources

***Choosing a topic***. Gallaudet University says that choosing a topic is one the most important parts of constructing an essay. It is a known fact that choosing a topic to explore is difficult. There are a range of topics that can be explored, but again, there are suggestions that should be followed. For example, when choosing a topic, select a topic that is of interest to you, something that you want to explore and learn more about. The topic must be narrow enough to be specific and not too broad that the information becomes overwhelming. I had a difficult time figuring out what I wanted to write about. Although I knew I wanted to explore something related to my community, I wracked my brain trying to determine what in the community interested me. I had been hearing a lot of talk about the casino on Saipan and I wanted to know more.

## *Read information from various source.* In the beginning, when research is just starting to take place, text will easily becomes the researcher’s best friend. It is important to read information from different sources. I started reading newspaper articles surrounding the topic of the casino in Saipan and though I didn’t completely understand what was written, it was clear to me that not all that was being said was good things. I realized that I wanted to explore both the positive and the negative impacts of the casino industry on our communities. I proceeded to conduct research through academic databases like EBSCO host and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) that are offered at my college. I was able to come across academic journals that contained studies conducted regarding the impacts of the gaming industry. It is also important to remember that in this phase of the research process, jotting down information and its sources will be a big help later on. Reading information when I was still in the “choosing a topic phase” definitely helped me to decide what I wanted my paper to be about

## *Collect information.* Reading information from a variety of sources is the first step in collecting pertinent information. The next step a researcher can take is collecting information from people. Surveys are excellent ways to accomplish this goal. There are various ways to make a survey. Google Surveys, SurveyMonkey, or creating your own survey from a word document and distributing them are just a few simple ideas that will help the researcher collect important information. Through the advice of my instructor, I was able to learn how to use SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey is pretty easy to operate and I was able to create a pilot survey to test with my peers. My first survey was a very rough draft. My peers were able to advise me to add in more demographic questions so that I can get a feel of what my audience is made of. I took the advice and added questions that asked for age group, which island the person is from and whether that person was a male or female. When I was analyzing the information, I found I knew where it was coming from and that ended up being more important to me than I thought it would. I was able to ask questions that required full sentence answers. I asked what the benefits and disadvantages of a casino in the community might be and I was very happy with the answers I received. Some survey takers went into depth about how the casino industry stole from their families, both money and time. Though I had hoped to be able to conduct interviews, I was grateful for the honest answers of my survey participants.

## *Cite your sources.* Research papers contain information that sometimes, does not come easily. When readers come across a research paper that speaks to them, they might want to know where the information came from. This is why it is very important that when constructing a research paper, always cite sources. Citations do not have to be done last. They can be done throughout the entire paper, from beginning to end, while the researcher is still finding information. When done this way, it does not become a hassle to go back and look through your browser history.

## Findings

I created a survey using SurveyMonkey and shared the link with others in hopes of gathering pertinent information. After having asked what were some of the advantages and disadvantages of the casino industry, I asked if they thought the good surely outweighed the bad and less than 50% of the survey takers responded with a “yes.” The remainder had a strong belief that a casino has bad counterparts that cannot be overlooked.

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**Appendix**

