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Portfolio

Why Tourism had Declined in Saipan

Helen Choi

Northern Marianas College

English 101

May 11, 2014 Brainstorm Topics

1. Obesity in Saipan

2. Art in Saipan

3. Why did Saipan’s tourism decline in the past?

4. Saipan’s economy

Research Proposal

**Research Topic:**

Tourism in Saipan

**Introduction:**

Saipan is a small tropical island that is located in the Pacific Ocean. It is the home of the indigenous Chamorro natives and other people from diverse cultures throughout Asia and Micronesia. Saipan’s primary economy consisted of the garment factory and tourism until the late 1990s to early 2000s. After the permanent closure of garment factories throughout the island, residents of Saipan began to rely on tourism as the primary income source. However, over the years tourism in Saipan had declined.

**Background:**

The student researcher chose this topic as her research topic because she lives in the island of Saipan. As a person who has been living in Saipan for her entire life, it shows to say that the drop in the economy had played a big part in her life. Tourism, which was an income source for Saipan’s economy had dropped in the past, causing many problems for the student researcher’s and others like her. Growing up with the bad economy, the student researcher decided to conduct her research on why the tourism had dropped in the past because although the decline in tourism was obvious, she never understood why.

**Literature Review:**

Some literature that pertains to the topic has been found. One article states and contains information on why Saipan’s economy had decrease. Another literature looks briefly in to why tourism decreased.

**Research Questions:**

Primary research question: Why tourism had dropped in Saipan.

Secondary research questions: What the effects were from the dropping economy and who were affected by the results.

**Research Methodology:**

The research will be done through gathering academic articles, newspaper articles, survey information, and interviews of business officials and permanent residents that live on the island.

The methodology proposed in gathering information is to interview business owners past and present, residents on island, the different hotel branches, and airlines. The major business branches that will be interviewed will be the different hotels and airlines, because they serve the largest populations of tourists that arrive on island. A few questions that will be asked would concern what the rates of the drop of tourist have been, the trend in the rates that can be seen and so on. Surveys will also be conducted as a comparison to the past and present economy to observe the changes that the island has undergone. Surveys will consist of questions asking majorly on the impacts that have been caused due to the event. The information provided by the residents will be of valuable information because they are the people who have faced the changes in the economy firsthand.

**References:**

Asian shares drop on weak US data. (2012, June 4). *BBC News*. Retrieved May 11, 2014, from http://www.bbc.com/news/business-18320198

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**Tentative Writing Schedule:**

The tentative writing schedule that is to be followed consists of Fridays and Saturdays as essay writing days. The tentative research schedule will be on Mondays and Wednesdays to conduct researches on the topic of the essay. Also, weekends will be used as both research and writing days. In February, an outline will be constructed and more research will be done about the research topic. Towards the end of March, a rough draft will be made. Then, in the beginning of April, the rough drafts will be proofread and edited in preparation for the final research paper. Also in first few weeks of March, surveys and interviews will be conducted.

Outline

Cover page

Table of contents

Abstract

Write last. It is just an overview of the whole essay.

Title and introduction

Use the one in your argumentative essay. Add some changes.

Background

Same as introduction. Add more details as to why you the topic is revelant.

Literature Review

Talk about the literature you found. Also discuss how it helped you.

Research Questions

Methodology

Introduce the survey. Explain who you interviewed.

Findings and analysis

Talk about survey results.

Disscussion

Explain what you learned from doing the assignment.

Conclusion

Research Paper

Why Did Tourism in Saipan Decline in the Past

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English 101

May 13, 2014

Author’s note:

This essay was made for English Composition 101, Section 6, taught by

Dr. Kimberly Bunts Anderson.

Table of Content

Abstract …………………………………………………………………………………page 3

Introduction……………………………………………………………………………...page 4

Background……………………………………………………………………………...page 4

Literature review………………………………………………………………………....page 4-6

Research questions……………………………………………………………………….page 6

Methodology……………………………………………………………………………..page 6-7

Findings…………………………………………………………………………………..page 8

Analysis…………………………………………………………………………………..page 8

Discussion………………………………………………………………………………..page 9-10

Conclusion……………………………………………………………………………….page 10

References………………………………………………………………………………..page 11

Appendix A……………………………………………………………………………….page 12

Appendix B……………………………………………………………………………page 13-17

Abstract

Helen Choi is a student in Northern Marianas College. She conducted her research on Saipan’s tourism and economy. The essay discusses Saipan’s tourism and why it had declined in the past. The essay also looks into what the effects resulted due to the drop in tourism had caused and who were mainly affected by the drop in economy. The research had been done through gathering of several academic articles, newspaper articles, census reports, survey information, and interviews of business officials and permanent residents that live and lived on the island.

Introduction

Why Did Tourism in Saipan Decline in the Past

Saipan is a small tropical island that is located in the Pacific Ocean. It is the home of the indigenous Chamorro natives and other people from diverse cultures throughout Asia and Micronesia. Saipan’s primary economy consisted of the garment factory and tourism until the late 1990s to early 2000s. After the permanent closure of garment factories throughout the island, residents of Saipan began to rely on tourism as the primary income source. However, over the years, the tourism in Saipan had started to declined

Background

The student researcher chose this topic as her research topic because she lives in the island of Saipan. As a person who has been living in Saipan for her entire life, it shows to say that the drop in the economy had played a big part in her life. Tourism, which was an income source for Saipan’s economy had dropped in the past, causing many problems for the student researcher and others like her. Growing up with the bad economy, the student researcher decided to conduct her research on why the tourism had dropped in the past because although the decline in tourism was obvious, she never understood why. The research will help address the reasons of why the tourism rates had started to decline over the years. This research topic will also help explain and relieve the concerns of the dying economy of Saipan, and explain how this would affect the residents living on Saipan in the long run. The research had been done through gathering academic articles, newspaper articles, survey information, and interviews of business officials and permanent residents that live and lived on the island.

Literature review

For the research topic, the student researcher looked for various articles, studies, census reports, anything that could be of help to her research. She used various keywords such as Saipan’s economy, Tourism in Saipan, and economy in other places like America, Korea, China, and Japan. Some literature that pertains to the topic had been found. One article stated and contained information on why Saipan’s economy had started to decrease. It listed various reasons like the closing of an airline. Another problem the article mentioned was that the economy started to fail because the government was in debt. This article was a good insight for the research paper because it listed not only possible reasons to why Saipan economy and tourism went down, but it also mentions the negative effects the people in Saipan faced due to the drop in the economy. Some of the negative impacts listed were constant power failure in the past that also affected water supply for many families in Saipan. Also, it mentioned the decline in the economy caused many people to be jobless and some families leaving the island looking for a better life elsewhere.

Another literature, the student researcher found while searching was a newspaper article that focused on the subject of JAL airline choosing to close in Saipan due to a case where two sisters filed a lawsuit because they wanted the land Nikko hotel was on. Nikko hotel was one big hotel that was in Saipan in the past. It has since closed down and reopened as Palms Resort. It the article, the company stated that if they lost the case they would suspend all flights to Saipan and close Nikko hotel and a mall known as La Fiesta (Petrovsky & Phillips, 1993). La Fiesta was a mall in Saipan that many tourists and locals alike frequented. It has long since closed down.

This newspaper article helped the student researcher understand more on the airline closing down. Due to being so young when this case happened, she did not understand. The airline closing down not only stopped flights from Japan but it also affected tourism because of the hotel and mall closing. The closing of the hotel and mall caused many people to lose their jobs. Also, the closing of the mall affected tourism because Saipan had just lost a tourist attraction that tourists and locals alike frequently visited which caused huge impact on the economy. Also, in the article, it stated that the company invested in many other organizations in Saipan. The company also donated much money to community organizations like Joeten Kiyu library. This means that everyone in Saipan was affected because with the money donated, the library could have bought books which could have aided in learning for the younger generation. The money invested in other organizations could have benefited Saipan because it could have opened more businesses to attract more tourists to Saipan.

A journal gave the student research similar information as the one in the above newspaper article. “Tourist arrivals over the period under review were running around 400,000, compared to the peak of 750,000 in 1997. Hotel room rates were down, which is good for tourists but shrinks the 10 percent room tax, which constitutes a significant portion of government revenues. Some hotels have closed off wings and put their workers on part-time “(Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, 2008).

The journal explains in detail what was going in Saipan. It talks about the closing of the garment factory and the JAL airline closing which limited the tourist visits. It also explains that the side effect that effected people who worked in that part of the industry for example limited tourist’s visits caused hotels to either put some workers in part time or even laid off workers.

Various other literatures the student researcher found discussed the drop in other nation’s economy. Many Asian economies like Japan were starting to fail which could have caused the drop in Saipan’s economy because many of the tourists who visited Saipan were Asians.

Research questions

Why did tourism decline in Saipan? What the effects were from the dropping economy? Also, who were affected by the results?

Methodology

This paper covers three methods that were used to answer the research questions. There are many methods an individual can use to gain information for their research. The student researcher used the method of conducting a survey as a one way of gaining insight to answer her research questions. The first method of collecting data the student researcher used was a survey of convenience. The survey was distributed to her peers in her English 101 class through the use of Google docs.

Out of 8 people, 5 people responded with comments that suggested a change in questions. For example, most of the questions were short answer. It was also suggested that the types of questions she asked took too much time, were lengthy, and tiring to answer; she was advised to change the style of how the question was asked. The problems listed could cause people to answer without thinking considerably/carefully or they might not even complete the survey at all. She changed long/short answers to multiple and yes or no questions. She also added a demographic question that asked about the participants’ information to get more accurate results. The student researcher found that the responses from the pilot survey were very helpful in order to create a better survey.

The second method the student researcher used was to resend her improved survey to larger variety of people through the use of social networking sites like face book. She also used her email to send out her survey to other people. 10 people responded to her survey and gave her helpful insight on her research questions through their opinions.

The student researcher used an interview as another way of getting answers to her research questions. The student researcher asked a past business owner questions that went through topics on Saipan’s tourism and economy. The business owner explained her life’s story revolving in Saipan. She explain how she started her business, which was a small store located in Tanapag.

“Business was very good. Many tourists from different nationalities frequented my store. I saw Koreans, Japanese, and Chinese people. My store was located near the garment factory so many workers and locals would frequent the store. In the past, when Nikko hotel and La Fiesta were in business, people would stop by the store on their way there. Tourist sites like Banzai cliff, Bird Island, Suicide Cliff, and Grotto helped my business because people would stop by when going there also. Tanapag in the past is what Garapan is today. Since the closing of Nikko hotel, La Fiesta, and the garment factories, not much tourist had stopped by. Business started to slow down. After awhile, the other businesses around started to disappear. My store also closed because there was no business. Tanapag was becoming a ghost town.”

Findings

In the survey conducted 10 people responded. 6 out of 10 people said that tourism plays a big part in their daily life even when few of the people do not have jobs that are associated with tourism. The survey also showed that all of the respondents agree that tourism is increasing in Saipan. All respondents agreed that the majority of the tourists’ nationalities are Chinese over Koreans, Japanese, and Russians. 7 out of 10 people agreed that the tourism in Saipan will continue to increase but 50 percent of them also agreed that tourism itself is not much to increase the economy. Other factors that had contributed for the decline of the economy had been suggested. Some people said it was due to government corruption, whereas others said it was because of the drop in other nation’s economy and the increase of prices on things like airfare and gas prices.

From the interview, the student researcher got the idea that Nikko hotel and La Fiesta closing down really affected many people. The article stated in the literature review really connects to the interview. The closing of Nikko hotel and La Fiesta really affected the people who were living in Tanapag. The business owner and several like her had closed her business down because there was not any income coming in.

Analysis

The survey showed that the majority of the respondents agree that tourism plays or has played a big part in their life. Tourism has been shown to have increased throughout this year, although there have not been any improvements in the current economy. Chinese tourists have been sighted in Saipan than any other tourists from another nationality, but this may be subjected to change. Also, the closing of the garment factory and drop in tourism is not the only factor that had contributed to the decline in economy. Corruption in the government had been suggested.

The interview with the business owner gave the student researcher new insight. It showed how everything that caused Saipan’s tourism and economy to drop was related in so many ways. Rather than being the cause of just one factor, the student researcher saw that the events led up in a chain of reactions to a certain factor that caused the economy to drop. To explain, JAL closing down not only caused Japanese tourist visits at a minimum which affected the rate of tourism in Saipan, but it caused a hotel and mall to close down. The hotel closing down caused bad reactions because the hotel was a source of income through the company’s investment to other organization and donations to the community. The hotel case with the law suit could also have brought negative views to countries that might have been visiting Saipan. It also caused the loss of plenty of jobs for others. The mall closing down not only disrupted small businesses inside the mall but it caused one of Saipan’s attraction for tourists to disappear which caused the tourist visit rates to drop more. The interview gave a little insight on how the people of Saipan were affected. Some people lost their jobs; others had their businesses go bankrupt. Other than the interview, some literature the student researcher found talked on how life was like when the economy was really low in the past. The articles mentioned that there were black outs, water problems, and prices were unreasonable.

Discussion

The findings helped the student researcher realize that there are many other factors that contributed to the drop in Saipan’s economy. The closing of the garment factory and decline in tourism is not the only factors. Findings helped the student researcher realize factors like the corruption in government may be another reason why Saipan economy dropped. Also, the increase in pollution is another factor that needs to be observed. Many of the survey participants suggested that to increase Saipan’s economy, Saipan should start exporting goods like mangoes, coconuts, and other things that are found in the island. It was also suggested that people in Saipan should work together to open new businesses.

The student researcher believes that some if not all of her questions were answered. She learned the new factors as to why tourism dropped in Saipan but also why the economy dropped as well. From the survey, she also learned ways and options one can use that might help increase the economy. Even if the economy cannot be increased currently, learning the factors on why the economy dropped can help the economy from dropping further. Also, new solutions can also be created from observing the problems.

An example would have been investigating more on the case with JAL airlines closing. In an article the student researcher had read, the writer said that the government was in dept. Many respondents from the survey also agreed that the drop in the economy was the fault of the local government whom they believe are corrupted.

Conclusion

Overall, through the research essay, the student researcher answered or gained insight to answer some if not all her questions. The questions were, “why did tourism decline in Saipan? What the effects were from the dropping economy? Also, who were affected by the results?” The student researcher searched for various articles, journals, anything that could help her on her search. She also conducted a survey and interview that had asked for other’s opinions on the topic. Not only did she conduct a survey she interviewed a past business owner. Through the interview she learned how the drop in tourism led to a drop in economy which in turn affected many people who lived in Saipan. She learned new factors to why the economy dropped that could also be associated to why tourism had declined in the past.

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Asian shares drop on weak US data. (2012, June 4). *BBC News*. Retrieved May 11, 2014, from http://www.bbc.com/news/business-18320198

CNMI Department of Commerce. 2013 CNMI Economic Development Forum Report & Recommendations. By J.T. Arenovski and S.K. Igisomar. Retrieved September 2013 from http://commerce.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/FINAL-EDF-REPORT.pdf

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Appendix A

# 1. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. This research is looking at Saipan's economy and tourism. Please read and fill out each question carefully. The survey is short. Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!

a. Age?

b. Gender?

c. Nationality?

d. Occupation?

e. In which are of Saipan do you reside?

f. How long have you lived in Saipan?

g. Do you work?

h. If you do work, what kind of job do you have?

i. If you currently do not work, what career do you have in mind?

# 2. Are you a local resident or has your family migrated to Saipan in the last few years?

# 3. Do you enjoy living in Saipan?

# 4. Saipan was once considered to be a "jewel" in the Pacific because of the clean air and beautiful beaches. Is the name still relevant towards Saipan? Explain.

# 5. Do you or a family member work with tourists? Does tourism play an important role in your life?

# 6. Have you seen tourists in the past few weeks? What is the nationality of the majority?

7. In your opinion, what do you think caused Saipan's economy to drop?

8. Tourism has been increasing recently in Saipan. Do you see any changes in the economy?

# 9. Do you think tourism in Saipan will continue to increase or is it just a short-term impact? Explain.

10. Other than relying on tourism, what other things can be done to increase Saipan's economy?

Appendix B

Responses to the Survey

# 1. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. This research is looking at Saipan's economy and tourism. Please read and fill out each question carefully. The survey is short. Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!

a. Age?

-40+

-21

-18

-19

-18

-20

-22

-18

-19

-18

b. Gender?

8 females and 2 males

c. Nationality?

- US/Aus

- US

- Filipina

- U.S.

- Filipino

- Filipino

- Filipino

- Korean

- Chamorro

- Filipino

d. Occupation?

- Education

- Student

- Cashier

- Teacher Aide

- Waitress

- Student

- None

- Student

- Student

- Student

e. In which are of Saipan do you reside?

- San Vicente

- Gualo Rai

- Koblerville

- Dandan

- Chinatown

- Dandan

- Susupe

- Chalan Kanoa

- Kagman

- Chalan Laulau

f. How long have you lived in Saipan?

- 4 years

- 21 years

- 18 years

- 20

- 18 years

- 5 years

- 9 years

- 10

- 19 years

- 15 years

g. Do you work?

5 no, 4 yes, and 1 intern

h. If you do work, what kind of job do you have?

- Instructor

- I start in the summer. Coral reef internship.

- Cashier at McDonalds

- Teacher Aide

- Waitress

i. If you currently do not work, what career do you have in mind?

- I want an environmental job.

- Accounting/teaching

- Business Manager/ Marketing

- tutoring

- Nurse

- Business

# 2. Are you a local resident or has your family migrated to Saipan in the last few years?

- Migrated

- Local resident

- Resident

- Local

- Local resident

- My family migrated to Saipan

- Migrated in the last 9 years

- Yes

- Yes i am a local resident

- Local Resident

# 3. Do you enjoy living in Saipan?

# Yes = 50% No = 0% Somewhat = 50% Other = 0%

# 4. Saipan was once considered to be a "jewel" in the Pacific because of the clean air and beautiful beaches. Is the name still relevant towards Saipan? Explain.

# 

- Yes, I still find it beautiful and the beaches relatively clean compared to other places.

-Yes. But like every place in the world. Climate change and pollution has damaged the world.

- No, it’s become polluted

- Not really because the beaches are now littered because people cannot clean up after themselves.

- We have really nice beaches but I am sure our island is more polluted than the last decade

- Yes, because Saipan still offers fresh air, as opposed to other places that suffer from air pollution. The waters are still crystal, and yes, Saipan is still a JEWEL

- Yes, it just needs some few cleaning. And it's still relevant because Saipan possesses a natural beauty of nature and that's what makes Saipan unique.

- Not really. Saipan still has clean air compared to other developed countries; however, beaches are filled with trash.

- No because tourist and local litter the beaches.

- Yes. Most areas here are still clean.

# 5. Do you or a family member work with tourists? Does tourism play an important role in your life?

# Yes…Yes = 4 No…Yes = 2 Yes…No = 0 No…No = 4

# 6. Have you seen tourists in the past few weeks? What is the nationality of the majority?

- Yes, (Korean and Russian); Yes (American); Yes (American)

- Yes. Russians and Chinese.

- Koreans, Japanese and Chinese

- Yes; Russian.

- Chinese

- Yes. Koreans and Chinese

-Yes. Majority are Chinese and Japanese

- A lot of Chinese and few Japanese and Russians

- Asian

- Yes. Asian.

7. In your opinion, what do you think caused Saipan's economy to drop?

- Services went down, prices went up (especially the cost of flights) and the world's economy was hit. This caused everyone to spend list and the travel and distance to Saipan make it an expensive place to visit.

- The mismanagement of funds and lack of businesses.

- Corruption

- Closing of the garment factories.

- it dropped since they started shutting down the garment factories

- The global economy has gone down and Saipan, just like any other place in the world has been affected by this prolonged recession.

- I think because of the corruption and several crimes

- Closing down of garment factories

- The government.

- Not enough business. Money doesn’t circulate.

8. Tourism has been increasing recently in Saipan. Do you see any changes in the economy?

Yes = 4 No = 6

# 9. Do you think tourism in Saipan will continue to increase or is it just a short-term impact? Explain.

- I think globally people are doing better and the tourism has increased in places that can afford and want to come to Saipan

- Hopefully it will keep increasing. But I don't think tourism is enough to cause a boom in the economy.

- Continue to grow

- I think it will continue to increase especially since casinos might start to rise because of the law passed.

- I think it will continue to increase because there are more Chinese and Russian tourists coming in. There is even an increase of Chinese and Russian companies that are accommodating them.

- It will continue to increase because tourists visit the island for its weather and pristine beaches. These natural attractions are not for short-term; therefore, the increase in tourism is not a short- term.

- It depends, however it will most likely to increase because there's new hotel that will open soon and Saipan has a lot of good land features.

- Short-term impact because many people are coming to Saipan because Philippine and other countries have been greatly damaged and has bad reputation.

- Continue

- Short term. Tourists usually come to Saipan with seasons in mind.

10. Other than relying on tourism, what other things can be done to increase Saipan's economy?

- I think things like offering diving, fishing, + gambling and perhaps legal marijuana as the government is currently considering will bring a different set of tourists and possibly increase the trade. I believe Saipan should start its own industries an airline would be a good way to start. It is in a good location and is too dependent on other airlines.

- Alternative Energy. Lowering peoples bills allows them to spend more cash at businesses and more. This generates a "cash-flow" and may allow for other possibilities.

- Open more businesses

- Find industries that could work. For example: peanut industry, aquaculture industry, etc.

- Saipan had a really good economy back then because it used to sell exports like clothes from the garment factories even sugarcane back in the Japanese period. Saipan should do something like that again. We have many natural resources that other places don't have.

- Have more variety of jobs on island.

- Exporting products made from Saipan, and establishing our own sugar factory and other forms of livelihood.

- Not sure

- Legalize marijuana and tax it.

- Open more businesses.