

A study to map customer's expectations on adventure camp in Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to map the expectations of the consumers from an Adventure come physical activities camp in the city of Coimbatore. The results of the market research showed that individual differences in priority of needs and preferences affect purchase intentions depending upon the structure of the choice environment and their pre-built perceptions. The well-developed knowledge structures for familiar brands allow consumers to go for the service with the support of their perception about the service already built through the previous experiences. Conversely, for an Adventure come physical activities camp the inability to predict the perception one holds about such a service due to the past experiences reduces the purchasing intentions. This study makes few important contributions. First, it showed that the customers have a perception towards what they expect as vacationers. The amenities which prove to be the most important factor while making purchase decisions. Finally, it showed how to bridge the gap between the expectations and reality of an adventure come physical camps. The paper discussed the implications of research findings and offered future research avenues along with solutions.

1. Introduction

In the marketing theory, the concept of quality service coupled with customer satisfaction has a long history. An adventure come training camp has a different definition for different set of people. It is much important to understand the customer's expectation from any service in order to retain them with the business for longer terms. Coimbatore is a city surrounded by hills. The vacationers now a day expect more than a good stay. They expect more amenities than just toiletries and Wi-Fi. There were times when luxurious infrastructure was the most expected by the vacationers, but now that got replaced with outdoor activities which has a lot of people engagement involved. And even for this it is necessary to study the likings and expectations of a particular sect of people. An Outdoor Adventure Program is an educational and interactive program to get youth, adults and older adults into our natural environment to pursue recreation and physical activities. The program can also incorporate teambuilding/leadership techniques as well as safety and survival information while participating in the outdoors. The physical activities will depend on the demographics they are working with (ie: hiking, fishing, rafting, etc..) these expectations are different for people of different age groups and of different profession and gender. It is important to match their demography with the service offered.

2. Review of Literature

During difficult economic times, vacationers are more discriminating when choosing an adventure come physical activities camp. Amenities often define an adventure come physical activities camp (Mill, 2001; Schwanke, 1997)^[10]. When making a vacation decision, tourism experts will cite resort offerings and amenities as one of the key deciding factors (Brey, 2010)^[3].

Amenities are 'any extra product or service found in the hotel (Vallen & Vallen, 2005). Although amenities can include hotel items such as shampoo, a coffee machine, and Wi-Fi, this study focuses exclusively on resort recreation amenities.

The purpose of the Report is to provide a comprehensive look at the most recent data on adventure come physical activities camp and service offerings and serve as a source for recreation amenity comparison and benchmarking data for industry professionals. According to Brey (2011)^[4], a resort is a full-service lodging facility that provides access to or offers a range of amenities and recreation facilities to emphasize a leisure experience. Resorts work for as a primary provider of the guests' experience, often provide services for business or meetings, and are characteristically located in vacation-oriented settings. Brey cites that the minimum qualifications of a resort, related to recreation amenities, include: (1) Provide one signature amenity or anchor attribute, (2) provide five secondary recreation/leisure/entertainment experiences and (3) emphasize a leisure or retreat-environment experience.

Resort recreation offerings have grown over the years. Early resorts could focus on one amenity and be prosperous. Ski resorts didn't seem to need more than an alpine ski area and beach resorts could rely on the beach alone for visitors. But as the resort industry grew, multiple amenity offerings became the norm and consumers became conditioned to expect certain amenities as part of the resort experience (Stringham, 2008; Anon., 1989)^[1]. Recreation participation changes, vacationer demand, and industry influence have swayed resort development over the years, so much so, that for each decade, a new seemingly "essential" recreation amenity appeared to emerge. A swimming pool was one of the earliest expected resort facilities, followed by tennis in the 70s, fitness in the 80s, golf in the 90s, and spa in the 2000s. Amenity facilities and related services can make or break the success of a recreation

amenity department and is a way for resorts to stay competitive in the market (Kandampully et. al., 2001)^[6]. According to a 2010 research study, 40% of hospitality managers indicated they were ready to make 'recreation area' structural improvements, with twenty percent (20%) also specifying spa improvements (Bohrod, 2010)^[2]. Because today's travelers expect much from their recreation (1 Wisnom: Resort Recreation Amenity Report Published by ScholarWorks@GVSU, 2013) rupee and are offered more ways to spend that rupee, resorts must anticipate changing consumer preferences and cater to those needs (McElyea and Cory, 1998)^[8].

3. Discussion

Today many consumers are interested in physical activities in outdoor environment rather than a stay inside a resort. Rather than the climate they are interested in self rejuvenation and to get set and go on the field and sweat out and keep themselves active with their fellow mates. So they expect the value for time and the rupee they spend. For this reason the major contribution of this study is to explore the expectations of a customer from an adventure come physical activity camp. The study includes response from 151 respondents which includes people from in and around Coimbatore and they are spread across an age of around 15 to 50. The study shows there is significant influence of age on the selection of an adventure come physical camp. These research findings confirm that there is significant influence of the customer's age and their gender upon their expectations from an adventure come physical activities camp. As an expected result irrespective of their age the location preference for an adventure come physical activities camp among the Coimbatore residents is Amidst the mountains (76.16%)

4. Purpose

Considering the shifts in customer's expectation from a resort and inclination towards adventure come physical activities camp, this research is much needed to serve the niche set of people who were already interested in such activities and the increasing population that are currently inclined towards such camping and adventure activities. The aim of this research is to find the preferences of people of various age groups. And those who belong to various educational backgrounds. And their demographic profile as a whole. The demography of the respondents includes all people in and around Coimbatore of a varied age group which varies from a minimum of 15 and above, and all professional background.

The following are the details about the respondents:

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
15-19	4	2.65
20-25	124	82.2
26-30	10	6.62
31-35	1	0.66
36& Above	11	7.28

The below table shows the number of male and female respondents from the city of Coimbatore

Male	67	44.47
Female	81	53.64

Occupation	Number of respondents	Parentage
Student	24	16
Employee	78	52
Housewife	10	6.67
Business	13	8.67
Others	25	16.67

5. Methods

The Consumer's expectations on an Adventure and physical activities camp is a descriptive research project designed to provide data on the state of resort recreation amenities. The methods that were employed to address the study objectives includes, first, a review of the literature was completed to identify the latest resort recreation data and second, a survey of prospective customers was implemented to supplement and enhance the project results.

The statement of the problem is to study the Customer's expectation in the city of Coimbatore on an Adventure come physical activities camp.

Scope of the Study: The study is carried out in Coimbatore. The marketer will get insight on the customer's expectation in the city of Coimbatore on an Adventure come physical activities camp.

Design of the Study: This research applies a quantitative approach. The present study employs descriptive research design. This design is for summarizing the set of factors and variables. The survey method is followed in this study, and a set of questionnaires, interview schedule and observations where used to collect primary data

Methodology of Data Collection:

Primary data collection: Primary data will be collected through Survey questionnaire.

Secondary data collection: Secondary data will be collected through research paper and journals.

Sampling Methodology:

Sampling method: Convenient Sampling

Data collection method: Interview schedule, questionnaire and observation.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The survey data has been analysed with descriptive statistics and percentages and Chi square test and one-way ANOVA. The results have been shown in tables and figures for better interpretation.

Result from one way ANOVA test with Age as the independent variable.

	Freq.	Sig value	Sig/Not sig.
Reason to visit resort	3.64	0.007	Significant

Preference in case of team outing	1.12	0.348	Not significant
Resort location	0.49	0.741	Not significant
Preference for off road cycling	2.68	0.034	Significant
Best pair with campfire	4.18	0.003	Significant
Preference for early morning trek	1.13	0.347	Not significant
Preference on food	2.94	0.022	Significant
Preference for liquor	2.62	0.037	Significant
Preference for Rock climbing	5.49	0	Significant

Preference for trekking	149	4.2	1.08	1
Preference for off road cycling	150	3.82	1.16	2
Preference for swimming pool	148	3.17	1.02	3
Preference for rock climbing	149	3.14	1.07	4
Preference for rope course	146	2.82	1.06	5
Preference for bird watching	147	2.82	1.13	5
Preference for liquor	146	2.66	1.62	7
Preference for meditation	147	2.55	1.14	8
Preference for Yoga	147	2.51	1.11	9

The descriptive are given below with age as the independent variable.

For the above given parameters the preference varies from least preferred to most preferred. Hence the rank of the mean of those preferences gives us the order of which is the most importantly considered parameter of all the customers irrespective of their age and gender. The study shows that early morning trek is the most preferred (mean=4.2) and yoga is least preferred (mean=2.51)

	Age	N	Mean
Reason to visit resort	20 - 25	124	2.27
	26 - 30	10	1.9
	31 - 35	1	2
	36 & above	11	2.45
	15 - 20	4	3.75
	Total	150	2.29
Preference in case of team outing	20 - 25	124	3.87
	26 - 30	10	3.8
	31 - 35	1	4
	36 & above	8	3.75
	15 - 20	4	5
	Total	147	3.89
Resort location	20 - 25	124	1.38
	26 - 30	10	1.3
	31 - 35	1	2
	36 & above	11	1.36
	15 - 20	4	1
	Total	150	1.37
Preference for off road cycling	20 - 25	123	3.88
	26 - 30	10	3.4
	31 - 35	1	3
	36 & above	8	3
	15 - 20	4	5

The below table is the result of Chi square test

Variables	Value	Significance Value	Significant/Not significant
Resort location	7.74	0.021	Significant
Preference in case of team outing	6.02	0.197	Not significant
Reason to visit resort	0.66	0.883	Not Significant
Preference for off road cycling	5.18	0.269	Not Significant
Best pair with campfire	11.38	0.01	Significant
Preference for early morning trek	2.3	0.68	Not significant
Preference on food	5.17	0.075	Not Significant
Preference for liquor	19.82	0.01	significant
Preference for Rock climbing	3.12	0.539	Not Significant
Preference for rope course	3.15	0.542	Not Significant
Preference for bird watching	0.92	0.921	Not Significant
Preference for Swimming pool	6.69	0.153	Not Significant
Preference for Yoga	5.43	0.122	Not Significant
Frequency of visiting a resort	1.21	0.123	Not significant

When the significant value is lesser than 0.05 then it is said to have some significance. When the different age groups 15-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35 and 36&above are all equal then it is said that it is null hypothesis and the given is accepted else the alternate hypothesis is accepted. In this study the test results show that different age groups have various reasons to visit an adventure come physical training camp.

The Chi square test was conducted with gender as the independent variable, and the result shows that only the variables such as Resort location (0.021), Best pair with campfire (0.01), Preference for liquor (0.01) has a significant connection with the customer's gender.

Whereas when we consider the statements for which the significance value is greater than 0.05 the mean value of the various groups are more or less the same. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted in those cases.

The mean standard rank is given below, which differentiates to us the most important variable to the least important variable.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Rank
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7. Research Design

This study is a descriptive design which used both qualitative and quantitative data. The primary data collection has been done using survey method online. Schindler (2008) expressed that a quantitative method is appropriate when the aim of the research is to draw a connection between the selected study variables and the sample population. For this study about 151 respondents were chosen using a non probabilistic sampling method called Snowball sampling technique. An instrument was developed (Questionnaire) to map the customer's expectation on an Adventure come physical activities camp.

Data has been analyzed using SPSS and Excel employing descriptive statistics, One way ANOVA and Chi square tests.

8. Major Findings

- There is a significant relationship between the age of the customer and the reason why they choose to visit an adventure come physical activities camp. They have various purposes for their visits, their mean value exactly tells the reason for their visit. It is found that the customers within the age of 15-25 prefer physical activities, those above 36 want to spend time with their fellow mates.
- Similarly there is a significant relationship between age and what goes best with campfire. Barbeque is preferred by people within age of 26 to 30 and those above 36 prefer music.
- All the physical activities such as rock climbing, rope course, trekking, off road cycling has a significant relationship with age.
- The mean ranking shows that early morning trekking is the most preferred, and second to that is off road cycling. And that which is least preferred is Yoga.
- There is a significant relationship between gender of the customers and resort location, what best pairs with campfire and their preference for liquor.

9. Research Limitations

- The purpose of this research was not to attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of an adventure come physical activities camp and a visitor's selection process, but just a snapshot of the expectation of amenities and their offerings. It is also recognized that merely offering the recreation amenities will not to assure owner satisfaction (Masterson and Verhoven, 1995)^[7]. This study does not make recommendations

for mere amenities; these decisions are often dependent upon location and the requisites of targeted guests (Stringam, 2008). The focus of this research was purely to generate a state-of-the-industry report to serve as a source for an adventure come physical activities camp information.

- The small sample size limits the study results and may not be sufficient to address the overall industry.
- The incomes of the customers were not majorly taken into considerations only their expectations were studied. But that might depend upon their income as well.

10. Originality

The study is a one of its kind that is majorly aimed at studying the niche market and the vacationers' expectations from an adventure come physical activities camp. There are a very few researchers considering this niche segment in the overall tourism industry. This study talks about the various offerings at such camps and this helps in bridging the gap between the reality and the customer's expectations.

11. Conclusion

The challenge for an adventure camping is to design and deliver properly, products and services commensurate with the needs of the market. A role of adventure camping management is to identify what the market demands and work toward meeting those demands. Often, adventure camps are seeking a unique guest experience. Often this can come in the form of a recreation offering. It is always important to bridge the gap between the reality of an industry and what the customer expects out of an offering.

To date there has been no single source of information on adventure camping amenity offerings. The report provides a comprehensive look at the most recent descriptive data on adventure camping facilities and the customer's expectation towards the same in the city of Coimbatore. This research can be used by adventure camping and recreation managers for benchmarking, comparison, or simply inspiration for the next new amenity offering. For the hospitality educator, the research was meant to provide current data to use in the preparation of adventure camping management curriculum materials.

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