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## **PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES AT THE NINOY AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TERMINALS**

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### **Abstract**

This study is entitled, “PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICES AT THE NINOY AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TERMINALS”. It aims to take a closer look in the over-all airport experience of the chosen passengers-turned-respondents of this study.

Bearing the title as the Philippines’ premier gateway to the world, the Ninoy Aquino International Airport indeed plays a vital role in the national, international economics and historical scene in the story of the Filipino nation. This is a facility where first impression is made. Hence, identifying factors affecting passengers’ reception at the airport can pave the way to a deeper understanding on the why it is more fun in the Philippines, as the airport contributes in the increasing number of tourists arrival.

To achieve the objective of the study, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approach in crafting the survey questionnaire. Descriptive method was used in this study; the researcher went on to gather and tabulate data. This descriptive method was similarly used to analyze and interpret all data collected. The purpose of this method was to determine two (2) things: 1) to identify the over-all experience of passengers based on airport personnel, facility, and process; and 2) to identify action taken by airport authorities in handling passengers’ feedback and coming up with measures to be proposed in order to raised up the bar of service excellence at the airport.

Respondents to this study were chosen through purposive sampling. The thirty (30) respondents were randomly selected from each of the four (4) NAIA terminals making the total number of respondents to 120.

Through the interpretation and analysis of the gathered data, the researcher concluded that proper housekeeping of the NAIA terminals overturn the limitations posed by inadequate facilities.

Accessibility to a free internet connection is highly preferred by most of air travelers utilizing NAIA terminals. In the same level of importance, airport facilities have direct effect to passengers over-all airport experience, however, this has no effect in a macro-scale such as the economy of the country.

## Introduction

The reputation of NAIA terminals has national effect on both the economy and tourism. It may make or break interest among foreign tourists and may cause fear to possible business opportunities. The best approach to overcome such challenge is through effective handling and disposition of feedbacks from the first-hand airport users. The bottom line on the entire hand-me-down process of devolution of standard for an airport is its direct and indirect impact to the public, society as a whole and the economy in general.

The general problem of the study is the performance of Public Relations Office of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminals be appraised of its function to meet internationally acceptable standards of airport accommodation and services.

## Methods

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research in examining the data pertaining to the problems.

As early as 1989, Ferguson and Tahake gave a definition to Descriptive method of research as used statistical procedures in describing the properties of samples, or of populations where complete population data were available. Another set explanation that descriptive research is used to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2007).

One fundamental

characteristic of both types of research is that they involve naturalistic data. That

is, they attempt to study language learning and teaching in their naturally occurring

settings without any intervention or manipulation of variables. The main goal of this research was to describe the data and characteristics about the topics under study. The idea behind this type of research was to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations. Descriptive research was mainly done if a researcher wanted to gain a better understanding of a topic.

A descriptive method is a type of research used to describe and analyze the data and characteristics about what is being studied (Key, 1997). It uses the survey techniques through questionnaires and interviews to gather necessary information. The researcher will use both qualitative and quantitative approach to study the human or public relations practices in the four (4) terminals of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The researcher uses quantitative research, certainly because, it was concerned with measurements of quantitative properties.

It can be used to measure things such as the size of the segment, to validate findings or to test hypotheses (Szwarc, 2005). Quantitative research is typically consisted of collecting data from a relatively large sample in a standardized way and the results were usually presented as numbers in tables, graphs or charts (McGivern, 2009).

Furthermore, the researcher used qualitative research as he gathered relevant data through a locally constructive survey.

Analysis of qualitative data requires accurate description of participant responses, for example, sorting responses to open questions and interviews into broad themes (Saul and McLead, 2018).

## Results and Discussion

The following are the findings of the study:

1. Handling of Complaints of Passengers. The passenger complaints in NAIA were mainly brought by certain negative feedback from personnel, facilities and processes. First, in terms of personnel, which embraced airport workers whose primary task is to stand as front liners and safe keepers - respondents generally agreed that their attitude is good; conduct was righteous, gentle and lawful; and they possessed sufficient basic knowledge to the nature of the industry.

Second, in terms of facilities, respondents viewed the general housekeeping of the airport terminals are in good upkeep, maintenance and condition.

2. Problems encountered by Public Relations Officers. Ranked as number one is delayed flights followed by cancelled flights. With an equal level of importance, PROs are confronted with other concerns dealing with long waiting time at baggage carousel; excess baggage; unfamiliar with airport process. At the very least, PROs are similarly has to manage concerns on passengers on a wrong terminal, instant money transfer and diverted flights.

3. Proposed measures to improve human relations. Good housekeeping and internet accessibility both shared the Very Important (VI) post in this part of the study. The 120 respondents viewed the two (2) as top element to improve the airport operations at NAIA. Furthermore, well-kept clean facilities and strong internet connection can erase inconvenience and discomfort to some air travellers. Yet, internet is in two useful purpose - entertainment while waiting and communication in case of untoward incidents.

Sliding on another point, giveaways or also known as freebies is on the least of the list. This translates that NAIA terminal users are more looking forward to get in there destination place than to receive gifts and souvenirs.

## Conclusion

Based on the aforementioned findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Proper maintenance of good housekeeping of the airport terminals is the paramount consideration for most of air travelling passing through the Ninoy Aquino International Airport terminals. It is not a surprise that there exists physical limitation of the airport facilities, but proper maintenance of cleanliness added comfort to passengers.
2. Internet accessibility is a necessity, hence, an essential requirement. For the reason that internet is a basic tool of communication that will benefit not just passengers but personnel and well-wishers at the same time.
3. Organic personnel are committed to share their skills and knowledge to outsourced and contractual personnel posed by limited manpower.
4. Several international standards such as ICAO and SKYTRAX were set to keep the airports of the world in good passenger-friendly condition, as it is based on the figures of the survey; the Ninoy Aquino International Airport is on the average level - not above and not below international standard.
5. International carriers still prefer to operate at the airport located in the national capital region. Thus, most of the land-based and sea-based Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) depart and arrive at NAIA. Air travel for OFWs are nowadays convenient due to high preference for their departure in order to avoid delays and offloading which may affect their overseas contracts - an exclusive entrance, priority lanes in the check in counters and express lane in immigration areas should be maintained to expedite the boarding procedures.
6. Airport facilities, personnel and procedure find no direct effect to national economy. Key players of the national economy such as tourism, trade, business and the contracts of OFWs are

not dependent on the state of facility of the premier airport. Although, the airport is the first place of first impression, foreign tourists visiting the country for tourism and pleasure do not pay too much attention to the airport. For the tourism sector to boost, the burden is on the shoulder of the national and local governments to keep the tourist attraction in good shape. Next is business and trade; men and women of this sector spend much of their transit time in the comforts of private lounges maintained and owned by their airline of choice. At certain point, businessmen are extended with VIP services by the airport and airline employees. OFWs are preferred passengers; there are designated entrance gate, express lanes and lounge for their convenience. Apart from it, the government exempts them from paying travel tax and terminal fees. There could be less chance that a qualified OFW will miss their flight due to airport congestion, long queue no all points and other several forms of delay. That is the support of the government through MIA Authority to departing OFWs so as not to impede their contract obligations abroad.

## Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions, the following were hereby recommended:

1. The Manila International Airport Authority may utilize the Nayong Filipino grounds and the abandoned Philippine Village Hotel grounds and building for possible extension of the NAIA terminal 2 or possible construction of additional airport terminal adjacent to the existing four (4) NAIA terminals in order to decongest the present airport terminals.
2. The Department of Transportation, as the primary government agency in charge of airport operations, may consider the findings of the study to connect the airport terminals 1, 2, 3 and 4 through funding of construction of trains inside the complex, or enclosed bridge that can be used to cross to one terminal to another in order to make it easier for passenger to transfer terminal.
3. The Manila International Airport Authority may consider the results of the study in reviewing or possibly re-intensifying the personnel training module to adapt to the changing needs of growing number of airport users. This may cause possible review and revision on disaster preparedness, emergency response, as well as, feedback disposition mechanism, including increase in bandwidth for a more reliable and stronger internet connection for all airport users.
4. The Human Resource Development Division of the MIAA may consider the conduct of relevant skills training program based on international standards for its personnel in order to effectively and efficiently handle first-hand feedbacks in whatever form such as complaints, suggestions and several others.

5. Establish and maintain a centralized information system that will assist the concierge personnel in the dissemination of relevant information, direction and several others.
6. Finally, the airport management may set standard and guidelines relevant to quick disposition on all actionable feedbacks and prescribing timeline, setting constant monitoring and imposing stricter penalties therefore.

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