

Post-pandemic Destination Marketing Attributes of Davao Region: An Exploratory Factor Analysis

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Abstract

This paper explores the post-pandemic destination marketing attributes of the Davao Region, employing an exploratory factor analysis to identify and understand the underlying dimensions. This study utilized a sequential exploratory design using a stratified sampling technique involving 253 local tourists who visited the Davao Region twice a year after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thematic analysis was employed; from 50 item statements, only 23 items were classified under five constructs after seven iterations. The results revealed that the post-pandemic attributes of the Davao Region are value for money, safety and security, recreational activities, inherited resources, supporting factors, and resources. Moreover, this finding may serve as a methodological reference for future studies in tourism. Confirmatory factor analysis is highly recommended for improving the quality and precision of research findings, contributing to the growth of knowledge in tourism management studies.

Keywords: *tourism industry, post-pandemic destination marketing attributes, Davao Region, Philippines, local tourist, exploratory factor analysis,*

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has created massive global problems affecting many sectors of the economy, especially the tourism sector. This is seen as many countries imposing travel restrictions, resulting in a drop in tourism activities (Rogerson and Baum 2020). As published by the United Nations World Travel Organization (UNWTO 2021), an estimated loss of \$2.4 trillion in 2020 from international tourism and its closely linked sector is due to the drop in tourist arrivals brought about by the pandemic. With the series of lockdowns, closure of national and international borders to ceasing the operations of many businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic changes the way people live, as well as their behavior in choosing the destination to travel with (Nueburger and Egger, 2020; Wen et al., 2021). With this, many countries, especially those that greatly rely upon tourism, suffered the most.

The tourism industry has a substantial impact on a country's economy. It is one of the most important sectors that generate income and contributes to its economic development (Marzoor, *et.al*, 2019; Lee and Chen, 2020). It produces 10% of the employment globally, creating jobs not only directly in the tourism sector but also in other sectors that support it such as agriculture, communication, health, and education sector (World Travel & Tourism Council 2018). In the Philippines, it provides about 12.7% of its GDP last 2019, making an estimated 5.71 million employment, as reported by the Philippines Statistics Authority (2021). Further, the largest contributor to Davao Region's economy, accounting for P571.1 billion out of the P954.1 billion Gross Regional Domestic Product (at constant 2018 prices), came from the service sector, which includes tourism (Philippine Information Agency, 2023). Statistics shows how valuable the tourism industry is and should investigate and find ways to revive, as when the COVID-19 pandemic arises tourism sector has affected negatively (UNWTO 2020; Godovykh, Ridderstaat, Baker and Fyall 2021).

One of the ways to reverse the impacts of the tourism crisis is through destination marketing. Destination marketing refers to activities to increase the number of tourists and expenditures in a specific location (Gursoy and Chi, 2018, p7). Morrisson (2013) pointed out the importance of destination marketing in tourism. He shows that it helps tourism bounce back from the crises it faced before and maintain the positive public presence of a particular destination. It is supported by the study conducted by Birdir, Dalgic, and Birdir (2018), which claims that destination marketing helps destinations better exhibit and promote themselves and their attractions, improve their image, and build their brand identity. This implies that having effective destination marketing could revive the tourism industry from the crisis it faces today.

The majority of tourist activities occur at destinations, which serve as a pillar in any tourism system modeling and have evolved as the core unit of study in tourism. As defined by UNWTO (2011), destinations are places visited by tourists

and are central to travel decisions. Every destination's goal is to position itself in such a manner that tourists' positive impressions of it lead to return visits (Camilleri, 2018). Deciding to travel to a destination, travelers narrow down their options from hundreds of places within their awareness set (Hahm and Severt, 2018). With these, destination marketing plays a significant role in making a particular place a prime destination by giving people awareness of what a certain destination could offer that would also suit the travelers' needs.

Studies about destination marketing have become a major part of tourism research. Gursoy and Chi (2018) cited the importance of destination marketing as it refers to all marketing initiatives aimed at boosting the number of tourists and income in a destination. It is a key idea in destinations' sustainability and future development in the progressively globalized and competitive tourism industry (UNWTO, 2011). It transforms unknown destinations into popular ones, mitigates the negative effects of crises on tourism, improves a country's image, swiftly fires interest in locations with the instant reaction of social media, and keeps travel agents updated and interested in destinations (Morrison, 2013). Further, destination marketing efforts strive to attract and retain new customers (Liang, 2020). Thus, having effective destination marketing has a positive impact on a certain tourist destination.

Conducting destination marketing is crucial. The success of destination marketing is primarily determined by how the tourist perceives the products and how they are advertised (Aziz and Yaacob, 2019). Conversely, to promote a certain place, destination marketers must determine the attributes that will attract tourists to a certain destination (Guzel, 2017). This will help the destination marketer to effectively market the destination, essentials in the tourism industry, and the decision-making process.

Destination attributes are the features of a place that satisfy the tourist during their visit (Madden, Rashid, and Zainol 2016; Sotiriadis 2021), which also determine the competitiveness of a certain destination, among others. Similarly, in the study conducted by Crouch and Ritchie (2011) on destination competitiveness, he listed the determinant attributes of a destination, wherein it is believed to be the most thorough list of characteristics to date (Jumanazarov, Kamilov and Kiatkawsin 2020; Kiatkawsin and Han 2017). Crouch's study is built on the interdependence and links between the players in developing a destination's visitor experience. Hence, it was created to assess supply-side competitiveness. Moreover, he highlighted in his study that the major components that significantly influence a tourist destination's competitive positioning are core attractors, which include the climate, events, and heritage attraction; mixed activities such as sports and recreation activities; accessibility; and market ties.

Further, out of those factors of the determinant attributes of a destination formulated by Crouch and Ritchie, Kiatkawsin and Han (2017) examined these attributes that are suited for the evaluation by the visitors or the demand side. From 48 destination attributes items, it revealed five (5) factors: Tourism Friendliness, Shopping, Climate, Activities, and Traditions. These attributes were also extracted from the study of Dwyer and Kim (2003), wherein they then categorized the determinants and indicators of destination competitiveness into four, namely (1) inherited or bestowed resources, (2) created resources, (3) supporting factors and resources, and (4) situational conditions. The first attributes are categorized as inherited or bestowed resources, including climate, nature, tradition/heritage, and local food. In most cases, these are the main attractions that bring tourists in the first place. In Crouch's (2010) model, climate and physiography are the number one determinants and the most essential attributes of a destination. This implies that people prioritize a place's climatic condition when choosing a destination. Nature refers to the destination's natural scenery, including flora and fauna. Natural resources have been regarded as the cornerstone of many tourism locations as many tourist products rely on the natural resources present in the area (Bui and Kiatkawsin 2020). Heritage and local food or gastronomy are resources embodied by the locals. These are not just historical treasures but also live cultural aspects (Jumanazarov, Kamilov, and Kiatkawsin 2020).

The second is the *created resources*, which include accommodation, transportation, tourist information, tourism activities, shopping, and entertainment. Accommodation is an important component of the tourism industry, providing a substantial portion of overall tourism spending (Sthapit and Jimenez-Barreto 2018). The hotels and accommodation industry has a significant impact on a destination's competitiveness, without them, a destination couldn't compete (Attila 2016). Transportation is considered as the backbone of tourism, without transportation, there would be no travel and tourist business, and individuals would not be able to visit other areas they wanted to see (Dinu 2019). On the other hand, tourist information includes not only information about sights and activities, but also information about essential factors such as communication (mobile phone and internet signal) and banking. Another attribute of this category is the tourism activities that can create a more immersive experience (Chi, Lee, Ahn, and Kiatkawsin 2020) which could give a memorable experience for the tourists. Another element of the created resources is shopping and entertainment, which the study conducted by Choi, Heo, and Law (2016) shows that it is also an important part of the travel decision of the tourist. Entertainment on the other hand includes the cultural shows present in the area and gives an educational element to the tourist experience (Hwang and Lee 2019). These attributes also rated as very important in the study conducted in the province of Batangas, Philippines (Reyes, K *et.al*, 2020). With these attributes, it sums up the available services that a certain destination could provide.

The third one is supporting factors and resources. The attributes here are optional to directly serve guests but rather to provide more general characteristics or knowledge that could enrich the tourism experience. These include service quality, accessibility, hospitality, and communication. Service quality represents how products and experiences are given to visitors and is frequently identified as a critical factor of overall satisfaction (Dwivedi, Nayeem, and Murshed, 2018). Accessibility assesses how easy it is for tourists to move around and go from their residence to their destination (Hooper 2015). Hospitality refers to the overall warmth of residents toward travelers (Crouch 2011). It shows how the locals positively react to the presence of tourists in their community. Communication refers to how simple it is for visitors to engage with others and navigate within the area. This dimension includes the language abilities of service employees and the signages at hotspots (Enright and Newton 2005). These attributes are more of the engagement of the local people towards the tourists in their community, like how friendly the destination is for the visitors.

Finally, the last group of attributes is situational conditions. This attribute includes the perceived value as well as safety and security features. These factors influence the increase or decrease of tourists' overall experience (Crouch 2010). The idea of perceived value arises from the difference between the assessment of services obtained by an individual and the expense of such services (Wu and Li 2017). Safety and security involve tourists' perceptions of risk associated with a tourist destination, which are significant determinants of their desire to return to that location (Hasan, Ismail, and Islam 2017).

In the destination mentioned above, the attributes cited and supported by other scholars, the researcher aims to explore these attributes and know what compels people to visit Davao Region after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are the things that the local people consider when traveling within the region.

1.1 Objectives

This study aims to:

- 1.) To determine the factors for post-pandemic destination marketing attributes of the Davao Region;
- 2.) To develop a framework that illustrates dimensions of destination marketing attributes of the Davao Region post-COVID-19 pandemic context.

2. Methods

2.1 Study Participants

The researcher conducted an in-depth interview with six tourism stakeholders to develop the research instrument for the quantitative phase. One respondent is from the LGU Tourism Section, one from a travel and tours agency that is also a Davao Travel Agencies Association member, one travel organizer/coordinator, and the remaining are the local tourists who visited Davao Region. All respondents visited at least twice when the travel restrictions were lifted. The results from the interview, literature review, and related studies were the basis for formulating the research instrument. In the quantitative phase of the study, the researcher employed a stratified sampling technique in selecting the respondents.

The researcher surveyed five provinces in the Davao Region, wherein a big chunk of the respondents traveled to Davao del Sur, followed by Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Davao de Oro, and Davao Occidental, to investigate the dimensions of what compels people to travel. The total sample size will be times five of the total number of items developed from the scale (Bryant & Yarnold, 1995). The questionnaire contains 50 items. The total number of qualified respondents is 253, which met the criteria of Bryant and Yarnold.

The main criteria for selecting the participants are local tourists 18 years old and above who traveled twice within the Davao Region after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic or from 2021 up to the present either via land, air, and sea will be the target respondents of the study. To be considered a tourist, they must stay in the region for 24 hours on each visit (Wescott and Anderson, 2021). Respondents who stayed for less than 24 hours will not be included in the study as they might not give the dimensions of marketing attributes of the Davao Region as a tourist. Likewise, respondents who did not give consent to the researcher were excluded from the said survey, and those who wished not to proceed with the survey will also be excluded as part of the sample.

2.2 Materials and Instruments

In conducting the study, the researcher employed self-made questionnaires reviewed and validated by expert validators. The first one was an in-depth interview questionnaire for the qualitative phase of the study. Then, a structured or standardized survey questionnaire was extracted from the in-depth interview results, various pieces of literature, and scholarly sources fitted to the objectives of this research. The survey questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part consists of the profile of the respondents, such as place of origin, age, sex, number of times they traveled to the Davao Region each year from 2021, and the number of days spent in the Davao Region—the second part comprised item statements approved by the validators and structured using the five-point Likert scale.

The 5-point scale is anchored between "Highly Essential or Important to Not Essential/Important" semantic differential pairs. The degree of responses will be then categorized and interpreted as follows: A 5 score indicates a mean range of 4.20 to 5.00 (very essential/important), which is defined as extremely high. A score of 4 corresponds to a mean range of 3.40 to 4.19 (essential / significant) or high. While a score of 3 with a mean range of 2.60 to 3.39 indicates that something is somehow essential/important or moderate, a score of 1 with a mean range of 1.00 to 1.79 indicates something is not essential/important or extremely low.

2.3 Design and Procedure

The study utilized a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research, specifically a sequential exploratory approach. The exploratory research design was used to extract the measures that characterize or describe the destination marketing attributes of the Davao Region by using interviews to form the items of the scale, followed by gathering quantitative data and analyzing the same using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to extract or "explore" these factors. This approach is appropriate for scale or instrument creation, developing a categorization for testing, or identifying factors (Bonds- Raacke and Raacke, 2014).

The researcher submitted a self-made guide question to the adviser and expert validator – internal and external for review before conducting the in-depth interview of the six selected tourism stakeholders to formulate possible statements leading to identifying the destination marketing attributes. The researcher tabulates the statements collected from the in-depth interview, literature, and related studies and submits the final survey questionnaire to the expert validators for review and possible improvements. Subsequently, the researcher submitted all the documentary requirements to UMEREC for ethics review. After securing the certificate from the UMEREC, the researcher submitted a letter of permission to conduct the study signed by the adviser and favorably endorsed by the Dean of the Professional Schools to the tourism business establishments and local tourism offices in the Davao Region. Further, the distribution and retrieval of the questionnaire were done in 3 weeks. After retrieving the questionnaire, the researcher tabulated it and submitted it to the university statistician for a thorough analysis of the data collected.

The researcher strictly follows the Data Privacy Law that seeks to protect all forms of information, be it private, personal, or sensitive. The researcher performed the utmost diligence in handling and managing the respondents' private and confidential information and data. The researcher informed the respondents about the confidentiality of their responses and that they would only be used within the parameters of this study, as well as the benefits they might get from the study's outcome. Further, all the data was kept where only the researcher could access it. Hard copies were all compiled in a folder and placed in a safety box, and one year after the research was accomplished, all the data and responses of the respondents were burned and deleted.

In adequately asking for the consent of the target respondents to participate, the first thing the researcher did was to seek approval from the local tourism offices and business establishments to conduct the study in their area of responsibility by sending an email and written permission to conduct the study signed by the research adviser and endorsed by the Dean of the Professional School. Out of 11 letters sent out for approval, only six were permitted to conduct a study on their area of responsibility. During the data gathering, the researcher explained the objectives and purpose of the survey to the tourism stakeholders and target respondents before distributing the survey questionnaires, as well as the confidentiality concerns. The survey was done face to face, and the researcher ensured that they were asked to read it before signing the Informed Consent Form (ICF).

In conducting the study, the researcher foresees a minimal risk, which includes the possible physical and emotional discomfort or inconvenience and the risk of confusion or misinterpretation of the written statements/questions by the respondents. Accordingly, to mitigate these potential risks, the researcher makes sure to ask the respondents if they are comfortable answering the survey questionnaire to avoid the risk of possible physical and emotional discomfort or inconvenience. The researcher surveyed a place where the participants felt comfortable and reiterated that their participation was optional and that they may only participate if they were comfortable. Further, since the study was conducted face-to-face, the researcher was always available to explain the items in the research instruments in the context of this research to avoid the risk of confusion or misinterpretation of the written statements/questions by the respondents.

During the data gathering, the researcher explained the objectives and purpose of the survey to the tourism stakeholders before distributing the survey questionnaires, as well as the confidentiality concerns. The study was conducted based on the willingness of the respondents. With this, those respondents who declined to be included as participants, the researcher never pushed the person to do so. The researcher ensured that the selected participant could provide sufficient information to achieve the primary objective of the study by placing profiling features in the survey questionnaires and conducting surveys at the different tourist spots in the region suggested by the local tourism office. After the retrieval, the responses were tabulated and analyzed using relevant statistical tools; the researcher will present the result in good faith with no intention of misrepresenting the findings to fit the stated conceptual or theoretical framework. The researcher only presents a fact, detailed, and respondent-based interpretation with no intentional misinterpretation or data fabrication. The researcher

employs the optimal way to prevent any possible misinterpretation of someone's work and will ensure to keep all the information that could identify a specific individual by keeping the respondents' personal information separate from their responses so that only the researcher can identify such information. Also, plagiarism tools such as Grammarly and Turnitin were utilized to prevent plagiarism issues. The researcher employed proper citations of others' work following the proper citation guidelines using the Harvard Referencing style. The researcher also exerts efforts in coming up with information indicated in this investigation with guidance and suggestions from the research adviser.

Further, the research adviser was acknowledged as the co-author in the publication of the paper. The researcher employed the objective strategy in the conduct of this research and for this research alone. Any other purpose for any personal gain was quickly disregarded. The researcher also exerts efforts in coming up with information indicated in this investigation with guidance and suggestions from the research adviser.

All of these required actions and activities were carried out following the UMERG and under the supervision of the research adviser.

3. Discussion of Results and Reflection

This section presents the result and analysis of the data gathered from the study's respondents. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to assess the data collected from the survey questionnaire. The following sequence is used to show the results: sampling adequacy and multidimensionality test for destination attributes of Davao Region, rotated component matrix/latent roots criteria, and framework developed from the findings of the study.

Table 1. Measures of Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity

<i>Measures of Sampling Adequacy and Sphericity</i>			
<i>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</i>			0.885
<i>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</i>	<i>Approx. Chi-Square</i>	3988.902	
	<i>df</i>	561	
	<i>Sig.</i>	.000	

Shown in Table 1 is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) assesses the suitability of data for factor analysis, which varies from 0 to 1, and higher values indicate the sampling is adequate. In this case, the KMO value is .885, which suggests that the sample is "meritorious" (Kaiser and Rice, 1975; Pett, M.A., Lackey, N.R. and Sullivan, J.J., 2003) as it is above the acceptable value of 0.6. Moreover, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity in Table 1 shows the test level is 3988.902 with a significance level of .000 (<.05), which suggests that a factor analysis for the data set is favorable (Napitupulu, D., Kadar, J.A. and Jati, RK, 2017, Chan, L.L. and Idris, N., 2017). Thus, this signifies that the sampling is adequate and the data is well-suited for factor analysis.

Table 2 shows the Latent Roots Criteria where we can see the eigenvalues and the total variance explained. Principal component analysis (PCA) is used in the extraction method of factor analysis. Prior to extraction, thirty-four linear components were identified. After extraction and rotation, six distinct linear components were within the eigenvalue greater than 1. This also reveals that, at most, six factors can be extracted from the set of items submitted for factor analysis. The first component explains 13.829% of the total variance with an eigenvalue of 10.044. The second component explains 10.669% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 3.052. The third component explains 10.224% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 2.124. The fourth component explains an 8.602% variance with an eigenvalue of 1.78. The fifth one has an 8.105% variance with an eigenvalue of 1.432. The last component explains a 6.526% variance with an eigenvalue of 1.271. Further, the six components or dimensions structure explains 57.955% of the total variance, which also reflects on the KMO value, 0.885, indicating that the sample is good and the factor analysis is suited for the study. Referring to the general rule on the total variance of 50% (Shrestha, 2021; Samuels, P., 2017), the variance explained in Table 2 is acceptable.

Figure 1 shows the graphical data plotted with eigenvalue on the y-axis and thirty-four components on the x-axis. The eigenvalue decreases as one proceeds right, approaching subsequent components. As shown in the graph, there are six plotted points before the eigenvalue reaches below 1. Thus, in this study, there are six components identified to be subject factor analysis.

Table 2. Latent Roots Criteria

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Var	Cum %	Total	% of Var	Cum %	Total	% of Var	Cum %
1	10.044	29.54	29.54	10.044	29.54	29.54	4.702	13.829	13.829
2	3.052	8.977	38.517	3.052	8.977	38.517	3.628	10.669	24.498
3	2.125	6.25	44.767	2.125	6.25	44.767	3.476	10.224	34.722
4	1.78	5.236	50.004	1.78	5.236	50.004	2.925	8.602	43.324
5	1.432	4.212	54.216	1.432	4.212	54.216	2.756	8.105	51.429
6	1.271	3.739	57.955	1.271	3.739	57.955	2.219	6.526	57.955
7	0.991	2.914	60.869						
8	0.953	2.803	63.672						
9	0.892	2.623	66.295						
10	0.853	2.508	68.804						
11	0.822	2.419	71.222						
12	0.762	2.241	73.464						
13	0.677	1.992	75.456						
14	0.66	1.941	77.396						
15	0.624	1.835	79.231						
16	0.584	1.716	80.948						
17	0.576	1.694	82.641						
18	0.546	1.605	84.247						
19	0.48	1.411	85.657						
20	0.47	1.383	87.041						
21	0.448	1.318	88.359						
22	0.416	1.223	89.582						
23	0.409	1.204	90.785						
24	0.398	1.169	91.955						
25	0.369	1.085	93.04						
26	0.348	1.023	94.063						
27	0.323	0.949	95.012						
28	0.309	0.91	95.922						
29	0.28	0.824	96.745						
30	0.268	0.789	97.534						
31	0.251	0.739	98.273						
32	0.206	0.606	98.879						
33	0.204	0.599	99.478						
34	0.177	0.522	100						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Cum. Means Cumulative Var means Variance									

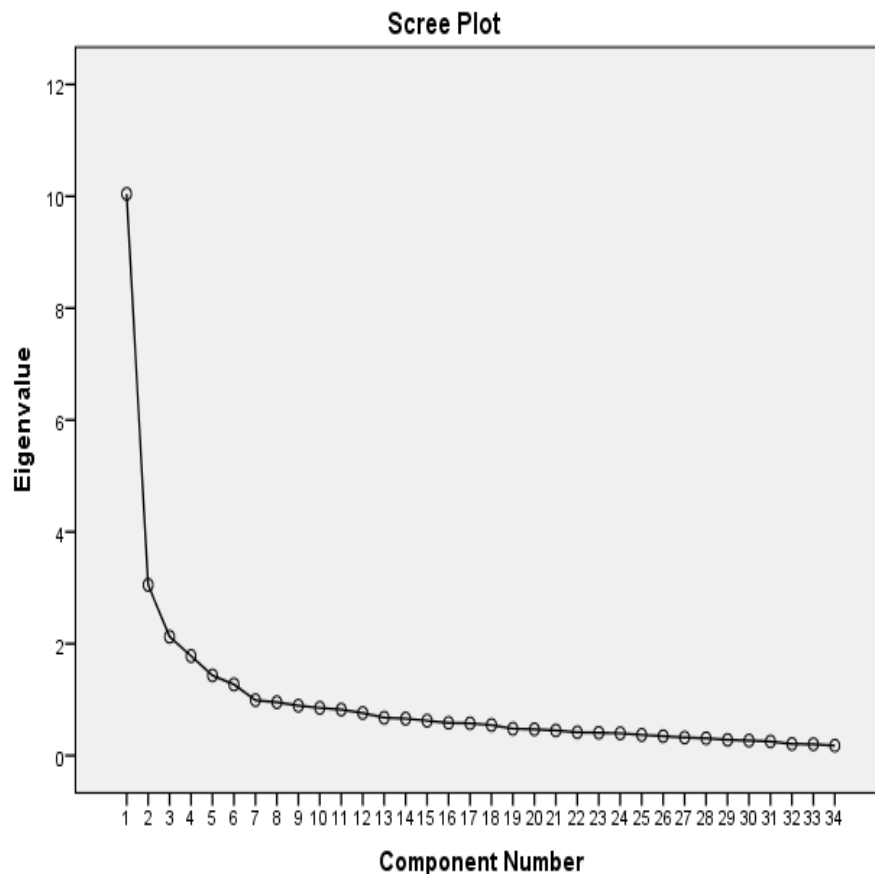


Figure 1. Scree Plot Showing the Extracted Number of Factors

Table 3 shows the Rotated Component Matix, highlighting the observed variables' factor loadings. There are 34 items loaded, and only 23 items formed six components using the extraction method PCA and rotation method VARIMAX with Kaiser Normalization and seven iterations. These 23 items reached the threshold of >0.60 and remained after the extraction method PCA and rotation method VARIMAX with Kaiser Normalization and seven iterations. The items that did not have any coefficient values were all subject to deletion.

On the other hand, Table 4 shows the extracted factors on the Destination Attributes of Davao Region. There were only five created factors from the six components, as one component did not meet the required number of items to form a factor. In order to form a factor, a component needs at least three items (Watkins, 2018). With this, the 6th component is eliminated as it only comprises two items.

Factor 1 – Value for Money. Table 4 shows that factor 1 extracted most of the item statements, having six items in total. Examining the list of item statements in this factor, it all talks about its value on spending or the affordability of the Davao Region in terms of accommodation, activities, and tour packages, which includes the amenities available, accessibility, which refers to transportation, and the attraction in the region. The researcher named this "Value for Money ."This factor focuses on the affordability of tour packages, accommodations, activities offered, and the justification of the marketed rates. The word affordability here does not mean cheap; it refers to the extent to which people perceive a destination as having a justifiable rate on its goods and services offered about tourist's financial means. With this, the researcher may conclude that local tourists choose the Davao Region as a travel destination in a post-pandemic context because it justifies the rates it offers to tourists. Tourists sought value for their money when traveling to Davao Region. The result, further supported by the study of Ortaliza and Mangli (2021), concluded that affordability is one of the attributes influencing tourists' travel to a particular destination. Moreover, it significantly influences tourist satisfaction (Wara, K.U., Jan, S. and Ihsan, A., 2022).

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6
VAR00023	0.664					
VAR00020	0.663					
VAR00021	0.661					
VAR00022	0.622					
VAR00027	0.606					
VAR00025	0.604					
VAR00024						
VAR00026						
VAR00034						
VAR00028						
VAR00019						
VAR00016		0.804				
VAR00015		0.779				
VAR00014		0.725				
VAR00017		0.663				
VAR00018						
VAR00009						
VAR00008			0.783			
VAR00004			0.764			
VAR00007			0.723			
VAR00005			0.662			
VAR00006						
VAR00031				0.756		
VAR00030				0.695		
VAR00033				0.607		
VAR00032						
VAR00029						
VAR00011					0.797	
VAR00010					0.724	
VAR00012					0.687	
VAR00013					0.623	
VAR00002						0.813
VAR00001						0.738
VAR00003						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.						
a Rotation converged in 7 iterations.						

Table 4. Extracted Factors of the Destination Attributes of Davao Region

ITEM	Factor 1 – VALUE FOR MONEY	Loading
VAR00023	It offers affordable rates for tour packages either for solo or groups.	0.664
VAR00020	Davao Region offers affordable accommodation.	0.663
VAR00021	The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory.	0.661
VAR00022	The accommodation justifies their posted rates.	0.622
VAR00027	Davao Region offers affordable activities.	0.606
VAR00025	There are variety of tour packages offered for solo or groups.	0.604
ITEM	Factor 2 – SAFETY AND SECURITY	Loading
VAR00016	Davao region is a safe place for group travelers.	0.804
VAR00015	Davao region is a safe place for solo travelers.	0.779
VAR00014	What attracts me to Davao Region or any other place is the level of security and safety that is implemented.	0.725
VAR00017	Davao region has a complete emergency response team, especially in Davao City.	0.663
ITEM	Factor 3 – RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	Loading
VAR00008	Davao Region offers outdoor activities such as trekking, zip line, sky swing, etc.	0.783
VAR00004	There are great hiking spots in the region.	0.764
VAR00007	Davao Region offers water activities such as surfing, diving, as well as island hopping.	0.723
VAR00005	There is a wide range of activities to choose from.	0.662
ITEM	Factor 4 – GASTRONOMY	Loading
VAR00031	There is a wide range of food to choose from.	0.756
VAR00030	Tasteful local cuisine and the cultural experience.	0.695
VAR00033	Tourists can experience diverse cultures.	0.607
ITEM	Factor 5 – SUPPORTING FACTORS AND RESOURCES	Loading
VAR00011	The vital establishments and services are available in the region (Food, Bank, Accommodation etc.).	0.797
VAR00010	There are lots of stores or malls to shop and even restaurants to spend time and eat.	0.724
VAR00012	There's access to almost everything	0.687
VAR00013	Davao region offers more opportunities to do business and explore due to its level of safety and security.	0.623

Factor 2 – Safety and Security. Table 4 shows that Factor 2 extracted four (4) items. The item statements focus on the safety and security of the Davao Region which is named "Safety and Security". Travelers after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Davao Region feel safe and secure when visiting a tourist spot in the region as manifested in the result of the study. This attribute is good for the image of any travel destination because most people will travel to a place where they feel they can relax and enjoy themselves without thinking of any danger that might happen. As mentioned in the study of Hasan et. al, (2017), tourist perceptions of risk in a destination are determinants of tourist revisit intention. If the tourist feels safe in a particular place, it is a determining factor of their desire to revisit the destination. Having a safe and secure destination is fundamental for the socioeconomic development of any place (Chili, 2018).

Factor 3 – Recreational Activities. Table 4 shows that Factor 3 has extracted four (4) items. The item statements mentioned about activities offered that may experience when visiting Davao Region, thus it is named as "Recreational Activities". Part of the decision-making process of tourist when choosing a destination is heavily influenced by recreational activities. Tourist often choose destinations based on what kind of recreational activities they can experience and enjoy. This

draw tourist and enhance visitor satisfaction (Pavia, Cerovic, and Brnetic, 2020). Tourist who loves outdoor activities such as hiking could enjoy the region as it offers a lot of hiking spots intended for beginners and pro-hikers. It can create more immersive experiences resulting to a more memorable experience to the tourist (Chi *et. al*, 2020). Having such activities at the destination has the potential to draw tourists while also enhancing the effectiveness of marketing and communication approaches that results to the economic growth and development of the destination (Yelena *et. al.*, 2019).

Factor 4 – Inherited Resources. Table 4 shows that Factor 4 extracted three (3) items. These item statements reveal the gastronomic feature and cultural experience of the tourist in the region, consequently this factor is called “Inherited Resources”. This factor reveals that one reason why people travel to Davao region due to its cultural and gastronomic experience – food tourism. Food tourism is “the act of travelling for taste of place in order to get a sense of place” as defined by World Food Travel Organization (WFTO). Tourist can connect with destination’s cultural heritage through its cuisine, as they engage on its local food, it gives them the chance to experience the culture of the place. Davao Region offers diverse food choices, from halal to vegan, to exotic one. The result confirms and reflects that Davao Region has a rich and diverse gastronomy and tourist were considering it as a travel destination. This result is a good sign of having a sustainable tourism industry in the region as part of having a sustainable, improve and consolidate tourism destinations, is gastronomy (Jimenez-Beltran *et. al.*, 2016) and cultural tourism is one of the important components to the overall tourism experience (Smitha, 2022).

Factor 5 – Supporting Factors and Resources. Shown in Table 4 Factor 5 has extracted four (4) items. The item statements illustrate additional resources that a tourist might need while exploring the destination such as banks, shopping areas other tourism-related businesses, and other vital establishments hence, the factor is named "Supporting Factors and Resources". Traveling to a place where you cannot find a restaurant, shopping mall, or atm is troublesome for some tourists. Having these establishments in the destination gives appeal and convenience and enhances the overall tourist experience. Tourists will be more likely to return if they are satisfied with the facilities and other vital establishments in the destination (Jangra, R., Kaushik, S.P. and Saini, S.S., 2021). The visibility of these establishments is a great manifestation of the booming business industry in the region.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has developed five destination marketing attributes of the Davao Region in the post-pandemic context as shown in Figure 2. The five destination marketing attributes *are value for money, safety and security, recreational activities, inherited resource,, supporting factors and resources.*

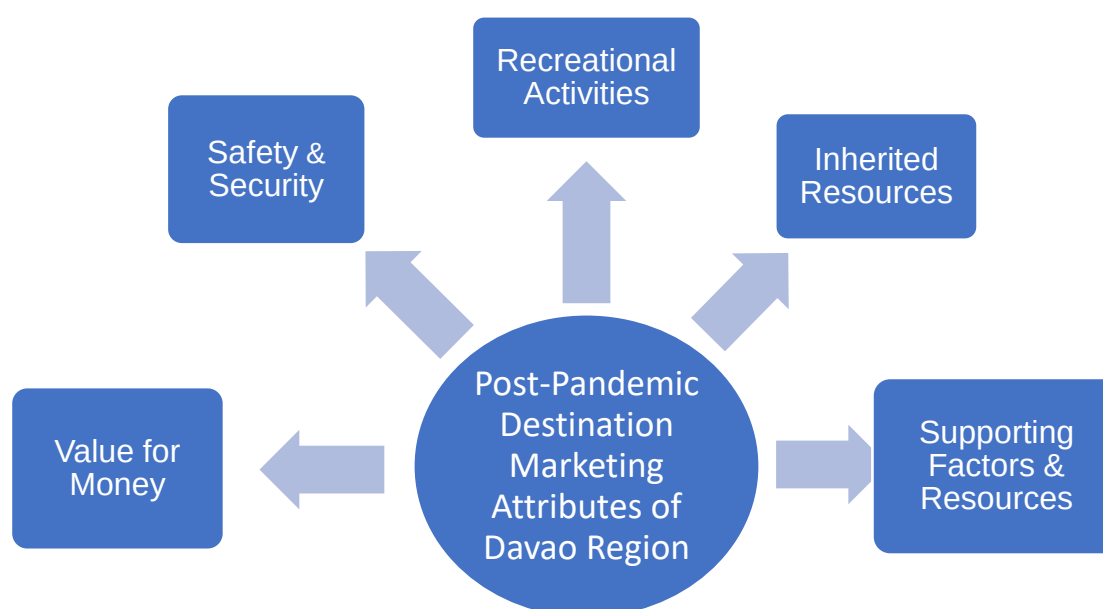


Figure 2.. Thematic Framework on Post-pandemic Destination Marketing Attributes of Davao Region

With the above conclusion, the researcher recommends (1) highlighting the identified attributes of the Davao Region in the promotional videos and campaigns, especially the safety and security features, as this has been the concern of many when they hear about “Mindanao.” Destination marketers may coined or alter the word “Mindanao” into “Southern part of the Philippines”. (2) emphasize the affordability of Davao Region compared to other tourist destinations, highlight Davao Region’s recreational activities that include “highlands to islands” activities, develop adventure packages that cater adventure enthusiasts and nature lovers as we have many hiking spots, pristine beaches, falls, etc.; conduct food festivals showcasing local cuisine and consider farm to table concepts. (3) Collaborate with local businesses to align their offerings with the identified marketing attributes. (4) Promoting responsible tourism practices to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Davao Region (e.g., strictly requiring climbers to get basic mountaineering courses before having a major climb, making the locals involved, and educating them on the benefits of tourism and cultural preservation. (5) Review the marketing strategies with the identified destination marketing attributes and check the areas that need improvement. (6) Continue to research this topic to check the impact of marketing efforts and adapt strategies accordingly. Moreover, this finding may serve as a methodological reference for future studies in tourism. Confirmatory factor analysis is highly recommended for improving the quality and precision of research findings, contributing to the growth of knowledge in tourism management studies.

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