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FOREWORD

The Business Administration Department is delighted to launch its first issue of BusinesSYNERGY – the official research journal of the BSBA Program. This issue features student researches from the rather challenging school year of 2019-2020 when Olivarez College Tagaytay shifted from the in-person classes to a blended distance learning modality as a ramification of Taal Volcano Eruption and of the genesis of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country; and of school year 2020-2021 when the College transitioned to a flexible online class modality due to the prolonged surge of the pandemic.

BusinesSYNERGY brings to you articles that altogether embody the quote "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". The Business Administration Program of Olivarez College Tagaytay has special management tracks in Business Process Outsourcing and Business Analytics, with Marketing Management as its field of specialization. With this research journal, we would like to share with you the research articles that are based from the important components of the program parallel to the department's research agenda – Business Process Outsourcing ("Keeping the Passion Alive: Factors Affecting Motivation Among Call Center Agents" and "Exploring the Work-Life Balance of BPO Support Group: Input Towards Work-Life Balance Program"), Entrepreneurship and E-Commerce (The Entrepreneurial Potentials of Graduating Business Students: An Analysis" and "Sustainability and Profitability of Online Second-Hand Selling: A Single Case Study"), and Marketing and Advertising ("The Level of Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies of Olivarez College Tagaytay SY 2019-2020" and "Social Media Advertisements and the Buying Behavior of the College Students").

My sincere appreciation goes to the student researchers who, despite the abrupt diversion from onsite to online data gathering process brought about by the local government's restrictions on people's mobility during the pandemic, have not lost their motivation to complete their research works. My gratitude also extends to the Center for Research, Publication, Planning and Development for its all-out support in the research endeavors of the Department.

Finally, it is my fervent hope that this output would not only be an evidence of our commitment to the institutional intended learning outcomes but would also be an inspiration and an encouragement to all other students who will come after this batch of researchers.

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"Excellence Amidst Quarantine"

Keeping the passion alive: Factors affecting motivation among
Call Center Agents

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I. ABSTRACT

One of the most dynamic and fastest growing sectors in the Philippines is the call center industry. Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies rely entirely on their people, so it is one of the industries that really craves employee motivation. By the nature of work in this industry, stress becomes inherent to the call center agents and coping to stress of the agents became the subject of some research. April Evarbia (2019) noted that many third-party organizations struggle to find and keep the right people for the job due to their specific work culture, which is why motivating call center agents become a vital part of the business. Therefore, the study aims to determine the factors affecting motivation among call center agents and how agents cope with stress. The researchers used the sequential explanatory mixed methods design. The population group used in this study includes call center agents from different BPO companies, with a total of 114 respondents for the quantitative study and 5 participants for qualitative study. In general, the majority of call center agents were female, the age range was from 21 to 30 years old, and they were all motivated. The results showed that there is no significant difference between motivational factors when grouped according to the profile of the respondents. On the other hand, work schedule is the main stressor of the call center agents. Participants have a positive and negative way of coping mechanism. The researchers were able to come up with a positive result as well as recommending possible research such as; encouraging better and more frequent communications between team leaders and agents and offering a lot of opportunities for employees to increase their skill-sets and to master their respective positions.

Keywords: *BPO, call center, call center agents, motivation, passion*

II. INTRODUCTION

In the past 15 years, the call center industry is one of the biggest and fastest growing industries not only in the Philippines, but also, all over the world (Dizon, 2010). By the nature of work in this industry, stress becomes inherent to the call center agents. Motivating employees is an incessant and key process for any industry. The concept of motivating employees becomes all the more important especially for the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) industry where the job involves a high degree of monotony and tremendous amount of stress while working during odd hours of the night.

According to Bonjana Djordjevic (2017), BPOs usually work 24/7, which means employees are working night shifts, weekends, holidays, etc. With these hours it is not easy maintaining a social life. Add to that a repetitive, monotonous job, stress and burnout BPO workers feel, and one can see why it is hard to keep them motivated. Additionally, BPOs usually do not have a lot of space for career growth, and professional development, which is another reason why employees keep leaving these companies after a couple of months.

In the article of SourceFit (2017), a business process outsourcing company from Manila, attrition rate in the Philippine BPO industry dropped dramatically over the last years — to an average of 50 percent from 70 percent — due to the improvements in terms of salary, training, continuous education, as well as the new career paths for young people. However, this is still a huge rate. In order to raise job satisfaction of your staff and influence performance levels of outsource workforce, it is vital for a BPO company owner to find out what job outcomes and motivating factors will help to retain his or her outsourced workforce.

Motivation is the drive of an individual to do a certain task or achieve a certain goal. Every company would like to have a productive worker. Motivating the employees is one way of helping this employee to be productive. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the factors affecting motivation among call center agents utilizing mixed method design.

III. METHODS

This study used a Mixed method design by Creswell (2007) as a guide in the research. According to Creswell, the participant selection model is used when a researcher needs quantitative information to identify and purposefully select participants for follow-up, in-

depth, qualitative study.

Quantitative Analysis was used to determine the motivational factors and the profile of the respondents, and also to identify if there is significant difference between the two.

Qualitative analysis supports the results of the quantitative analysis by exploring the participants' lived experiences as call center agents. The results of the two phases used to give an interpretation to come up with a recommendation.

Quantitative Part

Descriptive survey research method was employed in the study. Descriptive research was used to determine the level of motivation and the demographic profile of the respondents.

Researchers surveyed a random number of call center agents to determine their demographic profile and motivational factors. One hundred fourteen (114) call center agents answered the survey questionnaire.

Table 1
Population of the Study

NAME OF COMPANY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
A	21	18.4 %
B	2	1.8 %
C	25	21.9 %
D	16	14 %
E	1	.9 %
F	24	21 %
G	1	.9 %
H	1	.9 %
I	1	.9 %
J	1	.9 %
K	1	.9 %
L	7	6.1 %
M	12	10.5 %
N	1	.9 %
TOTAL	**114**	**100 %**

Table 2

Measures Used to Determine the Respondent's Level of Motivation

Assigned Points	Numerical Ratings	Verbal Interpretations
4	3.26-4.00	Very High Motivated
3	2.51-3.25	High Motivated
2	1.76-2.50	Moderate Motivated
1	1.00-1.75	Low Motivated

The researchers used an adapted and modified survey questionnaire by Cervantes & Luyahan (2015) to collect quantitative data. Data collected from the survey were subjected to appropriate statistical tools for analysis and interpretation. First, frequency and percentage were used to describe the demographic profile, and weighted mean to determine the level of motivation of the Call Center Agents in reference to motivational factors. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the level of motivation of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic profile.

Qualitative Part

Thematic analysis by Creswell (2007) was utilized for data interpretation. A semi-structured interview was used to gather information about the reasons for working in a call center, stresses in the workplace and how they cope with it. The interviews focused on the contents and state of the call center agents' feelings towards performance in their workplace. Only five (5) participants were interviewed due to the pandemic but they came from 5 BPO companies (Metro PCS, IQOR, PSG Solution, Concentrix and Teletech).

After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed and analyzed. A literature review was also conducted. This would provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of each construct, and how they can be linked together which then support the creation of a motivational program for the company's consideration.

IV. RESULTS

This section encompasses the motivational factors and demographic profile of the respondents. The findings about the significant difference of these variables were thoroughly discussed. In addition, the results of the interview about how call center agents cope with stress was also discussed to support the quantitative results.

Quantitative Results

Table 3

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18 – 20	4	3.5 %
21 – 30	76	66.7 %
31 – 40	30	26.3 %
41 – 50	4	3.5 %
Total	**114**	**100 %**

Table 3 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of age. It shows that majority of the respondents are between the age 21 – 30 with the frequency of 76 or 66.7% while ages between 18-20 and 41-50 got the lowest frequency of both 4 or 3.5% this may imply that most of the call center company is having young and energetic agents in the service and are ready to serve for long time provided they are motivated to stay.

This is consistent with the findings of Bautista (2014) that is attributed to the level of stamina of the young agents who can handle the rigors of graveyard shift. Similarly, with the research of Waldeck (2011) that call centers usually consist of a younger workforce, as their agents use the call center as a stepping stone to enter the organizations.

Table 4

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Gender

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	46	40.4 %
FEMALE	56	49.1 %
LGBTQ	12	10.5 %
Total	**114**	**100 %**

Table 4 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of gender. It shows that the majority of the respondents are female and male with the frequency of 56 and 46 or 49.10% and 40.40% while LGBTQ are 10.5% only with the frequency of 12, respectively. This may indicate that females dominate the call center industry as they have the interpersonal skills to communicate with customers.

This is consistent with the trend in Philippine call centers in which observed that the call center, the fastest growing sub-sector of the service industry, has in recent years generated many "high value" but short term jobs for young, English - speaking Filipino women who work night shifts at great expense to their health, family and social life (Pineda Ofreneo, 2005).

Table 5

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Educational Attainment

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
High school undergraduate	1	.9 %
High school graduate	12	10.5 %
Vocational	9	7.9 %
College undergraduate	38	33.3 %
College graduate	54	47.4 %
Total	**114**	**100 %**

Table 5 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of educational attainment. Data indicate that majority of the respondents are college graduate and college undergraduate with the frequency of 54 and 38 or 47.4% and 33.3% respectively while the other respondents are vocational and high school graduate with the frequency of 9 and 12 or 7.9% and 10.5 and high school undergraduate got the lowest frequency of 1 or .9%. This may imply that most of the

jobs available in the Philippines require at least college level as a minimum requirement. This is supported with the findings of Ariola (2017) that most of them would end up taking any type of job regardless of its quality. However, it is also notable that the call center industry welcomes applicants with at least some years of college education. This gives undergraduate job-seekers a fair chance of having decent jobs and, provided that they have the right skills and attitude. The findings are related with the study of Bird & Ernst (2009), that IT-BPM employees are 80-90% of IT-BPM employees are college graduates.

Table 6

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Monthly Income

MONTHLY INCOME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
10,000 AND BELOW	1	.9 %
10,001 - 20,000	68	59.6 %
20,001 - 30,000	21	18.4 %
30,001 AND ABOVE	24	21.1 %
Total	**114**	**100 %**

Table 6 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of monthly income. It shows that majority of the respondents are earning between 10,001 to 20,000 with the frequency of 68 or 59.6% while the minority of the respondents earning between 20,001-30,000 and 30,001 and above with the frequency of 21 and 24 or 18.4% and 21.1 % and only 1 or .9% earning 10,000 and below. This may imply that a call center agent's gross monthly salary is above the minimum wage.

The above findings are consistent with the findings of Mitter et al. (2010) that the average initial salary for call center agents was approximately Indian Rupees (Rs) 16,000 per month which increased to Rs 19,000 per month. This is similar to the findings by Ramesh (2013) which shows that 53% of call center employees receive a monthly salary of Rs 17,000 or more.

Table 7

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Length of Service

LENGTH OF SERVICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1 YEAR AND BELOW	53	46.5 %
2 - 5 YEARS	45	39.5 %
6 - 10 YEARS	16	14 %
Total	**114**	**100 %**

Table 7 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of length of service. The data show that the majority of the respondents are below 1 year and within 2 – 5 years length of service with the frequency of 53 and 45, or 46.5% and 39.5% respectively and 16 or 14% of the respondents were 6-10 years had been working in their company. This may imply that most of the respondents are new to the industry or new to the company. In the findings of Bautista (2014), call center agents may not be as committed and efficient compared to those who have stayed longer.

Table 8

Level of Motivation of the Call Center Agents in Reference to the Motivational Factors

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
Rewards and Recognition		
1. My Supervisor/Team Leader appreciates my efforts.	3.32	V.M.
2. Work recognition and appraisal motivates employees towards jobs.	3.57	V.M.
3. Companies recognize and acknowledge my work.	3.20	M.
4. Recognized employees' contribution.	3.22	M
Mean Total Recognition	**3.32**	**Very Motivated**
Advancement		
5. The company provides training.	3.56	V.M.
6. I have opportunities to learn.	3.47	V.M.
7. Effective performance appraisal system.	3.23	M.

8. I am pleased with the career advancement opportunities available to me.	3.25	M.
9. Ongoing training is given whenever needed.	3.25	M.
Mean Total Advancement	**3.35**	**Very Motivated**
Self-motivation		
10. I am aware of my responsibilities in the company.	3.45	V.M.
11. I am motivated performing my work	3.30	V.M.
12. I perform tasks without command.	3.35	V.M.
13. I am satisfied with the task given.	3.21	M.
Mean Total Self-Motivation	**3.32**	**Very Motivated**
Salary		
14. I am satisfied with my salary.	3.01	M.
15. I am getting handsome salary packages.	2.83	M.
16. Good salary is the main motivation.	3.40	V.M.
17. Reasonable periodical increase in salary.	2.95	M.
Mean Total Salary	**3.04**	**Motivated**
Job Security		
18. I feel secure with my workplace.	3.26	V.M.
19. I am aware of underemployment.	3.29	V.M.
20. My job is where I want to retire.	2.58	M.
Mean Total Job Security	**3.04**	**Motivated**
Mean Total Motivational Factor	**3.21**	**Motivated**

Table 8 shows that the respondents are very motivated in terms of *rewards and recognition* as motivational factors with the mean score of 3.32 which means that most of the agent's works were recognized and appreciated in their company. According to (Healthfield 2017), if the efforts of an employee are recognized, he/she will feel achievement and fulfillment and continue to excel in the work. By working closely with employees, one may

know how they react to recognition, thus being able to offer a fitting way of appreciation. Recognizing and rewarding excellence boosts agent performance. It also builds morale (Nancy Pais, 2019).

In terms of *advancement*, the respondents are very motivated with the mean score of 3.35. This implies that the majority of call center agents were very motivated to work hard for advancement. According to (Whitmore, 2012), advancement in terms of opportunity for promotion and opportunity for task expertise tend to motivate employees.

In terms of *self-motivation*, the respondents are very motivated as well with the mean score of 3.32 in which overall the agents were very motivated to continue working under pressure. According to Shreyans (2014), self-motivation is often increased when call center agents are encouraged to take on new skills and responsibilities.

Moreover, the respondents are motivated in terms of *salary* with a mean score of 3.04. This may imply that agents are motivated with their salary. According to Anniston (2017), nothing is more valuable than salary package for any call center agents, and therefore, it must be ensured that performance is timely evaluated and appraised. This is relatively true with the findings of Jan Ketil Arnulf's article "Money as a Motivator" on Fudan.

University School of Management (2014) stressed that money is deemed to be the most motivating factor to any individual.

Meanwhile, in terms of *job security,* the respondents are motivated with a mean score of 3.21 which means that the agents felt secure from their workplace. As mentioned by Yamamoto (2013) if an employee perceives he/she will be getting rewards for good work and their job is a secured one, the performance will automatically be better. Similarly, Zhang and Wu (2004) indicated that with job security, an employee gets confident with the future career and he/she puts his/her best efforts to achieve the objectives of the organization.

Table 9

Differences in the Level of Motivation of the When Grouped According to Demographic Profile

ANOVA Table								
LEVEL OF MOTIVATION, Group			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
GENDER * MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS	Between Groups	(Combined)	40.126	85	.472	1.709	.055	Accept Null
	Within Groups		7.733	28	.276			
	Total		47.860	113				
AGE * MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR	Between Groups	(Combined)	28.460	85	.335	.822	.756	Accept Null
	Within Groups		11.400	28	.407			
	Total		39.860	113				
INCOME *MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR	Between Groups	(Combined)	57.539	85	.677	.952	.583	Accept Null
	Within Groups		19.900	28	.711			
	Total		77.439	113				
EDUC * MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR	Between Groups	(Combined)	96.158	85	1.131	1.508	.110	Accept Null
	Within Groups		21.000	28	.750			
	Total		117.158	113				
TENURE * MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR	Between Groups	(Combined)	41.058	85	.483	.849	.722	Accept Null
	Within Groups		15.933	28	.569			
	Total		56.991	113				

Table 9 shows that the significance or p-value is greater than 0.05 which means that the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference in the motivational factors of the respondents when grouped according to their profile. This may imply that the respondents level of motivation is the same regardless of gender, age, monthly income, educational attainment and length of service has no significant influence on the respondents motivational.

This is consistent with the findings by Latif (2010) which suggests that gender is not important in motivating oneself, it is about how the call center agents motivate themselves despite the tiring job. Wiley (1997) concluded that good pay is an important motivator regardless of age while with the findings of Laura Woods (2017) mentioned that call center agents are often motivated by money. The salary of an agent paid by his employer can have a great influence on his performance in the company. In the findings by Julia Connel and John Burgess (2015), it was stated that the most important predictor of using education in call center work is current educational attainment. Those with some university experience or those with higher educational qualifications are significantly more likely to discount their work and its capacity to make full use of their qualifications. In the research of Candid (2013) it was cited that in the middle and late career stages of their employment, call center agents have an

opportunity to showcase their achievements with pride. Agents work in the company not just to make a living, but to make a life. It encourages heightened ownership at work.

Qualitative Results

Theme 1. Financial Reward

These responses include the reasons of the participants for working in a call center industry.

P1: "Kaya kasi ako napasok sa call center is dahil sa salary which malaki naman talaga. At marami din umaasa."

P2: "They provide very high understanding to their employees and especially with this pandemic. They are very professional on their job and of course the salary. It's very satisfying. Apparently, that's some of the reasons why I chose to work with a BPO company. Satisfying the salary. You enjoy your job even if it's very stressful just don't think of the negative side, think of the positive side.

P4: "I'm a high school graduate I cannot earn this much when I when it comes to other industry, I can't have the same salary, If I go like them if I'll choose to be with the industry like electronics company, I won't get the same salary.

BPO industry there's always a room for promotion even if you are an elementary graduate. If you were good, if you were persistent if you are dedicated, they will always acknowledge you can always be someone. To be honest, it's the high salary."

P5: "You can get a lot of money. Aside from that good basic pay, well it gives you good incentives. So, on top of your regular salary you can get a lot of bonuses. BPO employees are so slave for money because they are working for money."

In general, the participants stated that salary is the main reason why they worked in a call center industry, participant 2 said that BPO companies are very professional with the job itself and also, they have empathy towards the agents. On the other hand, participant 4 reported that in a call center one can earn a high salary regardless of your educational attainment. Participant 5 said that one can get a lot of incentives and bonuses. This means that the majority of the participants are motivated to work in a call center because of the high salary and incentives that the company can provide.

In the article of Bina (2013) it was stated that the prime factor which drives call center agents to work is money. The majority of people work in order to earn money. Before taking any other factors into account, it is normal to first consider the salary that a particular post offers. It is rare to hear of a person who happily takes a paycheck when they begin a new job. Everybody needs money to pay basic necessities, such as accommodation, bills and food. That is why financial reasons are the main motivation for people to work. Sabin Dangol, (2017) reported that call center agencies offer better compensations compared to other industries and being hired as a customer service agent opens lots of good job opportunities in the future.

Theme 2. Challenging Work Schedule

This theme presents the stressors of the participants in the workplace.

P1: "Night shift ako from 1 am to 11 am so talaga nakaka stress kasi puyatan" "Ang hirap magwork ng graveyard shift. Bawal ka magkamali, talagang mapapahiya ka. Mga racist na customer. Ayusin lang ang matrix kasi para sa akin unfair siya. Then sa mga TL yung treatment nila sa mga employee nila."

P2: "One of the challenges that I face is every time someone asks me why you chose to work in a BPO company at your age, you can work in other fields. I started taking phone calls and then I did understand why they say. It's very stressful to be in a BPO company. Because I work overnight, it's the number 1 factor. My shift starts at 10 pm to 7am with a 10-minute break and 1-hour lunch break. Other than that. The customers are very irate of course. The customers that are calling you are very irate."

P3: "To work on a graveyard shift that's very stressful because I really want to sleep the whole day and I get home but I won't be able to because I cannot teach my body to sleep during the day and I have kids to take care of. Another factor would be from being a customer service people we are moving towards sales and sales is not my forte it's hard to upsell it's hard to make sales."

P4: "The Sprint Telco it's a little bit friendly because we're working at home so I don't really feel that we're having the right support I guess and when it comes with the training process that we had on its because it's different and its we are at home I don't think that we had the right amount of knowledge that we can use it at collections because our line of business or spend is collection specialist so anyways with the management it's okay there is nothing

wrong I can't say anything bad or wrong about the management. My workplace is at home so my stress is when there is power outage or there's a problem with the connection. When I'm with MetroPCS maybe the account it's self-it's not the environment it's not about the working environment it's about the account itself it's really stressing we are care agents so basically all the calls that we are assuming is all because of the customer is always irate. I guess it's always about the account with your line of business, if the clients or the callers of those account is Billy Irish customer agents will be demotivated to know."

P5: "Because of the shifting schedule, you're going to have a lot of stress with how much you're dealing with. For metrics, for the kinds of customers you have, and the kinds of people that you need to deal with. From your teammates to sup, to manager and everyone in the room or on the floor. It's going to be hard because of the shifting schedule that could affect your health."

Most of the participants reported that their work schedules are their major stressor. Moreover, participants encountered a hard time meeting the sales quota, while for the beginners is the training process and improper treatment of their team leaders.

The news in the magazine and newspaper depict that call center employees are facing a lot of problems like excessive workload, unreachable targets, and pressurizing and abusive customers. According to Latha and Panchanatham (2010), continuous night shifts create biological imbalance in them and finally makes them stressful. So, stress is an important problem encountered by the call center employees. In the research findings of Dr, A, Drotskie (2011), it was reported that job stress of having to deal with irate customers has an impact on the stress levels of agents and causes a feeling of demotivated at work. With one agent saying, "You never know what mood the next person on the phone will be in". This heightened state of tension does not contribute to agents feeling good at work and motivated in their day to day activities.

Theme 3: Self-Care

Working in a call center industry is stressful and this includes the way on how the participants cope with stress.

P2: "What I do is I take vitamins; it always depends on your health routine for staying healthy. And the other stressors are the customer, so as I said earlier its mind over matter. You have to face it that this is your job. I don't say that you have to enjoy being shouted on.

It's just like you applied for this job. If you cannot change your work of nature, try to change how you react. That's how I cope with it. I change how I react so even though the customer is shouting at me, I don't care. I just do my job. The metrics, just go to work every day and everything will follow that's what my team leaders taught me. Even if you don't reach this metrics today, just go to work. Patience is a talent here in this industry."

P4: "I always use my free time when I need to refresh myself and go on vacation they are really generous and they're all actually giving us bonuses like that and they allow to spend some time in before we have like teambuilding in an island in Batangas and its all-expenses paid by the account we refresh ourselves from stress that way."

Participants have a variety of ways of coping with the challenges or stresses encountered, but the most prominent is related to self-care. Participants find unwinding, minding over matter and staying healthy as stress reliever and caring for oneself. The participants have their own set of self-motivation in coping with their stresses that leads them to stay motivated despite stressful work in the BPO industry.

According to Melinda Smith (2019), call center agents cope with stress through having a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, fun and the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on. Robinsons Lawrence (2019) reported that all call center agents experience stress from time to time, and they cope with it in different ways. For many agents, cigarettes are credited with calming their nerves. It is no surprise that many BPO employees are smokers. There are some reasons why they smoke at stressful times; they think that smoking gives them a much-deserved break, they feel a sense of camaraderie because smoking is usually done in a group of people, and they feel relief because smoking eliminates nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

V. DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study is to determine the factors affecting motivation among call center agents and to know how call center agents cope with the stress.

The results of the study shows that the majority of the respondents were from the age range of 21-30 years old. Also, the majority of the respondents are female and are college graduates. The total results of the motivational factors are that all of the respondents are motivated and their level of motivation is the same regardless of their demographic profile.

Further, more research can be conducted to find out if the intensity of the motivating factors has a significant effect on the work attitude of the workers. According to MSG experts (20197), motivation leads to a positive attitude in the workplace, easy adaptation to changes and more creativity. The more motivated the employees are, the more contribution they bring, thus the more profitable and successful the business will become. On the other hand, qualitative study was used to support the findings in the quantitative results. In the qualitative result, the majority of the participants reported that salary is the main reason why they work in the call center industry and their main stressor in the workplace is their work schedule arrangement. In order for them to cope with the stress, it was reported that staying healthy, using the mind over matter, smoking, going on a vacation and relaxation are their stress relievers.

The results of this study indicate that most of the call center agents are young and mostly female. Also, call center agents are all motivated to work despite the stress that they are experiencing. This study concluded that gender, age, educational attainment, monthly salary and length of service have no significant difference with their level of motivation in reference to the motivational factors. The results of qualitative study support the quantitative study that call center agents are still motivated to work even if they are experiencing stress in the workplace.

The study contributes to understanding the importance of motivation in the call center industry. Knowing the right motivation is essential to attain maximum performance. All business process outsourcing industries must sustain good labor relations throughout their operation. This study is more beneficial to call center agents in a way that this would make them feel that their value in the company is realized and that the need is supplemented. And also, this will serve as a guide for future researchers who would encounter or conduct business research that is similar to our study. It can be a helpful tool for researchers' future reference.

A major limitation of this study needs to be clarified. The instrument used was adapted from Cervantes & Luyahan (2015) and was modified by the researchers. This study was conducted with 114 call center agents from different companies, and an online survey and online interviews was conducted due to the pandemic. A more refined study about motivational factors of the call center agent and stress reliever can be created once these other

factors are investigated.

These findings recommend several courses of action for the call center company which includes; raising the salary of the lower income call center agents at the company, encouraging better and more frequent communications between team leaders and agents, making sure employees are receiving significant credit and recognition for the great work and offering more opportunities for employees to increase their skill-sets and to master their respective positions. The researchers also suggest to the call center company to build up an awareness of the importance of work-life balance in employees. Companies should conduct regular workshops and programs on work-life balance. Berkson, Martin, Smith and Worley (2012) observed that if there is a greater level of understanding and cohesion between call center agents and managers, and if the right types of incentives are added to effectively motivate employees, productivity and revenues will increase, and the company as a whole will greatly benefit.

In addition, future researchers may conduct a comparative study on the level of motivation of the Call Center agents who are working from home against those who are working at the office. Especially in this time when the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed so many industries to change their work set-ups. Future researchers may conduct the same study with call center agents who finished any 4-year program in college, be it business or non-business, to determine the impact and/or relevance of the school's curriculum to the respondent's actual performance in the field.

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The Entrepreneurial Potential of Business Students: An analysis

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I. ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship plays a critical role in contemporary economies. This study focused on assessing the extent of entrepreneurial potential of graduating BSBA students. According to Bolton and Thompson (2003) a person's character themes are the starting point. They stated that entrepreneurs have six main character themes and they conveniently form the acronym FACETS: Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social. This study sought to help the students identify their characters that are directly connected with the concept of entrepreneurship and serve as an eye opener for them to discover their entrepreneurial capabilities. This study identified the entrepreneurial potentials of graduating business students who have an inclination to start their own business right after graduation. With a total of 51 respondents from different schools in Cavite with the use of frequency counts and percentages, weighted mean and the P-value. The majority of the respondents were female with an income of 10,000-50,000 monthly. The result showed that there is no significant difference in the extent of the entrepreneurial potential when respondents were grouped according to the profile characteristics which are age, sex and family income. Among the six themes, Team and Social both got Very High Extent while all the other four themes (Focus, Advantage, Creativity and Ego) all got High Extent. This may imply that the respondents regard those characteristics which are directly related to the respondents' interrelationship with other people (Team and Social) as highly necessary in succeeding in any entrepreneurial venture. As a general conclusion on the findings of this study, the respondents showed a high extent of entrepreneurial potential based on Team and Social factors. It should also be noted that when higher education institutions provide more seminars, activities and practices related to developing the students' entrepreneurial skills, it will help them become inclined in putting up their own business in the future.

Keywords: *Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurial Potential, FACETS (Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social).*

II. INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to determine the entrepreneurial potential of graduating business administration students with major courses such as Marketing Management, Operations Management, Accounting Management and Human Resource Management and to analyze how factors such as demographic profile is associated with their entrepreneurial potential. Moreover, the study aimed to help the students who are not sure of their future career the opportunity to think of what they want after graduation. This study focused on graduating students who want to start their own business. This study would also be beneficial to other students and school management to have an effective learning related to the entrepreneurial potentials.

Lumpkin and Erdogon (2004) suggested the existence of a number of schools of thought regarding the explanation of the entrepreneurial function and entrepreneurial behavior. Deakins (1999) provided is to identify certain personality characteristics or traits individuals that appear to be possessed by successful entrepreneurs. Lucinda Cross (2010) defines an entrepreneur as someone who can come up with new ideas to undertake a certain activity, for instance, business enterprise and ensure that the activity he/she undertakes is successful. Gordon (2002) entrepreneur must be a special type of person.

The conceptual model that was used was Bolton and Thompson's FACETS which stated that entrepreneurs have six main character themes which are Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social. The resource based theory of entrepreneurship argues that access to resources by founders is an important predictor of opportunity based entrepreneurship and new venture growth (Alvarez and Busenitz, 2001). Resource-based theories focus on the way individuals leverage different types of resources to get entrepreneurial efforts off the ground. Jay Barney developed the resource based view of the firm, which is a strategic management theory designed to explain why some firms perform better than others even when they occupy a very similar business environment. Barney's resource-based view seeks to explain why some firms perform better than others by looking to the firm's resources. The theory has important implications for entrepreneurship research. Entrepreneurial opportunities can be expressed as an entrepreneur's unique insight into the value of particular resources that established firms may not yet possess. Resources that might be important for entrepreneurs include: special information, leadership capabilities, education and experience (explicit and tacit knowledge) embodied in the

entrepreneurs or their social networks, all of which may help to make their ventures difficult to imitate.

This research aimed to help the students to know their entrepreneurial potential and serve as an eye opener with the societal impact and economic slowdown for them to build and boost their abilities as an entrepreneur. The hypothesis of the study was there is no significant relationship between the extent of FACETS and the profile characteristics of the respondents when grouped according to age, sex, economic status and family income. This study provided new insight for business students to explore their entrepreneurial potentials. This study has been divided into six main character themes: the FACETS (Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social) which can identify the entrepreneurial potential of the graduating business students.

In general, this study focused on assessing the extent of entrepreneurial potential of students taking up business courses like BSBA major in Operations Management, Marketing Management, Accounting Management and Human Resource Management. The assessment has been made along the following attributes: Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social. The study identified the extent of entrepreneurial potential and from the results, the researcher proposes recommendations geared towards strengthening the curriculum that would enhance the entrepreneurial potential of the future business students.

III. METHODS

The study's main concern was to determine the significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and extent of FACETS, Pearson correlation method was used. To determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, economic status and family income frequency counts and percentages were used. To determine the extent of FACETS of the graduating students weighted mean was used. This study used correlational descriptive design. This method was employed to describe the profile of the students and their level of entrepreneurial potential.

The respondents of the study were the selected Business Students from different colleges and universities in Cavite during the period of second semester of A.Y 2019-2020. A total of 51 respondents answered the online survey. A survey questionnaire was used as the main data gathering instrument. The questionnaire was composed of 30 questions that identify the

entrepreneurial potential in terms of FACETS. The questionnaires were from the study entitled "An Analysis of the Entrepreneurial Potential of the 1st to 4th year Business Operations and Management Students of De La Salle University Dasmariñas City, Cavite". The researchers asked the permission of the original authors of the survey questionnaire and they were given the consent to do so.

The respondents were taken from six (6) schools from public and private HEIs. From each school, all the fourth year business students were given an online survey questionnaire. The questionnaires which were distributed to the respondents covered two parts to prompt data as follows: Part I on Profile of the respondents and Part II on The Entrepreneurial Potential of Graduating Business Students based on FACETS.

Part II was subdivided into six (6) areas namely FACETS: Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social.

Data were collected through an adapted questionnaire and rewritten as an online survey since in-person survey was not possible because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The researchers distributed the questionnaire via online to gather the information needed. Not all the Fourth year business students answered the survey and the researcher came up with only 51 respondents. Respondents were asked to answer the survey using the following responses:

Response	Interpretation
1	Never
2	Seldom
3	Most of the time
4	Always

Data collected from the survey were subjected to appropriate statistical tools for analysis and interpretation. First the frequency and percentage were used to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of their age, sex, economic status and family income, the weighted mean for the extent of FACETS, the Pearson correlation to identify the significant relationship between profile of the respondents and the extent of FACETS.

To determine the extent of FACETS (FOCUS, ADVANTAGE, CREATIVITY, EGO, TEAM and SOCIAL) of the respondents, the following measures were used:

Assigned	Numerical	Categorical	Verbal
Points	Ratings	Response	Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	(VHE) Very High Extent	Always
3	2.51-3.25	(HE) High Extent	Most of the time
2	1.76-2.50	(ME) Moderate Extent	Seldom
1	1.00-1.75	(NE) No Extent	Never

IV. RESULTS

Table 1

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age

AGE	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
19 - 23	39	76. 5	76.5
24 - 28	7	13.7	90.2
29 – 33	2	3.9	94.1
34 - 38	3	5.9	100.0
Total	51	100.0	

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are 19 to 23 years old. This implies that the majority of the respondents belong to the regular age bracket for College students. This trend is according to the article entitled Philippines: Educational System – An Overview, most bachelor degrees are for four years and students are usually from 17 to 20 years old which means that the age shown in the table are accurate for the Philippines Educational System. However, with the onset of the K to 12, the average age bracket of College students has become from 19 to 23 years old. Entrepreneurial potential is for all, regardless of age.

Table 2

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Sex

SEX	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
FEMALE	39	76. 5	76.5
MALE	12	23.5	100.0
Total	51	100.0	

Table 2 shows that the majority of the respondents are female. This result indicates that most of the students who select business courses are female. This result is also supported by the study on gender distribution presented in the article Philippines: Educational System – An Overview which stated that there are more female students at the secondary and higher education level in the country. Based on the study conducted in LPU Laguna "Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies of LPU Laguna BSBA Graduating Students: Basis for Curriculum Enhancement ", majority of their respondents are also female.

Table 3

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Family Income

FAMILY INCOME	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
10,000-50,000	44	86.3	86.3
50,001-100,00	5	9.8	96.1
100,001-200,000	1	2.0	98.0
200,000 and up	1	2.0	100.0
Total	51	100.0	

Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents are earning between 10, 000 to 50,000. This is congruent with the Philippine Statistics Authority's Family Income and Expenditure Survey in 2015 which revealed that the average family income is estimated at 22,000 monthly which is within the bracket of P10, 000.00 to P50, 000.00.

Table 4
Extent of FACETS (Focus)

FOCUS	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
1. I do things on my own.	3.31	Very High Extent
2. I usually take the initiative.	3.02	High Extent
3. I can concentrate very well.	3.04	High Extent
4. I don't easily get distracted.	2.86	High Extent
5. There are a lot of projects but I finish them on time.	3.18	High Extent
Mean Focus	3.08	High Extent

Table 4 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of Focus. Among the five items, the item number 1 (I do things on my own) has the highest mean score of 3.31 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent in terms of Focus. But overall, the mean score of Focus is 3.08 which is High Extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of Focus. This finding implies that focus is necessary in building one's entrepreneurial capability and a real desire to get on with things. Based on Bolton and Thompson, having the ability to look onto goals and not to be distracted as having a focus on your mind is one trait necessary for entrepreneurs.

Table 5
Extent of FACETS (Advantage)

ADVANTAGE		
6. I can identify opportunities that give a lot of benefits	3.22	High Extent
7. My goal is to identify the right target	3.47	Very High Extent
8. I always take advantage of the opportunities I get	3.27	Very High Extent
9. I look at everything ahead of time	3.16	High Extent
10. Lack of resources was never a barrier	2.82	High Extent
Mean Advantage	3.18	High Extent

Table 5 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of advantage. Among the five items number 7 (My goal is to identify the right target) has the highest mean score of 3.47 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent. But overall the mean score of Advantage is 3.18 which is High Extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of Advantage. This implies that when a person has the ability to identify goals, opportunities, and resources he is more likely to sense his entrepreneurial potential. According to Bolton and Thompson, entrepreneurs must be able to pick winners and to know instinctively what falls to the bottom line or having the advantage of the respondents as they move forward.

Table 6

Extent of FACETS (Creativity)

CREATIVITY		
11. I just consider myself as very creative person.	2.94	High Extent
12. I always promote creative thinking.	3.00	High Extent
13. I can transform an idea into an opportunity.	3.02	High Extent
14. No idea will be fulfilled without creativity.	3.44	Very High Extent
15. I am willing to think outside the box.	3.27	Very High Extent
Mean Creativity	3.09	High Extent

Table 6 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of Creativity. Among the five items number 14 (No idea will be fulfilled without creativity) has the highest mean score of 3.44 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent. But overall the mean score of Creativity is 3.09 which is High Extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of Creativity. This implies that a person's creativity is a determinant of entrepreneurial potential. Based on Bolton and Thompson, an entrepreneur must have the ability to come up with new ideas, and to think differently and to see patterns others miss.

Table 7

Extent of FACETS (Ego)

EGO		
16. I am a competitive person.	2.65	High Extent
17. I am responsible and an accountable person.	3.16	High Extent
18. A lot of people come to me in times of need.	3.14	High Extent
19. I have the courage to face setbacks and resistance.	3.18	High Extent
20. I initiate positive change.	3.33	Very High Extent
Mean Ego	3.09	High Extent

Table 7 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of Ego. Among the five items number 20 (I initiate positive change) has the highest mean score of 3.33 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent. But overall the mean score of Ego is 3.09 which is High Extent of entrepreneurial

potential in terms of Ego. This implies that the positive outlook and self-esteem of a person are contributory to becoming an entrepreneur. Bolton and Thompson states that the inner ego embraces motivation and the outer ego is the entrepreneur's internal locus of control. It is also a driving force behind individual behavior that reflects the passions.

Table 8

Extent of FACETS (Team)

TEAM		
21. I know when I need the help of my team.	3.59	Very High Extent
22. I make a team by looking for the right people.	3.24	High Extent
23. I develop the potential of people.	2.98	High Extent
24. Other people's ability is also important to me.	3.57	Very High Extent
25. I try my best to motivate people.	3.57	Very High Extent
Mean Team	3.38	Very High Extent

Table 8 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of Team. Among the five items number 21 (I know when I need the help of my team) has the highest mean score of 3.59 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent. But overall the mean score of Team is 3.38 which is Very High Extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of Teams. This implies that having the character to work well with your team is an indicator of an entrepreneurial spirit. This is the same as Bolton and Thompson's theory that an entrepreneur must have the ability to pick the best people and to build an extensive network of supporters or being one as a team.

Table 9

Extent of FACETS (Social)

SOCIAL		
26. I am socially productive.	3.12	High Extent
27. Belief and values is something I take seriously.	3.45	Very High Extent
28. Serving others is something I am proud of.	3.49	Very High Extent
29. I orient my life around a cause.	3.24	High Extent
30. I am very much a social person.	3.10	High Extent
Mean Social	3.27	Very High Extent

Table 9 shows the extent of FACETS in terms of Social. Among the five items number 28 (Serving others is something I am proud of) has the highest mean score of 3.49 which is verbally interpreted as Very High Extent. But overall the mean score of Social is 3.27 which is Very High Extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of Social. This finding implies that being social is necessary in building one's entrepreneurial potential since business is a social activity. Social also affects the culture and style of the business and how the employees are to be treated (Bolton and Thompson, 2003).

Among the six themes, Team and Social both got Very High Extent while all the other four themes (Focus, Advantage, Creativity and Ego) all got High Extent. This may imply that the respondents regard those characters which are directly related to the respondents' interrelationship with other people (Team and Social) as highly necessary in succeeding in any entrepreneurial venture. The findings also show an overall mean score of 3.18 which means that respondents have High Extent of entrepreneurial potential based on the six main character themes of Bolton and Thompson. Based on the study entitled "An analysis on the entrepreneurial potential of the First to Fourth year business operations and management students of De La Salle University Dasmariñas S.Y. 2011-2012", the respondents have the highest level of extent in terms of their team and social status. This may further imply that the graduating business students have developed their entrepreneurial potential during the course of their program. It also cited the FACETS framework could be an indicator to provide an effective means for identifying people who are most likely to

succeed as entrepreneurs regardless of the context. This indicator also provides a practical and accurate assessment of a person's entrepreneurial potential (Thompson, 2004, p.224-248).

Table 11

Correlation

Profile of Respondents		Extent of FACETS	Decision
Economic Status	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.139 .332	Accept Null
Family Income	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.180 0.206	Accept Null
Age	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.171 0.230	Accept Null
Sex	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.052 0.720	Accept Null
	N	51	

Table 11 shows that the p-value of the profile of the respondents is greater than 0.05 which means that the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and extent of FACETS. This finding is the same with the result of the study "An analysis of the Entrepreneurial Potential of the 1st year to 4th year Business Operation and Management students of De La Salle Dasmariñas'' which proved that there is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the extent of FACETS. This may imply that regardless of age, sex, and the family income, a person may still have developed an entrepreneurial potential.

V. DISCUSSIONS

The study aimed to determine the extent of FACETS of the graduating business students from different colleges and universities in Cavite. The researcher gathered information through conducting an online survey using an adapted questionnaire. The respondents of the study were 51 graduating students taking up any business-related course such as Business Administration, Entrepreneurship, Accountancy, Human Resource Management and the like. The result of the online survey was treated using the Pearson Moment Correlation to analyze and determine if there is a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the extent of FACETS.

One of the limitations of the study was the transition from a direct face-to-face survey into an online data gathering procedure. The researchers found some level of difficulty in reaching the target population of the study. Not all of the target respondents heeded the invitation to answer the online survey. Only 51 graduating business students took time to answer and agreed to become respondents of the study.

The researchers of this study found out that no significant relationship exists between the respondents' profile (age, sex, economic status and family income) and the extent of FACETS or the entrepreneurial potential of the graduating students. In the online survey, majority of the respondents were female graduating business students but both male and female respondents have a high level of entrepreneurial potential in terms of FACETS (Focus, Advantage, Creativity, Ego, Team and Social).

It is therefore concluded that entrepreneurial education plays an essential role both for future entrepreneurs and for every man of the modern era in general. The Higher Education Institutions should be a key player in the formation of the students' characters that would enable them to unleash their entrepreneurial potentials, generate knowledge and innovation in the conditions of a constantly changing environment. In this regard it is useful to note the increasing interest of students to the entrepreneurial career and the importance of business for economic development form a growing interest in the acquisition of business knowledge and skills.

The result of the study showed that females aged 19 to 23 years old with a monthly family income of P10, 000.00 to P50, 000.00 have a high extent of entrepreneurial potential in terms of FACETS. The study contributed to the understanding of the students in terms of their entrepreneurial capabilities. The results proved that the focus, advantage, creativity, ego, team and social framework is a good indicator or tool in assessing the person's entrepreneurial potential.

This study will encourage the business students to study harder and want to become more self-aware in order for them to discover and develop their entrepreneurial skills. Nowadays, entrepreneurial skills are very useful because of the pandemic that we have faced in our country. That is why most Filipinos are encouraged to venture into entrepreneurship where they could make use of their own ability and creativity.

For the recommendation, future research directions may also include a longitudinal study to look at goal setting. In this realm, research could include a sample of students in entrepreneurship programs and examine their goal setting. This could even include the possibility of an intervention to work with the students to educate them on goal setting after the initial data are collected. Then follow up at different intervals in time down the road to measure performance, and gather data on possible goal changes at those points would be needed. This would address the issues related to having the entrepreneurs retroactively trying to remember their start up goals.

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Exploring the work-life balance of BPO Support Group:
Input towards Work-Life Balance Program

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I. ABSTRACT

This paper sought to identify the perception of work-life balance and job performance of trainers, quality analysts, and team leaders classified as a support group in general in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry. BPO support groups function in a stressful work environment due to heavy workloads on top of strict performance targets and tight rules and procedures. Maintaining a balance between work life and personal life is a challenge. It also means different things to different groups, and the meaning often depends on the perspective of the discussion of one's viewpoint. This study also discusses the recommendations from the BPO support group workers themselves on how to limit and lighten the work-life disconnect and establish a genuine work-life balance. Gathering nine (9) support groups from two BPO companies in Nuvali, Laguna and Dasmarinas, Cavite, purposive sampling was employed to identify the possible participants who fit in with the study's objectives. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews via Google Meet and were analyzed using selective coding.

Keyword: *Work-life balance, BPO, Support Group*

II. INTRODUCTION

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is a developing industry that is receiving significant attention from all other sectors such as government, business, as well as from the academe. The Philippines is the largest international location for offshore Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) services providing operations for major foreign clients and call centers. The industry grew by 20% in 2012 and is expected to be valued at US$25 billion by 2016 10% of GDP, according to the Philippine BPO Association. *(AFP, 2017, Investvine.com/Philippines-bpo-industry-to-hit)*

Nonetheless, every job has its upside and downside. While the offshoring industry is a growth and jobs engine, some BPO workers are challenged from working the graveyard shift servicing clients from different time zones. According to an International Labor Organization (ILO) study on offshoring and working conditions in remote work, many BPO employees operate in a stressful work environment due to heavy workloads on top of strict performance targets and tight rules and procedures.

The researchers found that an increasing amount of attention has been given to agents or frontlines and top management teams. However, lower-level management which is composed of team leaders, quality analysts and trainers should also be given focus since they are more concerned with day-to-day direction and control function as compared to planning and organizing functions of the management. They directly guide and control the performance of the workers. They also represent the grievances of the workers to the higher level of management. Support roles also have their own metrics to reach as well as they are also handling people. With this, their work-life balance should also be considered the same as the other roles in the BPO Organization.

III. METHODS

A qualitative research approach for this study was chosen because qualitative methods are especially useful in discovering the meaning that people give to events that they experience. (Merriam, 1998)

A qualitative descriptive approach needs to be the design of choice when a straightforward description of a phenomenon is desired. It is an approach that is very useful when researchers want to know, regarding events, who were involved, what was involved, and where did things take place.

This research approach undermines the method of analysis and interpretation participants must undergo through with the sets of questions that will be asked upon them. The researchers aim to examine and assess the nature of occurrence, system, experiences, and ideologies with regard to its significance in validating the respective research study. This method is considered the most applicable research design to be applied within the study.

The participants were interviewed in their houses or any comfortable place that the participants preferred. The researchers also gathered participants who are currently employed in two BPO companies located in Dasmarinas Cavite and Nuvali Laguna. These participants were interviewed via Google Meet. The study was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021.

This research used purposive sampling and did not aim to generalize findings to a general population. Ulin, Robinson, Tolley & McNeill (2002) described purposive sampling as a strategy which uses sampling methods; based on purpose rather than on statistical probability of selection. Participants in the current research were selected based on their individual experience of being BPO employees, specifically they are all in the support role.

The purpose of this study was to conduct interviews with nine support roles in two BPO Companies situated in Dasmarinas, Cavite and Nuvali, Laguna to examine their work-life balance and how this would affect their performance.

Participants were chosen for the study based on the following criteria: 1) Participation was exclusively for those working in BPO with a support role, 2) Working in BPO Industry for more than a year, 3) Currently employed in Nuvali, Laguna or Dasmarinas, Cavite

It is important to select participants who matched the above profile to understand how they balance work duties and personal responsibilities and if this is affecting their perception of their job performance. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary.

The researchers asked for the biographical profile of the participants before the interview proper. Table 1 shows the biographical data of BPO support employees who participated in the interviews conducted by the researchers.

Table 1

Biographical Data of Participants

Role	Gender	Tenure in BPO	Tenure in Support Group	Participant's Background
Quality Analyst	Male	5 years	4 years	33, self-supporting individual
Trainer	Female	5 years	7 months	22, a newly promoted trainer and a breadwinner
Supervisor	Male	11 years	5 years	35, a single father
Quality Analyst	Male	3 years	1 year and 8 mos.	25, living with his parents and sibling
Quality Analyst	Female	13 years	5 years	37, a breadwinner and living with her grandmother
Trainer	Female	5 years	2 years	36, a mother of five
Trainer	Female	5 years	2 years	32, a mother of two, husband is working as a front liner
Supervisor	Female	7 years	6 years	29, newly married and still living with parents
Supervisor	Female	5 years	2 years	32, a mother of two

Qualitative Technique was used in this study because it is the most suitable for understanding the phenomenon understudy. The qualitative data were obtained through in-depth interviews virtually, using semi structured interview questions, which allowed the informants to describe their experiences in a free manner.

The credibility criterion establishes that the results of the qualitative research accurately represent the view of the participants in the research process (Easton, 2007). In this paper, the researchers used the guidelines advocated by Shenton (2004) to encourage self-reliance that the experiences of the participant were recorded accurately. The collected data were transcribed and the participants were given the chance to check the data themselves.

The following procedures were done in gathering data: First, the researchers sought to have ethical clearance and approval from the faculty of Olivarez College Tagaytay. Thereafter, they

contacted the BPO employees specifically in Dasmarinas, Cavite, and Nuvali, Laguna. BPO employees were requested, through email, to participate in the study. The email contained a brief purpose of the study and information regarding participant anonymity and confidentiality. A meeting date was set for those who expressed interest in the study. Interviews were conducted online through Google Meet. The participants were informed on what the research was about and given a letter with an informed consent form to sign via a Google Form. Participants were also told that they would be informed of the outcome of the research and would be given the contact details of the researchers. In addition, the participants were asked if they would agree to record the interview sessions.

To analyze the data gathered, Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-steps of thematic analysis were used, which include familiarization with data in the first instance, followed by the creation of initial codes and identification of themes and sub-themes. Thematic tables were then created which acted as a good visual guide when repeatedly reviewing and refining the themes further. Finally, a thematic report was then created, which was supported with direct quotes from participants.

V. RESULTS

Theme 1: Increasing demands for Overtime

QA 3: *"Talagang nag eextend ako ng time ahm sometimes 2 hours more than 2 hours pero ahm wala talaga syang pay kasi fix kami non voice kami ang binabayaran lang talaga sa amin is just 8 hours na time na shift namin."*

TR 5: *"Hindi, kase nasa training department ako. Ahm I'll make sure na yung trabaho namin eh matatapos ng 4AM which is yung out. If ever merong mga i-send or i-complete within that day siguro ang pinakamatagal ko na thank you OT is mga 30 minutes."*

TR 6: "*Yung mga admin tasks po namin hind sya swak sa 8 hours na yon so I really need to have or to render OT so that we can finish the work na kailangan namin pong tapusin.*"

TL 7: *"Kung may nag ot man, hindi naman ako madalas nag o-ot lalo na kung matagal na yung agent na yun hindi ko na kailangan mag ot or hindi ko na siya kailangan i-coach or i-guide."*

TL 9: *"Majority of the people who are working under my roster are like, like obliged to render overtime as their coach not getting paid on the extra hour."*

Theme 2: Increasing Autonomy at Work

QA 3: *"Ahm ano talaga kami through email autopilot kasi kami so yon so na ahm ang communication talaga naming is through email lang"*

TR 4: *"So veery-very minimal like yung manager ko, can like take a leave in a week but we can still function as a trainer and do our responsibilities"*

TR 6: *"How can I say this kulang kami sa manpower in order for us to ahm address it."*

TL 9: *"I'm strongly satisfied. Since I've been in the position for quite some time, you now I am very much aware of the process and work arounds."*

Theme 3: Expanded Responsibility

QA 2: *"Ahh oo we also do have lalo na kapag wala yung manager namin. So yung manager mag aasign kung sino yung mga mag hahandle ng certain concern habang wala sya."*

QA 3: *"Sometimes it happens talaga, especially to us limited yung people namin so if there's ahm someone not available you have to ahm cover his task"*

TR 4: *"Dun sa mga training assistance we are also responsible in putting them into ahmm you know, being a trainer someday."*

TL 7: *"Yes naman all the time since gusto ko rin tumaas pa. Hindi naman tayo nag wo-work na dito lang tayo.Uhm kung may opportunity na oh magiging OM."*

TL 8: *"Oo, meron jusko nakakastress nga yung laging umaabsent tapos iiwanan yung buong ahente nila. oo, may ganun, di talaga yun maiiwasan kailangan mo talagang gawin yun"*

Analysis of the theme

The responses of the participants of the study revealed that extending their time at work or working overtime depends on the preference of the employees if they want to extend or not. This is mainly because overtime was not being paid and the salary was already fixed with the 8 hours of work. Participants of the study also revealed that they were only extending their working hours

if there were many things to accomplish and intended only to lessen workloads for another day. In the study conducted by Holly and Mohnen (2012) titled "Impact of working hours on Work-Life balance," their main objective was to examine the influence of the working hours of the employees on their satisfaction on the job. They explain that the overall number of the employees who want to reduce their working hours is influenced mainly by the overtime compensation.

Also, having a sense of responsibility is what the narratives of the participants revealed which showed that most of them have already practiced and mastered the art of taking responsibility in whatever circumstances. Also, most of them claimed that pressure in taking responsibility makes their work challenging. Hill et al. (2010) defined work-life balance as the extent to which a person can concurrently balance the emotional, behavioral, and time demands of both paid work, personal, and family responsibilities and these include responsibility at work, at home, and at self.

The success of the company relies on the quality of management and supervision being given by the employer to their employees. Quality supervision equates to quality employees' performance and this is what was being revealed which showed that most of the participants experienced both poor and quality supervision. Participants who experienced poor quality supervision have learned how to deal with the situation and become independent every time their superior neglects to give quality supervision while on the other hand participants who experienced quality supervision have absorbed the good practices that their superior has shown them. Baral and Bhargava (2011) in their research titled "HR interventions for Work-life balance," quotes that work-life balance is the concern for both research scholars and the business leaders in the view of technological, demographic, and organizational changes related to it. They explained the challenges that the HR managers face while effectively implementing the policy in their organization.

Theme 4: Worry-free Off from Work Time

QA 3: *"Siguro for me work life balance is yung if you are still able to spend time with family and friends at the same time."*

TR 5: *"So if work mo kahit work from home dapat focus ka lang don and then make sure na you will need to do lahat ng task mo sa trabaho within the time ng shift mo para after nun pag out mo after ng shift ko dapat lahat ng trabaho ko finish na sa time na yon."*

TL 7: *"Hmm okay so work/life balance means yung nakakapag work ka yung nag e-enjoy ka sa trabaho mo and of course nagagawa mo rin yung mga gusto mo bilang tao lang."*

TR 5: *"Yung time with your family especially mommy ako, meron akong 1 year old na baby so uhm kailangan you know how to balance your life talaga"*

TL 7: *"So yun, like what I've said or like what I've mentioned balanse yung buhay mo pag nag e-enjoy ka ng maayos pag hindi ka puyat, nakakakain ka ng three times a day, hindi ka stress or hindi sobrang stressful ng work mo then may time ka pa para sa friends mo diba"*

TL 9: *"Whenever you get to spend your weekend without worrying. What am I going, what am I going to do next we just had last week, you know, those kinds of stuff. If you don't really have to really get yourself thinking during the time you should be resting, then you will be able to say that, yeah, you have a balanced life."*

Theme 5: Struggling to Keep the Balance

QA 3: *"Work life balance (chuckle) pa rang hindi sya applicable sa akin. (chuckle) will work life balance kasi we're talking about work life balance is balance lang yung work mo so if it ahm if you're working for 8 hours you have to do your job within 8 hours"*

TR 5: *"To tell you honestly, I don't have work life balance, ahm, I would say I have work but I don't have balance,, kasi ahmm, sometimes, nag oover work ako, not because it was asked,but because I need to do,I mean to do so."*

TR 6: *"Work life balance for the term itself work and life. you have to separate your work and of course your life for me so ahm unfortunately nowadays I'm not getting that kind of work life balance because of the fact that I was unable to go on leave/Kagaya po ngayon so ayon kung baga hindi sapat ang 2 days off mo para makapag pahinga you need more than that kasi versus the stress that your always carry on the daily basis and even if you sleep ahm that doesn't help, yon lang po for me."*

TL 9: *"Have you been able to, you know, separate, personal and work life.I would say it's a bit challenging, you know, with, with the, you know, mandatory overtime that's happening a bit, we have this a bit fluctuation of performance"*

QA 3: *"Ahm nararamdaman ko lang sya ngayon kasi work from home but during times na, na sa office pa kami ahm I feel talaga na hindi balance yung life ko kasi ahm will pag out ko syempre galing pa ako nag OT pa ako o nag extend pa ako and then pag-uwi ko is natutulog lang ako"*

Analysis of the Theme

The participants of the study revealed that having work and life balance is personal convenience for them due to the fact that they were able to spend time with their family every time they needed to and still not let their work be sacrificed as they were living their personal life. Also, they believed that they have work and life balance because of being able to manage everything smoothly and conquer challenges in both work and personal life. As Tausig and Fenwick (2001) measured perceived work-life balance using two items: the extent to which workers feel successful in balancing work and personal life, and the amount of conflict they face in balancing work and personal life.

Having a work life balance requires vigorous factors such as time management, dedication and perseverance in the workplace. This is what the participants have revealed: their job may be the job that they wanted but having work and life balance along with their job is fulfilling. Having the ability to manage and separate work and personal life is way more challenging than the job itself. Also, having the ability to survive working and living the personal life is what they still learn as the time passes by. Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003) identified three components to measure work–family balance: time, involvement, and satisfaction. The study used direct measures of work-family balance to avoid the limitations of individual judgments about balance. The first component time relates the amount of time spent at work with the amount of time spent at home and family activities. The second component evaluates the involvement in work compared to involvement in family, and the third component measures the satisfaction from work and satisfaction with family.

Recommendation

1. Time Management**:** Rather than thinking of the number of hours of work, think of the effective time spent at work. Many people spend a long time at work yet do not seem to accomplish their

high-impact activities. They must track their activities and the amount of time they spend on them. Watch out for some common traps. Some of these include the constant use of email or blackberries.

2. Drop Activities that SAP One's Time or Energy: Many people waste their time on activities or people that add no value. For example, spending too much time at work with a colleague who is constantly venting and gossiping. Take stock of activities that are not really enhancing one's career or personal life and minimizing the time they spend on them.

3. A Little Relaxation Goes a Long Way: Employees should not feel overwhelmed by assuming that they need to make big changes to bring more balance to their lives. They should set realistic goals like trying to leave the office earlier one night per week. They also slowly build more activities into their schedule that are important to them. Maybe they can start by spending an hour a week on their hobby or planning a weekend getaway with their family once a year. Even during a hectic day, they can take 10 or 15 minutes to do something that will recharge their batteries. Take a bath, read a trashy novel, go for a walk, or listen to music. They have to make a little time for the things that ignite your joy. As happiness has a direct relation to productivity, one must think of the things which make them happy.

4. Set your Priorities: Work-life balance cannot be achieved without effective priority setting. Many people spend long hours at work without knowing the effective time they spend actually working.

5. Social Networking: It is recommended that women should integrate themselves into various social networks and high levels of social support, as this will greatly improve their mental health outcomes.

6. Learn to Say "No": Whether it is a co-worker asking to spearhead an extra project, remember that it is fine to respectfully say no. When people quit doing the things they do only out of guilt or a false sense of obligation, they will make more room in their life for the activities that are meaningful to them and bring them joy.

7. Leave Work at Work: With the technology to connect to anyone at any time from virtually anywhere, there may be no boundary between work and home - unless people create it. Make a conscious decision to separate work time from personal time. When with family, for instance, people must turn off their cell phone and put away their laptop computer.

8. Manage Time: Organize household tasks efficiently, such as running errands in batches or doing a load of laundry every day, rather than saving it all for a day off. Put family events on a weekly family calendar and keep a daily to-do list. Do what needs to be done and let the rest go. Limit time-consuming misunderstandings by communicating clearly and listening carefully. Take notes if necessary.

9. Bolster Support System: At work, join forces with co-workers who can cover for you — and vice versa — when family conflicts arise. At home, enlist trusted friends and loved ones to pitch in with child care or household responsibilities when one needs to work overtime or travel.

10. Nurture Oneself: Eat healthy foods, include physical activity in your daily routine and get enough sleep. Set aside time each day for an activity that you enjoy, such as practicing yoga or reading. Better yet, discover activities you can do with your partner, family or friends — such as hiking, dancing or taking cooking classes.

11. Seek Help of Counselors: Everyone needs help from time to time. If life feels too chaotic to manage and one is worrying about it, talk with a professional — such as a counselor or other mental health professional. If an employer offers an employee assistance program (EAP), take advantage of available services.

12. Do Not Overbook: This may seem unusual to people who try to crowbar as much as possible into every workday. The problem is: Things rarely go according to a prearranged agenda. That means a lot of time falling through the cracks chasing down appointments, unreturned phone calls, and other items that simply are not going to happen. Do not try to plan on doing too many things. Assume that only 50% of the things planned on doing today will actually get done. If not, one only just wastes valuable time trying to find out why things did not happen.

13. Use of Technology: Although personal habits and practices can do wonders for time management, do not overlook technology as yet another weapon to make the most effective use of the workday. Sticky notes are one of the worst things in the world. One should live by your database. That way, nothing is ever forgotten.

14. Organize: Bringing your time into line is not just a matter of scheduling. The mechanics of how one operates can be every bit as important. That means organizing almost every element to allow as smooth a workflow as possible. Everything in business should be set up using logical

systems so anyone needing anything can find it when they need it. Eliminating clutter and the chaos it causes will give a gift of many hours every year.

15. Use the Facilities Available for WLB in Organizations: WLB initiatives give employees flexibility and help ensure that dependents are cared for whilst employees are at work. Both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict can be reduced when employees use WLB initiatives but not all employees make use of the initiatives that are available to them even when those initiatives would be helpful. Remember, striking a healthy work-life balance is not a one-shot deal. Creating a work-life balance is a continuous process as one's family, interests, and work-life change. Periodically examine priorities and make changes if necessary to keep on track.

Risk Management Plan

1. Integration: Integrating work-life balance issues into the organization's management development program is advisable if not essential. One size does not fit. All the process of introducing, operating, and implementing work-life balance has to suit the organization. A collaborative approach between management and Trade Unions assists with the process of introducing new initiatives. Embed the WLB agenda into the HR strategy.

2. Offer Flexibility: Work Life Balance initiatives can assist employers and employees to be productive and healthy in their work and community lives. Organizations can give employees greater flexibility in how they work.

3. Childcare Centers at Workplaces: A further recommendation is to establish nurseries and child activity centers at workplaces, which would offer timetables adapted to workers' needs, along with high-quality services and competitive prices. It is envisaged that such services would offer an important source of assistance to working parents.

4. Women-friendly Workplace: Organizations need to develop policies that create a women-friendly workplace environment. Removing core hours and implementing self- roistering – demonstrating trust. Assisting managers to manage remote workers by agreeing targets and deadlines. Promoting core team meetings where time off is negotiated and agreed between all staff.

5. Parental Leave: As regards parental leave, it is proposed to increase the duration of leave from the 13 weeks to which working mothers or fathers are currently entitled to 13 months each. Another

suggestion is to pay beneficiaries parental leave benefits equal to unemployment benefits, since at present parental leave is granted without pay and this acts as a disincentive to those entitled to such arrangements.

6. Training Programs: Employers need to establish training programs for women, such as mentorships, career guidance and leadership development. Train Managers and staff in the use of WLB policies.

7. Promote Awareness: Promote awareness initiatives that highlight the value of female employees. Early buy-in by senior management to the strategic benefits of work-life balance is essential, as is a willingness to take risks by senior members of the organization.

8. Commitment during Hiring: Organizations should have a true commitment to hire and promote women and include women in the annual business strategy. Avoid as far as possible the long hours of work for employees. Long hours are not just potentially damaging to the individual employee but also to the company itself. Companies need to understand that long hours may lead to lower motivation, morale, turnover and productivity of employees and reputation in the labor market. There has long been a recognition that happy employees are more productive and less likely to leave. However, the reality is that there is often an assumption amongst some employers that simply getting staff to work longer hours will increase their work output.

There was a time when the boundaries between work and home were fairly clear. Today, however, work is likely to invade personal life — and maintaining work-life balance is no simple task. Still, work-life balance is not out of reach. Start by evaluating relationships to work then apply specific strategies as.

V. DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to explore the work-life balance of BPO employees. Findings of the study revealed that because of the overwhelming workloads, work-life balance is being compromised if they choose to work longer hours and decide not to take their vacation leave. It was also learned that they can accomplish tasks even though they are getting minimal supervision. They are also willing to go the extra mile when there are opportunities to take responsibility.

Work-life balance could be influenced by both motivation and hygiene factors, as company policies and managers determine an individual's schedule and workload, while an individual's involvement and desire to achieve may contribute to their time and effort spent at work.

From the answers provided by the participants, they describe work-life balance as; time management and setting up priorities. The narratives of the participants also revealed that they do not get to experience an organized activity initiated by the upper management. Though it is burdensome when they are achieving and enjoying something every single day in all important areas that make up their lives.

The results of this research indicate that a large proportion of people lack awareness of work-life balance issues and the laws governing them. The participants' answers show that both the state and employers are in a position to enhance work-life balance by providing benefits and proper information in this regard. The researchers recommend that the proposals be put forth for debate and intervention by organized groups, especially by the social partners, for the creation of a targeted policy aiming to strengthen work-life balance.

This study varies from the other studies as previous studies have mostly focused on the work-life balance and employees' performance of agents or frontlines. It differs from the other studies as we focused on BPO support groups as they serve a vital purpose in customer service environments, serving as a key link between the agents and management.

Moreover, this study comprises some new aspects of work-life balance such as overtime and vacation leaves and commitment to work that has been seldom observed but ideally are said to affect employee performance.

Today's customer-centric marketplace is putting even greater pressure on BPO leaders to find advanced out-of-the-box solutions to provide a better customer experience, meet demands at lower costs. Having to bear all these, it has been observed that employees of the BPO sector, specifically those in the support group, are trying to work hard that somehow affects their personal life.

According to Tuna and Lublin (2009), Former General Electric Co. Chief Executive Jack Welch has some blunt words for women climbing the corporate ladder: they may have to choose between taking time off to raise children and reaching the corner office. "There are work-life

choices, and you make them, and they have consequences." Mr. Welch said those who take time off for family could be passed over for promotions if "you're not there in the clutch."

Hence, it was learned that while people can certainly choose to take time off from work to be with their family or pursue other interests, being away may indeed affect their work performance as they may not accomplish all of their deliverables within an eight hours shift. Making better work-life choices simply means that employees should identify that work and personal lives will always present competing demands. Careful planning is essential if they want to be successful in both.

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were suggested in order to enhance the perception and practice of effective overtime policy in the organizations:

Employees must review allocation of duties to ensure they have achievable workloads. They will need to familiarize themselves with the processes of allocating work. What seems like a small task to management might actually take an individual a day to do. Managers who talk to their teams regularly will know who is busy and stressed, and who has capacity. Ask the staff regularly to indicate to managers whether they are overworked, just right or have spare capacity.

Work-life balance enables employees to feel as if they are paying attention to all the important aspects of their lives. Employees who cannot afford to get away on vacation do not recharge both physically and mentally. Employers who encourage the use of time off and provide benefits that offer affordable ways to take vacations will improve employee morale and their company's bottom line at the same time. In today's time, vacation is no longer a luxury. Rather it is more of a necessity. It is high time employers realize how vacations from work have become an important part of today's work culture. Letting the employees take long breaks without sacrificing their wages is very effective. Employees feel more rejuvenated and relaxed after returning to work, yielding better productivity.

At work, join forces with co-workers who can cover for you — and vice versa — when family conflicts arise. At home, enlist trusted friends and loved ones to pitch in with child care or household responsibilities when one needs to work late. If overwhelmed at work, and it is causing undue stress, do not suffer in silence. Shed the Superwoman/Superman image and explain the situation to the boss or supervisor.

Team Building may sound too cheesy for your company environment, but some of them really do foster a much-needed sense of teamwork around the office. If the employees feel like they can depend on each other for support, they will feel like they have someone to go to when feeling stressed out or overwhelmed. One of the best ways to boost employee morale and help workers get to know each other in a non-stressful capacity is by offering an occasional company outing. This type of outing can be low-key or extravagant, depending on the company's culture and budget for such things. For example, one could organize a company-paid lunch either to be catered into the office or at a favorite group-friendly restaurant nearby. Happy hours, holiday parties, birthday celebrations, and park days are other fun ways to get out of the office and bond in a non-traditional setting. However, employees do not have to even leave the office to achieve this feeling of camaraderie. Some small companies have found great success in "breakfast club" programs in which employees take turns bringing in their favorite breakfast foods (either homemade or store-bought) to share with coworkers.

Rewarding and recognizing employees lead to greater employee engagement, which increases retention and helps, create a more positive overall workplace. Incorporating a rewards and recognition program helps increase employee engagement, leading to many benefits for the company, like increased productivity and retention

Time management is a very important aspect when it comes to having a proper work-life balance. Most individuals tend to ignore this phase. As a result, they end up getting overwhelmed by work at the end of the day with no time for themselves. So, one must make sure they have a proper routine in place for the day.

Having open, honest conversations about one's needs and those of the employer and team can lead to productive solutions such as flextime, a compressed workweek schedule, job sharing, and other creative options. Workers value employers who empower them to manage their own time.

Time-to-time assessment of the employees is an essential part of creating a healthy work environment. Situations may differ with changing times, and keeping track of these changes becomes very important in order to put effective solutions in place. These enable the employers to fix problems that may act as blockades towards achieving a healthy work-life balance.

Taking feedback and conducting surveys from the employees further helps organizations to know them better and work on the issues raised.

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Social Media Advertisements and the Buying Behavior of the College Students

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I. ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the measure of effectiveness of social media advertisements on the buying behavior of college students. This study included the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, interest, income level, the extent of influence in entertainment and social imaging, impulsiveness, and carelessness buying, and discounts. The researchers used the Quantitative method and utilized a descriptive research design. The respondents were 100 students from Olivarez College Tagaytay who have experience in social media. The instrument used was adapted from the study of Sincero (2010). The study revealed that the majority of the respondents are female and in their adolescent stage of development. Their interests were in beauty and wellness. The income level of the respondents was largely based on their allowance as students. The entertainment and social imaging factor with the highest influence on the buying behavior of the respondents was wall posts of individuals such as feedback and comments regarding a service. The impulsiveness or carelessness buying factor with highest influence was when consumers are having fun in buying the products they like. The discount factor that recorded the highest influence in the respondents' buying behavior was the freebies given to the customers.

II. INTRODUCTION

Social media has provided consumers with new ways to develop in networking groups. This is also the easiest way for a good or service to be advertised. To generate content and network with other users, consumers use social media, such as online communities. According to Lu & Hsiao (2010), online communities and social networking sites (SNSs) are effective web technology for social interactions and sharing information. It has been playing a huge role in society since it became a new way of communication, different businesses start using it to expand their market. Many businesses use SNS to engage with their customers. It also offers different values to firms such as strategies in increasing sales, sharing business information, knowing feedback, and the support of consumers that leads businesses in having a positive impact. In the Philippines, according to We Are Social's Global (2019), there are 76 million active Filipino social media users, 71 percent of the entire population, who spend an average of four hours a day on different social media platforms. Therefore, Filipinos are more likely to have access to the internet. It created a connection and a way that allowed businesses to reach their consumers by having promotional marketing through online advertisements. In this, online advertising is also likely to give potential in increasing business strategy.

Consumer's buying behavior is the practice by which people browse for, pick, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services to suit their needs. SNS has been beneficial for many companies with the development of the online media market, especially in supporting their brand through using online ads. Marketing campaigns in businesses are likely to be carried out by trust-building processes and influence the purpose of consumers to purchase online goods. At the start, customers focused only on the internet for details. They would browse around for the items, look up the options, but were hesitant to purchase them. Yet buyers are now shopping online with the passing of time, consumers are now shopping online due to awareness (i.e. Laptops, cameras).

Consumers are the final end-users of the products; they keep the production cycle moving. They do play a vital role in the economic system of any nation, thus, any nation will face a crisis if the consumers do not have the effective demand for goods produced. Social media advertising platforms are so powerful nowadays that online sellers or any businesses specify exactly who to display their advertisements to.

Currently, social media advertising channels are so effective that online dealers or firms determine exactly who to show their commercials to. Depending on their demographics, desires, attitudes, and more, they will construct target markets. They may start using a social networking advertising platform to make mass improvements, simplify operations, and customize their advertisements as they operate multiple social media marketing campaigns simultaneously.

In modern days, there is a significant shift in the system of communication. Social media has been a useful way for all age groups to collaborate. The internet, and particularly social media, have changed the sort of interaction between shoppers and marketers. It is now possible for business people to reach global clients with the aid of the internet and the influence of multiple social networking platforms at the one click of the button. It allows the user to check the product on the website using internet technologies, and see the review and ratings of current customers for the product before buying the product. Consumers are frequently using the technology too for purchasing products and seeing other buyers' feedback.

A modern approach for market growth is the digital platform. The networking techniques between sellers and purchasers are changed by social media. E-commerce impacts the customer in their willingness to shop. Interaction via social media is a modern medium for the sharing of product and service content. Consumer behavior monitoring is the key element of goods and service purchases since most people use the website and social media online tools. Social networking is an important way of launching and promoting goods and even of conducting surveys. It is a big marketing medium for advertising events today. It is also important to consider how customer behavior is influenced by social media.

The purpose of this study is to understand the behavior of the consumers and to find out the extent of influence of social media advertisements on buying behavior of the college students in Olivarez College Tagaytay because social websites and platforms which are doing marketing are new methods of gaining importance or attention among various consumers. Also, social media marketing created a new avenue for most marketers and consumers who can communicate, exchange ideas, sell and purchase a variety of goods and also services through the use of social websites which are doing advertising.

III. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive Quantitative Research Design was used in this study. The phase started with the collection of quantitative data through the use of a self-made survey questionnaire. The researcher utilized the self-made survey questionnaire as their research tool to answer the research questions.

Table 1

Respondents of the Study

Respondents	Quantity Per Category
Online Consumers	50
Online Sellers	50
Total Respondents	100

Table 1 shows the two (2) categories of the respondents of the study: online consumers with a total of 50 respondents and online sellers with a total of 50 respondents.

To select the respondents of the study, purposive sampling was used. According to the study of Amedy (1999), purposive sampling is described based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore, one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most. According to Cherry (2016), purposive sampling involves seeking out individuals that meet certain criteria. The researchers used this technique because it uses the specialty of specific participants to gather some information and data about this research therefore it is appropriate for this research.

In order to gather significant information, the qualified respondents for sample selection must be online consumers in Olivarez College Tagaytay. This qualification ensures that the respondents understand the nature of the instruments and their use of assessment. This allowed the respondents to accomplish the instrument easily. Self-made survey questionnaire was used to collect a data technique and analysis that generates or uses numerical data. According to Sincero (2012), survey is a data gathering method that is used to collect, analyze and interpret the opinion of a group or individual from a target population. It is widely used in various fields of research such as sociology, marketing, politics and psychology. The survey questionnaire consists of two

parts: part one consists of the demographic profile such as: age, gender, social status, educational attainment and interest while part two is concerned with consumers' buying behavior.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to content validity with 3 experts of the field.

Test of reliability was also conducted utilizing Cronbach's Alpha through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), with a rating of 0.7 with an interpretation of acceptable.

After the validation of the research instrument, the researchers secured a letter of approval. The researchers explained to the respondents the purpose of the study and the data gathering procedure. The survey was conducted online because of the COVID19 pandemic and the researchers want to secure the safety of each respondent.

For statistical analysis, the data obtained were recorded, arranged, and tabulated and were statistically analyzed using the following: Frequency Distribution- A frequency distribution is a table that describes a survey data set which is used to coordinate and summarize the details. It is a compilation of qualitative or quantitative qualities that a component in a sample group takes, as well as the corresponding frequencies (Lavrakas, 2008); Weighted mean- It is a type of mean that is determined by multiplying the weight (or probability) related to a given outcome by the associated collected data, then summing the results; Test – This is a type of inferential statistic used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups, which may be related to certain features. A T-test is used as a hypothesis testing tool which allows testing of an assumption applicable to a population.

IV. RESULTS

Table 2
Age

Category	f	%
15- 20 years old	41	41%
21-26 years old	57	57%
27-32 years old	1	1%
33-38 years old	1	1%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age. Data indicates that the majority of the respondents are between 21 – 26 years old with the frequency of 57 or 57% of the total respondents. This may imply that ages 21-26 years old are the ones who mostly used the internet. Based on the Philippines Statistics Authority (2020), Filipino students aged 10 to 30 used the internet for social media more frequently (86.8%) than for research and e-mail (81.4%). This was observed in both urban and rural areas, as well as between sexes and age groups.

Table 3
Gender

Category	f	%
Male	37	37%
Female	63	63%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents are female with the frequency of 63 or 63% of the total respondents. This may imply that females are more likely to purchase products than males. According to SeeWhy (2013), 57% of women purchased goods online, compared to 52% of men. Women place a greater emphasis on issues of trustworthiness and assurance, as well as the ability to share opinions and ideas. Men are more concerned with the value gained from the purchase. According to Skyle et al. (2002), female e-commerce customers are more rational and risk-averse than male e-commerce customers. Men are loyal to brands while women are loyal to excellent service.

Table 4
Interest

Category	f	%
Entertainment	15	15%
Beauty and Wellness	29	29%
Travel	14	14%
Sports	28	28%
Age	8	8%
Outside Recreational Activities	3	3%
Others	3	3%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents are more interested in beauty and wellness with the frequency of 29 or 29% of the total of respondents. This may imply that beauty and wellness are the ones that are mostly interesting. According to Hill (2021), the rising of beauty and wellness is due to the trend that has exploded. It is a way of self-expression. It expresses the individuality of a person.

Table 5
Income Level

Category	f	%
Valid Student Allowance	72	72%
5,000 and below per month	12	12%
6,000 – 15,000 per month	7	7%
16,000 – 25,000 per month	5	5%
26,000 – 35,000 per month	4	4%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents spend their money from their student allowance with the frequency of 72 or 72% with the total of respondents. This may imply that valid student allowance has the highest percentage. According to Tong and Park (2020), most students attributed their spending habits to personal choices. The majority valued frugality even if their families' financial backgrounds would have allowed for more generous spending. Some students dive deeper into their spending habits. Most students indicated that they spend most of their money on basic necessities like toiletries or school supplies, and both the survey and interview responses revealed the most common reasons for personal spending is off-campus meals, ride-booking services like Uber, groceries and toiletries.

Table 6

Extent of Influence of Social Media Advertisement on the Buying Behavior of College Students

A. Entertainment and Social Imaging	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Online product commercials influence my purchasing behavior.	3.22	High Influence	2

	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
2. Ambassadors and celebrities who represent or promote brands in online platforms drive my purchase intent	3.01	High Influence	6
3. Wall posts of individuals such as feedbacks and comments regarding a service or product (remarketing)	3.41	Very High Influence	1
4. YouTube vlogs on which influencers give reviews/advertisements regarding a service or product	3.19	High Influence	3
5. Giveaways introduced in Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. of many brands	3.04	High Influence	5
6. Social media posts driven by hashtags and memes which advertise commodities	2.99	High Influence	7
7. Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram, twitter and etc. which are highly visible by searching keywords relating to a product	3.18	High Influence	4
8. Email marketing, google ads, display ads, etc. which pop up in my screen	2.86	High Influence	8
Total Extent of influence of social media advertisement on entertainment and social imaging	**3.11**	**High Influence**	

B. Impulsiveness/Carelessness Buying	**Weighted Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**	**Rank**
1. Having fun buying something that I like.	3.54	Very High Influence	1
2. Having difficulty controlling my desire to buy.	3.02	High Influence	3
3. Feeling a sense of excitement seeing a social media advertisement.	2.96	High Influence	5
4. I tend to click pop up advertisements.	2.63	High Influence	8
5. I tend to enter an online store when seeing an eye-catching advertisement.	3.16	High Influence	2
6. Pressured to enter an online store when noticing an interesting advertisement.	2.86	High Influence	7
7. I tend to spend more money than I originally set.	2.98	High Influence	4
8. Buying more online products that I didn't expect to buy.	2.91	High Influence	6

Total Extent of influence of social media advertisement on impulsive buying	**3.01**	**High Influence**	
C. Discounts	**Weighted Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**	**Rank**
1. Coupons drive my purchase intent	3.05	High Influence	6
2. Freebies attract buyers	3.42	Very High Influence	1
3. Online discounts and vouchers encourage me to purchase a service or product	3.40	Very High Influence	2
4. Promotional activities is one of the key factors that influence my buying behavior	3.23	High Influence	5
5. Promotional activities as a convincing communication to inform us about the existence of brands (services and products)	3.31	Very High Influence	4
6. Online discounts and promotional strategies thru social media increases my loyalty to the brand	3.32	Very High Influence	3
Total Extent of influence of social media advertisement on discount	**3.29**	**Very High Influence**	
Total Extent of influence of social media advertisement on buying behavior	**3.14**	**High Influence**	

Table 5 shows the extent of influence of social media advertisements on the buying behavior of the College Students of Olivarez College Tagaytay. In entertainment and social imaging, the influence of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are higher and the ones with the least influence are E-mail marketing, Google ads, Display ads, etc. For impulsiveness/careless buying, the very high influence is they are having fun buying products that they like. The least influence is the one that tends to click pop-up advertisements. This may imply that mostly, entertainment and social imaging of the product highly influence the consumers on purchasing the products as well as their impulsiveness and carelessness on purchasing. On the other hand, discounts that are given to customers are the things that give very high influence on consumers whether to purchase the products or not. According to Berland (2012), 88% of respondents view social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook as a new form of entertainment. In this study, it surfaced that more than half of respondents (56%) believe that social

networks play an important role in making buying-related decisions. Across every genre of entertainment, respondents felt that positive posts held greater influence over their decisions in purchasing than those that are negative.

Table 6

Difference in the Extent of Influence of Social Media on Buying Behaviors as Rated by Online Seller and Online Customers

	F	Sig.	t.	Df.	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Decision
Equal Variances Assumed	3.162	.078	1.55 6	98	.123	1.87	.12035	Accept Null

Table 6 shows that Levene's Test or equality of variances is 0.078 which is greater than the P-value of 0.05 which means that there is homogeneity in data. While the t-test result shows a significance of 0.123 which is greater than the P-value of 0.05 the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the rating of the online seller and online customers on the extent of influence of social media advertisement on the buying behaviors of college students is consistent is the same. Based on the European Consumers Organization (2011), the increasing popularity of social media advertisements (65% of Internet users use social networks) has also attracted the attention of marketers, business owners and consumers that develop new strategies aimed at targeting users on the basis of their preferences and online behavior.

Table 7

Relationship Between the Demographic Profile of the Extent of the Influence of Social Media Advertisement Buying Behavior

Demographic Profile		Extent Influence of Social Media Advertisement	Decision
GENDER	Pearson Correlation	-.002	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.981	Accept Null

AGE	Pearson Correlation	.062	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.539	Accept Null
INCOME	Pearson Correlation	.085	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.399	Accept Null
INTEREST	Pearson Correlation	-.018	
	Sig. (2 Tailed)	.857	Accept Null
	N	**100**	

Table 7 shows the relationship between the demographic profile and the extent of the influence of social media advertisement on the buying behavior of the respondents. The data shows that the computed P-value of 0.981 for gender, 0.539 for age, 0.399 for income, and 0.857 for interest are all greater than P-value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant relationship between demographic profile and the extent of influence of social media advertisement of the respondents. This may imply that the influence of social media on the buying behavior of the respondent are not affected by age, gender, income and interest.

Proposed Marketing Plan

Through this plan, the purpose is to promote growth in the business and within the organization. The challenge, however, is to provide access and spread awareness among businesses or marketers about the impact of social media advertisement regardless of entertainment and social imaging, impulsiveness/carelessness buying and discounts.

This development plan will help businesses and marketers to enhance their online marketing and know the importance of marketing mix in marketing strategy specifically in communications and customer relationships for the next 3 to 5 years. Social media plays a vital role in promoting products. Businesses are now using social media to make it easier for consumers to purchase products. It creates communication with customers, builds and maintains long-term relationships. These marketers ensure that they can communicate with consumers.

General Objectives

After the implementation of the Marketing Development Plan listed, social media advertisement are expected:

- elevate performance ratings and increase brand management in the market;
- increase the customers in the business for the next 5 years; and
- the business will be able to have a sustainable development plan for online marketing strategy.

Key Result	Objectives	Action Plan/Activities	Source of Fund	Lead Responsible, Strategic Partners/ Organizations Involved
Entertainment and Social Imaging	To develop a strategic plan to help businesses enhance their online marketing and increase communication and relationship to consumers.	Using likes, comments, shares and surveys to encourage online word of mouth marketing. Boost the use of hashtags in social media platforms. Monitor performances such as new page likes and post engagements. Recognize and respond to negative feedback or reviews by responding at right time in proper manner	Banks Investors Company Funds Marketing and Advertising Commercial Finance Marketing Finance	Delivering Apps (J&T Express, Lalamove Grab Food etc.) Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, etc.) Department of Finance Department of Trade and Industry Bureau of Internal Revenue

Impulsiveness and Carelessness Buying	To develop a strategic plan to help businesses enhance their online marketing and increase communication and relationship to consumers.	Reply to customers' posts on a regular basis to show that they are valued.	Banks Investors Company Funds Commercial Finance Marketing Finance	Delivering Apps (J&T Express, Lalamove Grab Food etc) Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Shopee,etc.) Department of Finance Department of Trade and Industry Bureau of Internal Revenue
		Enhance customer loyalty.		
		Increase pop up advertisements.		
		Increase eye-catching advertisements.		
Promotional Activities	To develop a strategic plan to help businesses enhance their online marketing and increase communication and relationship to consumers.	Promotional activities on a monthly basis such as monthly coupons, prizes etc.	Banks Investors Company Funds Commercial Finance Marketing Finance	Delivering Apps (J&T Express, Lalamove, Grab Food etc) Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, etc.) Department of Finance
		Perform digital marketing campaigns		

		To sell products, use live videos.		Department of Trade and Industry Bureau of Internal Revenue
Discounts	To develop a strategic plan to help businesses enhance their online marketing and increase communication and relationship to consumers.	Having freebies to increase brand. Share discounts and special offers to people who follow the store or page	Banks Investors Company Funds Commercial Finance Marketing Finance	Delivering Apps (J&T Express, Lalamove, Grab Food, etc.) Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, etc.) Department of Finance Department of Trade and Industry Bureau of Internal Revenue

Influencer Marketing	To develop a strategic plan to help businesses enhance their online marketing and increase communication and relationship to consumers.	Integrate social media influencer marketing.	Banks Investors Company Funds Commercial Finance Marketing Finance	Delivering Apps (J&T Express, Lalamove, Grab Food etc.) Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, etc.) Department of Finance Department of Trade and Industry Bureau of Internal Revenue

V. DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to describe the influence of social media advertisements on the buying behavior of the college students of Olivarez College Tagaytay.

This study revealed the majority of the respondents are female. Which may imply that the females are more likely to purchase online products than males.

The study also ascertained the importance of the perception of the respondents on the level of the influence of social media advertisements on the buying behavior of the college students of Olivarez College Tagaytay.

In the light of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: majority of the respondents were female aged 21 to 26 years old who are either online sellers or online consumers who use their student allowance as their basis for their level of income. They showed highest interest in beauty and wellness products.

In entertainment and social imaging, wall posts of individuals such as feedback and comments regarding a service or product have the highest influence. For impulsiveness/careless

buying, the highest influence is they are having fun buying products that they like. In terms of discounts, freebies given to customers have the highest influence.

Moreover, statistical analysis show that there is no significant difference in the extent of influence of social media advertisement in the buying of college students behavior as related by online seller and online consumer.

Furthermore the demographic profile of the respondents do not post significant associate with the extent of the influence of social media advertisement in the buying behavior of the respondents.

Hence the following are recommended: 1.) Online consumers could use social media advertising like email marketing, google ads, display ads etc. These might be a more effective way to nurture leads and transform prospective customers into loyal ones. This is because social media allows sellers to engage and interact with consumers, unlike any other advertising platform. This is something they cannot really do with traditional media. Additionally, to the consumers, make it a habit to read every detail posted when an advertisement appears on social media accounts to better understand what a company/business is advertising.In line with the result of this research, online consumers must write a review regarding the service or the product since it will help the online sellers to grow; 2.) Online sellers might imply the relevance of the marketing mix in marketing strategy, communications, and customer interactions were emphasized as marketing strategy components. In line with the result of this research, online sellers might always remind their consumers to write a review regarding the service or the product. They must know the trend and the likes of their target since most of the consumers buy products that they like. Also, consumers appreciate receiving freebies from online sellers so they might give consumers freebies to attract consumers to purchase more products; 3.) Marketers must ensure that they connect with consumers at all stages of the consumer's purchase decision process in order to be effective in engaging with them and creating and maintaining long-term relationships with them; 4.) Future researchers might consider other factors or focus on one influence of social media advertisement on consumer buying behavior for more reliability of the study.

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Sustainability and Profitability of Online Second-Hand Selling:
A Single Case Study

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I. ABSTRACT

This paper analyzed how the online sellers of second-hand clothes sustained their profitability in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is surprising that online selling has emerged drastically during the pandemic, especially selling second-hand clothes online. Back in the normal days, people could buy second-hand clothes only at the physical stores, but now it is the most selling item online. The purpose of this research was to know the ways and strategies on how these online sellers of second-hand clothes managed to adapt to the pandemic and still earn profit. This paper would help other aspiring entrepreneurs whether online or offline selling. The researchers have found a participant from Laguna. A qualitative approach was applied to this research. This online seller of second-hand clothes was interviewed regarding how he runs his online business and how he managed to adapt to the pandemic situation. The result of this study revealed the ways and strategies on how this online seller of second-hand clothes sustained his business' profitability amidst the pandemic. The researchers have found based on the result of the study that marketing mix plays a vital role for the success and sustainability of a business. From a business perspective, this study emphasized not only the strategies on what an online seller should perform, but also their courage and determination to earn while giving good quality service to their customers.

II. INTRODUCTION

In the old days, people were already into purchasing second-hand products, and when online shops emerged, that was also the time for second-hand products to flourish. Second-hand products are items that were already owned or used by the original owner then passed down to the second user or the latter. When people hear the words "second-hand products," some of them would think that these are not of good quality because the condition of the item is not the same as the first time it was bought by the original owner. However, some would also prefer to purchase second-hand products because they are much cheaper compared to the brand-new ones and they will also get the same purpose of the item.

E-commerce, commonly referred to as electronic commerce, refers to the purchasing and distribution of goods or services centered on the internet. In the Philippines, the biggest online platforms with regard to the marketplace are Shopee which is a Singaporean e-commerce company, and Lazada which is an international e-commerce company that was also founded in Singapore, the Facebook MarketPlace, and Instagram application. As stated in the survey conducted by the European marketing firm Global Market Insite, Chahal (2013), claimed that 70% of the online consumers purchased second-hand products whereas females who purchase online are into second-hand bags, clothes, shoes, jewelry, accessories, and books. While males are into second-hand products such as electronics and cars. Moreover, e-commerce plays a big part in why online platforms for the marketplace have emerged over the years.

Last December 2019, the world was bombarded with the news about COVID-19 which was first reported from Wuhan City, China. COVID-19 is a disease that originated from the novel coronavirus and later on it became pandemic. It caused the businesses to close down and also caused the other countries to undergo lockdown which made the situation in the economy worse. Right now, as the world is experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic, purchasing second-hand products online must be done cautiously to mitigate the spread of viruses.

According to Beals (2020), the largest online thrift store in the world is the ThredUp, which saw that there was a small increase in the activity of purchasing second-hand products since the COVID-19 pandemic has started. The market of second-hand products is set to grow by 27% in 2020 while the broader retail sector is projected to decline by 23 percent. During this pandemic,

as businesses decline, second-hand selling rises. There are lots of advantages in purchasing online, especially if considering the convenience, it gives the consumers who have no time to go outside. On the other hand, there are also some disadvantages considering that these consumers are purchasing second-hand products online which makes it appear very alarming when it comes to their safety.

Based on the researcher's observation, many online sellers are selling second-hand clothes despite the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The researchers find this study to be relevant and timely because, from this COVID-19 pandemic, people need to be more cautious when it comes to their health and more concerned about saving money whereas for the second-hand online sellers since they are also greatly affected by it, their business needs to survive for them to sustain their everyday needs and other expenses because this global health crisis is uncertain.

According to Herjanto (2019), there are minimal studies about second-hand consumption and most of those studies focus more on the viewpoint of customers, and because of this, it is also important to understand the point of view of sellers especially now that they are struggling because of the pandemic. Due to this COVID-19 pandemic, businesses should take steps in boosting their position in the market because this pandemic made the customer's awareness focus more on online shopping. Along with that, strategies are needed to help entrepreneurs to improve their situation in the market (Hashem, 2020).

This study was conducted to identify and understand the challenges that second-hand online sellers experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the marketing strategies they utilized to remain profitable. The main objective of this study was to give benefits to marketers, upcoming entrepreneurs, stay-at-home sellers, and students.

III. METHODS

The researchers utilized a case study method. The case study method's strength is its ability to analyze a "case" in detail within its "real-life" context. Case study is most effective when it is used to answer descriptive or explanatory questions, such as what happened, how it happened, and why it happened. It is also helpful for explaining a current scenario or occurrence where a detailed explanation is required but the researcher does not have to manipulate events.

This research study is qualitative as well. Qualitative research is used to answer questions about experience, meaning, perspective, and most often from the standpoint of the participant (Hammarberg et al., 2016). This method is applicable in this study because it helped the researchers to have an in-depth understanding of the experiences that second-hand clothes online sellers underwent during this time of the pandemic, that led to the strategies they used to remain profitable. Having a deep understanding of the participants' experiences provided a better result and conclusion of the study.

The study was conducted through the use of video conferencing applications, namely Zoom and Google Meet. These two social media platforms were chosen with regard to compliance to the health protocols such as social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic that people are currently experiencing. The chosen participants were from the CALABARZON region, and were selected from Facebook Groups. The researchers chose CALABARZON as their research locale because it is considered as a prime destination and considered as one of the top contributors in our economy together with Metro Manila and Central Luzon.

The researchers used non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. Non-probability sampling methods are used to supplement the information in qualitative research. The sample size is calculated by the concept of data saturation and the type of qualitative research methodology, rather than by a mathematical formula (Seetharaman, 2016). Non-probability sampling is applicable in this research because specific respondents were needed in this study wherein the participants or samples were chosen and invited for an interview.

Purposive sampling, also known as purposeful or qualitative sampling, refers to the collection of samples for the purpose of gaining knowledge or information from a certain phenomenon (Hadi, 2012). Purposive sampling enabled the researchers to acquire an in-depth understanding of the problem and also to gain richer, useful, and informative information.

The participants of the study were selected online sellers of second-hand clothes, together with their social media and logistics managers that are CALABARZON region-based who are also involved in operating the online business. The nature of their business is sole proprietorship. Their online business is DTI registered, and has been operating for almost four years. The researchers'

selected participants were from Facebook Groups. They were the chosen participants because they have the characteristics that helped the researchers to acquire the information needed in the study.

The following instruments were used by the researchers to gather data and evaluate the participants' answers:

A. Central Question - This served as the guidelines for the researchers during the interview to limit the data that is only related to the subject.

B. Consent Form - This served as proof that the participants allowed the researchers to perform the interview regarding their personal matters and that they agreed upon that all information gathered were kept to the participants and researchers only.

C. Google Meet and Zoom - This served as a tool to communicate with the participants to conduct virtual interviews.

D. Paper and Pen - This helped the researchers to record data and to take down important details during the interview.

The researchers asked for the approval of a consent form from their research advisor. A consent form was sent to the email of secondhand online sellers, informing them what is the purpose of the research study, why it is being conducted and it also served as an agreement between the participants and the researchers defining their roles and commitment throughout the research process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually with the secondhand online sellers, and their social media and logistics managers through the use of Google Meet and Zoom. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researchers to dig further into particular points that come up during the conversation with the participant. The purpose is to extract opinions and comments that may not have been heard during the planning processes but will have a direct effect on the study (Fauvelle, 2020). In the course of a virtual interview, participants were asked by the researchers to narrate their struggles and successes as second-hand online sellers, and social media and logistics manager during the pandemic. The information that was acquired by the researchers during the virtual interview from the participants were analyzed and interpreted that gave significance to the study. Additional sources of the data were gathered from the online platforms that they are using

to sell their products. The data that have been gathered were presented by the researchers to the panelists.

Document analysis is an easy and reliable way of collecting data since documents are readily available and it is considered an accurate source of data. Obtaining and analyzing data are often much less expensive and less time-consuming than doing your own analysis of experiments (Bowen, 2009). The researchers collected information about the online platforms that the online sellers are using in selling their products. The documents that were gathered and analyzed are the public information of the online platforms that they were using which includes the name of the page, number of likes or number of followers. These data served as additional data to the researchers to understand how it contributes to the sustainability and profitability of the second-hand online sellers of clothes during this time of the pandemic.

After conducting the semi-structured interview, it was transcribed as it is. Transcribing is the method of translating spoken words into text. When conducting interviews, transcribing is a standard procedure since it allows the researchers to easily analyze the data (Streefkerk, 2019). The researchers transcribed each recorded interview using the intelligent verbatim transcription method wherein they write down every word, but they didn't include irrelevant fillers. They also fix grammar mistakes. After the transcription, the researchers proofread it before sending it out to the participants. Before analyzing the data, the transcribed interviews were sent first to the participants for approval and in order to assure them that the researchers did not add anything to the interview.

The researchers used thematic analysis in treating the data. Thematic analysis is the systematic process of breaking down and processing qualitative research data to promote the identification of key themes through marking individual observations and quotations with relevant codes (Rosala, 2019). The researchers closely examined the transcribed data and compiled all these together into groups, which is defined by a code. After coding the data, these codes were put together in different groups called categories. With these categories, themes were generated, then the researchers reviewed these themes before naming and defining each. Naming themes requires a concise and easily understood name. Lastly, the researchers wrote their analysis about the themes that have been created, and this includes the meaning and explanations of each theme.

IV. RESULTS

Analysis and interpretation of data gathered drew out important information and significant points on how second-hand online sellers remained profitable amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions to guide this study were the following:

1) What are the challenges faced by secondhand online sellers of clothes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2) How did the secondhand online sellers of clothes remain profitable amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?
3) What are the marketing strategies utilized by second-hand online sellers of clothes amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

This study utilized a case study method wherein a case was being studied. The owner and their employees were interviewed and the researchers collected their social media information to assure the research's validity. Thereafter, it was transcribed and coded to find significant themes that will answer the research questions using thematic analysis.

Case Story

Selling through online platforms of secondhand clothes, the owner of the business is a couple who have three kids and reside at Balibago Sta. Rosa, Laguna. It started in the year 2017 and back then, it is just a source of extra income for them because they have their own regular jobs in a BPO Company. According to them, they really never thought of having such a business and they didn't really expect that this business would grow.

It all started when the owner gave birth to their second child. She then decided to declutter her clothes because she noticed that she had plenty of clothes and most of them were unused. Instead of throwing it, she thought of selling it online. At first, she hesitated to sell online through a post her used clothes thinking of the possibility that no one will buy her clothes. In the end, she had the courage to post it and their friends became their first customers.

She used her personal Facebook account in posting pictures of her used and unused clothes. She also posts those photos of her secondhand clothes on her "my day" or Facebook story and she

never thought that it would be sold out. There came a time when she did not have any of her pre-loved clothes to sell and a lot of her customers were asking when she would post again. She then took this opportunity to handpick secondhand clothes in different Ukay-Ukay stores in Tagaytay City and Muntinlupa City. When handpicking, they tend not to buy in bulk, instead, they only bought a few items to sell as they were just starting this business venture.

In 2019, they officially created a Facebook page, Facebook accounts, and Instagram account for their business. They decided to separate their personal accounts from their business so that it is organized and they can handle it properly. According to them, they had to create multiple accounts to gain more customers. As a result of the increasing number of customers, they had to find suppliers to meet the growing demand for secondhand selling on online platforms. Now, they have suppliers from China, Dubai, Korea, Australia, and Malaysia. They also have a warehouse for their stocks. They also had to focus on their business and resigned from their respective jobs. The task was designated as well. She manages the sales and the marketing of the product while her husband manages the logistics or distribution of the product. And as their business became full time, their business grew.

In March 2020, they also thought that their income would decrease because of the pandemic, but they were surprised that their business became more popular as online shops are in demand during this time of the pandemic. They had few problems when it came to the shipment of their products during the first month of the COVID-19 pandemic because of the restrictions implemented by the government, but they were able to manage it. According to them, they had no other problems encountered and notice that their income grows even more in this time. The sales increased because they needed to hire employees, and now they have three employees that help them in running their business. According to them, most of the people are on a tight budget during this pandemic and as they sell fashionable and affordable products, customers began to patronize their business.

As they have mentioned in the interview, their estimated monthly income has reached 200,000-300,000 pesos and their monthly expenses cost 100,000-200,000 pesos which resulted in an estimated monthly net income of 100,000 pesos. In September 2021, three of their GCash accounts exceeded their incoming limit.

People are clueless about what business will boom in the market. According to them, hard work is needed in order for a business to thrive, and when hard work is combined with proper management practices and implementation of strategies, it will surely result in success.

Theme 1: Customer-Related Problems and Delay due to restriction during the pandemic

This theme indicates the problems encountered by secondhand online sellers during this time of COVID-19 pandemic. It includes restrictions implemented by the government and customer related problems.

When the pandemic started, the government implemented rules and regulations to help lessen the spread of the virus. This causes problems in shipments of products that affected the online sellers of second-hand clothes, especially during the pandemic's first months.

Business Owner: *"Sa shipping, medyo nahirapan kami sa shipping. Kasi ahmm, sarado yung mga couriers like JNT, LBC's. May araw nung nagkaroon ng days na MWF lang tsaka TTHS lang ang paglabas. Delay ng shipments, not just with our products but the products coming from the supplier. Medyo delayed lang ang stocks."*

Logistic Manager: *"Since the pandemic nga there are limitations lalo na paglalabas. Pag delay ang shipments, syempre pag delay ang shipments madedelay din yung negosyo."*

Part Time Employee: *"Sa shipping, may mga check point kasi diba bawal lumagpas ng boundary, tsaka syempre diba bawal din lumabas lalo na't may hindi naman essential ang gagawin tas hindi naman essentials ang idedeliver."*

The shipping industry plays a big role in almost every country in the world, and it is an important aspect of almost every industry's supply chain. Most people rely entirely on the shipping industry to convey foods, medicines, and other essentials across international borders during the pandemic. This pandemic has put a strain on the shipping industry, with lockdowns and closed factories (Larsen, 2021).

Restrictions also cause delays in payments.

Logistic Manager: *"Yung mga customers na... nadedelay yung mga bayad nila. Especially kapag nagbabayad sila sa Palawan express, sa Mlhulier, Cebuana."*

Late payments cause a domino effect to small businesses. Late payments do not simply hurt the company waiting to be paid; they disrupt the entire supply chain, potentially raising consumer costs and it limits the ability of the firm to hire new workers (Fadilpašić, 2021).

Theme 2: Going back to basic

This theme pertains to the fundamentals of business management that remains even though the business landscape ages. Such as ethical business practices, experience-based business management, and hard-working sellers. Going back to basic practices and management in business helps the second-hand online sellers to remain profitable.

Subtheme 2.1 Ethical Business Practices

A lot of customers will trust a business if it is legal. It attracts customers, especially now that there are a lot of online sellers that are not legally operating. Legalizing one's business is one of the most important things to keep the business operating.

Logistic Manager: *"Mas maganda siyempre pag DTI registered ka you're registered."*

Part Time Employee: *"Maganda talaga mag online business lalo na kung legit ka."*

According to Contributor (2020), it is possible to gain an advantage by registering one's business. A legitimate business has a number of advantages, some of these are making small company loan applications easier, establishing consumer trust, and being qualified for supplier discounts that others will not get as an unregistered business.

Subtheme 2.2 Experienced-Based Business Management

According to Osteryoung (2016), experience is the key to prevent costly errors and manage a profitable firm. There are few ways to get a competitive advantage over your competitors. What makes the business stay ahead of the business is the knowledge and insight they gained through experience.

Business Owner: *"Sobrang deep ng ukay industry actually. Hindi sya umiikot sa iisang code or iisang supply, sobrang dami. So iyun sa tingin ko number 1 advantage namin sa kanila is experience."*

Logistic Manager: *"Masasabi naming edge namin sa iba lalo na dun sa ibang mga baguhan, syempre marami silang kailangang malaman. We are trained in handling customers, different type of customers."*

To work in different industries allows them to gain experience that they can also apply to their own business. Entrepreneurs who have been in business for a while are already aware of how their industries' trends and expectations are changing. Being a long-time seller enables them to understand and operate their business easier.

Subtheme 2.3 Hard-Working Sellers

According to Tamim (2016), setting and attaining goals are the keys to business success, and the secret, as many people will agree, is hard work. All successful people put in a lot of effort. Because nothing comes on a silver platter, hard work and success go hand in hand. This means that people must keep trying to succeed.

Business Owner: *"It can provide you almost everything as long as na masipag ka, madiskarte at tsaka matyaga ka sa bagay at syempre mahal mo yung ginagawa mo."*

Logistic Manager: *"Just be consistent yan yung pinaka importante."*

Hard work is the key to earn a lot and become successful. There are no easy business opportunities and everything must be earned. Entrepreneurs should not only be streetwise but also be responsible sellers as well to achieve their goals.

Theme 3: Utilization of Marketing Strategies

This theme pertains to the effective marketing strategies that online secondhand sellers used to gain more customers such as multiple social media accounts, good customer relationship, effective handling and management of the customers' package, multiple shipping options, use of value-based pricing strategy, and recruiting of responsible employees.

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) benefit from using social media for marketing, particularly in terms of generating revenues, customer relationships, productivity, and creativity. This suggests that the better MSMEs are at using social media for marketing, the greater their performance (Syaifullah, 2021). Running an online business can increase revenue in different

ways. Most of the online sellers used multiple social media accounts to gain customers. In order to attract viewers, they used various techniques that help them to shape clothes in realistic form through mannequins and photos. They also offer giveaways or freebies and games for customer retention.

Business Owner: *"We have Instagram, we have account in Facebook."*

Logistic Manager: *"Bukod sa page meron kaming facebook account. Namimigay kami ng gcash. Mas madaming nagsheshare"*

Part Time Employee: *"Maayos at maganda mga picture. "May mannequin kami na kasama sa paglalive para isusukat don yung damit."*

The seller also maintains good customer relationships as part of their strategies to gain loyal customers. According to Peppers and Rogers (2011), businesses must aim to establish long-term relationships with their clients to be flexible enough to meet their rising demands and earn their lifetime loyalty. Good customer relationships are an essential aspect of any business. Online sellers invest in providing good customer services to gain more customers. They earn customer loyalty by giving constant effort, providing excellent service, appreciating customer feedback whether it is positive or negative, and being kind and understanding.

Logistic Manager: *"Hindi ka pwedeng pumatol ng basta basta. Kasi they are still customers naman."*

Part Time Employee: *"Dapat mabait ka din sa mga customers"*

Another strategy is to provide secure packaging for the orders of the customers. Effective handling and management of the customers' package incorporates the quality and security of the items. Product packaging serves to keep the product within at its most fundamental level. Packaging must protect the goods during distribution between the factory and the retailer, as well as during shelf life. The product's packaging must be durable and reliable because consumers expect their products to perform as expected, and the best way to ensure that is through secure, reliable product packaging (White, 2019).

Business Owner: *"Naka plastic, we have ah, coming from our supplier or ah, courier technically that's JNT and LBC. Humihingi na kami non."*

Part Time Employee: *"Kailangang maayos yung mga pagkakabalot."*

The strategy of having multiple shipping options can significantly contribute to the business operation on how fast and reliable the products will reach the customers. Multiple couriers can have a significant impact on a company's delivery costs. The organization will be able to find the best price among many courier firms as a result of this. When a corporation has multiple courier providers on board, it may choose the most cost-effective route for each parcel (Khatri, 2020). Secondhand online sellers use multiple couriers in distributing the items. It is more convenient to have multiple couriers so that customers can also have different options on how they want their items to get to them. All shipping companies have different rates and having different couriers can help them lessen the cost of shipments because they are able to choose who provides lower shipping costs.

Business Owner: *"We have three ways to deliver. Number 1 is meet up. We shipped out with LBC, J&T and also we have Shopee check out."*

Logistic Manager: *"We choose this channels kasing they were steady na. Malaki na yung channel nila to pagdeliver* ng items. Not just for nearby areas they can also deliver from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao."

The greatest motivator of profit is price. To stay competitive in markets where volume and price pressure are increasing, the right pricing strategy is important. It provides you with the value you deserve for the products and services you provide, as well as the earnings you require to invest in change and growth (Meckes, 2018). People will choose based on pricing if there are no substantial differences between your product and rival products. Most people prefer to buy second-hand clothes because of their cheap price and they are also able to save up money when purchasing second-hand clothes.

Business Owner: *"Yung bulto kasi Hindi siya pare-pareho ng quality. Merong medyo may sira, May kailangang irepair and all. So dun ako nagbabase kung magkano ko siya ibebenta."*

Logistic Manager: *"Depends on the quality of the item"*

Employees are regarded to be a company's greatest asset. If handled effectively, it can provide an incomparable source of competitive advantage for the organization. Employees that are not treated correctly and efficiently might affect the business and its revenue (Siddiqui, 2014). Everything in a firm, from production to customer interactions, is affected by manpower. A firm will never be successful if it lacks adequate and supportive manpower. As for the online second-hand sellers, they must have staff that is well-versed with their responsibilities.

Business Owner: *"We have part time employees. They are independent workers na."*

Logistic Manager: *"Ngayon meron na kaming tatlong employee. Hindi naman sila full time pero, part time. sila na yung nag papack ng item, tapos Picture ng mga items, ako na lang yung nag iinvoice. Nilolog ko yung mga nabili sa excel file, invoices. And nagpepresyo dun sa pagbebenta. They know what are they doing na, kumbaga parang more on sasabihin ko nalang."*

V. DISCUSSION

The study was conducted virtually via Zoom and Google Meet. The participants were secondhand sellers and two of their staff from Laguna. They were selected using purposive sampling. This study utilized the case study method and the data that have been gathered were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The virtual interview with the participants revealed some problems encountered by secondhand online sellers concerning the shipping of their products and late payments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Shipments and payment transactions of their products were affected because of the restrictions being implemented in line with the COVID-19 health protocols that limited the movement of people. With that being said, these difficulties caused delays in product delivery from the suppliers, late order shipments for their customers, and late payments from their customers. Even before the pandemic, participants have also encountered problems related to bogus buyers. The course of action on how challenges were overcome by the participants related to second-hand online selling was also discussed during the virtual interview.

Legalizing one's online business can be an advantage as well. By doing so, this helps the seller to gain more customers. The participants revealed that success is often the result of hard

work and passion for your career. Now that people have turned to online shopping, it benefits online sellers to gain more customers. And by consistently providing affordable products, they were able to gain loyal customers. Also, they have been in the business industry for almost four years and they consider it as their main competitive advantage.

Participants used various strategies to maintain relationships with their customers. The study shows that utilizing different social media platforms in selling secondhand clothes helps the business increase its income. The seller uses Instagram and Facebook as their online platforms in selling their products. They emphasized the importance of engaging with their customers, the proper way to pack the items, and how they priced the item. As per the distribution of their products, they have shipping options. They also have responsible employees that help them run their online business.

Finally, in this new normal, selling used garments is helpful in several ways: it benefits the environment, it helps customers on a budget, and it serves as a source of income for many sellers. During this pandemic, the main problem that online secondhand clothes sellers experience is delays in product shipments to their clients and from their suppliers. Likewise, secondhand clothes sellers on the internet may apply effective strategies to make a profit and attract more customers. One of the most effective strategies is using social media platforms in selling during a pandemic. Also, when it comes to their secondhand business, the participants are dedicated and persistent, which explains their success. Both sellers and customers benefit from registering their online business with the DTI.

The researchers concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic has both advantages and disadvantages for online sellers of second-hand clothes. The disadvantage of this pandemic for second-hand online sellers is that it creates shipping delays, and late payments, which initially hurt their profit. Since people are being encouraged to stay at home, they have plenty of time to engage with their phones; thus, selling online becomes their primary advantage. By combining effective techniques with hard work and consistency on the part of secondhand online sellers, their online business has grown and become more profitable.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made. Secondhand online sellers should have multiple suppliers to avoid conflict in delays and must have multiple shipping couriers so that their customers have options on what shipping courier is convenient for them. Moreover, secondhand online sellers should price their items based on their

value, thus, consider enhancing their social media marketing such as their live selling and posting of the products. They should hire and maintain responsible employees that make an effort to maintain a healthy relationship with their customers. They should make sure that products are properly packed and they must work efficiently. Most importantly, to gain customers' trust and confidence, they must operate legally and ethically.

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