THE
GATEWAY

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM
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OLIVAREZ COLLEGE TAGAYTAY

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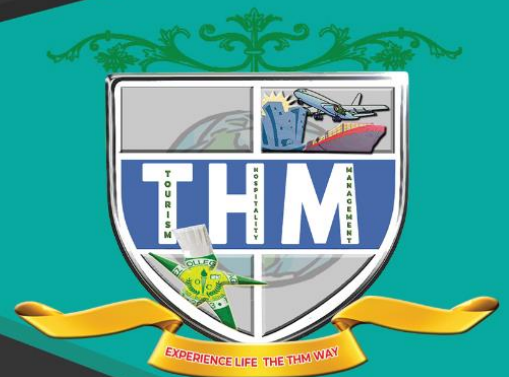
EDUCATING THE
MIND
BODY
AND
SOUL

FOREWORD

"A winner is a dreamer who never gives up." – Nelson Mandela

Our THM students (researchers) are already winners for not giving up. The pandemic caused them to have many struggles, but despite that, they continued dreaming. They are winners for being able to write their papers despite the many obstacles that came their way.

My deepest gratitude goes to the researchers, our dreamers, and, eventually, the winners. Your contribution to the THM Department will consistently be recognized. Being able to write research papers like the ones in this publication truly breaks barriers and is a living example of what never giving up means.

As I always write, this may inspire the following THM researchers. May you also contribute to the development of our students, curriculum, and the entire department.

Ma. Mildred A. Lago, LPT, MBA

Editor-in-Chief

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The Influence of Social Media Platforms the Home-based Food Business in Alfonso, Cavite

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I. ABSTRACT

A home-based food business is a process of making and selling food from home comfort. While this is a good option for many home-based food entrepreneurs, managers, and employees, there are restrictions on what can be done in many jurisdictions where food, hygiene, and health and safety laws regulate the production of food made for sale from the home environment. Since the day the alarming growth of COVID-19 led to lockdown and loss of employment, some thought that selling by using Social Media Platforms could help the home-based workers throughout this crisis following the health protocols given by IATF. Social media can easily manage to post pictures and sell items, particularly foods. This paper was written to determine the influence of social media platforms on home-based food businesses in Alfonso, Cavite, and to propose a comprehensive marketing plan to the home-based food entrepreneurs, managers, and employees. The eighty-four (84) respondents are from the selected sixteen (16) barangays of Alfonso, Cavite. The quantitative approach to determining the level of influence of social media on home-based food businesses is used and utilizes a correlational descriptive method of research. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents via an online Google form survey. After gathering the necessary information, the percentage of responses to each question is calculated. The study revealed that social media has a powerful influence on the home-based food business and a strong significant relationship between the influence of social media platforms on the performance of home-based food business.

Keywords: Influence, Home-based Food Business, Comprehensive Marketing Plan

II.   INTRODUCTION

The phenomenal rise of social media is impacting how the business environment works, especially for home food business owners. Enterprises can access resources that are not otherwise accessible. In addition, companies have increased their reputation, built strategic partnerships, and strengthened contact with customers and suppliers. Understanding how social media can function as a communication and marketing tool and grow business significantly is essential for business owners and marketers. The internet era and social media have evolved and developed into a platform readily available to anyone with an internet connection. It is rapidly expanding, with millions of people joining from worldwide (Medh, 2017). Today, social media is one of the best opportunities for a brand to engage with prospective customers. Social media is a great way to meet new people. It has an essential impact on a consumer's purchasing method.

Furthermore, the internet attracts many entrepreneurs to promote their business online because social media provides quick exposure to the products and services. More importantly, it provides a chance to the organization and allows it to have broad relationships with the target audience. Social media advertising focuses on social networking services, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and even TikTok as a marketing tool. Moreover, the goal is to create content that users will share on social media to help the business increase brand exposure and customer reach (Kumar, 2016).

On the other hand, the alarming growth of COVID-19 in the past year has prompted the government to develop rules and restrictions that lead to the closure of numerous business industries. Thus, hospitality businesses and the food service sectors have directly affected the implementation of Covid-19 Health Protocols by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF). One of the food service business sectors greatly affected was the home-based food entrepreneurs, which required them to adopt such initiatives to continue their operation despite the challenge of border restrictions and frequent community lockdown. The challenge arises within the concept of food marketability that is offered across social media convenience of the customer to buy food products and the delivery on the part of the service provider. Alfonso, Cavite is one of the Philippines that has been dramatically affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, especially in terms of commerce, tourism, transportation, education, government, and health sectors. Alfonso, Cavite is an upland town situated in the southwestern portion of the Cavite province. It is 74 kilometers from Manila via Tagaytay. The researchers, from their perspectives, have witnessed how small home-based businesses struggled due to the rules and regulations being implemented by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) from time to time as the alert levels vary.

This study aimed to explore the impacts of social media platforms on the home-based food business from the selected barangays in Alfonso Cavite, Philippines. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, educational background, years of operation, and social media platforms used. How do social media platforms influence home-based food business in terms of production, promotion, distribution/delivery and pricing. What is the performance of home-based food business in terms of the quality of products,

advertising techniques and customer satisfaction. Is there a significant relationship on the influence of social media platforms to the performance of home-based food businesses?
What comprehensive marketing plan can be proposed to the home-based businesses in the selected barangays of Alfonso, Cavite.

Given the advantage of the social media platforms and utilization in home-based food businesses, the purpose of this study is to determine the impact of social media platforms on the home-based food business of selected barangays in Alfonso, Cavite amidst the pandemic in terms of production, promotion, distribution/delivery and pricing as evaluated by the entrepreneurs, managers, and employees. Consequently, to propose a comprehensive marketing plan for these home-based food businesses.

III.   METHODS

The researchers used a correlational descriptive method of research. Correlational descriptive research design is a scientific method that entails observing and describing a subject's behavior without influencing it. Furthermore, it is often used by researchers to judge the habits and behaviors of customers or companies in the marketing and business industry. In the first part of the study, the researcher determined the demographic profile of the respondents. In the second part, the researcher identified the respondent's various types of social media platforms. Lastly, the third part determined the influence of social media platforms on the home-based food businesses and entrepreneurs and their influence on their performance using the Likert scale.

The study used a stratified sampling to divide the total of thirty-two (32) barangays in Alfonso, Cavite into sixteen (16) barangays using the lottery technique to remove any bias. The selected sixteen (16) barangays are Barangay Amuyong, Barangay Buck Estate, Barangay Upli, Barangay Kaysuyo, Barangay Lucsuhin, Barangay Bilog, Barangay Esperanza Ibaba, Barangay Kaytitinga I, Barangay Kaytitinga II, Luksuhin Ilaya, Barangay Mangas I, Barangay Sikat, Barangay Palumlum, Santa Teresa, Barangay Sulsugin and Barangay Pajo.

Purposive convenience sampling was employed to reach the target number of respondents to represent the study. A sampling in which researchers rely on specific criteria for judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the survey. This survey sampling method required the researchers to have prior knowledge about the purpose of their studies to correctly choose and approach eligible respondents for the survey- the influence of social media platforms on the home-based food business and entrepreneurs. The respondents were eighty-four
(84) home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and other employees from the selected sixteen (16) barangays of Alfonso, Cavite. The criteria for selection are limited to home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and other employees, both male and female, at least 18 years old and at least high school graduate who actively engage in online selling via social media, home-based food business which been operating since 2020 to present and who had a business page on any of the social media platforms with a minimum of one hundred (100) followers and likers.

The researchers used a self-made online Google form to collect the necessary data needed in the study. The Google form was examined by a panel of validators to ensure its validity, and a pilot test was conducted on fifteen (15) random respondents to ensure its reliability. The Cronbach alpha reliability estimate of the scale was adequate towards excellent at 0.956. The study's Google form and interview guide were both prepared based on the research problem statement and usage of other relevant theories, literature, and studies.

Below are the numerical gradations of the five-point Likert scale and its corresponding descriptions to indicate the level of influence of social media platforms on the home-based food business entrepreneur.

Scale	Range	Description	Verbal Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very High Influence
4	3.41-4.20	Agree	High Influence
3	2.61-3.40	Moderately Agree	Moderate Influence
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree	Low Influence
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly Disagree	No Influence

To determine the extent of the influence of social media platforms on the performance of home-based food businesses, the researchers utilized Pearson R at a .05 level of significance.

The researchers also sent a letter of permission to the Mayor's Office of the selected sixteen

(16) barangays of Alfonso, Cavite, to allow the researchers to conduct the study. When the permission was granted, the researchers arranged the study's schedule from December 2021- March 2022. Before conducting the survey, the researchers also requested permission from the respondents and provided a signed letter from the school authorities as legal proof during the online survey process, proving that the researchers were conducting an actual study. All the necessary documents were sent online through their emails or social media accounts.

IV.   RESULTS

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Gender

Table 1
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Gender

		Frequency	**Percent**
Gender	Male	40	47.6
	Female	44	52.4
	Total	84	100.0

Table 1 contains the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According To Gender. The table consists of two choices whether the respondent is Male and Female.

Table 1 shows the proportion of home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees of the total respondents by gender. Female home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees account for around 52.4% of all respondents, 44. This is likely since home-based work appeals to women because it allows them to be more flexible. Other reasons include childcare and other family obligations and the flexibility provided by home-based employment, which allows for a better work-life balance and overall quality of life, especially for women (Reuschke, 2019).

While this table also shows that the least of home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, employees, and the total workforce by gender is male. Male home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees account for only 47.6% of all respondents with a total frequency of 40. This is probably because male home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees' masculinity in cooking is still needed in the kitchen. However, Wallace (2019) emphasized that femininity and masculinity are essential factors in achieving food safety. This is because both the capacity to work in groups, which is characteristic of feminine cultures, and the concentration on getting the job done, which is characteristic of male cultures, are essential in food safety. The high proportion of female food handlers is consistent with findings from previous studies (Lee et al., 2017; Ncube et al., 2020).

Table 2
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Age

		Frequency	Percent
	18-20	8	9.5
	21-23	28	33.3
Age	24-26	18	21.4
	27-29	19	22.6
	30 years old above	11	13.1
	Total	84	100.0

Table 2 contains the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Age which had five choices whether the respondent belongs to 18-20, 21-23, 24-26, 27-29, and 30 years old or above.

Table 2 shows that the home-based food owners in the different age groups revealed significant differences between the three age groups, the ages from 21 to 29 years of age, where those ages 21-23 with 33.3% tend to create more opportunities in marketing their business.Millennials (ages between 26-24) and Gen Zers (ages between 10-25) have a fantastic opportunity at their fingertips. While our parents' generation had to put in the time and work their way up the corporate ladder, the iGeneration and Net Generation have a quicker (and more fun!) alternative. Since we grew up with technology, we have a competitive advantage in building brands that rely on digital marketing and technology (Parks,2017).

While those 18-20 years of age got the lowest percentage of 9.5% maybe because they are too young for the job and they are still focused on their study, but at some point, this is most likely since young people have more opportunities to reach out to potential clients. They can use word of mouth to propel their firm to greater heights if they start early enough. Mark Zuckerberg built Facebook in this manner. They can get rapid feedback from peers, likely to be their largest consumers if they start their entrepreneurial itch early. The majority of firms do not have direct contact with their customers. They may learn a great deal about who they are, what they want, and what products they require to better serve them (Ferreira, 2020).

In conclusion to this, Safari,2016 yielded a finding in his studies where it was concluded that the older the respondent terms of age, the more likely he or she is to follow the recommended and proper handling and preparation of food and probably with the knowledge of using social media as marketing.

Table 3
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Educational Background

		Frequency	Percent
	High School Graduate	25	29.8
Educational Background	Vocational	13	15.5
	College Graduate	46	54.8
	Total	84	100.0

Table 3 contains the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food businesses according to educational background. The table consists of Three choices whether the respondent belongs to High school, vocational, or college graduates.

Table 3 shows that college graduates are most likely to engage in the home base food business, with a total percentage of 54.8. Setting up a business and working for oneself (Allingham, 2022) is a terrific option to generate extra money at home during the covid-19 pandemic. They may also find that starting a home-based food business is less expensive than starting any other type of business. Most people start food enterprises at home since they already make their goods there (Taylor, 2022). This implies that when they wish to start their firm, they usually already have the majority of the necessary equipment and skills.

Vocational Graduates tend to have the slightest interest in the home-based food business with 15.5%. This could be because vocational graduates choose to work in the field to improve and practice their abilities. After all, that is what employers are looking for. Those interested in learning how to improve their employability skills should first look into vocational learning alternatives. Students can obtain practical experience in their chosen professional path through vocational education and training before graduating. Students who complete such demanding programs will have the credentials and skills necessary to begin working in their chosen field right away. These abilities can assist students in learning the tactics and strategies that are special to this field of employment, ensuring that they are equipped to succeed. Employers may be confident that candidates they acquire from a reputable school have the necessary expertise and training to start working right away (Peters, 2022).

Table 4
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Years of Operation

		Frequency	Percent
Years of Operation	1 year	46	54.8
	2 years and above	38	45.2
	Total	84	100.0

Table 4 contains the frequency and percentage distribution of home-based food businesses according to years of operation. The table consists of two choices whether the respondent belongs to one year and two years above.

Table 4 shows a percentage of 54.8; table 4 reveals that most home-based food business years of operation are only one year. This is possible since the pandemic began two years ago, and this is the most common way for most people to make money and feed their families. Although the coronavirus pandemic has drastically altered how businesses are conducted, food entrepreneurs' work remains crucial and demanding. Increased interest in purchasing from local farms and food companies has sparked due to more individuals cooking at home and strong demand at grocery shops. Restaurants, caterers, food manufacturers, and meal delivery services have been working overtime to keep customers and communities supplied during this trying period (Weiss, 2020).

Table 5
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Home-based Food Business According to Social Media Platforms Used

Social Media Platforms	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	83	98.8
Twitter	11	13.1
Instagram	43	51.2
Tiktok	36	42.9
Youtube	27	32.1

Table 5 contains the frequency and percentage distribution of home-based food businesses according to social media platforms used. The table consists of five choices of whether the respondent uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and youtube in their home-based food

online business.

Table 5 shows that Facebook accounts for 98.8% of all social media platforms. This is most likely because most of the world's population uses Facebook monthly. Every month, about 2.8 billion individuals access the platform. That is a lot of potential customers for the home-based food business.

Twitter is the least popular social media platform, with only 13.1 percent of respondents using it. This is most likely due to Twitter's primary purpose of providing informational and succinct tidbits. Twitter is used to share ideas, real-time information, and trending news (Forsey, 2021). While people use Twitter to interact with friends and family, they mostly use it to connect with the rest of the world and learn about what is going on.

Table 6
Influence of Social Media Platforms to the Production, Promotion, Distribution/Delivery and Pricing of Home-based food business in Alfonso, Cavite

I. INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN HOME-BASED FOOD BUSINESS	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
1. PRODUCTION		
- Since social media platforms can easily contact clients, hence, production is moving more quickly due to the high demands of orders.	4.61	VHI
- Through social media, you can easily transmit product information and the actual goods to a large number of individuals.	4.65	VHI
- Social Media allows the home-based food business owners to accept the new trends in the production of goods based on the insights and opinions shared/given by the customers.	4.71	VHI
- Social media serve as the platforms for the owners and the consumers to transact orders.	4.62	VHI
- Social Media allows for various inquiries about the products.	4.58	VHI
Mean Production	**4.63**	**VHI**
2. PROMOTION		
- In order to take part in social media, you don't need to be technically savvy. An ordinary computer user or mobile phone the owner will have no problems.	4.33	VHI
- Social media encourages interaction and engagement among the owners and the consumers with regards to the promotion of products.	4.60	VHI
- Social Media has the potential to reach a global audience of millions of people for promotional purposes.	4.69	VHI
- Video contents work well in social media which is one of the best ways to promote the products.	4.73	VHI
- Social Media allows the owners to promote their products		

through special offers, discounts, and prizes.	4.68	VHI
Mean Promotion	**4.60**	**VHI**

3. DISTRIBUTION/DELIVERY

- Meet up and delivery are faster because you can communicate personally or online with the target customers.	4.63	VHI
- Social Media applications help a lot in the scheduling of product distribution and delivery.	4.63	VHI
- The use of social media platforms allows you to reach a much wider group of customers than using traditional methods of distribution and delivery.	4.64	VHI
- You can use email marketing or social media to offer special online ordering.	4.58	VHI
- Transactions are completed more quickly because clear delivery locations are specified.	4.58	VHI
Mean Distribution	**4.61**	**VHI**

4. PRICING

- The cost of goods and services is cheaper and affordable since no additional taxes or fees are required to be paid.	4.33	VHI
- Price skimming is evident due to comparison of prices of goods in various social media platforms.	4.46	VHI
- Discounts and promos for bundled or bulk orders can be applied using several social media platforms.	4.51	VHI
- Customers sometimes compare prices with those of rival who use social media site as well.	4.50	VHI
- The business owners can easily change the price of the products as the need arises upon informing the target customers.	4.50	VHI
Mean Pricing	**4.46**	**VHI**

OVERALL Influence	**4.58**	**VHI**

Legend:

       4.21 – 5.00 = Very high influence
       3.41 – 4.20 = High influence
       2.61 – 3.40 = Moderate influence
       1.81 – 2.60 = Low Influence
       1.00 – 1.80 = Very Low influence

Table 6 contains the mean score and its corresponding verbal interpretation of the influence of social media platforms on the production, promotion, distribution/delivery, and pricing of home-based food businesses in Alfonso Cavite. Each category consists of five questions which the respondent rated on a 1- 5 scale.

Table 6 shows that the influence of social media platforms in the home-based food business when it comes to production is that Social Media allows the home-based food business owners to accept the new trends in the production of goods based on the insights and opinions shared/given by the customers with a mean percentage of 4.71 and with an interpretation of powerful influence. This is likely since social media are online communities that allow people to interact with people and share and produce information. For businesses of all sizes, social media offers fantastic marketing options.

While in promotion, there is a powerful influence in video content that works well on social media, which is one of the best ways to promote the products, with a mean percentage of 4.73. This is probably because most people today spend a lot of time watching videos on social media (Chen, 2021). The average person will spend 100 minutes a day in 2021 watching videos. To put that in perspective, that is 25 whole days. Marketers need to take note of this if they want to plan on developing their video marketing strategy on social media. On the other hand, there is also a powerful influence in delivery or distribution when it comes to the use of social media platforms that allows reaching a much wider group of customers than using traditional methods of distribution and delivery, with a mean score of 4.64. This is most likely since social media may greatly assist business owners in making their businesses visible to their target customers. (Digital Marketing Institute, 2021) There is no denying that social media is an essential marketing tool for any company that wants to stay current and visible. Eighty-eight percent of marketers claim that social media has expanded awareness, with 77 percent claiming that it has aided in growing traffic. It is missing out on a significant opportunity if it does not leverage social media to its full potential.

Lastly, when it comes to pricing, there is also a very significant influence when it comes to discounts and promos for bundled or bulk orders can be applied using several social media platforms with a mean score of 4.51. This is probably because customers genuinely like shopping discounts. Consumers enjoy being rewarded for their purchases. As a result, when customers offer exclusive discounts or offers, they will feel both excited and valued. Promo codes, which consumers may enter in their shopping carts or at the payment, are a terrific way to extend existing customers' buying experience (Estay, 2022).

Table 7

Performance of Home-based food business to the Quality of Products, Advertising Techniques and Customers' Satisfaction

II. PERFORMANCE OF HOME-BASED FOOD BUSINESS	Mean Score	Verbal Interpretation
1. THE QUALITY OF PRODUCTS		
- Practices the principle of quality over quantity	4.65	VHP
- Believes that customer engagement is social engagement	4.58	VHP
- Improves the quality of products	4.70	VHP
- Monitors the progress of the business for future innovations and development	4.67	VHP
- Assures the quality of products at all times.	4.68	VHP
Mean quality	**4.65**	**VHP**
2. ADVERTISING TECHNIQUES		
- Applies bolder and clearer advertisement and promotion of the products.	4.74	VHP
- Assures that the promotion of products stands out on whatever social media platforms are used.	4.68	VHP
- Makes the promotion of products relatable to the customers/consumers.	4.75	VHP
- Understands the needs and natures of the consumers in making promotional activities.	4.73	VHP
- Consider the nature, wants, needs, and insights of the customers.	4.75	VHP
Mean Advertising	**4.72**	**VHP**
3. CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION		
- Meets or even surpasses customers' satisfaction.	4.73	VHP
- Acknowledge customers' feedback regarding the products.	4.69	VHP
- Consider the needs of the customers and the changes in their expectations.	4.67	VHP
- Provides effective response regarding the feedback and opinions of the consumers with regards to the quality of the products.	4.70	VHP
- Considers customer satisfaction as an indicator of their success in business ownership.	4.76	VHP
Mean Customers satisfaction	**4.70**	**VHP**

OVERALL Performance   **4.69**   **VHP**

LEGEND:
4.21 – 5.00 = Very High Performance
3.41 – 4.20 = High Performance
2.61 – 3.40 = Moderate Performance
1.81 – 2.60 = Low Performance
1.00 – 1.80 = Very Low Performance

Table 7 contains the mean score and its corresponding verbal interpretation of the performance of home-based food businesses to the quality of products, advertising technique, and customer satisfaction. Each category consists of five questions which the respondent rated on a 1-5 scale.

Table 7 shows that when it comes to the performance of home-based food enterprises in terms of product quality, table 7 revealed a powerful influence that increases product quality, with a mean score of 4.70. This is likely since home-based food business entrepreneurs have more time to research and develop their products. Because the food industry is competitive, a person must do homework before beginning at-home food business. Attend business networking events organized by Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, and local Chambers of Commerce. This is a fantastic opportunity to pick the brains of local food industry professionals and learn what works and what does not (Flanagan, 2019).

With a mean score of 4.75, both making product promotion applicable to customers/consumers and addressing the nature, wants, requirements, and insights of customers had a powerful influence on advertising strategies. This is most likely due to the customer's always correct adage. The well-known aphorism among all those associated with restaurants is "the customer is always right." Any client issue or concern should be addressed as soon as possible. On the other hand, customers prefer to air their grievances on social media platforms in today's digital age. However, whenever a client makes a complaint on the internet, management should respond quickly and respond with decency and courtesy (Posist, 2018).

There is a tremendous influence in meeting or even surpassing customers' satisfaction when it comes to customer satisfaction. This is probably because social media greatly aids their customer service efforts. Social media provides a method to give excellent customer service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Social networking can be a valuable tool for providing customer care. Show other consumers how dedicated they are to keeping them satisfied if they handle client complaints and problems on social media. There are various ways to use social media for customer service, including strategically using hashtags and creating a separate handle for customer service (Caramela, 2021).

Table 8

The Relationship on the Influence of Social Media Platforms to the Performance of Home-based food business

		Performance of Home-based food business	Decision
IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN HOME-BASED FOOD BUSINESS	Pearson Correlation	.834**	Strong Positive Relationship
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	Reject Null
	N	84	

Legend: P-value < 0.05 Reject Null Hypothesis

Table 8 contains the significant relationship between the influence of social media platforms on the performance of home-based food businesses.

The data shows a strong positive relationship between the influence of social media platforms in the home-based food business and the performance of the home-based food business in Alfonso, Cavite (r = .834, P-value = .000) with the P-value < 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and with the r = .834 indicates a strong positive relationship. This implies that as the influence of social media platforms on home-based food businesses increases, the performance of home-based food businesses in Alfonso, Cavite also increases and vice versa. According to Marsha 2019, when the business has a positive outcome in utilizing various types of social media to sell a home-based food product and advertising, the performance of the business will also remain high. Thus, a positive outcome will maintain its good reputation across the internet world and to the customers. Good performance is vital for every business since it is a basis for whether the home-based food business gains revenue. Also, customers are always looking out for sellers with good performance and serve as their basis for purchasing products (Peterson, 2018). It demonstrates the significance of social media in business. Businesses will almost certainly use popular social media platforms to stay competitive (Gohan,2018). Social media has drastically altered the corporate landscape. It is one of the most significant components of digital marketing, as it offers impressive benefits and allows contact with millions of people worldwide (Jameburgh, 2019).

V.   DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine the impact of social media platforms on the home-based food business of selected barangays in Alfonso, Cavite, as evaluated by the entrepreneurs, managers, and employees towards the proposal of a comprehensive marketing plan.

The proportion of home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees by gender is based on the findings. Female home-based food business owners account for around 52.4% of all respondents, with a total frequency of 44. It shows that most home-based food business owners and other respondents and the total workforce by gender are males. Male home-based food business owners account for only 47.6% of all respondents, with a total frequency of 40. In terms of age, it shows that the home-based food owners in the different age groups revealed that significant differences exist between the three age groups, which are the ages from 21 to 29 years of age, where those ages 21-23 with 33.3% tend to create more opportunity in marketing their business. In terms of educational background, it shows that college graduates are most likely to engage in the home base food business with a total percentage of 54.8. Vocational Graduates tend to have the slightest interest in the home-based food business, with 15.5%. In terms of years of operation, with a percentage of 54.8, the table reveals that most home-based food business years of operation are only one year. In terms of social media platforms used, Facebook accounts for 98.8% of all social media platforms used today. Twitter is the least popular social media platform, with only 13.1 percent of respondents using it.

The influence of social media platforms in the home-based food business when it comes to production is that Social Media allows the home-based food business owners to accept the new trends in the production of goods based on the insights and opinions shared/given by the customers with a mean percentage of 4.71 and with an interpretation of powerful influence. While in promotion, there is a significant influence in video content that works well on social media, which is one of the best ways to promote the products, with a mean percentage of 4.73. On the other hand, there is also a very significant influence on delivery or distribution when it comes to using social media platforms to reach a much wider group of customers than traditional distribution and delivery methods, with a mean score of 4.64. Lastly, when it comes to pricing, there is also a powerful influence when it comes to discounts and promos for bundled or bulk orders can be applied using several social media platforms with a mean score of 4.51.

Regarding the performance of home-based food enterprises in terms of product quality, the table reveals a powerful influence that increases product quality, with a mean score of 4.70. With a mean score of 4.75, both making product promotion applicable to customers/consumers and addressing the nature, wants, requirements, and insights of customers had a decisive influence on advertising strategies. There is a powerful influence in meeting or even surpassing customers' satisfaction when it comes to customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, it was concluded that as social media platforms' impact grows, so does the home-based food business, implying that they have a significant relationship. According to the findings, the most popular social network among home-based food businesses is Facebook. Similarly, Facebook marketing provides them with an easy and low-cost way to reach thousands

of people. Moreover, the data reveal that home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees believe that firms may gain many benefits from using social media, which is why it has been the standard corporate practice to use them. As a result, social media marketing is no longer considered experimental but rather an integral part of the commercial world. The study's findings suggest that home-based food business entrepreneurs, managers, and employees must be cautious of the post content to avoid posting content that could harm their business's or seller's image or reputation. Everything that has been posted is visible to the virtual internet world. It has the potential to do two things: help or harm their business. Keep the risk in mind at all times. Furthermore, they should be wary of potential competitors because social media is an open and transparent platform that others can easily penetrate.

Moreover, this study raises concerns about additional merit investigation for future researchers. More study is needed to understand why digital technology's 'emancipatory' impacts on advantaged socioeconomic groups' usage of their home as a business location are lower than predicted. The study's findings might advise new entrepreneurs that starting an internet home-based business, along with innovative thinking, can help minimize the various challenges that immigrant entrepreneurs have faced in the past. The study findings, which include entrepreneurial marketing experiences and information, might be utilized to demonstrate that starting an internet home-based business can be another active avenue for entrepreneurs to develop a sustainable firm. The study contributes to our understanding of the different informants' perspectives on the impact of social media platforms on the home-based food business of Alfonso, Cavite in the following seven key result areas: production, promotion, distribution/delivery pricing, product quality, advertising technique, and customer satisfaction.

The study's findings provided a clearer picture of the impact of social media platforms on home-based food businesses, which served as the foundation for the proposal of a comprehensive marketing plan to be more competitive with other competitors. According to Mcguire, 2021, a marketing plan is a report that outlines a company's marketing strategy for the coming year, quarter, or month.At this point, the limitations of the study must be clarified. First, the study's findings are based solely on the responses of 84 respondents from 16 barangays who completed a google form questionnaire. Thus, using other data sources, a more comprehensive study can be conducted within the entire barangay of Alfonso and Cavite during the post-pandemic period. Second, as additional lenses, external informants such as customers and community members can be included.

Based on the study's findings, the following comprehensive marketing plan will be proposed for the home-based food business in Alfonso, Cavite.

This comprehensive marketing plan will help the home-based food business in Alfonso Cavite utilize social media platforms to market its products for the entire year and upcoming.

Table 9
Marketing Plan to the Home-based Food Business in Alfonso Cavite

Areas	Strategy	Recommendation
Production	Responsiveness	24 hours checking of inbox about the customers' inquiry
	Modification	Modify products based on the customers feedback
Promotion	Investing high speed gadgets	Investing budget friendly high speed gadgets to do multitasking and to accommodate multiple customers
	Content Marketing	Using advanced photo and video editing tools to have the best output. Recommended apps are filmora, kinemaster .
Distribution/ Delivery	Location Tracking	To have easy delivery, location tracker apps are available on play store such as WAZE.
	Paid Advertisement	Paying advertisements in small amounts to stand out from other competitors instead of organic advertisement.
Pricing	Bulk order technique	Order raw ingredients on a bulk basis to save and make the price cheaper.
	Promo Giveaways	Customers that purchase bulk orders will be given a discount .
The Quality of Products	What you see , what you get strategy	Produce product the same what is being posted on social media platforms to avoid any confusion of the customers
Advertising Technique	Affiliate Program	Collab with social media influencers and they can get a percentage of every purchase. This is way to be stand out from other competitors
	Holiday promo and theme	Promos on every holiday will be encourage and theme must be relatable
Customers Satisfaction	Customers Feedback Wall	Set a page on any social media platforms where customers can post and share their thoughts and experiences before and after purchasing. This will also serve as the basis to other potential customers.

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Level of Mental Well-Being and Coping Strategies of College Students Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic: Basis for Proposed Mental Health Awareness Program

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I. ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on collegiate mental well=being and highlights the critical need for effective interventions to better support college students' health and well-being throughout this crisis. This paper aimed to assess the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of 800 students from the Olivarez College Tagaytay throughout the pandemic. A Quantitative Descriptive Method was utilized to examine the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of college undergraduates during the pandemic. It involved using the Descriptive Research method to process the phenomena in view of recording, description, data construction, analysis, interpretation, and presentation. The researcher used a set of survey questionnaires to gather pertinent data. The questionnaires were disseminated via an online Google form survey sent to the respondents. After gathering all the data, the frequencies of responses to each question were tallied, and a percentage was obtained. Based on the findings, all participants self-identified with a high level of mental well-being and a moderate level of coping strategies in terms of cognitive strategy, behavioral strategy, and affection strategy. The result revealed a significant linear relationship identified with the level of mental well-being and level of coping strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant concerns for the mental health of college students. The output of this study is the proposed mental health awareness program to raise awareness about the mental health continuum of the students.

Keywords: *Covid 19, mental well-being, coping strategies, cognitive strategy, behavioral strategy, affection strategy, mental health awareness program*

II.   INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 Pandemic is one of the educational crises that everyone must focus on. An unexpected execution of internet learning due to Covid-19 and lockdown by numerous colleges has demonstrated to bring about a variety of issues in the advanced education industry. Even though there have been notable triumphs, it has been perceived that the transition from class-based to internet learning has not been smooth for most colleges and universities. The writing demonstrates that among the academics' and understudies' difficulties in changing; availability, organization, and web issues; unconducive physical space and climate; psychological wellness issues; a lack of necessities; and a lack of educating and learning assets are significant difficulties related with the abrupt change to internet learning (Mseleku, 2020).

Covid-19 is frequently linked to mental health issues. Many young adults have experienced increased anxiety, depression, sleep disruptions, and suicidal ideation throughout the pandemic. They have also experienced several pandemic-related consequences, such as university closures, transitioning to remote work, and income or employment loss, which may contribute to poor mental health (Panchal et al., 2021).

Mental Health is essential for everyone, especially the students taking their degrees during this pandemic that only e-learning is the only choice to finish their studies. It has changed the landscape of everything, including Mental Health. It has been so long since the pandemic started, and until now, everyone is trying to fight it and live with it. The longer it gets, the more it affects the students' mental health. To ensure constant mental well-being, all of the students used a variety of coping mechanisms. Based on Lazarus & Folkman (1984), evaluating an encounter, and its different elements, concerning their significance for well-being is referred to as cognitive strategy. Coping is the strategy of using cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies to address (master, reduce, or tolerate) a dysfunctional person-environment interaction.

One of the critical aspects of coping strategies during COVID-19 in China is mental health. Among the general population in China, immediate action was taken by the local and central authorities. This is known as an immediate psychological response and can help people cope with the pandemic situation. However, there is little research into socio-psychological effects and the relevant coping strategies. So far, personal reactions have been examined in the context of community action taken to tackle the Wuhan COVID-19 outbreak. Coping strategies are hard to implement anywhere; however, in China, the people supported and responded well to measures to cope with the pandemic during COVID-19. If a person's mental health can be supported, coping strategies for fighting against COVID19 will be comparatively flexible as the COVID-19 outbreak is treated as a psychological problem. In order to implement coping strategies, psychiatrists have played an essential role in society. The role of telehealth services has been revealed as an ideal coping strategy recently. The coping strategies are ongoing and based on industry and situation; as a result, the socio-psychological impact of the coping strategies on students studying in China should be investigated (Main et al., 2011).

An unresolved mental health issue is if this will continue to degrade at some point in time. The persistent increase in cases significantly affects individuals psychologically (Montano & Acebes, 2020). It is critically essential to consider possible health-related behavioral and

consequential changes in the students' psychological state of mind amid the pandemic to recommend future preparations and approaches (Savage et al., 2020). To further analyze and complete this research, the respondents were undergraduate students at Olivarez College Tagaytay in the school year 2021-2022 during the 2nd semester period. This study will contribute necessary information to understand students about the significance of psychological health. The researchers aim to know the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of the college students of Olivarez College Tagaytay during the pandemic.

This study aims to determine the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay amidst the pandemic. Significantly, this study sought to answer the following:

What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Gender, Course, and Year Level? What is the level of mental well-being of the respondents? What are the coping strategies of the respondents, in terms of Cognitive coping strategies, Behavioral coping strategies, and Affection coping strategies? Is there a significant difference in the level of mental well-being and coping strategies when grouped to their profile? Is there a significant relationship between the level of mental well-being and coping strategies?.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been accompanied by tight isolation restrictions, which have confined pupils to their homes; a disrupted social life and learning in solitude have made it hard for students. Students miss out on group classroom activities, which are the heart of group learning. All of this has resulted in a stressful situation. Low physical activity and spending all of one's time at home have a detrimental influence, which everyone is attempting to overcome by engaging in various other activities. Students have been away from physical campuses for almost a year, yet they are still completing their courses and programs online. The multiple obstacles they face due to e-learning, along with the surrounding uncertainty, have increased their stress levels. Continued stress will impact not just their academic performance but also their mental and physical health, as stress has been identified as one of the leading causes of various physical and mental problems. While e-learning appears to be becoming the new normal, students deserve adequate attention, assistance, and support from their families and institutions.

College can be a very stressful period in most students' lives; however, some students cope with stress better than others. Many students who can handle stress well have effective stress coping skills. When college students face stressful life events, they typically use many kinds of coping strategies to deal with them. They used various coping strategies simultaneously, and strategies are also likely to change over time, depending on the effectiveness of the applied strategy. This study aims to explore the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of the college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic. Also, to identify the demographic profile of college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay in terms of age, gender, and course level. Moreover, to analyze the coping strategies for the students in terms of Cognitive coping strategies, Behavioral coping strategies, and Affection coping strategies. Lastly, to determine how college students deal with their level of mental health well-being.

Thus, this study is critical because it may be helpful to students, parents, educational practitioners, and researchers, particularly in the area of mental health. Experts will be able to derive more comprehensive information and then be used to broaden the scope of the study.
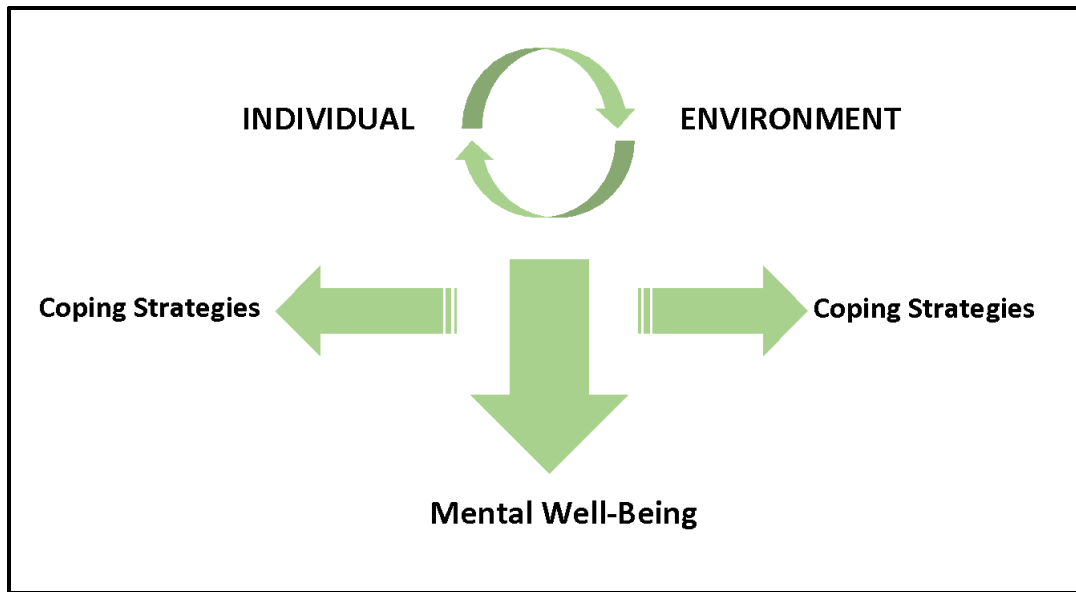
III.   METHODS

Figure 1. Psychological Stress Model

This study was anchored on the theoretical framework of the Psychological stress model developed by Lazarus & Folkman (1984); the environment or situation brought by the Covid 1-9 Pandemic affects the level of mental well-being of the students. It was perceived as challenging or exceeding existing resources and consequently endangering their state of mental well-being. Through coping strategies, the individual resorts to different resources. Moreover, to discover the level of coping strategies of the students in dealing with their problems.

Since the study's main concern was to determine the level of mental well-being and coping strategies of college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay, a Quantitative- Descriptive research design was used. The researchers surveyed all the college students and collected quantitative data on two variables to determine if there was a significant statistical correlation between them.

Respondents of the study were all the college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay. The latter were enrolled in the school year 2021-2022, during the 2nd semester period, except the researchers with a total of 1154 students through total population sampling. Whereas it was a sampling technique in which a researcher relies on their judgment when choosing population members to participate in the study. Due to the pandemic and poor connection of other respondents, the researcher only reached 800 students in random courses, 69% of all the college students in Olivarez College Tagaytay.

To obtain the necessary data for the study, the researcher utilized two (2) questionnaires and modified them to complement the study's context. The researcher emailed the authors, requesting permission to use this instrument in the paper. One of them was adapted from the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) and a modified version of the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE). The instruments are indicated in the following discussion. The researcher proposed the topic and sought first the approval of the department head of Tourism and Management before proceeding to data collection. After the

approval, the researcher utilized social networking sites to contact and administer data gathering by sending personal messages to all the respondents. The researcher sent an informed consent through email to the different department heads and informed them about the purpose of the study, its importance, and all the other information they must provide. Additionally, the researcher assured that what they input will remain confidential in all ways possible.

This study utilized social networking sites in the process of respondents' recruitment. As soon as the instrument was developed and validated, the online survey questionnaires were employed on the respondents. Questionnaires that professionals validated were then provided and distributed by the researchers and were collected after the respondents were duly answered. The researchers will interpret the data gathered, and respondents will be informed after response analysis to confirm if the interpretations are accurate.After obtaining the informed consent, the link was sent to the representatives of every course and will be appropriately disseminated in their respective fields. Finally, the link led the respondents externally to the survey completion. The individuals who have shown an increased level of mental health well-being were given a follow-up survey or questions about the impact of the pandemic on their psychological thought and were guided to describe their coping strategies.

The statistical treatment used to get the weighted mean of the respondents' demographic profile was through ANOVA Test. At the same time, the Tukey Hoc Test was used in conjunction with an ANOVA to find means significantly different from the level of mental well-being and coping strategies according to respondents' demographic profiles. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient measured if there was a linear relationship between two quantitative variables, which is the level of mental well-being and coping strategies.

The instrument was validated through a survey of students in each undergraduate program, namely; Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA), Bachelor of Science in Accountancy Information System (BSAIS), Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSCRIM), Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), and Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management (BSTHM).

This study used two (2) questionnaires. These are the following:

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) is a fourteen (14) item questionnaire that will identify and measure the level of mental well-being focusing entirely on positive aspects of mental health of the college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay. This questionnaire was granted permission by the author. Respondents were asked to indicate their responses on five (5) point frequency scales ranging from "none of the time" to "all the time." Thus, items rated "none of the time" were scored 1, "rarely" 2, "some of the time" 3, "often" 4, and "all the time" 5.

The indicators rated with a mean score of 1.00-1.80 were identified with a very low-level mental well-being in students, implying that those with self-awareness or insights are limited. Their social and emotional dysfunction cannot function and impairs their cognitive functioning.

1.81 – 2.60 were identified with low-level mental well-being in students, which implies that those who have no desire to study, socialize, or pursue their hobbies suffer from impaired problem solving, ability to focus, and memory disruption. 2.61-3.40 were identified with a moderate level of mental well-being in students, which implies that those who impact social and emotional functioning; have low motivation and energy, and their resilience to daily stressors is decreasing; they are focusing on problem-solving and memory change. While findings rated with a mean score of 3.41-4.20 were identified with high-level mental well-being in students, it implies those who have vital social and emotional functioning, a strong focus on memory and problem solving, and are self-aware. They are the ones who are ready and able to face challenges. Lastly, the findings rated with a mean score of 4.21-5.00 were identified with a very high-level mental well-being in students, which implies that those who excel in emotional and social functioning thrive on difficulties. self-aware and able to reflect, capable of leading others to reach excellent outcomes focused on problem solving and memory

Level of Coping Strategies (BRIEF COPE)

A modified version of the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE) is a 28-item self-report questionnaire designed to measure effective and ineffective ways to cope with a stressful life event and identify the level of coping strategies of the college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay. This test underwent the reliability test to secure the item's internal consistency. Respondents indicated their responses on four (4) point scales ranging from "I have not been doing this at all" to "I have been doing this a lot." Thus, items rated "I have not been doing this at all" were scored 1, "a little amount" 2, a medium amount" 3, and "I have been doing this a lot" 4,

The indicators with a mean score of 1.00-1.80 were identified as very low-level coping strategies in students. This implies that they are those who are careless with their mistakes, suffer from disabling distress and loss of function, as well as an inability to focus, and relying on substances, food, or other numbing activities to cope, and cannot move forward to the nature of the stressful situation. 1.81-2.60 were identified with low-level coping strategies in students. This implied that they experienced a low capability in adjusting to changes in life or the nature of the stressful situation. 2.61-3.40 were identified with moderate level coping strategies in students, which implies that they are kept within reasonable limits to not, so they have difficulty adjusting to changes. They are easily overwhelmed or irritated, activities and relationships they used to enjoy are less exciting or stressful, and their performance is inconsistent. While the findings rated with a mean score of 3.41-4.20 were identified with high-level coping strategies in students. This implies that they are the average who are calm and steady, with minor mood fluctuations, can take feedback and adjust to changes and plans, communicate effectively, and perform consistently. Lastly, the findings rated with a means score of 4.21-5.00 were identified with a very high level of coping strategies in students. This implies that they are the most capable of the behaviors, thoughts, and emotions that they use to adjust to the changes that occur in their life, depending on the nature of the stressful situation and the person who is employing them.

IV. RESULTS

All the data were exported to ANOVA for statistical analysis. Table 1 shows the distribution of the demographic variables where the researchers utilized the descriptive statistics on age, gender, course, and year level to calculate each combined sample. The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to provide a unique estimate of the reliability of each instrument.

Problem number 1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents, in terms of: Age, Gender, Courses & Year Level?

Table 1

Distribution of the demographic's profile among the samples

Demographic Categories	Frequency	Percent
Age		
17-20	431	53.9
21-25	346	43.3
26-30	23	2.9
Gender		
Female	484	60.5
Male	316	39.5
Course		
BS Tourism Management	74	9.3
BS Hospitality Management	84	10.5
BS Business Management	68	8.5
BS Accountancy	90	11.3
BS Accounting Information System	8	1.0
BS Elementary Education	44	5.5
BS Information Technology	40	5.0
BS Nursing	151	18.9
BS Criminology	241	30.1
Year Level		
First Year	314	39.3
Second Year	170	21.3
Third Year	194	24.3
Fourth Year	122	15.3
Total	**800**	**100.0**

The age distribution of the respondents is shown in the table. Table 1 shows that the respondents between the ages of 17 and 20 garnered 53.9 %, with a frequency of 431. Respondents

aged 21 to 25 garnered 43.3 %, with a frequency of 346. Respondents aged 26-30 account for around 2.9 % of the total, with a frequency of 23. The study sample included a higher proportion of younger age groups among the 800 respondents. It has been observed that different age groups face different mental challenges in dealing with the pandemic. How the unpredictable effects of COVID-19 in China teach us how to deal calmly with pandemic situations. (Nurunnabi et al. 2020).

In terms of gender, the table shows the gender distribution of all college students enrolled at OCT during the second (2nd) semester of the school year 2021-2022. Female college students were the most significant respondents in this study. Female college students made up the majority of respondents in this study, with the frequency of 484 and 60.5 of the percentage. The minority of respondents were male college students, with a total frequency of 316, approximately 39.5% of all respondents. According to Manandhar et al. (2018), gender is a significant social factor in health, and gender-based analysis is required to enhance women's and men's health and health care.

According to research undertaken in several nations, several health indicators have revealed inequalities between men and women. The table shows the course distribution of the respondents. The majority of the respondents are from BS Criminology with a frequency of 241 or 30.1% of the total respondents. In comparison, the minority of the respondents are from the newest course at Olivarez College Tagaytay, BS Accounting Information System, with 8 or 1.0% of the total respondents. This implies that most of our respondents who answered our surveys are the most significant enrolled students during the second (2nd) semester of 2021-2022.

People's life goals and professional aspirations have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This virus has caused enormous demographic and economic damage to lead states. As a result, we can discern people's priorities.

The table shows the year level distribution of the respondents; out of 800, the majority of our respondents are First Year students in different courses with the frequency of 314 or 39.3% of the total respondents. The minority of our respondents are Fourth Year students with a frequency of 122 or 15% of the total respondents. It was expected that higher levels of education would be associated with better psychological well-being. The indirect effect of a leisure attitude on the relationship between education and mental health was also tested. (Belo et al. 2020).

Problem number 2. What is the level of mental well-being of the respondents?
  Table 2.
  The Level of Mental Well-being of the respondents

	College Students	
	Mean Score	**V.I.**
Level of Mental Well-Being	**3.54**	**High Level of Mental Well-Being**

The table shows that the level of mental well-being of the respondents exhibits a high level of mental well-being. This implies that these have vital social and emotional functioning, a strong focus on memory and problem solving, and self-awareness. They are the ones who are ready and

able to face challenges. Positive mental health, well-being, and flourishing refer to high levels of positive functioning in the mental health domain (inclusive of social health). However, well-being encompasses physical, mental, and social domains in its broadest sense (National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health, 2018). When they are mentally healthy, they enjoy our life and environment and its people. They can be creative, learn, try new things, and take risks. They can better cope with difficult times in our personal and professional lives.

Problem 3. What is the level of coping strategies of the respondents in terms of: Cognitive, Behavioral and Affection?

Table 3
The Level of Coping Strategies of the respondents

Variables	Rating	Mean Score	V.i
Cognitive Coping Strategies	1-4	3.08	Moderate Level of Cognitive Coping Strategy
Behavioral Coping Strategies	1-4	2.98	Moderate Level of Behavioral Coping Strategy
Affection Coping Strategies	1-4	2.91	Moderate Level of Affection Coping Strategy
Mean Coping Strategies		**2.99**	**Moderate Level of Coping Strategies**

The table shows that cognitive coping strategies got the highest mean score, which is moderate. Cognitive coping strategies are characterized by active coping, use of informational support, planning, and positive reframing. It implies that they are using coping skills to change the stressful situation. It indicates mental toughness, tenacity, and a practical problem-solving attitude, anticipating favorable outcomes. While the Affection Coping Strategies got the lowest means score exhibits the moderate level. It is characterized by the facets of venting, use of emotional support, humor, acceptance, and religion.

It implies coping strategies to regulate emotions brought on by the stressful experience. High or low scores are not always linked to psychological well-being, but they can help shape a more comprehensive picture of the respondent's coping strategies. In light of this finding, the researcher will focus more on developing a program that includes strengthening the affection coping strategies, as respondents reported low use of emotional support from family, relatives, friends, or loved ones.

Coping skills also help increase reliance, which refers to how quickly a person can recover from a difficult situation or how quickly and efficiently they bounce back after a difficult life situation, leading to a moderate level of coping strategies of the respondents. This may imply that they have difficulty adjusting to changes, are easily overwhelmed or irritated, activities and relationships they used to enjoy are less exciting or even stressful, and their performance is inconsistent (Dienere, 2012).

Problem number 4. Is there a significant difference in the level of mental well-being and coping strategies when grouped to their gender?

Table 4
Levene's Test for Equality of Variance

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Mental Well-Being	Equal variances assumed	.687	.407	-5.324	798	.000	Reject Null
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.303	664.518	.000	
Coping Strategies	Equal variances assumed	6.538	.011	-.280	798	.780	
	Equal variances not assumed			-.272	607.196	.786	Accept Null

The table shows no significant difference in the level of coping strategies when grouped according to the respondents' gender. Determining that gender is a crucial factor, it does impact mental well-being. Women are more likely to suffer from physical and mental illnesses due to the gender wage gap and workplace inequity.

There is no substantial difference in coping strategies, implying that gender is not a basis for coping with our daily challenges. According to Dyson & Renk (2006), Martínez-Hernáez et al. (2016, and Matud (2004), male and female participants had comparable degrees of coping mechanisms, but there were no significant differences between the two. The absence of substantial gender differences might be attributed to gender differences reducing with time or that all of the participants were college students, who may be more liberal in their perceptions of proper behaviors for men and women.

Problem number 4.1: Is there a significant difference in the level of mental well-being and coping strategies when grouped according to the respondents Age?

Table 5
Difference in the Level of Mental Well-Being and Coping Strategies according to Age

		Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.	Decision
Level of Mental Well Being	Between Groups	10.051	2	11.072	.000	Reject Null
	Within Groups	361.732	797			
	Total	371.783	799			
Level of Coping Strategies	Between Groups	1.559	2	3.386	.034	Reject Null
	Within Groups	183.479	797			
	Total	185.038	799			

The data shows a significant difference when it comes to age. There is no excuse for having the unstable mental well-being of one person. It is not based on age; everyone is affected by this, from younger to an older age. Coping strategies also have a significant difference. They have different coping techniques depending on their age (younger, middle, and older), but it also depends on one's personality and how they cope with life challenges. One explanation is that older adults may engage in a more differentiated approach to problem situations by using diverse strategies in handling stress.

Furthermore, having experienced a stressful encounter influences an individual's ability to deal with the same or a similar situation when it arises. According to Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner (2008), most people, regardless of age, rely on distraction to cope with stress as much as or more

than they do on support seeking or problem-solving.

Table 6
Tukey Post Hoc Test

Dependent Variable	(I) AGE	(J) AGE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Decision
Level of Mental Well Being	17 - 20	21-25	-.16722*	.04863	.002	Reject Null
	21 -25	26-30	-.53237*	.14418	.001	Reject Null
		26-30	-.36515	.14507	.032	Reject Null
Level of Coping Strategies	1	2	-.06222	.03463	.171	Accept Null
	3	3	-.21883	.10268	.084	Accept Null
		2	.15661	.10332	.284	Accept Null

People of all age groups are struggling right now. However, the table above shows that ages 21-30 had experienced the most struggles during the pandemic. Thus, according to Rousseau & Miconi (2020), the COVID-19 outbreak is a highly stressful experience for youths and young people. In particular, these are experiencing difficulties, such as how necessary public health measures may hinder personal and collective meaning-making, disrupt family dynamics, and disrupt youths' typical social environment.

Compared to their older counterparts, young people had worse stress and mental health. One critical consideration that seemed to contribute to mental health in this study was people's resilience: their ability to deal with painful emotions, deal with whatever life throws at them, and recover from adversity. Resilience protected against elevated stress and poor mental health, but it also mitigated the negative impact of risk factors such as pre-existing health conditions on mental health. Asvec & Kocjan (2021). Therefore, youths are the most vulnerable age group when dealing with difficulties in their lives during the pandemic.

In terms of dealing with an individual's problem or how they combat their struggles in life, the table shows that there are no coping strategies designed for every age group, but it is designed for everyone.

Coping refers to the thoughts and acts people use to manage the demands of stressful transactions. Nevertheless, Lazarus & Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress and coping suggests that age differences in coping strategies may result from changes in what people must cope with as they age.

Problem number 4.2 Is there a significant difference in the level of mental well-being and coping strategies when grouped according to the respondents' Course.

Table 7

Difference in the Level of Mental Well- Being and Coping Strategies according to course

		Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.	Decision
Level of Mental Well Being	Between Groups	21.590	8		.000	Reject Null
	Within Groups	350.193	791			
	Total	371.783	799			
Level of Coping Strategies	Between Groups	2.294	8	1.241	.272	Accept Null
	Within Groups	182.744	791			
	Total	185.038	799			

The table shows that the chosen career or course is one of the factors for having unstable mental well-being. Online learning still leaves college students with the same academic burden. Every course has serious challenges that every student faces. Every student experiences different academic stressors in their fields. Academic stressors refer to any academic demands such as environmental, social, or internal demands that cause a student to adjust his or her behavior. Learning and examination, performance competition, especially mastering much knowledge in a short time, would lead to different degrees of academic pressure.

In terms of coping strategies, there are no specific strategies designed by each course. Even though different fields face different challenges, there are three different coping strategies they can use to cope with problems that are designed for everyone.

Table 8

Tukey Post Hoc Test

Dependent Variable	(I) COURSE	(J) COURSE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Decision
	BS Tourism					
		BSHRM	-.31869	.10608	.068	
		BSBA	-.16568	.11177	.864	
		BSA	.20472	.10441	.571	
		BSAIS	-.02703	.24763	1.000	
Level of Mental Well Being		BEED	-.08709	.12667	.999	
		BSIT	.09797	.13058	.998	
		BSN	-.16988	.09442	.683	
		BSCRIM	-.27036	.08843	.058	
	BSHM					
		BSBA	.15301	.10854	.894	
		BSA	.52341*	.10094	.000	Reject Null
		BSAIS	.29167	.24619	.960	
		BEED	.23160	.12382	.634	
		BSIT	.41667*	.12782	.032	Reject Null
		BSN	.14881	.09057	.781	
		BSCRIM	.04834	.08431	1.00	
	BSBA					
		BSA	.37040*	.10691	.016	Reject Null
		BSAIS	.13866	.24870	1.000	
		BEED	.07859	.12873	1.000	

BSIT	.26366	.13258	.552	
BSN	-.00420	.09717	1.000	
BSCRIM	-.10468	.09137	.967	
BSA				
BSAIS	-.23175	.24548	.990	
BEED	-.29181	.12240	.294	
BSIT	-.10675	.12644	.995	
BSN	-.37460*	.08861	.001	Reject Null
BSCRIM	-.47508*	.08220	.000	Reject Null
BSAIS				
BEED	-.06006	.25574	1.000	
BSIT	.12500	.25770	1.000	
BSN	-.14286	.24140	1.000	
BSCRIM	-.24333	.23912	.984	
BEED				
BSIT	.18506	.14536	.939	
BSN	-.08279	.11399	.998	
BSCRIM	-.18327	.10908	.759	
BSIT				
BSN	-.26786	.11832	.366	
BSCRIM	-.36833*	.11360	.034	Reject Null
BSN				
BSCRIM	-.10047	.06906	.876	

The table revealed that selected courses experience a struggle in life during the study of their desired courses. These courses are BSA, BSIT, BSN, and BSCRIM. The student's experience was not as great as imagined. It was not a smooth sailing journey. Lately, it has been anxious with the gradual opening of school for a few face-to-face classes. These courses have many tasks that need to be done physically. One of these courses takes up a review and some clinical examination

which makes them more pressured. The students have been thinking that they will be taking on a journey in their chosen profession in a few months or one more year. This pandemic was why the students were stressed throughout their studies, and their mental well-being was unstable. A sound support system is a big help to feed their mental health. Knowing what and who to seek during these difficult times could lessen their anxiety.

Problem number 4.3 Is there a significant difference in the level of mental well-being and coping strategies when grouped according to the respondent's year level.

Table 9
Difference in the Level of Mental Well-Being and Coping Strategies according to Year Level

		Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.	Decision
Level of Mental	Between Groups	13.227	3	9.788	.000	Reject Null
	Within Groups	358.556	796			
	Total	371.783	799			
Level of Coping Strategies	Between Groups	4.537	3	6.669	.000	Reject Null
	Within Groups	180.502	796			
	Total	185.038	799			

The table disclosed that all year levels could experience unstable mental well-being. For many young people, starting university is a watershed moment. Students face new challenges during this transition, such as making independent decisions about their lives and studies, adjusting to the academic demands of an unstructured learning environment, and interacting with a diverse range of new people. This may imply that different levels of education experience different struggles in their lives and study that can trigger their mental health. However, some researchers believe that a "mental health crisis" emerges in higher education (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004; Evans et al., 2018). Students are experiencing a significant transition from face-to-face classes to online learning, knowing that their future is uncertain and considering what life they would have after completing their studies. They know that most industries are shuttering due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

All year levels are dealing with difficulties in their lives and studies that require improved coping strategies to overcome adversity and maintain a healthy state of mental well-being. Each year level faces different challenges and different strategies for dealing with these challenges. Differences in coping strategies across educational levels may result from changes in what people must cope with and how that fits into their level of education.

Table 10

Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test

Dependent Variable	(I) YEAR	(J) YEAR	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Decision
Level of Mental Well Being	1st year					
		2nd year	-.15656	.06391	.069	
		3rd year	-.08463	.06129	.512	
		4th year	-.38066*	.07160	.000	Reject Null
	2nd year					
		3rd year	.07194	.07051	.738	
		4th year	-.22409*	.07964	.026	Reject Null
	3rd year					
		4th year	-.29603*	.07755	.001	Reject Null
Level of Coping Strategies	1st year					
		2nd year	-.05179	.04534	.664	
		3rd year	-.03497	.04349	.853	
		4th year	-.22458*	.05080	.000	Reject Null
	2nd year					
		3rd year	.01682	.05003	.987	
		4th year	-.17280*	.05650	.012	Reject Null
	3rd year					
		4th year	-.18962*	.05502	.003	Reject Null

Table 10 shows that among the year levels, 4th-year students or the graduating students are experiencing unstable mental well-being. Due to Covid 1-9 pandemic, the students are experiencing a rising stress level and lower engagement with learning. The adjustment made from traditional classroom-based learning to online classes was stressful. Anxiety and stress were mainly present in their junior and senior years because of online classes. It was hard to study independently, being locked up in the room studying independently with a phone or laptop, with no human interaction.

Academic workload, isolation from school, and fears of contagion all harmed the health of graduating students. Multiple preventative and control efforts centered on graduating students may contribute to variable stress levels and health problems in the COVID-19 crisis.

According to Costa & Nebel (2018), in a scenario of graduate education insecurity, the pandemic may highlight some practical aspects that were already a source of concern among the students. Considerations such as whether to keep the scholarships or not, the credit deadlines must be met. Payments, possible deadline extensions, and even future employment opportunities influence mental health. The pandemic has had a more significant impact on higher education. Situations such as layoffs, the suspension of public services tenders, and even the availability of resources to keep things running in graduate education investments indicate an uncertain future for those wishing to pursue an academic career. This scenario can be more stressful for a student who is not yet employed.

Retrieving the need to explore the strategies by the students to face these markers unequivocally leads us to the concept of coping. Coping can be understood as the association of strategies that people use to eliminate, reduce or manage stressful events. Such strategies can focus on the problem or emotion; the former emphasizes the cause of stress and changes its relationship with it. The latter focuses on the emotional response and adaptation to the event. Thus, one of the resulting needs refers to how graduate students have adapted to the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with resources and strategies to maintain teaching and research activities and mental health in this period of substantial emotional distress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Problem number 5. Is there a significant relationship between level of mental well-being and coping strategies?

Table 11

Relationship between the Level of Mental Well- Being and Coping Strategies

		Level of Coping Strategies	Decision
Level of Mental Well Being	Pearson Correlation	.648**	Moderate positive
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	Reject Null
	N	800	

Table 11 shows the relationship between the level of mental well-being and the coping strategies of the respondents. The table shows that there has been a moderate positive correlation between the level of mental well-being and the level of coping strategies of the respondents (r=.648, p-value =.000). This implies that when the level of mental well-being is high, the level of coping strategies is also high and vice versa. The positive coping strategies, particularly active coping and help-seeking, were associated with higher well-being and better quality of working life. Negative coping strategies, such as avoidance, were risk factors for low well-being and worse quality of working life (Environ Res Public Health, 2021).

V.   DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant concerns about the mental well-being of college students. The study explored the level of mental well-being and the level of coping strategies based on the three coping skills (1) cognitive strategies, (2) behavioral strategies, and (3) affection strategies of the college students at Olivarez College Tagaytay amidst the Covid 19 pandemic. Based on the findings, this study sample included a higher proportion of younger age groups (17-20) and a lower proportion of older age groups (26-30) among the 800 respondents. Female college students were the most significant respondents in this study, with more females than males responding to the survey. Due to the massive imbalance in the number of male and female participants in this study, this conclusion should be considered.

Nonetheless, this finding could be explained by gender differences in presenting sentiments and emotions such as concern, fear, sadness, anxiety, pain, and bodily discomfort. The majority of the respondents are from BS Criminology. In comparison, the minority of the respondents are from the newest course at Olivarez College Tagaytay. This implies that most of our respondents who answered our surveys are the most prominent enrolled students during the second (2nd) semester of 2021-2022. Out of 800, most of our respondents were First Year students in different courses. The minority of our respondents were Fourth Year students.

Mental Health is essential for everyone, especially the students taking their degrees during this pandemic that only e-learning is the only choice to finish their studies. It has changed the landscape of everything, including Mental Health. It has been so long since the pandemic started, and until now, everyone is trying to fight it and live with it. The longer it gets, the more it affects mental health. It was considered that the respondents' exhibit or are identified with a high level of mental well-being. This signifies that those who have sturdy social and emotional functioning and a greater focus on memory and problem solving are self-aware. They are the ones who are equipped and capable of dealing with complexities.

This pandemic has paved the way for some students to rediscover newfound hobbies such as learning a new language, reading, baking, and playing instruments. Results also suggest an increased social media usage and high interest in sleeping, eating, physical exercises, and household chores in the current study. Adequate coping skills have been identified as a strong defense for individuals, offering long-term stress reduction effects during stressful or traumatic situations. Previous studies involving college students have also identified problem-focused coping behaviors, including seeking social support and problem-solving behaviors, as equally vital to increase their adaptability and hardiness against stressful events (Labrague et al., 2017; Farrell & Langrehr, 2017).

All respondents identified themselves with moderate levels of coping strategies based on cognitive, behavioral, and affection strategy tests. However, there are different facets of different coping strategies found in this study under cognitive coping strategies characterized by the facets of active coping, use of informational support, planning, and positive reframing. Behavioral Coping Strategies are characterized by self-distraction, denial, substance use, and behavioral disengagement. Affection Coping Strategies are characterized by venting, emotional support, humor, acceptance, and religion.

In light of the findings, the respondents have the highest mean score in terms of Cognitive Strategies. This means that most people use cognitive coping strategies that promote a positive image of their health condition. However, individuals with a severely disabling condition or multiple or chronic problems may report low SWB, whereas adaptation is possible if the condition is less severe (Mehnert et al., 1990). At the same time, the respondents identified that they have low emotional support, which falls under Affection Strategies. Small but significant gender differences in emotional expressions have been reported for adults, with women showing greater emotional expressivity, especially for positive emotions and internalizing negative emotions. (Chaplin, 2015). This implies that as respondents reported low use of emotional support from family, relatives, friends, or loved ones, the researcher will concentrate more on developing a program that includes strengthening affection coping strategies.

Dealing with different challenges in life and when it comes to one person's unstable mental well-being, there is no excuse. It is not age-related; everyone is affected. There is also a significant difference in coping strategies from young to old. They have different coping techniques depending on their age (younger, middle, and older), but it also depends on one's personality on how they cope with life challenges. The age differences in coping strategies may result from changes in what people must cope with as they age.

Considering that gender is a crucial factor, it does impact mental well-being. As a result of the gender wage gap and workplace inequity, women are more likely to suffer from physical and mental illnesses. There is no significant difference in coping strategies, implying that gender is not a factor in how we deal with our daily challenges. The absence of substantial gender differences might be attributed to gender differences reducing with time or that all of the participants were college students, who may be more liberal in their perceptions of proper behaviors for men and women.

Furthermore, a chosen career or course is one of the factors for having the unstable mental well-being of a student. Online learning still leaves college students with the same academic burden. Every course has serious challenges that every student faces and different academic stressors in their fields. Selected courses have experienced the most struggle: BSN, BSA, BSIT,and BSCRIM. Many tasks must be completed physically in these courses. One of these courses includes a review and some clinical examination, which puts them under more pressure. The students believe that they will embark on a journey in their chosen profession in a few months or a year.

In addition, all year levels can experience unstable mental well-being. Each year level faces different challenges and different strategies for dealing with these challenges. Differences in coping strategies across educational levels may result from changes in what people must cope with and how that fits into their level of education, but the 4th year or the graduating students have experienced the most struggles and pressure and mental health crises emerging in higher education. Graduating students think the future awaits. All point to an uncertain future for those wishing to pursue an academic career, considering what life they would have after completing their studies, knowing that most industries are shuttering due to the COVID 19 pandemic. This scenario can be even more stressful for a student who is not yet employed.

Having a healthy or unstable mental state and overcoming difficulties through coping

strategies, statistics proved that the level of mental well-being does mediate with the level of coping strategies of the college students. With the said data, a significant linear relationship was identified between mental well-being and the level of coping strategies (p = 0.00, p<0.05). This implies that when the level of mental well-being is high, the level of coping strategies is also high and vice versa.

Higher levels of coping skills were found to contribute to a significant reduction in psychological issues (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression) associated with the COVID-19 pandemic among college students in China (Cao et al., 2020), the United States (Tull et al., 2020), and Switzerland (Elmer et al., 2020). According to a recent study involving college students, high levels of stress, anxiety, and sadness caused by social distancing measures were linked to lower social connectedness with peers and friends and lower coping skills (Nitschke et al., 2020). As a result, efforts to reduce mental health problems among college students must focus on improving their coping skills, which will improve their mental and psychological well-being and overall health. It is critical to increase communication and relationships with friends and family, which can be accomplished through technology or social media to mitigate the adverse effects of home confinement.

The results suggest that the pandemic has harmed the mental well-being of the students. Before the pandemic, college students and other young adults often had limited access to affordable mental health services. In order to positively boost the mental health of the students, first, universities need to ensure that students have access to campus, community, and mental health services to increase the accessibility of resources among the general public. Mental health awareness programs in every university could also be considered to check the level of mental health of the students and the level of coping strategies, especially today because of covid 19 pandemic, with an emphasis on understanding the typical reactions and psychological impact of Covid-19. They were finding out what life was like before, during, and after the pandemic to understand the distinctions between the three coping strategies and how they work—intensifying the use of Affection Coping Strategies because students reported receiving little emotional support from family, relatives, friends, or even loved ones. Identifying students' struggles during the pandemic based on their course and year level and providing findings or solutions on how the students will overcome their problems could help students better understand their mental health. It will provide strategies to manage or reduce lockdown fatigue webinars among college students should consider the factors identified to effectively address this growing problem among this group of the population during the coronavirus pandemic.Without addressing fundamental necessities, ensuring access to mental health services may not be enough to alleviate the students' mental well-being level. The reality that many Olivarez College Tagaytay students are financially disadvantaged must be addressed. Many college students in public colleges in the Philippines are likely to be affected by these findings. The government and institutions should work together to develop an innovative and beneficial way of providing high-quality, timely crisis-oriented psychological services to college students.

Universities can also give free psychological counseling hotlines to the public to avoid burdening mental health services in the long term by implementing new policies and programs to expand college students' access to mental health services and public benefits. Future research should focus on the efficacy and effectiveness of coping strategies for reducing fatigue in college students. Future longitudinal research studies should incorporate more samples from other colleges in the Philippines to increase the study's generalizability and representativeness.

BASIS FOR PROPOSED MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAM
KUMUSTA KA NA?: MENTAL WELL-BEING & COPING STRATEGIES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Description:

The COVID-19 outbreak was a traumatic experience that can have short-term and long-term effects on an individual's mental health. The seminar has three parts. The first part discusses the common reactions to the COVID-19 outbreak and how life before, during, and after the pandemic. The second part discusses the three coping strategies and their differences that can be expected in school and how they work in our daily lives, most especially on strengthening the use of affection strategies as the respondents reported that they have low emotional support. The last part will be the group discussion to find out what struggles the students are facing.

It does not assume that the COVID-19 experience has passed. It is assumed that the COVID-19 experience will have a global ripple effect, with different experiences across geographical landscapes. It also addresses the issue of some people who have recovered from COVID-19 being able to relapse and test positive again in a short period. It applies to people who are currently quarantined and those who live in countries where restrictions are being lifted. The researchers will look at practical techniques that we can use as individuals to address how trauma manifests in our lives. It promotes self-awareness, using good resilience strategies, reaching out for support in our social networks, and seeking help as needed.

Structure:

A 1–2-hour instructor-led training session that combines lecture elements with a variety of engaging elements like Question and Answer, Grouped Discussion, and Polling and Chat functionality when delivered virtually through Zoom Meeting: Breakout rooms.

Objectives:

At the end of the seminar, the students will be able to do the following:

- Understand the typical reactions and psychological impact of Covid-19

- Build awareness in regards to mental well-being

- To discover the differences how life before, during, and after the pandemic

- To know the differences between the three coping strategies and how it works

- Strengthening the use of Affection Coping Strategies

- To determine the struggles of the students during this pandemic according to their course and year level
- To provide findings or resolutions on how the students will overcome their problems

- Apply techniques to improve personal well-being through:

    - Self- awareness

    - Resilience/ Coping Strategies

    - Access help: Social Connections and networks

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The Status, Challenges and Prospects of Newly Established Micro-Food Business amidst Covid-19 Pandemic: A Single Case Study

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I.   ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic presents unprecedented operational challenges, especially to businesses; it severely affected global economies that many businesses had even closed. However, despite the pandemic, even the first-time entrepreneurs took the risk of opening a business. The researchers concentrate on the components of a micro-food business, namely: market, product, people, and money. This research will assist newly established micro-food businesses in assessing the status, challenges, and prospects in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. A qualitative case study research design describes the in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, or one or more individuals (Tetnowski, 2015). Braun & Clarke thematic analysis was used in the study. It used a qualitative case study design to perform in-depth investigations of complex phenomena in a specific area of a study through the interpreted gathered data of the selected participants using an interview. The researchers identified six themes: A Successful Business with sub-themes, namely, Increased Effectiveness of Social Media and Progression, Stable Production and Effective Customer Engagement, Customer Satisfaction in Efficient Production and Fairness in Payout, and Justice in Product Pricing. Second: Business Operational Challenges with sub-themes, namely, Emerging Social Media Threats, Employee Adjustment, Poor Business Location, and Transportation Risk Management. Third: Stock Consideration and Maintaining Product Quality, Fourth: Considering Employees' Behavior on Customer's Service Quality, Fifth: Justified Employee Salary and Product Pricing, and Six: Continuous Process Improvement with sub-themes, namely, Business Expansion, Introduce Wide Range Menu, Employees Retention, and Reasonable Price Increment. The researchers concluded that a micro-business is viable even in the COVID-19 pandemic, providing new opportunities for first-time entrepreneurs. The output of this study was to propose a strategic marketing plan based on identified SWOT Analysis that may be utilized as a guide to assist micro-businesses in improving procedures so that they can remain operational even during a pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, first-time entrepreneurs, business operational challenges, continuous process improvement, marketing strategic plan

II. INTRODUCTION

Business is a service or trade that involves distributing goods or services in exchange for money. To further understand, there are Micro, Small, and Medium enterprises. These MSMEs create job opportunities and play a significant role in developing the Philippines' economy. Asian Development Bank (2020) stated that MSMEs are the backbone of economies in Asia and are considered their driving force. In the Philippines, MSMEs comprise around 99 percent of businesses in the country.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which began in Wuhan, China, in early December 2019, had spread rapidly, with confirmed cases in almost every country around the world, and had become a new global public health crisis. After Covid-19 happened, many people were trying to cope with the situation, even in the business sector. One of the most affected industries by the pandemic was the business sector in the Philippines.

The COVID-19 pandemic has identifiably and unexpectedly altered the lives of almost everyone in the world. It forced them to practice social distancing, thoroughly wash their hands, and become accustomed to wearing covers. Meanwhile, the public health threat has unexpectedly allowed many people to work from home, and some will continue to do so for a long time. Furthermore, there is an undeniable relationship between micro and small businesses and COVID-19, notably since experts prohibited unnecessary ventures from closing incidentally and forced that all others apply new wellbeing and security techniques. The World Bank (2020) stated that social assistance to poor and vulnerable families and micro and small businesses would help mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and quicken recovery in the Philippines. Rivas (2020) stated that in terms of the COVID-19 Pandemic's impact on businesses and families, the Philippines fared the worst, according to an Asian Development Bank study. ADB Monetary area expert Shinozaki (2021) also stated that 70.6 percent of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Philippines had to close temporarily due to the COVID-19 flare-up. Besides, during the lockdown, Philippine MSMEs experienced the highest contract termination or cancellation (19.1 percent) and delayed delivery of goods and services (35%). The study surveyed 3,877 MSMEs, 1,804 of whom were from the Philippines. Thus, most MSMEs in the Philippines, or 58.8 percent, reported zero pay, while 28 percent reported income drops of more than 30 percent.

The study was also supported by the recent study by Engidaw (2022) noted that many small and large businesses face challenges. This unprecedented coronavirus crisis has affected breakdowns for many businesses worldwide, making it hard to survive with reduced revenue and job losses. Life slowed, making it even more challenging to keep a cool head and their business intact.

Nonetheless, despite the devastation brought by the pandemic, possibilities are indeed actual. The study results show that opening a business during uncertain times can give new opportunities. Proper handling of the business itself, managing good marketing, producing quality products, taking everyone's health and welfare, and visibility and fairness in transactions are keys to having an effective and sustainable business during a pandemic.

Amadeo, a small town in Cavite, has been revered as the "Coffee Capital of the Philippines." There is no doubt that many businesses, including micro-business owners in Amadeo, established coffee shops. Some micro-food businesses were newly established during this time of the pandemic. Despite the rapidly growing number of cases of covid in the Philippines and the struggles of other businesses' decisions to close their operations, these struggles have not become a hindrance for micro-food business owners.

A successful small firm must have four things in its corner: the market, the product, the people, and the money. The market should focus on reaching customers from afar- ensuring that identifying the target people with relevant content that appeals to them. Products are superior, and it is advantageous for the company to provide a product that meets customer satisfaction having a reasonable price. For people, a company must invest in a team of people who can help it advance to the next level. Lastly, money assists in generating enough cash from its activities and being able to grow a business. (Princic, n.d.).

The study provided questions to explore the status, challenges, and prospects of a newly established micro-food business amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The study specifically sought answers to the following questions:

What is the status of the micro-food business during the Covid-19 pandemic? What are the challenges encountered by a micro-food business? What are the prospects of the micro-food business despite the current situation/covid-19 pandemic? What marketing strategic plan can be proposed based on the finding of the study?

The principal objective of conducting this study was to investigate the status, challenges, and prospects of the newly established micro-food business amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the researchers proposed a strategic marketing plan to the micro-food business owner.

III.METHODS

The researchers used a qualitative case study. A qualitative case study research design describes the in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, or one or more individuals. It allows a complex phenomenon to be explored, researched, and identifies multiple components that interact within a specific context from one another using various data sources, and undertakes the exploration through a variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Tetnowski, 2015).

The researchers used a qualitative case study method to perform in-depth investigations of complex phenomena in a specific study area. A qualitative case study was used to identify the status, challenges, and prospects of micro-business through the interpreted gathered data of the selected participant.

The study focused on the entrepreneur's newly established micro-food business. The participant was limited to only (1) one entrepreneur of a micro-food business operating since 2020. For employees, only (1) one employee has been granted permission by management to be interviewed, and for customers, at least (5) five customers with criteria of three to five dining

experiences in the micro-food business. Data collected were done through an interview. The researchers used Braun & Clarke thematic analysis. It outlined how to utilize thematic analysis in a step-by-step method for qualitative research 2006. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), as cited by Lago (2019), thematic analysis is a fundamental way of analysis that must be defined and documented to become more established. Braun & Clarke thematic analysis involves a six-phase guide. (1) The researcher did not just fold the paper used to capture the interview afterwards; instead, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data. Reading and re-reading transcripts, taking notes, and emphasizing critical impressions are critical. (2) After re-reading and familiarization, the next step is to organize similar impressions in a meaningful and systematic manner. Then, the researchers created the first codes to break down the topic into smaller bits of significance. (3) The researchers carefully searched for critical themes as they categorized and designated them with initial codes. There were no hard and fast guidelines about what constitutes a theme. The relevance of a topic is what distinguishes it. This step was beneficial because it was all about familiarizing the derivation of themes; it all began then. (4) It was not enough for the researchers to create a theme; they needed to review it. Researchers review, revise, and develop preliminary themes established in the previous phase during this phase. The researchers utilized any word processing program's cut and paste option, cutting and pasting transcripts using scissors, or using Microsoft Word (Bree & Gallagher, 2016). The theme was then thoroughly reviewed to see if it was genuinely related to the data or if it supported it. (5) This phase is the final refinement, defining to determine its essence after the themes have been sifted. The researchers asked themselves, "What is the theme saying?" before coming up with a definition. (6) Writing up is the researcher's last thing during the data analysis to finish the sixth phase. It is the culmination of data interpretation and analysis.

The researchers came up with a better coding of the data after meticulously following the processes of Braun and Clarke's theme analysis. The participants' impressions were more synchronized, and the ideas were refined more effectively. From the interview to the sifting of the themes, the entire process was beneficial since it maintained the order of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis.

IV.RESULTS

Problem No. 1: What is the status of the micro-food business during the Covid-19 pandemic?
Theme 1: A Successful Business

This theme illustrates that the micro-food business had successfully established and attained the operation considering the four components; Market, Product, People, and Money. Subthemes 1.1 Increased Effectiveness of Social Media and Progression, 1.2 Stable Production and Effective Customer Engagement, 1.3 Customer Satisfaction in Efficient Production, and 1.4 Fairness in Payout and Justice in Product Pricing.

Subtheme 1.1: Increased Effectiveness of Social Media and Progression

This sub-theme pertains to the fact that it is truly hard to start a business during a pandemic. However, given the business's resources, they were able to develop strategies to continue and rise from the occasions and strive for better opportunities. Now, It is getting customers even from afar. Thanks to new modern ways of promoting the business, such as social media, and the help of the employees and customers themselves by sharing their experiences.

Social media has become an essential part of a marketing strategy because of its capability to produce co-created value, interactively attach brands to consumers, monitor brand-related discussions and sentiments, guide consumers through the decision-making procedure, encourage customer-to-customer interactions, and convert consumers into brand advocates (Vinerean, 2017). Engaging in employee advocacy and their role and the firm, in general, come from a natural desire to share and be proud of where they work. Seeing a business grow fulfills them, which is vital for establishing a positive workplace culture (Martin, 2022).

Table 1

Subtheme 1.1: Increased Effectiveness of Social Media and Progression

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"We only use social media in terms of marketing. I believe Facebook, Tiktok and Instagram are very effective platforms to market our business. A lot of marketing agencies are offering their services to us but we choose not to partner with them due to the terms and fees."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Siyempre last year po lalo na noong kasagsagan nung covid medyo mababa talaga and since kakastart pa lang naman neto I think 2 years palang tong shop and then after naman nun dire-diretso na siguro dahil medyo nakikilala na din siya kaya okay naman po."* *"Sharing ng mga post ng aming mga boss para atleast hindi lang friends nila ang nakakaalam pati rin yung mga friends namin."*
Interview	**Customer**	*C1: "I think effective kasi based from regularity na pumupunta kami dito is yung tao pinupuntahan na siya."* *C2 "Nowadays, online talaga is the best way to share information about your establishment so I think they're doing the right thing for their business."* *C3: "I think effective naman."*
		C4: "For me yes, so far magmula netong pandemic nauso yung mga cafe/coffee shops so if we will compare before pandemic na milk tea shops naman so kung mag start ng business na kagaya neto I think bago lang to eh during pandemic lang din siya." *C5: "For a change, we tend to crave sometimes for coffee and cake, not the regular food diba na you call it like mcdonalds and jollibee."*

Subtheme 1.2: Stable Production and Effective Customer Engagement

This sub-theme manifests that given that restrictions are getting high and low, regardless of the status being implemented day by day, the business has been delivering good quality of service with proper hygiene of the employees. Following safety protocols have been why people are getting back and forth in the business. These qualities are genuinely vital and how the owners and employees take care of the business and how the customers value their experience.

Workplaces that maintain a high level of stability appear to be more organized than those constantly changing. This image of the company may encourage employees to think more favorably of it and provide the idea that it is stable (Schreiner, 2022). Duncan (2018) stated that every company should prioritize workplace health and safety, no matter how big or small. Employers owe it to their employees to keep them safe, both legally and morally. However, workplace safety is everyone's responsibility. When customers buy products or services, they expect to receive excellent service for their price. They also expect to be treated with the highest level of care. As a result, many businesses train personnel to provide excellent customer service and conduct research into various

customer service programs to maintain high client retention (DeukHun, 2021).

Table 2
Subtheme 1.2: Stable Production and Effective Customer Engagement

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"I think wala naman siyang effect sa production. Since meron naman kasing mga exemptions like sa pagtatravel ng mga products and ng mga ingredients. Once they travel frozen food, yung mga madaling masira. May mga exemptions yung mga LGU's and I think wala naman masyadong challenges sa mga ganoon."* *"Since nag start kasi kami ng pandemic, wala naman. Ang naiisip ko lang na impact kapag nag strict na sila ng protocols. Nag tataas na ng level, so for that, I think yung mga customers lang na gusto mag dine in, hindi sila nakakapag dine in. because we have limited slots."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Actually sa amin naman po talaga dito so for me, wala naman siyang masyadong naging impact so unang una kasi nasa food industry kasi yung shop na pinagtatrabahuhan ko so sakin wala siyang gaanong impact kasi araw-araw nakakapasok naman ako sa trabaho and may isang araw na rest day. All in all wala siyang ganong impact sakin as an employee."* *"Safety lang tapos yung pag-iingat pagsunod sa mga kailangang gawin bilang employee to customer. Yun lang naman, yung pagsusuot ng facemask then pag-aalocohol. Then sa customer ganun din, lagi namin silang nireremind na pakisuot ang facemask, log in then alcohol."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"If I'm going to rate it from 1 to 10 I'm gonna give them like 9 because the employees, the owner, and the ambiance is also good."* C2: *"The first thing that I looked for when I go inside the restaurant is whenever they greet you, yung pinaka importante sa akin that they acknowledge your presence once you step into their store and I think they're very good at that. Also yung smile that's very important because you would wanna feel that they welcome you inside the store and then you will be prioritized. I think that's the most important thing so I think service is really good and the product, the prices are really good and the quality is as good as the ones that you see in the likes of the french baker."* C3: *"Well, very satisfied that's why I keep coming back here."* C4: *"So far so good naman mabilis naman yung serving nila and based on price naman okay din naman yung pice range nila di naman nalalayo sa mga ibang coffee shops o cafe na nagsisimula lang din."* C5: *"The staff itself, accommodating naman the food they offer."*

Subtheme 1.3: Customer Satisfaction in Efficient Production

This sub-theme illustrates that the business has always performed well in its service. This might be the key to holding and sustaining goals on achieving more remarkable service. Regardless of the situation, the business ensured that the quality of service would serve no less than their standard. Covering up one's hole and filling up everyone's role to ensure unlimited accessibility every time. It is not easy to sustain this rate by taking positive feedback from every customer. It takes solidified people, skills, talent, and attitude to attain and improve every action that the owner and employees make to ensure that satisfaction for both staff and customers is observed.

Knowing how to control staffing levels will result in a delicate balancing act. Appropriate staffing levels help the company meet customer expectations and deliver superb service (Roennevig, 2019). A flexible employee can change their plans to navigate or overcome unanticipated obstacles. An employer can encourage this way of thinking by giving employees the freedom to choose how they work—including their schedules and work locations, which can be supported by flexible offices (Hogarty, 2021).

Boretti (2018) stated that the keys to corporate success are establishing and associated with trust. We do this by knowing and understanding our customers in the safety industry. There is no reasonable alternative than to anticipate needs, produce services that meet those needs, and go above and beyond to exceed the customer's expectations.

Table 3

Subtheme 1.3: Customer Satisfaction in Efficient Production

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"During that time naman kase kahit na limited lang yung pasok and labas ng customers, tuloy tuloy pa rin yung production and all."* *"We double time. Kapag nawala ang isa, nakakayanan naman namin yung workload. Because flexible kami lahat. We can work in different kinds of work kasi nag communicate kami before we start the operations."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Sa ngayon po ano naman kumpleto naman kami so hindi naman kami masyadong nahihirapan halos lahat naman kami dito is gamay na namin yung mga trabaho dito."*
Interview	**Customer**	*C1: "I really like yung employees na pag regularly ka pumupunta and then alam mo yung naaalala ka nila and it makes you feel na somehow special and they already know yung gusto mong drink. Parang vinavalue nila yung mga customers nila. And I think it goes with all the employees."* *C2: "They're very friendly, they're very accommodating. It seems that they actually care about the store because I can see them doing what is supposed to be done. Somebody cleans, somebody's doing cashier, somebody's servicing guests. I think that's very important."* *C3: "Friendly and approachable."* *C4: "Mabilis silang gumawa. Kakaupo lang namin dito may order na agad siguro wala din masyadong customers kanina pero based naman sa experience namin na ilang beses na kaming nakabalik is mabilis naman palagi yung dating ng order."* *C5: "As I've said, accommodating. Easy to get along with."*

Subtheme 1.4: Justified Wage and Product Pricing

This last sub-theme pertains to the fact that money is indeed crucial for operating a business. It is hard to recover from the devastation of the unprecedented event. Businesses had many adjustments; some had to reduce staff, some were reduced payouts, and some had to close. Nevertheless, luckily, this business had a great time adjusting to this new normal. Getting regular days as if nothing is going around. The business is still in the position to pay their staff based on their contract, no more and no less. Pay them the right amount and give them what they deserve. On the other hand, customers are satisfied with food quality for as long as it is justifiable. It shows that customers are confident with the business, will not be disappointed, and are still willing to come.

Caldwell (2021) stated that it is vital for the success of your business that you pay your employees on time. The main factor in establishing employee salaries is no labor, no pay. Thiswas based on the age-old notion of "a fair day's salary for a fair day's work," which states that if an employee is ready, willing, and able to work but is unable to do so, he gets compensated (Del Puerto, 2019).

The right pricing strategy is critical to remain competitive in huge volumes and price pressure markets. It provides the value received for the products and services while also ensuring the profits required to invest in change and growth. To be clear, it is still critical to run cost-cutting initiatives and regularly improve the sales organization's effectiveness (Meckes, 2018).

Table 4
Subtheme 1.4: Justified Wage and Product Pricing

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Standard naman yung bigay ko na salary. Regardless of our sales low or high it's still the same. Their salaries are on time. We didn't like to cancel or delay their salary because of that."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"In terms naman ng salary syempre pag wala naman kaming pasok bawas din yung araw na bayad kami since alam naman natin pag ganitong work is no work no pay naman kahit saan naman kahit sa mga company ganun naman talaga yun lang naman."*
Interview	**Customer**	*C1: "I think it's very affordable. I've been to a lot of coffee shops before this one. First of all, the quality as long as expensive yung drinks or coffee, okay yung lasa and quality and their drinks are very affordable. It's really good."* *C2: "Very reasonable. They really lower their prices I guess because of covid but it is actually a good thing to everybody. They cater to all the demographics so the price strategy I think is working."* *C3: "Very affordable for the quality."* *C4: "Sa price range niya I won't say na it's the cheapest in the market*

pero with the price itself and the taste nung products nila. Food and coffee, worth it naman siya."
C5: *"Well, it's reasonably priced."*

Problem No.2: What are the challenges encountered by the micro-food business?
Theme 2: Business Operational Challenges

This theme demonstrates that the newly established micro-food business had faced obstacles due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It results in different problems that affect the business. Subthemes 2.1 Emerging Social Media Threats, 2.2 Employee Adjustment, 2.3 Poor Business Location, and 2.4 Transportation Risk Management.

Subtheme 2.1: Emerging Social Media Threats

This sub-theme pertains to the effect of social media as one of the best ways to promote business. The owner implements this marketing strategy to be competitive enough for the competitors to compete in the market. Since, commonly, many businesses are offering the same business.

Social media has developed into an essential part of marketing strategy to generate co-created value, interactively connect brands to consumers, monitor brand-related discussions and sentiments, guide consumers in the decision-making process, instigate customer-to-customer interactions, and transform consumers into brand advocates. In addition, By providing a comprehensive conceptualization and definition of social media marketing, this research outlines its role in advertising, Customer Relationship Management, and e-Word-of-Mouth (Vinerean, 2017).

When it comes to social media marketing, Facebook continues to be the big guy on campus. Facebook has grown to 2.38 billion users, making it the top social media platform for the total number of active users. Over the past 15 years, Facebook has redefined the way we look at social networks and expanded social media possibilities for businesses. In addition, With billions of active users, it is clear that these social networking sites are influential and have a lot of opportunities for the brand to engage with consumers. Even better, Facebook and Instagram have been hard at work bridging the gap between user bases. Things like the ability to have an Instagram placement for a Facebook ad and allowing users to share Instagram Stories directly to Facebook are just two ways these platforms have created moments of synergy for marketers and users alike (Jackson, 2019).

Table 5

Subtheme 2.1: Emerging Social Media Threats

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Challenges, siguro since sa social media nowadays, sobrang dami na ng mga coffee shop so nag start kami 2020. Wala pa masyado yon, eventually dumarami na sila. Challenges non is paano kami makikisabay sa mga bago."*

Subtheme 2.2: Employee Adjustment

This sub-theme illustrates the challenges that the employees face in a business. It allows employees to become flexible when they are about to assign some new tasks. However, trying new things while working makes it more favorable since they learn while being an employee.

A flexible employee can change their plans to navigate or overcome unanticipated obstacles. An employer can encourage this way of thinking by giving employees the freedom to choose how they work—including their schedules and work locations, which can be supported by flexible offices (Hogarty, 2021).

Employee work adjustment (EWA) represents the ability of individuals to adjust effectively to working conditions, supervisors, the environment, and their peers. To deal with work adjustment in different environments, companies must understand and continually assess their employees (Na-Nan,2019).

Table 6.

Subtheme 2.2: Employees' Adjustment

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Employee**	*"Sa pagbabake siguro, challenge yun sakin. Dito ako natuto since barista talaga kami dito barista, then napunta sa baking yung mga cakes na yan turo lahat ni bossing yan."*

Subtheme 2.3: Poor Business Location

This sub-theme illustrates that having Poor Business Location is one of the customers' concerns. One of the factors is the parking since it does not have enough space to provide for customers' vehicles.

A business needs to be located in an appealing area accessible for most transportation and mass transit. If it is not in such an area, the owner will have trouble making a profit or even covering their overhead. In addition, Businesses like coffee shops located in areas that provide amenities such as high-speed or wireless Internet service stand a better chance of attracting more professionals or entrepreneurs (Suttle, 2019).

The location of a business is one of its most important factors for success. The location has an even more significant effect on microentrepreneurs, opening a small-scale business that employs less than nine people. The importance of location strategy is vital for these small businesses because it impacts whether enough profits will be generated to sustain the business (Luthor, 2019).

Table 7

Subtheme 2.3: Poor Business Location

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"Parking, mahirap magpark kasi napupuno siya specially for a week ends natry ko na pumunta dito ng week end. Oh my god! Ang hirap magparking. I just wish that the inside uhm a little bigger kasi parang syempre may aircon sa loob and ayon mas comfortable I think yung dalawang yun. Yung parking and gusto ko lang sana mas malaki pa ng konti and mas dagdag table sa loob."* C2: *"The location I think. Because in this area they really gonna have to wanna go here so you know it has to be something that you intend to go to when you wake up in the morning kasi again before you come to this place there's gonna be a lot of sources, there's gonna be a lot of restaurant even malls that you would wanna go to instead of this place so that's my take on it."* C3: *"In terms of delivery, kase medyo limited pa. Like yung third party delivery like grab ganon, limited pa siya."* C4: *"Siguro parking, marami kasing tao. Yun nga nakapagdala na kami ng kotse tapos motor. I would say na iccompare ko siya pag naka-motor kami medyo hassle so kagaya niyan maraming sasakyan dito nakapark syempre nakakahiya naman na di mo pagbigyan so ililipat mo nang ililipat yung motor mo."*
		C5:*"As I've said there's no competitors with them."*

Subtheme 2.4: Transportation Risk Management

The sub-theme pertains to how the employees can still find a way to come in and out to work. There has been a reduction in passenger transport demand due to government lockdowns and fears of contracting and spreading the virus when using mass transport modes.

The Federal Highway Administration defines risk management as "a process of analytical and management activities that identify and respond to the inherent uncertainties of managing a complex organization and its assets." Because there are uncertainties and those unknowns change frequently, this process has not always been easy to define, making the U.S. transportation industry among the most risk-prone of all industries (Bonner, 2019)

Approximately 44% indicated they walked to work during the community quarantine and public transit restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. Approximately 5% of respondents, on the other hand, stated they rode their private vehicles to work (Statista Research Department, 2021)

Table 8

Subtheme 2.4: Transportation Risk Management

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Challenge na naexperience ko during the pandemic siguro yung ano yung biyahe super ang hirap mabiyahe so thankful ako kase may naghahatid sakin may sumusundo sakin pauwi. Yung lang kase yung pagpasok at pag uwi kase medyo malayo yung inuuwian ko so hindi siya kayang lakarin araw araw."*

Theme 3: Stock Consideration and Maintaining Product Quality

The theme pertains to managing the supplies or the stock well on what the business needs only for the operation. This is to avoid over-stock, reduce food supply waste, and be prepared for undesirable situations that may come in a business or sudden changes, especially in the current situations where changes become constant due to the pandemic. Challenges that experience in dealing and working in this time of the pandemic. Moreover, this theme identifies the quality consumers are looking for in a product. Providing consistent and high-quality products lets the customers know exactly what to expect every time they purchase products.

"Fail to prepare, prepare to fail" is a great quote to help reiterate what is necessary to achieve any goal (MBA Rendezvous, 2019). Workplace readiness skills are vital because they ensure that employees have the fundamental academic, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills required to keep their jobs. It helps workers bridge the gap between their existing skills and the skills required on the job (Scott, 2022).

It was claimed that sustaining the consistency of products will give an edge over the competitors. It keeps the manufacturing process, low market complaint rate, and improvement of ratings in customers' satisfaction. Consistency of quality products will lead to high customer satisfaction; the higher customer satisfaction, the higher chances of repeat customers (Magellan-solutions, 2021).

Table 9.

THEME 3: Stock Consideration and Maintaining Product Quality

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Hindi kami nag sstock ng marami. Kasi ang iniisip din namin what if mag grow out ulit yung number ng mga cases. So, we make sure na we have enough supply na good for the month. So, para we don't over stock din kasi mahirap kapag nasiraan ka ng ingredients."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Pag naubusan kami nung product na kailangan namin medyo nadedelay so ang ginagawa nalang namin before iniinform na namin sila para maiwasan yung delay nung deliveries na kailangan din naman namin."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"Number 1 is affordable of course and then the taste and the quality of the drinks now even if how many times i've been here na pabalik-balik it's the same and ayoko kasi yung pupunta ako sa coffee shop and then bawat punta ko is iba yung lasa ng kape na parang eto ay yung gusto ko and then pagdating ko sobrang tamis and then so far yung mga employees they maintained the same quality of drinks and cakes that they serve to the customers."* C2: *"Well of course it has to be delicious, like for example if they say that it's a carbonara it has to be carbonara. It needs to have all the ingredients of what makes a carbonara. So ayoko nung parang sasabihin nilang this is cafe latte when it's not you know like means so that's something that i looked for so if I wanna buy a croissant make sure its flaky it's actually a croissant and not just a mamon or whatever it has to be made. correctly because you're paying for it.``* C3: *"Again, quality and affordability.* C4: *"Quality syempre yung lasa ng product kung yung pagkain ang pag uusapan, syempre it's not the place naman na binili mo eh the product itself kung nagustuhan mo yung pagkain then kahit na puchu puchu yung lugar kahit na di kagandahan yung lugar babalik at babalikan mo."* C5: *"Of course it should be yummy that's it."*

Theme 4: Considering Employees' Behavior on Customer's Service Quality

The theme pertains to how the employee's behavior becomes a challenge since it reflects the quality of service and responsibility as an employee. This case shows that the employee's attitude is essential in the employee-employer relationship and the customer-employee

relationship. A positive attitude and Good Quality of Service of the people behind the business will lead to success.

In studying the impact of behaviors or attitudes of employees on customers' perceptions and overall satisfaction, it was concluded that employees' behaviors have a significant effect on overall customer satisfaction regardless of customers' gender, nationality, the purpose of visit, number of visits and length of stay (Kattara, 2019). Choosing an employee with a positive attitude and positive thinking is essential at work. It will reflect on what an employee does and make them more productive.

Table 10
Theme 4: Considering Employees' Behavior on Customer's Service Quality

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"The consideration number is that good attitude. Yes, you can work, you have the skills, but the attitude. It ruins all, it ruins everything. So, number one yung attitude talaga."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"If I'm going to rate it from 1 to 10 I'm gonna give them like uhm 9 coz the employees, the owner, and the ambiance also, is also good. so yon."* C2: *"I'm satisfied."* C3: *"Very satisfied."* C4: *"Wala naman ako masabi pagdating sa service nila kasi yung product and service itself is maganda naman never pa naman kami nagkaroon ng issue sa shop na to."* C5: *"Describe how I feel, it's just a good feeling to purchase the things that you like in cakes and coffee."*

Theme 5: Justified Employee Salary and Product Pricing

The theme manifests the employee's contentment with the compensation that they received. It also proved that fair and proper giving of compensation affects the employee's performance. The price justifies the product's quality. Because they are pleased with the products, the customer is unconcerned about the price. Therefore, prices justify the satisfaction of the customers in patronizing the products.

Nowadays, taking care of the employee's welfare is very important to ensure that they work hard in achieving the organizational goal. It was found that the performance level of lecturers is at medium and high levels. In addition, there is a positive correlation between compensation and employee performance. Moreover, the compensation and benefits also positively affect employee performance (Kadir et al., 2019). A business' pricing strategy can be a make or break when keeping

your customers satisfied. A "reasonable" pricing strategy positively affects customer satisfaction, but it will also make things easier when and if you need to increase prices. Customers still perceive that they are buying a valuable product and can retain the customer base and offset expenses involved with transportation, machinery, or ordering costs (Melanie, 2017).

Table 11

Theme 5: Justified Employee Salary and Product Pricing

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"I think yes, parang hindi naman kami nag sshort sa salary. I think it's more than enough, it's enough. Kasi sa tingin ko parang yung mga barista ko parang meron silang napupundar, alam mo yon. And then hindi sila nahihiya sakin, ever since noong nag open ako."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Hindi naman po kasi every payday naman po ah pag kinokompute naman nung bossing namin yung sahod namin, so pinapakita naman niya yung payslip namin then lahat ng computation nandoon naman opo."* *"Opo kasiya naman po, kasiya pa naman siya kasi kahit papaano maliit naman yung nakakaltas napapagkasiya naman kami."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"I don't really worry about the budget before coming here. Because I regularly come here I don't really budget like 500 lang. kasi We order a lot and then we take out din kasi. It's really affordable so it's really okay so I don't consider the budget."* C2: *"I don't really have to consider because again it's fairly reasonable so if I have like 300 pesos I can buy myself a meal and that's I'm satisfied with it."* C3: *"Well parang hindi ka naman na magbubudget kase affordable nga yung food. Even yung pasta kung icocompare mo siya sa ibang coffee shops like this pasta… you can buy it for like 300 pero dito below 200 so very affordable."* C4: *"Sa budget pasok naman siya."* C5: *" You know If you crave for something, budget is not an issue."*

Problem No. 3: What are the prospects of the micro-food business despite the current

situation/covid-19 pandemic?

Theme 6: Continuous Process Improvement

This theme manifests that the micro-food business will continue its progress in improving operational efficiency in the future. Subthemes 6.1 Business Expansion, 6.2 Introduce Wide Range Menu, 6.3 Employees Retention, and 6.4 Reasonable Price Increment.

Subtheme 6.1: Business Expansion

This sub-theme shows that the participants envision the coffee shop's possible future, which is branching out or expanding the establishment.

One of the factors for the business to reach a broader audience and expose its products is business expansion. Expanding the customer base will improve sales and success (Nasrudin, 2022). Business expansion has become a means of growing the firm and increasing profits for the owners.

There are benefits from business expansion. It makes more money by selling more product to a larger number of clients, increase your competitiveness by accumulating more massive resources, capture a wider part of the market to gain a competitive advantage, increase your negotiating leverage with all of your clients, including suppliers, customers, distributors, and suppliers, and obtain market leadership to have a greater impact on market price. It also promotes economies of scale and distributes costs across more outputs, cutting unit prices and increasing shareholder value in line with positive expectations for company growth and profits (Penpoin, 2022).

Table 12

Subtheme 6.1: Business Expansion

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"3-5 years from now probably we will have a lot of branches."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Ang nakikita ko pong paglaki at paglawak nito sa iba't ibang lugar o pagkakaroon ng branch nito sa ibang lugar."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"I think I Informed them regarding this about branching out kasi it would be better I think, when you branch out but I want it to be yun nga bigger di ko alam kung paano yun gagawin. Pero yun nga, yung mainly, ang pinaka ano ko lang naman is the parking which is ano siguro bigger and I would like to see them branch out also kasi syempre I would like to.. Other people or people from let say Manila to be informed also or to taste or get the experience that I have with them."* C2: *"3 to 5 years I think it will still be here granted that they don't really stray from what they are doing. Right now I guess the only thing is just to branch out which is you know another store.* C3: *"3 to 5 years, more space for customers, especially parking and then maybe mag-branch out."* C4: *"I would say na mas lalaki tong shop o magkaroon sila ng branches."* C5: *"A bigger shop probably or branching out somewhere."*

Subtheme 6.2: Introduce Wide Range Menu

This sub-theme pertains to the customers who have expressed a need for more variety of foods and drinks, which the owners are researching, and with the help of the employees, everything may become a reality someday.

As per Penrose (1959) & Chandler (1978), as stated by Jawabreh et al. (2018), introducing new items is a crucial strategy for seizing new market possibilities and gaining a temporary monopoly. Additional items in the menu will attract more consumers and give an edge to its competitors. Ozdemir & Caliskan (2014) stated that the menu serves as a guide for consumers when selecting food choices. According to Baiomy et al. (2017), the restaurant's menu is critical to its overall success since it represents the items available to consumers. It is customary to prioritize display over taste when it comes to food. The menu design, colors used in menus, paper

type, and drawings should all work together to enhance the restaurant's identity. Menus that provide misleading information, on the other hand, can cause customers disappointment, loss of revenue, and even the eventual failure of a restaurant. The main goal of making a menu is to convey. Sensibly selected words in a speech can make it fascinating and unforgettable. In a speech, carefully chosen words can make it engaging and memorable; this is also true for menus. A well-designed menu acts as a road map for the consumer, guiding them to their desired level of satisfaction and beyond their expectations. Menus also define the image of the restaurant.

Table 13

Subtheme 6.2: Introduce Wide Range Menu

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Yun nga we are thinking na to introduce more food, drinks."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Kayang makipagsabayan ng CaKe's coffee sa ibang coffee shop and sa tingin ko po dahil dun kayang lumaki at palaguin ito."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"Well before I came here na hindi pa ganon karami yung variety nung drinks and the pasta…is wala pa nun before so, I liked na they continuously offer something new to the customers."* C2: *"I think it needs to have a variety so it needs to keep on innovating themselves like they have different products."* C3: *"Siguro more on pwede nilang palawakin pa yung menu nila."* C4: *"Introduce more products."* C5: *"Ahh cake varieties pa sana."*

Subtheme 6.3: Employees Retention

This sub-theme pertains to the participants' perspective in terms of the prospects of the employee.

Employees are a company's foundation, and their presence is more than necessary. According to Bisht et al. (2016), as stated by El Safty & Ragheb (2020), employee retention is a vast topic. Many firms take this provision seriously to maintain a healthy output with their personnel. Employee retention is directly linked to the policies developed and enforced by a company's HR department. An organization must ensure that each employee has the resources necessary to meet their professional and ethical needs. According to Al-sharafi et al. (2018), employee retention improves with motivation. Intrinsic and extrinsic elements are used to divide motivation into two categories. These motivational variables are critical in establishing a high level of efficiency and improving customer service. According to Dhanya & Prashath (2019), motivation is a driving force. It allows a worker to be more responsive, effective, and productive. Highly motivated employees can maximize their potential and level of happiness, which raises the

value and productivity of respective companies.

Table 14
Subtheme 6.3: Employees Retention

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Hindi namin inaakala na ganun yung impact namin sa mga customers. At first, we only have two baristas… so noon nagstart kami, di naming inaakala na ganun yung impact namin sa customers, so ang daming tao. Eventually napagaralan naman namin yung profit ng tao, so doon kami naghire ng mga tao and hopefully they stay."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"Yes nakikita ko po ang sarili ko na magtatagal ako sa CaKe's coffee dahil masaya kaming lahat ng staff and lalo na ang aming mga boss."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"I've already observed them, it's the same. I like that you guys treat everyone equally na and then they are really polite. I'm hoping na wag umalis yung mga employees nila because it will affect their business.* *C2: "Hopefully nobody would resign or leave and then ah new employees will come in and destroy their reputation and that's the worst thing that could happen to a restaurant when an employee doesn't really care about the store anymore."* *C3: " Sana makeep pa din yung employees nila."* *C4: "Okay naman yung mga employees nila, sana ma-maintain ng owner yung ganung quality ng employees."* *C5: "I hope na magstay pa din mga employees nila for the good service."*

Subtheme 6.4: Reasonable Price Increment

This sub-theme depicts the participants' perspective on the future of the micro-food business in terms of pricing.

Thanasuta (2015) suggested that consumers perceived the price as one of the vital factors in-store selection. Consumers are very particular about price when it comes to purchasing. One of the impacts of Covid-19 on the food industry is the increase in food prices. As a result of the study by Bairagi et al. (2021), other reasons for a price surge include hoarding and panic-buying, typical in developing nations like India. However, consumers' higher quality expectations at higher costs may be self-fulfilled only if sellers do not find it lucrative "to deceive" by sending deceptive market

signals–charging higher prices for lesser quality (Gerstner, 1985).

Table 15

Subtheme 6.4: Reasonable Price Increment

Data Source		Evidences
Interview	**Owner**	*"Competitive prices."*
Interview	**Employee**	*"About naman po sa products ng CaKe's coffee maayos naman po ang price nito and hindi talaga ito sobrang pricey and affordable at quality ang mga foods and drinks and kung magtutuloy-tuloy ito ganun pa din ang kakalabasan hanggang dulo."*
Interview	**Customer**	C1: *"Though alam ko naman magtataas kasi eventually pero I think before they do that the owners will really include the considerations of the customers of course. Pero yun I think it will increase eventually, as all prices increase."* C2: *"I think everything is gonna go up but again I hopefully they could still consider you know balancing it out."* C3: *"Even naman na magtaas sila I think parang justifiable naman kasi nga because of the quality."* C4: *"Depende eh ayun nga maraming nagtataas ngayon; gas, etc. Food of course so kung tataas yung food dito o yung pricing ng products nila then that's fine as long na tumataas din talaga yung mga bilihin."* C5: *"As i've said it's reasonably priced, ayun okay na siya."*

V.   DISCUSSION

The Philippines' most affected sector by the COVID-19 pandemic was the business sector presenting unprecedented operational challenges, especially to micro-businesses. Under the four components of marketing, product, people, and money, this study examines the status, challenges, and prospects of the newly established micro-food business amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Increased Effectiveness of Social Media is at its peak in today's generation. Both owners, employees, and customers have used this to promote and succeed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study concluded in terms of the status that social media is an effective tool for the micro-food business to connect with consumers during the pandemic. Henderson (2020) stated that social media is a highly effective platform. Moreover, being in this digital era can be highly beneficial if entrepreneurs, marketers, or even bloggers take advantage of this opportunity. Developing a highly influential social media presence is essential for creating persuasive and appealing content that will instantly connect with the audience.

Despite the current situation, employees are witnessing the company's growth based on shared experiences. Despite these setbacks, there are ways to capitalize on the current situation and continue growing business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Be completely involved in all communications, regardless of the audience, and remember to communicate to the customers and employees. Inquiring about their situation and checking in on them shows care about them as humans. Whether the situation is pandemic, a little empathy goes a long way (Fallon, 2020).

Stable Production and Effective Customer Engagement have been the keys to holding the ladder to achieving success. Given the fact that restrictions are getting high and low, regardless of the status being implemented day by day, the business has been delivering good quality service, with proper hygiene of the employees, following safety protocols in the vicinity, and most importantly, the food that has been the reason for people returning to the business. With a company that prioritizes customer engagement, customers can establish a relationship with the company. Customers are more inclined to buy from and recommend to their friends if they believe they know and trust the business. When it comes to customer relations, we must focus on customer support by maintaining efficiency and stabilizing good performance in the production. However, this extends beyond providing excellent customer service. In order to boost customer engagement, brands must effectively work to associate and connect with clients at each possible opportunity. Eventually, anything client engagement procedures utilized be reliable. Make messages that are on-brand and appropriate for the target gathering of people, and create positive end-to-end client encounters; giving them a consistent experience will earn their trust, loyalty, and engagement (Kloot, 2021).

Customer Satisfaction in Efficient Production is indeed a factor in holding the fort. It should always be one of the businesses' foundations to stay on the ground. Based on the results, regardless of the situation, the business ensured that the quality of service would serve no less than their standard. Moreover, knowing that customer satisfaction is a metric that indicates how effectively business products or services meet the needs of its customers, the results show that the

company has always provided excellent service. Customer Satisfaction is critical for business growth. It helps determine how well the company's products and services meet the customers' expectations. Accurately and thoroughly measuring customer satisfaction provides the data required to keep the buyers happy. A business must maintain high levels of satisfaction throughout the customer journey. Customer satisfaction is essential because it describes the target audience. A high customer satisfaction results in higher consumer loyalty, lifetime value, and a strong and positive brand reputation (Gupta, 2021).

The study also concluded that Justified Wage and Product Pricing could help both employees and customers feel satisfied with what the company offers. Employees help a company give customers services, so they must be adequately rewarded and compensated. Also, pricing the products correctly and enhancing how much they sell creates the foundation for a business that will prosper. Also, it will be able to demand a greater price for the goods to reflect their superior quality and, most importantly, improve customer satisfaction. A "fair" wage rewards an individual's input proportionately; better pay and purchasing power are still in high demand among a large segment of the population. They also enable us to consider the concept of a "dignified" wage. Offering a fair wage in a job market remains the best way for businesses to remain competitive, both in recruitment and employee loyalty and commitment (Riberolles, 2021). Furthermore, justified pricing is important because it defines the product's value to make and for the buyers to use. The actual price point tells customers whether it is worth their money (Campbell, 2022).

Social Media has become one of the marketing strategies of the business owner when it comes to promoting their products and services. This study showed that Social Media has a significant impact on promoting the products and services and has helped gain potential customers. It also showed that marketing strategy is one of the things to consider for the micro-business owners when promoting their products and services for businesses to become competitive enough to compete with competitors in the market. Around the world, 47% of internet users ages 16 to 64 have spent more time on social media in 2020 than in 2019. Furthermore, those users are not just mindlessly scrolling: e-commerce sales are also on the rise. Social media will play an increasingly crucial role in supporting small business growth. (Read, 2020).

The employee is considered the backbone of the business. Giving productivity and doing some workloads or tasks in the business helps the owner provide good quality service to the customers. The study concluded that employees had experienced adjustment in their work since some of the owner's tasks were new for them and not within the scope of their skills. However, being flexible and willing to learn new things while working triggered employees to pursue working in the said business. In addition, employee work adjustment (EWA) represents the ability of individuals to adjust effectively to working conditions, supervisors, the environment, and their peers. To deal with work adjustment in different environments, companies must understand and continually assess their employees (Na-Nan,2019).

One of the considerations when doing a business is the location itself. The study results showed that the business lacks a suitable location since it has no proper allocation for the parking space where the customers can park their vehicles while patronizing their products and services.

Location can also influence a business's ability to market itself, the competition it faces from businesses, the total cost of operation, taxes the business owner must pay, and the regulations they must follow. The location also matters for marketing. The importance of location goes beyond the business's physical location and website rank in Google search results. It extends to the placement of the advertisements (Oppong, 2018).

Transportation has become a problem for everyone since the pandemic started. Many transportations are asking for a higher amount of transportation fee. The study concluded that transportation is one of the employee's concerns since it is not easy for them to travel from their home to the business location or work. Since it has no assurance that they are safe from the virus spread by the Covid-19, it was suggested that the business should have a vehicle for the employees to make sure they will come to the work location on time and be safe and avoid contact with other people to secure their safety. In addition, Public transport was already one of the most significant issues for all municipalities where people are highly concentrated in the same space at the same time. With the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing consequences, mass transportation is the main barrier for students and workers dependent on transport to go back to their daily routines with comfort and safety. Thus, the objective is to determine a demand control able to equalize the number of passengers in each car, respecting the COVID-19 social distancing protocols. The number of passengers in each time-of-day range was combined in four different models that included independent variables related to passenger's behavior, indicating that almost 90% of all passengers follow a very strict and straight daily routine that can be coordinated and scheduled, creating enough time space one from the other to avoid undesirable concentrations inside buses and bus stops. In conclusion, a very accurate urban management tool can arise from the study. It may be able to solve not only the pandemic issues but also improve local public services efficiency, attract private investments, and improve citizens' quality of life (Fumagalii, 2021).

The study also showed that the business with knowledge of managing the stock correctively to avoid overstock is one of the good things to do by the business owners. It has a significant impact on saving money and avoiding having overstock and food waste since some of the supplies are needed to maintain. Also, the study showed that maintaining the quality of product offers to customers must be prioritized since many customers are looking for the consistency of the product itself. It is highly suggested that giving high-quality products and services must be maintained to gain and attract customers' loyalty. Effective restaurant inventory management relies on several elements that work together as a system. This system, if executed well, provides guests with consistently great food and restaurant operators with the means to help achieve their intended financial results. The system parts are Ordering, Receiving & Storage, Food Prep, Inventory, and Cost of Goods Sold & Food Cost Percentage. Merely completing these tasks while running a restaurant can feel like, and at times may be a rather significant accomplishment. Effectively managing inventory will take a solid understanding of these critical elements and the discipline to ensure they are adequately done day in and day out (Pura, 2018).

The study illustrated that employees' behaviors must be considered when working in the business because it has a considerable impact on the employee-employer relationship and the employee-customer relationship. A positive attitude makes the environment of the business gain

productivity, and it also leads to giving customers good quality service. Since good quality service is one of the things to look at by the customers to say that the business products and services are suitable and highly recommended for the other people to visit. Attitude is a significant factor in the workplace. It is beneficial not only to the organization but also to the individual employees. Organizations that cultivate good workplace attitudes among their employees improve communication efficiency and achieve better teamwork and collaboration in the course of work. As a result, their employees have a tremendously boosted morale, have lesser stress levels, and are highly productive. As a result of a good attitude, employees' fatigue and stress are reduced as they are motivated and innovative in discharging their duties. Reduced stress translates into reduced absenteeism. Higher productivity means the organization can achieve performance goals and therefore is profitable. Organizations must therefore strive to cultivate good workplace attitudes among employees to motivate. Highly motivated employee teams perform well, serve well, and enable the organization to compete on the frontiers of quality products and services to their customers (Fallah, 2017).

The study showed that the business is justified and fair in giving salaries to their employees. Fair and proper compensation motivates employees to become productive and does their work or tasks efficiently. Also, the study concluded that the quality of the products offered by the business justified the price. Giving satisfaction of the quality of the products to the customers makes them unconcerned about the price of the products. A wage is a reward given in recognition of the performance of a valued task. It is also an incentive: a way to entice workers to take and keep jobs and to motivate them to work hard. Finally, a wage is a price of labor and, like all prices, conveys valuable information about relative scarcity. It shows that each conception of wages has its normative logic or appropriate justification, and these logics can come apart. This explains some of the debate about wages and makes the project of justifying a wage *simpliciter* difficult. It also identifies which logic we should choose since we must choose and say what this means for how we should think about the justification of pay (Moriarty, 2019).

In line with prospects, the researchers also concluded that in (3) three to (5) five years from now, the selected micro-food business was expected to continue its improvement process. Continuous Process Improvement is the practice of gradually improving the performance and excellence of the organizational operations. Rather than discarding everything and starting over, continuous improvement makes minor modifications to the processes. Small adjustments to operations or significant 'breakthrough' enhancements that stimulate innovation can all be part of this continual endeavor to improve existing systems (Deshpande, 2016).If the business begins on a small scale, owners may need to expand to manage increased volume capacity. In some instances, establishing a small restaurant and having grown the customer base to the point where they must turn people away or require reservations months in advance need to think about expanding to accommodate the increase (Joseph, 2021). Establishing business expansion of the selected micro-food business is a significant issue of the business location and considering branching out, the addition of dining and parking capacity.

Introducing a broad range of menus to offer is also a primary consideration. According to Writers (2020), the benefits of updating menus are the ability to adapt to current dining trends, the

ability in changes supplies, create a sense of urgency and excitement among customers who want to try the new items, highlight seasonal ingredients, make seasonal special dishes/items, and maintain customer preferences, such as healthier menu options.

In regards to the employees of the micro-food business, it suggested keeping the current employees as they see them as valuable assets and serves as one of the foundations of a business. Employee retention gains the business' health and success. Hiring and training new employees requires time, stress, and additional payroll, and turnover can harm the business outcomes. High employee turnover causes various issues, including increased costs, knowledge loss, and decreased productivity (Paulsen, 2021).

Eventually, the prices of the products were expected to increase with reasonable considerations. One may assume that a shop owner has absolute pricing rights because the product is owned and invested. The reality, however, is quite different. In a comprehensible way, no seller can set his prices for his products. Several factors influence the price, and the final fixed price is a healthy balance of all of these factors. As a result, no seller can afford to undervalue these factors. For example, the seller's status, A slightly higher price can be charged if the seller is well established, reputable, and dominant in the market, but a newcomer must set low prices at first (Sanchita, 2020). The owner of the selected micro-food business might have ideas in operations but is still in the learning process in the coffee shop industry.

In addition, the researchers proposed a strategic marketing plan based on the study's findings. This plan will be beneficial for the micro-business owners to recognize, predict, and satisfy the needs and wants of target customers through the creation and improvement of goods and services while pursuing organizational goals. A well-planned strategic marketing plan establishes the foundation for long-term growth and adaptability to external changes and defines the company's future.

A strategic marketing plan is one of the essential components of running a successful firm. Conducting market research, distilling the results, and acting on recommendations assist a company in defining what it will sell, to whom it will sell, how it will interact with them, and when it will do so (Ahmed, 2019). The researchers have developed different marketing strategies based on the participants' responses using the SWOT Analysis. A SWOT analysis investigates a company's market position, growth prospects, and the components that determine the company's vulnerability. It also considers a company's internal concerns and critical external factors. It is easily adaptable to market trends when familiar with the company's capabilities. Recognizing weaknesses and strengths can assist in entering the market and meeting the objectives (Oana, 2022).

The researchers proposed a strategic marketing plan based on the study's findings. With the help of the customers, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats have been defined. The researchers' marketing strategic plan can serve as a guide for micro-food businesses in understanding their capabilities and limitations and providing insight into how they can improve their processes to remain even during a pandemic.

General Objectives:

The following are the strategic marketing plan in such a way that the micro-food business owner is expected to:
- Strengthen its positive points in order to improve and enhance the business processes.
- Capable of understanding factors related to maintaining effective customer engagement.
- Capable of identifying various opportunities that can assist businesses in conforming to current conditions.
- To stay relevant in business despite the current situation.

Table 16
SWOT Analysis

This table shows the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the micro-food business based on the findings of the study.

SWOT ANALYSIS	
STRENGTHS	● Excellent Service Quality ● Budget-Friendly Menu ● High-Quality Products

WEAKNESSES	● Transportation Issue
	● Customers, particularly public commuters, may have difficulty locating the area.
	● Poor Business Vicinity
	  ○ Limited Dining Capacity
	  ○ Limited Parking Capacity

OPPORTUNITIES	● Today's growing demand for coffee shops ● Employee training and programs for continuous service improvement ● Nearby Tagaytay City, one of Cavite's most popular tourist destinations. ● Business Expansion ○ Area Expansion
THREATS	● Phantom Competitors ● Sudden Changes in IATF Guidelines due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Table 17

SWOT Analysis with Strategies

The table depicts the combined SWOT Analysis and suggests various strategies.

SWOT ANALYSIS	STRATEGIES
● **STRENGTHS - OPPORTUNITIES** 　○ High-Quality Products 　○ Today's growing demand for coffee shops	**INNOVATION OF EXISTING AND INTRODUCING NEW PRODUCTS**
● **STRENGTHS - OPPORTUNITIES** 　○ Excellent Service Quality 　○ Employee training and programs for continuous service improvement	**OFFER A FREE TRAINING PROGRAM TO EMPLOYEES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SKILLS**
● **STRENGTHS - THREATS** 　○ Budget-Friendly Menu 　○ Phantom Competitors	**CONSISTENT DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY IN PRODUCT, SERVICES AND PRODUCT PRICE MODIFICATION**
● **WEAKNESSES - OPPORTUNITIES** 　○ Limited Dining Capacity and Parking Capacity 　○ Business Area Expansion	**PARKING EXTENSION AND ROOF DECK RECOMMENDATION FOR ADDITIONAL DINING CAPACITY**
● **WEAKNESSES - OPPORTUNITIES** 　○ Customers, particularly public commuters, may have difficulty locating the area. 　○ Nearby Tagaytay City, one of Cavite's most popular tourist destinations.	**BUSINESS BRANCHING OUT**
● **WEAKNESSES - THREATS** 　○ Employee Transportation Issue 　○ Sudden increase of alert levels in IATF Guidelines due to COVID-19 Pandemic	**TRANSPORTATION ACCESS FOR EMPLOYEES**

Table 18

Marketing Strategic Plan

This table depicts the proposed marketing strategy based on the strategies developed.

STRATEGIES	OBJECTIVES	PROPOSED BUDGET	TIME FRAME
INNOVATION OF EXISTING AND INTRODUCING NEW PRODUCTS	To introduce new products and innovate the existing products to make the business competitive about the products in the market. It also	₱ **3,000 to ₱ 5,000** (includes ingredients and packaging) ● Keto Products ● Triple Chocolate Moist Cake	Two months
	could help to gain potential customers and maintain customer loyalty.	● Fresh Mango Smoothie	
OFFER A FREE TRAINING PROGRAM TO EMPLOYEES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SKILLS	To enhance and strengthen skills of the employees to be more efficient and effective. Employees are also the backbone of the business and the reason why the operation and productivity are in the business. Considering the employees to undergo or offer them a free training program will also benefit the business to make sure that their employees are knowledgeable enough and	**Des Pâtisseries Studio Rate:** ₱2500.00 / student **Other expenses** (transportation and food allowance): ₱1000.00 **Inclusions:** (All-inclusive - hands-on experience) Complete business course on how to start your dream coffee or milk tea shops. -Affordable business package -Website Consultancy that can help you create your own website for your business at a	As soon as possible

have strong skills in doing the tasks and operating.	very affordable price - Business consultancy -Sample menu, store set-up, uniform, & suppliers Budgeting & profit planning -Marketing strategies -Food costing -Recipe hand-outs & Certificate -Direct suppliers of utensils, ingredients, and machines -Lunch / Snacks -Learn the ff. **FRAPPE - YOGURTS - ICED COFFEE - FRUIT TEAS** -Learn 20 premium yogurt flavors / concoctions -Learn 10 premium frappe mixture / concoctions -Create your own signature Iced-coffee, fresh fruit teas, yogurt and frappe -Learn alternative brewing techniques and ideas (with or without coffee machine/s) -Take-home 13 cups of your own mixture / concoctions. Lifetime access of milk tea online workshop -Lifetime access of barista online workshop -After sales -Freebies from our brand partners and get access to the most reputable brands

MAINTAIN PRODUCT QUALITY AND MODIFY PRODUCT PRICE	To align the product to its price based on market demand. To satisfy customers with the products and services of the micro-food business by maintaining quality products regardless of the price. Making a reasonable price helps to produce loyal customers.	Budget depends on external factors during a pandemic.	As soon as possible
PARKING EXTENSION AND ROOF DECK	To enhance poor business locations and also to improve customer experience.	**Parking Extension**	In the next three to

RECOMMENDA TION FOR ADDITIONAL **DINING CAPACITY**	As of the moment, the major problems of the establishment are its poor location, limited dining capacity and parking. It serves as a threat since there are a lot of competitors nearby. In order to cater numbers of customers, establishing a roof deck and prioritizing renting an open lot for additional parking are highly recommended.	Lot rental fee: ₱10,000 to ₱15,000/month **Roof Deck construction cost:** ₱180,000 to ₱200,000 Roof deck design and drawing including the flooring, tiling, ceiling, surface, plank decking, sheet decking, panels, paint, and base material. (It also Includes framing, plumbing, electrical, and water). Also for manpower, (3-4 skilled workers, estimated working days: 20-25 days).	five years
BUSINESS **BRANCHING OUT**	To introduce the arising selected micro-food business in various locations, accommodate more customers and most importantly, to continue its business growth.	**Branching out at Tagaytay** Lot rental: ₱50,000-₱150,000/month Construction Cost: ₱500,000 to ₱1,000,000 Equipment Cost: ₱300,000-₱500,000	In the next three to five Years
	The researchers also recommend branching out in Tagaytay City since it is one of the most visited places by the tourists who love coffee shops. Aside from that, cold and foggy weather plus the panoramic view of Taal volcano will surely attract consumers and increase sales.		

TRANSPORTATI ON ACCESS FOR EMPLOYEES	To help employees secure their safe transportation coming in and out of the workplace when sudden changes in IATF guidelines due to COVID-19 pandemic occur. Since we are still in a pandemic, safety of the employees are very much important because they are the front runner of the business. The owner may rent	**Tricycle Service** **Amadeo Terminal - CaKe's Coffee Shop (vice-versa)** **Transportation Fee:** - ₱120.00 to ₱140.00	Applicable during lock down only
	a shuttle service or a tricycle to transport employees from point-to-point in order to motivate them to come to work and also for their health safety coming in and out of the workplace.		

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PHOTOVOICE: A PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN TAGAYTAY CITY

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I.   ABSTRACT

All living creatures exist inside their beneficial zones of the environment; therefore, the environment cannot be readily abandoned without care. Although the environment can continue to survive in its natural state, human intervention has caused extensive destruction in many ecosystems. We need to protect our environment from continuing to live on this planet - in a healthy and safe atmosphere. This paper was written to understand and analyze the implementation of sustainability practices in different tourism sites and establishments in Tagaytay City. It involved using the PhotoVoice method to reflect by using photographs they had chosen and investigating the reasons, emotions, and experiences that influenced their chosen images. The researchers used one research question that guided this study. This paper began to analyze and understand by discussing the successes and challenges of using the photovoice methodology in exploring the sustainability practices implemented in different tourism sites and establishments. The paper concluded with methodological recommendations and directions for future research.

Keywords: *Sustainability Practices, photo voice, tourism sites, human intervention, environment*

II.   INTRODUCTION

Residents contributed to extensive tourism development in the previous several decades, which had a global impact on several rural and urban tourist locations, with a variety of harmful and sound effects on their long-term viability and the welfare of residents (UNWTO, 2018).

According to a World Tourism Organization (WTO) report, tourism had a higher turnover than oil exports, food, and vehicles, according to a World Tourism Organization (WTO) report (UNWTO 2019).

The globe suffers enormous environmental difficulties, primarily due to present consumption and globalization trends. Sustainability and responsibility have become an increasing attribute of businesses worldwide in the last two decades. Sustainability is a strategy for transforming firms into long-term success by improving critical components of a company's success, such as economic, social, and environmental performance. The population's knowledge is growing, and a severe need for change now appears critical to preserve the environment and encourage ethical behavior (Chavan, 2005).

Environmental issues have gotten so severe in recent years that disciplines such as sociology, which previously did not consider the physical environment part of their subject matter, now consider it obligatory. Because of globalization, these environmental concerns have been fully explored and debated in most international fora (Cramer, 2017; Tukker et al., 2018).

Businesses worldwide must register under ISO 14001 and follow all accompanying criteria to ensure environmentally friendly practices. These regulatory and innovative methods assist firms in maintaining internal sanity throughout their whole supplier chains. As a result, these management approaches consider the more significant stakeholder idea of business sustainability (Hörisch et al., 2014). Barr (2016) states that the period constituted a watershed moment in human environmental perception. Sustainable tourism development ideas and management practices can benefit all types of tourism in all settings, including mass tourism and specialist tourist segments. Sustainability principles cover the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a fair balance must be established between these three elements to maintain long-term viability.

Sustainable travel has become increasingly fashionable in recent years, but the term encompasses much more than just bringing BPA-free water bottles on vacation. Vacationers must consider their long-term influence on the environment and the local population. Eco-tourism is only a tiny element of sustainable travel. When a person travels sustainably, they not only have the opportunity to leave a location as clean as they found it, but they also have the opportunity to have a net-positive impact on the area. The Philippines is a popular tourist destination, and this Southeast Asian country offers many options for travelers to practice sustainable travel. If a person is considering a trip to the Philippines, here are three famous tourist destinations where they can get more out of the trip while also giving back to the environment (National Geographic, 2021).

Tagaytay City is one of the country's most important tourist destinations. The city has beautiful scenery and a refreshingly pleasant climate. It has a significant advantage for local and international visitors because it is close to Metro Manila, making it easily accessible. (Tagaytay Official Website, 2013)

Tagaytay places social and environmental issues at the heart of its products and services, implementing environmentally sound solutions to safeguard and nurture its communities and supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Tagaytay Highlands takes its role

as custodian of the estate very seriously, from simple practices like looking into grass species that are most compatible with the weather to efficient use of water resources to efforts at inclusivity like the installation of ramps and special entrances for persons with disabilities. (Team Orange, 2020) The complex's waste management systems also ensure that a third-party collection appropriately separates and collects residual waste. Composting and recycling programs are used to divert garbage from landfills whenever possible.

This study was undertaken to determine the impacts of sustainable practices among the tourist sites in the City of Tagaytay and to evaluate the effectiveness of the personnel plans. It will answer the following questions:

How do informants describe sustainable tourism practices in Tagaytay City as depicted by the photos that they have taken? How do they see the future of sustainable tourism in Tagaytay City? What policy-driven initiatives can be proposed based on the study findings?

III.   METHODS

This study focused on the DOT-accredited tourist sites and challenges in implementing Sustainability Practices in Tagaytay City.

The participants of the study were the personnel from tourist sites. Operators and tourists were also interviewed, and they served as voices. The study focused on understanding the participants' status and challenges in implementing the tourism sustainability practices in Tagaytay City. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and observation.

This study will utilize PhotoVoice Methodology. Photovoice is a well-established method initially developed by health promotion researchers (Wang & Burris et al., 1997). Respondents can reflect by using photographs taken and chosen by them and investigate the reasons, emotions, and experiences that influenced their chosen images

The project was explained to participants during a briefing session. The researcher usually leads this session with the assistance of an artist. They were given a disposable camera and instructions on how to use it. Disposable cameras were used because they allow participants to concentrate on the game images rather than the ability to take a large number of images as is possible with digital cameras or smartphones (although there is nothing to stop researchers from using these instead).

Participants were asked to take photographs that express their thoughts, feelings, and perspectives on a given topic, such as community supervision, as seen in Super Visible. The photographs have been printed.

Participants chose two images to serve as a stimulus for a group discussion. The discussion focuses on why the photographs were selected, what makes them meaningful, and what the participants think about each other's photographs. The conversation has been recorded and transcribed.

Participants were co-researchers because they took the photographs and interpreted their significance for the study. This fundamentally differs from traditional research, in which power is

frequently concentrated solely in the hands of the researcher in collaboration with the researchers.

The target informants of the study were the personnel of tourist sites in Tagaytay City. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the informants. According to Indoctivo (2014), the basic idea involved in this type is that logic, common sense, or sound judgment can be used to select a sample representative of a larger population. The following were criteria employed to select informants. 1) Must be officially employed 2) Has been in the establishment for at least six months; 3) willing to participate in the study.

Table 1
Respondents of the Study

RESPONDENTS (establishment organization in charged in sustainable practices)	QUANTITY PER CATEGORY CITY OF TAGAYTAY DOT ACCREDITED TOURISM SITES
HOTELS	2
RESTAURANTS	2
MALL	3
AMUSEMENT PARKS	3
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	**10**

The research question guiding this study was: What sustainable practices are implemented inside the establishment, and how do they affect the establishment and the environment?

The researchers had allotted time, effort, and cooperation in constructing their questions for the interview that will be given to their respondents. They are selecting or choosing participants for the study. It can be restaurants, hotels, malls, and parks. After selecting different establishments, the researchers contact the participants. Furthermore, the researchers conducted an actual interview of the participants and transcribed the answers afterward.

IV.   RESULTS

The researchers identified twelve themes to capture participants' insights into sustainability practices. These are (1) The Nitrogen and Phosphorus from Human Waste, (2) A Future depending on Separation, (3) Love of Nature, (4) Living in Drought, (5) The Challenges of Going Green, (6) The Light of Life, (7) Let the Earth Breathe, (8) Second Life Re-Adapted, (9) A Beautiful Disaster, (10) The Fight for Pollution, (11) Caution: Poisonous, and (12) A Tree of Life.

Theme 1: THE NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS FROM HUMAN WASTE

Photo 1.   Photo 2.

The sewage treatment plant used in selected establishments in Tagaytay City is used to treat the wastewater. The wastewater theme was chosen because of its purpose. Advanced machines, long pipes, and water pipes characterize this STP. It shows that a sewage treatment plant's goal is to treat wastewater as thoroughly as possible – and while these facilities can frequently handle more waste than a septic tank, they still need to be emptied from time to time. Participant 1 pointed out some facts about this photo.

> "*Before, we consumed 120 cubic meters of potable water daily for merchants, common area, and Kasama na ang pagdilig ng Halaman. From 120 cubic everyday consumption bumaba ng 50-60 cubic meters of water per day*".

STP's establishments can save a vast cubic meter of water every day.

Connecting to the main sewers should be the first consideration for anyone considering a new property. They are usually the most cost-effective and dependable way to handle wastewater. It is only sometimes practicable to connect to the central sewer system. In some cases, the distance to the nearest sewer or the land layout prevents the property from being served by the main sewer. Sewage treatment plants and other alternatives come into play in this situation. Because sewage treatment plants are powered by electricity, they may be erected practically everywhere. (Do Sewage Treatment Plants Pollute Water, 2021).

Theme 2: A FUTURE DEPENDING ON SEPARATION

Photo 3.   **Photo 4.**

Photo 5.

These photos are themed "Segregation." Segregating waste minimizes the rubbish in landfills, taking up less room. When hazardous waste is separated and processed separately, pollution of the air and water is significantly reduced. Waste must be separated into bins to be disposed of appropriately. Participant 2 says that,

> *"Segregate yung mga karton tsaka mga cans, bottles and yung mga hindi na pwede irecycle. Binebenta namin para atleast kumikita pa din, we have our own food waste collector and we make sure na it's for disposal and pinapakain sa piggery and we give it for free".*

They can lessen the pollution of the environment, and at the same time, they help the piggeries and other businesses.

Segregation after collection takes longer, costs more, and might harm the environment if recyclable material is transferred to landfills. The simplest method to handle this problem is to prevent it from occurring in the first place by practicing good on-site waste segregation. Clear-marked containers for various types of garbage and well-understood recycling procedures can help the organization save space, time, money, and effort in recycling waste products. (General Waste, 2017)

Theme 3: LOVE OF NATURE

Photo 6.   **Photo 7.**   **Photo 8.**

These photos are under the theme "Sustaining Oxygen." Plants, flowers, and other greenery represent feelings, thoughts, and deeds. Each plant has meaning, and surrounding oneself with plants that symbolize things they want or value can create a positive environment. Plant symbolism can assist in selecting more meaningful and individualized decor and gifts. For Participant 2,

"*In terms of plants, we make sure na around the area, we have plants na nakatanim. Kase diba nga more plants more oxygen so ayon*".

Our body takes in oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide when breathing. Plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen during photosynthesis. This opposite pattern of gas use makes plants and people natural partners. Plants can help improve oxygen levels in interior spaces since photosynthesis stops at night, and plants respire like humans, consuming oxygen and expelling carbon dioxide.

We often overlook the value of plants and take them for granted. Plants and trees may appear insignificant daily, but they are essential for life and long-term survival. Plants are an essential resource - we rely on them for food, water, medicine, the air we breathe, habitat, climate, and more (Clark, 2018). Trees and plants are not only excellent for the environment, but they can also help us feel better. According to research, having access to forests has various advantages, including improved physical health, mental well-being, and quality of life. Exercise in these natural spaces has also been shown to lower stress and anxiety and boost self-esteem and mood.
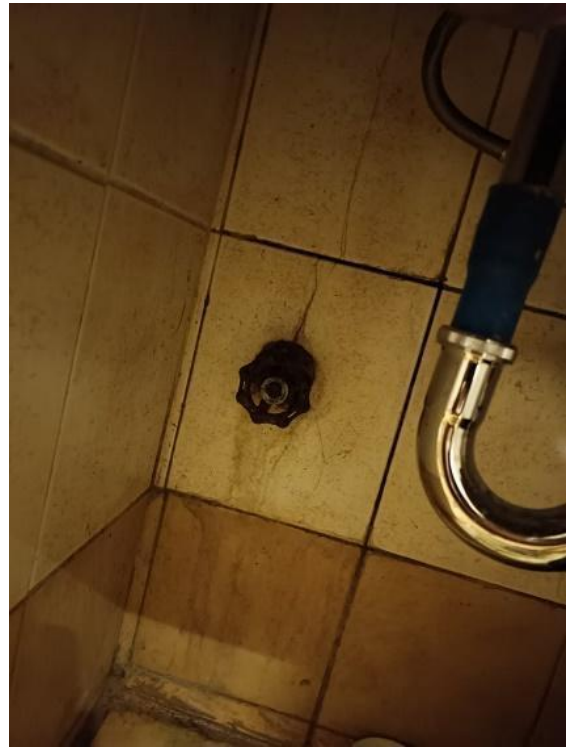
Theme 4: LIVING IN DROUGHT

Photo 9.

Photo 10.

Photo 11.

Photo 12.

 The theme "Water Shortage" shows the importance of conserving water and proper water management. For Participant 1,

> *"Para maka tipid kami ng tubig meron kaming mga container na pinag iipunan para hindi kami panay bukas ng gripo and bawat closing kami lahat ng metro ng water namin pinapatay". Even though our need for freshwater sources constantly increases due to population and industry growth, our supply remains stable. Even though water eventually returns to Earth via the water*

cycle, it does not necessarily do so in the exact location or the same quantity or quality. We can better safeguard ourselves against future droughts by lowering the water we use."

Because only half of one percent of the world's freshwater is drinkable, safeguarding our water supply is critical. Governmental entities such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can enact legislation to prevent enterprises from dumping rubbish on invaluable water supplies, contaminating groundwater, and reducing the amount available for use. They can also implement water conservation programs that require enterprises to disclose their water impact. By actively preserving and protecting our consumable water, our institutions can reduce the quantity of water wasted and lost annually due to human activities (Goodall, 2022).

Theme 5: THE CHALLENGES OF GOING GREEN

Photo 13.   Photo 14.
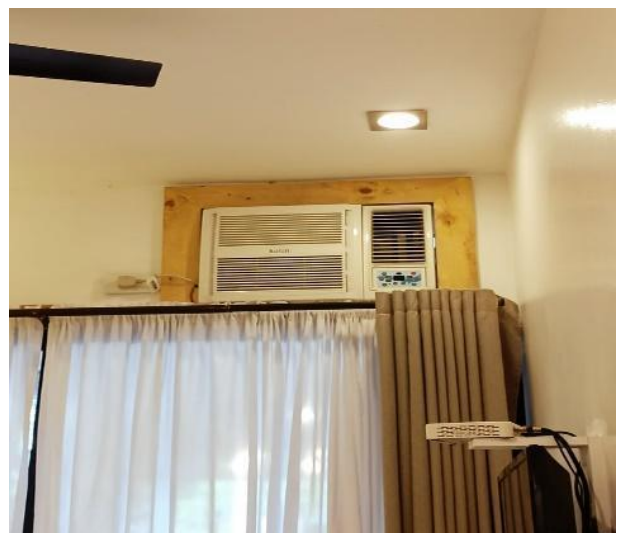

Photo 15.   Photo 16.

These photos are under the theme "Environmental Friendly." Cool air is vital to life and is the primary element because it is what we breathe. It is associated with human freedom, as well as cold. According to Participant 4,

> "*Yung mga aircon namin is water based. It is more eco-friendly and sustainable than using ah… chemical products, of course, it is saten and environmentally friendly".*

The National University of Singapore (NUS) has developed a novel water-based air-conditioning system that can cool air to as low as 18 degrees Celsius without using energy-intensive compressors or hazardous chemical refrigerants. This game-changing technology can potentially replace the century-old air-cooling mechanism still utilized in today's air conditioners. The unique system is portable and can be customized for any weather situation. It is suitable for both indoor and outdoor applications.

The energy efficiency of an inverter air conditioner is assured. The compressor slows down and speeds up to maintain the desired temperature. The compressor of the unit only sometimes works at total capacity. This control allows it to work at different rates, making the system more energy-efficient (ACSIS, 2020).

A good investment is an inverter air conditioner. Yes, it costs more but is also more robust, flexible, and functional.

Theme 6: THE LIGHT OF LIFE

Photo 17.   **Photo 18.**

Energy Consumption is the theme of the photos above. One of the most universal and essential symbols is light. It is divine and spiritual, as well as illumination and wisdom. In general,

light is associated with life, happiness, prosperity, and, in a broader sense, complete existence. For Participant 2,

> *"Unti - unti kaming nag papalit ng mga led light inside the hotel since mas matipid sya and kapag out na ng mga employee pinapatay din yung mga ilaw to conserve energy"*

There are no harmful ingredients in LED lights. Fluorescent strip lights contain hazardous compounds such as mercury and are currently used in most offices. When disposed of in landfill waste, this will pollute the environment. Switching to LED reduces the expense and time implications of compliance disposal and helps preserve the environment from toxic waste.

The advantages of LED lighting are self-evident. To 'go green,' everyone is looking for the best way to reduce energy consumption while maintaining quality, longevity, and color. The LED light uses less energy than the newer coiled compact fluorescent electric bulbs, and the most significant part is that they do not contain mercury like regular CFL bulbs (yet another "green" feature of the LED) (Harris et al., 2021).

Theme 7: LET THE EARTH BREATHE

Photo 19.

Photo 20.

Photo 21.

The theme formulated through these photos is "Earth Day." Participant 1 says that

"For electricity consumption sumasabay kami for 'earth day' and nakapatay lahat kapag walang tao. May time din kung anong oras bubukas yung sounds namin and yung lights namin. We have an electricity secret box in each room to make sure that all of the electricity in the room is off".

Indeed, this year's theme is "Invest in our planet," which can take various forms: financial, physical, political, artistic, and so on. It does not matter how much time they have, where they live, or who they are; we can make a difference by working together to safeguard our world. Earth Day was established on grassroots initiatives and enthusiasm and continues to thrive today.

One of the most significant measures a person can take to lessen environmental effects is to use clean, renewable energy. Clean energy also minimizes hazardous pollution, toxic buildups in our air and water, and the repercussions of coal mining and gas extraction. This is a global issue and a local environmental justice one, as air and water pollution from fossil consumption and extraction disproportionately affects local underprivileged people. However, upgrading our fossil-fuel infrastructure will take time—and strong, continuous support from state and federal laws to increase renewable energy generation and consumer and business demand for clean energy.

Renewable energies are clean, limitless, and becoming more competitive energy sources. They differ from fossil fuels primarily in their diversity, abundance, and ability to be used anywhere. However, most importantly, they do not emit greenhouse gases or damaging emissions. Their costs are also reducing at a sustainable rate. However, despite their current volatility, the general cost trend for fossil fuels is in the other direction (ACCIONA, 2020).

Theme 8: SECOND LIFE RE-ADAPTED

Photo 22.   **Photo 23.**   **Photo 24.**

Photo 25.   **Photo 26.**

The theme titled "Upcycling" shows being innovative, which means several procedures by which "old" products are updated and given a fresh lease on life by being transformed into "new" products. Participant 3 stated,

> "*The whole room is a container van sa halip na mapa stock sya or mapalagay sa something na ginagawa ng tapunan, upcycle din talaga namin na as hotel as room.*"

Reduced consumption is one of the simplest methods to reduce waste. Upcycling turns discarded or unwanted objects into usable products or adds value to an existing product. Upcycling aims to reduce waste while extending the life of the resources employed. Let us take a look at some upcycling data.

Upcycling is creating a usable product from waste or unwanted items or adapting an existing product to add value. Upcycling aims to reduce waste and improve resource use efficiency (Wigmore, 2022). It has massive environmental benefits; aside from reducing the amount of discarded materials and waste sent to landfills each year, it also reduces the need for production using new or raw materials, resulting in less air pollution, water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and often conservation of global resources.

Theme 9: BEAUTIFUL DISASTER

Photo 27.

Volcanic eruptions are hazardous and unpredictable. Volcanoes can be considered a challenging symbol in and of themselves. Their mountainous forms mirror the upward challenge that our lives can sometimes bring. Volcanoes, which protrude ominously from an otherwise unremarkable environment, remind us of the goals we strive to achieve, the path to get there, and the worth of the summit climb. For Participant 1,

"We closely monitor volcanic activity and assess hazards, biodiversity concerns, and natural environmental phenomena that could hurt its residents."

Monitoring volcanic activity is part of the sustainability practices. Protecting natural resources from the possible destruction caused by eruptions is essential to sustaining the ecosystem.

The primary purpose of the monitoring is to learn when new magma is rising in the volcano that could lead to an eruption. It is highly crucial. Residents in the area are clearly at risk. There are significant economic issues in addition to human safety. Not that eruptions can be halted, but just like a hurricane, knowing when one is coming is helpful (Harmon, 2009).

Theme 10: THE FIGHT FOR POLLUTION

Photo 28.

Pollution enters our lungs and can enter our bloodstream when we breathe. Air pollution can cause minor irritations like coughing and itching eyes. It can also induce or worsen various lung and respiratory illnesses, resulting in hospitalizations, cancer, or even death. It is a huge environmental threat to our health and food security worldwide. It is estimated that it kills 3.7 million people prematurely each year and destroys enough crops to feed millions. According to Participant 1,

> *"As an environmentally friendly alternative form of transportation, we*
> *used golf cars that do not require electricity & gas. It helps reduce pollution."*

Transport has substantial environmental consequences because it is a significant energy consumer and consumes most of the world's petroleum. This produces air pollution, such as nitrous oxides and particles, and contributes significantly to global warming by emitting carbon dioxide.

As public awareness of automotive pollution grows, more individuals choose environmentally friendly vehicles. Many countries have altered people's minds by pushing them to buy cars that pollute the environment minimally or not at all, with the support of various government agencies, NGOs, and the UN. The main advantage of environmentally friendly cars is that they release nearly no pollution, unlike typical petrol/diesel cars, which emit much CO2 and other pollutants. This alone is enough for an environmentalist to convert to a green vehicle. With petrol costs rising, environmentally friendly automobiles that run on batteries have become a viable choice (Lobo, 2014).

Theme 11: CAUTION: POISONOUS

Photo 29.

Chemicals can come from various places, including landfills, incinerators, tanks, drums, and industries. Hazardous chemical exposure can occur at the source or when the chemical moves to a location where people can contact it. Chemicals can travel through the atmosphere, the soil, and the water. For Participant 1,

"For the organic products naman, ahyung chemical kasi namin is something na .. hindi naman sya talaga.. mas mababa yung content nya na chemicals na nakaka-affect sa pollution pero I cannot ano kasi, disclose the information about the products."

Toxic chemicals in the environment cause less harm to plants and animals. Global warming, ozone depletion, and smog generation are all reduced. Ecosystems are less chemically disrupted—less reliance on landfills, particularly those for hazardous waste.

Chemicals and the accumulation of persistent pollutants, for example, impact wildlife and ecosystems. Testing is carried out, but it is time-consuming and expensive and does not cover all possible exposure scenarios. Experience teaches us that what we earlier believed to be safe often has unintended consequences that manifest later. The issue is maintaining chemicals' human and economic benefits while reducing their adverse effects (Cultrera, 2017).

When a person chooses eco-friendly cleaning products, they choose to protect the environment. Eco-friendly cleaning products are devoid of harsh chemicals but have not been tested on animals. This allows them to clean guilt-free, knowing that no animals were hurt in producing cleaning goods.

Theme 12: A TREE OF LIFE

Photo 30.

Concentrating on ourselves allows us to address any concerns, and nature can provide an ideal setting for some self-therapy. Nature has been shown to alleviate sadness, anxiety, tension, and rage and improve psychological well-being in general. Nature may help people feel better and more content, which can benefit them. For Participant 1,

> *"Yes hindi namin pinutol yung malaking tree ah since we all know that*
> *trees and plants supply oxygen.*"

The environment is protected by preservation from destructive human activity. Forest conservation, for example, usually entails using sustainable logging practices to reduce deforestation. Setting aside a portion or possibly the entire forest from human development would be considered preservation.

Nature conservation entails safeguarding, preserving, and restoring biodiversity. (Munoz et al., 2019). To conserve nature, (1) actions that help us connect with nature, (2) actions that assist us in lessening our ecological footprint, and (3) actions that help us conserve nature.

Table 2
Integrated Data of Sustainability Establishments

QUESTIONS	THEME	PHOTO NUMBER	INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCHERS	INTERPRETATION OF PARTICIPANTS	INTEGRATION
What are the sustainable practices you implement inside the establishment and how does it affect the establishment and the environment?	The nitrogen and phosphorus from human waste	PHOTO 1. PHOTO 2.	The photographs show the use of machinery and advancement through the use of technology. The wastewater treatment is to remove as many suspended solids as possible before returning the remaining water, known as effluent, to the environment. As solid matter decays, it consumes oxygen, which is required by the plants and animals that live in the water. The sewage treatment plant protects the humans and ecosystem.	**PHOTO 1.** "*From waste water dadaan sa step (Sewage treatment plant) para linisin ang tubig instead na itapon nag pagawa kame ng tangke para ma save ang tubig at ipangdilig ng mga halaman. Before we are consuming 120 cubic meter of potable water every day for merchants and common area and kasama na ang pagdilig ng halaman. From 120*	*The primary use of waste water treatment is to collect a large amount of used water in order to sanitize and make it reusable kno wing that Tagaytay City is a high place with insufficie nt water supply as a result of its many commerci al establish*

It is a matter of concern for Both the environment and our own health. There are numerous reasons why keeping our water clean is a top priority. Tagaytay City has been a major tourist destination since then, with numerous hotels and restaurants built. As a result, they've run out of water due to the enormous number of commercial establishments. It's a major assistance that certain hotels and restaurants utilize a sewage treatment plant (STP) because it conserves water and demonstrates a long-term strategy

cubic everyday consumption bumaba ng 50-60

cubic meter. of water per day".

PHOTO 2.
"*We have our own sanitation process or the STP for our water conservation.*
Hindi kame masyadong nag babayad ng malaki sa primewater kasi nga pinapa ikot lang namin yung tubig. We also have filters and pumps for the sanitation.

In that way mas nakakatipid kami sa consumption

ments. Rather than throwing away used water, they choose to prioritize the benefits of water to humans and animals, particularly in the ecosystem. Water waste treatment also enables the hotel to save a significant amount of cubic water on a daily basis. because the water they use is constantly circulating through

			since tagaytay is facing water shortage."	*their pumps and sanitation system.*
A FUTURE DEPEND ING ON SEPARA TION	PHOTO 3 PHOTO 4 PHOTO 5	The photographs show proper disposal of garbage and express care to the environment. Waste management refers to the various waste management and disposal schemes. It can be done through waste disposal, destruction, processing, recycling, reusing, or control. The primary goal of waste management is to reduce the amount of waste and to avoid potential health and environmental hazards.	**PHOTO 3.** ** So in here naman sa basurahan as you can see made of wood pa din sya talaga eco-friendly pa din. And as usual segregate yung basurahan, like yung biodegradable, recyclable and yung non bio namen".*	*The goal of proper waste management is to reduce waste while also avoiding potential health and environment al hazards. It can be done in a variety of ways, such as disposal, destruction, processing, recycling, and reusing. It contributes to the environment al friendliness of a hotel. Things that are disposable for others can be useful for someone*
		In most cases, improper waste disposal, including the burning of any type of garbage that people come across, is harmful to Mother Nature. This is due to the fact that Doing so pollutes the air and releases	**PHOTO 4.** "*Segregate yung mga karton tsaka mga cans, bottles and yung mga hindi na pwede irecycle. Binebenta namin para atleast*	

toxins that can lead to the destruction of the planet as a result of the extreme climate changes that the world is currently experiencing. Tagaytay City's Mission Vision is environmentally friendly, hotels and restaurants will find it easier to preserve or segregate waste because it is one of the best practices. The creation of waste is inevitable for every person and business across all sectors, including residential, commercial, industrial, construction, agriculture and more.

kumikita pa din, we have our own food waste collector and we make sure na it's for disposal and Pinapakain sa piggery and we gave it for free".

PHOTO 5.
"*And for garbage bags we have segregation. Biodegradable, and non-Bio de gradable and most for recycling. We also have for biohazard like used facemask and faceshield"*

else; it all depends on your level of creativity. Old woods, cans, and bottles can be used to make useful furniture, and some can be used to make art. Making the most of an object can help reduce waste significantly.

LOVE OF NATURE	A photograph depicting a view of natural inland scenery. It depicts everyday life, fresh air, and peace. Planting trees is one		*Tree plantin g and gardeni ng assist Tagayt*

PHOTO 6	method of compensating for the loss of natural forests by providing domestic products such as building poles, fencing materials, firewood, and even livestock fodder.	**PHOTO 6.** "*Landscaping and planting nature trees is one of ayala approches to embedding sustainability. Plants also gives of oxygen na kailangan natin para makahinga. It helps tagaytay environment to sustain oxygen*".	*ay City in reducing carbon dioxide and producing and sustaining the oxygen that we breathe every day, as well as maintaining Tagaytay's cool weather. Also trees help the soil absorb and store carbon dioxide by absorbing carbon dioxide. The more*
PHOTO 7	In addition to absorbing carbon dioxide, trees assist the soil in absorbing and storing carbon. Despite not doing as well as the oceans in absorbing around 90 percent of all carbon emissions and then suffering the consequences of ocean acidification, trees are extremely important in combating climate change	**PHOTO 7.** "*In terms of plants, we make sure na around the area, we have plants na nakatanim. Kase diba nga more plants more oxygen so ayon*".	
PHOTO 8	Sustainable tree farming provides timber for the construction of homes and shelters, as well as wood for	**PHOTO 8.** "*We have a tree planting activity called 'one tree at a one' with a*	

cooking and heating. Food-producing trees provide fruit, nuts, berries, and leaves for human and animal consumption, and they pack a nutritional punch. Tree planting/ landscaping can help Tagaytay City to have good looking sites and also to lessen the pollution from the tourists, residents & vehicles in Tagaytay City. And it can help to sustain oxygen and to have fresh air in the City that will be loved by the tourists. It can help not only Tagaytay City but also our environment. More trees or plants can help the city to sustain its cool climate.

goal of planting one million trees in its

premises".

plants there are, the more fresh air there is produced. Landscaping can help Tagaytay City reduce pollution from residents and vehicles while also making the city more visually appealing. In

In addition , there are food-producing trees that produce fruit that is suitable for human and animal consumption,

				and they contain nutrients that our bodies require.
LIVING IN DROUGHT	PHOTO 9	The photograph shows the true meaning of every drop counts and the importance of being functional in different ways such as conserving and sustaining the environment. Water conservation is the practice of using water efficiently in order to reduce waste. Water conservation is important because fresh clean water is a limited and expensive resource. It aids in environmental protection. By not wasting water, you save it for the fish and animals who rely on it. You also safeguard drinking water	**PHOTO 9.** *"Para maka tipid kami ng tubig meron kaming mgav container na pinag iipunan para hindi kami panay bukas ng gripo and bawat closing kami lahat ng metro ng water namin pinapatay".*	*It helps to preserve the environment by not wasting water. Water conservation in Tagaytay City can contribute to the city's ability to provide water to all establishments and residents. It can aid in ensuring*
	PHOTO 10		**PHOTO 10.** "*Sa water naman yung tubig na pinag banlawan ng mga plato baso ah… ano pa ba, ng kutsara at tinidor ganyan iniipon namin sya sa timba and pinag didilig namin sa halaman around the area para din hindi sila matuyo."*	
	PHOTO 11		**PHOTO 11. "***We use tifdwarf grass because it is disabled and*	

supplies. In addition, if there is less water flowing down the drain, wastewater treatment plants will not have to work as hard. Failure to conserve water can lead to a lack of an adequate water supply, which can have serious consequences. These include rising prices, dwindling food supplies, health risks, and political conflict. It contributes to the preservation of our environment. City of Tagaytay is now facing a water shortage. The practices presented above, is a must have to help in terms of water conserving. Conserving water in Tagaytay City can help to provide water supply to all establishments or residents in the city. It can help to have a fair

requires a little amount of water consumption, resulting in water conservation. We also monitor best practices to optimize water use at our golf courses & common areas."

PHOTO 12.
"*Meron kaming water gate bulb bawat rooms namin and kapag wala na kaming guest pinapatay namin yon to na nakapatay at walang tumatagas na tubig".*

equitable water distribution among all residents and businesses.

Gate bulbs can be extremely beneficial in terms of water conservation, such as preventing leaks. Saving water on containers before turning off the gate bulb may be a good way to reduce water consumption.

			distribution of water for all residents and establishments in Tagaytay city. Because there are some instances that every peak season or every weekend some residents are not having a good water supply. Because of the amount of tourists that are using water. Conserving water can help Tagaytay city to lessen their problem in water supply.		
CHALLEN GES OF GOING GREEN	PHOTO 13 PHOTO 14	The photographs show cool fresh air and relaxation. It provides better sleep and reduces risk of dehydration. The ability to control the speed of the compressor motor is the main feature of an inverter AC. The regulated speed allows the unit to keep the temperature stable without having to	**PHOTO 13.** *"Older air conditioners have been replaced with more energy efficient inverter versions".* **PHOTO 14.** *"ahh ano sya .. Inverter to kasi nga naman pag inverter alam nman natin na mas*	*Switching to an inverter air conditioner can help you save money on your electric bill. Inverter air conditioners also use less energy, making them more environmental ly friendly. An inverter air*

turn off its motor. This means that an inverter air conditioning unit uses far less energy than a non- inverter unit. Temperature is adjusted in inverter air conditioners by changing motor speed rather than turning the motor on and off. Inverter air conditioners have less power loss and can save energy when compared to non-inverter air conditioners. Inverter air conditioners have fluctuation detection capabilities and automatic adjustments to the overall compressor speed when compared to non-inverter ACs. This advanced mechanism conserves energy, is efficient and environmentally friendly.

Use of inverter air-conditioners in Tagaytay City can be a big help to those businesses that

makaka tipid sya".

PHOTO 15.
"Actually little by little nag switch na yung hotel na gumamit ng ah.. Inverter aircon since it can save energy than typical aircon as well as environmental friendly inverter".

PHOTO 16. *" Yung mga aircon namin is water based.it is more eco- friendly and sustainable instead of using ah… chemical.*

conditioner has a more advanced mechanism that allows it to keep the temperature stable without turning on and off. This should be implemented so that Tagaytay City can contribute to conservation efforts, given that the majority of things are now powered by electricity.

		want to lessen their electricity bill. Air-conditioners like this should be implemented so that Tagaytay City may contribute to the conservation practices knowing that most of the things now are working through electricity.		
	THE LIGHT OF LIFE			*LED lights are free of any potentially hazardous substances. However, the majority of establishments use fluorescent strip lights, which*
	PHOTO 17		**PHOTO 17.**	
	PHOTO 18		*"We have 48 lampposts in the whole perimeters before we use metal halides buds. The power of each bubs was 200w (200w X 48 = 9600w) from 2015 to 2018 We use metal halides and in late 2018 we will replace it with led light. Each led light power*	

Light is one of the most fundamental and universal symbols. It embodies the spiritual and divine, as well as illumination and intelligence. Light is the ultimate source of goodness and reality.

LED lights do not contain any harmful substances. Fluorescent strip lights, which contain noxious chemicals such as mercury, are currently used in the majority of offices. When disposed of in landfill waste, this will contaminate the environment.

has 60w (60w x 48 = 2800w)

from 9600w to 2800w we save 6.72kw per hour."

PHOTO 18.
"Unti - unti kaming nag papalit ng mga led light inside the hotel since mas matipid sya and kapag out na ng mga employee pinapatay din yung mga ilaw to conserve energy".

contain chemicals such as mercury and this will contaminate the environment if disposed of in landfill waste.

Aside from turning off switches during employee off hours, switching to LED lights can be a good way to save electricity.

Because disposal must be arranged through a registered waste carrier, switching to LED avoids the cost and time implications of compliant disposal – and helps to protect the environment from additional toxic waste. Led lights are advantageous in restaurants and hotels in Tagaytay City since these energy-saving bulbs have a long life and maintain consistency even when used for extended periods of time. In other words, they are not easily impeded, even when used for a long period of time. As a result, it does not require

frequent replacement. It aids in energy consumption and lowers electric expenditures.

LET THE EARTH BREATHE	PHOTO 19 PHOTO 20 PHOTO 21	The use of renewable energy instead of fossil fuels is critical to long-term development. Solar power is the conversion of solar energy into thermal or electrical energy. Solar energy is the most abundant and clean renewable energy source available. The sun produces more than enough energy to meet the entire world's energy requirements, and, unlike fossil fuels, it will not run out anytime soon. The only limitation of solar power as a renewable energy source is our ability to convert it into electricity in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The sun is a free, sustainable, and clean resource that	**PHOTO 19.** *"For electricity consumption sumasabay kami for 'earth day' and nakapatay lahat kapag walang tao. May time din kung anong oras bubukas yung sounds namin and yung lights namin. We have an electricity secret box in each room to make sure that all of the electricity in the room is off".* **PHOTO 20.** **"***ah.. sa amin kase gumagamit kami ng solar panel/ lights kase it reduce energy*	*Solar panels in Tagaytay City are an effective technique to bring solar energy to the city. It aids in the reduction of energy consumption. It may also assist the city in lowering their electricity bill. The sun is a free, renewable, and environmentally friendly resource that we may use to power our life instead of standard electricity. It also allows Tagaytay City to participate*

we can use to power our lives instead of traditional electricity. Using solar panels in Tagaytay City is a useful way to bring solar energy to the city. And it can help Tagaytay City to join the earth day and have an awareness to our environment. It can also help the city to lessen the electricity bill. And use the other fund for other projects. Tagaytay City can use solar energy in case of emergency or to lessen the use of electricity.

consumption. It can also avoid global warming and t can also help din para ma lessen yung pollution".

PHOTO 21.

"In our parking lot we have solar lights to reduce the usage of energy".

in Earth Day and raise awareness about our environment.

SECOND LIFE RE-ADAPTED	PHOTO 22	The pictures show being creative and innovative. Recycling contributes to the greening of our infrastructures by conserving natural resources, reducing energy consumption, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, reducing the extraction of virgin materials and minimizing their consumption, and protecting the environment.	**PHOTO 22.** *"This is the dental kit ng eco hotel ah.. This one is made up of strew naman sya so, we upcycle din yung straw then we use it as the toothbrush".*	Upcycling reduces the need for new materials and uses a unique alternative in producing things.
	PHOTO 23		**PHOTO 23.** *"More on talaga ah.. Nag a upgrade kami ng mga things such us (bottle lapms) talagang ina upgrade nmin yung mga hindi na ginagamit, ginagamit namin yang mga tubo para maging sabitan so such that".*	Recycling allows things to be used to their maximum benefits. They are devising a method for profiting from throwaway items. Instead of tossing things out, consider how they may be put to use in another way.
		Recycling is important because it reduces pollution, reduces the need for new raw materials, saves energy, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, saves money, reduces the amount of waste that ends up in landfills, and allows products to be used to their full potential. They implement the	**PHOTO 24.** *"The whole room is container van sa halip na mapa stock sya or mapa lagay sa somthing na Gianagawang tapunan, inupcycle din talaga namin*	

environmental mission and vision of Tagaytay City. So, aside from reducing the amount of discarded materials and waste sent to landfill each month/year, upcycling reduces the need for production using new or raw materials, resulting in less air pollution, water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and in many cases a conservation of global resources. They also require eco- friendly or sustainable strategies that demonstrate how they maintain environmental sensitivity despite the events that occur in our environment.

na as hotel as room.
2017 pa nag start si eco hotel so hanggang ngayon dipa sya napapaltan so long term use talaga sya".

PHOTO 25.
"* Like this one, the bed bar sa halip kasi na.. sa different kasi na hotels you can see bakal ah .. bato or something na kahoy na binibili. Dito naman we use the 'paleta' kasi sometimes yung paleta is tinotthrow na lang hindi na ginagamit so we use it as bed box".

PHOTO 26.
"Instead na itapon namin yung mga beer cans, kagaya nyan as a sustainable & eco-friendly hotel ginawa

nalang namin syang wall decors."

BEAUTIFUL DISASTER	PHOTO 27	The photo shows a peaceful and cloudy view of Taal. It shows being attentive and The primary goal of the monitoring is to determine when new magma is rising in the volcano, which could result in an eruption.	**PHOTO 27.** *"We closely monitor volcanic activity and assess hazards, biodiversity concerns and natural environmental phenomena that could have a negative impact on its residents".*	Tagaytay is famous for its breathtaking views of the Taal Volcano. However, aside from providing a

As populations grow, areas near volcanoes are being developed, as are aviation routes. As a result, volcanic activity puts more people and property at risk. Volcanic eruptions are among the most dramatic and violent agents of change on Earth. City of Tagaytay is known for its very beautiful and amazing view of Taal Volcano. Because of that, monitoring it is a must because of the possible eruption. It is for the safety breathtaking view, it can also be lethal and destructive.

Persons and property are unsafe as a result of volcanic activity.

Monitoring volcanic activity will assist the city in taking action and caring for its own people as well as the natural resources.

of the
residents and
tourists.

Monitoring the
volcanic activity will
help the city to
provide action/care
for its own people as
well as the natural
resources.

| | THE FIGHT FOR POLLUTION | PHOTO 28 | The photo depicted advancement. Sustainable transportation refers to any mode of transportation that is 'green' and has a low environmental impact. It is also important to balance our current and future transportation needs. Existing modes of transportation rely on energy sources | **PHOTO 28.** *"As an environmentally friendly alternative form of transportation we used golf cars that don't require electricity & gas. It helps to reduce the pollution."* | Tagaytay City can benefit from eco-friendly transportation by reducing air pollution and preserving the city's clean and green environment. It has the potential to foster a healthy environment for all. Golf |

such as fossil fuels, which emit massive amounts of greenhouse gases into the environment. Green transportation, which emits few to no toxic gases, would aid in the removal of these toxic gases from the atmosphere.

An eco- friendly transportation can help Tagaytay City to lessen the air pollution. And it can help to sustain the clean and green environment of Tagaytay City. It can promote a healthy environment for everyone. And it can also attract tourists because it's not a usual kind of transportation. It can be adopted by other cities.

cars are an environmentally friendly alternative mode of transportation that does not require electricity or gas, thereby lowering pollution. And because it is an unusual mode of transportation, it will attract tourists.

CAUTION: POISONOUS	PHOTO 29	The photo shows essentials and… Green cleaning products are less likely to contain	**PHOTO 29.** *"For the organic products naman, ahyung*	Using items with minimal chemical content is always preferable to ones with high chemical

hazardous chemicals and thus pose fewer health risks. They are also typically much safer and more appropriate for use around people with compromised immune systems or medical conditions. Green cleaning products are also less harmful to the environment. Using products with low content of chemicals will help Tagaytay City to not harm the plants/soil in different places. Low content of chemicals is a healthy way of expressing love to nature. Knowing the City of Tagaytay, most of the places have trees and plants that need to be protected and saved.

Through the use of these kinds of products it will help

chemical kasi namin is something

na .. hindi naman sya talaga.. mas mababa yung content nya na chemicals na nakaka- affect sa pollution pero I can't ano kasi, disclose the information about the products."

content. Green cleaning solutions are less likely to contain harmful chemicals, posing fewer health hazards. They are also often significantly safer and more suited for usage in the presence of persons who have impaired immune systems or medical issues. Knowing Tagaytay City, that most of the sites contain trees and flora that need to be maintained and saved.

			to lessen the pollution.	
A TREE OF LIFE	PHOTO 30	The photo shows the attractive color of leaves and you can feel the love of nature. Ecosystems are critical to our health and prosperity because they provide us with food, clean air, and clean water. Ecosystems are also a fantastic source of outdoor recreation opportunities. Preservation safeguards the environment against harmful human activities. For example, conserving a forest usually entails using sustainable logging practices to reduce deforestation. The preservation of the forest would entail reserving a portion, if not the entire forest, from human development. As	**PHOTO 30.** *"Yes hindi namin pinutol yung malaking tree ah since we all know that trees and plants supply oxygen."*	It is beneficial to our health to avoid cutting down trees since it supplies us with fresh and clean air. Ecosystems are also a tremendous source of chances for outdoor enjoyment. Many structures were built in Tagaytay City, as we can see now. The majority of trees were destroyed. Unfortunately, other business owners are unconcerned about the value of the

we can observe at Tagaytay City today, many buildings were established unlike before. The trees and forests were destroyed. Unfortunately, other business owners do not care about the importance of the ecosystem. But we are glad that this establishment at Tagaytay hugely cares about the trees and plants. They chose not to cut this lovely tree. This tree can be a source of oxygen and fresh air inside the hotel. ecosystem. But we are relieved that this Tagaytay establishment genuinely cares.

V.   DISCUSSION

Sustainable tourism practices benefit both tourist destinations and the environment. Knowing about sustainable practices might help a tourism destination save money. There are numerous methods for conserving and utilizing water. The most prevalent sustainable techniques in tourist destinations are proper rubbish segregation and disposal. Participating in Earth Hour and using environmentally friendly products can help our mother earth breathe more easily.

Sustainability enhances our quality of life while safeguarding our ecology and natural resources for future generations. Sustainable development always encourages us to conserve and improve our resources by gradually changing how we develop and use technologies. All countries should meet their basic needs for employment, food, energy, water, and sanitation.

We frequently overlook how reliant humans are on nature. Living species and the factors that shape the physical world, such as the weather, mountains, oceans, and landscapes, are all included in this word. Even city dwellers in modern skyscrapers require fresh air, clean water, and

food, all provided by nature. True, stores sell bottled water and ready-to-eat meals, but they are not made there. Some fruits and vegetables, for example, are exclusively grown in tropical areas and are transported worldwide in refrigerated ship containers, arriving at the local store perfectly ripe. Because we still need the technology to produce vast amounts of water in the laboratory, all drinking water comes from a natural source.

Sustainable tourism aims to increase tourism's benefits while decreasing the negative impacts on destinations. This can be accomplished by developing and managing tourism activities that protect natural environments, wildlife, and resources.

Without sustainability as a core value that underpins the entire business structure, the "new normal" cannot be implemented. From interior design to food waste, it is time to reconcile long-term vision with short-term gains for the greater good.

Tourism destinations are scrambling to figure out the new normal as lockdowns begin to lift and people begin to travel again. Experts agree that owners and managers who focus on innovation and sustainability are more likely to recover and thrive. A sustainable approach will be critical in driving global economic development.

The research focused on how a person can exercise environmental sustainability. Moreover, based on the findings, the establishment of Tagaytay City, notably the visitors, is still working on it. Based on the findings, the majority of Tagaytay establishments follow sustainable methods. One of the reasons is that the number of visitors visiting the city is growing, so to avoid water shortages and other costs and save money, their company will benefit greatly, particularly in the Tagaytay city setting. Based on our interviews, they can maintain sustainable tourism in their enterprises with a positive net result.

Policies aimed explicitly at ensuring long-term economic growth and a healthy financial system. The environment and inclusive social development are both essential for long-term development.

The Local Government of Tagaytay City must ensure all establishments have proper segregating containers. Furthermore, avoid disposable things to reduce garbage/waste and start using reusable alternatives. All tourist sites must join Earth Hour and monitor their electricity usage to lessen pollution and help Mother Earth. Tourist sites or establishments must be responsible for their hazardous chemical waste and how they properly dispose of it. Alternatively, they may use an eco-friendly chemical with less hazardous chemicals. The local government must promote the importance of eco-friendly vehicles to lessen air pollution in the city and provide fresh air and a clean and green environment.

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Sustainable Food System Practices of Selected Restaurants in Tagaytay City Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: Multiple Case Study

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I.   ABSTRACT

Today, restaurants are attempting to reduce their environmental impact and address concerns by integrating sustainable food system practices such as sustainable food production, supply chain shortening, food waste, packaging, water and energy conservation, recycling, and other factors that affect consumer behaviors and diets. The primary goal of this study was to investigate and identify the sustainable food system practices and problems encountered by selected restaurants in Tagaytay City during the height of the pandemic. Furthermore, to learn about plans for their sustainable food system practices in the new normal. As a result, a post-pandemic plan was made for these restaurant establishments. This study utilized a qualitative descriptive multiple-case study approach. It was used in this study to collect and analyze non-numerical data to understand the participants' concepts, points of view, or experiences better, get in-depth knowledge of a subject and generate new research ideas. The study concluded that the key players have different initiatives in practicing sustainability in their establishments but have the same goal: to help the environment and minimize their effect on it. The sustainable practices of the key players were identified in the study. Consequently, the research findings indicate that the Local Government Unit of Tagaytay can significantly contribute to restaurant sustainability in the city.

Keywords: *Sustainable food system practices, sustainability, restaurant sustainability, restaurant sustainable food system practices in Tagaytay city, restaurant sustainability during pandemic*

II.   INTRODUCTION

The globe was besieged with news of COVID-19, initially reported from Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new coronavirus that spread to become a pandemic. It led businesses to close and caused other countries to lockdown, worsening the economic crisis. Due to this pandemic, the public's growing awareness about climate change has arisen, and restaurant sectors worldwide are trying to promote and implement sustainability practices in their operations. According to Burton (2020), restaurants today are attempting to reduce their environmental impact and address concerns by integrating sustainable food system practices such as food production, supply chain shortening, food waste, packaging, water and energy consumption, recycling, and other factors that affect consumer behaviors and diets. Furthermore, restaurant sustainability entails participating in environmental activities and allowing consumers to contribute to these practical efforts since customers are becoming more environmentally sensitive as they purchase items and services that are environmentally friendly and become more aware of the significance of environmental concerns.

Based on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2018), a sustainable food system (SFS) ensures food security and nutrition for everyone while preserving the economic, social, and environmental foundations necessary to provide food security and nutrition for future generations.

Selected restaurants in Tagaytay started spreading awareness and promoting sustainability even before the COVID-19 pandemic by joining the project WWF-PH. It was stated by the WWF-PH (2018) that some well-known restaurant establishments in the city are serving the best the country has to offer, taking pride in serving fresh dishes and referring to natural ingredients purchased only from the best local sources. This ensures that the foods they offer are as organic as possible to satisfy the needs of their customers. Perhaps that is more likely to continue since restaurants can now continue to operate amidst the pandemic through the guidelines from the Inter-Agency Task Force against Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF - IED).

The WWF-Philippines has chosen three cities in the Philippines to further educate the food service industry to be more environmentally friendly: Quezon City, Tagaytay City, and Cebu. These cities are selected to promote local and sustainable sourcing, minimize food and overall restaurant waste, lower the dependency on single-use plastics, and effectively use resources such as water and electricity.

As the pandemic surges, numerous restaurateurs hope to take advantage of the new decade as an opportunity to try new things. While some restaurateurs are focused on developing a new menu item or launching a new marketing campaign, others strive to incorporate sustainability into their operations (Hollis, 2021).

Four questions were formulated based on the study's theoretical framework to identify and explore the sustainable food system practices of selected restaurants in Tagaytay City

during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The first question was, what are the sustainable food system practices of the participating restaurants in the aspect of the system supporting food production, food supply chains, consumer behaviors, and diets? The second one was how vital players describe their challenges in practicing sustainable food systems in the new normal. The third question was, how do they see the future of sustainable food systems in the new normal? The last question was, what post-pandemic sustainability food systems plan can be designed for Tagaytay City restaurants' consideration?

The primary reason for conducting this study was to explore and identify the sustainable food system practices and challenges experienced by selected restaurants in Tagaytay City at the height of the pandemic. Additionally, to discover plans for their sustainable food system practices in the new normal. Consequently, a post-pandemic plan should be designed for these restaurant establishments.
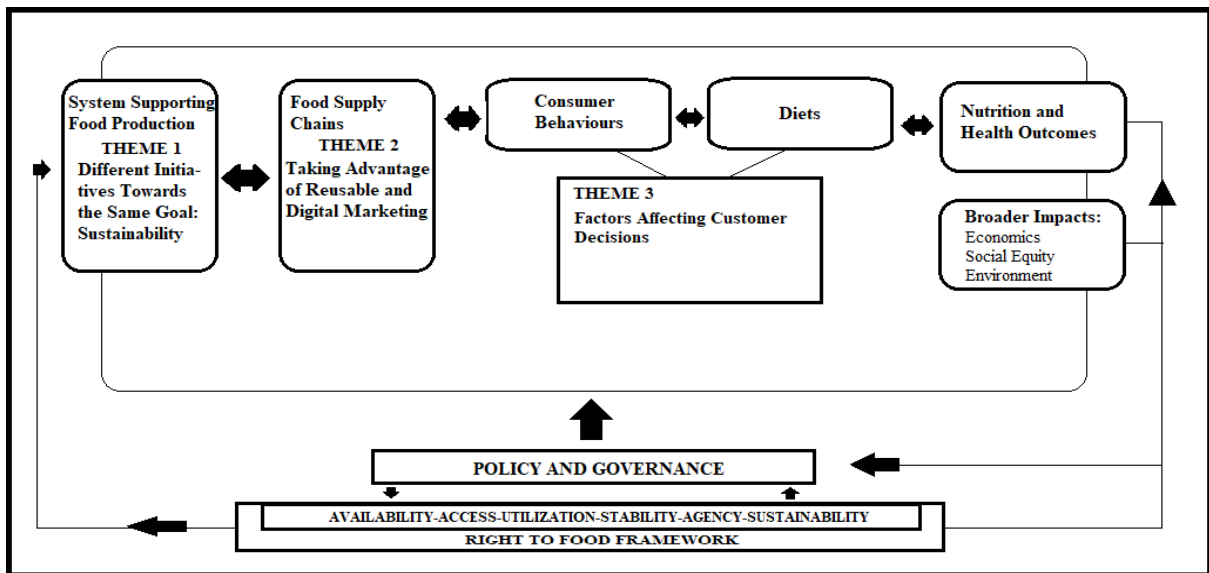
III.   METHODS

Figure 1. Sustainable Food Systems Framework

This study was anchored on the theoretical framework of Sustainable Food Systems developed by The High-Level Panel on Experts for Food Security and Nutrition (2020), in which the researchers focused on the four (4) aspects that affect the sustainable food system practices of restaurants, the system supporting food production, food supply chains, consumer behaviors, and diets.

The research design for the study was a qualitative descriptive multiple case study. Qualitative research gathers and evaluates non-numerical data to better comprehend concepts, views, or experiences. It can be utilized to get in-depth insights into a topic or develop fresh

research ideas. At the same time, the multiple case study design or collective case study explores various instances to get insight into the participants' experiences with internationalizing policies and methods among the selected higher education institutions toward internationalization (Yin, 2003). A Multiple case study can obtain a more in-depth understanding of the phenomena than a single case. This enables the researchers to further explore the dissimilarities of the cases and compare and point out the crucial points to develop similar result predictions for the cases (Gustafsson, 2017).

Multiple case studies are appropriate for the study since they allowed the researchers to explore and gain a thorough grasp of the current state of the key players' sustainable food system practices during the height of the pandemic. With a thorough understanding of the participants' responses, the researchers can provide a better recommendation and conclusion for the study. Consequently, a proposed post-pandemic sustainability food systems plan was designed for Tagaytay City restaurants' consideration.

Two (2) restaurants that operated during the height of the pandemic were looked after in this study. Participants were two (2) restaurant owners and two (2) food and beverage staff who knew and understood the concept and importance of sustainable food system practices. They were the chosen participants through purposive sampling or those who agreed and consented. The interview was conducted in the setting chosen by the participants to ensure comfort and convenience in answering the essential questions of the researchers.

The researchers used open-ended questions, consent forms, Pen and Paper, and a voice recorder to collect and analyze the data gathered from participants. Open-ended questions act as a guide for the researchers during the interview, limiting the data collection to only those that were relevant to the subject. The consent form verifies that the participants consented to the researchers interviewing their restaurant operations and agreed that any information acquired would be confidential and only shared with the participants and researchers. Pen and Paper make it easier for the researchers to keep track of data and take notes during the interview. Voice Recorder allowed the researcher to record every answer of their participants and helped them transcribe their responses.

Interview Analysis was used in this study; data transcription is needed to uncover and compile them into sections or groups of information, codes, and themes (Canary, 2019). The researchers will transcribe the interviews to formulate concepts based on the perceived meaning of the participants' responses in each case. In addition, the researchers will be able to solicit feedback, ideas, and evaluations on the emerging notions from the transcripts. Pattern Matching is one of the most desirable techniques because it involves comparing two patterns to see if they match. The essential process of theory-testing using cases is pattern matching. Testing compares an observed pattern of measured values to an expected pattern or hypothesis and determines whether they match.

The predicted pattern must be adequately stated before pattern matching occurs instead of pattern recognition, a technique through which theory is created (Hak & Dul, 2009). Cross-case analysis/synthesis may be used in various situations and include any of the

abovementioned strategies. After the data collection and interview transcriptions, the researchers read, appraised, and internalized the transcription to comprehend and recognize the participants' perspectives. Then, the data is thematically analyzed. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis approach that entails reading over a data set, such as transcripts from in-depth interviews or focus groups, and looking for meaningful patterns (Caulfield, 2019). This study adapted the six steps of thematic analysis from Braun and Clarke (2006): a.) familiarization of data by reading transcript documents of the interviews; b.) identifying preliminary codes; c.) searching for themes; d.) reviewing and connecting themes; e.) defining and naming global themes; f.) producing the report. This data analysis procedure will aid the researchers in adequately locating the participants' quotations in the study findings. Furthermore, thematic data preserve the participants' identities.

IV.   RESULTS

Problem No. 1. What are the sustainable food system practices of the participating restaurants in the aspect of: System Supporting Food Production, Food Supply Chains, Consumer Behaviours and Diets?

Theme 1: Different Initiatives Towards the Same Goal: Sustainability

This theme pertains to the key players having different sustainable food system practices. However, they are doing all these for the same objective: to prevent climate change and promote sustainability in their little ways. In this case, the participants identified restaurants' sustainable food system practices. Subthemes 1.1 Local Sourcing, 1.2 Water Conservation, 1.3 Energy Conservation, and 1.4 Waste Management are the sustainable food system practices under the system supporting food production.

Subtheme 1.1: Local Sourcing

This sub-theme pertains to one of the specific sustainable food system practices of selected restaurants in Tagaytay City: local sourcing. Restaurant 1 and Restaurant 2 both practice local sourcing of ingredients. They are buying from local producers and businesses. Aside from buying locally, Restaurant 1 employees are all residents of Tagaytay City. Restaurant 2 grows some of its ingredients, like herbs and lettuces, in the back of its restaurant, which Restaurant 1 still needs to do.

The key players know that supporting local talents and buying from local stores for their ingredients is part of sustainability, and they do it with initiative. This sub theme is supported by Lee (2021), who stated that locally produced goods are thought to be more environmentally friendly. This translates to more meaningful presents with less junk, healthier food with fewer chemicals, and a more sustainable planet with less human waste.

Table 1

Subtheme 1.1: Local Sourcing

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	O1: *"Ahm… sustainability in the sense that we actually source all our products ahm… sa lo-local. So for example our beef is local. So that helps our local businesses. And our coffee is local, as well as our hot chocolate is local. So, as much as possible lahat ng pine-purchase naming na ingredients are all local."* *"Apart from that, ahm… 'yung ano naming, 'yung employees namin are also local. So, kung mapapansin niyo, 'yung ga OJTs naming are all from Tagaytay. 'Yung mga tao naming dito are also from Tagaytay"*	O1: *"We also try sustainable harvesting and purchasing of food sources by buying locally grown products for our menu ingredients."* *"For the garnish like mint, leaves we plant our own herbs and then may tanim din tayo dun sa likod na mga letus."*

Subtheme 1.2: Water Conservation

This sub theme refers to the specific sustainable practices the key players are integrating with their restaurant operations: water conservation. This sub theme is also under the system supporting food production. Restaurant 1 uses water filtration and pouring to save on water costs. Restaurant 2 uses deep well water as its water source to cut off some of its water bills, but it also ensures that its water pipes are all good and continuously monitored for leaks. Both restaurants have different approaches in this area but have the same objective: to conserve water.

However, the key players practice water conservation, not mainly because of sustainability but because they want to spend less on water bills. Based on Gruere and Shigemitsu (2021), water conservation is the key to food systems sustainability. Water conservation methods, along with efficient plumbing fixtures and equipment, which are eligible for monetary incentives, can save food service businesses millions of dollars throughout the globe.

Table 2

Subtheme 1.2: Water Conservation

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	*O1: "Alam mo, one of the things pala is water filtration. Meron kaming water filtration system. So we don't actually buy water."* *"The used water ahh, ginagamit naming 'yon pandilig nung plants naming dito sa resto. 'Yung pinagbanlawan, 'yung wala ng sabon."*	*O1: "We conserve water in this restaurant. Kase bali meron naman tayong maintenance dito nag momonitor and for the pipe every month number one kasi na kailangan natin i-monitor yan kase dyan mapupunta 'yung mga sebo tumitigas yan kapag hindi natin namomonitor. So magkakaroon tayo ng malaking problema kapag hindi natin nachecheck every month. We have also opted to have our own deep well as the source of our water."*
Interview	**F&B Staff**	*S1: "Sa tubig naman puro, puro pouring kasi kami e. Para hindi maaksaya sa tubig, mga ganon."*	*S1:*

Subtheme 1.3: Energy Conservation

This sub theme is under the system supporting food production and energy conservation by the key players as part of their sustainability practices. Restaurants 1 and 2 are trying to cut off electricity expenses by minimizing the utilization of electrical appliances. Restaurant 1 is not trying to use air-con as much as possible, while Restaurant 2 is not using air-con. Both restaurants mainly use the natural breeze to keep their establishment cool.

Like sub theme 1.2, the key players practice energy conservation not mainly because of sustainability but because they want to cut off their electricity expenses. Energy conservation is critical for the food industry's long-term success. Improvements in energy efficiency and waste heat recovery in the food sector have been a priority in recent decades to promote food production sustainability. Minimizing energy reduces production costs and increases the sustainability of food production (Wang, 2017).

Table 3
Subtheme 3: Energy Conservation

Subtheme 1.3			
Data Source		**Evidences**	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	O1: "So ahm… one of the things that we also plan to do is ahm… mag lagay kami ng solar panels, 'cause that's also you know it really helps in sustainability. Kase one of the biggest overhead ng restaurant is actually the electricity. Kase even during the pandemic na wala masyadong tao, kailangan talaga mag operate kami, kailangan mag bukas. So, Malaki talaga actually 'yung konsumo ng restaurant sa ah… mga ilaw, sa mga electricity 'yon."	O1: "We designed our restaurant to maximize outdoor lighting and natural breeze. This would lessen the electricity consumption for lights and electric fans."
Interview	**F&B Staff**	S1: "Sa energy saving naman, pag closing na at kaunti nalang 'yung guests or wala na sila and disinfection na lang, nag babawas kami ng ilaw. Tapos kapag daily naman, hindi kami nag bubukas lahat ng ilaw. Eto lang halos labas." "Hindi din kami ang e-aircon. Kapag may nag rerequest lang po. Kagaya po niyan, pag may guest po doon sa loob, 'dun lang naming bubuksan 'yung aircon. Kasi dalawa 'yung aircon naming e, hindi talaga kami nag bubukas lagi. 'Yung pag gamit din naming ng bamboo d'yan sa gilid, I think sustainable practices din 'yon diba? Kasi nakakadagdag siya sa freshness ng lugar, we don't need na po to install electric fan kasi diba dagdag pa 'yon sa electric bill."	S1: "We are not using aircons. Ahm, wala kami non dito sa resto. 'Di ba ang lakas ng aircon sa kuryente, kaya siguro pasok 'yon. Electric fans lang meron kami pero hindi din siya laging ginagamit."

Subtheme 1.4: Waste Management

The last sub theme for the system supporting food production pertains to the waste management of the key players that help them achieve sustainability in their operation. Restaurant 1 and Restaurant 2 dispose of their waste correctly by waste segregation. Restaurant 1, as part of their waste management, is preventing waste production by buying durable kitchen equipment, while Restaurant 1 is also trying not to use single-use plastics.

The key players are aware that waste management is critical when discussing sustainability. They are conscious of their restaurants' waste, so they want to reduce their waste production as much as possible. This sub theme is supported by Gruia et al. (2021), who state that waste management in a restaurant has a favorable impact on the possibility of eliminating physical trash and reducing the volume of waste generated by restaurant operations.

Table 4
Subtheme 1.4: Waste Management

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	O1: *"We have waste segregation, kasi hindi kino-collect 'yung garbage kung hindi siya segregated."*	O1: *"We also make sure that we dispose them in accordance to city ordinances."*
			"Apart from what I've said earlier, as much as possible we are trying not to use single-used plastics for our takeaways."
		"Makikita niyo [kitchen] its all stainless. Kasi diba para hindi mag grow 'yung bacteria and hindi na 'din palit ng palit pag nasira kasi waste 'yon – ng money and sa environment. So ganon, 'yun lang naman so far, so far."	
		"Tsaka number two, may nag ko-collect dito 'yung pagkain ng baboy. Somebody also comes here to ahh to collect ayon."	

| **Interview** | **F&B Staff** | *S1: "Kasi ang ginagamit kasi namin meron kasi talagang gumagamit na placemats na papel, kaya po 'yun 'yung isinuggest po namin para narerecycle din. Meron din kaming placemats na pwedeng hugasan nalang para hindi din naman tapon ng tapon, and high quality placemats siya na talagang magtatagal, hindi 'yung isang* *laba sira agad."* | *S1:* |

Theme 2: Taking Advantage of Reusable and Digital Marketing

Both Restaurants 1 and 2 have the initiative to reuse what they can reuse in their restaurants to lessen their waste and take advantage of social media marketing. Both restaurants maximize the use of social media to market and advertise their food establishments. Doing this reduces the possible paper waste a traditional advertising method can cause. Subtheme 2.1 Taking Advantage of Reusables and Subtheme 2.1 Social Media Marketing is under the aspect of food supply chains.

Subtheme 2.1 Taking Advantage of Reusables

This sub theme refers to the specific practices of the key players to lessen their negative environmental impact. This sub theme is related to food supply chains. Thus, they both take advantage of the reusables. It was observed that Restaurant 1 is using paper and microwavable packaging for their takeaway containers. On the other hand, Restaurant 2 recycles its oil and reuses it in recycling containers that it can still use. Currently, disposable food ware is used in many institutional and fast-casual restaurants and practically all takeaway and delivery, which has risen with the introduction of COVID-19. However, reusing and recycling can save a food business money and avoid countless environmental impacts (Khvaleva, 2021). The key players have the initiative to reuse and recycle things in their restaurants to reduce expenses and help the environment.

Table 5

Subtheme 2.1: Taking Advantage of Reusables

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	*O1: "[For takeaway orders] Ah, naka ano siya, naka ah microwavable (clears her throat) na mga sealed na microwavable na package, okay."*	*O1: "As much as we can, we recycle the oil that we use when deep frying food."* *"For economic sustainability, we make sure that we reuse and recycle any containers that can still be used in order to save money instead of just buying new containers."*
Interview	**F&B Staff**	*S1: "For our packaging, ahh gumagamit kami ng paper bags pag ahh nag tetake-out. Tapos 'yung mga microwavable 'yung mga lagayan, kasi diba pwede pa gamitin 'yon, huhugasan lang okay na ulit."*	*S1:*

Subtheme 2.2: Social Media Marketing

With the current situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, marketing a newly established business can be challenging. However, Restaurants 1 and 2 used the Internet to market and advertise their products. According to Navalon et al. (2019), the emergence of social media has changed how companies communicate with their customers, allowing them to have more direct and faster contact using advertising or marketing strategies. In addition, the cost of using social media for advertising is much lower than traditional publicity methods.

The key players practice sustainability by eliminating paper and plastic for their advertisement flyers, posters, and tarpaulins. They are maximizing the use of social media instead.

Table 6

Subtheme 2.2: Social Media Marketing

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owner**	O1: *"Well actually we also do our own marketing. Kase it's a very small restaurant, family owned siya actually. And also ahh.. we also maximized the use of social media. So, makikita niyo sa Facebok, sa Instagram and also we… also ahm, do collabs and partnerships with vloggers. 'Yung nga young na… na vloggers, ganon."*	O1: *"For marketing, ahh… I don't know if this would count as sustainable practice but we use social media to advertise our restaurant, specifically a facebook page, ayon. And I think kasama siya right? Rather than printing papers and everything."*

Theme 3: Factors Affecting Customer Decisions

Regarding consumer behaviors and diets, the researchers have discovered that the key players need specific sustainability practices in these areas. However, the researchers studied if there is any significant connection between consumer behaviors and diets and the key players' sustainability practices.

This theme pertains to the factors affecting the customers' decisions on where and when to eat. Since Restaurants 1 and 2 do not have specific sustainable food system practices in consumer behavior and diets, the researchers tried to discover if Restaurants 1 and 2's sustainability practices affect customers' decision to eat at their establishment. Based on the answers of the participants, the sustainable food system practices of the restaurant do not have a significant effect on their buying behavior. Customers choose to dine in Restaurants 1 and 2 not because of their sustainable food system practices but mainly because of the ambiance and delicious food items and food quality that they set out for their customers, which are the sub themes of this theme.

Subtheme 3.1: Ambiance and Delicious Food Items

This sub theme illuminates that the customers are mainly after the main product of the key players, which are delicious food items; the second is the place's ambiance. According to Griffith (2017), three main factors influence why customers eat at a restaurant: food quality, service, and ambiance. Therefore, both restaurants' sustainable food system practices do not affect their consumers' decision to choose them.

Table 7

Subtheme 3.1: Ambiance and Delicious Food Items

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Customer**	C1: "I chose to dine here at [restaurant 1] because it's ahm sulit, and I love their pansit, pizza, and specially their bulalo. Everything is tasty dito."	C1: "Hmm.. masarap yung food nila at napaka ganda ng ambiance."
		C2: "Masarap kasi 'yung foods nila."	C2: "Maganda kasi yung ambiance more plants ang presko unlike sa other resto masyado ng crowded."
		C3: "Hmm… the ambiance is good and their service and the food is also great."	C3: "Masarap dito nagustuhan naming ng friends ko 'yung pagkain nila."
		C4: "Ahh… siguro dahil sa pricing ng food pero quality na tsaka di masyado kalayuan kasi taga kaybagal lang kami."	C4: "We love their bulalo, the beef is not to soft, you can still feel it when chewing."
		C5: "Masarap yung food nila dito and budget friendly pa, di tulad sa iba mahal na nga di pa kasarapan."	C5: "Malapit lang samin tsaka masarap yung pagkain di pa gaanong kamahalan."

Subtheme 3.2: Food Quality

Most customers love to enjoy the food of the key players and claim that it is not because of their diet and the restaurants' sustainable food system practices but the quality of the food they serve. Although the key players have a wide range of menu selections that can cater to everyone's diet, most of the customers that the researchers have interviewed have yet to have one and mainly visit the restaurant because of the excellent food.

The customers need to be made aware that these restaurants are practicing sustainability. According to the Journal of Environmental Sustainability, restaurant sustainability has been increasingly apparent throughout the pandemic. However, it is still being determined whether these practices attract consumers who do not have a particular diet that corresponds to the restaurant's products. However, food quality is one of the customers' top priorities.

Table 8

Subtheme 3.2: Food Quality

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Customer**	C1: "Personal diet? Ahm actually, I don't have a specific diet nanman. Ahh I just love to eat (laughs). And masarap talaga ang pagkain, so bumabalik kami. In terms of their Though bulalo 'yung parang pinaka ano nila ahm focal point 'nung resto, may mga other options naman sila sa menu nila, like salads and pasta ganon, flexible din naman if you're not a heavy eater."	C1: "Di naman ako masyado nag dadiet pero yung food nila isa sa mga reason kung bakit ako bumabalik dito."
		C2: "For those who are on diets, kasi ako hindi eh Hehehe. Parang onti lang yung pagkain nila para sa diets."	C2: "Not a diet person pero I recommend their menu para sa mga nag didiet kasi there are a lot of choices from salad to fish and soup."
		C3: "Di naman kami masyado nag didiet pero gusto ko lang dito is my choices sila from meat, fish to salad."	C3: "Di naman ako nag didiet hahah, kayo ba mga brad? Kidding aside gusto lang talaga namin yung ambiance tsaka masarap yung food dito kaya pabalik pablik kami."
		C4: "'Di naman kami nag didiet ng girlfriend ko pero isa talaga sa binabalik balikan naming dito ng girlfriend ko ay yung food nila bukod sa affordable na masarap pa, pati yung pizza nila dito sarap din, kasi kadalasan sa ibang mga resto na bulalo ang main product eh halos lutong bahay na talaga eh dito nag ooffer sila ng pizza na talagang favorite ng girlfriend ko."	C4: "Yes, I like eating salads. And meron sila dito kaya dito ako kumakain."
		C5: "Wala kami diet hehe, pero	C5: "Di ako nag didiet eh,

bumabalik kami dito kasi masarap yung food and 'di masyado matao di kagaya nung mga kainan sa may magallanes parang sobrang crowded na."	*pero sa sarap ng food at sa lapit kaya ako nagagawi dito."*

Problem No. 2 How do key players describe their challenges in practicing sustainable food systems in the new normal?

Theme 4: Restaurant Flexibility

This theme pertains to the participants' experiences during the new normal situation. They quickly adapted to changes and blended into the situation without being troubled as they started their business. It turns out that the key players did not experience any challenges relating to their restaurants' sustainable food systems practices during the new normal situation. Since both the key players opened their food establishments in the last quarter of 2020, which was the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, their standards and sustainability practices became high.

This theme is supported by Ford (2021), which specifies that the restaurant sector is fast-paced and adaptable, and businesses must consider how to serve the customers best post-pandemic, including food safety measures, delivery options, and where meals are eaten. This will forever alter the industry, and we have yet to determine the outcome. This industry will emerge with two characteristics: flexibility and openness.

Table 9
Theme 4: Restaurant Flexibility

Data Source	**Evidences**

		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owners**	*O1: "Hmm… challenges? Wala naman. we open during the pandemic. So ahm, since we opened, our standards talaga have been this one already, so we didn't really have to… to… parang adjust na kailangan mas malinis, kailangan hugasan ng maayos, kailangan i-disinfect. Kasi it was what we started with already and we also pala do the fogging every night. Na alam mo 'yon? Dini-disinfect kasi ano we are not just concerned about our customers, we're also taking care of our staff you know, our kitchen and kung sino man – lahat everybody here yah."*	*O1: "Since the beginning of our operation, September 2020. We are ahh, we are practicing sustainability na talaga because its pandemic, we need to sanitize everything, the area – everything. We use organic disinfectants and soaps actually, because they are mild but effective and non-toxic and chlorine but we need to make sure tama 'yung timpla non for it not to be toxic."*
Interview	**F&B Staff**	*S1: "We really don't have to adjust because we open in the pandemic, so we open October of 2020. So we were very very conscious of cleanliness practices and disinfection. We do fogging everynight and we have pest control, lahat lahat na tinodo na talaga namin."*	*S1: Since na open po ito ahh.. September 19 2020 so ahh.. meron na talaga kami ng standard operating procedure namin. So yun yung kelangan nating sundin. So simula noong ahh.. september 19 pinapalaganap na talaga namin yung sustainability.*

Problem No. 3 How do they see the future of sustainable food systems in the new normal?
Theme 5: Consistency and Owner's Initiative: The Key To Restaurant Sustainability

This theme pertains to the participants' consistency and initiative toward restaurant sustainability. The owners' initiative to integrate sustainability practices in their restaurants is evident in their answers. They plan to continue their sustainability practices for the long run and have the initiative to improve their implementation of sustainable practices in this new normal situation.

For any restaurant, consistency is the key to a sustainable future, Ichimura (2019) stated. The urge to embrace sustainable restaurant standards has grown over the last decade. These practices have often become an intrinsic part of the restaurant's mission and commitment to the community. There has been a significant increase in understanding of strategies restaurants could use in energy and water efficiency, low or non-toxic cleaning and pest control products, and waste management practices to counter the massive waste that occurs in restaurant operations. These tactics have frequently boosted profit for operators who apply them well (Someck, 2021).

Table 10

Theme 5: Consistency and Owner's Initiative: The Key To Restaurant Sustainability

Data Source		Evidences	
		Restaurant 1	**Restaurant 2**
Interview	**Owners**	O1: *"Of course! We will continue our sustainability practices. Papalagay kaming solar panels. So, 'yun talaga kasi ahm 'yung bill naming – iba kasi 'yung computation ng bill pag commercials spaces, 'yung bill naming dito, ang liit-liit neto ah, umaabot 'to ng forty-five thousand monthly. And if you think about it, solar panels maybe like three hundred – four hundred thousand? Oh ilang months lang 'yon ROI ka na diba? Pero syempre ang laki-laki ng investment na 'yon. I mean, 'nung pinagawa naming 'to marami na rin kaming improvements since napagawa naming siya."*	O1: *"We plan to implement the practices we have now for the long run of our restaurant. For now, wala pa kaming naiisip na pwedeng idagdag sa restaurant in terms of sustainability, so we will just continue what we started. But we would like to improve pa our practices. I think we just need time and new ideas pa."*

V.   DISCUSSION

This research study explored and identified the sustainable food system practices of selected local restaurants in Tagaytay City and investigated the challenges experienced by the key players and their plans for the new normal situation.

The study concluded that the key players have different initiatives in practicing sustainability in their establishment but have the same goal: to help the environment and minimize their effect on it. The sustainable food practices identified under the system supporting food production are local sourcing, water and energy conservation, and waste management. In the food supply chain, reusable items and sustainable social media marketing are used more than traditional marketing. However, the researchers found that the key players need specialized sustainability standards in consumer behaviors and diet. Instead, they tried to discover if the key players' customers know that they have sustainable food system practices to see if they will affect their buying decisions. However, the sustainability practices of the key players do not affect consumer behavior. Customers love to eat at Restaurants 1 and 2 mainly because of their delicious food items and their restaurant's ambiance. However, the key players offer a diverse menu selection that can accommodate everyone's dietary needs. The customers enjoyed the food of the key players and claimed that it was not because of their diet but because of the food the restaurants served.

The researchers also discovered that these selected restaurants had no challenges in their sustainable food system practices during the pandemic since they became part of their restaurant from the beginning. They quickly adapted to the situation, and it did not hinder them from operating amidst the pandemic. It is supported by Alsetoohy et al. (2021), who stated in their study that the COVID-19 pandemic became a wake-up call for restaurants to practice sustainability. Consequently, they plan to continue integrating sustainability into their operation. One of the key players is planning to install solar panels for their restaurant for their post-pandemic plan, while the other will continue what they are doing today.

In addition, there are two essential things that the researchers have discovered while conducting this study. First, the Local Government of Tagaytay City is involved in the waste management of the key players. One of the participants stated that their garbage would not be collected if it was not adequately segregated. According to the City Planning and Development Office of Tagaytay, in 2011, Mayor Agnes Tolentino mandated solid waste segregation for all commercial and noncommercial establishments in the city. It has been strictly observed until today. Hence, the LGU of Tagaytay supports the sustainability of the city's restaurant sector. Second, the key to restaurant sustainability is consistency and the owner's initiative in integrating and implementing sustainability practices in their establishment. Sustainability in restaurants must start with the owners themselves. They can rule over what should be done in the restaurant. Being hands-on with the business is vital to initiate the first move towards sustainability.

To further encourage the restaurant industry of Tagaytay City and venture into sustainable food systems, the researchers recommend that the city's Local Government must

continue to support the restaurant sector in terms of sustainable food systems practices by developing a concrete plan toward sustainability for these establishments.

Based on the study's findings, considering sustainability, the following post-pandemic plan was drawn for Tagaytay City restaurants.

This post-pandemic plan will help the restaurant sector of Tagaytay City and their Local Government enhance their sustainability program, particularly in their food systems, for the next 5 to 10 years. The local government will play a crucial role in promoting sustainable food systems practices in this program.

General Objectives:

Following the execution of the development mentioned above plans, the restaurant industry and Tagaytay City's Local Government Unit are expected to:

- Elevate the performance of sustainable food systems practices of the restaurants in Tagaytay City.
- Increase the awareness of the public about restaurant sustainability.
- Reduce food waste in the restaurant sector of

the city. Table 11 Action Plan

Key Result Areas	Objectives	Action Plan/ Activities	Key Performance Indicators	Source of Fund	Lead Responsible, Strategic Partners/ Organizations Involved
Restaurant Sustainability (System Supporting Food Production)	To establish a policy or program to help improve the sustainable food systems practices	Introducing to restaurants the use and advantages of a walk-in freezer instead of using multiple individual freezers in the kitchen for the upcoming years.	To reduce electricity use by 20% every month.	Restaurant Management Local Government Unit	Restaurant Sector of Tagaytay city LGU of Tagaytay City

of restaurants in Tagaytay City	Recommend seminars for restaurant staff about sustainable food system practices.	Increase of awareness and knowledge of the restaurant owners and employees about sustainabi-lity in the coming years.	
	Seminars about proper waste disposal, using the leftover fruits and vegetables as a fertilizer and donating leftover foods such as rice to piggeries.	Lessen the restaurant food waste by 50% yearly.	
	Mandatory for big restaurants to have their own vertical garden or small garden area for their herbs and other low maintenance vegetables.	Expenses for ingredients will be reduced by 5 to 10% monthly.	

Restauran t Sustain- ability (Food Supply Chain)	Introducing the customized eco bags for restaurants instead of using single- use plastics for take outs to the restaurants.	To reduce plastic waste in the restaurant sector by 50 – 80 % yearly.
	Start using restaurant establish- ments' sustainability practices to advertise themselves to the public. To gain a niche market, which are the sustainable diners in the vicinity. This can be their new set of customers, aside from their regular customers.	Increase the awareness of the public about their sustainabi- lity practices.
Restauran t Sustain- ability (Consumer Behaviour)	Encourage- ment to purchase seasonal ingredients locally.	Increase customer satisfaction by 50%, since the restaurant can offer Their seasonal cravings.

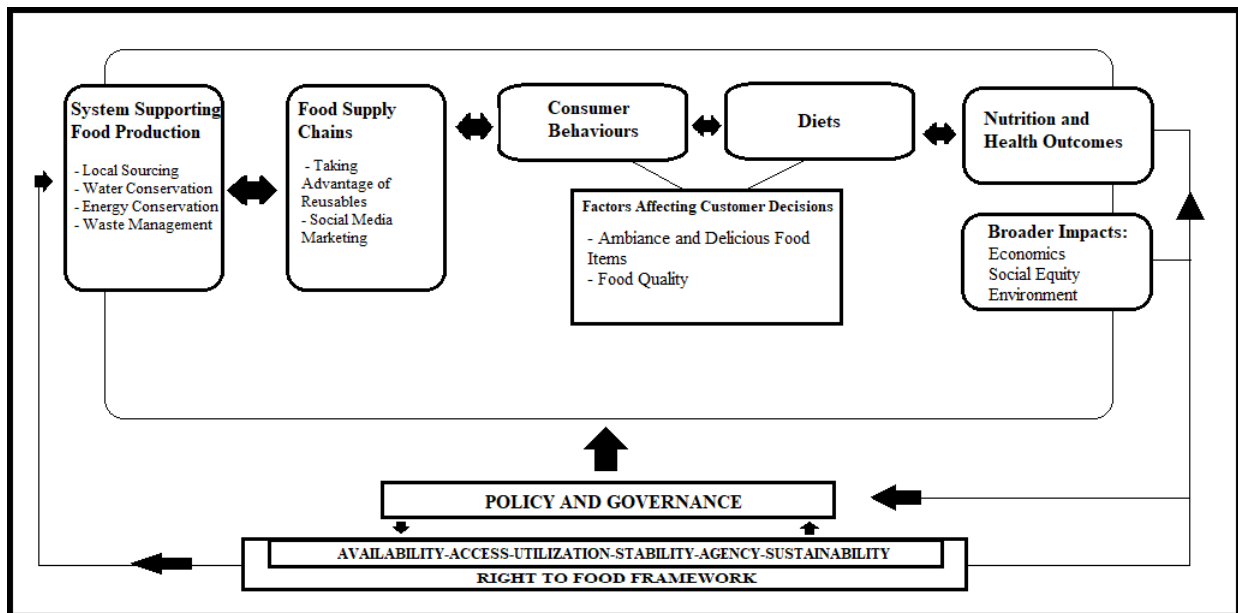|	Conduct seminars and implementation of menu diversity (eg. Vegetarian options) to improve consumers' health.	Improves the diet and food choices of the consumer.
Restaurant Sustainability (Diets)		

INTEGRATIVE CONSTRUCT

Figure 2. Sustainable Food System Practices Framework

Theme number one of this study is the aspect of the system supporting food production. Sustainable food system practices include local sourcing, water conservation, energy conservation, and waste management. At the same time, sustainable restaurant practices in the food supply chain are under theme number two of this study. The identified practices are taking advantage of the reusables and social media marketing. Theme number three differs from the first two themes since the key players need sustainable food system practices in consumer behaviors and diets. This study brought to life factors affecting consumer decisions. The ambiance, delicious food items, and food quality are the two factors that affect customers choosing and dining at restaurants 1 and 2.

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The Impacts, Challenges, and Possibilities of Covid-19 Pandemic to the Natural Attraction Sector of Tagaytay City: Basis for a Proposed Post-Pandemic Intervention Plan

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I.   ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the natural attraction sector of tourism in Tagaytay City, the adaptive responses to the challenges brought by these impacts, and the possibilities for progress recovery of the sector. This study sought to answer the following problems: 1) The level of impacts (socio-cultural, financial, and environmental); 2) The challenges experienced; 3) The solutions to the challenges; 3) The possibilities for progress recovery in the natural attraction sector, and 4) the proposed post-pandemic intervention plan. Simple random sampling and snowballing sampling techniques were used as the sampling method among the natural attraction tourism stakeholders in Tagaytay City. A survey questionnaire and a structured interview schedule were created as the study instruments. The researchers used a contemporary mixed-method approach to determine the objective and subjective experiences of the respondents. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to interpret the data. Findings show that the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the sector's socio-cultural, financial, and environmental aspects. They responded to these impacts through establishment-level and community-level approaches. The progress recovery was observed to be sourced from the opportunities brought about by the pandemic and the outlook for recovery by its stakeholders. A detailed proposed intervention plan was presented at the end of the study.

Keywords: *tourism, COVID-19, pandemic, IATF, socio-cultural, financial, economic, environmental, tourists, government*

II.   INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in lockdowns and restrictions that upturned the industries on a global scale. Due to the attempts to contain viral transmission by restricting human

mobility, several key industry players suffered a decline in operations, workforce, resources, and inevitably – revenue – leading to a temporary shutdown of functions until they can be safely restored.

The tourism industry is among the earliest to experience the impacts of the pandemic. Defined by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2008), Tourism is the "social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or professional purposes," which has to do with the activities of these people, some of which may imply tourism expenditure. Tourism is subdivided into five classifications in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). These include the industry groups of accommodation, food and beverage services, recreation and entertainment, transportation, and travel services (British et al. of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 2013).

The Cambridge Dictionary (2022) defines a tourist attraction as "a place people visit for pleasure and interest, usually while on holiday." Tourist attractions have different types, including natural attractions, purpose-built or artificial attractions, sports attractions, and special events (Stainton, 2021). Natural attractions, such as national parks, beaches, mountains, islands, and forests, are naturally occurring. In the Philippines, Tagaytay City is one of the top tourist destinations (Celis et al., 2013) that features cool weather, fresh food, and scenic locations overlooking Taal Volcano.

Tagaytay is a city in Southwestern Luzon situated atop the Tagaytay Ridge, with an altitude of 2000 feet above sea level (Britannica Encyclopaedia, 2015). For years, Tagaytay has been tagged by the Department of Tourism (DOT) as the top tourist destination in Region IV-A CALABARZON, with the number of local and foreign visitors – typically city dwellers from nearby Metropolitan Manila – doubling in the first half of 2019 compared to the same period from the previous year (Nazario et al., 2019). Among the frequently visited establishments are natural attractions People's Park in the Sky, Picnic Grove Complex, and Residence Inn and Zoo, and purpose-built attractions Sky Ranch Amusement and Recreation Park, Museo Orlina, Puzzle Mansion, and the Our Lady of Manaoag at Tierra de Maria. In 2018, the number of tourists totaled 4,216,403, with 1,142,413 visiting in the first six months of the year, which doubled to 2,641,447 tourists in the first half of 2019. However, tourist visits declined in 2020 due to pandemic lockdown restrictions that preceded the Taal Volcano's eruption (Arnaldo, 2020).

In March 2020, Philippine health authorities raised the highest alert level (CNN Philippines, 2020) after reaching 52 active cases, with 794 samples and 68 under investigation (World Health Organization, 2020). In Metro Manila, travel restrictions prohibited its over 12 million population from traveling in and out of the political center by land, air, and sea. Along with the prohibition of mass, gatherings were the mandatory closing of all establishments except those providing necessities such as food and medicine production (Official Gazette, 2020). The same lockdown was extended over the entire Luzon, including Tagaytay, on March 15, 2020. Implementing these global lockdowns has tremendously affected the local and international scene; tourism is at the forefront of those affected.

Among the factors under review when considering the impacts of the pandemic on tourism are socio-cultural, economic, financial, and environmental factors. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2020), culture was indispensable during the challenging period of the pandemic, and it is an experience that people seek out. However, the slow recovery of cultural tourism due to the pandemic has put livelihoods at risk, threatening to permanently damage the ecosystems of tourism and culture. On a more positive note, however, altruism and care were raised to be a "culture" when fewer social services were delivered, including community and local neighborhood efforts to provide essentials to the needy (Mansouri, 2020). On a much larger scale, transnational solidarity and intercultural dialogue were promoted to create critical and transformational roles for new standard global industry policies.

From a financial standpoint, it was apparent that the hospitality and tourism industry was not adaptable to lockdowns because of its heavy reliance on face-to-face contact, travel, and discretionary income (Mauck, 2020). The declining personal income, social distancing, and fear of infection had become a disadvantageous situation for the industry, leading to staggering financial losses. From an upward perspective, the significant impacts on worldwide tourism of the shutdown of hotels, restaurants, theme parks, and travel were viewed with a solution and opportunity in mind, where new business models and delivery concepts were formulated (Deloitte, 2020).

Environmentally speaking, tourism contributes 5% of all artificial emissions from tourism transportation and over 20% of transport-related emissions. However, a considerable decrease in carbon dioxide emissions was observed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, most notably within the transportation industry, including tourism-related travel (von der Ropp, 2020). Additionally, the pandemic has created behavioral changes for travelers to be encouraged to act more sustainably, where many have called for people to become more environmentally conscious in their travel behavior to mitigate the threats posed by environmental destruction, climate change, and infectious diseases (O'Connor & Assaker, 2021).

Despite the adverse impacts and challenges in the cultural, economic, and environmental facets of tourism, the transition to the new normal as the world reaches the end of the COVID-19 pandemic opens new opportunities for transnational and intercultural dialogues in policy-making in terms of environmental emissions (Ono, 2020). New models are also being considered and discussed by both industries and clients regarding operational and impact mitigation for financial and economic losses (Deloitte, 2020). Furthermore, a steady focus on socio-cultural recovery accelerates socio-economic recovery from the pandemic (Wahba et al., 2020).

This study sought to investigate the impacts, challenges, and possibilities posed by the COVID-19 pandemic on the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1.   What is the impact of the pandemic on the natural attraction of Tagaytay City in the aspects of:

    1.1. socio-cultural

    1.2. financial

1.3.   environmental;

2.   What challenges did the natural attraction sector encounter during the COVID-19 pandemic?

3.   How does the Tagaytay City tourism sector adapt to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic?

4.   What are the chances of progress in the recovery of Tagaytay City's natural attraction sector?

5.   Based on the study's findings, What intervention plan can be proposed?

The impacts gauged on all three aspects stated in problem 1 reflect a range within adversarial or negative pandemic impacts. The identified themes in problems two to four will help understand on-the-ground situational responses and perceptions for recovery of the stakeholders in the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City. In the final section of the paper, a post-pandemic intervention plan rooted in the results was proposed.

To investigate these problems, the study was anchored on the Culture of Tourism by Richards & Wilson (2006) and the U-curve model by Oberg (1960) for socio-cultural impact, the Economics of Tourism Companies by de Oliveira Santos (2017) for financial impact, the Eight Dimensions of Sustainable Development by Sachs (2004) for environmental impact, and the Tourism Theory of Change (n.d.) for challenges and progress recovery.

The key variables of this study were impacts, challenges, and possibilities for progress recovery. The impacts were gathered quantitatively, while the challenges and possibilities were collected qualitatively and were integrated into the analysis and interpretation stage, which provided a basis for a post-pandemic intervention plan.
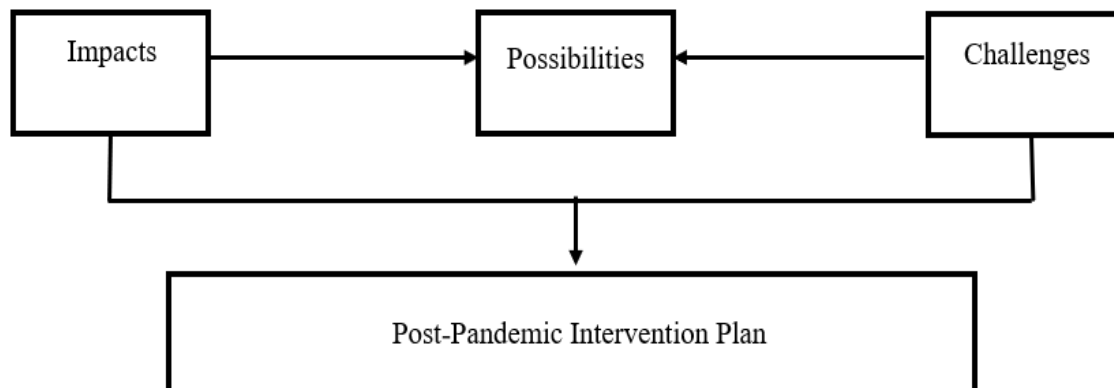

Figure 1. The Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

III.   METHODS

This study followed a mixed-method explanatory approach and was divided into two concurrent phases: the quantitative phase, which was geared towards measuring the socio-cultural, financial, and environmental impacts, and the qualitative phase, which examined the recurring themes among challenges experienced by the sector, the solutions they implemented to adapt to

these challenges and the perceptions on the possibilities of progress recovery.

Due to the nature of the study, two sets of sampling techniques were utilized for the two concurrent phases. First, the respondents were randomly sampled and snowballed to attain sufficient responses foundational for interpreting and analyzing quantitative data. The sample included tourism stakeholders such as Tagaytay City tourists, LGU officers and volunteers, natural attraction administrators and managers, natural attraction employees and staff, and Department of Tourism employees, snowballing to 257 responses. For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was used to gather five participants, representing *People's Park in the Sky*, *Picnic Grove*, *SVD Farm*, *Sunflower Farmville*, and *RD's Sunflower Farm*.

The respondents for the quantitative phase were profiled in their age years, critical player classification, and years of visiting or working experience in the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City. A total of 102 respondents were aged 18 to 23 (P = 39.7), 56 respondents were 24 to 29 (P = 21.8), 36 were 30 to 35 (P = 14.0), 31 were 35 to 40 (P = 12.1), and 32 were 40 and above years old (P = 12.5). For the vital player classification, more than half of the respondents were tourists (F = 145; P = 56.4), followed by business employees or staff (F = 44; P = 17.1), LGU officers or volunteers (F = 33; P = 12.8), business owner or manager (F = 27; P = 10.5), and Department of Tourism employee (F = 8; P = 3.1) consecutively. Finally, for the years of visiting or working experience in the sector, 1 to 3 years and 4 to 6 years were almost at par with 85 respondents (P = 33.1) and 82 respondents (31.9), respectively. Forty-seven respondents (P = 18.3) have 7 to 9 years of experience, while the rest (F = 43; P = 16.7) have been sector stakeholders for ten years and above.

The researchers utilized two instruments for the study: a survey questionnaire for the quantitative data gathering and an interview schedule for the qualitative. The *socio-cultural, financial, and environmental impact surveys* consisted of one section dedicated to examining the demographic profile and three sections geared toward rating the level of impact on the natural attraction sector through 10-item Likert-type scales that were anchored on the works of UNWTO (2021), Williams (2020), KEA European Affairs (2021), Kaushal & Srivastava (2021), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020). The *structured interview schedule* was designed to acquire information on the subjective experiences of the critical representatives per the selected natural attraction establishment, which was directed towards examining the adaptive responses to the challenges and the possibilities of the sector's recovery from the challenges. All interview items were created based on the existing works of Kaushal & Srivastava (2021) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020). Both instruments were tested and validated before administration.

The researchers ensured the apt implementation of ethical considerations in the data gathering phase, which included non-compulsory participation of the respondents, attaining their informed consent, assuring anonymity of responses and confidentiality of personal data through a confidentiality agreement at the forefront of the survey questionnaires, and the briefing for potential harm, which were limited to social interaction during the pandemic but was minimized through the online collection of data. The data gathered using the survey questionnaire were

examined via descriptive statistics, which were computed for the weighted mean to glean the extent of the responses on a scale of 1 (very low impact) up to 5 (very high impact), all gauging the negative impacts of COVID-19 to the sector. The qualitative data from the interviews were transcribed, coded in two stages, and examined for recurring themes using a thematic analysis approach. Lastly, the data from the two phases were integrated with the mixed-method analysis.

IV. RESULTS
Problem #1. What is the impact of the pandemic to the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City in the aspects of:

Table 1
Socio-Cultural

Socio-Cultural Impact	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Certification for hygienic practices for COVID-19	4.48	Very High Impact
Information guides on the procedures to be followed during the stay	4.44	Very High Impact
Distance between people at the attractions	4.39	Very High Impact
Detailed guides for human traffic management (i.e., arrows, signages)	4.33	Very High Impact
Feelings of safety in the premises	4.42	Very High Impact
Feelings of connectedness with the natural attraction	4.39	Very High Impact
Feelings of connectedness with the people	4.33	Very High Impact
Feelings of social inclusivity within the premises	4.37	Very High Impact
Interaction between employees and guests	4.32	Very High Impact
Local color and identity (i.e., pasalubong, regional accents)	4.33	Very High Impact
Mean Socio-Cultural Impact	**4.39**	**Very High Impact**

Legend: Scale for Verbal Interpretation of the computed mean:
4.21 – 5.00 – Very high impact   *1.81 – 2.60 – Low Impact*
3.41 – 4.20 – High Impact   *1.00 – 1.80 – Very Low Impact*
2.61 – 3.40 – Moderate Impact

This table presents the weighted mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation of the socio-cultural impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City. All indicators pointed towards an interpretation of very high impact, with the highest weighted mean garnered by the indicator, "Certification for hygienic practices for COVID-19" (M = 4.38), followed by "Information guides on the procedures to be followed during the stay" (M = 4.44) and "Feelings of safety within the premises" (M = 4.42). The lowest weighted mean was accounted for by "Interaction between employees and guests" (M = 4.32), yet all indicators fall within the 4.21 to 5.00 range, interpreted as very high impact. These findings affirm the claim that the physical distancing measures and safety protocols for preventing COVID-19 transmission in the tourism industry further engender people's social and physical disconnectedness from each other (UNESCO, 2020).

While the Tagaytay City pre-pandemic tourism statistics indicate its thriving state, the scores during the Pandemic reflected a very high impact that led to its poor socio-cultural state. Tourism is not chiefly an activity to visit and view destinations but also to be exposed to different types of culture, people, and interactions, which Tagaytay City tourists and stakeholders were primarily deprived of as social interactions were significantly lessened during the Pandemic due to the IATF restrictions and internalized fear that social engagements increase viral transmission.

More than the level of connectedness, however, patterns and habits play a massive part in the socio-cultural aspect. In Tagaytay City, just like on the global scale, these patterns were disrupted by the Pandemic because the crisis was unprecedented, and the natural attraction sector's patterns on information guidelines and procedures to be followed by guests during their stay were erratic; therefore, the confusion of both tourists and staff on the inconsistent changes. Hence, this significantly impacts the sector as tourism conditions were ever-changing from the fluctuation of COVID-19 infection rates.

All indicators reveal that significant adverse impacts were observed in the poor state of the socio-cultural aspect of the natural attractions. The minimal socio-cultural interaction between stakeholders is attributed to the general decline in social activities as an effect of the directive of the government banning social gatherings and local festivities in pandemic-stricken

areas, which diminished their local colors, as well as the decline in tourism activities due to restrictions and cancellation of bookings (Soliku et al., 2021).

Table 2

Financial

Financial Impact	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Admission costs	4.13	High Impact
Additional costs (i.e., for PPEs, sanitation fee, etc.)	4.18	High Impact
Presence of MSMEs near the natural attraction	4.27	Very High Impact
Securing a booking	4.37	Very High Impact
Postponement or cancellation of booked visits	4.26	Very High Impact
Price points of food and beverages within the attraction	4.02	High Impact
Price points of services within the attraction (i.e., spa, etc.)	3.98	High Impact
Promotions and discounts	4.25	Very High Impact
Staffing or manning within the premises (i.e., feels short-staffed resulting in slow services, etc.)	4.25	Very High Impact
Staff satisfaction on wages (in your perception only)	4.32	Very High Impact
Mean Financial Impact	**4.21**	**Very High Impact**

Legend: Scale for Verbal Interpretation of the computed mean:
4.21 – 5.00 – Very high impact   1.81 – 2.60 – Low Impact
3.41 – 4.20 – High Impact   1.00 – 1.80 – Very Low Impact
2.61 – 3.40 – Moderate Impact

This table presents the weighted mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation of the financial or economic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City. The financial impact indicators individually reflect either high impact or very high impact. However, the indicator with the highest weighted mean was "Securing a booking" (M = 4.37), followed by "Staff satisfaction on wages" (M = 4.32) and "Presence of MSMEs near the natural attraction" (M = 4.27), while the lowest was found in "Price points of services within the attraction (i.e., spa, etc.)" (M = 2.02). True to the interpretation of its indicators, the mean financial impact pointed towards the very high impact range (4.21 to 5.00).

The natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City suffered not a sturdy decline but an abrupt loss of revenue due to the immediate lockdown measures. This meant that its primary revenue generation sources, the tourists, were not attainable from the lack of visits. As the sector slowly reopened and accepted bookings, the outlook on its revenue seemed to be positive but was instantly declining as bookings were canceled due to the rise and fall of COVID-19 cases. This resulted in the financial decline of the attraction and the economy of their employees and staff, who had to suffer from reduced wages due to reduced working hours.

The presence of MSMEs within or surrounding the attraction also signifies its economic stealth. The very high impact observed in the poor respondent scores for the natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City shows that the financial impact was not merely experienced by the establishment but also by small-scale businesses that had to shut down because their revenue was highly dependent on tourist arrivals which were not possible during the restrictions. On the other hand, the lower mean of price points may be attributed to the effort of the sector to create promotions at an affordable price to gain an increase in tourist footfall.

These findings align with those of Folinas and Mextas (2020). They reported that the difficulties in travel bookings and cancellations led to significant estimated losses for the industry. Furthermore, the higher price range upon the onset of the Pandemic (Wu, 2022) indicates the poor price point results. Considering the micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) surrounding the attraction, the exceptionally high impact would be a sharp decline in revenue, possibly shutting down because destination-dependent providers rely on tourist footfall for their enterprises to thrive (Lim & To, 2021).

Table 3
Environmental

Environmental Impact	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Cleanliness and maintenance	4.50	High Impact
Condition of animals (if any)	4.52	High Impact
Condition of plants, trees, and greeneries	4.59	Very High Impact
Condition of land	4.56	Very High Impact
Air quality	4.58	Very High Impact
Availability of open spaces	4.44	High Impact
Access to water (i.e., in restrooms)	4.38	High Impact
Availability of waste bins	4.44	Very High Impact
Waste management	4.43	Very High Impact
Presence of maintenance staff	4.41	Very High Impact
Mean Environmental Impact	4.49	Very High Impact
Overall impact of the pandemic to the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City	**4.36**	**Very High Impact**

Legend: Scale for Verbal Interpretation of the computed mean:
4.21 – 5.00 – Very high impact   1.81 – 2.60 – Low Impact
3.41 – 4.20 – High Impact   1.00 – 1.80 – Very Low Impact
2.61 – 3.40 – Moderate Impact

Table 3 presents the weighted mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation of the environmental impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City. All indicators point towards the result of *a very high impact*. Among the highest-scoring indicators were the "*condition of plants, trees, and greeneries*," "*air quality*," "*condition of the land*," and *"condition of animals"* (M = 4.59; 4.58; 4.56; 4.52). The indicator with the lowest weighted mean is "*access to water*" (M = 4.38), but it remains to have no significant differences compared to the interpretation of the rest of the indicators.

The very high impact observed in the indicators shows that the natural attraction sector in Tagaytay City declined due to poor conditions during the pandemic, as perceived by its stakeholders. This is the opposite of what was generally presumed: nature could recover due to decreased human mobility during the pandemic. The increased use of shared resources in Tagaytay City could account for this gap. Its locals were back home from working in other cities, and general lockdowns meant more resources, such as water, were consumed. Furthermore, this could be

compounded by the very high financial impacts observed. The lack of income disrupted the hiring and giving of salaries for the maintenance staff. Furthermore, the budgetary requirements of ensuring that the animals and plants on the premises were well-fed and well-tended may have exceeded the income that the attraction generates, leading to lesser capacity and resources for feeding and tending.

The results affirm the findings that flora and fauna were among the ones that suffered greatly during the pandemic, especially those that were domesticated (Usui et al., 2021). However, this contradicts the early data released by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and European Space Agency (ESA), which stated that overall pollution from reduced global economic activity decreased by up to 30%. Nonetheless, this discrepancy may be caused by the variability of the nature of the local tourism industry in a country (Gössling et al., 2005). Many environmental maintenance and enhancement goals have been subdued because of the increased focus on defeating the health crisis, even if it means tolerating single-use plastics to avoid contamination and viral transmission (Nagaj & Žuromskaitė, 2021).

Problem #2. What are the challenges encountered by the natural attraction sector during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Theme 1: Job Loss

The natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City faced challenges that involved possible job loss of employees due to retrenching activities. This is because of the establishments' minimal revenue, resulting in a lower salary budget.

> *"no people were coming in… so we do not have the right amount of revenue to pay people… so we had to let people go,.." (Participant 3)*

In addition, because of the lockdown measures that led to the indefinite closing down of establishments, many employees feared job loss.

> "*'di ba sarado yung park… iisipin mo na wala kang sahod o mawawalan ka ng trabaho…"["the park closed down, right? It makes you think that you will lose your job and your salary…" (Participant 1)*

The lack of revenue from the temporary shutdown of tourism activities increased the possibility of retrenching employees and staff, fearing the loss of their jobs and wages. This is true not just in the tourism sector but also worldwide. In a study by Ocheni et al. (2020), they reported that the job loss brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic became a regional dilemma and a global challenge. Massive job loss has been stated to be damaging to the industry (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021) as the collapse of travel led to income inequality (Sun et al., 2022).

Theme 2: Revenue Loss

The lack of tourism activities during the total lockdown period at the beginning of the

pandemic and the temporary yet prolonged shutdown of the establishments led to the loss of income for the natural attraction sector. For some, the initial lockdown meant no tourist footfall was received, and no revenue was generated.

> "... malaki ang nawala kasi ay sarado, diba during the pandemic, sarado naman lahat ng establishment, so ibig sabihin walang kita." [...we have lost a lot because the establishment closed down, hence, we had no revenue]"
> (Participant 2)

More than the enforced lockdown, however, a part of the sector reported the lack of or minimized tourist activities because most people were economically affected by the pandemic. Hence, not all pre-pandemic tourists may have the means for leisure and travel, especially during the pandemic.

> "... kasi siguro sa hirap na rin ng buhay konti na lang yung namamasyal kaya siguro actually masasabi talagang revenue loss yun kasi para sa city..." [...maybe due to the (financial] difficulties of life, fewer people travel, which led to revenue loss for the city] (Participant 3)

An establishment also had to shut down due to COVID-19 transmission within the vicinity, which brought about a long period of revenue loss for them as they were quarantined.

> "... kasi there was a time na nag positive sa kabila, kabila kase is the seminary, so we had to close down, pinasarado kame, siyempre walang revenue..." [There was a time when someone tested positive in the seminary adjacent to the farm, so we had to close down and lose revenue...] (Participant 3)

The loss of revenue due to the prolonged strict lockdown period, the decline in the economic capacity of most tourists, and the instances of viral transmission within the vicinity of the establishment led to difficulties and challenges for the sector. This is because the sector operates on and for revenue, and revenue generation supplies the resources they will need to continue their operations and provide salaries for their staff. This is true worldwide, as a decline of about 70% in tourist arrivals was observed in 2020 due to significant travel restrictions, leading to a loss of 730 billion USD (Malra, 2021).

Theme 3: Stiff IATF Restrictions

The strict measures of the Inter-Agency Task Force against Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) also contributed to the challenges experienced by the sector. Because the establishments were not allowed to operate at 100% capacity entirely, the natural attraction sector had to turn down guests in order to refrain the attraction from being too crowded.

> "... hinaharang naman jan sa gate para mas hindi maging prone yung farm mapuno yung tao hindi kami maging crowded." [we do not let other tourists enter the gates so that the farm will not get crowded by too many people] (Participant 4)
> "... 'close na muna, naka 300 na po tayo, masyado po kaseng mahigpit ngayon eh,' iyon yung mga sinasabi namin sa guest, which is yung ibang guest nag

rereklamo…" ["We reached 300 visitors so the park is now closed, we have strict measures at the moment" is what we tell the guests, however, they tend to complain] (Participant 1)

For other establishments in the sector, compliance with the IATF meant that no admission could be granted to tourists who were not vaccinated or did not bring any proof of vaccination at the time of visit.

".. Hinahanapan namen sila ng contact tracing ganun.. Ahh.. Vaccination card.. Yung wala noon, hindi makakapasok…" [we look for contact tracing forms and vaccination cards… without it, they cannot enter (the premises)] (Participant 5)

"May mga bata na di pa vaccinated, [auto] matic dapat may guardian na kasama na vaccinated," [there were children who weren't vaccinated, so we made sure that their guardians were.] (Participant 1)

The strictness of the IATF measures became a challenge to the sector because after the prolonged lockdown period and minimized tourism activities. The sector needed to recover by earning all the revenue it could generate. However, this could be at the expense of another wave of COVID-19 transmission. Hence, the sector had no choice but to comply with the restrictions imposed by the IATF.

Visitor management was more important than revenue generation in preventing positive cases. Hence, strict control in traveling, enhancing social distance, and avoiding crowding was essential in recreation sites with limited space (Hakim, 2020).

Theme 4: Fear of Volcanic Activities

Unfortunately, Tagaytay City faced a simultaneous natural dilemma, the COVID-19 pandemic, when the Taal Volcano – a city trademark due to its scenic view – threatened to erupt. This caused fewer tourist arrivals despite reopening tourism activities in the city, as visitors were afraid of being caught in an unanticipated eruption.

"… sa ngayon kokonti lang ang guest namin, kase dahil sa bulkan naman, diba ayun, yun naman ang naging, ang pag sabog naman mg bulkan, siguro kaya lang umonti ang aming guests." [at the moment we have only few guests because the volcano threatens to erupt] (Participant 2)

The sector was also concerned that the volcanic activities would put their attractions at risk, destroying their well-tended features.

"Kaya lang may isa pang risk na nagbabanta, yung taal, just two saturdays ago, umuusok. Kaya ayun dasal, dasal, kase kapag nangyari yung before kawawa yung halaman." [However, there is another risk – the Taal (volcano) – because it emitted smoke just two weeks ago which detriments our plans] (Participant 3)

Due to the announcement that Taal Volcano was raised to Alert Level 3 due to its phreatomagmatic explosion (Manila Bulletin, 2021; CNN Philippines, 2022), many bookings were

canceled, and the natural and scenic beauty of the attractions that connect people to nature were at insistent risk to be disrupted. This withheld the sector's progress because as it slowly gained momentum to reopen and see progress, the volcano's threat caused them a negative turnout.
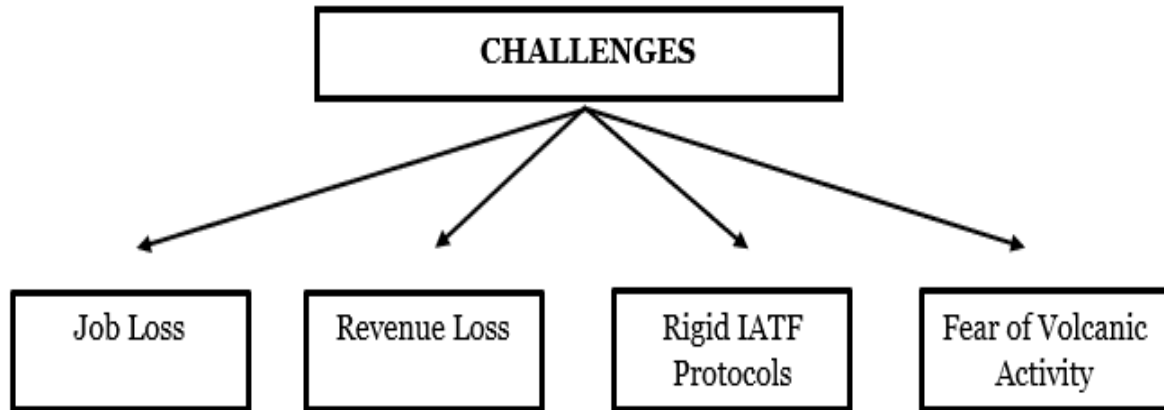

Figure 2.
Recurring Themes in Terms of Solutions to Challenges Encountered

Problem #3. How does the Tagaytay City tourism sector adapt to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Establishment-Level Category

In adapting to the challenging impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the researchers observed that establishment-level solutions were those measures that the natural attraction administration and staff decided to implement without the influence of external bodies.

The natural attraction sector has taken these responses to combat job and revenue loss and minimize viral transmission at the height of the Pandemic. Such responses were interpreted as the result of the necessity of the attraction administration to address the rising challenges from the very high impact experienced in the socio-cultural, financial, and environmental aspects on their own without waiting for government mandates and government-stipulated assistance as most of the initial state directives and resources were focused on minimizing the health-related impacts and strengthening the initial line of defense of the country, which was the front lines. Furthermore, responses observed at the establishment level were those that the administration and staff autonomously implemented to mitigate possible pandemic impacts, such as retrenching employees and eventual business shutdown.

As organizations within attractions respond to such challenges, they rapidly tend to operate in more novel and more resilient ways (Verma & Gustafsson, 2020). As displayed by their independent responses at the establishment level, *organizational resilience* is defined as their ability to manage uncertainty (Prayag, 2020) – especially at an unprecedented time such as the

COVID-19 Pandemic. Alonso et al. (2021) identified such responses as coping with the Pandemic's fallout, which entails self-reliance and self-initiated steps to generate revenues and limit costs. These steps are subdivided into the sub-themes presented in the succeeding sections.

Theme 1: Retaining Employment

The natural attraction sector exerted effort to ensure that they did not retrench employees and staff at the height of the pandemic despite the lack of revenue from tourist footfall due to government restrictions. In order to address this, they implemented an employee rotation and scheduling system.

For employee rotation, this response was observed:

> *"…hinati kami sa set a at set b. Dalawang grupo, team a, team b. Halimbawa mag positive man ito, wala na tayo, tas yung team ba na yung mag ano, para kumbaga gagalaw pa rin yung operation." [we were split into two sets, so that if someone from a team tests positive, the operations continue with the other team in mobilized]* (Participant 1)

The scheduling system was reported through the following statement:

> *"… we just had them rest for a while and then what we did was [parang] scheduling."* (Participant 3)

These two types of role division were formulated so that no employee would have to be removed from their posts. Retaining their employees was essential to the natural attraction sector, which could be because most of their employees were locals or from nearby provinces who heavily relied on their income to supply their needs during the pandemic. Additionally, many staff members have been employed at the attraction for years and have mastered the workflow. Retrenching them meant that the attractions would have to cover the costs of retraining the staff or employing a new workforce once the tourism activity is restored. These efforts to avoid retrenching employees were generally observed in the tourism sector during the pandemic as imperative for business survival (Rogerson, 2021).

For government-owned attractions, continuous "emergency" hiring of employees was implemented. This provided job opportunities for those retrenched from their previous occupations.

> *"… manpower siguro… tinulungan nila yung sa iba-ibang barangay kase siyempre yung iba na tengga, nawalan ng trabaho… pinapasok yung mga pangalan sa city tas pinapasahod namen" [they helped the locals who lost their jobs, they worked with us for manpower and their names were registered in the city government for payroll]* (Participant 1)

For privately-owned natural attractions, the pandemic had been an opportunity to open and enhance their establishment. Hence, they continued hiring workers.

> *"…actually nangangailangan pa nga kami ng maraming tao… kumukuha parin kami ng tao mga jobless talaga yung kinukuha namin dito para*

> *maestablish naman to…" [we actually need more workers, so we employ*
> *jobless people to help establish the attraction]* (Participant 4)

Hiring employees is identified to be a measure taken not out of the need to increase the workforce in the attraction premises – as most of its operations have already slowed and halted – but out of the state-sponsored initiative to introduce jobs to the locals who have no means to supply their needs during the pandemic after having lost their jobs. However, this is a temporary solution to the problem and will eventually result in job loss once the transition to the new normal of tourism is over. To work around it, more creative roles for the job must be developed, such that the newly employed individuals will be directed to new functions such as improving social network promotions, online and on-site customer response teams, and maintaining safety on the premises - all of which are competencies that would be important in post-pandemic tourism job field. These measures reflect the programs and policies designed to build a better normal for the Philippine labor market (Bertulfo, 2020).

Theme 2: Revenue Generation

The natural attraction sector formulated solutions to continue generating revenue to sustain and support its operations. These were through partial reopening, selling and delivering goods, shared revenue, and business enhancement.

Partial Reopening

For the sector, partial reopening was made possible by the loosened government-mandated restrictions due to the decline in the number of cases and the increase in the vaccination rate.

> *"...Nag bukas nung konti na lang yung positive." [we reopened when there*
> *were few positive cases]* (Participant 1)

The sector partially reopened in response to the decreasing number of positive COVID-19 cases nationwide. However, this was executed in a highly restricted and rigid manner. The roles were extensive for the employees and staff as more requirements had to be checked upon entrance, and additional supplies had to be present to ensure that the facility was COVID-safe, which could be costly. Hence, the partial reopening measures could have been more efficient in revenue generation and were only done to fill the revenue gaps caused by the lockdown. The partial reopening of businesses, however, aimed to increase the footfall of domestic tourists from nearby cities and provinces, as it had been established to be less vulnerable to global crises when compared to international tourists (Mbaiwa et al., 2007) because domestic tourists are more likely to visit and go through the rigid checking process. However, this method is the only precursor to the eventual reopening of the business because the marginal increase in tourists only assists in keeping the business open at a survival level (Rogerson, 2021).

Selling and Delivering Goods

Because the natural attraction sector is heavily linked with the environment and, in turn,

the existence of farms within the attraction grounds, selling and delivering farm-grown products became an immediate response to the lack of revenue when they were closed down from tourist visits. Farm-grown goods were posted online and delivered door-to-door because on-site selling was impossible as part of the COVID-19 preventive measures.

> *"...what we did was ... nag online selling ng vegetables, kase tuloy ang harvest tapos walang tao, so parang ang naging solution was to sell online, nag deliver kame, nagpalalamove, tapos nag deliver ng ano, so it was a parang stop gap solution lang"* [*we sold vegetables online and delivered it door-to-door as a stopgap solution*] (Participant 3)

This, however, was reported to be a mere stopgap solution and will only be pursued partially when tourist footfall increases. Based on this sector's response, the attempt to enter the production and selling market was not a consideration to be pursued after the pandemic. It was only done to generate revenue while tourist visits were still not permitted, and government help to keep the sector afloat has yet to be available. This change in revenue generation is consistent with the self-reliant approach asserted by Alonso et al. (2021a) and was a new form of generating revenues while limiting costs (Alonso et al., 2021b).

Shared Revenue

The administration and owners of non-government natural attractions sought ways to generate income and sustain business survival even when no tourists were allowed to visit. Hence, those who own multiple businesses implemented an approach of shared revenue.

> *"...meron din kaming flower shop sa manila kaya yun nagfefeed kung baga ito yung siya yung nagnagpapakain dito para maestablish namin ng mas maayos pato tong farmville."* [*we also have a flower shop in Manila whose revenues helped sustain the site*] (Participant 4)

Through this, the income or revenue from a high- or stable-earning business branch from a location with better business conditions than that in Tagaytay City will be shared to keep both businesses afloat. Based on this, revenue sharing helped temporarily sustain the operations and business survival of the attractions in Tagaytay while they were still closed. Hence, natural attractions modeled to be interconnected with other businesses have better chances of staying afloat during the pandemic as an external source of revenue is available without generating it on the site itself. Revenue sharing was not new to the pandemic, as global organizations have used this to contribute to sustainable development goals (Cairus & Job, 2019).

Theme 3: IATF Compliance at the Establishment Level

As a general measure, the establishments took it upon themselves to strictly follow the guidelines implemented by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF).

> *"... facemask, faceshield, vaccine cards, ... Temperature, social distancing,*

sanitation" (Participant 2)

"...yung IATF protocol na mag suot ng mask, ... and then hand washing, alcohol, lahat kame, meron kameng alcohol spray..." [*wearing of face mask, handwashing, sanitizing, and others*] (Participant 3)

These were done because the management and staff believed they needed to work together with the IATF to diminish the positive and suspected cases of COVID-19 and ensure that unanticipated cases would be prevented (Amul et al., 2022). Therefore, despite not being directly observed to help improve the sector's financial, socio-cultural, and environmental conditions, the willingness to comply with the IATF protocols was instrumental for the sector in reducing the number of cases and preventing the numbers from spiking. This way, the sector can operate and implement its means for sustained financial, socio-cultural, and environmental conditions.

Community-Level Category

Theme 1: Government Subsidy

Compared to private attractions, government-subsidized natural attractions could sustain the wages of their employees and staff without the need for retrenchment.

"... ibig sabihin nun [ng lockdowns] parang diba iisipin mo walang sahod pero iba, pag sa government kase kung ilang days yung regular days may sahod kayo ganun" [*it means despite the lockdown, the government provides our salary with our regular working days considered*] (Participant 1)

Hence, none of the employees and staff were relieved from their posts despite the lack of revenue.

So under kame ng city. So ah, ibig sabihin, kahit na pandemic, may trabaho pa rin, ah hindi nawalan ng trabaho kase nga ay government employee lahat... [We're under the city (government), so despite the pandemic, we still have jobs because we're government employees] (Participant 2)

The government-owned attractions were able to assist in supplying its organizational and employment needs by providing steady salaries and wages. This assisted the attraction administration in supplying organizational needs through government provision of salaries and wages, which is helpful because the natural attraction sector is a huge source of job opportunities for locals in Tagaytay City. It is highly-visited for its natural features. This is true in other countries, too, such that government policy interventions assist tourism establishments through payments to staff to minimize retrenchment and avoid augmenting the salaries of those heavily impacted economically, such as the utility staff. Such an act reflects and is inclusive of the encouragement of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) that governments must support the tourism industry by protecting the workers and their livelihood and providing financial stimulus for businesses (WTTC, 2020).

Theme 2: IATF Compliance at the Community Level

The Local Government Units assisted in monitoring the compliance of the attractions to the IATF protocols to ensure that the risks of COVID-19 transmission are minimized. These were done through regular and random monitoring of cases.

> *"... 'yung sa LGU, ayun siguro ano dito, mas minonitor nila.."* [the local government monitors the establishment further] (Participant 1)

Based on this, the sector always had to be ready for random checking and monitoring of their supplies and facilities, which prompts them to stay on their toes to ensure that the facility is COVID-free and safe for resumption of operations. Improving healthcare monitoring within the tourism and hospitality industry was among the practices demonstrated by many governments in attempts to restore the sector with which the Philippine government and its local units were actively in compliance (Allaberganov et al., 2021).

Safety officers were also appointed to ensure that the IATF mandates were followed and transmission risks were minimized.

> *"...nag tala sila ng tao dito, halimbawa safety officer para mag monitor ng mga siyempre kung may mga nararamdamang sintomas ganun…"* [they appointed a safety officer who monitors if the staff experiences COVID symptoms] (Participant 1)

These safety officers' responsibilities include regularly monitoring the status of employees who were quarantined in isolation and health facilities or their homes (Department of Health, 2022). The presence of safety officers in the sector has been beneficial for the sector as it helps note the employees in quarantine and, in turn, collectively aid them with their needs while they cannot step out of their homes. Furthermore, safety officers helped regulate the number of cases and helped ensure compliance with the IATF measures regarding self-quarantine and quarantine in health facilities. Such a measure was vital because clear communication with the state is crucial for the survival of the tourism and hospitality industry (Yeh, 2020), and safety officers were instrumental in that.

A proper cascade of information is vital in restoring and mitigating adverse pandemic outcomes in the industry. The distribution of informational materials in flyers and posters became essential.

> *"...sila rin yung nag ccheck sa amin, nag follow up, nagbibigay ng mga materials, information, materials."* [they (the local government) also check up on us and distribute information materials] (Participant 3)

Based on this, informational materials were crucial in aiding the industry in attaining a general and standardized set of materials and protocols. Furthermore, such provision was facilitative for the industry as the cost to cover purchasing such was lessened, and government support in the form of provision during this crisis has been highlighted as essential by more than one study (Fong et al., 2020; OECD, 2020).
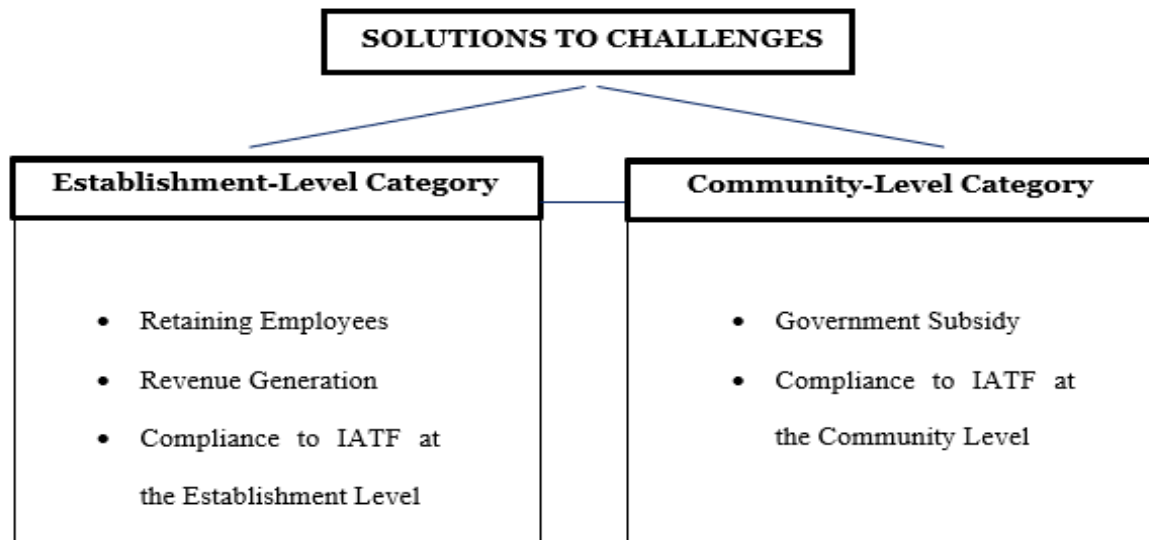
Figure 3. Recurring Themes in Terms of Solutions to Challenges Encountered

Problem #4. What are the chances of progress in the recovery of Tagaytay City's natural attraction sector?

Arising Opportunities

The opportunities attained by the natural attraction sector that surfaced as a result of the pandemic were explored in this section. These include relational improvements, business improvements, and employment improvements. Based on the interview data, several opportunities from the pandemic may be maximized to be incorporated and sustained as best practices in the post-pandemic industry.

Theme 1: Relational Improvement

The sector observed the heightening of the collaboration in both employee-employee and employee-employer layers. This improvement in the organization's internal workings was attributed to the constant checking up on each person's health and needs to avoid possible viral contraction and the collective need to improve the attraction's economic, socio-cultural, and environmental conditions.

> *"… yung relationship ng employee to employee… Employee tapos sa boss sa OIC namin … mas napaigting… mas nagtulong-tulong…" [the employee-employee and employee-employer relationships grew due to our collaboration]*
> (Participant 1)

The organizational resilience demonstrated by internal relationship improvements contributes to its ability to overcome COVID-19 (Bhaskara & Filimonau, 2021).

The attraction managers and staff also reported an increase in concern for the welfare of those who work in the establishment. This concern extends not only to the employee's physical

health or the presence or absence of COVID-19 symptoms they experience but also to how they cope with providing for the needs of their families, balance their mental well-being, and play their roles in the attraction sector.

> "...isang positive opportunities for us to really look out for each other... kapag may konting naramdaman, lahat kami concerned about that person..." [a positive opportunity is that we now look out for each other and were concerned for their wellbeing] (Participant 3)

Based on this result, this theme is first beneficial to the employee. After all, the developed concern for their welfare by the administration and management was instrumental to improving their well-being and, second, beneficial to the management because holistically healthy staff meant more participative and invested teams. This is evaluative of the strategic climate of the organization because promoting employee well-being facilitates organizational sustainability (Haque, 2021).

Theme 2: Business Improvement

The natural attraction sector admin and staff both reported improvements in the attraction premises due to the closing down or limited tourist admission.

> "...dahil kokonti nga ang tao, hindi nagagamit ang facilities, so parang na maintain, yun yung positive way,..." [Due to less visits, the facilities were less used hence better maintained] (Participant 2)
>
> "...it was the time of healing ... diba [dati] maraming tao, yung mga grass yung mga halaman, parang masyadong over used talaga, parang we were given time, the farm was given time to rest,..." [it was the time of healing. It was overused then, but now the farm was given time to rest] (Participant 3)

This is because of the decrease in footfall and declining carbon emissions from touristic activities (Nagaj & Žuromskaitė, 2021). This meant that the sector benefitted from the period of tourist inactivity because fewer resources were consumed regarding ground maintenance. The sector could recover and "breathe" environmentally without the compounding tourism destruction.

The sector also saw a rising trend in their respective social networking pages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

> "Actually 1 [million] views yung.. maliit na farm namen, na.. na-Go Cavite na siya. Na feature na siya Go Tagatay yan.. Nasasama na siya sa mga tourist attraction dito sa.. Tagaytay po."[we now have 1 million views and we are now featured in popular pages, and are now included in Tagaytay's list of tourist attractions] (Participant 5)

Based on this, such an increase was not observed before the pandemic because people were less active than online users. Hence, increased activity became beneficial for online tourism pages, which engage more active audiences through promotions and discounts. This is true to research literature because the increase in social media engagement and views was observed as an effect of people turning to their phones and social networks for entertainment during the local pandemic

lockdown and the active effort of establishments to seek innovative ways to market themselves to a domestic audience (Rogerson, 2021).

Theme 3: Employment Improvement

For all of the attractions studied, the work-from-home or hybridized work set-up was first introduced only at the onset of the pandemic. In this system, many employees with roles that are not necessary for daily on-site reports were permitted not to report on-site daily.

> *"...sa part ng mga employees ah, nakapagpahinga sila, kase meron kaming work from home, so nakasama yung yung pamilya nila, ako kase kung walang pandemic, araw-araw ka papasok, pero nung wala namang, nung pandemic, pwede ka mag work from home."[the employees can now rest and be with their families through the work-from-home set-up, which was not possible before the pandemic]* (Participant 2)

According to the administrators and staff, this allowed more time and space for the staff to relax and spend time with their families. This meant that the sector could introduce healthier work setups for some of its employees, which did not happen prior to the pandemic because, during the pandemic, employers became more open to permitting remote work. According to Galanti et al. (2021), enabling employees to work from home typically leads to healthier outcomes for their well-being due to the leeway of time that they get to dedicate to family and personal purposes, which (Sultana 2021) reported to improve employee participation and commitment to the goals of the business.

Uncharacteristic of the massive job loss during the pandemic, the natural attraction sector opened temporary and permanent job opportunities for disadvantaged families after losing their jobs in retrenchment.

> *"...nagkaroon kami ng mga emergency [manpower] na galing sa mga bara-barangay, dumuty sila dito eh, tas may sahod…"* [we hd emergency manpower from the locals who were in duty here and received salaries] (Participant 1)
> *"nag-tanggap kami ng ibang mga applicants sa iba na alam namin nangangailangan talaga… naka tulong ito para mas matulungan din nila pamilya nasa province…"* [we employed applicants who were in need, which helped them support their families in the province] (Participant 4)

Based on this, jobs became available in the natural attraction sector on temporary and potentially permanent bases. They may develop into better opportunities to improve the Tagaytay City tourism job market. These decisions aligned with post-pandemic outlooks for an enhanced focus on job creation, which features a fundamental shift from merely gaining revenue to improving the job market (Koh, 2020).

Outlook for Recovery
Theme 1: Within Control

The possibilities for recovery were perceived to happen if and when the attraction

administration implemented steps within their control, such as increasing tourist footfall, adding recreational facilities, and collaborating for government provision.

The increase in tourist arrivals once the pandemic is combatted will signal the industry's recovery.

> " …'pag back to normal, magiging ano eh, [dadami] yung mga tourist arrival
> namin eh." [when all goes back to normal, more tourists will arrive.]

This may mean that the statistics on tourism in Tagaytay City may return to that of its pre-pandemic state or even exceed it to signal recovery. Based on this, the attraction sector believes that more tourist activity equates to more recovery chances. For tourists to increase, however, the fear of contracting the virus in highly-populated tourism sites must be mitigated by improved site conditions and safety certifications (Allaberganov et al., 2021).

For a part of the sector, it is presumed that new features must be added to entice more tourists to visit.

> "… yung naisip siguro ng government is yung mag add ng facilities, to invite
> more people ulit…" [the government thought to add facilities which will invite
> more people in] (Participant 2)

This had been in the process for government-sponsored natural attractions in Tagaytay City. It was projected to bring more tourists to the city as recreational facilities will bring a new thrill and excitement to their visiting experience (Mandić & Kordić, 2018). Based on this, some stakeholders believe newer features will attract tourists. However, this requires an additional budget and attention from the state and site operators and may not be possible for smaller-sized natural attractions privately owned and unsubsidized.

Finally, government provision was still continually sought as a precursor to progress. This support was requested through supplies, such as seeds, fertilizers, and farming tools that help improve the natural attraction's agricultural aspect.

> "Sana tulungan pa rin kami na yung ahh.. Patuloy silang magbigay ng mga
> .. mga seeds..mga.. Ahh.. Abono.. Ayun po.. Mga tools.. Farming tools" [we
> hope the government could supply farming tools which could help us recover]
> (Participant 5)

Based on this, the natural attraction sector remains dependent on government assistance because some of its stakeholders uphold that the state must be responsible for providing at least minimal materials that may aid recovery. Other forms of government support may include skills training of local employees and fiscal stimulus in the transition to the post-pandemic tourism economy (Hall et al., 2020).

Theme 2: Beyond Control

The possibilities for progress recovery are believed to be influenced by factors beyond the control of the natural attraction sector, such as the direction of natural events and the years of recuperation necessary for the environment to recover from the pandemic.

Tagaytay City is disadvantageously situated near the Taal Volcano, which means that

simultaneously with the COVID-19 pandemic, there were fears of a Taal explosion. This has shaken the stability of gaining tourist visits over time.

> *"...yun naman ang naging, ang pag sabog naman ng bulkan, siguro kaya lang umonti ang aming guests… Dadami iyon at makaka-recover ulit kung tigil na yung pag-aalburoto…"* [threats of Taal Volcano explosion lessened ur guests, but we can recover when the threats stop] (Participant 2)

This implies that the attraction sector must be ready to adapt whenever natural events occur because these are random and usually unexpected. Because these were not within control, progress recovery regarding the direction of natural events may mean that the city must develop alternative tourism activities such as virtual realities to recover. This is because the direction of these natural events affects the outlook on tourism recovery in Tagaytay, as news of Taal Volcano instability was always almost immediately followed by cancellation of bookings and long periods of barely populated sites (Mercado & Apritado, 2021).

While some stakeholders believe there must be a precursor to progress recovery, some assert it will take years to recuperate.

> *"Mahirap sabihin yun kase alam naman natin na yung COVID is still here. Pero siyempre with God's grace sana ano, tama na. Mga ano 1 year sana…"* [We can't tell because COVID is still present, but hopefully at least a year to go…"] (Participant 1)

What this means for the sector is that consistent effort to recover will only show its incline to progress once it has compounded over time. The stakeholders must be willing and able to hold out amidst the fluctuation in tourism activities to see progress in recovery. Furthermore, the industry's survival has a standard period that applies to only some places because some destinations could reevaluate and improve their practices without immediate state assistance. In contrast, others resumed business with the government's help over time (Hall et al., 2020).
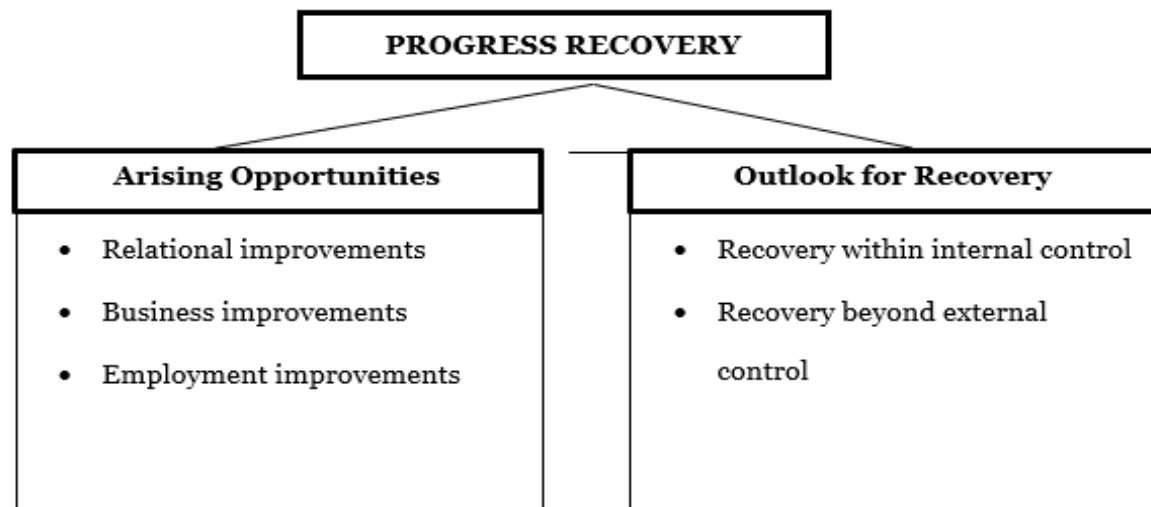
PROGRESS RECOVERY

Arising Opportunities	Outlook for Recovery
• Relational improvements	• Recovery within internal control
• Business improvements	• Recovery beyond external control
• Employment improvements	

Figure 4. Recurring Themes in Terms of Possibilities of Progress Recovery

Figure 5. The Integration of the Impacts, Challenges, and Possibilities for Progress Recovery of the Natural Attraction Sector in Tagaytay City
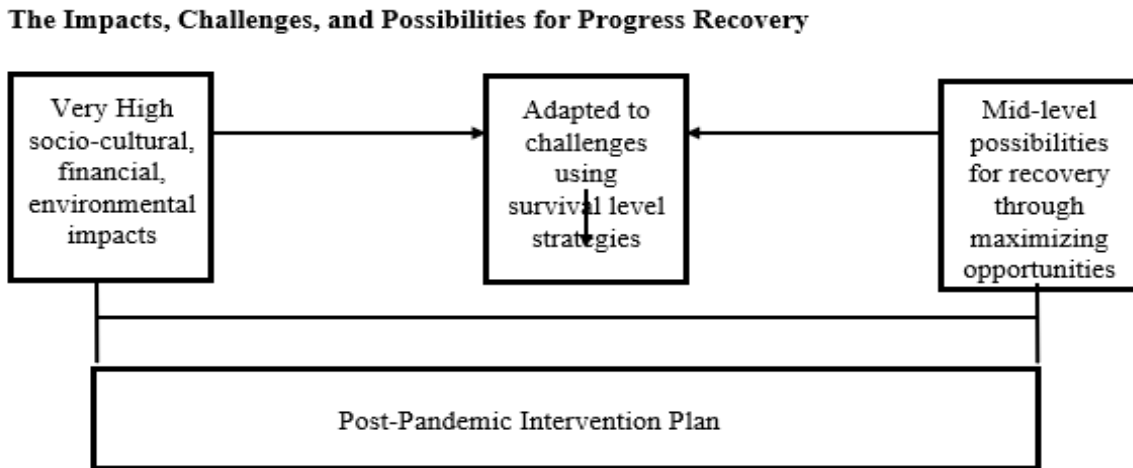
The natural attraction sector experienced high socio-cultural, financial, and environmental impacts. This meant that in contrast with its thriving pre-pandemic state in all aspects discussed, its state during the pandemic was in poor conditions and was, therefore, heavily affected by the pandemic.

The high impact posed challenges in the sector's socio-cultural, financial, and environmental aspects. The strict measures of the IATF on the protocols affected the socio-cultural aspect as more and more tourists grew frustrated with not being able to enter the site premises due to missed vaccination cards, age limits, or overcapacity of the destination. Furthermore, the strictness of these measures refrains interaction among stakeholders, as most used to be covered in face shields and masks. Revenue and job loss lie within the financial impacts, as the heavy impact costs a part of the revenue of the attraction, which lessened the dedicated budget for the salaries of its employees. Finally, the high environmental impacts also reflect the threats of the Taal eruption as greeneries were exposed to poor conditions due to the phreatomagmatic explosions.

The adaptive strategies intercepted the sector's challenges at the establishment and community levels. This way, employment continued, and revenues were earned even during the health crisis. However, since the impact scores were high, these adaptive strategies needed to be

more significant to be observed and felt by the respondents. This could be because the responses utilized generic strategies that could not boost the sector and only served as valid at a survival level.

Socio-culturally, the strict protocols and measures demonstrated by the sector's compliance with the IATF and the regular monitoring of governmental stakeholders withheld and contained socio-cultural interactions. It made stakeholders feel less interconnected, and engagements needed to be more manageable. Furthermore, because of the fear of viral transmission, tourists and other stakeholders kept to themselves and were more or less culturally isolated from the rest of the people present.

Financially, the sector was able to protect jobs and revenue. However, the employee rotation and on-call system strategies resulted in fewer working hours and fewer salaries for the workers. The revenues, too, were at a pandemic-era low because of the shorter operating hours and price promotions, leading to lower operating capacity and low revenue generation. The revenues, however, were able to serve their purpose at the survival level of the attraction operations.

Environmentally, the administration and staff observed natural improvements with little effort, such as recovering nature from the insistent damage from tourism activities during the lockdown period. However, more effort was needed to improve the environment and adapt to challenges. The strategies focused on not retrenching employees and providing stop-gap solutions to continue earning and operating during the crisis. Additionally, most environmental factors were affected by uncontrollable events, such as the rise to alert level 4 of the Taal Volcano immediately after tourism in Tagaytay had reopened, resulting in canceled bookings.

Hence, according to the respondents' evaluation, the sector's socio-cultural, financial, and environmental aspects could have been in better condition despite the adaptive strategies to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. This is supported by the respondents' observation that possibilities for progress recovery will still take years before they can be felt and observed. Furthermore, the possibilities depended on events beyond control, such as the threats of the Taal Volcano explosion. In addition, recovery meant involving a large sum of money, among other resources, to improve the attraction and develop recreational activities that would attract tourists.

However, the pandemic opened improved online engagements in the sector as more and more potential tourists were active online. Additionally, the relationship and collaboration between the employees and employer improved, and the external collaboration between the governmental arm of the stakeholders increased as all collective attempts to combat the pandemic.

The high impact experienced intercepted by adapting to the challenges through strategies that were effective only at a survival level and not at a level for the attractions to thrive resulted in possibilities that were bleak and dependent on how soon the pandemic would end, on the volcanic activities of the Taal Volcano, and on the resources of the management to construct activities and recreational facilities that will improve tourist engagements. On a brighter note, however, online engagement on the sector's social media platforms and websites, interpersonal concern and collaboration between the staff, and collective action with the government and external sectors

were observed. Hence, the post-pandemic intervention plan must be focused on maximizing these opportunities.

Problem #5. What intervention plan can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

The following section provides recommendations in improving the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City in no particular order based on the analysis from the previous sections.

Table 4

Recommendations in Improving the Natural Attraction Sector of Tagaytay City

Findings	Objectives	Strategies	Outcomes
Online engagement in social media platforms of the natural attractions increased due to the increased number of online users during the pandemic.	To optimize the use of online platforms for fast-tracked processes for online bookings, information dissemination, and promotions.	Use organic promotions by encouraging guests to share their best photos or experiences in the attraction, among other strategies for promotion.	Increased page reach resulting in a larger base of potential tourists; Fast-tracked processing of inquiries, bookings, and checkouts.
There is an improvement in the internal relationships among the attraction admin and staff.	*To sustain improved internal collaboration through employee-employer programs.*	Conduct regular capacity building programs for employees; establish a systematic process of addressing employee concerns.	Efficient natural attraction operations as a result of positive employee behavior; Attraction staff will be more committed to the goals of the attraction.

There was an enhanced external collaborative effort as a "team effect" of helping the attractions continue its operation despite the crisis.	*To further venture external collaborations through joint projects with other stakeholders.*	Establishing legal partnerships with other stakeholders, such as with NGOs; Enhancing the partnership and networking capacities of the staff through training.	Gaining reliable partners for the operations of the natural attraction; Skilled employees who can establish valuable partnerships and carry out joint programs.

V. DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the socio-cultural, financial, and environmental impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the natural attraction sector, the adaptive responses to the challenges brought about by these impacts, and the possibilities for progress recovery of the sector. Based on the findings, the researchers conclude the succeeding points.

The pandemic primarily affected the natural attraction sector of Tagaytay City socio-culturally, financially, and environmentally, leading to very high impacts. However, the natural attraction sector adapted to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic by working internally through establishment-level responses and externally through community-level responses simultaneously.

The possibilities for progress recovery of the natural attraction sector are vital if the opportunities brought about by the pandemic are effectively optimized and an upward trend is seen through increased footfall, effective handling of factors around natural disasters, and collaborative effort by stakeholders. Finally, the post-pandemic intervention plans must target increasing the tourist base, fast-tracking business processes, enhancing employee efficiency, and gaining reliable partners for the natural attraction sector.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers propose that the stakeholders may strive to enhance the socio-cultural, financial, and environmental conditions of the natural attraction sector by collectively consulting field experts in group consultation events and programs hosted by the local government of Tagaytay. The sector's establishment-level and community-level adaptive responses must be strengthened in preparation for unanticipated events that may or may not be similar to the COVID-19 pandemic by routinely practicing preemptive and response measures every month. The recovery efforts of the natural attraction sector may be reinforced by supplying their needs through monthly transitory government stipends, which could last for a year following the pandemic. The stakeholders may optimize the technological base of the attraction by consulting technology experts, increase employee motivation and commitment to the sector's goals through employee training programs, and establish effective partnerships by equipping the natural attraction administration and staff with skills in developing networks.

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