

Hotels in Daet, Camarines Norte: Their Story of Resilience amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract- *COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the global economy. The overarching aimed to unveil the challenges met and strategies used by hotel industry in the municipality of Daet. Specifically, it described the demographic profile of the hotel owners in Daet, Camarines Norte, Bicol, Philippines. In addition, it sought to identify if there is a significant relationship between the profile and the strategies as well as the profile of hotel owners, and the challenges they encountered. The study utilized the descriptive-correlational method with a survey questionnaire which served as the main tool in data gathering. There are a total of 21 hotels with events place in the municipality of Daet which comprised the respondents of the study. Based on the data gathered, hotel owners in the province of Camarines Norte strongly agree that COVID-19 had an impact into their lives as well as to the operations of the hotels in Daet. The study also revealed the challenges encountered by hotel owners in their operations in terms of financial aspect which indicates that there is no problem, operational aspect showed that there is no problem at all while the human resource management aspect showed that there is a minor problem. In terms of innovation, promotion and marketing strategy revealed that they seldom use it while diversification strategy indicates that they use it sometimes. Other revenue streams showed that they never used it. Significant relationship between the profile and the strategies employed by the hotel owners in Daet showed a statistically significant relationship between the net sales income and profile of the respondents, and management strategies in terms of innovation, promotion and marketing, and diversification while there is a positive relationship in management strategies in terms of innovation, promotion and marketing, and diversification.*

Indexed Terms- *Hotel Industry, Challenges, Resilience, Strategies, Stories, COVID-19 Pandemic*

I. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry plays an important role in society. It gives work opportunities, thus reducing unemployment. It also provides products and services to the people who look for recreation. It helps improve tourism, and contribute to the well-being of the guests. Having this kind of industry is important because aside from giving jobs, it also aids the county's economic growth. One way to show why tourists should travel to a country is through its tourism industry. Visitors from other nations spend money on goods and services, and contribute significantly to the economy, as well as to the welfare of the populace.

This industry is important for a wide range of reasons. It is responsible for a sizeable chunk of most countries' gross domestic product (GDP). This percentage grows with time. It supports local economies and jobs. Many communities will die if they will not be supported by the money that comes in. It also provides livelihood for a huge number of individuals and families. Beyond all of that, it provides essential services for travelers and locals alike which is of course its purpose (IMPOFF-Everything Exists for a Reason,2021).

Broadly speaking, a hotel is a managed building or establishment which provides guests with a place to stay overnight on a short-term basis in exchange for money. The precise features and services provided to guests can vary quite drastically from one hotel to another. Hotel owners generally aim to attract a particular type of customers through their pricing model and marketing strategy or via the range of services they offer. The hotel industry is the section of the service industry that deals with guest accommodation or lodgings. By most definitions, it refers not only to hotels but also to many other forms of overnight accommodation including hostels,

motels, inns, and guest houses. However, it does not usually include long-term or permanent forms of accommodation (Revfine Optimizing Revenue, 2015).

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the world's economy shut down almost overnight (UNWTO, 2020). It has confronted the hospitality industry with unprecedented challenge. Strategies to flatten the COVID-19 curve such as community lockdowns, social distancing, stay-at-home orders, and travel and mobility restrictions have resulted to temporary closure of many hospitality businesses and significantly decreased the demand for businesses that were allowed to continue to operate (Bartik et al., 2020). The government implemented lockdown to prevent the spread of the virus. Even though some establishments catering the essential needs of the people such as clinics, hospitals, drug stores, and grocery stores were open, they strictly followed the guidelines of the IATF.

Hotel owners and employees in the province felt the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic brought not only fear of being infected by the virus but also the impact of employment status of the employees. The owners felt the changes in their monthly income and other expenses during the first month of pandemic. Most of the hotel was temporary closed. It took months before the opening of the operation but it is not the same with the usual operations. The hotel management had a lot of requirements before travelers can have reservation in the hotel for events or accommodation. Since there were restrictions imposed by the government, the operations had to change their usual activities.

Before the pandemic, the major problems faced by the entrepreneurs were strong competition with imported products, high cost of advertisement, fluctuation of exchange rate, high production cost due to increased price of utilities expenses, high cost of marketing operation, sale of smuggling goods products, low quality products, and price competition.

With the rapid spread of pandemic, people around the world expressed panic in various behaviors. It affected the economy of the country, social values,

and psychological stress of the people involved regardless of the directness of contact with the infected (Nicomedes and Avila ,2020).

The increase in number of businesses in the Philippines can be attributed to the initiatives of the government that recognizes the importance of MSME in nation-building. As stated in the R.A 9501 which is "An act to promote entrepreneurship by strengthening development and assistance programs to micro, small, and medium enterprises amending for the purpose of Republic Act No. 6977 as amended, otherwise known as the "Magna Carta for small enterprises" and for other purposes. Section 2 is about recognizing that MSMEs have the potential for more employment generation and economic growth and therefore, can help provide self-sufficient industrial foundation for the country. It is hereby declared the policy of the state to promote, support, strengthen and encourage the growth and development of MSMEs in all productive sectors of the economy particularly rural or agri-based enterprises.

The research focused on the number of hotels based on the provided list from the Provincial Tourism Office in Daet, Camarines Norte. Those hotels served as the sources of work opportunities, and competition for the people. It offered a wide benefit such as innovation and cumulative productivity growth. It also contributed hugely to the development of the country in terms of taxes to the state, promoting of the different places that can be a source of investors or other potential partners in the business providing quality goods and services to the smaller and larger public at a reasonably reduced prices as well as its contributions to poverty alleviation.

Furthermore, the municipality of Daet is turning to be a fast-growing, competitive town and can be considered as the center of economic activity in the province of Camarines Norte when it bagged the Rank 1 spot in the Overall Most Competitive Municipalities in the Philippines for 2014. It also got the Rank 1 spot in terms of infrastructure (Madera, 2022). However, COVID-19 has huge impact to the people as well as to the establishments.

Most of the establishments struggled in the midst of the situation. Those offering the essential commodities such as the grocery stores, drug stores, clinics, and hospitals were advised to open while the other business were affected by the temporary closure of their business. The operations of other businesses had an impact not only to their customers but to the employees as well who suffered because of their loss of income as it was really hard to find another a job especially during the pandemic.

The hotel industry was one of the most affected by the virus. The operations had to stop for a long period of time in order to survive. Strategies were essential to the owners of hotels to stay competitive in the market such as reservation and payment through online to avoid exposure outside.

In this study, the researcher found solutions for the purpose of helping entrepreneurs, and the people as well. This study would help the future entrepreneurs on how to handle situations such as pandemic. It would provide additional knowledge or information about solving the different challenges that they might encounter in the world of business.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Generally, this study focused on the story of resilience of the hotels in Daet, Camarines Norte amidst the COVID-19 pandemic as basis of the formulation of a business model.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of hotels in terms of:
 - 1.1 total assets;
 - 1.2 number of years in operation;
 - 1.3 number of employees; and
 - 1.4 estimated annual net sales income?
2. What are the challenges encountered by hotels in terms of:
 - 2.1 financial aspects;
 - 2.2 operational aspects; and
 - 2.3 human resource management?

3. What are the strategies employed by hotels in terms of:

- 3.1 innovation strategy;
- 3.2 promotion and marketing strategy;
- 3.3 diversification strategy; and
- 3.3 other revenue streams?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the strategies employed by the hotels?

5. What business model canvass for hotel industry can be proposed?

• Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the strategies employed by the hotels.

III. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study determined the strategies employed by the hotel industry to become resilient in facing the challenges brought about by pandemic. Specifically, the researcher determined the profile of respondents in terms of total assets, number of years in operation, number of employees, estimated annual net sales income, common store strategies in place to gain the desired profit; challenges encountered by hotels in terms of financial aspects, operational aspects and human resource management; strategies employed by the hotels in terms of innovation strategy, promotion and marketing, diversification strategy, and other revenue streams; and proposed business model that may sustain the business operation of the hotel industry.

The scope of the study included the hotels and events place in Daet, Camarines Norte. Only the registered businesses and their proprietors were the respondents. As shown in the records of the Provincial Tourism Office, there were 21 registered hotels with events place in Daet. The researcher considered the criteria in selecting the respondents such as the services offered, location, and those who were registered in Daet LGU, and had been operating for three years. Other establishments such as hotels and events place which were outside of

the town were excluded in the study. The time frame set was from May 2022 to December 2022 which was deemed adequate to determine the story of resilience of the hotels in Daet, Camarines Norte amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter contained various related literature and studies deemed important to this study. The relevant data were gathered from different sources including the published and unpublished theses, research journals, research articles, and other relevant websites.

The study of Yacoub and ElHajjar (2021) found that hotel operations had witnessed a new normal characterized by more in-room dining rather than buffet, and that wearing of face masks became the norm. They also found that many hotels had taken steps to minimize expenditure by ensuring that staff took their annual holiday while room and food costs were adjusted according to market demands. These simple ways helped the owner earn despite the pandemic.

Rini and Fikri (2022) cited the strategies that have been successfully conducted in the hotel industry in order to make the business bounce back after the pandemic such as creating work flexibility as HR strategy, managing supply and demand uncertainty, creating disaster management operating procedure, and entering multi-business and multi-channel platforms. These strategies will not only be helpful on the part of the owner but also to the entire operations.

According to Burhan et al.(2021), government support, cordial relationships with stakeholders, self-determination of entrepreneurs, and formal planning were the most crucial factors that shaped the immediate adjustments of operational activities in response to COVID-19. These resilient practices were hygiene concerns, increased promotion through social media, innovative marketing practices (e.g., revised offerings), operational cost-cutting, and employee training to comply with changing standard operating procedures from the government and industry. Planning is essential in all aspects of life

especially in business. One of the purposes of having a plan is it guides the owners or management in deciding and achieving their goals.

The studies of Garrido-Moreno et al. (2021), and Sigala (2020) revealed that the literature concerning crisis management in the hotel industry confirmed an absence of contingency plans whereby the recovery/responsive practices were primarily reactive in their nature. The most common reactive resilience was shown by practices such as innovation through newer technologies for communication, strong cordial relationships with external stakeholders, enhanced marketing efforts, dedicated employee trainings, and specialist hygiene protocols. Those common practices being applied by the owners proved subservient in their business.

According to Sharma and Tiwari (2020), aside from initial lockdowns and gradual unlocking of economic activities, the public was encouraged to ensure social distancing, practice appropriate hygiene, mask wearing, and avoiding gatherings unless critically needed. Safety measures were the basic requirements when entering any establishments. This was implemented to avoid the increasing rate infected by the virus, and to help the owners of the establishments prepare in the new normal set up.

Similarly, Jiang and Wen (2020) emphasized the need for the establishments to strictly follow health protocol. The three dimensions artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, hygiene, health care, and cleanliness were essential in helping fight the fast spread of virus. They were recommended for the safety of the hotel staff and customers.

In addition, Bonfanti et al. (2021) stated that like other managers, proprietors in the hotel industry wanted to satisfy their customers. They kept practicing the things that ensure the safety of the customers because they believed that it was a big deal to their guests. The seven (7) safety measure were hygiene and protection, internal work reorganization, service scape reorganization, investments in technology and digital innovations, customer wait-time reorganization, staff training, and updated communication. These measures were

important for the continuous improvement of the business.

Didier et al. (2020) discussed the challenges of tourism and hospitality industry such that lending transactions and liquidity had significantly decreased during the pandemic as most lenders slowed down or stopped new lending. COVID-19 pandemic had huge impact to the Investors in the tourism and hospitality industry. Because of this, they cannot easily access loan to finance their business expansion and operations. Many of the investors in the hospitality industry were put on hold.

Gursoy and Chi (2020) stated that the impact of the current crisis was of a higher magnitude than any crisis experienced before, making it difficult to apply previous conceptual and theoretical frameworks effectively. Therefore, new knowledge was required to provide better insight into how operations in the industry can be transformed to cater the emerging customer needs during pandemic. The new strategies guided the owner in helping to recover, but this was not only focusing on the current situation as it was also beneficial to the other sector in overcoming the future unprecedented occurrences that had great impact to the people, as well as in the business industry. Developing methods for predicting the effects of crises especially in the tourism industry was much needed.

Nicola et al. (2020) in their study recommended that managers may make tough decisions that would make the business survive. The hospitality industry had a great number of employees and customers. Maintaining a large workforce did not help the financial status of the business because of the impact of pandemic. Since it would take years to recover from the crisis, the managers should cut on the costs of their operation. Most of the companies in the industry hired seasonal staff, so that it can lessen the budget for their salary. For instance, Marriott International Hotel had to place a large number of its hourly workers on furlough during this period. Nevertheless, businesses need to find ways of supporting their employees during the pandemic.

According to Aquino et al. (2021), in the interim standards, only facilities with legitimate Department

of Tourism accreditations were permitted to operate during the peak of the lockdown in the Philippines. These hotels were either employed as quarantine hotels or approved as places for staycations per interim regulations. As quarantine hotels, they housed guests who might have been exposed to the virus or became isolation facilities for COVID-19 positive guests. Hence, the Department of Tourism, with its tourism response and recovery plan (TRRP) brings together several government departments to help the tourism industry in the country devise new business strategies with health and safety measures in its entire service delivery. The initiative of the concerned agencies like the Department of Tourism (DOT) was really helpful especially in the hotel industry since many of the overseas wanted to go home in the Philippines. Hotels could still gain amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Asian Development Bank (2020), the use of digital technologies would help the Philippines restart tourism activities and operations in the new normal. The tourism enterprise needed to implement digital transactions to ensure customers' confidence towards their health, safety, and security as per the Department of Tourism. This might be difficult for the owners but the only thing that they can do was to embrace the situation for them to find ways on how to gain income despite the crisis.

Lugtu Jr. (2020) posited that with the government allowing full-capacity operations of businesses in several sectors, there were opportunities for MSMEs to adopt strategies for their survival and growth. There is a rich body of research that shows remarkable yields from MSMEs during a crisis by developing and executing strategies and innovative tactics to survive and even grow. The owners should make sure that all the input cost of the materials in the products offered were negotiated with the suppliers since the world was facing pandemic that brought huge damage to the people as well to the business owners. They had to make a way in order to survive. They can innovate, and use strategies that will enhance their business in the middle of the crisis.

Consumption practices should turn to e-commerce platforms to reduce the spread of the virus. This can increase shopping efficiency, enable new purchases,

and facilitate information access, and online communication between consumers and sellers (Guillen-Royo, 2019). This became the trend in the business world to continue their operations while facing the pandemic.

Salonga (2020) pointed out that certain businesses labeled essentials had been allowed to continue running, with a few rules implemented to maintain safety measures. Public markets were strictly implementing the rules of social distancing, with some municipalities providing “mobile palengkes” to their citizens. Other essential services such as hospitals, food establishments, and banks also continued to provide work for their employees. This initiative was not only beneficial to the owners but to the people as well. They can fare expenses in going to the market, and it saves time.

In addition, Iyer (2020) said that COVID-19 breathed out fright towards millions of people smashing the lives of every individual including their economy. Food and beverage industry was in the middle of its worst nightmare when coronavirus struck. Back then, health consciousness focused on diet and a healthy lifestyle, but during pandemic, it was about buyers' fear resulting in panic buying, affecting the future supply chain. Fear is the common reaction of the people when facing a serious problem. Their immediate response is to be secured, that is one of the reasons they reserved a lot for their own sake.

However, the national government finally allowed the reopening of food establishments and the implementation of strict health protocols. Dine-in services were available for only 30 percent of sitting capacity in fast-food chains, with strict hygiene and physical distancing. In compliance with safety measures, food companies were monitoring the health of employees (Adel, 2020). The government decided to allow the establishment to operate but still they had to follow strictly the health protocols for the safety of the employees as well as of the customers. Colliers, in the first half of 2020, hotel occupancy in Metro Manila fell from 71 percent to 25 percent due to a sharp decline in foreign arrivals. Moreover, a significant number of hotels closed their doors and laid off hospitality professionals and personnel since most of the OFW wanted to go home despite the

pandemic. They had to follow the guidelines of the IATF. People from other country who needed to go home in the Philippines needed to undergo quarantine before heading to their respective destinations. Some hotels accepted accommodation to the overseas Filipino workers and foreigners who had undergone 14-day isolation.

On the other hand, Lopez (2021) stated that the Philippine Hotel Owners Association (PHOA) continued to help the other organizations by offering wide range of training programs. Employers Confederation of the Philippines and International Labor Organization in conducting Soft Skills Training Program, 40-hour Basic Occupational Safety and Health seminars by Occupational Safety and Health Center, and Guidelines on Ventilation for Workplaces and Public Transport to Prevent and Control the Spread of COVID-19 by the Department of Labor and Employment. These trainings were helpful to the owners as well as to customers, giving importance to the mental health. It would also improve the productivity in the workplace while ensuring the safety of everyone.

Talavera (2020) reiterated that the use of new trends in the hospitality industry like digital platforms was needed to adapt for the safety of everyone. The tourism and hospitality industry had given the chance to improve their operations not just today but also in the future. The use of online booking and platforms payment were safer and convenient for the customers, and prevented the potential transmission of virus. The hotels had also begun implementing the new health and safety protocols. Using the thermal scanning could verify if the guests/customers had fever. Social distancing measures needed to be practiced, maximum of double occupancy rooms, and provision of sanitation kits for guests should be given.

According to Lau (2020) in his study entitled “New Technologies used in COVID-19 for Business Survival: Insights from the Hotel Sector in China”, many hotels and resorts had turned to the latest popular online entertainment trend which was live streaming. They also collaborated with celebrities who acted as a tour guide to introduce the hotel or resort offerings and latest discounts. In this study, the

interviewed hotels were following this trend. From a networking perspective, live streaming enabled viewers to communicate, and shared ideas. Findings showed that hotels could still gain income by simply adapting the latest trend which people can communicate to one another. Since people were afraid to go outside because of the fear of being infected with the virus. This trend was really a good innovative way to operate a business in times of pandemic.

Moreover, Nakai (2021) pointed out in his study entitled “Strategies of Forbes Five-Star Hotels for e-Star Hotels for Attracting Guests in Japan amid the COVID-19 Pandemic Emphasizing Cleanliness and Safety”. As a crisis responsive strategy, the five-star hotels adopted a new higher standard for cleanliness to prevent a repeat of the crisis. For example, to relieve hotel guests’ anxiety regarding COVID-19, Palace Hotel Tokyo received international hygiene certification, the GBAC STAR (GBAC: Global Bio-risk Advisory Council) Facility Accreditation, in August 2020, the first for a Japanese hotel (Palace Hotel Tokyo 2020). Findings revealed that people were afraid of the COVID-19 virus. Because of this reason, they wanted to go to a place wherein cleanliness was important. Maintaining the cleanliness was one way of preventing from being infected by the virus but also, it can attract customers knowing that they are safe because of the standards being followed by the hotel.

On the other hand, Liu et al. (2021) in their study “Taking a Break is for Accomplishing a Longer Journey: Hospitality Industry in Macao under the COVID-19 Pandemic” found that there are three major reasons why Macao was an important reference in the fight against COVID-19. First, the decisiveness and speed of government decision-making when the crisis emerged. Second, the engagement and willingness of the Macao hospitality industry to support and conform with the government’s policy was crucial. Third, Macao used the epidemic period as a chance for policy reflection including implementing strict actions to prevent against further COVID-19 infections, and preparing for hospitality industry diversification after the crisis. Findings revealed that cooperation of one another was essential to fight from this pandemic. Since no

one could see the virus, it was very important to make precautionary actions to avoid exposure to the virus.

Kyung and Whitney (2020) stated in “A Study on the Financial and Entrepreneurial Risks of Small Business Owners Amidst COVID-19”, the economy suffered major loss when COVID19 hit due to business shutdowns. Repercussions from economic downfall due to closed businesses from social distance policies had made many small businesses lost operation mechanisms, and saw a decrease in profit and sales. Many people lost their jobs due to businesses losses. A record of 22 million employees had filed for unemployment.

In this paper, it showed how the COVID-19 epidemic changed people’s behaviors, and changed the way people shop. As more people were shopping online to avoid at risk situations at busy stores, small businesses were seeing losses in sales and customers. Findings of the financial and entrepreneurial risks of small business owners amidst COVID-19 showed that social distance had huge impact to the small businesses. Because of this, the operations had to stop wherein the owners and staff were much affected. It really affected the operations and sales of the business. Customers felt that when they were in a public or crowded place, the virus could spread easily. To avoid much exposure, most of the customers shopped or bought through online transactions.

Gursoy and Chi (2020) on the study “Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Hospitality Industry: Review of the Current Situations and a Research Agenda” showed that a large proportion of restaurant customers (64.71 percent), and the majority of hotel customers (70.42 percent) believed that the use of various technologies in service delivery was necessary in the COVID-19 environment in order to minimize human-to-human contact such as service robots, contactless payment such as Apply pay or contactless bank cards, digital menus that could be viewed on personal mobile devices via QR codes, contactless digital payments, keyless entry, touch less elevators, and the like. Findings showed the effects of COVID-19 that using various technology would be beneficial to the owners, as well as to customers.

Adapting technology in the hospitality industry would likely be integral in the future.

On the other hand, Aharon et al. (2021) in their study “COVID-19, Government Measures and Hospitality Industry Performance” explored the interplay between public measures adopted by the U.S. government to combat COVID-19, and the performance of the American hospitality industry. The recent global pandemic was a natural experiment for exploring the role of government interventions, and their direct impact on hospitality stock returns in the U.S. financial market. The overall findings revealed that most of the government interventions were associated with a negative impact in the returns of the hospitality industry, as well as the other industries like entertainment and transportations because of the impact of COVID-19 to the businesses as well the people.

Consequently, Jorda et al. (2020) on the study “Effects of COVID-19 on business and research in the middle of the pandemic, it was very difficult to estimate its long-term effects. Although society had been hit by several pandemics in the past, it was difficult to estimate the long-term economic, behavioral, or societal consequences as these aspects had not been studied to a great extent in the past. The findings showed on the effects of COVID-19 on business and research that for a period after pandemic, they tend to become less interested in investing but more interested in saving their capital, resulting in reduced economic growth. Given the current situation in which saving capital means negative returns, it is not at all certain that would be as conservative as they had been in the past.

The study of Hasanat et al. (2020) titled “The impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on e-business in Malaysia” cited that the e-commerce business was being driven into significant limitation due to the pressure brought about by the pandemic. The e-commerce was identified as the dependent variable since the rise or the downfall in the demand of the particular online platform was significantly dependent on the widespread of COVID-19, as well as the customer's behavior towards this global issue. The online business was mainly dependent on the two factors

which would influence its overall demand in the market. Findings of the study revealed that the customers have shifted towards the e-commerce approaches. This was considered as the only means through which the population of the nation could be able to survive the situation. The increased number of audiences was trying to gain benefits from the digital grocery facilities. The tracking entity of the mobile application known as Apptopia had signified that the daily downloads of popular grocery applications such as Walmart Grocery, Instacart, and Shiip had been coming forward significantly starting at the end of the month.

Afshan et al. (2021) pointed out in their study “Learning experiences of women entrepreneurs amidst COVID-19”, that entrepreneurs showed that they were not able to generate cash flows and faced problems in supporting the family. For instance, the need for beauty salon and boutique products declined, and people needed health and safety products and services. Findings showed on the learning experiences of women entrepreneurs amidst COVID-19 that many of the businesses shifted their focus from routine production to timely and needy products such as hand sanitizers and masks. However, many were not in a position to survive or shift the operational focus. The thematic analysis also showed that many entrepreneurs had no choice but to shut down their businesses until the lockdown was lifted by the government, thus normalizing the situation.

Inkinen (2021) revealed in their study on the “Effect of Contingency Planning on Survival of the Hotels in California, USA amid COVID 19 pandemic” that most of the businesses were collapsing. The most affected industry in the entire world was the hotel industry. Thus, the study sought to examine the effect of contingency planning on the survival of the hotels in California, USA amid COVID 19 pandemic. Findings revealed that contingency planning had significance and related in the survival of the hospitality industry wherein planning essential in any firm to prepare for the unexpected disaster that businesses might encounter in the future like what the global is facing now.

Andulana et al. (2021) cited in their study about “Challenges and Opportunities in Philippine Tourism amid the COVID- 19 Pandemic” that the pandemic saw the need for smart services to boost both the industry's demand and supply. The digital network and innovative technology supported contactless systems. Adopting this modern technology could help stabilize the quality of service, thus increasing customer loyalty, and enhance hotel performance (Hao et al., 2020). Findings showed that COVID had huge impact not only in the business establishments but also to the lives of the people. Most of the hotel owners’ strategy to attract and have more customers used the digital transformation. Just like the contactless system which was also convenient to the busy people. This transformation could lessen the exposure of the customers in a public place.

Similarly, the study of Danay et al. (2021) on “Coping Mechanisms of Hospitality Industry Workers in a Tourism Destination during the COVID-19 Pandemic” found that during the time of uncertainty, it was strongly recommended that hospitality workers may be flexible to fit in with the changing world, acquire new skills and knowledge, and seize new opportunities that we available in the community to stay afloat and survive with the impacts of the disruptions. Findings revealed that workers should be flexible especially in the current situation wherein people all over the world were much affected because of the crisis. Also, acquiring and learning new skills could enhance the full potential of the workers and owners that will greatly contribute to the overall operations of the business.

Flaminiano et al. (2021) cited in their study about “Journey to Recovery and the Next Normal for Philippine MSMEs” that the pandemic has changed the landscape for MSMEs. New challenges have emerged for small businesses in the Philippines amidst the growing uncertainty about the next normal. This report tracks the recovery journey of 677 MSMEs in the National Capital Region (NCR) and the neighboring CALABARZON region in the Philippines for more than one year in the COVID-19 situation. As firms geared up for recovery, re-examine their response strategies, and reorient their business models, it became clear that the next normal

presents several unique challenges for small businesses to survive and thrive. Findings revealed on the journey to recovery and the next normal for Philippine MSMEs that small businesses quickly adopted the digital technologies that has significantly increased. Higher application of e-commerce, digital payments, and establishing a digital presence may remain beyond the pandemic and became a fundamental aspect of MSMEs’ business models moving forward. Further utilization of digital technologies through fintech and the use of software and cloud-based services can help alleviate financing constraints and improve operational capability respectively.

Similarly, the study of Ocampo and Yamagishi (2020) cited that “Modeling the lockdown relaxation protocols of the Philippine government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: an intuitionistic fuzzy DEMATEL analysis“ as these measures were exhausted, non-COVID-19 related issues such as those associated with the mental and physical well-being of people under lockdowns became an emerging concern. Findings showed that modeling the lockdown relaxation protocols of the Philippine government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: an intuitionistic fuzzy DEMATEL analysis had significance of compliance to the minimum public health standards, limited movement of persons, suspension of physical classes, prohibition of mass gatherings, non-operation of category IV industries, and non-operation of hotels or similar establishments are the most crucial protocols for such strategy. The government should impose measures to ensure their implementation as well as allocating funds or resources that would help recover from the impact of pandemic.

Moreover, the study entitled “Psychosocial Impact of Joblessness Due to COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case of Hotel Workers from The Philippines” as discussed by Minene et al. (2020) as COVID-19 was considered a pandemic that shocked the whole world. The safety of everyone was taken into consideration. First, protecting its people was what every government focused on. Thus, economic growth was in question especially for businesses. The impact was really unpredictable. It had created damage already. Hence, with the current situation the hospitality industry has

been facing, they remained focused, and tried to understand possible solutions to make the industry keep going. Findings revealed that the impact on worldwide tourism was huge on the hotels, and restaurants, and to stop tourism in areas that had high number of people infected by the virus. Travel agencies, tour operator, and investors as a team were doing their best to maintain good relationship with their stakeholders despite challenges they are facing. The studies of Baraero-Era and Del Rosario (2020) on “Examining Tourism Resilience Practices as Basis for a Post-COVID 19 Recovery in the Philippines” revealed that at this point, it was hard to predict or assess the length of time it will take to flatten the curve of the Corona virus in the Philippines, and in the world. Findings revealed on examining tourism resilience practices as basis for a post-COVID 19 recovery in the Philippines that tourism and other stakeholders should work together at different levels towards recovery. There would be a change in daily living such as the health and sanitation practices, and social distancing. Healthy lifestyle would be the most likely to do for post-COVID-19. Tourism resilience would be reflected in the various means and forms of systematic adaption and transformation that the government and its people would employ to address this health crisis and, moving forward, towards tourism recovery. Travel and tourism had endured wars and catastrophic events in the past, and with effective resilient strategies, everyone is bound to recover from this pandemic.

Bautista and Manzano (2021) cited in their study “Survival Analysis of Export Relationships of Philippine MSMEs” the survivability of Philippine micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) exports to select countries within the frameworks of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Boracay Action Agenda to Globalize MSMEs and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Strategic Action Plan for SME (small and medium enterprises) Development. Findings showed that on the survival of export relationships of Philippine MSMEs, the assistance of government was much needed during the critical years of survivability to sustain and scale up their exporting activities by financing or developing their capacity to hurdle international product standards. The survivability analysis could be adapted as an additional monitoring mechanism of

MSME programs by the government agency to promote MSME development. Through this program of the government, the MSME can survive their businesses.

However, in the study “Impact and Coping Mechanism of Restaurant Business Amidst COVID-19 Global Pandemic” by Vigilia et al. (2021) stated that the limitations in gathering to a certain number of people have considerably affected dine-in restaurants. Since quarantine level was not to be lifted yet until a vaccine was discovered that restaurants were kept hanging to the point of nowhere. Findings revealed that the alternative approaches would mean flexible on the part of the restaurant business. Those strategies would be worthy if the restaurants would improve their cash flows. The coping mechanisms of the restaurant were to raise the price of the products more particularly notable in small-scale eateries which they claimed to be blamed on distorted supply-chain of raw materials because of movement restrictions imposed by the government, quality control of products being delivered compromised, and loss of jobs for the majority of its workers. The researchers could neither attest nor verify the disclosure of informants especially the practice of work shifts they imposed on their employees, and exorbitant fees, rather debatable rates charged on delivery services being charged by food couriers.

Similarly, Etcuban (2019) study about “Housekeeping Standard Practices of Resorts in Bohol, Philippines” revealed that the examination was tied down on the Theory of Customer Service by Dorling (2017) placed that client administration depended on distinguishing and fulfilling their clients' needs and surpassing their desires. An organization must be focused on conveying reliably elevated requirements of administration to pick up and hold client reliability. Everybody in the association must be tuned into what the client needs. Making a client administration culture inside an organization could help construct achievement. Findings revealed on the housekeeping standard practices of resorts in Bohol, Philippines that the consumer loyalty and dependability were part of the organization's productivity. Administration should focus on it and make a program that would enhance

their specialization that would bring out the best for the company as well as to the customers.

However, Vigilia (2021) stated that the study of “Organizational Management Cases in Hospitality Businesses in Nueva Ecija: A COVID 19 Experience” that the results revealed that majority comprising 145 (97percent) of the respondents managed cases and experiences amidst COVID-19 pandemic used alternative working arrangement as to maintain and sustain the needs of the employees and business organization like online selling by means of creating FB page to market the product and services that the hospitality businesses in Nueva Ecija would provide. Findings showed that the organizational cases in hospitality business in Nueva Ecija on COVID-19 experiences that owners decided to operate not just because of their personal earnings but also to help the employees sustain and provide their family needs. They still operated even in less minimum operating time. The owners or managers decided to give the salary on a daily basis based on the scheduled duty of their employees to sustain the daily basic needs.

Magboo (2020) cited in the study “Creative Marketing Strategies of Food Park Businesses in Batangas, Philippines” that most of the owners who were using creative marketing strategies survived for more than a year in business. The marketing strategies used by the business owners were effective enough to attract customers. Food parks with average customers of 31 and above had creative marketing strategies on branding while businesses in Lipa City had higher creativity on customers’ experience and visual merchandising.

The study shows that those owners who had piece of knowledge, skills, educational attainment, and education as well could be competitive, efficient and effective in their business. Those who had food parks may find a strategic location in putting up their business. The management may seek trending interiors appropriate for their business. This could be helpful in advertising their business. The management of Food Park may create food application named Foodies Park to boost the marketing of the business. In this application, customers could access all the food parks in Batangas

and Lipa City from which they can order online, and reserve seats whenever they wanted. They could also view the announcements and discounts of food parks, and got freebies.

Meanwhile, the study of Oficiar (2017) entitled “Status of Restaurants in Taal, Batangas, Philippines: Basis for Improvement” revealed that majority of the respondents came from Taal, Batangas; and operated for about 3-15 years. Guests assessed the selected restaurants in Taal, Batangas to identify the status of restaurants in terms of staff, facilities, amenities, services and product served. Problems encountered mostly of the guests were insufficient parking lot, insufficient Wi-Fi connection, and lack of knowledge and skills related to task. Results showed that there was no significant relationship on the assessment of respondents on staff, facilities, and amenities of restaurants between the problems encountered by them. Assessment of respondents on services and products of restaurants between the problems they encountered. Findings of the study revealed that restaurants to improve their services by using guest comment card for the problems in staff, facilities, amenities, services and product served in order to inform the restaurant owner, manager, and staff.

V. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The outline of the conceptual framework of this study is based on the identification of independent and dependent variables. A funnel is a tube that is wide at the top and usually narrows at the bottom wherein scientific laboratories used to filter materials. However, in the study, the funnel contained the independent variables including the respondents' profile, challenges, and strategies being employed by the hotel owners. Therefore, it connotes that the funnel is the channel for the abovementioned variables to be the basis of the formulation of business model which is labeled as the dependent variable. The researcher deemed that it is important to include this profile because it might affect the operations of the business. A line connecting the business model and the funnel conclude continuous feedback, thus, interprets that the idea of feedback is not concrete and temporary but can be considered as a guide in handling a crisis.

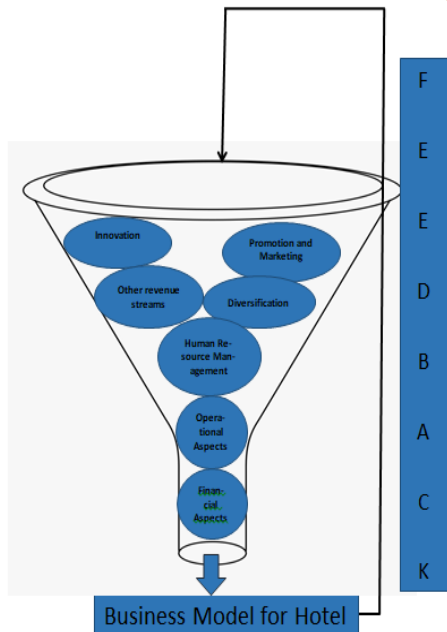


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

VI. METHODOLOGY

A. Method of Research

This study used the descriptive correlational design. Descriptive research provided a snapshot of the current state of affairs (McBurney and White, 2009). In this study, the story of resilience of hotels in Daet, Camarines Norte amidst the COVID-19 pandemic was determined. Correlational research was a research design to discover relationships among variables and the prediction of future events from present knowledge (Stangor and Walinga, 2019). The descriptive correlational design was used to generate reliable results by administering a survey questionnaire. This research instrument was used to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of total assets, number of years in operation, number of employees, estimated annual net sales income, and the challenges encountered in terms of financial, operational, and human resource management. The strategies employed in terms of innovation strategy, promotion and marketing, diversification study, and other revenue streams. The business model was developed to sustain the business operation of the Hospitality Industry.

In this method, the researcher was able to ascertain if there was significant relationship between the profile

of the respondents, and the challenges encountered by the hospitality industry. This study also employed this method in order to determine the extent to which the different variables were related to each other.

B. Population, Sampling size and Sampling technique

There were only twenty-one (21) active hotels with events place in Daet, Camarines Norte. The respondents of this study were identified as businesses under the hospitality industry. This number was obtained from the list of Provincial Tourism Office in Daet, Camarines Norte for 2022.

C. Description of Respondents

The respondents were the registered businesses under the hospitality industry which had venues that cater to different occasions in Daet, Camarines Norte. The researcher employed purposive sampling targeting hotels with events place in the municipality of Daet. A total sample of 21 represented the hotel owners based on the list of Provincial Tourism Office in 2022.

The total population was used. Purposive sampling, also known as judgment, selective or subjective sampling is a sampling technique wherein the researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the study (Research-Methodology n.d). It was used to registered businesses under the Hospitality Industry in Daet, Camarines Norte to identify the respondents of the study. The researcher requested a list of active hotels with events place from the Provincial Tourism Office.

D. Research Instruments

The research tool used in the study was a survey questionnaire. Before it was distributed to the registered business operators/owners, it underwent a series of consultations from the adviser, statisticians, and panelists to check the integrity of the parameters, and indicators to be included in the questionnaire. After checking the survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted a survey to the expert validators to review the contents of the questionnaire which has five salient parts containing a series of questions. The first part was for gathering data about the profile of respondents which answered the total assets, number of years in operation, number of employees, and

estimated annual net sales income. The second part was composed of questions regarding the challenges encountered by the Hospitality Industry in the municipality of Daet in terms of financial, operational, and human resource. The third part contained questions about the strategies employed in terms of innovation strategy, promotion and marketing, diversification study, and other revenue streams while the fourth part of the questionnaire was to answer if there is a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the challenges encountered. The last part of the questionnaire was to answer the business model which may be developed to sustain the business operation.

The Likert scale was used in the second, and third part of the questionnaire. It is a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaire, and is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research. The following rating scale was used to measure the seriousness of the problems encountered using 4 (Serious problem) 3 (Moderate problem) 2 (Minor Problem) 1 (Not at all a problem). Regarding the strategies employed in the hotel amidst the pandemic, the following gauge was used such as 5 (Always) 4 (Often) 3 (Occasionally) 2 (Rarely) and 1 (Never).

The dry run was conducted with the hotel owners of Camarines Norte to validate the reliability of the questionnaire. The respondents were the twenty (20) hotels in Camarines Norte with events place. After the results were tabulated, it was submitted for validation by the statistician. In terms of internal consistency of the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was used indicating 0.957. This means that the survey questionnaire was good as to its reliability, thus there was an internal consistency in the considered indicators.

E. Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher-made questionnaire was submitted to the adviser, and panel of experts for further improvement of sample questionnaire. Then a dry run was conducted in order to access the reliability, consistency, and accuracy of the questionnaire, and to evaluate whether the survey questions were enough to answer the problems stated in the study. The

researcher ensured that ethical considerations to conduct the dry run were observed. The said dry run was conducted to those business owners of hotel and events place in the municipality of Daet.

After gathering the data, the researcher submitted to the statistician for tabulation of the responses. The questionnaires were handed personally during vacant hours or depending upon the availability of the respondents, so as not to interfere with their normal work schedules to 21 respondents who were the owners or managers. The third part of the survey form was intended to acquire data for the strategies used by the entrepreneurs of hotel and events place. The instrument used has undergone content validation as it was consulted from the experts, then, it was retrieved after answering the questionnaire. The answers of the respondents were summarized, and analyzed. Respondents were assured that the information provided was treated with utmost confidentiality, and their help would benefit the hotel and events places in the Municipality of Daet. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to make sure that the respondents understood that they would receive no compensation for participating in the study and this was voluntarily.

F. Statistical Treatment

The data gathered in the study were organized, analyzed, and interpreted using the appropriate statistical tools, and techniques. After the data was gathered and collected, the researcher tabulated the responses using the descriptive-correlational method.

To compare the frequency of responses, and the total number of respondents, the data was treated using Percentage technique (Percentages Concepts and Definitions n.d.). One of the most frequent ways to represent statistics was by percentage. The percentage was utilized to determine the quantitative relations for the whole respondents. Taylor (2023) weighted mean is a type of mean that is calculated by multiplying the weight or probability associated quantitative outcome, and then summing all the products together. This was applied also in the treatment of data to assess the second, and third parts about the challenges encountered and strategies employed by hotel owners.

Meanwhile, Somers' Delta (Laerd Statistics, n.d.) was employed to test the significant relationships between the profile of the respondents and the problems encountered; relationship among the challenges encountered against the profile of respondents as well as the strategies employed by the owners.

VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This part presents the results, analyses, and interpretation of data gathered using the survey questionnaires relative to the challenges encountered and strategies being employed by the hotels.

The findings of the study answered the following objectives such as 1) profile of the respondents in terms of total assets, number of years in operation, number of employees, and estimated annual net sales income; 2) challenges encountered by the hotels amidst the pandemic in terms of financial, operational and human resource management aspects; 3) strategies employed by hotels amidst the pandemic in terms of innovation strategy, promotion and marketing, diversification strategy, and other revenue streams; 4) Significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the strategies employed by the hotels; and 5) business model that may be designed in relation to the enhancement of the hotel owners in handling pandemic.

A. Profile of Respondents

Total Assets. Figure 2 displays the total assets of hotels in Daet, Camarines Norte. It shows that majority of the respondents have a total asset of ₱ 5,000,000 below constituting to 94 percent while the lowest number of respondents has a total asset of ₱35,000,000-₱40,000,000 or 6 percent.

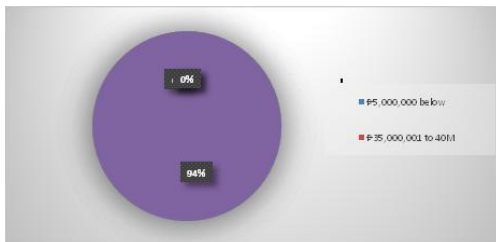


Figure 2 shows the Total Assets (₱) of the respondents.

The result indicates that majority of the respondents' total assets are under the bracket of ₱5,000,000 below. This asset is ideal to build, run, and sustain the maintenance of the operations of those hotels with 20 rooms, and have one or two function halls that can accommodate 100 to 200 persons. It also demonstrates that operating a hotel needs a huge amount of money to provide services to the customers.

On the other hand, the total assets under the bracket of ₱35,000,001 to ₱40,000,000 get the lowest percentage. However, this amount of assets can run a hotel like the Shangri-La hotel in the Philippines, with complete amenities such as infrastructure, equipment, utensils, and supplies.

It can be deduced that budget is essential in operating a service business like a hotel. According to the respondents, operating it needs huge amount especially if it has a function hall. The materials, designs, and labor in building the rooms, amenities, and function hall are costly.

Findings that support the present study are those of Kim (2018), Pacheco and Tavares (2017) who confirmed that financing decisions are extremely critical for successful management of hotel firms because of its unique characteristics of capital employment. First, hotel development and renovation are very capital intensive since they require large investments in land, buildings, furniture, and equipment. In addition, hotel firms have high fixed cost structure, with large amount of expenses spent to regular maintenance and improvement, which is not directly relevant to turnover like in manufacturing firms.

Number of Years in Operation. Figure 3 shows the number of years in business of the respondents. It can be observed that 31.3 percent of the respondents has been in the business for 4-6 years while 18.8 percent had been in business for 7-9 years while 1-3 years and 10-12 years have the same results of 2 or 12.5. Lastly, there is only 1 or 6 percent of the respondent's number of years in operation are 19 years and above.

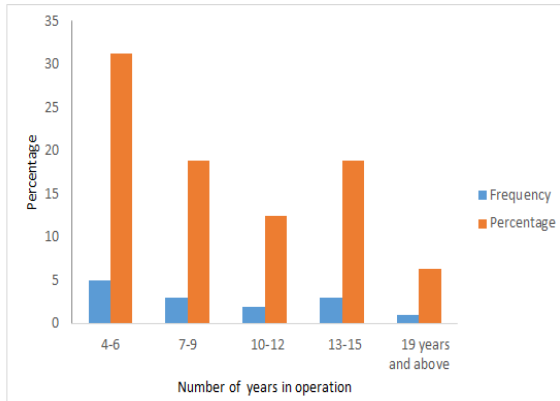


Figure 3 shows the Number of Years in operation

Longevity is one of the most crucial success indicators. It can be deduced that the industry has advanced from the crucial stage of a new business to the established phase because the respondents of this study are hoteliers who are able to sustain their operations for five years or longer.

There is no denying that COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the hotel industry to a degree that has never been seen before. Many hotels are forced to close temporarily or run at a small portion of their capacity as a result of a combination of local lockdowns and travel restrictions. However, given the number of years these hoteliers have been in the business, they have been able to overcome the difficulties of expanding their enterprises.

The result indicates that majority of the respondents' number of years in operation are 4 to 6 years which demonstrate that they are stable in terms of operations. Managing hotels is not easy because money, effort, and patience are essential in operating a hotel. They claim that the pandemic put their patience and determination to the test in dealing with the situation. Less debt is necessary for them to manage their finances with ease. To keep the hotel open and avoid having it closed, it is essential to have additional sources of income. They are aware of how crucial it is to continue operating, so that customers remain confident in their business as it is hard to build a name and customers. Fortunately, majority of them also operate farms, construction companies, and grocery stores in addition to their hotels. Meanwhile, there is only one respondent who has a single year of operation of the business.

Nguyen et al. (2021) and Song et al. (2021) support the findings by concluding that a capital structure with a lower level of debt can be less beneficial in supporting those firms' financial stability during a crisis. Similarly, hotel firms with high sales growth tend to have large cash generated from sales. Therefore, they are more financially stable during crises. In the specific case of the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel firms with a history of higher sales growth can still be more appealing to customers, thus can attract more bookings compared to those having a record of low sales growth. Thus, the former group of hotel firms can better sustain the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore cannot benefit as much from a low-leverage capital structure as hotel firms with lower sales growth.

Number of Employees. Figure 4 presents the number of employees of the hotel owners, and managers. The data shows that 10 and below, and 11-20 are the highest with the same frequency of seven or 43.8 percent while the lowest is 21-30 with a frequency of two or 12.5 percent.

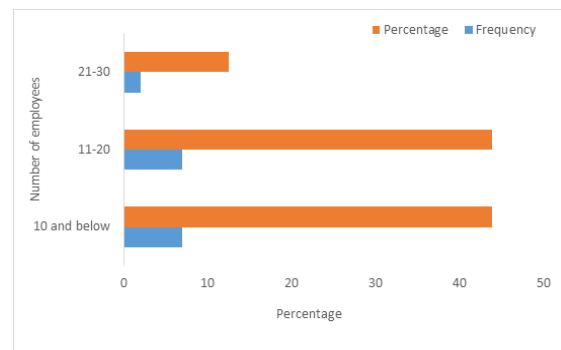


Figure 4 shows the Number of Employees.

Largely, it can be deduced that in terms of the human labor force required to run a hotel, those who have less total asset as shown in Figure 3 can easily keep their employees while those hotels with large asset faced retrenchment due to financial difficulties *which is a legitimate ground to reduce workforce.*

The findings suggest that majority of the hotels have at least 10 to 20 employees since the hotel owners need to maximize their profit. These number of employees of the hotel can accommodate and provide quality of service to their customers. This further

implies that they are capable of doing the daily tasks while the lowest indicator gets 21-30 employees in a hotel.

Owners cited those employees are essential part of the operation of hotel. Without them, they cannot give the services that the customers want. Even though they have huge budget, human resource has the important role in daily operations. Since most of the hotel operating in the province is not a luxury hotel, the ideal employees needed in a hotel service should be at least to below 20 persons. This is enough to cater a different event in this time of pandemic.

According to Bagnera and Stewart (2020), in some cases, a full-service hotel might have as few as 7 to 15 employees working. A dilemma of concern is the financial burden that comes with keeping the hotel open, with a skeleton crew versus the unknown challenges and costs that a complete closure with reopening would incur such as having to obtain a certificate of occupancy. Many hotels still have guests staying in hotels. This can include emergency response teams, medical companies, and transportation companies. In most cases, they are doing everything that they can to cut costs but their creativity to think differently about how they handle business helps reduce expenses even further.

In agreement to the findings, David et al. (2021) revealed that although there is a decrease in sales, hospitality businesses manage to lessen layoffs and implement flexible working arrangements. Hotel workers have a job during pandemic crisis. They feel secure to survive the crisis.

However, according to Hoang et al. (2021), a hotel with 150 rooms in three buildings and a full range of amenities including a restaurant and a coffee shop in each building employs around 100 full-time staff members, and reduced into 56 during pandemic.

Estimated Annual Net Sales Income. Figure 5 presents the estimated annual net sales income of the respondents. The data shows that the bracket of ₱100,001 - ₱150,000 with frequency of 5 or 31.3 percent recorded the highest annual net sales income while the brackets ₱160,001- ₱165,000, ₱250,000-₱300,000, ₱500,001 - ₱550,000 and ₱550,001 -

₱600,000 tied as the least annual net sales income with frequency of 1 or 6.3 percent.

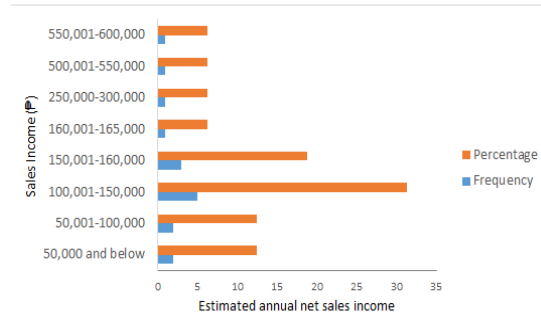


Figure 5 shows the Estimated annual net sales income.

It could be gleaned that despite the pandemic, hotel owners can still earn since they have ventured into new strategies such as promoting their services thru online, implements contactless check-in and check-out using a phone application suitable to the current situation.

According to the hotel owners, COVID-19 pandemic brought changes in the daily and monthly operations of the hotel causing the income to become lesser compared to the years without crisis or pandemic. They experienced the greatest decline in walk-in customers, booking of parties and conferences with profound effects on profitability. Even though the hotels are open, the owners noticed significant changes in their income since majority of the customers prefer to celebrate special occasions at home in order to limit exposure outside. Conferences are also held via digital platforms. Moreover, as the hotel industry operates in accordance with government policies in response to the onslaught of pandemic in an effort to flatten the curve, there are restrictions and limitations in receiving guests, and conducting a party which greatly affects the financial performance of the hotels.

In support, Yiu and Yiu (2020) stated that as a consequence of the restriction during pandemic, all hotels including luxury brands have almost ceased their operations leading to a cliff-like drop in their occupancy rates; hence their revenues. Moreover, according to the China Hospitality Association

(2020), China’s hotel industry lost over 67 billion Yuan (approximately US\$9.44 billion) in revenue, and 74.29 percent of hotels in China are closed for an average period of 27 days in January and February 2020.

B. Challenges Encountered by the Hotel during the Pandemic

Growing businesses face numerous challenges. As a business grows, different problems and opportunities demand different solutions. Recognizing and overcoming the common pitfalls linked to growth in hotel industry is essential for the business to continue to grow and thrive while facing the different challenges. Also, challenges can create a room for improvement and an idea to the business owners to devise strategies that will greatly improve their products and services that they offer to the customers. Tables 1 to 3 describe the problems encountered by the hotels with event place in Daet, Camarines Norte in terms of financial, operational, and human resource management.

Financial Aspects. Table 1 shows the challenges encountered by the hotels amidst the pandemic in terms of financial aspects. Hotel owners perceived these challenges as not at all a problem with an average weighted mean of 1.40. The highest weighted mean of 1.81 and interpreted as a minor problem is the “high cost of materials and equipment being used of the hotel”, followed by the indicator “limited budget for the renovation of the facilities and the hotel in general” with average weighted mean of 1.75 also interpreted as a minor problem. Two indicators tied as the lowest weighted mean of 1.13 and interpreted as not a problem. These are limited access to financial credit institution because of the status of the business, and having too many financial loan obligation such as loan sharks, bank loan, personal loan, and others.)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. No strategic plan should unforeseen experiences occur	1.19	NP
2. Limited knowledge in financial planning and lack on investment updates	1.31	NP
3. Limited fund because of pandemic	1.50	NP
4. Limited sources for additional income	1.50	NP
5. Limited budget for the renovation of the facilities and the hotel in general	1.75	MIP
6. Limited access to financial credit institution because of the status of the business	1.13	NP
7. Having too many financial loan obligation (loan sharks, bank loan, personal loan etc.)	1.13	NP
8. Demands of the lending institution (no extension of due date and additional charges for not paying on time)	1.19	NP
9. Paying salaries of employees even the hotel is not operating due to the restrictions of government	1.50	NP
10. High cost of materials and equipment being used by the hotel	1.81	MIP
Average Weighted Mean	1.40	NP

Legend:
 3.25-4.00 Serious problem (SP)
 2.50-3.24 Moderate problem (MIP)
 1.75-2.49 Minor problem (MP)
 1.00-1.74 Not at all a problem (NP)

The hotel owners claimed to entrepreneurs for a very long time. Majority of them have been conducting business in the province for over ten years. They have experience in financial management as a result. Also, they believed that experience is not enough to stay in the business. Business owners understood that they should learn more and adapt the latest trends to invite more customers. They acquired enough skills over the course of the year to get by during emergencies. Some of them run other businesses besides hotels such as pawn shops. Majority of them have Accounting and Business Administration degrees. They do not only concentrate on one type of business because they think that business owners should diversify their portfolios. When they are undertaking projects or growing their company which require a significant amount of money, they occasionally run into financial difficulties. In this situation, the hotel owners are able to continue their projects by borrowing money from a bank or other financial institutions. Additionally, their commitment to their jobs, business acumen, and resources allowed them to manage challenging circumstances like this pandemic.

The result of the study indicates that the “high cost of materials and equipment being used by the hotel” is the most challenging for hotel owners. The focus of the hospitality sector is on providing excellent customer service and giving the best experience possible. This fact presents both a challenge and an opportunity for hotels to take advantage of. Upholding standards of quality and guest experience is not always easy for it is associated with high cost of materials and equipment. However, hoteliers in

Daet, Camarines Norte are on the lookout for ways to reduce costs to improve financial result while continuing to delight customers.

From the beginning of the pandemic, hoteliers had trouble finding supplies of everything from toilet paper to furniture. Price has increased due to supply disruption. Due to travel restrictions, most of the hotelier outsourced their materials locally which is a bit pricey compared to materials bought in bulk outside the province.

According to Cavallo (2022), early in the pandemic, stockouts would ease within a few months. However, the composition of the stockouts changed over time. The temporary ones which are visible in empty shelves or out-of-stock signs online have fallen but the discontinued goods remain high in some categories. Those shortages are putting pressure on prices, and they are still contributing to the high levels of inflation.

All sizes and types of business owners need a range of financial services including loans in which if managed responsibly can help hotel owners. Inadequate access to financing, however, remained a significant challenge for many hoteliers even before the pandemic. To lower their risk, creditors abruptly reduced the availability of all forms of credit. As shown in Figure 6, hoteliers have lower income compared to years without pandemic. This situation put the hotel owners under financial distress, and lower credit scores.

In support, Ozdemir et al. (2021) cited the hotels across various segments may be required to carry a working capital that suffices for 6 months depending on their operational structures. Hence, lodging establishments especially parented by multinational large corporations should fully draw down company's entire credit facility resulting to quantitative easing on their balance sheet such as reducing capital expenditures, and halting capital investments.

As shown in Figure 4, majority of the hotels are in business for 4-6 years. It can be deduced that majority of them use various types of loans to launch their businesses, and that these loans are now piling up. Fortunately, during the pandemic, the government

urged banks and other financial institutions to refrain from tagging missed or partial payments of loans during the enhanced community quarantine as default or delinquent. However, expenses and other obligations piled up even though the government temporarily stopped making loan payments. Hotel's working capital and cash position are under pressure as a result of this.

In support, the COVID-19 Business Impact Survey (PwC Philippines, 2020) reveals that small businesses need cash, with 44% of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in need of better working capital management while 39% see financing as one of their pressing needs (Galicia-Dorado, 2020).

Operational Aspects. Table 2 shows the challenges of the hotel in terms of operations which obtained a weighted mean of 1.40 and interpreted as not at all a problem (NP). All of the indicators are considered by the hotel owners not a problem. The highest indicator of 1.69 shows that they fear fortuitous events impacting the normal operation of the business such as calamities, water shortage etc. Meanwhile, three indicators tied as the lowest with weighted mean of 1.31. Those indicators are lack of orientation to the staff about conflict and management resolution, limited number of staff due to the demand of clients, pressure and demands from clients, and the pressure and demand from clients.

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Absence of clear organizational roles for employees leading to unmet targets	1.38	NP
2. Unclear roles and responsibilities of each employee resulting to inefficient delivery of service	1.38	NP
3. Lack of communication with reliable suppliers on inventory and deliveries	1.38	NP
4. Lack of orientation to the staff about the conflict management and resolution	1.31	NP
5. Limited number of staff to respond to the increasing demands of guests and clients	1.31	NP
6. Absence of good physical structure and of storage facility	1.38	NP
7. Use of traditional inventory system and not adopting the latest system due to unavailability of sufficient funds	1.38	NP
8. Time management such as preparation of the venue and materials needed in the events	1.50	NP
9. Pressure and demands from clients	1.31	NP
10. Fortuitous events impacting the normal operation of the business such as calamities, water shortage etc.	1.69	NP
Average Weighted Mean	1.40	NP

Legend:
 3.25-4.00 Serious problem (SP)
 2.50-3.24 Moderate problem (MoP)
 1.75-2.49 Minor problem (MiP)
 1.00-1.74 Not at all a problem (NP)

The result indicates that hotel owners found fortuitous events as the most challenging in the

operational aspect. According to the follow-up interview, hoteliers are worried about the things that are beyond their control. Just like when unprecedented lockdowns and quarantines are implemented to stop the country's rapid COVID-19 spread, hoteliers are caught unprepared. Without a doubt, the measures have a big impact on how hotel business is done. Hoteliers are not able to conduct business as usual in light of these difficulties.

According to Globe Business Academy (n.d.), it is not every day that companies encounter events that are beyond their control but it is always good to take precaution and prepare for any unpredictable circumstance that can make or break a business. The success of the operation of any business comes from the quality of services being offered. Thus, according to the owners, when they are hiring staff for the hotel, there is a basis or criteria for a specific task. But there are times, problems arise in the hotel's daily operation in terms of manpower. As an example, if the staff is sick or has an emergency, and need to be on leave for a week.

Owners can hire applicants without background in hotel services by providing them orientation and trainings. They can learn also from the senior employees in the hotel especially the basic functions like maintaining the cleanliness of the room, the materials, amenities, and preparing the venue. It is just a matter of proper training, and continuous learning of the employees. Since Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) offers scholarships for those aspiring persons that want to enhance their skills, and it can also be used for possible application even outside the country.

According to Bonfanti et al. (2021), the staff training is of fundamental importance to all the managers interviewed as it provides learning, for example with the support of videos regarding how to enforce hygiene, and protection measures mentioned above, recognize any suspicious symptoms, and other internal procedures against COVID-19. In particular, staff are receiving training on how to implement the directives on the cleaning of common areas, and of the most frequently touched objects such as handles, elevator buttons, handrails, and switch.

Clients are the reason for the business to exist. Hoteliers in Daet, Camarines Norte acknowledge that client's pressure and demands are common part of the business, and can be a source of learning. Based on the follow-up interview, hoteliers believe that clients are more likely to repeat services with hotels that provide them with excellent service.

MindTools suggest ways on how to deal with excessive customer demands as some refuse to accept the constraints of delivering goods or services quickly, cheaply, and to the highest quality. If customer's demands have become unrealistic or impossible, remain calm, and professional. Explain the hotel the business position clearly, and then together with the client, resolve the problem (MindTools/Home, n.d.)

Human Resource Management Aspects. Data revealed that majority of the problems encountered in terms of human resource management was a minor problem having an average of 2.06 as shown in Table 3. It shows that the newly-hired staff are not familiar with the operation of hotel having a weighted mean of 2.81 which is a moderate problem while the communication gap between the management and the employee is not a problem with a weighted mean of 1.75.

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Hiring the right staff for a specific responsibility	2.00	MIP
2. Newly hired staff are not familiar in the operation of hotel	2.81	MOP
3. Mismatch of employee expertise with their assigned tasks	2.06	MIP
4. Employee absenteeism and tardiness	2.06	MIP
5. Professional jealousy among employees	1.88	MIP
6. Communication gap between the management and the employees	1.75	NP
7. Training and continuous improvement of the employees are not a priority	1.94	MIP
8. Gives slow attention or quick response toward employees and customers complaints and concerns	1.81	MIP
9. Performance of the employee depends on the incoming activities of the hotel	1.81	MIP
10. The changing policies and guidelines of the government leading to confusion in the implementation of business rules	2.44	MIP
Average Weighted Mean	2.06	MIP

Legend:

- 3.25-4.00 Serious problem (SP)
- 2.50-3.24 Moderate problem (MoP)
- 1.75-2.49 Minor problem (MIP)
- 1.00-1.74 Not at all a problem (NP)

The result indicates that the most challenging to hoteliers is “newly hired staff that are not familiar with hotel operation”. Hotel owners acknowledge that hiring means more than just employees’ salary. Integrating a new employee into the hotel requires time and expenditure. The hotel needs to provide

adequate training, so the new employee can do the work.

Similarly, Postan (2022) cited that hiring good employees can be challenging, costly, and time consuming. The organization needs to spend time and money advertising translation, and interviewing candidates, and the best ones may require more money than the small business can afford. While the business hires an employee to increase productivity, more time is needed to spend managing them, and training them. Monitoring is not just only looking for who are working on time to their assign tasks but also in identifying the weaknesses of the employee to improve their skills. Any employee who is not highly competent will require ongoing assistance, and may even make mistakes.

The urgency of the situation during COVID-19 prompted hoteliers to become vigilant, and act quickly in all complaints and concerns in the hotel operations. Thus, “giving slow attention or quick response toward employees and customers’ complaints and concerns” is not a problem at all. Hoteliers understand that addressing complaints and concerns has direct impact on customers’ experience. Hoteliers ensure the positive working environment for everyone by providing a policy on how to handle grievances to coworkers, and how to handle customers’ complaint.

Likewise, Bhrmanachote and Sawangdee (2021) contend that acquiring the skills and know-how within a system that is upholding preventive measures from getting infected for workers requires diligent human resources, training staff to fully collaborate with medical experts, and professionals dealing with disease control to design a workshop that leads to positive results.

“Communication gap between the management and the employees” is seen as not a problem at all by the hoteliers in Daet, Camarines Norte as they believe that communication is the key to successful hotel operation being a service industry. Hoteliers develop an organizational culture in which supervisor-subordinate relationships, teamwork, and collaboration among them are strong, and contribute to the professional well-being, motivation, and pride

of employees. Having a channel for employee-management communication is crucial because it fosters transparency, ensures trust, and makes the management aware of any problem they might otherwise be unaware of.

The recent pandemic-related uncertainty has caused significant disruption in the hospitality sector. Hotel owners cannot afford to have dissatisfied guests in the current economic climate. One of the key pillars of providing a first-rate guest experience is making sure that there are effective internal communications systems in place. As a result of the ongoing uncertainty COVID-19 has caused in the industry, hoteliers can quickly inform staff when there are new health recommendations, closures, and lockdowns.

Likewise, according to Les Roches (2022), the hospitality industry is a field that relies heavily on communication. Hotel managers who can effectively communicate their vision and expectations to their team are more likely to achieve results than one who cannot. This is where workplace orientation comes in and plays a vital role in the organization. With clear objectives in mind, the focus of an employee towards their work is much more.

B. Strategies Employed by the Hotels during the Pandemic in terms of Innovation, Promotion and Marketing Strategies, Diversification Strategy, and Other Revenue Streams

Strategies are important in every business to attract customers as well as to survive while facing the challenges like the pandemic that has huge impact in the overall operation. It is a plan designed to achieve the major goals of the organization, and a mechanism to ensure the continuous operation of the business. Tables 4 to 7 illustrate the strategies employed by the hotel industry amidst the pandemic in Daet, Camarines Norte in terms of innovation strategy, promotion and marketing, diversification strategy, and other revenue streams.

Innovation Strategy. Table 4 shows the strategies employed by the hotel in which the innovation strategy obtained a rating of “seldom” with an average weighted mean of 2.16. It can also be observed that the “uses of social media for advertising the services being offered and updates

about their promos and discounts” has the highest strategies employed with a weighted mean of 4.69. Though all are positively assessed, the lowest rating with a weighted mean of 1.00 falls under the two indicators which are achieved by “uses mobile room key for hotel guests” and “adapts the technology trend like the AI Virtual Agents (Robots)” is never used. “The respondents never use facial recognition for the security purpose of the client” with a weighted mean of 1.13, “transforms unused rooms into health spas” with a weighted mean of 1.44

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Uses of social media for advertising the services being offered and updates about their promos and discounts	4.69	A
2. Implements contact-less check-in and check-out using a phone app	2.88	SO
3. Creates improvement in the use of payment facilities	2.50	SE
4. Uses facial recognition for the security purpose of the client	1.13	N
5. Uses mobile room key for hotel guests	1.00	N
6. Upgrades the internet connection of the whole facilities	1.94	SE
7. Adapts the technology trend like the AI Virtual agents (Robots)	1.00	N
8. Uses the venue for virtual gatherings like webinars and trainings	2.63	SO
9. Renovates of facilities by adopting the latest designs or theme	2.44	SE
10. Transforms unused rooms into health spas	1.44	N
Average Weighted Mean	2.16	SE

Legend:

4.20-5.00	Always	(A)
3.40-4.19	Often	(O)
2.60-3.39	Sometimes	(SO)
1.80-2.59	Seldom	(SE)
1.00-1.79	Never	(N)

Most of the hotel owners used social media as one way of introducing and updating what they have in the hotel. Promoting in different social media like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok can attract customers, not only in the province but even outside the country since people are more connected in the social media. It is also a good way to advertise what is in the province. Using the technology can also have a negative effect if it is not used properly, and managed well. For example, if posting all of the customers’ events is not necessary, there are customers who want privacy. In this situation, staff can ask if it is okay to take picture and post it in the social media. If the customers agree with their permission, then it is good. Monitoring and updating what has been posted or shared in the social media is essential in avoiding the problems that can destroy the image of the hotel.

Hotel owners focused only on using the social media because they know that people are engaging more activities and allotting time to the social media. They believed that humans play an important role in their

daily operations, that is why they do not follow the latest trend like AI Robotics in some hotels. They are also concerned to their employee and they want to help them to earn. Finding job is not easy in this time of pandemic. If they adapt this kind of trend some of their employee will not continue their work. Tourist and other guests can add value not only in the hotel industry as well as the economic status of the province.

Lau (2020) cited that the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly demands social media as a measure to market goods and services. However, ensuring privacy is also essential. Bringing customer data online and connecting them to local authorities introduce enormous efficiencies and applications. However, it also introduces threats like cyber-attacks, and security breaches. How to balance guest privacy, and public security becomes a new challenge for the hospitality industry.

AI is one of the fastest-growing trends in technology that can help hoteliers expand their operations. However, small businesses like hoteliers in Daet, Camarines Norte are often at a disadvantage with access to AI to help them manage day-to-day operation because of the cost associated with AI development. As shown in Figure 6, hoteliers’ net sales income is lower, thus, purchasing AI technology that will improve the business future growth, and success is not a priority.

Likewise, Mortensen (2022) cited in Tech Evaluate that AI coupled with technology is growing to new levels every year. Many businesses rely on it to increase efficiency, improve their products, or scale and gain an edge over their competitors. AI is one of the fastest-growing trends in technology that can help companies expand their operations or create a whole new industry.

The study’s findings are affirmed by Ruiz-Martin et al. (2018) that resilience is a continuous adjustment to the crisis and challenges confronted by an organization. Hence, resilience is not only to bounce back to stability but to achieve a desirable level doing a better than before through learning and innovation. Thus, leisure and hospitality organizations’ resilience consist of flexibility, adaptative capabilities, capacity,

and organizational culture that nurtures innovation and efficacy.

Promotion and Marketing Strategies. In Table 5, the strategies employed by the hotel in terms of promotion and marketing obtained a rating of seldom, with an average weighted mean of 2.48. It shows that the highest results with a weighted mean of 3.06 sometimes offers free simple backdrop decorations for the birthday occasion in the venue while the lowest results state that the respondents seldom provide free internet connection to those who will undergo quarantine for 14 days with a weighted mean of 2.00.

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Gives discount rate for repeat customers up to 25%	2.19	SE
2. Gives additional 2 hours extension for the use of venue	2.31	SE
3. Offers free venue decoration with the chosen of the celebrant with minimum of 100 guests during the event	2.25	SE
4. Offers free tables and chairs for the kids in the venue	2.69	SO
5. Offers free simple backdrop decorations for the birthday occasion in the venue	3.06	SO
6. Charges no-corkage for any occasion during the event	2.88	SO
7. Charges no-extra fee for the gadgets that uses electricity	2.75	SO
8. Accepts guests who will undergo 14 days quarantine for 14 days with free meals	2.25	SE
9. Provide free internet connection to those who will undergo quarantine for 14 days	2.00	SE
10. Accepts catering services outside the venue	2.38	SE
Average Weighted Mean	2.48	SE

Legend:

4.20-5.00	Always	(A)
3.40-4.19	Often	(O)
2.60-3.39	Sometimes	(SO)
1.80-2.59	Seldom	(SE)
1.00-1.79	Never	(N)

The data imply the highest indicator 2.88 owners' charges no-corkage for any occasion during the event. According to the owners, they decided not to give charges to their customers since everyone is affected of the pandemic. This is also a way to attract customers to conduct their events in the hotel. Meanwhile, the lowest indicator which provide free internet connection to those who will undergo lockdown for 14 days because most of the respondents do not accommodate guests for quarantine.

Hotel owners cited that using strategies can attract customers to conduct their events in the hotel function hall. Different hotels have varied strategies to attract customers such as offering free simple backdrop decorations for a simple event like baptism, birthdays, and weddings. Most of the customers availed of free or additional services that are not part of their expenses. Customers can save and use their

other funds for the occasions. In such simple way of offering a service like this can encourage customers with limited budget for their event. Not giving charge for the other foods like lechon, cake, and wine can also lessen the budget of the celebrants.

According to Amankwah-Amoah et al. (2018), competition is around 100 percent, and everyone needs to survive by having some customers since most of the hotels do not want to close their business. Importantly, many of them just renovate, and having some staff training in the late 2019 and early 2020.

Hoteliers also resorted to strategy of providing “free internet connection to those who will undergo quarantine for 14 days”. The decision to offer the property as a quarantine hotel could be a double-edged sword. It might help the hotel build its brand reputation and image (Martinez and Nishiyama, 2017). It could gain positive perceptions from people in general which could increase its brand equity through favorable brand associations (e. g. helpful) and generate strong brand personalities (e.g. sincere, responsible). The hotel brand could then be perceived as a responsible brand which could lead to many favorable outcomes (Japutra and Molinillo, 2019). However, at the same time, the decision could also dilute the brand equity (Lu et al., 2015). There might be negative perception that the hotel is unsafe because it might carry the virus. Since, the main concern of the hotel owners is to provide safe and quality service to their customers.

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Offers promo for those customers who will undergo 14-day quarantine such as free meals and internet connection	2.44	SE
2. Offers foods and catering services on top of the main services offered	3.06	SO
3. Offers services for the guests (shuttle services and free deliver foods outside the hotel.)	1.63	N
4. Accepts the government activities (relief operation, vaccination site and health consultation)	1.56	N
5. Collaborates with the other suppliers like the event decorators or coordinator	4.00	O
6. Accepts events with limited guests upon provision of safety devices such as thermal scanner with alcohol dispenser	4.13	O
7. Joins the subscription craze like Netflix	3.25	SO
8. Automates the hotel experience-touch less check in and smart room amenities	1.13	N
9. Invites prospects or residents from outside the province who may intend to visit the locale	3.63	O
10. Puts satellite office on other strategic sites in order to captures prospects outside the business location	1.19	N
Average Weighted Mean	2.16	S

Legend:

4.20-5.00	Always	(A)
3.40-4.19	Often	(O)
2.60-3.39	Sometimes	(SO)
1.80-2.59	Seldom	(SE)
1.00-1.79	Never	(N)

Diversification Strategy. Table 6 exhibits the gathered data about the strategies in terms of diversification strategy wherein an average weighted

mean of 2.60 is obtained. The highest response is “accept events with a limited guest upon provision of safety devices such as thermal scanner with alcohol dispenser” with a weighted mean of 4.13 while the lowest result is “never automate the hotel experience touchless check-in and smart room amenities” with weighted mean of 1.13. “Collaborates with other suppliers like the event decorators or coordinators” has the weighted mean of 4.00 and interpreted as often responds, “Accepts events with limited guests upon provision of safety devices such as thermal scanner with alcohol dispenser” garnered the weighted mean of 4.13, “Invites prospects or residents from outside the province who may intend to visit the local” has a weighted mean of 3.63, “Offers foods and catering services on top of the main services offered” with a weighted mean of 1.63 interpreted as sometimes responds; and “Joins the subscription craze like Netflix” with a weighted mean of 3.25.

According to the hotel owners, adding an extra deal with the usual services being offered is necessary in handling pandemic. The typical hotel services are not what actually the customers want. Since COVID-19 is contagious, the safety of the guests is the main priority of the management. Proper use of face mask, checking their temperature thru thermal scanner and hand washing are the best practices to avoid spreading the virus. Collaborations with other suppliers can also add income to the hotels. Suppliers can also bring customers who are not familiar with the services being offered by the hotel.

The findings of this study of Chan et al. (2021) revealed that most dimensions of guest experiences at luxury hotels including room quality and settings, hotel facilities, location, environment, value/price, bathroom, amenities, and hotel design show a minuscule decrease in frequencies whereas the remaining determinants, conversely, show an increase. What is worth noticing is that services show an increase in proportions indicating that hotel guests expect to receive additional services such as delivery service of takeaway and late check-out services amid-pandemic.

Other Revenue Streams. Table 7 shows the gathered data about the strategies of hotel amidst the pandemic

in terms of other revenue streams wherein an average weighted mean 1.44 is obtained. The indicators pertain to the offers of packages with special deals such as wedding car services, free hand and foot spa massage for the direct booking; Offers hotel services for local rental properties such as catering utensils, projector, and speakers garnered the highest weighted mean of 1.56 while the lowest rating of 1.25 belongs to “provides other areas or function hall use for the fitness enthusiast like gym”.

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Offers of package with special deals (wedding car services, free hand and foot spa massage for the direct booking)	1.56	N
2. Offers happy hours in the hotel with discounted price for the drinks	1.31	N
3. Offers hotel services for local rental properties (such as catering utensils, projector, and speaker)	1.56	N
4. Offers child care for the guests with accompanying kids	1.31	N
5. Offers corporate rate with recreational facilities	1.50	N
6. Uses other areas or rooms for online workers (such as teacher, agent, and entrepreneur)	1.50	N
7. Provides other areas or function hall use for the fitness enthusiast like gym	1.25	N
8. Hosts entertainment events like concert and campaigns	1.50	N
9. Adds one stop-shop in other areas of the hotel	1.38	N
10. Runs loyalty programs	1.50	N
Average Weighted Mean	1.44	N

Legend:

4.20-5.00	Always	(A)
3.40-4.19	Often	(O)
2.60-3.39	Sometimes	(SO)
1.80-2.59	Seldom	(SE)
1.00-1.79	Never	(N)

Hotel owners have other ways to earn income in this time of pandemic. Majority of the hotel owners are aware of the guidelines from the IATF wherein the owners are adjusting to what the latest guidelines are. This was their reason why they do not give much privilege to their customers but they are planning to implement like offering car services for special occasions, and use of the other rooms for fitness enthusiasts but it will also depend on the customer’s needs.

The pandemic effects would be effectively visible on the country’s inbound, outbound, and domestic tourism, adventure travel, business travel, and cruise holidays (Dash, 2020). Post-lockdown predictions and preparations would need a better understanding of the current situation. To this end, trends like “staycations” and “workcations” are being opined by hospitality practitioners to remain dominant in the near future (Divya, 2020). Since these trends are becoming popular, it can save the hotels in closing their operation, and also the owners can still generate income while the world is experiencing crisis.

The findings imply that environmental jolt occurs. Firms will be naturally inclined to use their dynamic

capabilities to change their resource configuration, so as to fit with the new environment (Colombo et al., 2020). Business owners can still operate and provide services for their customers. What they only have to do is to change their offerings before pandemic like limited number of guests, and social distancing be implemented.

According to Lau (2020), this new mechanism requires tremendous efforts to understand, and use for new selling trends. If hotel managers are looking forward to creating a new marketing channel on live-streaming platforms, then they should not forget that it requires tremendous investment in terms of both money and time. In addition, hotel managers should not forget the difficulty in teaching and training their employees to create valuable and entertaining editorial content for the live streaming.

C. Significant Relationship between the Profile and Strategies Employed by the Hotels

Somer’s Delta was used to determine the relationship which may exist between the profile of the respondents, and their employed management strategies. Table 8 shows the result tested at 5% level of significance.

Profile	Somer's d	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Total Assets				
Innovation	0.867	0.275	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Promotion and Marketing Strategy	1	0.268	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Diversification Strategy	0.867	0.275	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Other Revenue Streams	0.867	0.275	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Net Sales				
Innovation Strategy	0.429	0.003	Moderate Relationship	Reject
Promotion and Marketing Strategy	0.514	<0.001	Moderate Relationship	Reject
Diversification Strategy	0.400	0.047	Moderate Relationship	Reject
Other Revenue Streams	0.343	0.004	Weak Relationship	Reject
Number of Employees				
Innovation Strategy	-0.39	0.083	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Promotion and Marketing	0.013	0.962	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Diversification Strategy	0	1	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Other Revenue Streams Strategy	-0.351	0.023	Weak Relationship	Reject
Number of Years in Operation				
Innovation Strategy	-0.088	0.685	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Promotion and Marketing Strategy	-0.098	0.594	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Diversification Strategy	-0.069	0.751	No Relationship	Accept Ho
Other Revenue Streams	-0.010	0.956	No Relationship	Accept Ho

*significant @ p<0.05

It can be noted that Somer’s correlation coefficient d =0.429, d = 0.514, and d = 0.4 with p value of 0.003, <0.001 and 0.047 for the positive moderate relationship between the net sales income profile of the respondents, and management strategies in terms of innovation, promotion and marketing, and diversification respectively are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. A positive weak correlation is also noted with d = 0.343 and p value of 0.004 between net sales income and application of other revenue streams strategy. These

positive moderate correlations suggest that as the hotel’s net sales income increases their application of these management strategies also increases. It can be seen that the strategies being employed by the hotel owners are applicable and suited to the current situation. Strategies are part of business to gain more customers and income. Hotel owners provide the customers looking for in the hotel. Their strategies can support the hotel to survive while there is still pandemic.

In support, the study of Reeves (2020) stated that by employing various crisis response strategies, five-star hotels in Tokyo survived during the outbreak. The hotels maintained high-level services to restore reputation as crisis response strategies without joining a price war, added exclusive seasonal and cultural guest experiences, developed new takeout foods, and utilized signature stories in an effort to cope. Adopting these strategies to increase the satisfaction of guests could better secure the future of luxury hotels in Japan and around the world amid the ongoing global pandemic.

The table also shows a statistically significant negative weak relationship at d = -0.351 and p value 0.023 between the hotel’s number of employees profile, and their application of other revenue streams strategy. These data suggest that as the number of hotel employees increases their application of other revenue streams, strategy decreases. The current situation tested the owners on how they can survive their business. According to them, employees are also their asset in operating a business. Without them, the hotel cannot operate. They value and become considerate to their employees. If they would cut their human resource in this time of pandemic, they think it is not appropriate because everyone is suffering. The owners have to balance the operations since everyone is adjusting brought of the pandemic. They applied cost cutting while giving importance to their employee. Since most of their employee is working in the hotel for long period of time.

The table also shows that no significant relationship exists between the hotel’s profile in terms of total asset, number of employees, and number of years in operation, and their application of management strategies as innovation, promotion and marketing,

diversification, and other revenue streams strategy. Their respective p values are all greater than 0.05 which suggest an acceptance of the null hypothesis that no significant relationship is evident between the hotel's total asset, number of employees, and number of years in operation profile and their application of management strategies. Hotel owners cited that to be able to survive in difficult time, entrepreneurs should be resourceful and creative. There are huge ways to attract customers while facing crises. They can maximize their resources and used social media application to stay connected to the people even outside the province. Survival of a business will not only depend on how long they are operating but also on how they communicate with the people which are their source of their income.

The implication is supported by the study of Kaushal and Srivastava (2021) although COVID-19 presents an unprecedented case before all the sectors in that the reduced demand and revenues are obvious consequences which can resonate with the previous crises that also had detrimental effects.

Similarly, businesses, large or small faced the dilemma to continue to pay employees in the event of reduced demand. Especially in the case COVID-19, impacts would arguably be damaging for the industry (Gössling et al., 2020a, b). Massive job loss and weakened contribution of the sector to the GDP is imminent, and calls of bailout are rising.

Moreover, findings of Abubakar (2020) imply that the wider the spread of such pandemic, the more it will continue to affect the operations of almost all businesses across the globe. This is so because many businesses are interdependent of each other. Above all, they rely on customer patronage which is now difficult with the present pandemic. People and organizations are restricted which leads to a drastic reduction in operations and consumption.

Business owners cannot change the current situation. The only thing to do is to survive. Since, everyone is suffering from the pandemic, almost all hotels in the world have their own strategies to keep the business going on as the pandemic has had a destructive, detrimental effect on the hospitality industry globally

(Gössling et al., 2020; Majeed and Ramkissoon, 2020).

The study of Khong (2021) also supports that the hotel can still make revenue by taking the opportunity to be part of house for COVID-19 patients or the place functions as a quarantine center for those returning from aboard or offshore. It can be helpful to the operations of the hotel since people are afraid of being infected, and also to avoid the spreading of virus to other people especially to their family who are waiting for them to their home safe and healthy without worrying about the virus.

D. Proposed Business Model that may be Designed in Relation to the Challenges and Strategies of the Hotel Amidst the Pandemic

Based on the results derived from the study, business model is suggested to address the challenges and strategies employed by the hotel owners in Daet, Camarines Norte. The Investodia defines business model which refers to a company's plan for making profit. It identifies the products or services the business plans to sell, its identified target market, and any anticipated expenses. Business models are important for both new and established businesses. They help new, developing companies attract investment, recruit talent, and motivate management and staff. Established businesses should regularly update their business plans or they will fail to anticipate trends and challenges ahead. Business plans help investors evaluate companies that interest them.

According to the findings of the study, hotel owners should adapt to the current situation to be able them to have income they should attract more customers, and stay connected to them. There are ways that they can make in order to sustain the operation of the hotel. They need to focus on the needs and demands of the customers. Since there is no declaration of COVID-free, and nobody knows when it will end. Most of the people are afraid of being infected, that is why they are looking for a safe place where they can gather and enjoy their special occasions. In this case, hotel owners can change or add on their offerings before pandemic for them to satisfy the expectation of the customers.

Rakshit and Wilson (2020) believe that companies should rethink their business model, concentrate on their core business area, revive their strategies, rework their plans and policies, try to explore new markets, embrace new sales channel and find more opportunities to grow. There is a way that can help the owners think suitable to the current situation. Strategies are essential part of any business operation for them to survive.

The Business Model Canvas is definitely the most common and widespread tool for business model Innovation. The nine different building blocks help them to get a comprehensive and fast overview, and understanding of the business model. The canvas is co-created with many practitioners and is based on The Business Model Ontology developed by Alexander Osterwalder in 2004. The different blocks have a corresponding role that can be applied by the business owners to main competitive in the market.

This proposed business model canvas has nine key strategic factors and may be adopted by the hotel industry in Camarines Norte. The following different blocks are Key Partner. The hotel industry should analyze the external environment which is the source of their operation. It includes the partners, suppliers, and existing government regulation that affect the operations of the hotel. Local manufacturers are a great help in this time of pandemic. Since the suppliers outside the province cannot provide easily the materials that are needed.

Considering also the customers' perception of the hotel, and their capacity to pay for the services is a must. In Key Activities, the industry should assess the internal and external resources. The resources are very important in the successful operations. Customer experiences and feedbacks are essential in the attainment of goals in the industry, thus the knowledge and skills on hotel practices must be determined to serve as the bases for the implementation in the hotel. Their stories will be the best opportunities to upgrade or improve what the hotel is being offered.

In the Value Proposition, it involves the services that the hotel offers to their customers. It is important to know the customers' needs, and follow the trends in the industry suited to the customers. They can

innovate for attraction to customers not only in the province but also the customers outside the province or country like using different social media applications. It is very easy to introduce the services being offered in the hotel. In Customer Relationship, the hotels should offer not only the services that they give but they have to value the importance of their customers. Providing good service and quality of products can help the operation to become smooth. Their satisfaction will be a way to patronize the hotel. Also, thru the customers' word of mouth sharing their great experiences in the hotel during their stay was a good sign that the hotel can attract more income.

In the Customer Segment, assessing the customers' needs based on gender, age, behaviors and interest are essential in providing services to them. It can be an instrument in strategizing to better understand the guests in the hotel. Each guest is different so it is better to know what is suited to them. For example, if the guests are family, the services should be complete considering the younger guests need. In providing services, the customers' satisfaction is what the hotel wants. Not all services can perform well. It is just a matter of dedication and effort of the staff in the hotel especially in dealing with the guests from outside the country. Hotels should create value in every guest that they might encounter.

In the Key Resources, capital is the most important in a business. If they have enough capital or budget, the hotel can provide facilities and materials needed in the daily operations. Having enough resources, hotel can follow the latest trends in terms of designs, offers, and services that the customers can be attracted. Hotel owners should not only focus on the facilities but also to the skilled staff. The skilled staff is much productive than not because of their experiences and knowledge gained through the years of working.

The Channels includes on how the business connect to their customers. Connection to the customers shows the product and services being offered. This is one way to maintain the operation of the business. Since most of the people are much connected in social media, it can be used for advertising the hotel. Also, everyone is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. People think that it is much safer to have a transaction thru online booking and payment to

minimize the exposure to the people because of the fear of being infected.

The Cost Structure consists of all the parts of operations. In this part, the hotel industry should devise a plan and prepare for the overall operations from budget to manpower, raw materials, suppliers, and expenses. Proper budgeting can prioritize the necessary and limit in purchasing the materials. The continuous learning thru trainings of workshops of the employees is essential to ensure that they can adapt to the latest services being offered by the hotel.

Lastly, in Revenue Streams, the hotel industry should know the opportunities despite the crisis. Since there are restrictions that the government imposed the hotel owners can only do is to devise strategies suited in this time of pandemic. Assess the needs of the customers thru this hotel can identify what they can offer and serve to them. For example, accepting catering services outside the hotel and even in the other places in the province can add income. This is for the customers who want to celebrate their occasion outside of the hotel facilities. Also, using the other vacant facilities can use as gym or zumba area for the customers who are fitness enthusiast and want to stay healthy. Business owners should take the opportunity to innovate, and improve their services, marketing and other vital functions. It is not easy to manage the business while facing the difficulties in the operation because of the crisis, but in order to survive to the challenges brought by the pandemic. Strategies are the best way to gain sales and stay competitive in the business.



Figure 6. Proposed Business Model Canvas for Hotels In Camarines Norte

VIII. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This part presents the brief discussion of the contents of the study, the data gathering procedure, as well as the statistical tools. The conclusions are based on the purpose, research questions, and results of the study. The implications of these findings and the recommendations are also explained. Recommendations are based on the conclusions, and purpose of the study.

A. Findings

The study aimed to determine the challenges and strategies employed by the hotel owners in Daet, Camarines Norte. Specifically, it answered the following questions: 1) What is the profile of the respondents in terms of total assets, number of years in operation, number of employees, and estimated annual net sales income? 2) What are the challenges encountered by the hotel amidst the pandemic in terms of financial, operational, and human resource management? 3) What are the strategies employed by hotel amidst the pandemic? 4) Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the strategies employed by the hotels; and 5) What business model may be designed in relation to the enhancement of the hotel owners in handling pandemic?

Descriptive-correlational method of research was employed in the study. The survey questionnaire was the primary research instrument used for data gathering. A total of 21 hotels with events place identified in Daet, Camarines Norte were the respondents of the study.

Percentage was used to describe the profile of the respondents. Weighted mean was utilized to measure the challenges in terms of financial, operational, and human resource management, strategies in terms of innovation, promotion and marketing, diversification strategy, and other revenue streams. Somer's d Correlation assessed the significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the challenges and strategies by the hotel owners amidst the pandemic.

1. Majority of the respondents belong to the total assets bracket of P5,000,000 and below with 93.8 percent of the total respondents while the least number of participants has the assets of P35,000,001 to P40M with 6.3 percent. It can also be observed that only one respondent has assets ranging from P35,000,001 to P40M.
 2. The challenges encountered by the hotel owners in terms of financial aspects show that most of the indicators is not a problem at all, with a grand weighted mean of 1.40 while there are two minor problems in terms of limited budget for the renovation of the facilities, and the hotel in general with weighted mean of 1.75; the high cost of materials and equipment being used of the hotel with weighted mean of 1.81 followed by operational aspects with a grand weighted mean of 1.40 signified that there is no problem while most of the indicators in human resource management show that there is a minor problem. The newly-hired staff are not familiar in the operation of hotel with a weighted mean of 2.81, and communication gap between the management and the employees with a weighted mean of 1.75 signified that there is no problem.
 3. In general, there is low implementation of the strategies recognized in terms of innovation, the uses of social media for advertising the services being offered, and updates about their promos and discounts with a weighted mean of 4.69, uses of room key for hotel guests and adapts the technology trend like AI Virtual agents with the same weighted mean of 1.00. In promotion and marketing charges, no-corkage for any occasion during the event with a weighted mean of 2.88 and provide internet connection to those who will undergo quarantine for 14 days with a weighted mean of 2.00. In diversification, it accepts events with limited guests upon provision and safety devices such as thermal scanner with alcohol dispenser with a weighted mean of 4.13, and automates the hotel experience touchless check-in smart room amenities with weighted mean of 1.13. The other revenue streams offer of package with special deals such as wedding car services, free hand and foot massage for the direct booking, and offers hotel services for local rental properties such as catering utensils, projector, and speaker with a weighted mean of 1.56, provides other areas or function hall use for fitness enthusiast like gym with a weighted mean of 1.25.
 4. The test of significance between the profile of the respondents in terms of total assets and the strategies of hotel amidst the pandemic reveal that there is no significant relationship among them wherein the p-values of the indicators are greater than the significant level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is also accepted in terms of the relationship between the respondents' number of employees, number of years in operation, and estimated annual net sales.
 5. The proposed business model canvas for hotel industry is proposed to help improve the hotel owners in managing operations in time of difficulties like the pandemic.
- B. Conclusions*
1. Majority of the hotels with events place have assets of P5,000,000 below, operating for almost 5 years with a maximum of 11 to 20 employees, and with an estimated annual net sales income of P100,001 to P150,000.
 2. The hotel owners employed strategies in terms of innovation was “uses of social media for advertising the services being offered and updates about their promos and discounts” with a weighted mean of 4.69, “promotion and marketing offers free simple backdrop decorations for the birthday occasion in the venue” with a weighted mean of 3.06, “diversification strategy accepts with limited guests upon provision of thermal scanner with alcohol dispenser” with a weighted mean of 4.13, “other revenue streams” offers hotel services for local rental properties such as catering utensils, projector, and speaker” with a weighted mean of 1.56.
 3. The test for significant relationship between profile of respondents and the strategies employed in terms of innovation (0.429, p-value =0.003), promotion and marketing (0.514, p-value =

<0.001), diversification (0.400, p-value = 0.047) has a positive moderate relationship between the net sales income profile. This means that the strategies employed is significantly related to the aforementioned variables with p -values<.05.

4. The challenges encountered by the hotel owners in operating their business with the highest weighted mean of 2.81 is the “newly hired staff are not familiar with the operation of hotel” as a moderate problem.
5. A business model has been developed for possible adoption to ensure the sustainable implementation of strategies in the hotel industry in Daet, Camarines Norte.

C. Recommendations

1. The hotel industry may attend trainings and workshops that will help them to innovate. New knowledge and ideas are important in creating innovation. They can adapt the best practices of another hotel with events place.
2. The management of the hotel industry may conduct regular strategic planning to assess the quality planning process. A SWOT analysis may be adapted
3. during the planning activity to strategize the proper implementation of business model to the hotel.
4. The hotel industry management may provide attractive packages for compensation, benefits, rewards, and incentives, and may be implemented to attract the employees to stay longer, and for the employment application of skilled workers who have enough experiences.
5. The business model may be presented to the group of associations in the hotel industry in Camarines Norte for proper evaluation, review, and possible recommendations.

For other future researches, studies may be conducted to further explore the implementation of business model canvas of other hotel industry in other locale.

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