

# ***A Qualitative Exploration on the Lived Experiences of the Computer Shop Owners Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines***

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## **Abstract**

*Business is either a trade or a commercial service involving the supply of products or services in return for money; it may also refer to your occupation or profession. A business may be a for-profit corporation or a non-profit organization and may or may not have a separate life from the individuals or individuals who operate it. Employing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the study aims to explore the lived experiences of computer shop owners during the pandemic. Moreover, the implications of the study were discussed, and recommendations were suggested.*

Keywords: *Business, Computer shop owners, Lived experiences, COVID-19*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Business is either a trade or a commercial service involving the supply of products or services in return for money; it may also refer to your occupation or profession. A business may be a for-profit corporation or a non-profit organization and may or may not have a separate life from the individuals or individuals who operate it. A company is an organization that focuses on mercantile, employment, benefits, or trade activities (Pahwa, 2019). Thus, establishing a business is a matter of survival for growth. There are so many things to consider in starting a business, including creating a unique business idea. But not all small business is for success. So when you decide to take the plunge, ditch your day job, and become a business owner, you might be in for a real challenge (Gregory, 2019).

Every crisis brings problems and menaces, whether caused by human behavior, natural catastrophe, or economic processes to entrepreneurs and their organizations or business (Doern et al., 2019). In late December 2019, the Coronavirus, also known as COVID 19, spread so rapidly from Wuhan in China to other countries. It announced a pandemic to be COVID 19 on March 11, 2020. Governments in the affected countries have implemented desperate measures for social distance, widespread lockdown, and restrictions on travel, movement, and community reunions as a response to Coronavirus reduced and saved lives. With that, many facets of public and private life have to switch online (Liguori & Winkler, 2020). Including businesses, but not

all kinds of companies can adapt to a form of online business. Thus, many companies have forced to shut down, resulting in severe trade disruption in most industries. Retailers and brands suffer from many short-term problems, including health safety concerns, the supply chain, employees, cash flow, consumer demands, revenue, and marketing. As a matter of course, many enterprises strive to decide whether they should continue to operate or whether it will be time to close down due to the devastating impact on all manner of business, from individual entrepreneurs to market firms of this fatal Pandemic.

Companies that have temporarily shut down due to government-imposed quarantine, such as business owners, may no longer be required to reverse their welcome sign saying "Open for business" (Guevara, 2020). Thus, the outbreak of COVID-19 would likely cause many famous brands and the local brands to fall into bankruptcy in many businesses as consumers stay home and economies shut down (Tucker, 2020). COVID - 19 sudden "environmental shock" has vastly disrupted companies' financial resources and increased business failures, generating financial difficulties in organizations and weakening many large and small businesses' financial condition. Enabling many to seek government support in the form of subsidies, tax relief, and other financial and non-financial support (Cook & Barrett, 2020). Thus, several businesses have been widely affected by Pandemic

As an entrepreneur, everyone must be willing to face challenges as danger characterizes entrepreneurialism (Hornor, 2012). Moreover, according to Zurcher (n.d.), 74% of small and medium entrepreneurs are happy to face enormous challenges to guarantee success. "Fortune," as the idiom goes, "favors the bold." The Pandemic has quickened the digital transformation across practically all areas. As the world gradually, however, consistently moves to the recuperation stage, we've additionally observed that the Pandemic has brought on changes to consumers' behavior that are probably going to remain for good. The inquiry at that point turns out to be how we can enable and empower business people to use advanced apparatuses, digital tools, and developmental strategies while exploring the Pandemic. (Wong, 2020).

Micro enterprises makeup 88.5% of businesses in the nation and utilize as much as 28.9% of complete private area workers. They are attempting to make due as they anticipate the government. (Rappler, 2020). According to Macaraeg (2020), small businesses like computer shops make up a more significant part (88.5%) of firms in the country. They are also close or somehow next to giant corporations or enterprises as far as work, utilizing as much as 28.9% of the all-out workforce in businesses nationwide. Small enterprises come next as far as the number of establishments, and third, in employment, she added.

Computer shops are one of the micro-enterprises. According to Figueroa (2015), computer shops and Internet cafes we're like mushrooms during the mid-2000s, where the interest in PC use was so high due to students for their tasks and homework, employees for their paper works and research, and gamers for their fun and relaxation. Thus, in the present Information Age, Internet cafes exist. One of the best computers in the Philippines, Netopia, offers computer services like printing, web browsing, and gaming. However, Guevarra (2020) said that the Coronavirus pandemic kills lives as well as businesses. Moreover, he added that over 2,000 establishments had shut down during the COVID-19 wellbeing emergency, dislodging around 70,000 workers. And at this point, the numbers have moved up.

Furthermore, due to the devastating cost of this destructive Pandemic on a wide range of businesses, from singular business entrepreneurs or micro-enterprises to huge players, numerous business people are attempting to conclude whether to proceed with their activities an ideal opportunity to crease up. Businesses that have briefly shut shop because of the legislature forced

isolate may not, at this point, have the option to flip back their welcome sign saying "Open for Business." All things being equal, many will keep on going on lockdown, for all time. Indeed, many businesses are affected, including computer shop businesses.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of computer shop owners during the pandemic. Specifically, it sought to answer the following.

1. What are the lived experiences of the computer shop owners experience during the pandemic?
2. What are the challenges that computer shop owners experience during the pandemic?
3. What are the strategies of the computer shop owners to cope up with the pandemic?

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### ***2.1 The Effects of Pandemic to Businesses***

The COVID-19 Pandemic has definitely and immediately changed lifestyles for practically everybody around the globe somewhat. It made them practice social distancing, wash their hands thoroughly, and get familiar with wearing covers. Meanwhile, the public health threat likewise permitted numerous individuals to work from home unexpectedly, and some will do as such for a long time to come. Moreover, there is also an undeniable connection between small businesses and COVID-19, exceptionally as specialists constrained unnecessary undertakings to close incidentally and commanded that all others follow new wellbeing and security strategies (Partida, 2020). According to The World Bank (2020), social help to poor and weak families, just as micro and small businesses, will help cushion the effect of COVID-19 and hurry recovery in the Philippines. As indicated by From Containment to Recovery, the World Bank's October 2020 Economic Update for East Asia and the Pacific, delivered today.

Moreover, the report forecasts the Philippine economy to decrease by 6.9 percent in 2020. It was preceding bouncing back to 5.3 percent in 2021 and 5.6 percent in 2022 – a drawn-out cycle that could hinder the nation's quick advancement in destitution decrease lately. Economic development arrived at the midpoint of 6.6 percent from 2015 to 2019, coming about because of judicious full-scale financial administration, considerable interests in the framework and human resources, and excellent outer conditions. This way, healthy development in family livelihoods decreased the public neediness rate from 23.5 percent in 2015 to 16.7, as said in an article at The World Bank. As noted by Business Mirror (2020), The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has released a memorandum roundabout recommending the implementing guidelines for business operations following recently gave Resolution 12 by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases. Memorandum Circular 20-04, Series of 2020 covers all business foundations in the National Capital Region (NCR). It said all manufacturing, retail, and service establishment would stay in activity amid the community quarantine being actualized in Metro Manila, subject to specific limitations. With that, mass get-togethers or gatherings by a business establishment, for example, yet not restricted to general congregations, huge conferences or meetings, outside occasions that draw in enormous groups, and unimportant business-related social affairs will be limited. Their staff will also chip away at relevant adaptable working courses of action compliant with Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Advisory 09, Series of 2020. These game plans incorporate working from home, telecommuting, decreasing workdays/hours, turn of laborers, and power leave, among others.

Meanwhile, shopping center or mall activities, then again, will work on a restricted limit. They were permitting tasks of those business establishments or tenants offering actual products and services, such as groceries and supermarkets, banks, drug stores, health clinics, bookstores, hardware, and more. As said by Rivas (2020), regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic's effect on businesses and families, the Philippines had it most exceedingly awful, as per an examination by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). A paper by ADB monetary area expert Shigehiro Shinozaki, introduced in an online course on Wednesday, September 16, demonstrated 70.6% of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Philippines had to close because of the COVID-19 flare-up briefly. Then, the nation trailed by Laos (61.1%), Indonesia (48.6%), and Thailand (41.1%). Moreover, Philippine MSMEs likewise noticed the most dropping or cancellation of contracts (19.1%) and delayed delivery of products and services (35%) during the lockdown. An aggregate of 3,877 MSMEs surveyed for the study, 1,804 of which came from the Philippines. Thus, the majority share or 58.8% of MSMEs in the Philippines detailed zero pay, while 28% said incomes fell over 30%. Laos topped the surveyed countries, with 62.8% of MSMEs detailing zero compensation because of the temporary closure. Furthermore, in terms of employment, 66.2% of Philippine MSMEs named impermanent staff cuts, trailed by Laos (53.5%), Indonesia (51%), and Thailand (42.3%). Besides, he studies likewise noticed that the work-from-home arrangement is "not a genuine alternative for MSMEs," with merely 13% to 21% of organizations in the four nations embracing the plan. It implies that small businesses adjusted to the Pandemic through impermanent cutbacks instead of executing work-from-home projects that administrations have energized, he added.

## ***2.2 The Strategies of Business owners during a pandemic***

Pandemic such as COVID-19 has resulted in significant disturbances for businesses and customers, which have had detrimental effects on the global and local economy. In keeping companies to operate, governments and other related bodies adopt steps to cushion small businesses against adjustments. Thus, managers and business owners developed different methods to achieve their objectives. Business Strategy is how the company owners build and sustain competitive advantage by aligning the organization with its surroundings' systematic assets, resources, and competencies (Gumusluoglu & Acur, 2016). One of the small business crisis management is making the most of the internet. According to Shin, Pang, and Kim (2015), they identified continuous upgrades in technology and internet advancements that enhanced online communication between corporations' shareholders and consumers. Their study included 200 businesses and promoted online media to build up a direct dialogue, which later announced open exchanges relationships ideas for and from customers. By ongoing use of internet sources, According to Graham, Aver, and Park (2015), the top three platforms used to relay and launch new products to information about marketing strategies. These were Facebook and Twitter corporate websites and social media sites, with even more than 150 million users in the United States and over 500 million users worldwide. Everything in the world, as such, include strategic planning tools.

Planning in an unexpected organizational downtime as a coordination tactic helps improve small businesses' survival during the crisis. ( Diers & Donohue, 2013). Another Strategy is the Managing of the situation through innovation. Innovation in crisis management is linked to alter or build procedures, goods, or services that increase crisis chance of company sustainability (Bessant, Rush & Trifilova, 2015). Earlier researchers included innovation as a tactic to survive a crisis. This can involve discounting prices, growing social media activity, or community

outreach programs. To emphasize creativity as a crisis survival technique, Archibugi, Filippetti, and Frenz (2013) reported the findings of a survey previously conducted on small business owners and after the global crisis in 2008. Their study respondents prepared to deal with problems and challenges that expand their organization's capabilities; thus, Small business owners refocused their attention on innovation activities. Establishing Partnerships in business is the other strategy in solving crises. Chain of supply in management alliances may support small business leaders by providing extended management partnerships (Carey, 2012). Products, records, and money are control as they pass between suppliers, producers, and retailers to buyers. Ideal creations will create a perfect positive environment with the incorporation of social and economic transparency. Chong, Wang & Tan (2014) stated that the acquisition of knowledge on the supply chain, partnerships may help small business owners to formulate strategies for survival and unpredicted crisis. According to Peacock and Xiao (2014), a situation's planning would not ensure the business owner's outcomes' success.

### ***2.3 Challenges that Business Owners faced During Pandemic***

The world is being affected by the COVID-19; businesses worldwide face significant challenges because of the virus, both positive and negative. A Coronavirus is an unpredictable event that the world is currently facing. It affects small, and big businesses globally; pubs and restaurants, malls, shops, and many other companies are forced to closed and shut down. It was implemented by the World Health Organization and the government itself because the virus that may spread widely and become more critical for it needed a face-to-face interaction. Companies are affected by the virus and finding it hard to adjust, and a lot of businesses are striving to protect workers from losing their jobs. Unequal financial practice has also guaranteed that companies and people do not have to stop working (David, 2020). Today's business owners face immense, struggling obstacles and unfamiliar plans as they continue to handle the Coronavirus impacts. Many businesses are risking by taking actions to arise from the Pandemic. The business owners face the crisis with a reinvention spirit by increasing the digital transformation, setting up variable cost structures, and executing quick-moving operations. The current situation is entirely upsetting, especially to the entrepreneurs.

A recent survey conducted by Goldman Sachs survey said that 50% of entrepreneurs are hesitant to keep the business operating for more than three months. Entrepreneurs are living with many challenges, which include providing the companies they have put their blood, sweat, and tears to carry on to bide one's time. From hundreds of exchanges of views with the customers, business owners, and local leaders, there are main problems that entrepreneurs are facing during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Taking steps and making progress, experiencing today's crisis has to do with quick decision making in the face of unpredictability. Business owners see themselves struggling with "analysis paralysis," or unable to decide due to overthinking. Maintaining the business while following the government's newly implemented regulations will impact the business owners almost every day. To be aware and abide by the new rules and changes, business owners will need to update the news from their region, state, and national government daily. Finding balance and acquiring a healthy mind-set, business owners experience fear, anxiety, hopelessness, and many intensive emotions during this Pandemic. The additional level of stress that business owners are by being the best for the employees and clients. Handling overloaded information, it is like every minute there is continuous information about COVID-19. The access to being informed about the updated news is good but also a burden. Information overload is right that results when many new details are distributing at the same time. When

there is information added, the essential details or news will be missed out and can result in harmful misinformation. According to the MIT Study, last 2018 found that false news travels faster than the actual information through social media. Choosing to focus on what is right, entrepreneurs have many concerns right now, and it is not easy to know what to prioritize.

Every business owner has their own story, and amid the Coronavirus outbreak, each business had its struggles. The owner of The Club by DM, a hair salon, said that one of the significant challenges that their business faces are keeping everyone's health and safety. It is essential to keep the place clean and disinfected, and the staff is wearing masks, sanitizing, and doing a temperature check. The customers should wear masks also and practice social distancing (Mager, 2020). The president of a Corazon Latino Dance Studio has financial as one of the significant challenges their business is paying rent and employees and having only limited clients (Gonzalez, 2020). The co-owner of Soul Bowl, a restaurant, is having difficulty staying open is a big challenge for the business because the business owner provides the livelihood of their employees and their own families. The restaurant had to change into a take-out and delivery model, the company had to adapt immediately (Klass, 2020). Co-owner and operator, Off the Rez and Via Tribunali's big challenge on their food truck, café, and pizza business is getting people convenient with eating outside again. The Pandemic affected how the company runs for that time. The food truck needed to phase out, but food trucks and dining out are also allowed (McConnell, 2020). The co-owner of Derrydale Farm is facing the big challenge of having delayed schedules in the small meat processor. The businesses closing, restaurants, hotels, and schools caused food waste. The farm business becomes extra strict regarding its food policy and security, which resulted in the scheduling delays that people struggle to put food on the table (Stuedeman, 2020).

Small businesses worldwide are affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic regardless of their size, location, or funding—small businesses are forced to closed and dealing with the unpredictable future. Facebook conducted a survey that resulted in 31% of mini and medium-sized enterprises closed down in the last three months. This Pandemic's situation is abysmal for personal business that 52% are reportedly has shut down, 43% of restaurants, cafes, hotels are closed, and 41% of services like grooming, wellness, fitness, or other professional services are not currently operating any activities. Business owners cause them to close because most of it is a demand by the government and health authorities. In contrast, the small business others responded that 9% is due to financial struggles, and 7% lack customer demand. Some businesses stayed open but still dealt with significant challenges, including access to capital and clients (Chacon, 2020). Access to capital is part of the biggest challenges among the open business, for it needs to stay afloat, keeping its supply, and providing the employee's needs and safety. According to Facebook's survey, 60% of 3 out of 5 businesses face financial problems in their company. Some of the concerns are 29% of it was paying the workers' salaries and 28% for paying the bills (Chacon, 2020). Small businesses have to adapt to the pandemic crisis and turning their businesses to Internet tools. Using digital tools for businesses is helpful, but it was not the complete solution; about half of companies (51%) reported that the interactions between the customers and employees need the same physical location and not applicable for being an online business (Chacon, 2020). Small companies have to balance running a business and to take care of their households. According to Facebook's data, 10% of the business owners and workers of available companies taking care of their family is their primary concern. The 47% reportedly felt the burden as they take care of both business and household. 29% are afraid that they might bring the virus at home (Chacon, 2020). Small businesses are struggling with their employees

having a difficult budgetary situation; the companies remained open. Yet, the employees are dealing with financial cuts from losing their jobs and working fewer hours. Even the small businesses are affected by the Pandemic; they remained optimistic and resilient. According to Facebook's report and survey, most of the small businesses that are 57% are looking forward to their businesses' future despite the COVID-19. Small companies are finding new ways to keep going and reach their customers online and adjusting to operating the company amid the COVID-19 Pandemic (Chacon, 2020).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The research is a qualitative study, and the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) used. It is an approach to qualitative psychological research with an idiographic focus, which means that it aims to offer insights into how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of a given phenomenon.

According to Smith and Osborn (2015), IPA is a qualitative approach that aims to provide detailed examinations of personal lived experiences. It focuses on lived experience on its terms rather than on prescribed by pre-existing theoretical preconceptions. It is an interpretative endeavor as humans are sense-making organisms.

#### **3.1 Participants**

The study utilized computer shop owners as respondents. These respondents are the owner or operators of computer shops, whether continuously open or not. The sample consisted of any gender, regardless of age, as these respondents are the said business owners of the computer shop. The researchers found ten respondents from different places around Bulacan with experience operating and handling computer shop business.

#### **3.2 Instrument**

The researchers formulated a semi-structured interview consist of nine questions in order to elicit the participant's views and experiences on their computer shop business. Semi-structured interview was used in order for the researchers to explore deeper on the participant's responses. The questions were asked using the Filipino language (Tagalog), to provide a comfortable conversation with the participants. Upon collection of the data, all responses were considered accordingly and validated based on the research problem and the variables of the study. An expert administered the validation in the academe. Revision and modification of the interview guide were verified before interviewing with the ten respondents of this research.

#### **3.3 Procedures**

The study has tackled a series of steps to come up with efficient data gathering. Because of the on-going pandemic, approval of the interview is given already. Interview was conducted immediately. The professor was kind enough to provide a guide for the researchers to conduct the interview with the participants. The interview process was done in Facebook messenger and face-to-face interview with safe protocols because of the pandemic.

A collection of questions was sent before interviewing participants to give them time to think and recollect their experiences. Interviews encourage individuals to explain circumstances to someone from their viewpoint and in their language. The reported interview was encoded and edited, and the text was interpreted many times to clarify and gain essential points of the

participants' perspectives. Through this, the researchers were able to gain and acquire responses from computer shop owners amidst the pandemic.

The interviews were held in privacy to ensure confidentiality. Before giving their informed oral consent, participants were asked and given written information about the flow of data collection and confidentiality. Permission to have access to the participants is the researcher's work, finding them around the area of Bulacan through Facebook and neighbors. The participants are questioned to inform them of this interview and safeguard their confidentiality.

#### 4. RESULTS

After conducted the lived experiences of computer shop owners during pandemic, exploring and understanding their lived experiences gathered from the data will now be presented. The method is phenomenological, this approach is to focus and analyzed the study of an participant's lived experiences; it aims to examine personal knowledge and concerns an individual's interpretation or description of an entity or occurrence, as opposed to an effort to create an empirical statement of the object or event itself (Smith & Osborn, 2015)

The following sections are the summarization of the results gathered from the interviewee. The finding of this study is laid out in themes found within the interview of each participant. These findings are organized within separate sections that cover each participant's different aspect of their computer shop business. This includes their experiences, challenges faced and strategies during and before the lockdown is implemented.

##### 4.1 *The Lived Experiences of Computer Shop Owners during Pandemic*

Where business owners are considered to have a millionaire mind-set, they are a legal proprietor of a business, own the assets of a firm and profits from them. Computer shop owners were considered only to accommodate people who needs internet. Computer shop owners is involved with the computer industry that means they can also include businesses that operate hardware and software manufacturers, PC repairs, service companies, and more. They depend on their business to provide for their biological needs. However, computer shop owners who are battling with the pandemic that requires social distancing were entirely different from what we imagined it would be. To perform and achieve a provider's role, computer shop owners are switching business and trying more work to earn for their needs.

Most respondent shared that this pandemic gave them the thing they least expect for, it is for their businesses to close. Most of the participants are having difficulty because they get their only income from the computer shop. Having to provide for the family despite the threatening closure of their shops might be hard for them. Francis' shared:

*'Ah, bilang isang may-ari ng computer shop, ano since diba nga nagkaroon ng pandemic syempre wala kaming kita. Syempre ang aasahan din namin is yung kikitain sa computer shop so ayun mahirap siya kasi bawal lumabas yung mga tao, bawal magpalaro ganun bawal magkita'*

With this, majority of the respondents shared also their sentiments about their negative experiences during the pandemic. They stated that they have been having difficulty and crisis this pandemic. Jhonafer stated that:

*"Nahirapan kami na makapag adjust sa mga bills, bagamat hindi na kami nangungupahan sa pwesto ang monthly bill ng internet at balanse sa ibang computer units na hindi pa namin nababayaran"*



Likewise, Francis also said the same thing.

*'Ah, para sakin yung negatibong dulot dito is yung ano sa financial pati pala sa ano kasi syempre pag di natin nagamit yung mga computer sa sobrang tagal, mayroong possibility kasi siyang masira'*

They shared that the computers are going to be broken when get stocked, maintaining its usage is expensive and also hard. They also shared what this pandemic had caused them. Francis shared his hardships during this pandemic when the lockdown and protocols are implemented.

*'Mahirap talaga yung dulot ng pandemyang ito bilang isang computer shop owner, syempre ah, yun nga maasahan lang naming dito is yung mga manlalaro, syemppre di ka naman kikita kung walang mga ganyan sa computer shop mo eh so ayun yung mahirap.'*

#### **4.2 The Challenges Faced of the Computer Shop Owners during Pandemic**

The most common theme of every research is challenges faced. Every human being has a challenging part of their lives. Majority of the respondents expressed their own point of view about the challenges they faced during this pandemic. Being stuck at home without their computer shop is a big struggle on how they will face their everyday needs. Arlene stated:

*'Unang una siyempre 'yung financial-state, hindi na masyadong maganda dahil kasi wala ngang income tapos yung expenses dire-diretso. Ayun ang isa sa pinaka risk noong quarantine.'*

She further explained her state that made her struggle as a computer shop owner. She states that maintaining the computers is a real challenge. She explained that it is not just about the computer, it is also about the connectivity and stability of the internet, if the internet is not stable then there is no customer. Christin, also a computer shop owner shared:

*'Ayun nga kumbaga dito kasi kami kumukuha ng pang araw-araw na pang-ulam namin e. Noong binili kasi namin ayan, ni-loan lang namin kaya ano nahirapan kami masyado kasi dito kami kumukuha ng pangkain namin. Kaya ano dobleng tipid, dobleng pagtitipid namin kasi nga wala naglalaro, wala kaming pambili ng ano gusto naming pagkain ganoon hindi katulad dati na sobra sobra na nakakabili pa kami ng isa isa niyan.*

Arlene, an amateur when it comes to maintaining computers added:

*'Siguro sa pagpo-program tapos pagma-maintain nung mga panibago nanaman na mga upgrades ng mga kailangan doon sa mga lumalabas na ano kasi parang pag na-meet mo na 'yung isang dinownload mo,meron nanaman susunod na mas mataas kaya kailangan mo lagi mag-upgrade ng PC'*

Most respondents' struggles are maintaining their computers and adjusting to the pandemic because every one of them is shocked that they did not have the time to think of anything and just close their shops because the government said so. According to one of the respondents who are not very familiar with the computers, it is expensive to maintain a computer. Whenever they need the computer to be fixed, they also struggle with the money:

*'Mahirap din kasi ano 'yung mga program niya kapag mayroong halimbawa may nawalang program hahanap ka pa ng technician, ng I.T e 'di ba wala naman akong alam diyen. Nagbabayad lang din kami ng mga technician atsaka ng mga I.T sa program. Kapag nawala, may nawala edi ayun hindi nanaman magagamit. Matagal nanaman namin magagamit kapag meron ng pera pampagawa.'*

Likewise, Rodolfo also shared the same statement as the other respondent:

*'Diba nagkaroon nga ng pandemic naging mahigpit 'yung protocol. Maraming pinagbabawal, isa na doon 'yung paglabas-labas ng mga bata ay siyempre walang*

*papasok sa computer shop atsaka minsan sarado ito hindi kami nagbubukas 'yung bigasan lang pero 'yung computer walang pumapasok talaga.'*

There is a respondent that even borrowed money from their own savings for them to have an expense for their everyday need. Jhonafer shared:

*'Kagaya ng mga ordinaryong mamamayan nahirapan din kami makapag adjust sa budget at nagalaw ang kaonting naitatabing ipon para sa pangangailangan sa bahay na ilang buwan na nahinto ang hanapbuhay.'*

#### **4.3 The Strategies of the Computer Shop Owners to Cope Up during Pandemic**

According to Sophie, "There is no luck in business. There is only drive, determination, and more drive." All participants are coordinating with the researchers and happily shared what strategies they have to keep up with the flow of the pandemic. Some respondents shared their faith that is keeping them from giving up with their computer shop business and their lives during the pandemic:

*'Unang una, ayun magdasal lang ng magdasal. Manalig ka lang sa Panginoon, malalagpasan lahat ng pagsubok na iyan kasi inano ng Panginoon na hindi lang tayo puro trabaho kailangan din natin magpahinga, tumawag at magtiwala sa Kanya.'*

Christine, also a respondent added:

*'Ayun araw-araw naman may problema naman tayo 'di ba? Atsaka ayun lagi lang akong dasal, nananalig, at ayun tawag lang ako ng tawag sa Panginoon at tiwala sa Panginoon na Siya ang tinutulungan Niya kami na maresolba namin 'yung mga dumaraan sa aming problema sa araw-araw.'*

All of the participants also shared the same ideas of their strategies. Finding another business and a job is their answer to the crisis of the pandemic brought them. April who is also a respondent shared that they opened a pisonet to help them pay their bills and meals all throughout the month:

*'Nakatulong ang aming pisonet, parang yun yung naging kapalit ng computer shop namin. Sa pisonet kasi maghuhulog ka lang dito samin tapos pwede na ka umuwi sa inyo kung abot ng signal ng wifi kaya pwede pa rin kami mag operate ng pisonet kahit may pandemya.'*

She also added that they sell frozen goods online at the same time with their pisonet because their computer shop is closed for months. Francis who is devoted to being a computer shop owner still opened his computer shop following the pandemic's protocols:

*'Bali kasi ang ginawa namin, nilagyan namin ng cover yung bawat pc para pwede na magpalaro tapos naglimit rin kami ng bilang ng tao na pwede pumasok. Kailangan yung mga maglalaro lang talaga.'*

Marinyl also did the same thing as Francis:

*'So iyon bilang isang owner ng computer shop, so naisip ko para magwork ito ay kailangan ko mag-adjust sa safety protocol para magpatuloy ito sa pagbubukas.'*

Some of them shared that even if the profit is small, it is okay as long as they get money from it to use for their needs. Arlene states that:

*'Siguro mas dapat hindi lang isa source of income mo. Kapag negosyante ka, nakadepende ka doon sa income na iyon unlike kapag empleyado ka kahit hindi ka magtatrabaho sasahod ka. Kapag negosyante ka kasi kailangan marami kang source of income, halimbawa kapag may computer shop ka kailangan may iba ka pang ginagawa pa.'*

Having their resolve despite the crisis, Arlene positively states:

*'Magpatuloy lang. Patuloy pa rin tayo kumapit sa plano ng Panginoon tapos ayun marami naman opportunity eh actually ngayon naka-ilang months na tayo 'di ba? So far, mas maraming opportunity na dumadating ngayong pandemic. Kailangan lang natin alamin, kailangan nakahanda lang tayo lagi.'*

Facing the pandemic with positivity is one of their resolves. All of them believed that even undergoing this pandemic is a struggle. They have the idea in their mind that someday all of these are going to be over. For the last question, the researchers asked them their accurate resolve for their business. Francis' shared his thoughts:

*'Ah, para sakin ano, sating panahon ng pandemya kasi yun nga yung paraang naging resolve ko as computer shop owner is yung naglagay kami ng mga alcohol, naglagay kami ng mga cover. Naglagay din kami ng sign na, "No wash, No entry" ganun tapos ang pede naming papasukin is yung manlalaro. Yun yung naging resolba naming as computer shop owner para mapagpatuloy ang business.'*

Even the circulating virus cannot stop these shop owners from thinking of a way to survive.

*'Nag-aano din kasi ako e meron akong nag-Avon din ako pero hindi rin naman malakas ngayon kasi lahat nga krisis ngayon. Kumbaga lahat ng negosyo humina, ayun ginagawa lang namin talaga tipid-tipid kasi lahat naman ngayon humina, lahat ng negosyo ngayon 'di ba maraming walang trabaho? Tapos ayun kami nagpapaprint lang, nag-xerox lang kami ayun 'yung alternative namin.'*

Christine's response is her resolve to survive this crisis. She manages to find a new part-time job that still connects her to her shop even if it is close to operate. Arlene also shared the same respond:

*'Yung kaalaman talaga kung papaano ka at may iba ka pang alam na pwede gawin bukod sa pagpapa-rent ng mga PC. Kailangan marunong ka rin mag-handle ng computer, kailangan marunong ka rin magpatakbo katulad ng pagpo-program, at iba pa tulad ng pagpapa-print. Tapos isa rin sa pupwede ka ay magprint ng learning materials, invitations, basta tungkol doon pati pag-xerox kasi pwedeng bukod sa pagpapa-rent ng unit pwede mong gawin source of income iyon.'*

## 5. DISCUSSION

This study aims to answer the general question of how the computer shop owners lived during the pandemic. To further understand this subject, this question is broken down into three major topics: Experiences of the computer shop owners during the pandemic; Challenges that computer shop owners experienced during the pandemic; and their strategies to cope up with the pandemic. These problems were looked into by conducting a qualitative interview of computer owners. In this chapter, the results that were laid down in the previous chapter will be discussed and assessed further.

Numerous circumstances and discouraging occurrences of the computer shop owners were also stated in the previous chapter. In spite of that, the computer shop owners still operate their businesses while facing the danger of COVID-19. In their issues, the computer shop owners are mostly struggles financially because of having no customers especially where people are not allowed to go out and have to follow safety protocols. According to the participants, the only way they survive in their computer shop is to find another business or work and do not depend on one business only. As COVID-19 cases still rises in our country, computer shop owners and

also other business owners needed to comply and adjust to keep their business open. As stated by the respondents, maintaining your business especially the computers is a difficult task for them because of the fee that it will cause and the monthly upgrade of its software. In addition, many of the respondents reported their dependency on their computer shop business and it affected their daily expenses. Regardless, computer shop owners remained optimistic while facing the challenges they are experiencing during pandemic and will continue to run their computer shop rentals while applying safety protocols.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted, the study may concluded the following: Computer shop owners were struggling financially due to the closure of their computer shops brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, knowing that their number one source of income is Computer Shop Business. Computer shop owners struggle with how they will support their needs. Most of them also find different approaches to survive the cause of the COVID-19 pandemic to their businesses. They find it to be more challenging in dealing with the financial state. Based on researchers' results, some business owners will continue operating their computer shop business and ready to adjust and face the new type of system amidst pandemics. In contrast, others may shift into another form of online business that somehow they believe could deal with their situation to the pandemic's effects. The researchers also conclude that some of them are deciding to push through their ongoing business while others are not.

Furthermore, the researchers recommend governments and leaders of the organization in businesses to provide ways and solutions. And options to the owner of computer shops on how to cope up to the situation that Computer shop owners are experiencing amidst pandemic, to guide them in the present and mostly in the future of their lives as a business owner. Government and leaders of the organization may provide financial assistance to be able to use by computer shop owners to manage their other resources.

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