

## THE HYBRID ADVANTAGE: ACCELERATING LEISURE AND RECREATION RECOVERY IN REGION IV-A

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### Abstract

This study analyzes the possible ways for the sector to recover its halted business operations not in a traditional way but on a hybrid manner. The study used a mixed method approach from a combination of quantitative research method through online survey from the leisure and recreation services business owners in the region to understand their perception on optimizing and collaborating for operational recovery and a qualitative research method for selected stakeholders of the sector for additional data specified in the research problem specifically on their challenges and their forecast for the sector. To make the study reach wider participants, the research used a random sampling technique to gather as many thoughts as possible. All in all, this research was able to gather 58 survey participants and 3 stakeholders for the interview. Result of the study where majority of the respondents are at the age of 35 – 44 years old mostly female with bachelor's degree and 6 – 10 years of managerial experience. Also, majority of the tourism business enterprises are in a corporation business structure operating from 4 – 7 years with an initial capital of Php 15,000,001 – Php 100,000,000 and their sources of fund for day-to-day operations is through their profits. Also, there are significant differences on Readiness of LGUs, Social Protection and Livelihood, Human Resource and mostly on, Information and Technology. Adding the inputs from the interviews of the stakeholders, these significant differences are the main focus on the intended Hybrid Approach Plan for Operational Recovery.

**Keywords:** Accelerating Leisure, Hybrid Approach, Hybrid Manner, Operational Recovery and Recreation Services.

### INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 crisis — in terms of scale, scope, and trajectory — has impacted the tourism sector in a way none of the earlier crises have affected the sector (World Bank Group, 2020). Since its spread, the entire value chain that defined the industry — from airlines, bus and train companies, cruise lines, hotels, restaurants, attractions, travel agencies, tour operators, online travel entities affecting the leisure and recreation — has dealt economic losses of historical proportions (ADB, 2020).

The closing of borders, airports, and hotels as well as restrictions on mass gatherings, land travel and related services across the world in the first ten months of 2020 represented 900 million fewer international tourist arrivals compared to the same period in 2019 and translated an estimated loss of 910 billion to 1.2 trillion US dollars in international tourism receipts (WTTC, 2020); more than 10 times the loss in 2009 under the impact of the global economic crisis, putting around 100 to 120 million jobs at risk (OECD, 2020).

Despite the resilient nature of Philippine Tourism, it is still vulnerable to internal and external challenges as it has become one of the hardest hit sectors. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) has estimated Gross Value Added (GVA) losses of 77.5 to 156 billion pesos (1.53 to 3.07 USD billion) in the tourism sector, and reduced employment by about 33,800 to 56,600.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) further estimated that each month of containment has generated a loss of two percentage points in annual GDP growth.

Indeed, any further economic collapse can adversely affect millions of people globally, including many Filipino vulnerable communities, who depend on tourism for their livelihood. While the outlook of the industry is still on an unstable position, all sectors of society have been taking action to make the tourism industry stay afloat (UNWTO, 2020).

In this case, the uncertain cycle and global nature of the pandemic puts the industry in a unique situation especially because an end date is harder to predict. Further, the pervasiveness of the virus leaves few options for travelers and operators. The ‘immediate response’ period before ‘recovery’ is the immediate concern. This means that policy responses must be designed to deal with the immediate survival of the industry.

A unified call for financial and political support for recovery measures aimed at tourism, and to include support for the sector in the wider recovery plans and actions of affected economies is of utmost importance.

A strong enabling environment is critical for fast business recovery and attracting new investment with the onset of recovery (ADB, 2020). To provide a national policy framework for the tourism industry’s response, recoil, and recovery measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Department of Tourism (DOT), in close coordination with other national government agencies and the tourism stakeholders through the Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP), spearheaded the formulation of the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan (TRRP) last March 2020.

The Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) approved the amendments to the guidelines on the nationwide implementation of the Alert Level System for Covid-19 response. This, after the IATF also approved placing the National Capital Region and 38 other areas under Alert Level 1 from March 1 to 15, 2022, exactly two years after the pandemic restrictions started.

Under Alert Level 1, the IATF said there are no restrictions in terms of indoor and outdoor capacities. Everyone can undertake intrazonal and interzonal travel without regard to age and even comorbidities. All establishments, persons, or activities are likewise allowed to operate, work, or be undertaken at total on-site or venue seating capacity, provided these are consistent with minimum public health standards. (PNA, 2022)

Numerous local organizations were elated with the lifting of restrictions in all sectors. One of them is The Department of Tourism (DOT) noting that this will further boost travel and tourism activities amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

While health declaration forms will no longer be required for all agencies and establishments, vaccinated individuals eighteen (18) years old and above" are still required to present proof of full vaccination before entry into any venue for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE); participation in social events such as parties, wedding receptions, engagement parties, wedding anniversaries, debut and birthday parties, family reunions, and bridal or baby showers; and visit to tourist attractions such as libraries, archives, museums, galleries, exhibits, parks, plazas, public gardens, scenic viewpoints or overlooks, and the like. (DOT, 2022)

NEDA Chief Karl Kenrick Chua mentioned that will add P9.4 billion in gross value-added or output per week, of which P3 billion will be for workers' salaries. As such, Chua said there will be about 170,000 fewer jobless Filipinos over the next quarter.

Chua said that if the entire Philippines moved to the lowest alert level, a bigger P16.5 billion in economic activity a week, of which P5.2-billion worth would be workers' pay, would likely slash unemployment by a larger 297,000 in the next three months. Also, tourism would benefit the most from Alert Level 1 — P750 billion, or half of the P1.5 trillion shed by the sector in 2020 at the height of the most stringent lockdowns, were expected to be recovered as transportation, hotels, malls, and restaurants raise their capacity to 70 to 100 percent.

Given this excitement, The Department of Tourism (DOT) is in the process of validating 71 new tourism circuits in 13 regions across the country. The circuits are being developed in coordination with local government units and tourism stakeholders and will feature activities based on travelers' preferences in the new normal.

These circuits would reintroduce the best travel products and experiences a region offers, including but not limited to culinary, history, nature, wellness, farm, and faith-based tourism. As of today, 44 tourism circuits have been validated in Metro Manila, the Ilocos and Cordillera regions, Central Luzon, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, Bicol, Western Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao region, and SOCCSKSARGEN. (PNA, 2022)

Developed for the new normal, the DOT sees to it that the destinations included in the "recalibrated" circuits are not only infused with the health and safety protocols but are carefully crafted for different kinds of travelers. Also, as lockdowns and strict protocols were implemented for the past two years, travelers for leisure and recreation have been dying to go out and do what they have used to practice during pre-pandemic times.

Given all of these data gathered and information, a lot of tourism businesses were caught off-guard on the pandemic. Most of the operations were halted, or worst stopped their business for good due to heavy losses. As the protocols are now at ease, these businesses are scrambling to adapt to the new normal of operations and unfortunately, business only rely on the mandates on either local government and/or national government, which from the observance of the

researcher is confusing. This study aims to understand the current situation of the business sector in The Philippines particularly the Leisure and Recreation Sector of the Tourism Industry in REGION IV – A and suggest what hybrid approach of operations can be tailor fitted in their business and adapt to the travel's new normal and as mentioned, for the business to bounce back from its lackluster business operations.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims to seek the formulation of the hybrid advantage: accelerating leisure and recreation recovery in Region Iv-A specifically for the Leisure and Recreation Services of Region IV – A, the study seeks to understand or provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 age;
  - 1.2 gender;
  - 1.3 highest educational attainment; and,
  - 1.4 years of managerial experience?
2. What is the profile of the business in terms of:
  - 2.1 business structure;
  - 2.2 years in operation;
  - 2.3 number of employees;
  - 2.4 capital (initial);
  - 2.5 services offered; and,
  - 2.6 average number of visitors per month?
3. What is the extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector with respect to:
  - 3.1 optimization:
    - 3.1.1 Social protection and livelihood;
    - 3.1.2 Enterprise survival;
    - 3.1.3 Product development and marketing;
    - 3.1.4 Infrastructure investments; and,
    - 3.1.5 Readiness of lgus and destinations?
  - 3.2 Collaboration:
    - 3.2.1 Operations;
    - 3.2.2 Human resource;

- 3.2.3 Marketing;
- 3.2.4 Information and technology; and,
- 3.2.5 External polic?
- 3.3 quantification:
  - 3.3.1 Profitability;
  - 3.3.2 Liquidity; and,
  - 3.3.3 Solvency?
- 4. Is there a significant difference on the extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of the profile of the respondents?
- 5. Is there a significant difference on the extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of the profile of the business?
- 6. What are the challenges encountered by the leisure and recreation sector establishments with respect to operational recovery variables before and during pandemic?
- 7. How do the respondents foresee the state/condition of leisure and recreation sector in 2023 and beyond?
- 8. Based on the result of the study what hybrid recovery plan may be proposed/developed?

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher conducted the study in a systematic manner it deals mainly with methods of research used by the author to formulate an effective Hybrid Operations Recovery Plan in REGION IV – A for the Leisure and Recreation Sector. This includes discussions on the respondents of the study, data-gathering instruments and sampling technique and the statistical treatment used in the analysis and interpretation of data. The researcher conducted a mixed method approach.

A Quantitative Research method seeks information to describe the status of an identified variable given by the researcher through survey from the leisure and recreation services business owners in the region. Then for the supplemental participants and non-financial data, A qualitative research method will be used as the researcher believes that this method allows for an understanding of how relevant stakeholders perceive and grasp the status of the tourism industry specifically the business aspect of the leisure and recreation services.

For the collection of supplemental data, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand the status and insights of tourism enterprises and local tourism councils amidst the pandemic.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Profile of the Respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
18 – 24 years old	0	0
25 – 34 years old	5	8.6
35 – 44 years old	43	74.1
45 – 54 years old	10	17.2
55 – 64 years old	0	0
65 – 74 years old	0	0
Total	58	100.0
<b>Gender</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	23	39.7
Female	30	51.7
LGBTQIA+	5	8.6
Total	58	100.0
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
High School Undergraduate	0	0
High School Graduate	0	0
College Undergraduate	0	0
Technical / Vocational Training	0	0
Associate Degree	0	0
Bachelor's Degree	52	89.7
Master's Degree	4	6.9
Professional Degree	2	3.4
Doctorate Degree	0	0
Total	58	100.0
<b>Years of Managerial Experience</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
1 – 5 years	5	8.6
6 – 10 years	42	72.4
11 – 15 years	11	19.0
16 – 20 years	0	0
21 – 25 years	0	0
More than 26 years	0	0
Total	58	100.0

As seen on the Table 1, based on age choices, majority of the respondents are in the bracket of 35 – 44 years old, 45 – 54 years old and 25 – 34 years old with a frequency of 43, 10 and 5 with percentages of 74.1, 17.2 and 8.6 respectively. The result can be proven in a study made by Karpinska, et al., (2013) that older age until the mandatory retirement age is not essential for managers. On the question about gender, majority are female followed by male and few who are honest enough to qualify themselves as LGBTQIA+ with a frequency of 30, and 5 with percentages of 51.7, 39.7 and 8.6 respectively. This is somewhat opposing to the study made by Cuadrado, et.al (2015) where male are more favored instead of females as managers. Here in our country, females are being given opportunities to do responsibilities that males are expected to do. For the highest educational attainment, almost all of the respondents were able to finish a bachelor's degree with a frequency of 53 or 89.7 percent followed by master's degree

with a frequency of 4 or 6.89 percent and professional degree with a frequency of 2 or 3.4 percent. It clearly shows that having a degree is essential in having a manager position in a business. Lastly, for years of managerial experience, majority have 6 – 10 years of experience with a frequency of 42 or 72.4 percent followed by 11 – 15 years with a frequency of 11 or 19 percent and 1 – 5 years with a frequency of 5 or 8.6 percent. It can be seen that the longer the years they practice the job, they have the tendency to be a leader as proven by an article by Watkins (2012).

**Table 2: Profile of the Business**

Structure of Business	f	%
Sole Proprietorship	10	17.2
Partnership	5	8.6
Corporation	43	74.1
Total	58	100.0
Years in Operation		
1 - 3 years	7	12.1
4 - 7 years	20	34.5
8 - 10 years	14	24.1
11 years and above	17	29.3
Total	58	100.0
Number of Employees		
1 - 9 people (Micro)	1	1.7
10 - 99 people (Small)	21	36.2
100 - 199 people (Medium)	31	53.4
200 people and above	5	8.6
Total	58	100.0
Capital of Business		
Php 3,000,001 – Php 15,000,000 (Small)	20	34.5
Php 15,000,001 – Php 100,000,000 (Medium)	31	53.4
Above Php 100 Million (Large)	7	12.1
Total	58	100.0
Sources of Fund		
Retained Earnings (Profits)	56	96.6
Debt Capital (Bank Loans)	40	69.0
Equity Capital (Shares)	39	67.2
Other Business	1	1.7
Activities		
Entertainment (Theme Park, Music Bars)	1	1.7
Water Activities	17	29.3
Physical (Sports, Adventure)	8	13.8
Food and Beverage	49	84.5
Accommodation	47	81.0
Events Place	1	1.7
Spa	10	17.2
Visitors		
Less than 100 visitors	15	25.9
100 – 500 visitors	35	60.3
1,001 – 3,000 visitors	8	13.8
Total	58	100.0



It can be seen from the table 2 that most of the tourism business enterprises were in a corporation with a frequency of 43 or 74.1 percent of the total respondents followed by sole proprietorship with a frequency of 10 or 17.2 percent, partnership with a frequency of 5 or 8.6 percent. This implies that most of the tourism business enterprises chose the Corporation business structure because it is a separate legal entity from its owners, offering liability protection for each owner's personal assets. According to Shannon Almes, attorney at Feldman & Feldman, corporations can generally conduct any lawful business as well as the actions necessary to conduct the business, like entering into contracts, owning assets, borrowing money, hiring employees, suing and being sued. Corporations are generally governed by a board of directors elected by the shareholders (Schooley, 2020). As shown on the table, most of the tourism business enterprises were in operation from 4 – 7 years with a frequency of 20 or 34.5 percent of the total respondents followed by 11 years and above with a frequency of 17 or 29.3 percent, 8 – 10 years with a frequency of 14 or 24.1 percent and 1 – 3 years with a frequency of 7 or 12.1 percent.

It clearly shows that most of the tourism business enterprises were relatively new on the business operations. On the other hand, majority of these business employs 100 – 199 people with a frequency of 31 or 53.4 percent followed by 10 – 99 people with a frequency of 21 or 36.2 percent, 200 people and above with a frequency of 5 or 8.6 percent and 1 – 9 people with a frequency of 1 or 1.7 percent. It simply indicates that these businesses no matter their years of operation, generates employment to the locals of their area. As shown on the table, most of the tourism business enterprises had an initial capital of Php 15,000,001 – Php 100,000,000 with a frequency of 31 or 53.4 percent of the total respondents followed by Php 3,000,001 – Php 15,000,000 with a frequency of 20 or 34.5 percent and Above Php 100 Million with a frequency of 7 or 12.1 percent. It indicates that for the majority of these relatively new business enterprises, their safe initial start-up capital is at Php 15,000,001 – Php 100,000,000. While for their sources of funds, most of the tourism business enterprises get their operational funds from Retained Earnings (Profits) with a frequency of 56 or 96.6 percent of the total respondents followed by Debt Capital (Bank Loans) with a frequency of 40 or 69 percent, Equity Capital (Shares) with a frequency of 39 or 67.2 percent and other business with a frequency of only 1 or 1.7 percent.

This clearly indicates that profits reflect the amount of net income a business has left over after dividends have been paid to shareholders. Anything that affects net income, such as operating expenses, depreciation, and cost of goods sold, will affect the statement of retained earnings. Also, retained earnings can be used to pay additional dividends, finance business growth, invest in a new product line, or even pay back a loan. Most companies with a healthy retained earnings balance will try to strike the right combination of making shareholders happy while also financing business growth. (Girsh-Bock, 2020). The table shows that majority of the respondent's offers Food and Beverage and Accommodation with a frequency of 49 or 84.5 percent and 47 or 81 percent respectively. Others offer water activities with a frequency of 17 or 29.3 percent, Physical (Sports, Adventure) with a frequency of 8 or 13.8 percent, Spa with a frequency of 10 or 17.2 percent and Entertainment and Events Place both with frequency of 1 or 1.7 percent. This indicates that tourism business enterprises offer a wide array of tourism



products whereas the most common is Food and Beverage and Accommodation which is the most important business in the industry as this is the first thing visitors look for in a destination they visit. On the other hand, most of the enterprises had an average visitor of 100 – 500 with a frequency of 35 or 60.3 percent, followed by less than 100 with a frequency of 15 or 25.9 percent and 1,001 – 3,000 with a frequency of 8 or 13.8 percent. Based on their answers, before and during pandemic most of the enterprises gets 100 – 500 visitors.

**Table 3: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization with respect to Social Protection and Livelihood**

Social Protection and Livelihood	Overall	
	Mean	VI
1. Increase utilization of financial assistance and social protection programs for enterprises and workers under but not limited to existing national recovery initiatives	4.62	Extremely Important
2. Diversify investment and financing program portfolio for traditional and non-traditional investments particularly in Tourism Enterprise Zones (TEZs)	4.88	Extremely Important
3. Expand engagement with National Economic Development Plan – Public – Private Partnership (NEDA-PPP), Tourism Infrastructure Economic Zone Authority (TIEZA), and Local Government Units (LGUs) to identify and package investments for destination infrastructure improvements/rehabilitation (e.g. heritage districts, sanitation, solid waste management, water supply)	4.29	Extremely Important
4. Invest in the re-skilling/upskilling of Human Resources in the use of Digital Technology and Solutions	4.22	Extremely Important
5. Build capacity of the industry to respond to dynamic changes in the job market through the implementation of the human resource capacity development roadmap	4.72	Extremely Important
6. Leverage the initiatives in human resource capacity development including but not limited to tourism professionals' program	4.52	Extremely Important
7. Nurture the culture of safety in tourism enterprises, LGUs, and destinations	4.86	Extremely Important
8. Campaign for the adoption of the Safe Travels stamp to DOT-accredited establishments and destinations	4.50	Extremely Important
9. Adopt regional quality standards (ASEAN) and certification processes within the Philippine context in facilities like homestays, spa services, and public toilets	4.26	Extremely Important
10. Increase participation of women and marginalized sectors in tourism development	4.88	Extremely Important
11. Promote barrier-free tourism and conduct capacity building programs for stakeholders	4.62	Extremely Important
12. Engage Local Communities (Including Indigenous Peoples Groups) in crafting recovery and tourism development projects	4.72	Extremely Important
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.59</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

As seen on Table 3, respondents have a positive response on statements number 2 on Diversify investment and financing program portfolio for traditional and non-traditional investments particularly in Tourism Enterprise Zones (TEZs) as this can be related as special economic zone

where aims to enhance the prosperity of the country based on the study of Pakdeenurit, et.al. (2014) and number 10 on Increase participation of women and marginalized sectors in tourism development both with a mean of 4.88.

However, it garnered a low score of 4.22 for statement number 4 on Investing in the re-skilling/upskilling of Human Resources in the use of Digital Technology and Solutions. This result is proven by the study of Popkova, et.al. (2021) where Digital Technology can be challenging in nations in the developing world where they play catch up with nations with advanced technology. In this case, Philippines is not spared in this kind of situation.

**Table 4: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization with respect to Entrepreneurial Survival**

Entrepreneurial Survival	Overall	
	Mean	VI
1. Prepare the Annual Tourism Infrastructure Program every year to fund destination management infrastructure such as but not limited to internet connectivity in major tourist destinations accessible to visitors for an improved tourist experience, healthcare facilities and services, safe quarantine facilities, contact tracing capabilities, and solid waste management	4.22	Extremely Important
2. Implement uniform safe travel protocols to facilitate domestic mobility and conduct rapid assessment on readiness for international facilitation initiatives	4.72	Extremely Important
3. Develop green corridors (e.g. market-segment-focused and/or spatial – bilateral or regional) as strategy to re-open borders utilizing more gateway airports	4.52	Extremely Important
4. Enhance capability to reach markets and improve quality of products to increase yields and impacts	4.86	Extremely Important
5. Expand the campaign for Sustainable Consumption and Production	4.50	Extremely Important
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

As seen on table 4, statement number 4 on enhancing the capability to reach markets and improve quality of products to increase yields and impacts got the highest score of 4.86. Whereas it is a clear sign of diversifying their product to reach larger target market as proven on the study of Arte and Larimo (2021) where diversification can play a big role in a business performance.

However, a low mean of 4.22 on statement number 1 on Annual Tourism Infrastructure Program as the researcher see this as a problem on government implementation as proven by a study by Hossain and Kryzanowski (2021) where corruption is a big hinder in social development in all aspects.

**Table 5: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization with respect to Product Development and Marketing**

Product Development and Marketing	Overall	
	Mean	VI
1. Fund and implement the action plan of the Task Force on Domestic Tourism Product Development	4.22	Extremely Important
2. Invest in market research/intelligence, mapping programs (i.e. food and cultural), and strategy/roadmap for potential tourism products	4.72	Extremely Important
3. Develop and/or improve the tour quality and experience in the priority tourism circuits that match market preferences for safe travels in open spaces/outdoors, nature-based, curated, sensorial, and inclusive products	4.52	Extremely Important
4. Collaborate with the private sector and destination management organizations for hybrid MICE Programs and big impact events	4.86	Extremely Important
5. Collaborate with the private sector and specific institutions (i.e. DepEd, CHED) in designing and promoting tourism in the education sector including but not limited to educational trips within the learning modalities to be implemented	4.50	Extremely Important
6. Implement tactical promotions to complement branding by focusing on specific activity market segments that exhibits continuous and high growth i.e. farm tourism, diving, trekking/hiking, cultural events	4.22	Extremely Important
7. Relaunch a Balikbayan and VFR (Visit Friends and Relatives) promotions program	4.72	Extremely Important
8. Invest in the organization and hosting of international events of major impact by the Tourism Promotions Board	4.52	Extremely Important
9. Invest in mix of umbrella branding campaign and sustainability campaign	4.86	Extremely Important
10. Implement a flexible Tourism Carrying Capacity Studies as a planning tool for specific sites and attractions particularly those reflective of threatened and fragile environment	4.50	Extremely Important
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

As seen on table 5, statement number 4 and 9 garnered the highest score of 4.86 on the Collaborating with the private sector and destination management organizations for hybrid MICE Programs and big impact events and in Investing in mix of umbrella branding campaign and sustainability campaign. This is proven on the study of Bazanella, et.al. (2022) where they take the examples of the recently concluded Tokyo 2020 Olympics and the upcoming 2026 Winter Olympics where collaboration in an event can make the project flow smoothly. On the other hand, an article by Finkle (2020) that umbrella branding can be an effective way of collaboration and survival in the market. Also, statements 1 and 6 garnered the lowest score on product development / product branding with score of 4.22, it seems that businesses are not yet ready on diversifying or adding more products and services what the business is capable of providing. It could be on the reason that the business may not have enough resources to add / develop new products as of the moment.

**Table 6: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization with respect to Infrastructure Investments**

Infrastructure Investments	Overall	
	Mean	VI
1. Flexible government funds for projects sponsored by both public and private entities (PPP)	4.86	Extremely Important
2. Expand government directed credit facilities to increase access to low-cost capital for a wide variety of infrastructure projects nationwide	4.50	Extremely Important
3. Further the restructuring process for targeted government infrastructure assets to pass into the hands of the private sector	4.22	Extremely Important
4. Create regulations with respect to approving, developing, and operating infrastructure assets	4.72	Extremely Important
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

As shown on table 6, statement number 1 garnered the highest reception from the respondents on Flexible government funds for projects sponsored by both public and private entities (PPP). In a book authored by Heeley (2001) on PPP in tourism, the public-private sector partnership in tourism is premised on the public sector ‘letting go’ of some or the whole of its traditional intervention and leadership accountabilities. Crucially, in ‘letting go’, it seeks to increase the participation of other key players and stakeholders, particularly the private sector. However, statement number 3 on restructuring process for targeted government infrastructure assets to pass into the hands of the private sector gathered the lowest score of 4.22 whereas the researcher has an impression that any projects by the government that will be passed on to the private sector will always have some issues to tackle from red tape to corruption.

**Table 7: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization with respect to Readiness of LGUs and Destinations**

Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Overall	
	Mean	VI
1. Improve the data gathering, processing, consolidation, and reporting of sex-disaggregated data related to tourism activities – both demand and supply –at the LGU levels	4.62	Extremely Important
2. Invest in digital infrastructure to secure and consolidate LGU level data for national planning	4.88	Extremely Important
3. Enable harmonious system of Department of Tourism (DOT) standards and LGU operational requirements	4.29	Extremely Important
4. Assess the impacts of COVID-19 on their tourism enterprise and workforce, especially those who have received assistance and disseminate results in timely manner for strategic decisions of national government	4.22	Extremely Important
5. Provide capacity-building/training programs LGUs to prepare and implement their local tourism master plans/ development frameworks/ strategic action plan/feasibility studies/investment programs	4.86	Extremely Important
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

As shown on table 7, statement number 2 on digital infrastructure garnered the highest score of 4.88. This is a clear manifestation on the study of Hadjielias, et.al. (2022) on enabling tourism organizations to leverage digital technologies to produce and/or deliver customer value, while responding to tensions inherent within each agility dimension. On the other hand, a low score of 4.22 has been recorded on statement number 4 on assessing the impacts on the current pandemic to their business to enhance strategic decisions of national government. It seems that stakeholders are in a sense of hesitance in the government and is capable enough on helping them recover.

**Table 8: Composite Result of the Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Optimization**

Optimization	Mean	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	4.59	Extremely Important
Enterprise Survival	4.57	Extremely Important
Product Development and Marketing	4.57	Extremely Important
Infrastructure Investments	4.58	Extremely Important
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	4.58	Extremely Important
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>

In this table shows the quantitative analysis of the operational recovery of the leisure and recreation sector, as presented in the table, reveals significant insights into the perceived importance of various optimization dimensions. The highest mean score of 4.59 for Social Protection and Livelihood indicates a strong consensus among stakeholders on the necessity of safeguarding jobs and supporting community welfare, particularly in the aftermath of disruptions such as economic downturns or public health crises. Closely following, the mean score of 4.57 for Enterprise Survival underscores the critical need for businesses to maintain financial stability and operational resilience, highlighting the importance of strategic planning in navigating uncertainties. Similarly, the equal mean score of 4.57 for Product Development and Marketing emphasizes the necessity for innovation and effective promotion to adapt to changing consumer preferences, suggesting that agility in product offerings is vital for attracting customers back to the sector. Infrastructure Investments, with a mean score of 4.58, further reflects the recognition of the need for modernized facilities and enhanced technological capabilities to improve customer experiences. Lastly, the readiness of Local Government Units (LGUs) and Destinations, also rated at 4.58, points to the essential role of effective governance in creating a conducive environment for leisure and recreation activities. The grand mean of 4.58, categorized as "Extremely Important," encapsulates the overall sentiment regarding the optimization of the sector's operational recovery, indicating a strong agreement among stakeholders on the multifaceted nature of recovery efforts. These findings suggest that policymakers and practitioners should prioritize social protection, enterprise survival strategies, product innovation, infrastructure improvements, and collaborative governance to ensure a resilient and thriving leisure and recreation sector in the post-disruption landscape. The insights gleaned from this analysis can inform strategic decision-making and guide efforts to revitalize the sector, ultimately contributing to broader economic recovery and community well-being.

**Table 9: Extent of Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect to Collaboration in terms of Operations**

Operations	Mean	VI
1. Our business financially performed well	4.81	Extremely Likely
2. Our human resource performed well	5.00	Extremely Likely
3. Our marketing performed well	5.00	Extremely Likely
4. Our business operations performed well	4.90	Extremely Likely
5. We comply with all the necessary external policies for the business to legally operate	5.00	Extremely Likely
6. We have great relations with our business partners and suppliers	4.93	Extremely Likely
7. We acquire business loans for expansion and/or operational expenses	3.67	Likely
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.76</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>

For table 9, stakeholders of the sector are hopeful that if they will collaborate with different sector entities on their business operations, it is more likely that they will perform well except for statement number 7 as they believe that if the business is performing well, business loans are not necessary as they have the funds to do such expansions on their own.

**Table 10: Extent of Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect to Collaboration in terms of Human Resource**

Human Resource	Mean	VI
1. Our regular employees increased (year on year)	3.31	Neither
2. Our contractual employees increased (year on year)	3.24	Neither
3. Our seasonal employees increased (year on year)	3.24	Neither
4. Our compensation and benefits are competitive with our competitors	3.86	Likely
5. We provide performance-based appraisal	3.83	Likely
6. We increased our manpower (recruitment)	3.57	Likely
7. We had a hard time recruiting qualified applicants	3.83	Likely
8. We do training and development sessions on a regular basis	4.29	Extremely Likely
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>Likely</b>

For table 10, stakeholders of the sector are mixed concerning statements on human resources. However, the only one who garnered a high score is statement number 7 on training and development with a score of 4.29.

It can be thought that human resource is hopeful that if collaboration is made, this aspect will be developed even more and making their employees more skilled as exchange of training ideas as practiced.

However for statements 2 and 3, it scored the lowest with 3.24, researchers thought of this could be a reason of humanitarian consideration since collaboration is practiced, lesser instance of seasonal/contractual employees are incurred.



**Table 11: Extent of Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with Respect to Collaboration in terms of Marketing / Advertisement**

Marketing / Advertisement	Mean	VI
1. Hire / partner marketing firm to promote our business	4.19	Likely
2. Collaborated with the Regional DOT or LGU	5.00	Extremely Likely
3. Collaborate with influencers (social media, artists etc.)	3.90	Likely
4. Partner with a marketing firm to do market research for new products and services to offer	4.16	Likely
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>

In this table, stakeholders from this aspect are also hopeful that if collaboration in different marketing activities, their business will perform well no matter what is the situation. However, they see that collaborating with influencers is not that popular to the managers as the researcher sees that this kind of collaboration is not as feasible as there were incidents in the country that influencers are just using their fame to get free use of their services that can result to abuse. However, it contradicts to the campaign of the Department of Tourism on inviting celebrities and influencers to revive domestic tourism published by Stella Arnaldo of The Business Mirror (2021). It seems that DOT did not consult the business owners if they agree with such campaign.

**Table 12: Extent of Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with Respect to Collaboration in terms of Information and Technology**

Information and Technology	Mean	VI
Our business can be seen online (social media / websites / tourism information sites)	5.00	Extremely Likely
We have high technology tools to adapt to the fast-changing business operations environment	4.12	Likely
We always review our policy on cyber security	3.74	Likely
Contactless transactions are now part of our operations (Payments, reservations, communication)	4.38	Extremely Likely
We obtain prior approval from customers before collecting, storing, using, or disclosing their personal data and information (whether online or in person) with respect to Data Privacy	5.00	Extremely Likely
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>

For this table, Information and Technology sees a good collaboration practice in the sector. However, cyber security remains a challenge to everyone who garnered the lowest score of 3.74 on how to handle such kind of concerns.

In a study initiated by Ma (2021), vulnerable action of an individual or organization can put the business or worst, sector at risk. Due to the reliance of various components of the business on information and communication technology, cyber-security challenges (such as information leakage and malicious cyber-attacks) in this field affect business performance.



**Table 13: Extent of Operational of Recovery Leisure and Recreation Sector with Respect to Collaboration in terms of Internal / External Policies**

Internal / External Policies	Mean	VI
1. Health and safety protocols for everyone is a top priority (employees and visitors)	5.00	Extremely Likely
2. Work schedules of our employees are fair for all and fair for the business	4.76	Extremely Likely
3. Compensation and benefits are reviewed and is properly given	4.36	Extremely Likely
4. We provide employee manual and reviewed regularly (Conduct, Ethics, and Harassment etc.)	4.66	Extremely Likely
5. We abide business operations according national law	4.69	Extremely Likely
6. We always review our security protocols within the premises of our business	4.79	Extremely Likely
7. Our recruitment process is easy to follow	4.59	Extremely Likely
8. We comply with the National Government mandated business policies (SEC, BIR etc.)	5.00	Extremely Likely
9. We comply with the LGU mandated business policies (Permits etc.)	5.00	Extremely Likely
10. We comply with the DOT mandated operations policies (Accreditation, etc.)	5.00	Extremely Likely
11. We seek international recognition	3.79	Likely
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.69</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>

For table 13, when it comes to policies, respondents were hopeful that if collaboration with the necessary group, implementation will be possible.

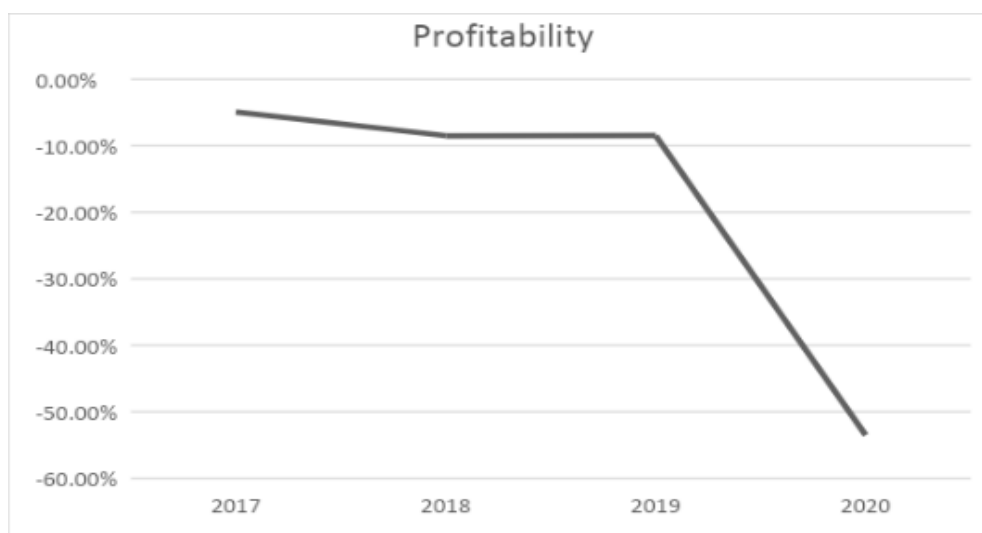
However, seeking international recognition did not get a high score compared to others having a score of 3.79.

This is a clear manifestation of the study of Pauletto (2021) that international recognition is somehow not a priority even there is help available due to the tedious process of requirements and the process itself makes it unpleasant to the stakeholders.

**Table 14: Composite Result of the Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Collaboration**

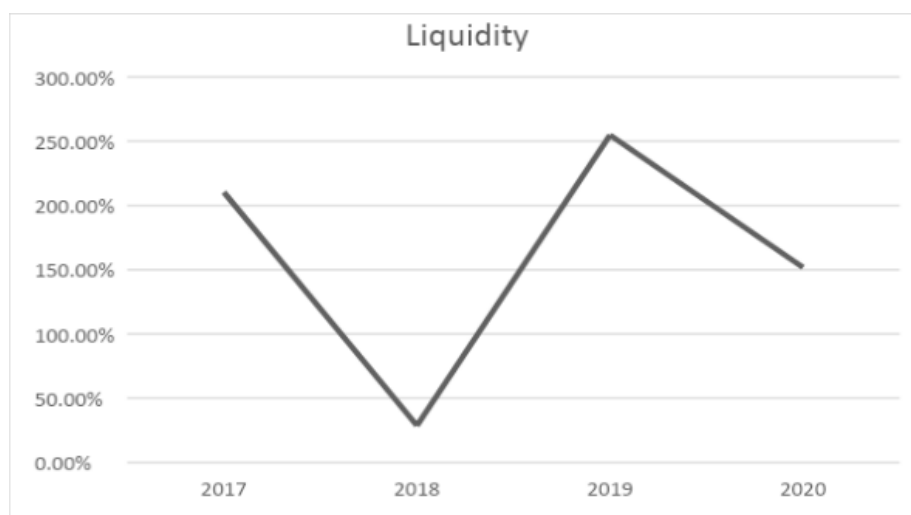
Collaboration	Mean	VI
Operations	4.76	Extremely Likely
Human Resource	3.65	Likely
Marketing / Advertisement	4.31	Extremely Likely
Information and Technology	4.45	Extremely Likely
Internal / External Policies	4.69	Extremely Likely
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>

**Graph 1: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Quantification with respect to Profitability**



As shown on the graph of Graph 1, it clearly shows that the gathered business enterprises' financial statements show a very sharp decline on their profits as the pandemic started in March 2020.

**Graph 2: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Quantification with respect to Liquidity**

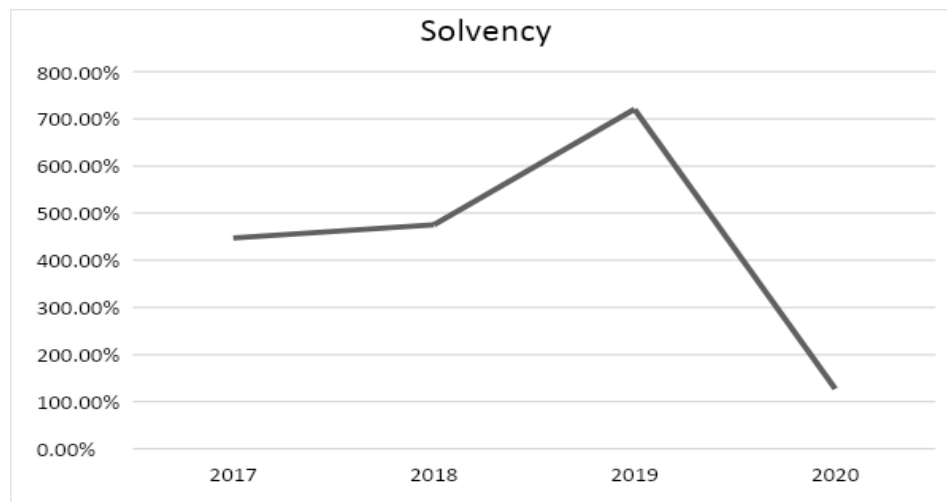


Also for the graph of liquidity on Graph 2 it clearly shows that the gathered business enterprises' financial statements show a very sharp decline in their cash flow in 2018 compared to when pandemic started in March 2020.

As the researcher looks for reasons why 2018 did not perform well compared to 2020 and was able to determine that Philippine Economy underperforms for the fiscal year of 2018 adding

the steep rise of inflation affected the business financial performance of all sectors. This details were seen in an article by Czeriza Valencia of PhilStar Global (2019).

**Graph 3: Extent of the operational recovery of leisure and recreation sector in terms of Quantification with respect to Solvency**



As stated on the graph of table 15, tourism business enterprises have enough assets to pay their obligations. However, it became minimal when the pandemic started in March 2020. However, given the timeframe, many international business newsgroups have reported that the Philippine Economy rose higher than expected. In an article on Channel News Asia (2022), the country's Quarter Four Gross Domestic Product rose 7.7 % compared to the government's forecast of 6.9% giving The Philippines more hope of getting funds to pay its obligations. Given this economic hope, the easing of restrictions allows all business to perform their pre pandemic activities to make room for financial recovery for this fiscal year of 2022.

**Table 15: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Age**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.015	2	.008	.186	.831	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.217	55	.040				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.107	2	.053	.768	.469	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.824	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.107	2	.053	.768	.469	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.824	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.015	2	.008	.125	.883	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.385	55	.062				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.024	2	.012	.187	.830	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.502	55	.064				

	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.038	2	.019	.304	.739	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.399	55	.062				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.054	2	.027	.230	.795	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.481	55	.118				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.047	2	.023	.259	.773	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.992	55	.091				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.015	2	.007	.153	.858	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.650	55	.048				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.101	2	.050	1.066	.351	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.605	55	.047				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 15 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of age does not show any significant difference. All variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

**Table 16: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Gender**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.110	2	.055	1.423	.250	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.122	55	.039				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.247	2	.123	1.843	.168	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.684	55	.067				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.247	2	.123	1.843	.168	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.684	55	.067				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.207	2	.104	1.783	.178	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.194	55	.058				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.106	2	.053	.854	.431	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.420	55	.062				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.231	2	.115	1.978	.148	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.206	55	.058				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.026	2	.013	.111	.896	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.509	55	.118				
	Total	6.536	57					
	Between Groups	.182	2	.091	1.032	.363	FR	NS

Marketing / Advertisement	Within Groups	4.857	55	.088				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.002	2	.001	.017	.983	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.663	55	.048				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.064	2	.032	.666	.518	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.642	55	.048				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 16 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of gender does not show any significant difference. All variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

**Table 17: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Highest Educational Attainment**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.103	2	.052	1.337	.271	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.128	55	.039				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.130	2	.065	.943	.396	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.801	55	.069				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.130	2	.065	.943	.396	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.801	55	.069				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.087	2	.044	.723	.490	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.314	55	.060				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.025	2	.013	.200	.819	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.501	55	.064				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.170	2	.085	1.432	.248	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.267	55	.059				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.469	2	.235	2.127	.129	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.066	55	.110				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.024	2	.012	.134	.875	FR	NS
	Within Groups	5.014	55	.091				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.534	2	.267	6.893	.002	R	S
	Within Groups	2.131	55	.039				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.105	2	.053	1.112	.336	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.601	55	.047				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 17 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of Highest Educational Attainment does not show any significant difference in all variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level except for Information and Technology as its significance level is lower than .05. As the researcher analyzes, it seems that the curriculum of the country's education lacks subjects / trainings to improve the said issue even to the people who have high degrees. The country's educational system with its very young newly implemented K to 12 System and its Collegiate Curriculum is a work in progress and Information and Technology needs to be addressed as this is a big factor especially since our economy competes with economic globalization and knowledge on information and technology is a requirement for its professionals in all sectors.

**Table 18: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Years of Managerial Experience**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.244	2	.122	3.377	.041	R	S
	Within Groups	1.988	55	.036				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.339	2	.169	2.591	.084	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.593	55	.065				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.339	2	.169	2.591	.084	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.593	55	.065				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.178	2	.089	1.516	.229	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.223	55	.059				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.103	2	.051	.826	.443	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.423	55	.062				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.039	2	.019	.316	.731	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.398	55	.062				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.038	2	.019	.162	.851	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.497	55	.118				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.136	2	.068	.763	.471	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.903	55	.089				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.357	2	.178	4.250	.019	R	S
	Within Groups	2.308	55	.042				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.035	2	.018	.362	.698	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.671	55	.049				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 18 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of managerial experience does not show any significant difference in all variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level except for Information and Technology as its significance level is lower than .05. With the same significance level mentioned in Table 19, aside from the proper knowledge on Information and Technology due to loopholes of the Philippine Education Curriculum, additional knowledge should be addressed about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that should be carried out by the people managing the business itself. It has come to the attention of the researcher that companies do CSR for the sake of marketing them to have a good name to the public, more of a Hypocritical CSR where they practice such just for the intention of brainwashing the public on their good deeds. This is a clear manifestation of the article of Alessandra Guida of Barcelona Executive Business School (2021) where she coined bad CSR Practices as Greenwashing.

**Table 19: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Structure of Business**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.063	2	.032	.799	.455	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.169	55	.039				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.072	2	.036	.514	.601	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.859	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.072	2	.036	.514	.601	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.859	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.029	2	.014	.236	.791	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.372	55	.061				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.586	2	.293	5.476	.007	R	S
	Within Groups	2.941	55	.053				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.092	2	.046	.758	.474	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.345	55	.061				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.103	2	.051	.438	.647	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.433	55	.117				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.128	2	.064	.719	.492	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.910	55	.089				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.032	2	.016	.338	.715	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.632	55	.048				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.054	2	.027	.561	.574	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.652	55	.048				
	Total	2.706	57					



Table 19 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of structure of the business does not show any significant difference in all variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level except for Readiness of LGU and Destinations as its significance level is lower than .05.

From the researcher's point of understanding, it seems that local government units needs to revamp the ease of doing business in the country. In a report by Philippine News Agency (PNA, 2021), the country ranked 95<sup>th</sup> out of 190 countries making The Philippines lagging from its neighbors and contradicts to the economic targets of the government. With laws in place to improve this issue, the government is now hopeful that ranking will improve on the coming years.

**Table 20: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Years in Operation**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.070	3	.023	.582	.629	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.162	54	.040				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.063	3	.021	.292	.831	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.868	54	.072				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.063	3	.021	.292	.831	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.868	54	.072				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.066	3	.022	.357	.785	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.335	54	.062				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.070	3	.023	.364	.779	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.456	54	.064				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.184	3	.061	1.018	.392	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.253	54	.060				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.557	3	.186	1.677	.183	FR	NS
	Within Groups	5.978	54	.111				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.467	3	.156	1.837	.151	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.572	54	.085				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.438	3	.146	3.543	.020	R	S
	Within Groups	2.227	54	.041				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.236	3	.079	1.724	.173	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.469	54	.046				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 20 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of years in operation does not show any significant difference in all variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level except for Information and Technology as its significance level is lower than .05.

Same with Table 19, businesses needs heavy investment and training for information and technology for them to adapt on the current new normal business environment.

**Table 21: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Number of Employees**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.361	3	.120	3.477	.022	R	S
	Within Groups	1.870	54	.035				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.345	3	.115	1.734	.171	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.586	54	.066				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.345	3	.115	1.734	.171	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.586	54	.066				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.343	3	.114	2.019	.122	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.058	54	.057				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.353	3	.118	2.005	.124	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.173	54	.059				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.250	3	.083	1.410	.250	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.187	54	.059				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	1.264	3	.421	4.314	.008	R	S
	Within Groups	5.272	54	.098				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.145	3	.048	.532	.662	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.894	54	.091				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.458	3	.153	3.731	.016	R	S
	Within Groups	2.207	54	.041				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.675	3	.225	5.986	.001	R	S
	Within Groups	2.030	54	.038				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 21 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of number of employees does not show any significant difference in majority of the variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level except for Social Protection and Livelihood, Human Resource,

Information and Technology and Internal / External Policies as its significance level is lower than .05. Given these several variables that needs to be addressed, investment on employee development on knowledge on the specific variables to be addressed should be discussed to make the business at par with the ever changing and even more competitive business environment especially today that everyone is scrambling and excited to recover and proper skills training should be reviewed.

**Table 22: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Initial Capital**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.054	2	.027	.681	.510	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.178	55	.040				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.082	2	.041	.585	.560	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.849	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.082	2	.041	.585	.560	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.849	55	.070				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.094	2	.047	.784	.462	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.307	55	.060				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.053	2	.027	.422	.658	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.473	55	.063				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.198	2	.099	1.678	.196	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.239	55	.059				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	.432	2	.216	1.945	.153	FR	NS
	Within Groups	6.104	55	.111				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.004	2	.002	.019	.981	FR	NS
	Within Groups	5.035	55	.092				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.063	2	.031	.663	.519	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.602	55	.047				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.090	2	.045	.945	.395	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.616	55	.048				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 22 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of capital does not show any significant difference. All variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

**Table 23: Significant Difference on the Extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the Optimization and Collaboration in terms of Services Offered**

	SV	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Ho	VI
Social Protection and Livelihood	Between Groups	.475	14	.034	.831	.633	FR	NS
	Within Groups	1.756	43	.041				
	Total	2.232	57					
Enterprise Survival	Between Groups	.756	14	.054	.731	.732	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.175	43	.074				
	Total	3.931	57					
Product Development and Marketing	Between Groups	.756	14	.054	.731	.732	FR	NS
	Within Groups	3.175	43	.074				
	Total	3.931	57					
Infrastructure Investments	Between Groups	.611	14	.044	.673	.787	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.790	43	.065				
	Total	3.401	57					
Readiness of LGUs and Destinations	Between Groups	.626	14	.045	.663	.796	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.900	43	.067				
	Total	3.526	57					
Operations	Between Groups	.822	14	.059	.965	.502	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.615	43	.061				
	Total	3.437	57					
Human Resource	Between Groups	1.903	14	.136	1.262	.270	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.633	43	.108				
	Total	6.536	57					
Marketing / Advertisement	Between Groups	.555	14	.040	.380	.974	FR	NS
	Within Groups	4.484	43	.104				
	Total	5.039	57					
Information and Technology	Between Groups	.332	14	.024	.438	.952	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.332	43	.054				
	Total	2.665	57					
Internal / External Policies	Between Groups	.350	14	.025	.456	.944	FR	NS
	Within Groups	2.356	43	.055				
	Total	2.706	57					

Table 23 shows that the extent of the Operational Recovery of Leisure and Recreation Sector with respect the optimization and collaboration in terms of services offered does not show any significant difference. All variables indicated on the table had p-values greater than .05 significant level, thus accepting the null hypothesis.

### **Challenges encountered by the leisure and recreation sector establishments with respect to operational recovery variables before and during pandemic**

The Philippine's tourism industry was heavily hit by the outbreak of Covid-19, as the government's-imposed community quarantine in an unpredictable manner. Due to the lockdown imposed by the government accompanied by strict and confusing rules, policies and regulations of both national and local government units, businesses under leisure and recreation businesses were not spared from the economic downturn.

Due to the caveats of this pandemic including time constraints, different and changing policies in terms of tourist visits, the researcher was not able to comply with the initial plan of interviewing five businesses under this tourism sector from different regions. However, it was fortunate to interview few of the stakeholders' holders of the sector, one of them is a farm tourism business in Laguna, Villa Socorro farm.

Just like any other business related to the tourism industry, Villa Socorro has experienced great challenges brought by COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher was able to interview the owner of **Villa Socorro, Mr Raymund Vincent F. Aaron**, which dubbed himself as the "Banana Chief". During the interview, he has enumerated the challenges he encountered and how he was able to overcome them:

### **No Mobility**

Villa Socorro Farm does not only offer farm tourism services such as lodging and accommodation. But it also offers products such as their flagship product banana and kamote chips". During the pandemic, especially on the first tranche of enhanced community quarantine imposed by the government from March to mid of June 2020, moving the products to its customers became very challenging.

"We gave up our bigger market since it was costly and challenging to deliver the products to them." Says the Banana Chief, Mr. Aaron. They resorted to look for smaller markets such as sari-sari stores where revenue was not that competitive but at least the movement of the products was within their proximity.

### **Delivery Problems**

The farm encountered challenges with its supplies due to restrictions on different places. This made it difficult for the business to cope up or sustain their operation.

### **No Work**

Mr. Aaron also mentioned that when the pandemic started, the industry was the very first sector to be affected as there is no tourism activity allowed. No visitors are coming in and his employees have no means to do their expected job. Also, in effect, revenues are hampered where salary for his employees is jeopardized.

### **Local Government Restrictions**

Another thing that made him frustrated is the lack of coordination between the National and Local Government in terms of implementing rules and regulation in accordance with IATF protocols making them confused on business operations.

Another owner the researcher was able to interview is the owner of **Graco Farms and Leisure** also in Laguna through its Operations Manager, Ms. Fe Esperanza. Just like Villa Socorro, they experience almost the same problems and numerous abrupt challenges when pandemic started in March 2020, also, adding the continuous challenges they need to face in their day-to-day operations such as:

## **Livestock**

Ms. Esperanza mentioned that taking care of them is already a challenge from food, diseases and mortality of the animals.

## **Natural Disasters**

“Calamity is one big problem for us” said Ms. Esperanza. “We cannot dictate what weather will it be in the coming days or month, and the cleanup and recovery we have to deal with every time it happens. It’s time consuming and we shell out money for it.” She added.

## **Human Resource**

She mentioned that not everyone is properly educated in farm tourism business. Training and development needs time and effort to make our staff, and employees equipped with proper knowledge in this business. And another thing she added is the attrition rate as not everyone has the patience to stay in this kind of work.

## **Logistics**

She also added that our accessibility infrastructure and logistics coordination need polishing. Sometime, their partnership with certain suppliers gets affected because of this.

Also, the researcher was able to interview the owner of **Acuatico and Acuaverde Beach Resorts in Laiya, San Juan Batangas, Ms. Simonette Gusi**. Same questions were asked and from the very start she has been very blessed when she started her resort business in 2010, it kept growing and expanding up to 2019. But sadly, March 2020 came along and just like any other tourism related businesses, hers is not spared. Here are some of her challenges:

## **Operational Expenses**

“This is the biggest problem we have to deal with, I have two resorts that I need to keep afloat and I do not want them to close” Ms. Gusi have told me. “Another is keeping my employees paid or at least fed from the timeframe of the lockdowns” she added.

## **Local Government Restrictions**

Just like Mr. Aaron of Villa Socorro, another thing that made her frustrated is the lack of coordination between the National and Local Government in terms of implementing rules and regulation in accordance with IATF protocols making them confused on business operations. “It’s like they do not know what they are doing!, they just decide on their own without even asking our opinion or inputs” Ms. Gusi said.

## **Respondent’s forecast on the state/condition of leisure and recreation sector in 2023 and beyond?**

Surprisingly, in spite of the challenges these three stakeholders have dealt with for the past two years, they have this fighting spirit in them that keeps them going. Here are a few of their thoughts:



For Mr. Vincent Raymund Aaron of Villa Socorro, as he sees lowering down the alert levels and letting people go out and enjoy domestic tourism, he is hopeful that this 2022 and hopefully on the coming years, what he lost will come back two folds. He also added that diversifying his products will make his business afloat if pandemic or surge and lockdowns will happen again.

For Ms. Fe Esperanza of Graco Farms and Leisure, she can see that tourism revenge will happen in that year wherein all of the business will bounce back two to three folds and even more businesses related to tourism will open up as they see that this industry is the most profitable industry.

Lastly, for Ms. Simonette Gusi of Acuatico and Acuaverde Resorts, she sees that the learnings of the past two years will make the stakeholders like them and lawmakers will learn the proper way of collaboration. In terms of making an industry resilient and sustainable on whatever crisis might happen in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study's findings reveal several key aspects of the leisure and recreation sector's operational recovery in Region IV-A. Regarding respondent profiles, a high level of educational attainment (mostly bachelor's degrees or higher) was observed, suggesting a strong understanding of business operations. All businesses surveyed utilized a corporate structure, prioritizing liability protection. Analysis of operational recovery, focusing on optimization and collaboration, indicated positive responses to implemented strategies, with stakeholders showing a willingness to partner and adopt improved practices. Quantitatively, significant pandemic-related losses were reported, highlighting the need for financial assistance and stimulus packages to facilitate recovery. Significant differences in operational recovery were observed based on respondent and business profiles, particularly regarding social protection, livelihood, and information technology, areas requiring substantial coordination and investment. Challenges experienced by stakeholders largely centered on operational issues, often addressed through internal resources. Finally, interviewees expressed optimism for a 2023 industry rebound, fueled by "revenge tourism" and improved stakeholder-government coordination.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion drawn, the following recommendation is suggested that the complexity of the industry and the challenges it faces for the past two years due to pandemic. The researcher highly recommends that developing or optimizing the sector's business environment, collaborating with different partners to enhance its operations through a win-win agreement and proper stimulus package from the government will help the leisure and recreation sector in Region IV – A recover in a gradual manner or better yet bounce back faster on the coming years. The researcher presents this Hybrid Approach Plan for Operational Recovery for all the stakeholders and entities to be involved on the recovery of the sector.



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## APPENDIX

### Proposed Hybrid Approach

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zXx6Y-1hlaYdskq-3Hr4hiR2g0a4m3aw4PzSXrpmdaQ/edit?usp=sharing>