

Challenge of Event Management as a New Trends in Hospitality Industry Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:- Event planning and organization, such as concerts, conventions, parties, weddings, and other gatherings, is an exciting and developing sector, as well as a unique career opportunity for anyone with a passion for creating and managing events. This study is descriptive research. This paper used a descriptive approach to assess the demographic profile of the respondents and the challenges of event management. This research was conducted to explore the different challenges experienced by event management during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was revealed that the majority of the respondents experienced problems in event management. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the event management or the organizer should collaborate with the LGU whatever events they have made as an approval or legality of the events and adapt social measures given to form the local health offices as their guidelines to follow. What is important there is the safety and security of the customers.

Keywords:- event management, hospitality industry, Covid-19 pandemic, challenges.

I. INTRODUCTION

Event planning and organization, such as concerts, conventions, parties, weddings, and other gatherings, is an exciting and expanding sector with a unique career opportunity for anyone with a passion for creating and managing events.

According to Burns, J. (2010) Companies of all sizes consider event management to be one of their most significant marketing and communication strategies. Companies arrange promotional events to help them communicate with clients and potential prospects, from product debuts to press conferences. The tone and atmosphere of an event can be influenced by a variety of factors, including music, live entertainment, and even the location itself.

J. Chen, P. Sloan, and W. Legrand. According to (2009), event planners can use the news media to target their audience in the hopes of generating media coverage that reaches hundreds of millions of people. They can also invite their target audience to their events and communicate with them throughout the event. The events industry currently encompasses events of all sizes, from the Olympics to business breakfast meetings. Many companies, philanthropic organizations, and interest groups arrange events to promote themselves, create commercial contacts, generate funds, or commemorate accomplishments.

Because of technological breakthroughs, the hospitality business is changing at a quick pace, requiring future workers to be technologically proficient while conserving natural resources to ensure our environment's sustainability. To stay relevant, leisure experts will have to meet and surpass the expectations of a growing audience, as well as satisfy their ever-changing demands. Future executives must be able to assess and recognize present trends in order to predict future consumer behavior through research while remaining ethical in order to protect the industry's credibility.

The province of Biliran were known from different festivals and the famous one is the Bagasumbol in the municipality of naval. The province offers a wide range of tourism attractions and activities. From soft to hard adventure, the province can provide tourists the experience they want from a tropical island. When the COVID-19 experience in the province, all events and gatherings have been cancelled and under restrictions. Keeping this in mind, the impacts of COVID-19 on the events industry alone are far too great. When it comes to managing with social alienation and a lot of new things with the new normal, the industry is projected to confront even more hurdles.

The event planner or manager is almost certainly the individual who will have to deal with any disruption to the event. However, the study focused on the municipality of Naval because it is regarded the heart of the primary trade operations, as well as the business center of the island province and a popular tourist destination. This study aims to analyze the issues of event management as a new trend in the hotel business during the COVID-19 Pandemic in order to prevent or, at the very least, mitigate the consequences of a disaster.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study generally aims to assess the challenge of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry amidst COVID-19 pandemic in order to provide recommendations for the improvement of the events.

Specifically, sought to;

- Determine the challenges faced by event management in Naval, Biliran hospitality industries in terms of;
 - Postponing/canceling events;
 - Lower conversion rates from online events;
 - Difficulties with Zoom and alternatives; and
 - Temporary struggle to find venues that can guarantee dates.

- Ascertain the steps to protect attendees from COVID-19 in terms of;
 - Create a plan and communicate it with all stakeholders;
 - Maintain an Update Log;
 - Proactively Update Your Attendees;
 - Establish Health and Safety Rules for Your Event; and
 - Creating a Sanitary Environment at Your Event.
- Investigate on how these challenges, affect the hospitality industry and its growth within the economy.
- Address the issues of COVID-19 pandemic as it is one of the challenges of event management in the province to the hospitality industries.

• Hypothesis

The research aims to provide conclusions that would either reject or accept the following alternative or null hypothesis:

Alternative (H_a):

- H1: There is a significant relationship between the challenges of event management and the growth and success of events management in the hospitality industry.

Null (H_0):

- H2: There is no significant relationship between the challenges of event management and the growth and success of events management in the hospitality industry.

III. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This section presents theories lifted from different sources which provide strong bases and support in answer to the questions posed which the study intends to address.

A. Theoretical Framework.

This study is anchored on the following theories: The study is anchored on the theory of social psychology Major et al. (2018), starting with the discussion by Goffman (1963). This refers to research in stigma that developed. There are also several studies on stigma in economics; Moffitt (1983), Besley and Coate (1992), and Bhargava and Manoli (2015) study the stigma of accepting welfare benefits (Lindbeck et al. 1999; Kurita et al. 2020; Itaya and Kurita 2020). Moreover, Kim (2003) analyzes the stigma related to tax evasion, and Rasmusen (1996) investigates the stigma against an ex-convict.

The theoretical analysis in this study assumes that, under the declared state of emergency, the individual going out suffers psychological costs arising from both the stigma of going out and the risk of infection. That is, we emphasize that infection risk and stigma have a complementary effect on the psychological cost to the player. Thus, the theoretical result shows that under a declared state of emergency, people refrain more from going out as it entails a strong psychological cost.

B. Conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework is presented in figure 1 shows the diagrammatic representation of interaction variables. The dependent variables of the study include the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, civil status. The independent variables however, reflected the challenges of event management as a new trend in hospitality industry during COVID-19 pandemic.

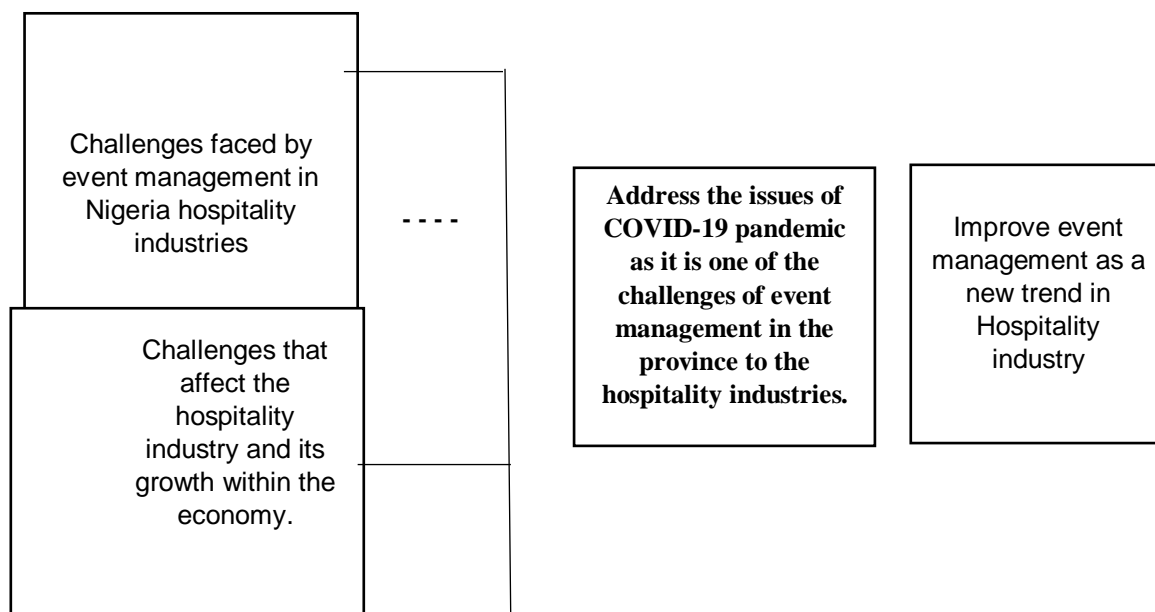


Fig. 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study is descriptive research. This paper used a descriptive approach to assess the demographic profile of the respondents and the challenges of event management. This research was conducted to explore the different challenges experienced by event management during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research design for this study is a quantitative research approach as it is the most appropriate approach to answer the research problem. Quantitative research collects data to quantify and subject information for statistical analysis in order to support or counter alternate knowledge claims (Creswell, 2003 cited in Williams, 2007).

B. Research Locale

Naval was last recognized as a 1st Class Municipality. It is the business center in the province. Being the capital town, Naval is the busiest town for business activities. Because of the rich trade and commerce in the Naval, people came from different parts of the province and even from the neighboring proximate towns under the Leyte Province. This movement of people enriched the market of the town. Part of those business activities that benefitted from such a huge market is the conduct of event management in the hospitality industry. Thus, the conduct of a study entitled Challenges of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 pandemic made Naval an appropriate research environment.

C. Research Respondents

The research respondents will be the event planner, event organizer and employees in municipal tourism who conduct different events and festivals in the municipality of naval. We randomly select 25 event planner, event organizer and employees of municipal tourism that would come to a total of 25 respondents in our study. They will be the involved respondents in order to provide the necessary data to attain the objectives of this study.

D. Research Instrument

The researchers will utilize a questionnaire from the articles and blogs to determine the impacts of COVID-19 on the events industry and modified by the researcher to obtain the necessary information that pertains to the Challenges of event management as a new trend in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The said questionnaire is composed of two parts. Part I contains the information of the respondent’s personal profile which includes the age, sex, civil status, length of employment, employment status; and educational background. Part II provides the data involved in the challenges of event management.

E. Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data, the survey questionnaire will be subjected for approval from the Dean of the School of Management and Entrepreneurship and instructor of the subject. Then, the researchers seek permission by writing a letter request addressed to the respondents namely to the event planner, event organizer and municipal tourism employee. Thereafter, the survey questionnaires will be distributed for them to answer.

After the retrieval of the instruments, the data will be tallied, collated, tabulated and analyzed.

F. Data Scoring

All data collected from the respondents were systematically tabulated, tallied, carefully described, explained and recorded in order to attain the accurate information needed from the respondents. The data gathered from then survey were scored as follows:

On the challenges of event management during COVID-19 pandemic the following categorization of 5-point rating scale will be utilized:

Range of Value	Quantitative Description	Qualitative Description
4.3 - 5.0	5	Strongly Agree
3.5 – 4.2	4	Agree
2.7 – 3.4	3	Undecided
1.9 – 2.6	2	Disagree
1.0 – 1.8	1	Strongly Disagree

G. Statistical Treatment

The data taken from the research tools will be classified according to the problem in this research. The results were

tallied and tabulated. The researcher used statistical methods and techniques in analyzing data. To determine the results of the study we use the mean and frequency percentage.

Weighted mean was used for the analysis of the data.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum xw}{\sum w}$$

In which,

- \bar{x} = weighted mean
- x = score
- w = weighted factor
- \sum = summation

Percentage:
$$(P) \% = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$

Where: F = Frequency
 N = Total number of the respondents
 P = Percentage

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Challenge of Event Management amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

In this chapter, it discusses about the Challenge of Event Management amidst COVID-19 Pandemic which

includes Postponing/cancelling events, Lower conversion rates from online events, Difficulties with Zoom and alternatives and Temporary struggle to find venues that can guarantee dates.

a) Postponing/Cancelling events

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
Some event organizers feel that they have had no choice but to cancel their event, or at best, postpone until an unknown time.	4.6	Agree
They don't feel, (or are unaware) that online solutions exist that would allow them to continue with their events with a little modification	4.1	Agree
Some organizers hold events in order to attract clients who will network with one another, and those organizers hugely value the privacy of both their content and their contact base.	4.2	Agree
There are many platforms and packages available to hold online conferences, meetings, lectures, demonstrations, and these all have features such as screen sharing, breakout rooms and much more.	4.1	Agree
TOTAL	4.25	Agree

The table above shows the Postponing/Cancelling events as one of the challenges of Event Management amidst COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are only 4 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the first indicator which obtain the weighted mean of 4.6

while the lowest mean is from indicators 2 and 4. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that they feel that they have had no choice but to cancel their event, or at best, postpone until an unknown time.

b) Lower conversion rates from online events

Indicators	WM	Interpretation
1. Fewer registered users attend the event	4.2	Agree
2. Fewer attendees convert into customers.	4.4	Agree
3. Invite more participants to an event and you will get higher numbers, even if your conversion remains the same	2.8	Disagree
4. Repackage or rebrand existing product. This works wonders for almost any product, tangible or otherwise.	3.8	Undecided
5. Consider trying a freemium model, rather than expecting attendees to convert right away. There are several options that can be made to work, and all are worth exploring.	3.8	Undecided
6. Adapt your product and create a 'lite' version at a lower price point.	4.0	Agree
TOTAL	3.83	Undecided

The table above shows the Lower conversion rates from online events as one of the challenges of Event Management amidst COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 6 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the second indicator which obtain the

weighted mean of 4.4 while the lowest mean is from indicators 4 and 5. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that they have only a few attendees converted into customers. This is because of the pandemic situation experience by the province.

c) *Difficulties with Zoom and alternatives*

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
Challenges with sharing the screen and presentation slides simultaneously. Switching between screens wastes time and distracts the speaker.	4.2	Agree
Participant management – from manually letting participants in, to individual audio/mute controls. Visual control can be a nightmare – you have no control over participant webcam view or the sharing of inappropriate material.	4.1	Agree
Participants tend to ask long questions in online meetings.	3.8	Undecided
Personal communication – it can be difficult to find someone in common to chat with and message them personally.	4.1	Agree
Invitations still need to be sent out manually – there is no integration to automate this	3.8	Undecided
TOTAL	4.0	Agree

The table above shows the Difficulties with Zoom and alternatives as one of the challenges of Event Management amidst COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 5 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the second indicator and 4 who obtain the weighted mean of 4.1

while the lowest mean is from indicator 5. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that Participant management and Personal communication is one the problem of the participant.

d) *Temporary struggle to find venues that can guarantee dates*

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Many venues are uncertain about when they will be able to re-open again and so they cannot guarantee any bookings right now.	3.7	Undecided
2. For physical events that cannot adapt to or translate online, this is perhaps the biggest challenge. But there are countries that are not restricted and others that are even now coming back 'online'.	4.4	Agree
3. The conduct of online events	4.6	Agree
TOTAL	4.23	Agree

The table above shows the Temporary struggle to find venues that can guarantee dates as one of the challenges of Event Management amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are only 3 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the third indicator which obtain the weighted mean of 4.6 while the lowest mean is from indicator 1. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that the conduct of online events during a pandemic is the major problem to finding venues in the province.

B. *Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19.*

In this chapter, it discusses about the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic which includes the following; Create a plan and communicate it with all stakeholders, Maintain an Update Log, Proactively Update Your Attendees, Establish Health and Safety Rules for Your Event, creating a Sanitary Environment at Your Event, Making the Move to a Virtual Event and Postponing or Cancelling your Event.

a) *Create a plan and communicate it with all stakeholders*

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Coordinate with local health officials	4.6	Agree
2. Reach out to all meeting spaces, hotels, and venues	4.4	Agree
3. Determine steps for identifying and isolating attendees with elevated risk.	4.6	Agree
4. Plan to circulate literature around COVID-19 prevention throughout your venue	4.6	Agree
5. Have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes on-hand	4.8	Agree
TOTAL	4.64	Agree

The table above shows the Create a plan and communicate it with all stakeholders as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from the COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 5 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the second indicator which obtain the

weighted mean of 4.4 while the lowest mean is from indicator 5. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that the use of Have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes on-hand are the major steps to alleviate infections in COVID-19.

b) Maintain an Update Log

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Add the time and/or date to your updates to demonstrate that you are actively monitoring the situation	4.2	Agree
2. Share the latest information from local health officials	4.4	Agree
3. Share the latest updates on your preparedness plan	4.4	Agree
4. Direct your audience to other updates or preparedness plan pages if applicable	4.1	Agree
TOTAL	4.27	Agree

The table above shows the Maintain an Update Log as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from the COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 4 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the second indicator and the third indicator obtain the weighted mean of 4.4 while the lowest mean is from indicator 5 which has the

weighted mean of 4.1. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that the sharing of the latest information from local health officials and the latest updates on your preparedness plan are the major steps to alleviate infections in COVID-19.

c) Proactively Update of the Attendees

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Share the latest updates on the status of your event	4.6	Agree
2. Reference the latest updates from local health officials	4.6	Agree
3. Reiterate your preparedness plan	4.2	Agree
4. Direct your audience to other updates or preparedness plan pages if applicable	4.1	Agree
5. Update everywhere - if you send out a long email update, create a short social update to go with it	4.2	Agree
TOTAL	4.34	Agree

The table above shows the Proactively Update of the Attendees as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 5 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the first indicator and the second indicator obtain the weighted mean of 4.6 while the lowest mean is from indicator 4 which

has the weighted mean of 4.1. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that the sharing of the latest updates on the status of your event and Reference the latest updates from local health officials are the major steps to alleviate infections in COVID-19.

d) Establish Health and Safety Rules for Event

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Give your attendees ample heads-up of your health policy over email and other communication channels	4.7	Agree
2. If your policies may result in attendees being prohibited from attending event or may otherwise result in excluding them from the event, have a clear (and generous) refund/registration transfer policy in place.	4.8	Agree
3. Be very clear in describing what is allowed, what is prohibited, and what is advised.	4.4	Agree
TOTAL	4.63	Agree

The table above shows the Establishment of Health and Safety Rules for Event as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are only 3 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the first indicator which obtain the weighted mean of 4.8 while the lowest mean is from indicator 3 which

has the weighted mean of 4.4. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that if your policies may result in attendees being prohibited from attending an event or may otherwise result in excluding them from the event, have a clear (and generous) refund/registration transfer policy in place.

e) Creating a Sanitary Environment at Your Event

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Provide attendees with hand sanitizer at registration.	4.8	Agree
2. Create designated sanitation sites stocked with hand sanitizer and disposable disinfectant wipes	4.6	Agree
3. Wipe down microphones, ipads, and other technology equipment after each use	4.6	Agree
4. Remind attendees of hygiene best practices through signage and over email, social media, or push notifications through your mobile event app.	4.8	Agree

5. Consider asking your attendees to sign disclaimer waivers when they register on-site	4.4	Agree
TOTAL	4.64	Agree

The table above shows the creation of a Sanitary Environment at Your Event as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from the COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are 5 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the first indicator and the fourth indicator obtain the weighted mean of 4.8 while the lowest mean is from indicator 5 which have the weighted mean of 4.4. This

implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that to Provide attendees with hand sanitizer at registration and to Remind attendees of hygiene best practices through signage and over email, social media, or push notifications through your mobile event app are the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic.

f) Making the Move to a Virtual Event

Indicator	WM	Interpretation
1. Demonstrate that you have been monitoring the situation closely and frame the decision as being in the best interest of your attendees, speakers and partners.	4.6	Agree
2. Communicate with any affected partners over email.	4.4	Agree
3. Prepare a strategy for communicating and coordinating with your speakers remotely.	4.4	Agree
TOTAL	4.46	Agree

The table above shows the Making the Move to a Virtual Event as one of the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic. We can observe that there are only 3 indicators and it reveals that the highest mean is from the first indicator which obtain the weighted mean of 4.6 while the lowest mean is from indicators 2 and 3 which have the weighted mean of 4.4. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees to Demonstrate that you have been monitoring the situation closely and frame the decision as being in the best interest of your attendees, speakers and partners are the Steps to Protect Attendees from COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Most of the respondents are agree that the event organizer should provide attendees with hand sanitizer at registration and remind attendees of hygiene best practices through signage and over email, social media, or push notifications through your mobile event app.
- Most of the respondents are undecided that many venues are uncertain about when they will be able to re-open again and so they cannot guarantee any bookings right now. Recommendation.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

- Majority of the respondents who are the event organizers feel that they have had no choice but to cancel their event, or at best, postpone until an unknown time. This implies that the event management coordinator or organizer agrees that they feel that they have had no choice but to cancel their event, or at best, postpone until an unknown time.
- Majority of the respondents are agreed that they are only a Few attendees converted into customers during this time of the pandemic.
- Majority of the respondents are agreed that having hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes on hand are the effective ways to prevent covid-19 to the guest.
- Majority of the respondents are agreed that through demonstration you have been monitoring the situation closely and frame the decision as being in the best interest of your attendees, speakers, and partners.

B. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the following recommendations were offered;

- The event management or the organizer should collaborate with the LGU whatever events they have made as an approval or legality of the events.
- The event organizer should adapt social measures given by the local health offices as their guidelines to follow. What is important there is the safety and security of the customers.
- For virtual events, the event organizer should train first other staff in any apps related to the event to avoid problems at the time of the event. Proper training is highly recommended.
- The event management should look for a place that is not crowded or populous for the event.

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