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A Post-COVID-19 Entrepreneurial Plan for Micro-Independent Hotels: The Case of Coron, Palawan

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Abstract

Aim: The Philippine government's restrictions during the Covid 19 pandemic severely impacted hotel and lodging business owners, leading to the closure of many destinations and affecting hotels worldwide. Travel bans hindered travelers from reserving hotels, causing difficulties in room occupancy and revenue stability. This study investigated the impact of the health crisis on micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan, and presented ways to mitigate the impacts and be better prepared for such crises.

Methodology: The study used two frameworks: the Crises of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and the Entrepreneurial Response to Crises frameworks; it employed a descriptive-qualitative approach, and gathered data from five selected micro-independent hotels (MIH) in Barangay Poblacion, Coron Palawan.

Results: The study revealed, among others, that SMEs and micro-independent hotel owners adapted to the crisis by lowering costs and diversifying services. MIH owners, employees, and local government units prioritized health, product creation, and owner recompense. SMEs invested in human capital, outsourced to improve service quality and cut costs, optimized resources, extended product offerings, and formed collaborative networks to be environmentally friendly. They diversified revenue streams, used digital technologies, and promoted sustainable tourism with local governments.

Conclusion: Based on the local government's response and best practices of hotels worldwide during the crisis, several recommendations for micro-independent hotels to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic and ensure long-term sustainability were given, including government support programs for small companies, diversification strategies, cost-cutting measures, prioritizing health standards, establishing collaborations with government agencies and local enterprises, employing technology for efficient pandemic management, implementing strategic interventions, and prioritizing entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity.

Keywords: COVID-19, Micro-Independent Hotel, Coron, Palawan, Entrepreneurial Response Plan

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically disrupted the global tourism and hospitality sectors, severely affecting micro-independent hotels (MIHs), especially in regions heavily reliant on tourism such as Coron, Palawan in the Philippines. Citing Gossling and Scott (2020), the pandemic's impact stemmed from strict travel bans, lockdowns, and heightened health protocols, which led to an 85% drop in tourist arrivals and forced many MIHs to either close or repurpose their operations. With the Philippines losing 78% of its tourism revenue and MSMEs—who form the majority of the hospitality sector—facing closures and layoffs (WTTC, 2020; UNDP, 2020), the crisis underscored the industry's vulnerabilities. Yet, Coron's MIHs showed signs of resilience by adopting health protocols, digital marketing, and flexible booking strategies, driven by "revenge tourism" and government recovery efforts (Department of Tourism, 2023; Asian Development Bank, 2022).

This study investigates how MIHs in Coron adapted and survived the crisis, focusing on their resilience and recovery strategies within the framework of Zutshi's (2021) Crises of SMEs and Ratten's (2020) Entrepreneurial Response to COVID-19. The former helps analyze the financial and operational disruptions, while the latter highlights



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how MIH operators employed innovation, digitalization, and new business models to stay afloat. With over 80 of the 83 hotels in Coron being independently owned (Hotelchains.com, 2024), their recovery trajectory offers insights into the broader challenges and entrepreneurial responses of small tourism enterprises in crisis contexts. As tourist numbers rebound—rising to over 1.5 million in Palawan by 2023—the study emphasizes the need for sustainable practices to ensure the long-term viability of these businesses and the preservation of Coron's natural and cultural assets (ADB, 2022; PNA, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

The investigation deliberated on a crisis that persisted while the study was in progress. It investigated the pandemic's accruing impacts, opportunities, and barriers to the sustainable operation of micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan.

This research explicitly addressed the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the selected micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan, in terms of:
 - 1.1 Affiliation (Hotel Owner's Association)
 - 1.2 Form of ownership
 - 1.3 Years of business operation
 - 1.4 Number of employees (Pre-pandemic)
 - 1.5 Current number of employees
 - 1.6 Room occupancy (Pre-pandemic)
 - 1.7 Current room occupancy
2. What are the perceived impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis among the selected micro-independent hotels in Coron, according to the following dimensions:
 - 2.1 Economic impact
 - 2.2 Operational viability
 - 2.3 Strategic
 - 2.4 Financial performance
 - 2.5 Access to raw materials
 - 2.6 Productivity?
3. What are the responses of the following selected stakeholders in Coron as resilience measures towards the COVID-19 crisis:
 - 3.1 Micro-independent hotel owners
 - 3.2 Micro-independent employees
 - 3.3 Local government unit (LGU)
4. What are the ensuing opportunities from the crisis to micro-independent hotel owners and employees and LGU in Coron?
5. What best practices to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the micro-independent hotel industry are perceived to be effective by micro-independent hotel owners and employees and LGU in Coron?
6. What barriers hinder the micro-independent hotels in Coron to sustain their business amidst the COVID-19 crisis?
7. What entrepreneurial response plan can be adopted to sustain the business operation of the selected micro-independent hotel owners during a crisis in terms of:
 - 7.1 Entrepreneurship
 - 7.2 Innovation
 - 7.3 Creativity?

Assumptions of the Study

Based on the provided literature and the identification of the status problem, the researcher made the following assumptions:

1. All the stakeholders, from the micro-independent hotel owners to the community and the local government unit, adopted some resilient measures to the best of their abilities in response to the COVID -19 crisis
2. Crisis situations open up opportunities for re-design which stakeholders can take advantage of.



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METHODS

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive-qualitative case study approach to explore the experiences of micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike quantitative methods focused on numerical data, qualitative research offers a deeper understanding of complex social phenomena, especially during crises (Amihan, et al., 2023; Muñoz & Sanchez, 2023; Tenny et al., 2021; Prayag, 2020). A case study approach compiles empirical data to assess real-world conditions and allows for flexibility in study scope and methods (Saunders & Thornhill, 2019; Robson, 2017). Descriptive case studies, as defined by Wilson (2016), are particularly suited for understanding observed realities without emphasizing causal relationships, making this design ideal for analyzing the diverse challenges and strategies of MIHs amid the pandemic.

Research Setting

Coron, Palawan was selected as the research site due to its prominence as a tourism hotspot and its reliance on micro-independent hotels, making it a representative model of similar tourism-driven coastal towns in the Philippines. Known for its natural wonders like Kayangan Lake and WWII shipwrecks, Coron attracts a mix of ecotourists and adventurers (DOT, 2022). The MIH sector in Coron thrives on personalized service, local ownership, and sustainability, although it faces ongoing infrastructure and financial challenges. These vulnerabilities were intensified during the COVID-19 crisis, leading to closures and job losses. In response, MIHs have diversified operations, embraced digital tools, and focused on domestic tourism to support post-pandemic recovery.

Selection Criteria and Participants

To ensure relevance and consistency, hotels selected for this study met four key criteria: they had to be located in Coron, operational before COVID-19, DOT-accredited, and Filipino-owned micro-independent establishments offering affordable yet fully functional accommodations. The final sample included five establishments: Darayonan Lodge, Sophia's Garden Resort, Nanay Vacation House, Kalaw Lodging House, and Dianna's Inn. These hotels provided valuable insights into pre- and post-pandemic operations, revealing adaptive strategies and business resilience in the face of unprecedented disruptions.

Respondents of the Study and Sampling Technique

The study involved 20 carefully selected key informants, including hotel owners, managers, staff, and local government tourism officials in Coron, Palawan. These participants were chosen based on purposive criteria such as legal age, residency before and during the pandemic, and direct involvement in hotel operations or tourism policy. LGU officials were included for their role in tourism development and crisis response. Those lacking decision-making authority, having limited local involvement, or conflicting interests were excluded. The respondents reflect just 2% of Coron's population of tourism stakeholders but meet qualitative research standards emphasizing depth over breadth (Creswell, 2009; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Hao et al., 2020; Albaz et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020).

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants most capable of providing relevant insights into the pandemic's impact on micro-independent hotels, as recommended for qualitative studies (Ames et al., 2019; Robson, 2017; Sargeant, 2012). A sample of 20 was sufficient to reach data saturation, representing 2% of Coron's tourism stakeholders. Triangulation of perspectives was used to enhance the credibility of findings despite qualitative research's inherent subjectivity (Turner, 2016). Coron's tourism registry showed 564 businesses in 2021, though only 52 were accredited post-pandemic (Abrenica et al., 2022).

Research Instrument

To explore stakeholder experiences, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, small-group discussions, and text analysis. These methods allowed in-depth understanding of COVID-19's effects, stakeholder resilience, and opportunities arising from the crisis (Halperin & Heath, 2017; Jamshed, 2014). The interview guide covered personal background, impacts of the pandemic, response strategies, and perceived long-term benefits, with logical sequencing to maintain participant comfort. Secondary data like sales and occupancy records complemented participant narratives.

The instrument was validated through expert review involving hotel managers, owners, and tourism planners to ensure alignment with research objectives. Objectivity was maintained via random sampling,



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standardized interviews, and confidentiality. Triangulation involved multiple stakeholder groups, and only relevant data were retained for analysis. This rigorous process ensured the tool's credibility and the reliability of findings.

Research Protocol

Following ethical guidelines, the study obtained clearance from the University Ethics Committee and used virtual platforms (Zoom, Google Meet) for interviews, given pandemic-related constraints. Informed consent was secured, with privacy protected via pseudonyms and secure data storage. Interviews were recorded with permission, and transcripts were thematically analyzed using Colaizzi's method and color-coded for patterns (Morrow et al., 2015; Gundumogula & Gundumogula, 2021). Participants also received layman-translated guides to ensure clarity and understanding.

Data Analysis Procedures

Using Colaizzi's seven-step method (Morrow et al., 2015), the researcher thoroughly reviewed transcripts, extracted significant statements, and formulated meanings through color-coded thematic clustering. These were then integrated into an exhaustive description and a distilled fundamental structure representing the core experiences of participants. Validation was done through participant confirmation and manual transcription, ensuring transparency and credibility of the interpretations.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to six core ethical principles: voluntary informed consent, anonymity, privacy in communications, secure and private interview sessions, careful handling of anonymized data, and strict data protection protocols. Telephone outreach ensured confidential communication, while data encryption and pseudonymization safeguarded participant identities and responses throughout and after the study.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

The hospitality industry in Coron, Palawan is dominated by private people or groups, with 50% of the sample owned by private individuals or groups. The government plays a significant role in the industry, with 30% respondents. Staff affiliations make up only 20% of the total number, with staff members taking on the responsibilities of proprietors or administrators.

The ownership structure of micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan is key, as they are sole proprietorships, reflecting small-scale entrepreneurship prevalent in the region. These establishments have complete autonomy and power over the business, allowing them to make quick and flexible decisions. Most of these establishments are 18 years old, with 29% in the 10 years of operation category. However, only 14% have been in operation for 13-6 years, suggesting a mix of established leaders and emerging rivals.

Pre-pandemic, the data shows a varied assortment of personnel arrangements among small independent establishments, with each category corresponding to a specific number of staff members. Micro-independent hotels prioritize guest engagement and personalized service, often hiring teams of moderate size. The fair distribution of employees across different time intervals allows hotels to modify their workforce composition to meet specific operational needs and guest expectations.

The personnel profile of micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan is crucial for their performance, service quality, and operational capacity. The majority of these hotels fall into the "3 to 4" category, indicating a moderate-sized workforce that balances service delivery requirements and operational efficiencies. Smaller hotels may prioritize job delegation and personalized attention, optimizing resource use and cost-effectiveness while adapting to diverse guest needs.

In terms of current room occupancy rates, the hospitality industry in Coron, Palawan is experiencing a decline, with a significant concentration in lower-occupancy categories. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated this issue, causing challenges for hotels in controlling costs, managing revenue, and competing in the market.

In terms of economic impact, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted tourism revenue and income in Coron, affecting the livelihoods of residents and causing financial instability. The pandemic has negatively impacted job prospects, travel anxiety, and economic recovery for tourism companies. Specialized support systems and financial aid programs are needed to help vulnerable populations and economically disadvantaged sectors recover. Effective fiscal management and cross-sector collaboration are crucial for economic recovery. Small tourism



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businesses face more market pressure and budgetary constraints, hindering economic growth and reducing the region's competitiveness.

In terms of operational variability, hotels in Coron, Palawan, have faced significant challenges due to government-imposed closures and operational restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. These restrictions have significantly impacted revenue generation and disrupted routine business operations. Globalization has impacted tourism, leading to travel anxiety, delays, and cancellations. Financial strain and resource management concerns have also been a significant issue, with hotel operators facing consistent losses and delayed bill payments. SMEs lack capital, putting them behind larger partners. Hotels heavily rely on government regulations and certificates, such as obtaining certification from the Department of Tourism (DOT). However, stringent rules and limited accessibility of certifications have impeded operations.

In terms of strategic dimension, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of adherence to government regulations, strategic adaptation, and diversification of services and business models. Businesses must collaborate with industry partners and government authorities to ensure compliance with health laws and accreditation criteria. Government interventions have increased short-term operating capital and protected long-term liabilities to help businesses avoid insolvency and financial limitations. Diversification of services and business models is also crucial, with a focus on food-related enterprises. Marketing and promotional efforts are essential for business rehabilitation and promoting local tourism. SMEs have increased access to digital tools to reduce management complexity and improve customer and supplier connections.

In terms of financial performance, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the tourism and hospitality industry in Coron, Palawan, leading to significant financial strain and business closures. Despite government financial aid, businesses are struggling to sustain operations and resort to drastic measures like selling assets and ceasing operations. The pandemic has also posed challenges in meeting financial obligations, such as settling debts and resolving loans. The industry has experienced a sharp drop in employment, with the number of people employed in the Philippine Travel & Tourism sector dropping by 21.1%. To diversify revenue streams and mitigate economic repercussions, businesses in Coron, Palawan have implemented innovative techniques such as converting facilities and creating culinary businesses. They are also working to acquire financial resources and develop business networks through partnerships and collaborative efforts.

In terms of access to raw materials, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disruptions in supply chains, affecting businesses in Coron, Palawan. Issues such as inadequate supplies, logistical hurdles, and insufficient transportation have contributed to these disruptions. Low productivity is a significant issue, affecting employee satisfaction and profitability. To overcome these challenges, businesses in Coron, Palawan are implementing DIY solutions and adapting to the situation. They are also utilizing local resources to produce cleaning products when commercial supplies are unavailable. However, long-term sustainability requires significant investments in technology, infrastructure, and capacity-building.

In terms of productivity, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant job losses, increased workload, and reduced productivity in Coron, Palawan. The pandemic has forced employees to multitask and work part-time to ensure operational efficiency. However, this can lead to burnout, diminished morale, and decreased productivity. Low productivity can result from factors such as employee unhappiness, diseases, corporate culture, and skilled workforce scarcity. Physical labor productivity has decreased due to reduced tourist bookings, travel restrictions, and reduced business and leisure travel. The pandemic has also led to a shift towards more efficient workforces. Voluntary resignations and part-time employment agreements have been implemented as a response to the economic downturn.

In terms of responses as resilient measures to the challenges of COVID-19 of micro-independent hotel owners, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the resilience and adaptability of hotel proprietors in Coron, Palawan. They have implemented various strategies to maintain their businesses and support their employees. These strategies include cost reduction, business diversification, and implementing health protocols. Cost-cutting measures include increasing unpaid leave, minimizing outsourcing, and reducing staff hours. Hospitality operators have also prioritized health and safety policies, working with authorities and community initiatives to ensure a clean environment. They have also formed alliances with local political authorities to manage emergency situations. The pandemic has also disrupted the tourism industry, causing travel bans, border closures, and quarantine procedures. These disruptions have raised concerns about the industry's continued existence and the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry.

In terms of responses as resilient measures to the challenges of COVID-19 of micro-independent hotel employees, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted workers in Coron, Palawan, who have shown resilience by

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implementing strategies to improve their skills and commitment to their jobs. They have implemented training and skill development programs to adapt to evolving job requirements. This highlights the importance of ongoing education and skill acquisition in building a resilient workforce. Hotels have also outsourced services to reduce costs and offer training classes to boost staff development. The resilience of employees is reflected in their dedication to their roles and their proactive response to the labor market's demands.

In terms of responses as resilient measures to the challenges of COVID-19 of local government unit, the local government unit (LGU) in Coron, Palawan has been working to build economic resilience and community support during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have implemented policies to help local companies escape budget constraints and bankruptcy, including workforce cost-cutting regulations, tax cuts, and rent reduction regulations. The LGU has also implemented health and safety protocols to protect the community from the virus. The tourism industry has been severely affected, with demand decreasing and staff layoffs. The LGU has implemented flexible financial conditions for businesses and the tourism industry, providing financial support, tax incentives, and extension of certification requirements. The LGU also encourages collaboration and knowledge sharing among industry experts.

In terms of human capital, microhotel businesses in Coron, Palawan have capitalized on the COVID-19 pandemic by expanding their staff, fostering collaboration, and embracing business diversification. They have repurposed buildings for various purposes, promoting sustainability and promoting eco-friendly housing choices. They also prioritize employee training and adaptability, investing in human capital to improve service quality and comply with regulations. Outsourcing services has also been utilized to reduce costs and increase job flexibility. These strategies demonstrate the importance of adaptability and flexibility in a constantly changing business landscape.

In terms of organization, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, microhotel businesses in Coron, Palawan have identified opportunities for growth. They have optimized resources, expanded product offerings, and established collaborative networks to adapt to changing market conditions. They have shown adaptability and innovation by repurposing facilities for secondary tasks and fostering solidarity among local enterprises. Micro-hotels must prioritize establishing cooperative networks and partnerships with local firms, suppliers, and government bodies to enhance operational effectiveness and customer contentment.

In terms of relational aspect, micro-hotel enterprises in Coron, Palawan, have adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic by forming strategic alliances and leveraging cooperative networks, partnerships, and ecosystems. These partnerships have expanded their consumer base and boosted their brand reputation. They prioritize ecological responsibility and sustainability, promoting environmentally friendly accommodations. Government assistance and a supportive ecosystem have also been crucial for their growth and resilience. These businesses have partnered with suppliers, local government units, and adjacent businesses to enhance their facilities and services, bolstering customer loyalty. They have also implemented stringent sanitation measures to ensure customer satisfaction.

In terms of collaboration network, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, micro-hotel enterprises in Coron, Palawan have capitalized on opportunities by forming alliances with government agencies, local enterprises, and other stakeholders. These partnerships offer mutual assistance, promotion, and ecological responsibility. They also foster community support, stimulate economic recovery, and ensure long-term sustainability. During lockdown, online marketing campaigns were broadcasted, and some hotels used cash reserves for growth. Collaboration between local businesses and government is crucial for overcoming challenges and fostering growth. Local governments have implemented cash-based procedures, e-payments, and innovative technology to adapt to the new normal.

In terms of value network, micro-hotel enterprises in Coron, Palawan have capitalized on the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by forming alliances and partnerships with local businesses and governmental agencies. These partnerships allow for mutual promotion, customer loyalty, and environmental sustainability. By leveraging digital tools, SMEs can improve their marketing and brand reputation. Government-business collaborations also help businesses align with regulations and improve their competitiveness. Despite the pandemic, SMEs need to maintain flexibility and rely on primary resources for core business operations.

In terms of co-creation, micro-hotels in Coron, Palawan, have embraced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by collaborating with local companies to create value and expand their services. These partnerships have been strategically formed to enhance visibility, attract a larger consumer base, and promote innovation. The focus is on service enhancement and adaptation, ensuring a steady supply of services and meeting evolving customer preferences. The hotel sector also collaborates with parent corporations to overcome financial hurdles, such as canceled fees, subsidized supply, and reduced advertising costs.

In terms of resource integration, micro-hotel enterprises in Coron, Palawan, are focusing on integrating resources and enhancing service delivery to overcome the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. They are establishing strategic partnerships with local businesses to expand their customer base and ensure long-term

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viability. Resource integration is crucial for business sustainability, as it allows businesses to utilize each other's expertise and assets. Additionally, hotels are implementing strong disaster response plans and implementing upskilling initiatives for their workforce. Strategic personnel management strategies are also being implemented to optimize resource usage and service delivery.

In terms of the best practices of the key stakeholders to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 of government response, the government's response to COVID-19 is crucial for public health and economic recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of regulatory compliance, technology innovation, local belongingness, and consumer and employee confidence. Government stakeholders are investing in tracing and monitoring technologies to combat the virus and improve public health treatments. Hotels have adopted contactless services and safety protocols to enforce safety standards and prevent viral transmission. Small businesses must continue saving while researching technology efficiency and innovations to adapt to the new normal. Local identity is being fostered through cooperative initiatives focusing on regional tourism and destinations. Public and commercial sectors are collaborating to promote attractions, enhance economic activity, and foster resilience.

In terms of consumer and employee confidence, the pandemic has boosted confidence through enforcing safety protocols, promoting transparency, and improving communication efficiency. Safety protocols focus on reducing viral transmission hazards and ensuring a safe environment. The pandemic has also accelerated business innovation, such as contactless check-in/check-out and digital menus, to reduce physical contact and infectious hazards while ensuring guest satisfaction.

In terms of barriers hinder the micro-hotel enterprises to sustain their business amidst the COVID-19 in terms of economic aspect, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted micro-hotel enterprises, particularly those under Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the scarcity of human capital in micro-hotels, leading to reduced productivity and revenue. Financial constraints and budgetary limitations have also impacted operations, causing anxiety and uncertainty. To overcome these challenges, strategic interventions such as improving access to funds and promoting sustainable financial management practices are crucial. Socio-cultural challenges include adapting to evolving legislation, enduring apprehension, and uncertainty. Firms must balance compliance with legislation with operational efficiency to ensure business continuity. Environmental challenges include internet connectivity issues and resource constraints, which hinder digital marketing and online operations.

In terms of entrepreneurial response plan can be adopted to sustain the business operation of micro-independent hotels focusing on entrepreneurship, micro-independent hotels are implementing strategies to sustain operations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, including revenue stream diversification and marketing and branding. Micro-independent hotels are embracing innovation and creativity to sustain their operations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. They are expanding their services to include public pools, event venues, and cafes, reducing dependence on traditional lodgings and enhancing financial resilience. They are using digital technology, such as contactless transactions and QR codes, to streamline operations and improve passenger experience. They are also implementing creative strategies, such as discounted daycation packages and internet access, to cater to changing customer needs. They are also promoting sustainable tourism and unique regional attributes. To adapt, they are diversifying revenue streams, strengthening their brand, and expanding services. They are rebranding to prioritize environmental sustainability and collaborating with local government units for advocacy and workforce development programs. Digital technologies are being integrated into operations, and employee recognition and engagement initiatives are being implemented.

Conclusions

The study concludes that micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan are predominantly sole proprietorships, with a significant portion being privately owned, alongside government and staff-affiliated establishments. Many of these hotels have operated for over a decade, indicating resilience in the tourism sector. Before the pandemic, they maintained high occupancy rates and moderate staffing levels. However, COVID-19 significantly disrupted hotel operations, leading to reduced staffing and lower occupancy rates, with many now operating below 60%. These disruptions not only affected hotel revenues but also led to job losses and financial instability within the community, emphasizing the need for targeted government support, financial aid, and resource optimization.

Despite the challenges, hotel owners, employees, and the local government demonstrated adaptability through strategic responses. These included cost-cutting, diversifying services, prioritizing health protocols, and forming partnerships to sustain operations. Micro-hotels embraced business diversification, outsourcing, and

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sustainable practices to adapt to shifting market conditions. Best practices such as leveraging technology, fostering community collaboration, and ensuring safety compliance have helped build consumer and employee confidence. Still, barriers remain in the form of financial constraints, regulatory compliance, and infrastructure limitations. Overall, the resilience, innovation, and collaborative efforts of stakeholders underscore the importance of proactive and sustainable strategies to ensure the long-term viability of Coron's micro-hotel sector in the face of ongoing uncertainties.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of micro-independent hotels in Coron, Palawan. Government support tailored specifically for small, privately owned hotels is essential, including financial assistance, training, and tax relief. To combat the economic impact of the pandemic, hotels are encouraged to diversify their operations—such as repurposing underused spaces for retail or events—and engage in partnerships with local government units and industry stakeholders to access resources and promote recovery. Continuous investment in staff training and the formation of strategic partnerships with nearby businesses are also recommended to improve service quality and foster collaborative crisis resilience.

Environmental sustainability is another key area of focus. Hotels should adopt eco-friendly practices, strengthen partnerships with local suppliers and authorities, and implement initiatives like waste reduction and energy-efficient upgrades. Strengthening collaboration across sectors—including government, businesses, and community organizations—is crucial to enhance public health efforts and rebuild tourist confidence. Addressing economic, socio-cultural, and environmental challenges through strategic interventions will help ensure long-term business viability. Additionally, embracing entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and creative marketing, while fostering partnerships with local entities, will help micro-hotels adapt to changing market demands and contribute to the sustainable recovery of Coron's tourism sector.

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