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Harnessing San Beda University's Organizational and Dynamic Capabilities to Flourish Amid the Pandemic

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Abstract

Amid the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, I described briefly how San Beda University harnessed its organizational and dynamic capabilities towards enabling our institution to flourish. I utilized the Appreciative Inquiry approach to recount our experiences, on how the interaction of technology, physical facilities, structure, people, and systems capabilities empowered us to manage this COVID-10 crisis and feel triumphant. My narrative data were based on the research-based internal individual stakeholders' evaluation feedback, and unit level performance assessment results, ISO audit data, formal and informal meetings with fellow administrators, and administrative reports submitted to the BOT from March 2020 until March 2021. Given the new normal, and with our mission and strategies serving as north star to guide us, we adopted a crisis management model, which considered two crucial major factors that influenced our ability to flourish sustainably to reach our dream. These are our organizational capabilities, and our dynamic capabilities. Our one academic year journey, and a continuing one, amidst this COVID-19 pandemic, gave us many learnings about being responsible school administrators and how to flourish as an academic community during a pandemic crisis. First, we learned the value of sensing and shaping limited opportunities and countless threats, as well as taking the opportunities no matter how limited. Second, we competently learned that we must utilize with due diligence our organizational and dynamic capabilities for the common good of all our stakeholders. Finally, we learned from our experience that we need to be engaged as a community working collaboratively, transparently, and resolutely to sustainably pursue our role as an educational institution caring for peoples and protecting our planet.

In the past years, higher education had been disrupted by several converging forces like the Industrial Revolution 4.0, unsustainable rise in the cost of college education, poverty, changing demands and values of consumers, and more recently, the emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the other disruptors of education, this deadly virus had practically caught everyone by surprise, causing unimaginable devastation and misery, like deaths, closure of businesses, unemployment, and negative effects on the quality of life, such as health and well-being of people.

In the Philippines, our COVID-19 total cases to date were 611, 618 with 12,694 deaths (DOH, 12 March 2021). It is forecasted to keep on increasing this month due to the UK and South African COVID-19 variants that had reached our country. Due to the pandemic, there were 865 private schools nationwide that did not operate, affecting 4,488 teachers and 58,327 learners (August 2020). This is aside from the temporary business closures of 83,000 companies, many of which are small businesses, causing 3.8 million Filipinos jobless (October 2020). Clearly, COVID-19 has seriously undermined our culture, systems, and institutions, deterring our people and our country to sustainably prosper harmoniously.

In response, the Philippine Administration, approved stimulus packages to support job creation, poverty reduction, development, and economic growth, as well as adopted and implemented intensive measures to control and mitigate the spread of these viruses. In particular, schools were closed which led to the cancellation of all campus events, especially the face-to-face classes, to protect the teachers, students, non-teaching personnel, and administrators from COVID-19. But these had most notably resulted in the disorientation of, and disturbance in, providing continuing education to the students. To cope with this disruption, our University had moved swiftly to address this global pandemic to minimize its effects on the quality of our education, quality of life of our students-teachers-personnel, and the continuity of San Beda in the long run.

It is in this context that I describe briefly how San Beda University (SBU) harnessed its organizational and dynamic capabilities towards enabling our institution to flourish amid the pandemic situation. Using the Appreciative Inquiry approach to recount our experiences, I want you to appreciate how the interaction of technology, physical facilities, structure, people, and systems capabilities empowered us to manage this COVID-10

crisis and feel triumphant at this point. My narrative data were based on the research-based internal individual stakeholders' evaluation feedback, and unit level performance assessment results, ISO audit data, formal and informal meetings with fellow administrators, and administrative reports submitted to the BOT from March 2020 until March 2021. Given the new normal, and with our mission and strategies serving as north star to guide us, we adopted a crisis management model, which considered two crucial major factors that influenced our ability to flourish sustainably to reach our dream. These are our organizational capabilities, and our dynamic capabilities.

SBU in Brief

San Beda University was established in 1901 by monks of the Order of St. Benedict, also known as the Benedictines. We acquired our university status only 3 years ago. We are headed by a Rector-President who is a Benedictine monk.

SBU as a Catholic educational institution, is committed to the Christian formation of the Bedan Community as its service to the Church, the Philippine society, and the world. It envisions itself as a distinguished academic community that transforms its members to become fully human, wholly Christian, truly Filipino, and globally competitive.

SBU offers graduate degree programs in the field of Business, Law, and Liturgy, undergraduate degree programs in Arts, Accountancy, Business Administration, Economics, Humanities, Information Technology, and Science, as well as Basic Education from pre-school to senior high school. These programs are taught by an aggregate of highly qualified and dedicated fulltime and part-time faculty; and administratively supported by long-serviced non-teaching personnel. As of this semester, we have a total enrollment of 8,200 in our two campuses, located in Manila and Rizal.

SBU is ISO 9001 certified and has PAASCU Level I and Level III accredited programs. The College of Law had been given the recognition of Excellence in Legal Education; and our Philippine Regulatory Commission had listed our College of Law and the College of Medicine

among the top 10 Universities with high passing rates in the licensure examinations in the Philippines.

Locally, SBU is a member of the CEAP, PACU, PAASCU, and ACUP. Internationally, SBU is a member of the ALN, AUAP, ASEACCU, FHNW, RENPER, ASEACCU, and SALT networks.

SBU's Experience in Flourishing during the Pandemic

Based on the study of Jakubik (2017), "teamwork, working environment, team spirit, communication, cooperation, collegiality, collaboration, people, customers, know-how, professionalism, products, motivation, sharing, feedback, and work atmosphere are the forces that make organizations flourish" (p.69). The findings of Jakubik (2017) further asserted that "discovering what provides joy and happiness for people in work serves as a strong basis for them to dream, design and maximize their own and their organization's destiny in the future" (p.61).

With the rapid spread of the hazardous COVID-19 pandemic, we resolved to respond quickly and efficiently to its ill-effects to endure and continue with minimal hurdles our institutional mission of transformative Benedictine Catholic education for the young and professionals. In the midst of the pandemic, we never lost track of our goal as stated in the SBU Strategic Plans to become a "Digital Global University" in 10 years' time and reaffirmed commitment in responding to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Given the new normal, and with our mission and strategies serving as north star to guide us, we adopted a crisis management model, which considered two crucial major factors that influenced our ability to flourish sustainably to reach our dream. These are our organizational capabilities, and our dynamic capabilities. Though conscious of being a small player in the education industry, we were raring to venture into global markets and face uncertainty and risks that will trigger a process of learning and adaptation (Lu & Beamish, 2001).

Organizational capabilities, as we had adapted from the definition of Chandler (1990), is a school's collective physical facilities, adopted technology, and skills of human capital, in particular, the abilities and

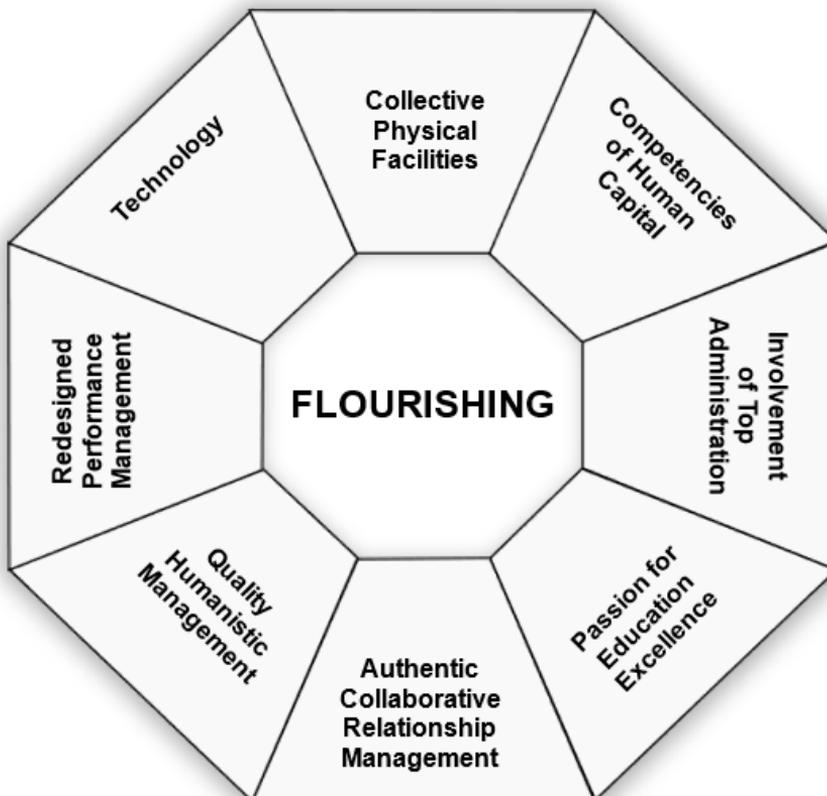
expertise of top management layers. It is the organizational ability to perform coordinated tasks, and utilize organizational resources, for the purpose of achieving a particular end result (Helfat, 2003).

Dynamic capabilities, as we had adopted from the definition of Teece et al., (1997) and Helfat et al., (2007), is the school's competence in terms of authentic collaborative relationship, passion for education excellence, quality of humanistic management, and redesigned performance management, to purposefully create, extend, or reconfigure and transform our resource base that already exists in the school, in order to respond to the changes due to the pandemic.

Flourishing means sustainably achieving our institution's immediate performance outcomes during the academic year amidst the COVID-19, and other affirmative meaningful actions we intend to undertake in spite of the pandemic and beyond.

Figure 1.

SBU Flourishing Model Amid the Pandemic



Organizational Capabilities

Technology

Embracing and leveraging high-level information technology to address the problem of unreliable and slow access to internet connectivity, was our main approach for our technology. We poured in a large investment on this organizational factor to ensure that we acquired and/or improved information technology for the right reasons. Specifically, to implement the flexible learning approach, we subscribed to CANVAS and GENYO for our official school Learning Management System (LMS) and embedded in CANVAS, LABSTER and PANOPTO to conduct online classes; developed our own School Management System (SMS) instead of subscribing to a 3rd party vendor every year; boosted mobile signal (Smart Telecom) using Distributed Antenna System (DAS); are currently upgrading our IT software security infrastructure equipment, as well as our computer units in all offices; installed WIFI Access Points and Switches for a stable Internet Connection in various Hallways and Study Areas; and integrated ZOOM and MS Teams as additional Online Video Conference options in our CANVAS.

To help towards the efficient and effective use of our information technology, we improved our HELPDESK/ Technical Support Hotlines for Faculty and Students and made provision for lending of computer units to SBU Faculty who need ODL-ready computer units. More importantly, using our technology, we were able to establish a common, official communication channel, and ensure that everyone in the school community can access this readily.

Collective Physical Facilities

Construction, renovation, and retrofitting were the key approaches to our collective physical facilities in our two campuses located in Manila and Rizal. We also allocated a big portion of our University budget on this organizational factor to ensure that our physical facilities stand on the pillars of safety, quality, efficiency for meaningful learning, healthier work practices, and more environmentally friendly spaces in the campus. Last year, we modernized our main Library in the Manila campus located in four floors of the new 8-storey building to support flexible learning. We also converted classrooms for the Graduate School of Business into Smart

Classrooms conducive for flexible learning, and renovated other rooms, offices, and common spaces in accordance with the health and safety protocols of IATF and the LGU. We constructed digital multimedia/recording rooms with the industry-standard editing software and equipment. Currently, we are now retrofitting our facilities (i.e., classrooms, laboratories, eating/dining/communal areas, library, isolation room for symptomatic individuals, comfort rooms, stairways/corridors, and entry/exit gates) based on the guidelines issued by the Commission of Higher Education in order to be allowed to conduct limited face-to-face classes for specialized laboratory courses in Medicine and Nursing for our students aged 20 years old and above.

Competencies of Human Capital

Based on the number of courses that we offer across Academic Units, our 172 Basic Education teachers are all fulltime and LET passers, of whom 2% have masters' degrees, while 19% have doctoral degrees, and an average teaching experience of 8 years. To ensure their readiness for ODL based on the flexible learning approach, they were given extensive in-house training on the use of our University Learning Management System (GENYO and REDCANVAS), planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Regular continuing online in-service trainings for faculty development related to their physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual wellness were also provided to them during the entire academic year.

Moreover, we have a total complement of 440 fulltime and part-time faculty in the college and graduate levels. Those teaching in the college are all masters' degree holders, and 60% of them have doctoral degrees. Those teaching in the doctoral are all doctoral degree holders. Their average teaching experience is 17 years, and all our graduate faculty have professional industry experience of at least 10 years.

To ensure their readiness to teach virtually before we rolled out our full online classes, we required all of them to attend an online 4-module training conducted synchronously and asynchronously, which included how to use our University-adopted LMS (CANVAS), module preparation for instruction, student assessment, and the pedagogy on how to effectively teach online.

We also provided follow up sessions via regular Zoom and/or MSTeams, training with external experts, as well as coaching and mentoring by our certified faculty champions or trainers, on any topic that are related to ODL, while webinars on research, health, and spiritual well-being were mostly facilitated by external resource persons, guidance counselors, and OSB monks. For the technology enhancement skills, we had always given priority to our new or more senior faculty who are digital immigrants.

Our 250 regular non-teaching personnel are all College degree holders, except for the maintenance crew. Those assigned to administrative work had been given trainings on specific technology skills they needed to perform their tasks, like how to use MSTeams and Zoom, Data Security and Threat Management, and Live Streaming Upskilling. This is aside from the webinars on health and safety protocols, mental well-being, ISO process, risk disaster management, and recollection that they are required to undertake during the year.

We had observed that in their entire service to SBU, our faculty and personnel had proven able to acquire new skills and knowledge quickly and continually, which is vital to our success in this era of the pandemic. The majority of our current faculty have shown their aspiration, self-awareness, curiosity, motivation to acquire knowledge/skills, and openness to new ideas to be effective learners to become effective teachers, and also that they will not be left behind in our efforts to flourish in this new normal.

Involvement of Top Administration

Our top administration is composed of the Rector-President; the Vice Presidents for Academics, Administration, Finance, Research, and International Linkages; and the Academic Deans. We also created our Crisis Management Team and a written memo on the SBU Contingency Measures in Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic was issued by our Rector-President.

Although we worked from home, especially during the first six months of the COVID-19 lockdown in Manila, the top administrators acted with urgency and were more deeply involved in steering clear directions in almost all facets of the school's operations, while remaining focused on

our strategic goals. At this time, their primary concern was to adequately ensure SBU's readiness to conduct Online Distance Learning (ODL) to achieve the best possible teaching and learning environment, as well as outcomes for our students at all levels, while simultaneously continuing with our research, community engagement, and internationalization activities.

Part of the SBU clan culture is that our top administrators are considered to be parent figures and mentors, so they patiently and actively inquired reflective questions and listened in a friendly manner to faculty, personnel, students, parents, and alumni, and in that way encouraged prompt dialogues and conversations so people were inspired, shared a lot of themselves, invigorated to learn and offer new ideas and other options to survive in these hard times. Many of our programs, projects, and activities under our Operational Plan and Learning Continuity Plan (as required by CHED) were generated from these consultations, small group huddles, and regular council/committee meetings, done via Zoom, Viber, email, and MSTeams online platforms. It was during the first two months of the lockdown when we had very frequent close collaborations through various types of long meetings at all levels across internal and external stakeholders to map out our SBU Operational and Learning Continuity Plans.

Our top administrators, specifically our Rector-President, emphasized to all administrators, first of all, the value of spending time to understand the broader context of the pandemic, accurately assessing the situation, and fully appreciating the underlying challenges that this pandemic will bring about. Second, to come up with creative and innovative solutions that can be implemented immediately and quickly transfer the knowledge to other concerned stakeholders. Then, establish and conduct reflective post assessments to learn from experience and reconfigure what has to be done better for us to likely flourish. We were made to realize that the phases of transition from the normal to the "new normal" about adopting new ways of working, learning, interacting, and being, be it in a year or more.

During this entire school lockdown period, the top administrators' communication was transparent. This means we were provided with honest and accurate descriptions of reality; being as clear as humanly possible about what they know, what they anticipate, and what it means for people

in a compassionate way. The Rector-President, in his inspirational messages during meetings and homilies, always conveyed profound appreciation to the faculty, students, personnel, and other administrators for all that we had done and what we were about to do together as a community, to thrive sustainably. These messages were always founded on hope, faith, and zeal, which is part of our Benedictine Catholic education hallmark values.

Dynamic Capabilities

Authentic Collaborative Relationship Management

In SBU, we value authentic relationships because they are a powerful way to bring joy to our lives, someone to lean on, comfort us, and provide counsel, especially to our young students and faculty during this pandemic. Concretely, we utilized the social media and our high technology on campus to celebrate milestone achievements, birthdays, community prayers, and even feast days. We also hold one-on-one online counselling and “how are you doing” sessions practically 24/7 for our students, especially those who are at-risk. This gave them a sense of belonging and a sense of security knowing that there are people they can run to when they need them.

We also emphasized the importance of intimate and tight interaction by almost having daily conversations with our internal stakeholders, which contributed to our sustained morale and performance throughout the year. The insights we gained from our deep-seated social relationships enabled us to enhance quick response times and strengthened our coordination capabilities to streamline our school processes, expand our support services, and immediately address complaints.

Our collaborative relationship is founded on open communication, teamwork, respect for others, honesty, and humility are our binding factors. In the midst of confusion, fear, anxiety, and stress, we did not falter in looking for feasible strategies to continue our academic, research, community engagement, internationalization, and SDG activities even on a limited scale. We became pragmatic in our approach and opted for quality rather than quantity.

Passion for Education Excellence

SBU has a very deep passion and determination to achieve education excellence based on our 10-year Strategic Vision for 2018-2028. We adopted the ISO 9001 management system standards, PAASCU accreditation standards, and CHED ISA criteria for accreditation as our business excellence models, which we embedded in our academic, research, community engagement, and internationalization plans and practices, not merely for compliance, but to sustain our stakeholders' satisfaction, school performance, and succeed in the competitive business of education arena. We are focused on our future direction, but quickly responsive to the challenges of the pandemic.

We fully recognized that one of our competitive advantages is the quality and variety of the degree programs that we offer in the market. In fact, even during the pandemic, we applied for approval of new programs in Information Science, Computer Science, and Accounting Information System. For quality, we made sure that our curriculum offerings are attuned to current conditions by modifying its contents and, this time, integrated the ESD critical issues in relevant subjects.

We also believed that people are the most valuable assets in our institution. Therefore, we are fully committed to giving priority, to the continuing training and development of our faculty and personnel for their behavioral and technical upskilling and retooling to teach, do research, and publish their work in reputable peer-reviewed indexed journals in their respective fields more effectively.

Our passion for education excellence during this pandemic was also our sure guarantee that all academic and administrative support services are relevant and responsive to the needs of our students and faculty, and that the SDGs we integrated with our university strategies serve a core role across our institutional governance systems.

Quality Humanistic Management

We anchored our quality humanistic management on fulfilling our commitment/promise, and building of trust and reliability, to our students and their parents, that their studies will be completed on time based on

their curriculum; that the quality of instruction will be at par or even better; that the health and well-being of the students will be as equally important, and that there would be no increase in tuition and fees. In fact, we returned a percentage of their unused miscellaneous fees, and gave a 2% discount on full payments of tuition and fees last Academic Year when we shifted to ODL.

In order to continue all our programs and services, we had shifted until now to work from home, flexible work arrangements, and redesigned some jobs through socio-technical enrichment. Even with the 8% decrease in enrollment this academic year, we did not displace any of our regular faculty and personnel. We had also given the full monthly compensation that each one was entitled to on time. We had even advanced a portion of their 13th month pay during the first quarter of the lockdown to help alleviate the economic impact of the pandemic. We had also extended laptop loans interest-free to faculty who wanted to upgrade or acquire their own computer device for ODL and research purposes. We ensured that everyone at home and those reporting for work on a skeletal work complement basis in the campus were safe and free of COVID-19.

Most importantly, we highly supported and prioritized the well-being of the members of the academic community. This covers physical, mental, and social health. We believe that it is essential to our human resources productivity and positive engagement. We also consider that well-being is a necessary requirement of effective teaching and learning. To concretize our support, we provided a holding environment where people would feel safe and have some sense of certainty during uncertainty. We still innovatively celebrated online our important school events like Graduation, Employee Service Recognition, Public Lectures, Christmas, and the Feast of Sto. Nino to keep us in touch and feel the community spirit. We made sure our students would feel connected to others and were experiencing safe and trusting relationships through the programs of the Homeroom advisers, Guidance Counselors, Dean of Student Affairs, and Prefects, in close collaboration and teamwork with the parents of the young ones.

Redesigned Performance Management

Conditions during the pandemic had prompted us to modify our traditional way of utilizing our performance management system to measure outcomes based on the snapshot and developmental approach. We had since identified three objectives at the root of our redesigned performance management: (1) to recognize, (2) to see, and (3) to stimulate performance.

At the individual level, we focused on our three major stakeholders, who are the students, teachers, and personnel. We had since used comparative snapshots of the summative assessments based on the actual student online class performance and faculty evaluation records, together with the online cross-sectional surveys for accountability, teamwork, engagement, and satisfaction indicators. These outcome behavioral snapshot indicators were all new to our performance feedback system.

Academic achievement, attendance rate, drop-out rate, discipline referrals, and satisfaction were our student key performance indicators. Taken together, these were also new to our performance feedback system. Then, classroom performance (using a new validated Faculty Evaluation Instrument for Online Classroom Teaching), attendance in trainings related to Online Distance Learning, engagement, and satisfaction, were our teacher key performance indicators. We used accountability, teamwork, engagement, and satisfaction as our administrator and personnel key performance indicators.

At the institutional level, the performance of each academic, research, linkages, finance, and other support services units were assessed in terms of the key performance indicators guided by their mandate, and the specific performance targets based on the priorities that we had set during this pandemic, and which they had included in the Annual Evaluation and Planning Forms. The outcomes of these unit performance assessments were presented during the Year-End and Mid-Year Evaluation and Planning Conferences done via Zoom. In-between, monitoring via Viber, email, or zoom of valuable brief conversations at the moment, about actual units' performance by their respective top administrators were purposely done, and frequent progress reports were rendered during council meetings of each cluster.

Flourishing Outcomes

Our one-year encounter with the disturbing COVID-19, made SBU flourish, filled with renewed hope, optimism, and faith, by harnessing our organization and dynamic capabilities optimally and prudently. The complexity of the challenges we faced and are still facing right now demands solutions that reach beyond one individual. Looking back, what had we accomplished in a year's time struggling under uncertainty?

Our records (BOT Reports, Units' Evaluation Reports) show the following outcomes of our synergistic and collaborative efforts:

- 1) **Organizational Readiness for ODL**- based on the flexible learning approach recommended by the CHED, our readiness dimensions encompassed the teacher, learner, curriculum/instruction, technology, logistics, learning environment, and finance indicators. We moved from a satisfactory level when we started in July 2020, to a very satisfactory degree by the end of February 2021.
- 2) **Students** - their overall performance based on the five indicators was very satisfactory. Particularly, their academic achievement based on their grades at the end of the semester had a mean of 85 % (high average), average attendance rate was 96% (Outstanding), average drop-out rate was 2% (very satisfactory), average of discipline referrals was less than 1% (outstanding), and average satisfaction was 4.25 (very satisfactory).
- 3) **Teachers** - their overall performance based on the four indicators was very satisfactory (4.16). Specifically, their average classroom performance was 4.39 (very satisfactory), average engagement was 4.43 (very satisfactory), and average satisfaction was 4.28 (very satisfactory).
- 4) **Administrator and personnel** - their overall performance based on the four indicators were very satisfactory (4.47). Their average ratings were: on accountability 4.49 (very satisfactory), on teamwork 4.45 (very satisfactory), on engagement 4.50 (outstanding), and on satisfaction 4.44 (very satisfactory).

- 5) **Support Services** - their overall performance based on the 10 indicators of the 18 support services units was very satisfactory (4.48). They rated outstanding on Improved Quality (4.60), Expanded kind and variety (4.62), on Increased quantity/number/volume (4.51), on New programs and services (4.54), on Streamlined internal processes (4.53), and on Increased utilization of technology (4.63). They also scored very satisfactory on Timeliness (4.30), Speed (4.33), Redesigned work and job description (4.42), and Addressed clients' complaints (4.36).
- 6) **Community Engagement** – some of the completed projects during the pandemic were on: Distributed Protective Kits to Pedicab Drivers, Street Vendors, and Parking Attendants; Donated 210 sacks of Rice (@5kilos per sack) for SBU Agency workers; Distributed Material Assistance to SBU Employees affected by typhoons; Conducted various Donation Drives for Typhoon Victims in Oas, Albay; Isabela Province, Cagayan Province, Pasig City, and Cainta, Rizal; Distributed Cash Assistance to Severely Affected SBU Employees by the typhoons; Distributed Vitamins to SBU Employees; Launched the Gulayan sa Bakuran; and Organized the Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBCP) Alay Kapwa donation boxes for distribution.
- 7) **Linkages and International Affairs** - some of the completed activities done in cooperation with the partner network or institution during the pandemic were: International Webinar on Excellence in Educational Mission through Partnerships; Initiatives for Poverty Reduction and Community Development; Cross Cultural and Conflict Management International Virtual Course 2020; Folklore 2021-Symphony of the World; International Webinars on Urban Farming and Mushroom Cultivation; The International E-Colloquium on Language and Humanities; Global Symposium on Service E-Learning in Higher Education; and the ATU-NET Student Leader Forum 2020 (ATU-NET SELF2020) on The Great Reset: The New World and Society.
- 8) **Research** - internally funded, publicly disseminated in Research Conferences, and published in our Bedan Research Journal, our faculty's 20 empirical research related to SDG on good health and well-being; decent work and economic growth; sustainable cities

and communities; climate action; life on land; and peace, justice, and strong institutions.

- 9) **SDGs and EDS** - when the COVID-19 virus erupted, which limited our in-person social interaction, decreased our financial resources, and resulted in many government restrictions on school operations, we recalibrated our SDG response actions to only four (4) of the goals: #3-health and well-being; #4-quality education; #16-justice, peace, and strong institutions; and #17-partnerships for the goals; with special focus on Education for Sustainable Development critical issues on climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and sustainable consumption and production.

We had also done with earnest efforts affirmative actions such as: (1) developed an SBU Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Guiding Principles; (2) integrated in the Basic Education and College Curriculum, the four ESD issues and pedagogy based on their relevance in selected Programs at various levels; (3) offered subjects/courses on Disaster Risk-Reduction and Climate Change at the Graduate School, and involved faculty who are teaching and/or consulting in grassroots education on these issues; (4) advocated and supported interdisciplinary researches, publication, and instructional materials development for online teaching related to the four ESD issues and SDGs; (5) reinforced the implementation of the Waste Management Program (i.e. separate waste bins for recyclable, non-biodegradable, and biodegradable wastes); (6) implemented the 4 R's of green living "Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle" policy in the entire campus; (7) implemented paperless or online transactions for all accounting and administrative services; (8) conducted continuing webinars on Mental Health and Well-being for students, faculty, personnel, and parents; (9) revised SBU Guidelines and Student Handbooks on Health and Safety Protocols based on recent IATF resolutions on COVID-19; and advocated positive action about quality education, climate change, biodiversity, and disaster risk reduction through Public Lecture Series and streaming of video clips and music via smart monitors; and (10) acquired more enriched print and online resources collection on ESD issues.

Conclusion

Our one academic year journey, and a continuing one, amidst this COVID-19 pandemic, gave us many learnings about being responsible school administrators and how to flourish as an academic community during a pandemic crisis. What made our organization flourish are the positive experiences of the people during their day-to-day work. The other significant contributors are the meaning, purpose, and high level of engagement that people experience that impels them to face challenges and innovate in order to flourish.

First, we learned the value of sensing and shaping limited opportunities and countless threats, as well as taking the opportunities no matter how limited. It means that dynamic capabilities link management's ability to sense and then seize opportunities, navigate threats, and combine and reconfigure specialized and co-specialized assets to meet changing customer needs (Teece, 2007, as cited in Acosta, 2021). There are three main fundamentals pillars of dynamic capabilities: (1) to sense and shape opportunities and threats, (2) to seize opportunities, and (3) to maintain competitiveness through enhancing, combining, protecting, and, when necessary, reconfiguring and transforming the business enterprise's intangible and tangible assets (Teece, 2007, as cited in Acosta, 2021). Therefore, we learned the need to act quickly to recalibrate and transform our tangible and intangible assets to respond to the challenges of the turbulent conditions to answer the needs of our stakeholders and achieve our goals.

Second, we competently learned that we must utilize with due diligence our organizational and dynamic capabilities for the common good of all our stakeholders. If we give more authority to people and knowledge workers, because if we succeed in this then people will be more involved, energized, motivated, and empowered to develop their organizations and to more successfully face the issues involved in ongoing change in the business environment (Jakubik, pp.69-70).

Finally, we learned from our experience that we need to be engaged as a community working collaboratively, transparently, and resolutely to sustainably pursue our role as an educational institution caring for peoples and protecting our planet. Flourishing during the pandemic is having a safe

environment where people's health and well-being are of primary concern. Where despite the many challenges brought about by the pandemic, the institution became more agile, resilient, resourceful, and more importantly optimistic that there will be better things to come if sustainable practices are implemented resolutely.

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