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## Hopes and Challenges of Filipino Displaced Workers at This Covid-19 Pandemic Period

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**Abstract:** Hopes and challenges were the focus of this study as it aimed at understanding the self-efficiency of Filipinos who were displaced at this pandemic period. Respondents were randomly taken from unaccounted pool of motor rider agents in Metro Manila and requested to respond on the survey provided to them. Results showed that in terms of hopes, Filipino-respondents Strongly Agree that they are dynamic, adaptable, and optimistic to surpass any difficulty and are very much hopeful that they will survive the challenges brought about by this Coronavirus pandemic. Likewise, when it comes to challenges, Filipino-respondents Strongly Agree that they are ready to solve difficult problems in terms of financial, health, food sustainability, spiritual/religious, and family social factors. Researchers therefore assumed that it is more than enough to say that combining the results achieved on the hopes and challenges of these Filipino-respondents, there is a strong basis that Filipinos are very much self-efficient as well as resilient as it is an innate characteristic on them with the influence of the environment and stimuli where they grow and their behaviors were molded to become better members of the society who are efficient, adaptable, ready to face the challenges, and hopeful amidst this pandemic period. This study also hope to possibly eliminate the notion about Filipinos negative values and instead strengthen and highlight the positive values that Filipinos are known for in the world which will bring constructive impact to those badly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Keywords:** challenges, displaced workers, hopes, pandemic period, self-sufficiency

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### INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 started with a challenging event in the life of every one as we are taken aback with a very harmful virus which claimed too many lives and affected millions of people all over the world from all walks of life. Todate, the virus known as Corona Virus, in its fast rate of spread has 21,026,758 cases and a total of 755,786 deaths recorded all over the world according to the World Health Organization as of August 15, 2020 (World Health Organization, 2020). With the virus' widespread and severe infection that is so alarming to people, this was assessed by the World Health Organization as a 'pandemic' (Shannon, 2020).

Various industries have been so affected by this pandemic disease and caused different impacts to the organizations, businessmen, and its employees from top to bottom. Many businesses have loss the expected earnings for the year especially those who are in the retail industry. In the United States, such companies like American Eagle Outfitters with \$257.2 million and Burlington Coat Factory for a 13-week period; Bath and Body Works with a 37% sales decline; Gap Inc. at 43% sales decline; and Starbucks expected losses with a \$3.2 B revenue, all because of temporary closures of most of their stores caused by this pandemic disease (Accardi, 2020). In the United Kingdom, Forrester, a research and advisory firm which is known in the world to be one of the most influential when it comes to business and technology, predicted to have a 9.6% decline in their retails sales in the entire globe which is equivalent to a \$2.1 Trillion (Forrester Research Inc., 2020).

Likewise, the food industry across the world were so much affected by this Covid-19 pandemic as the government of various countries have ordered closing down bars, restaurants, fast food chains, cafes, bakeries, and other convenient stores (Franck, 2020). In Asia, Malaysia's McDonald stores temporarily closed their dine-in restaurants starting middle of March 2020 but continue their takeout service (Daim, 2020; Wong, 2020; Molla, 2020). In Singapore as well as in Thailand, the Tourism industry was the most affected businesses as reported by their Tourism Board (Tay, 2020; Franck, 2020) and their retail industry together with their food industry were significantly affected because of low foot traffic in various shopping malls (Sen, 2020; Aislelabs Inc, 2020; Ivanova, 2020). Businesses, especially the retailers have started innovating by way of employing contactless home delivery or pick-up setting for items being ordered by customers through online in various platforms (Turner, 2020; Lambert, 2020; Underwood, 2020). This trend of online shopping had a significant increase brought by this pandemic period (Collins, 2020; Meyersohn, 2020).

Yet, with all that is happening around us especially at this pandemic time, businesses and people need to think positively. As the saying goes, ‘life must go on’ and everyone must give their fair share to move forward and accept and treat it as a challenge of life (Tan, 2020; McPherson, 2020; Malaysiakini, 2020).

But how can that be true if an individual was laid off, the regular salary was temporarily cut down to its lowest due to staggered workshift, become inactive or worst, his own small business was suddenly closed down due to this Corona virus pandemic. Specifically, unemployment in the food industry had a significant increase as some businesses have closed down or lessened the number of their employees (Katzanek, 2020; Maclean, 2020; Underwood, 2020).

Just like what is happening around the world, Philippines is also one of those countries which are much affected by this Covid-19 pandemic. Unemployment had a record high of 7.3 Million as reported by the Philippine Statistics Agency as of April 2020 which is a 17.7 percent as compared to last year’s 5.1 percent and 38.4 percent out of the 13 millions who are employed were not able to work due to this Corona virus pandemic. Report shows that two-thirds of the country’s labor force are salary-dependent and from this figure, 28.7 percent are self-employed, engaged on professional services, or operating their own businesses (Lopez, 2020).

It is at this juncture that the researchers came up with a deeper study on how each Filipinos who were suddenly laid off, displaced, have reduced salary intake, or closed down their businesses, are facing this challenging period. Their hopes and challenges in this pandemic period are put into test and only a verified response on this matter will definitely clarify various thoughts in one’s mind.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study tried to determine the efficiency of Filipinos, who are once part of a certain business establishment or owning their own small business are currently being self-motor rider agents, with their hopes and challenges fronting themselves at this Corona Virus pandemic period. Specifically, it dealt with (1) identifying their profile; (2) understanding the different challenges that Filipinos are facing at present and how they are dealing with it, and (2) their hopes of what this will bring them. It also attempted to find answer on whether there is a significant difference on their responses on the challenges they face when they are grouped according to their profile.

### Research Frameworks

Based from the theory of Albert Bandura, the Social Cognitive Theory and Self-efficacy as perceived by an individual encourages him how to cope when faced with challenges and other stressful situation in a social context, together with believing how much effort he needs to exert in order to reach and pursue his goals in a dynamic and common interactions between a person, his environment, and behavior. The more a person is given this challenging work to cope with the problems, he or she became more determined to resolve it and his or her self-efficacy is better moved more (Bandura, 1986; Akhtar et. al, 2012; Ackerman, 2020). Social Cognitive Theory and Self-efficacy according to the said theory has six (6) major constructs which are the following: (1) Reciprocal Determinism; (2) Behavioral Capability; (3) Observational Learning; (4) Reinforcements; (5) Expectations; and, (6) Self-efficacy. Table 1 presents the six (6) constructs and its definition as mentioned (Akhtar et.al, 2020).

**Table 1: Constructs of Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Efficacy**

Constructs of SCT&SE	Definition
Reciprocal Determinism	the dynamic interaction of person and behavior;
Behavioral Capability	the individual’s actual ability to perform the appropriate behavior;
Observational Learning	learning a new skill or piece of knowledge by observing others (and potentially modeling them as well);
Reinforcements	the external responses to the individual’s behavior that either encourage or discourage the behavior;
Expectations	the anticipated consequences of behavior;
Self-efficacy	the person’s confidence in his or her ability to perform a behavior (LaMorte, 2016).

A conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1 was conceptualized based on the theory presented and with the literature reviewed to have a clear presentation on what this study tried to achieve.

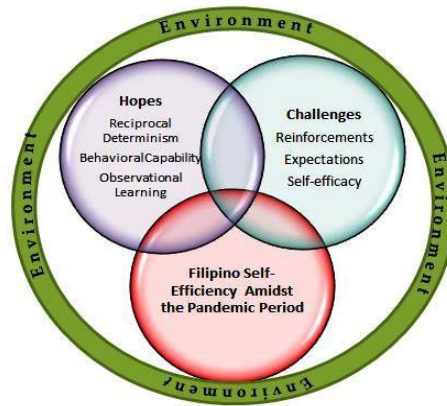


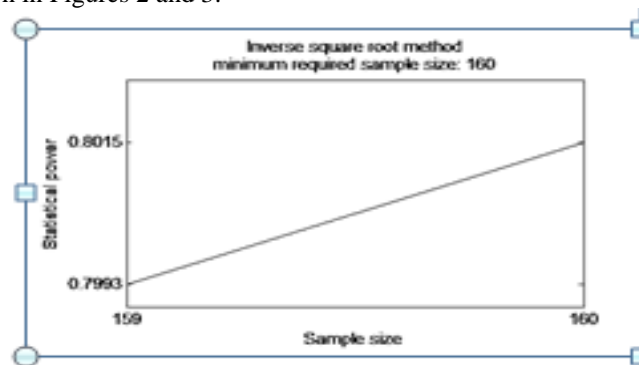
Figure 1 shows the paradigm of the study. The first two (2) circles present the challenges that Filipinos are now facing, and the hopes that they expect. Combining these two will result into the third circle which is the assessed Filipino Self-Efficiency at this pandemic time. The big circle surrounding the three small circles inside presents the social environment which surrounds the Filipinos' dynamism and interaction.

**Research Design**

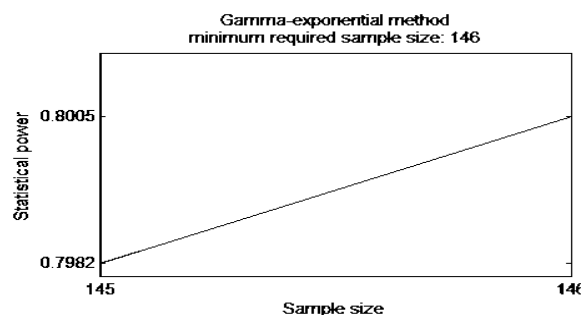
Quantitative Descriptive-Survey method was used in this study where an adapted survey questions was initially used which was later edited to suit the need of the current study. Questions on the survey questionnaire adapted from The General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995) were stated as is and sub-items were carefully constructed where the researchers collaborated on its formulation. Quantitative Descriptive Survey Method is based on social facts with a neutral reality separate from one's beliefs, attempts to clarify the reasons or source of the deviations in social realities, mainly with the use of quantitative analysis and impartial measurement (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984) and so is this study.

**Respondents of the Study**

The survey conducted gathered a total of 179 respondents taken from different places in Metro Manila. The current population of motorized service crew or agents was not known as they have suddenly increased its number brought about by the pandemic period. However, the study was able to gather enough sample size based from the WarpPls 7.0 software with a 0.05 level of significance and a 0.95 power level (Manheim & Boyd, 2006; Kock, 2020). The sample was calculated using the Inverse Square Root Method and the Gamma Exponential Method shown in Figures 2 and 3.



**Fig.2: Sample Size computation based on Inverse Square Root Method**



**Fig.3: Sample Size computation based on Gamma-Exponential Method**

**Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Profile**

<b>Profile</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	10	5.6
26-30	30	16.8
<b>31-35</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>28.5</b>
36-40	38	21.2
41-45	33	18.4
46-50	12	6.7
50 -55	4	2.2
65	1	.6
<b>Sex</b>		
<b>Male</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>86.0</b>
female	23	12.8
lgbtq	2	1.1
<b>Civil Status</b>		
<b>Single</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>41.3</b>
Married	70	39.1
Widowed	18	10.1
Separated/Single Parent	17	9.5
<b>Previous Work</b>		
<b>Sales/Seller (merchandise products/market seller)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>24.6</b>
prefer not to answer	2	1.1
Labor (janitorial/helper)	33	18.4
rider (bike/motor)-delivery	8	4.5
driver-passenger/public transportation	8	4.5
Shop Helper/Boy-Delivery	10	5.6
Food Service Crew (Canter/Food stall)	37	20.7
Biker	7	3.9
Laborer (Construction work)	29	16.2
OFW	1	.6
<b>Current Work</b>		
General merchandise motor service (ex. Lalamove, Lazada express)	48	26.8
<b>Food Delivery Services</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>73.1</b>
Motorcycle food service (ex. food panda, grab food etc.)	43	24.0
Mobile seller (fruit / vegetable vendor)	36	20.1
Motorized seller (fish/chicken/meat –processed or fresh)	31	17.3
Motorized seller (packed food)	21	11.7
<b>Highest Educational Achievement</b>		
Elementary	17	9.5
<b>High School</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>73.2</b>
College Level	28	15.6
College Graduate	3	1.7
Technical-Vocational/TESDA	17	9.5

Shown on Table 2 is the demographic profile of the respondents. Majority of the respondents are under the age bracket of 31-35 years old (28.5%); mostly males (154 or 86%); most are either single (74 or 41.3%) or married (70 or 39.1%); mostly are previously working in sales or are in to small-time market selling; majority are now working as Food delivery services; and a bigger number of them have achieved high school or secondary education. It clearly shows that majority of these displaced Filipino workers belongs to lower-working class in our society, yet these people are now playing an important role in this Pandemic period with their current work as motor riders delivering food to the Filipino people and other nationalities living in the Philippines as well. This statement supports the study released by Deliveroo Hong Kong, a food delivery service provider, where it was reported that it is estimated at around HK\$8 Billion contribution of delivery services for partner restaurants

was made at this pandemic period. With this study, the importance of delivery services that aid in retaining people in their jobs and/or the possible closures of various restaurants was mentioned by Brian Lo, the general manager of Deliveroo Hong Kong (Erickson, 2020). And at such condition of increase in delivery services, food service delivery providers such as the like of Grab Philippines and Food Panda were reported to have made additional precautionary measures to assure their delivery and their workers with the highest safety that they can provide during this pandemic (Philstar.com, 2020).

**Table 3: Reason/s for Becoming a Motor Rider Agent**

Reason/s for becoming a motor rider agent	f	%	Rank
Breadwinner of the family	46	25.7%	2
Solo parent	43	24.02%	3
For additional income for the family	59	32.96%	1
For self-gain/income	24	13.41%	4.5
For my brother/sister's support for schooling	24	13.41%	4.5
For self-satisfaction	8	4.47%	6
To help the government in their move to provide people with their needs immediately	1	0.56%	9.5
To make life easier for others	6	3.35%	7
To avoid boredom doing nothing	1	0.56%	9.5
Others	2	1.11%	8

Likewise, Table 3 presents the reason/s of the respondents for becoming a motor rider agent at this pandemic period after being displaced, laid-off, salary income was suddenly affected or has closed down their small business. Result showed that majority of the respondents claimed that their foremost reason for becoming a motor rider agent at this Pandemic period is 'for the additional income for the family' with 59 respondents (32.96%) followed by being a 'breadwinner of the family with 46 respondents (25.7%), and because they are 'solo parent' with 43 respondents (24.02%). This was also followed by reasons such as for self-gain/income and 'for my brother's/sister's support for schooling both with 24 counts (13.41%).

This result supports the statement made by LaPonsie (2020) in her report saying that it will not be easy to save money for other family needs such as children's or other siblings' education (in the case of those single respondents who stated their support for the family members), a vacation or family getaways, an available finances in case of emergency situation, or even for a down payment on a house or to pay for a house rent. This has made these Filipinos opted to have a second means of income. Collins Dictionary (2020) and other dictionaries available online defined 'breadwinner' as a person in the family who secures or provides earnings to support the essential needs of the family or his/her dependents.

**Research Instrument**

The study utilized an adapted survey questionnaire from the The General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995) combined with a researcher-made sub-items to fit the current study. Part 1 was the respondent's demographics such as age, sex, civil status, previous and current work, highest educational attainment, and their reason/s for becoming a motor rider agent at this Pandemic period. Part 2 was composed of 10 items from the GSE adapted instrument focusing on the hopes and challenges to assess the Filipino self-efficiency amidst the Pandemic period. Respondents were requested to choose only 1 response from each item where a 5-point Likert Scale was used to easily measure and analyze all the responses (a response of 5 as the highest = Strongly Agree and a response of 1 as the lowest = Disagree).

Reliability test was also used to assess the instrument's reliability for this study, and was shown on the following table.

**Table 4: Reliability Test- Cronbach's Alpha**

Item Means	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of items
4.354	0.914	0.918	25

It can be gleamed from the results shown in Table 4 that all the hopes and challenges (25 items) as constructs of the study generated a Cronbach's Alpha value higher than 0.6 (Chetty and Datt, 2015) which is higher than the acceptable value of the test. This means that the research instrument is highly reliable and valid to be used (spsstests.com, 2015).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Findings revealed that in terms of the respondents’ foremost reason working as motor rider agent at this pandemic period, their response is ‘for additional income of the family’. This only proves that Filipinos value family and takes responsibility of its welfare (Rannu, 2020; Maramara, 2017) and ‘see themselves as a self within the family’ (Dumaraos, 2018). This explains why Filipino-respondents position themselves as motor rider agents in order to earn extra or additional income for the welfare of their family.

In terms of Hopes of Filipino displaced workers, who are the motor rider agents in this study, results showed, having a Mean score of 4.3729, that majority of the Filipino-respondents Strongly Agree that they are dynamic and can easily adapt to whatever environment or situations, or difficulties that may come (Reciprocal Determinism). They also Strongly Agree that they are positive that they can perform what needs to be done with calmness and are confident that they can resolve any problems as long as they focus on the solution (Behavioral Capability) even at this pandemic period as shown on their Mean score of 4.5903. Furthermore, by simply observing what others are doing such as being a motor rider agent, Filipino-respondents Very Much Agree having a mean score of 4.1466, that they are hopeful that they can also do the same as they have enough skills and machinery to accomplish it (Observational Learning), and most of it all, they have a supportive family on whatever endeavor or challenges they have to face. Summing up, Hopes with the three variables generated a General Weighted Average Mean of 4.3699 which is verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree.

**Table 5: Filipino-Respondents’ Level of Agreement on Their Hopes Amidst Covid-19 Pandemic**

Hopes	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Reciprocal Determinism	179	4.3729	Strongly Agree
Behavioral Capability	179	4.5903	Strongly Agree
Observational Learning	179	4.1466	Very Much Agree
GWA		4.3699	Strongly Agree

When it comes to Challenges, findings present that majority of Filipino-respondents Strongly Agree that they are ready and that they can manage to solve difficult problems if they will try hard enough on different factors such as financial, health, food sustainability, spiritual/religious, and family social; and determined that they can handle whatever comes in their way even at this Pandemic period as shown on the Mean of 4.2322 (Self-Efficacy). Likewise, when things get rough such as someone opposes his/her thoughts or actions, or worse, gets into trouble, findings showed that majority of the Filipino-respondents claimed that they are more encouraged to find ways or solutions to resolve these issues and discouragement is far to be thought of having a Mean score of 4.3603 (Reinforcement). Lastly, when confronted with a problem or whatever comes on his/her way at this Pandemic period, most Filipino-respondents Strongly Agree that they are optimistic that they will be able to handle such situations as exhibited on the Mean score of 4.4358 (Expectations). In total, Challenges with the three variables garnered a General Weighted Average of 4.3427 and verbally interpreted as Strongly Agree.

**Table 6: Filipino-Respondents’ Level of Agreement on How They Perceived Challenges Amidst Pandemic Period**

Challenges	N	Mean	VI
Expectations	179	4.4358	Strongly Agree
Reinforcements	179	4.3603	Strongly Agree
Self-Efficacy	179	4.2322	Strongly Agree
GWA		4.3427	Strongly Agree

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also utilized to achieve the following result shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: ANOVA Test on the Significant Difference of the Filipino-Respondents’ Level of Agreement on Their Hopes and Challenges Amidst Pandemic Period When Grouped According to Profile**

Constructs of SCT&SE	Profile	F-value	P-value	Decision	Remarks
<b>Hopes</b>					
Reciprocal Determinism	Age	1.100	.365	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Gender	6.214	.002	Reject Ho	Significant
	Civil Status	5.483	.001	Reject Ho	Significant
	Educational Achievement	0.497	.685	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Previous Work Employment	2.646	.007	Reject Ho	Significant
Behavioral Capability	Age	0.493	.839	Accept Ho	Not Significant
	Gender	2.308	.102	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Observational Learning	Civil Status	4.755	.003	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Educational Achievement	1.917	.129	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
	Previous Work Employment	2.478	.011	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Age	1.860	.079	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
	Gender	4.381	.014	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Civil Status	3.115	.028	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Educational Achievement	.669	.572	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
Challenges	Previous Work Employment	1.643	.107	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
	Expectations	Age	0.959	.463	Accept Ho	Not Significant
		Gender	0.506	.604	Accept Ho	Not Significant
		Civil Status	3.094	.028	Reject Ho	Significant
		Educational Achievement	.978	.405	Accept Ho	Not Significant
		Previous Work Employment	2.429	.013	Reject Ho	Significant
	Reinforcements	Age	1.685	.116	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Gender		0.465	.629	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
Civil Status		3.540	.016	Reject Ho	Significant	
Educational Achievement		0.998	.395	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
Self-Efficacy	Previous Work Employment	2.571	.008	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Age	1.141	.340	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
	Gender	8.224	.000	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Civil Status	5.434	.001	Reject Ho	Significant	
	Educational Achievement	1.161	.326	Accept Ho	Not Significant	
Previous Work Employment	3.289	.001	Reject Ho	Significant		

It can be gleaned from the findings shown in Table 7 that in all the constructs of SCT&SE, there is a clear evidence that civil status and previous employment among Filipino respondents really matters and that there is a significant difference on their level of agreement on their hopes and challenges at this pandemic period. Likewise, gender shows significant difference in terms of Reciprocal Determinism, Observational Learning, and in Self-Efficacy. Other profile in all constructs of SCT&SE show no significant difference.

## CONCLUSIONS

In many challenges or calamities such as this unexpected Pandemic period, Filipino-respondents are hopeful and agreeable to say that “Filipinos always manage to rise above the challenge” (Wong, 2012). Their adaptability and optimism (Dacumos, 2013; Hopper, 2019; Callahan, 2020) at this period of uncertainty and adversity brought by the Coronavirus Pandemic has been tested to prove the resiliency and efficiency of the Filipinos. The resiliency and/or efficiency of these Filipino-respondents has been upheld that even with a meager assistance received from the government or other sources, and with weak technology that they can avail, they will take risk (Rannu, 2020) and strive harder to find ways on how they can earn a living for themselves and for their family.

The family solidarity (Talisayon, 2016) as well as that sense of feeling for the needs of others, caring touch, especially their immediate relatives, is one of the Filipino values which is still very much strongly observed at the present time (Wong, 2012; Hallig, 2011; Winter R, 2012). With all those challenges that Filipino-respondents are facing at this pandemic period, the sense of being resourceful, industrious, and their ability to survive with whatever might come in their way has become part of their instinct and behavior that they can surpass it all (Wong, 2012; pilosopotamad, 2013; Airth, 2016)

Finally, researchers assumed that it is more than enough to say that combining the results achieved on the hopes and challenges of these Filipino-respondents, there is a strong basis that Filipinos are very much self-efficient as well as resilient amidst this pandemic period. Filipinos do not just act or do things for other but also for themselves as it is an innate characteristic on them with the influence of the environment and stimuli where they grow and their behavior were molded to become a better member of the society who are efficient, adaptable, and hopeful amidst this pandemic period. This study also hope to possibly eliminate the notion about Filipinos negative values and instead strengthen and highlight the positive values that Filipinos are known for in the world which will bring constructive impact to those badly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

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