

# **Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique Toward Sustainability: An Analysis**

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## **ABSTRACT:**

This study aimed to examine the business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique with fifteen years of operations and above from the perspectives of owners, managers, and supervisors, with a focus in sustainability. The research centered on business practices of four key operational areas: marketing, costing and record-keeping, buying and stock control, and financial planning. Results showed that the majority of respondents demonstrated effective and well-established business practices in costing and record-keeping, buying and stock control, and financial planning. However, business practices in terms of marketing were slightly practiced, but not limited to monitoring competitor pricing and gathering customer feedback. Micro enterprises also faced significant challenges, including experiencing higher supplier prices, limited budgets for advertising and promotion, and finding it difficult to attract new customers. Among the business practices evaluated, stock control practices reducing waste, and enhancement of inventory control, strong partnerships and supplier relationships, and investment in eco-friendly practices were the top contributors to sustainability. Despite ongoing constraints, these findings highlight valuable entry points for future support programs and researches focused on enhancing the resilience, long-term growth, and sustainability of micro enterprises.

**KEYWORDS:** business practices, MSMEs, micro enterprises, small enterprises, medium enterprises, sustainability, Pandan, Antique

## **Chapter 1**

### **THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND**

This chapter provides a complete overview of the research. It discusses the problem statement. The study scope is framed in the bounding details of the reasoning placed in the Theoretical Framework. Moreover, this chapter explains the Conceptual Framework which provides a graphical visualization of the primary variables and how they relate to one another in the research. This chapter also outlines the significance of the study, scope, limitations, and definitions of the study.

### **Introduction**

Global enterprises greatly depend on business practices for their success and sustainability. These practices encompass management, marketing, finance, and even innovation. Strategies from a business vary depending on its size and surrounding circumstances. Larger companies seemed to have more sophisticated, almost rigid strategies to achieve long term goals such as social as well as corporate responsibilities and sustainability frameworks. However, in the context of developing countries, micro,

small, and medium enterprises still manage to dominate the market. These enterprises come with their own set of unique challenges when attempting to sustainably grow their business.

Based on the Asia Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Monitor, Philippine MSMEs constituted 99.5% of registered businesses with micro enterprises being essential to the local economy. In spite of their prominence, micro enterprises experience various challenges including lack of access to finance, obsolete technology, intense competition, and little to no formal business continuity planning. Micro enterprises are defined as having less than 10 employees and minimal capital, making them particularly vulnerable, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where resources and markets were limited. Although these businesses aid in local employment and development, many still rely on traditional practices and struggle with modern innovative practices. Delgado and Moreno (2021) highlighted on the resilience of Philippine SMEs to economic and environmental disruptions illustrated how employing diversification, technology, and strong networks boost resilience. Unfortunately, these micro enterprises do not have the means to employ these strategies. Like Capiña (2021) suggested that businesses without proper continuity plans suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One community that exemplified these challenges is Pandan, a municipality in Antique province in the Western Visayas region. Pandan also housed many micro enterprises engaged in processing and selling local products for the needs of citizens and tourists. Despite the natural beauty and economic potential of the area, these businesses still face significant barriers. Access to capital is one of the biggest issues, many owners have difficulty getting loans or other funding, so that it was hard to invest in the investment in new technology, training and facilities that would enable long-term growth. Moreover, so many still depended on traditional selling methods that restrict their potential to scale their reach and customer base. The challenges were further compounded by the limited research conducted on rural micro enterprises such as the ones in Pandan. The majority of studies do not consider the MSMEs housed in rural industries, creating a void in our knowledge of how these smaller businesses operate and sustain themselves, particularly those involved in agriculture and retail. These businesses are competing against each other, have little help and utterly no chance to innovate and/or further grow outside their immediate local area. This was the gap the current study aimed to fill.

Although general findings have been streamlined in broader studies about the general challenges experienced by MSMEs in the country, not many studies have been done in determining the practices that make micro enterprises located in rural areas like Pandan sustainable and keep them sustainable. By examining their business practices closely, this research aimed to figure out what is working, what is not, and what can be improved. Insights from the research may lead to better decision making by local business owners and help policymakers understand how to better support rural micro enterprises.

Due to its economic context and a high number of micro enterprises, Pandan presents a unique place for this type of research. By examining the business models of these small but crucial factors, this research aspired to offer actionable insights for strengthening local economies in a more resilient way.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to explore the business practices of micro enterprises on sustainability within Pandan, Antique.

Specifically, the study sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique?
2. What are the challenges encountered by the micro enterprises?

3. How do these business practices contribute to the sustainability of the micro enterprises?
4. What strategies and interventions need to be implemented to address these challenges toward enhancement of their sustainability?

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study was based on these theories:

The **Stakeholder Theory** emphasized that a company's long-term success depends on how well it meets the needs of its various stakeholders, not just its shareholders, but also its employees, customers, suppliers, and the surrounding community (Freeman, 2007). This perspective is especially useful in understanding how micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, try to balance sustainability with the expectations of the people they serve and work with. The **Resource-Based View Theory** explained that a firm gains a lasting competitive edge by making the most of its unique resources—whether these are physical assets, skills, or knowledge (Barney, 1991). For micro enterprises in Pandan, this theory helps shed light on how they use what they have to remain resilient and sustainable despite economic and environmental challenges.

The **Sustainability-Oriented Innovation Theory** explained the need for integrating sustainability into the innovation process. It motivates enterprises to innovate products, services, or models that target environmental and social problems (Hansen et al., 2009). This is particularly salient in considering how micro enterprises in Pandan are seeking to innovate sustainably and in ways that respond to their customers' and communities' needs.

These theories complemented each other and together serve as theoretical threads for this study. Such concepts inform how should be analyzed how micro enterprises in Pandan operate, adapt and work towards sustainability. The study drawn on qualitative methods to examine patterns and relationships between their business practices and interventions that support long-term resilience.

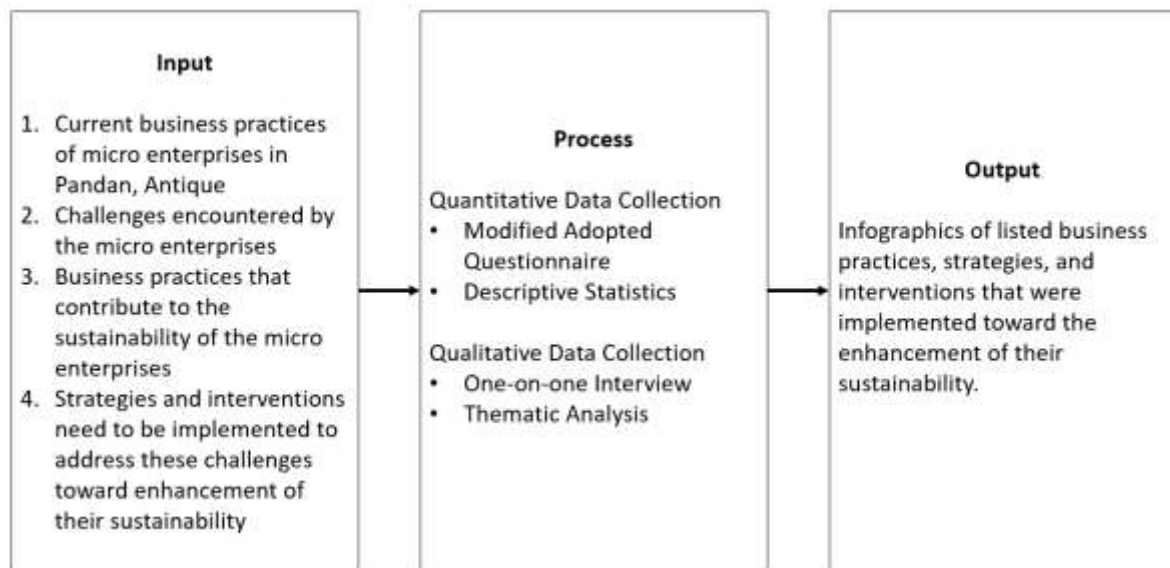
### **Conceptual Framework**

Input-Process-Output model presents as a framework for structuring a study and analyzing the relationships between different the elements of a system or phenomenon (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). This research aimed to provide an understanding to stimulate and capture the sustainability of micro enterprises. It used a structured lens that examines their existing business practices, the challenges they face, and the strategies that could enable their long-term growth.

The study aimed to collect data in four significant areas: 1) current business practices employed by micro enterprises in the region, 2) challenges, 3) the impact of business practices on business sustainability, and 4) strategies and interventions that could aid the business development and assist business to run more sustainably.

Quantitative and qualitative data with the use of descriptive statistics presented the potential trends and common issues of business owners, assisting in crafting one-on-one interviews that provided deeper insights into the business practices. The interview data were be analyzed thematically to identify themes, challenges, and strategies that promoted sustainability.

The end product was an infographics that condensed answering the key questions about existing business practices, challenges and possible solutions. This infographics aimed to make the research more approachable as well as actionable by stakeholders like local business owners, newly registered businesses, and policy makers. The framework served to inform practical interventions that, if embraced, could solidify and increased the contribution of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique.



**Figure 1.**  
Paradigm of the Study

## Significance of the Study

This research would benefit the following:

**Local Government Unit.** The significance of this study could be a basis to help the local government of Pandan, Antique to formulate more policies and programs that would enhance sustainability among micro enterprises.

**Micro Enterprises (Pandan, Antique).** This paper concerned the realities and challenges of local micro enterprises and provided hands-on advice on how they can adopt sustainable business practices, in order to enhance their resilience and competitiveness.

**Stakeholder of Pandan, Antique.** This research could be beneficial to community members, NGOs, development organizations, and other stakeholders working towards improving the microenterprise sector

**The Aspiring Entrepreneurs.** The strategies identified in the study can provide useful guidance for potential entrepreneurs in Pandan who wish to establish sustainable ventures and use effective business practices from the beginning.

**Researcher.** This study offered the researcher deeper insights into micro enterprise operations. It enhanced his understanding of business practices in Pandan. The analysis contributed to the researcher's expertise in business practices and sustainability. It helped craft strategies and interventions to be distributed to stakeholders.

**Future Researcher.** This work can also be used as a spring board for subsequent studies investigating micro enterprise sustainability, either in other rural communities or bigger cities of the Philippines.

## Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study explored business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique. It aimed to understand their contribution to sustainability. Current business practices were analyzed and sustainability strategies were examined. It also examined the challenges faced by these enterprises. Implemented interventions were part of the analysis.

The study was conducted on March 7, 2025, in Pandan, Antique, set out to examine how the business pra-

ctices of micro enterprises support their sustainability. Respondents in the study included business owners, managers, and supervisors of enterprises classified as micro enterprises under the Philippine government's definition. Data gathering utilized two primary instruments

The first was a modified adopted questionnaire from David McKenzie's research, "Business Practices in Small Firms in Developing Countries." It touched on the main areas of marketing, buying and stock control, costing and record-keeping, and financial planning. It was added with challenges encountered by micro enterprises and contribution of business practices to the sustainability of micro enterprises.

The second was an interview based on a semi-structured interview guide. On the qualitative data, one-on-one interviews were held with owners, managers, or supervisors of businesses. The interviews provided useful insights into their experiences, opinions, and plans adding context and depth that statistics alone could not provide. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed through thematic analysis to find recurring themes and underlying stories regarding their sustainability practices.

To make the analysis, the study applied both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data was analyzed by applying descriptive statistics, in this case, mean average, in order to show trends in the performance of the business, such as revenue or average sales. This provided a clear indication of how these micro enterprises are faring numerically.

By integrating both quantitative and qualitative information, the research provided a balanced perspective of micro enterprises in Pandan. The statistical information presented trends in performance, and the interviews brought out the people stories and issues behind the statistics. Combined, these findings created a more holistic picture of how these small businesses are coping with sustainability in a local setting.

### **Definition Of Terms**

The terms that follow were conceptually and operationally defined to continue understanding the study content:

**Business Practices** are the day-to-day processes, procedures, and activities used by businesses to attain their objectives (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2016).

In the context of this research, business practices particularly relate to how micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique run their businesses, ranging from marketing, buying and stock control, costing and record-keeping, and financial planning.

**Micro Enterprises** are enterprises with total assets of up to PHP 3,000,000 with and/or less than 10 employees (DTI, 2024).

In this study, micro enterprises were operation in Pandan, Antique with a total assets up to PHP 3,000,000 and/or employing less than 10 individuals.

**Sustainability** emphasizes the concept of "creating shared value" where firms not just chase profit but also solve problems that relate to society (The Comprehensive Business Case for Sustainability, 2023).

In this study, sustainability referred to the business strategies, tactics, and interventions employed by micro businesses in Pandan, Antique to achieve and generate economic value while addressing social issues related to them, with a focus on sustainable and inclusive growth.



**Chapter 2****REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter covers the related literature about business practices and sustainability of various authors and scholars which are in relation to the research study being conducted.

This chapter emphasizes the discussion of the Business Practices of MSMEs, Challenges Encountered by MSMEs, Sustainable Practices of MSMEs, and MSMEs and Their Contribution to Economic and Social Development

**Business Practices of MSMEs**

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) greatly impact the economy of many countries, especially developing nations, as they provide a large number of jobs. These businesses not only contribute economically, but are also a source of local identity, social consciousness, and strength, often promoting a culture of entrepreneurship. Economically, these enterprises are essential for sustainable development (Lau & Lee, 2019). In contrast to large corporations whose focus is profit maximization based on economies of scale, MSMEs remain sustainable by being flexible and agile.

McKenzie and Woodruff (2016) categorized the business practices into four areas such as Marketing, Buying and Stock Control, Costing and Record-Keeping, and Financial Planning. McKenzie and Woodruff (2016) examined business practices of MSMEs, showing that differences in business practices can account for the same amount of variation in outcomes—sales, profits, labor productivity, and total factor productivity—in micro enterprises as they do in larger enterprises. McKenzie's research emphasized the importance of formal training, business networks, and access to financial resources for MSMEs to enhance their performance. The study suggested that MSMEs, when provided with the right tools, such as training programs in business management and financial literacy, can improve productivity and overall business practices. McKenzie further advocates for the role of technology and digital tools in helping MSMEs scale their operations, reach broader markets, and optimize their business processes. This aligns with the increasing integration of digital tools and e-commerce platforms seen in MSMEs across the Philippines, where businesses leverage online platforms for sales expansion and operational efficiency (Ricafort et al., 2021).

In addition to McKenzie's insights, the International Labour Organization (ILO) framework plays a crucial role in shaping MSME business practices in the Philippines. As a member of the ILO, the Philippines has adopted various ILO recommendations to improve labor conditions, promote sustainable business practices, and enhance economic resilience. The ILO emphasizes the importance of decent work standards, including fair wages, social protection, and safe working conditions, which are crucial to the success and sustainability of MSMEs. By aligning with ILO principles, MSMEs are encouraged to adopt more formal business practices, ensure worker welfare, and integrate social and environmental goals into their operations. These guidelines not only enhance the quality of employment in MSMEs but also strengthen the business model by fostering a more sustainable and socially responsible approach to growth. The ILO's initiatives in promoting labor rights and sustainable development also empower MSMEs to become more resilient to economic shocks and competitive in the global market.

Limbuan and Salazar (2018) remarked that one of the landmark features of MSMEs is their dependence on indigenous craftsmanship and knowledge to develop unique products for niche markets. Many of these businesses are important to the economy and preservation of identity because they manufacture handicrafts, textiles, and food products which are rooted in traditions and culture. Furthermore, these

businesses tend to purchase materials from the region not only to reduce costs, but also to bolster the economy of local suppliers and artisans, thus creating a sustained community development cycle (Dario, 2019). This MSME's focus on local materials also decreases the carbon emissions associated with the company's operations, thus making them a step towards environmental sustainability.

MSMEs enhanced the community and customers' social identity while simultaneously supporting other cultural preservation aspects. Dario (2019) explains that unlike mass production geared towards large-scale enterprises that deal with standardized services, small businesses have a direct face-to-face connection with the consumer and real customers. This distinct approach cultivates loyalty from the clients and gives businesses the opportunity to modify and develop products according to actual demands. MSMEs often use the word-of-mouth advertising technique which helps to improve the trust and dependability of the people in the community and that is beneficial in a competitive environment.

Yet, the flexibility that enabled MSMEs to respond to changes also creates difficulties. Unlike larger corporations which are more financially and commercially sophisticated and have a defined financial structure supporting them, these small enterprises function from a budget and struggle to receive formal financing. Most MSMEs rely on microfinance banks or informal funding circles, which help alleviate short-term problems, but do not assist in enduring expansion (Maglaya, 2020; Pola, 2020). This limitation of capital hinders them from purchasing new technology, expanding, or even maintaining operations during an economic downturn.

Despite these financial hurdles, MSMEs exhibit remarkable resilience by continuously innovating and evolving their business practices. Many entrepreneurs modernize traditional processes, incorporate cost-effective production techniques, or form strategic partnerships with other small businesses to maximize resources and expand their reach (Bernardo, 2021). In recent years, digital technology has provided an even greater opportunity for these businesses to grow, with e-commerce platforms and social media helping them access broader markets without the need for significant physical infrastructure. However, while digital tools offer immense potential, many MSMEs, particularly in rural areas, face challenges such as poor internet access, inadequate digital literacy, and limited financial resources to invest in online platforms (Alonzo & Santos, 2021).

Another major factor influencing the success of MSMEs is the regulatory environment. Although governments tend to promote policies that seek to assist small businesses, bureaucratic red tape, complex taxation systems, and slow licensing processes often function as barriers to entry instead of supports. The majority of MSME owners have to deal with the obstacles on their own without any government support that could potentially be removed. The gaps within regulatory frameworks and improving awareness of the assistance structures put in place could improve long-term success.

In order to maintain steady economic growth through MSMEs, proper guidance and protective systems need to be put in place. Providing affordable capital, encouraging active investment in providing students with digital literacy skills, along with developing proper business management training sessions will greatly amplify the competitiveness of the MSME sector. In addition, an innovation-willing approach with private sector sponsorships, government aid, and entrepreneurship programs will enable capable MSMEs to sustain themselves in the market for long periods of time.

Ultimately, MSMEs are more than simply commercial units; they represent a profound socio-economic backbone. Their contribution to the creation of employment opportunities, maintenance of cultural practices, and investment into local economies highlights their importance both nationally and globally. By tailoring solutions to the identified issues while exploiting the available strengths, MSMEs stand ready

to fully harness growth opportunities and need to be enabled to continue fulfilling their role as facilitators of broad-based, sustainable, and inclusive socio-economic growth for the foreseeable future.

### **Challenges Encountered by MSMEs**

No Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have ever had it easy. For every small business that wants to excel, an entrepreneur has to overcome a myriad of problems. The most difficult of these problems is financial estimation and allocation. The majority of small business owners find it difficult to acquire loans either because they do not have enough collateral, credit history, or because they do not meet the set criteria put forth by banks and financial institutions (Maglaya, 2020). MSMEs are able to procure technology and upgrade their tools but depend on a bank loan for infrastructure funding. Most of these informal loans or microfinance sources only lead to further financial strain, portraying a bleak vision of growth.

Lack of skilled labor remains another primary concern. Competitively paying large companies hiring pre-trained employees is not the reality for MSMEs (Ricafort et al., 2021). Skilled employees seeking higher salaries end up quitting, leading to disruptions. Alongside high turnover rates, the lack of formal education in business administration increases the operational strain. Small business owners suffer with weak frameworks of financial projection, market strategy, and personnel administration, encountering massive inefficiency, ceaselessly stunting growth and profit.

Like most challenges facing MSMEs, the adoption of new technology is also a headache. Though self-employment, automation, and e-commerce have the potential to improve productivity and expand markets, many small businesses struggle with adopting these technologies (Tijam, 2021). Entrepreneurs' lack of digital literacy makes it impossible for them to use online marketing or cloud solutions, while financially constrained businesses are unable to afford new hardware or software. Consequently, most MSMEs are unable to cope with the fast-paced technology cycles, trapped in outdated operational models that could otherwise help them gain new customers.

Branding and marketing are other significant issues for rural businesses. Unlike large businesses that have money to spend on mass advertising, MSMEs operate on very limited budgets, surviving on word-of-mouth referrals (Lau & Lee, 2019). While it is useful in small, tight-knit communities, the referral marketing model has its limitations. The lack of a cohesive marketing strategy coupled with the absence of a distinct digital footprint makes it harder for small businesses to compete in saturated markets and expand beyond their locally defined customer base.

Supply chain disruption remains a persistent challenge for MSMEs. Coordinating the procurement of raw materials poses a problem to many small firms alongside the cost fluctuations and the efficient logistics management. Supply chains are greatly affected by economic recession, natural calamities, and even geopolitical disasters, which makes consistent production challenging (Bernardo, 2021). The prevailing high infrastructural deficits further inflate the transportation cost, which erodes profit margins, strains the already-constrained resources, and adds to the difficulties of the region's infrastructure (Garcia, 2020). Coupled with the highly unpredictable pricing of goods, most MSMEs are forced to operate on precarious profit margins and bear significant financial exposure (Navarro & Reyes, 2019).

Notable enhancements of MSME programs like automatic financing sometimes create challenges where one side attempts to help. The redundant tax compliance frameworks, onerous licensing rules, and administrative hurdles can paralyze a small business owner's ability to manage day-to-day operations, making compliance complicated and monotonous (Alonzo & Santos, 2021). Furthermore, numerous



MSMEs do not know what kind of assistance is accessible to them, most in the form of sponsorship, workshops, or tax offers. Without proper assistance, businesses fail to take advantage of strategies that could help in becoming more competitive and expand their resources.

To overcome the challenges of financial illiteracy, lack of workforce skills, and limited market penetration of MSMEs, a coordinated strategy is required. First, the provision of low-interest government-sponsored loans will enable micro and small enterprises to access sufficient capital required for their expansion. Moreover, bridging the skills gap ensures small businesses access to competent employees, which is possible through investing in workforce development vocational training. Finally, government support of MSMEs by streamlining regulatory processes enables easier compliance with tax and licensing obligations.

Apart from the supportive measures of providing financing and relief from regulations, entrepreneurs need to be empowered with resources for success in the technology age. Building comprehensive digital infrastructure, developing e-commerce and digital marketing training, as well as providing support for technology adoption will empower small firms to compete in the changing environment. Addressing these gaps makes it possible for MSMEs to sustain economic growth while simultaneously fostering community development.

### **Sustainable Practices of MSMEs**

The concept of sustainability is now vital in the operations of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as these companies seek to make profits while also considering the impact of their activities on the environment and society. Nowadays, a growing number of consumers want to make purchases from firms that pay attention to their ecological impact, which drives many MSMEs to implement green practices that decrease their ecological footprint and enhance their operational efficiency (Alonzo & Santos, 2021). Some businesses make greener choices due to increased resource prices and tough environmentally friendly policies, while others do so in an effort to establish a brand that is perceived as caring for the environment.

Particularly within regions where farming is the foremost income-generating activity, agricultural-based MSMEs are spearheading the movement. Navarro and Reyes (2019) highlight that a good proportion of small-scale farmers are adopting organic farming practices that minimize the use of chemicals, promote the conservation of biodiversity and enhance the soil. These enterprises significantly contribute to healthier ecosystems and ensure cleaner, safer, high-quality food products by stopping the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. Agroforestry and permaculture practices are also being integrated to enhance productivity while conserving the natural resources. Such strategies have the potential to benefit the environment while also aiding attracting consumers who are conscious about their health and are willing to pay premium prices for organic food products.

In the manufacturing and handicraft industries, other MSMEs are also striding toward sustainability by applying responsible sourcing policies. Many of these small businesses are switching from purchasing non-renewable and imported materials to utilizing sourced materials, which shrinks both environmental damage and production costs (Dario, 2019). For example, handicraft businesses are using recycled materials, natural dyes and biodegradable packaging, which reduces waste while providing green value. MSMEs in the textile industry are also venturing to replace traditional synthetic fibers with crocheted bamboo and abaca, two durable and renewable materials.

Although the benefits of sustainable practices are obvious, there are a number of challenges to be faced

by many MSMEs. As noted by Garcia (2020), the plugging of new eco-friendly technologies and infrastructure is cost prohibitive for small businesses. Furthermore, the sustainability gap remains as limited access to information and training hinders understanding of the concept's long-term benefits. Without adequate monetary support, MSMEs face the dual challenge of financing initiatives such as renewable energy powered solar energy and operational cost reductions through waste management. Because of the lack of sustainable support, most small businesses become trapped in a cycle of sustaining their operations and stalling growth.

Maglaya (2020) emphasizes the gap left by government intervention in providing financial instruments aimed at making MSMEs more sustainable. There are particular practices such as granting tax reliefs or subsidies that would greatly aid the cause and make them more proactive towards sustainability at a micro level. Through policies aimed at handouts for innovation in sustainable practices, simplified procedures, and even providing some form of ongoing technical support, MSMEs can become less burdened whilst maintaining a profit. Joint training programs can also be designed by governments and NGOs to help small business owners learn how to effectively apply the concept of sustainability without straining their finances.

Alongside environmental sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is slowly being adopted by MSMEs. Small businesses are beginning to recognize the need to give back to society and practice ethical employment relations (Pola, 2020). This encompasses social responsibilities like offering decent salaries, providing safe and healthy work environments, and responsible procurement of materials. Moreover, MSMEs are participating in scholarship schemes, infrastructure construction, and disaster response activities. These actions help to improve the overall social climate, and at the same time, create a positive impression and loyalty with customers who support socially responsible firms.

At present, from a business standpoint, social responsibility and sustainability serve as a competitive edge rather than emerging trends. With the advancement of technology, consumers are more inclined to consider the value offered by a business and its products. Businesses that adopt eco-friendly policies tend to have better brand loyalty and marketability (Ricafort et al., 2021). Moreover, sustainable MSMEs find it easier to secure partnerships with larger corporations that have their own sustainability objectives, thus increasing their chances for expansion and collaboration. Also, adopting sustainability measures results in lower costs through energy savings, reduced waste, and better resource management.

To make sustainability an ordinary practice, rather than an exception, education, technology, and supportive policies must be provided on a continual basis for MSMEs. Investment in small green solutions helps small businesses build a more sustainable economy while remaining competitive in the market. Empowered with the right blend of incentives, training, and innovation, these MSMEs can truly demonstrate that profitability and sustainability reign alongside each other by becoming stewards of social and environmental responsibility.

### **MSMEs and Their Contribution to Economic and Social Development**

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in developing markets, aid economic and social development. Such businesses are the backbone of many economies because they help in the creation of jobs, promote entrepreneurship and investment at the local level. In the case of the Philippines, for example, MSMEs represent 99% of the businesses in the country, and more than 60% of employment comes from MSMEs, showing how deeply rooted they are in the economy of the country (DTI, 2022). Their contributions go beyond numbers—they create livelihood opportunities, empower marginalized

populations, and build a more inclusive economy by enabling those who do not have corporate job opportunities to gain systematic income (Bernardo, 2021).

MSMEs are also one of the most important sources of innovation, especially at the grassroots level, because they are not only focused on providing job opportunities to people. Unlike large corporations, which focus on mass production, small businesses create specific products and different services for a particular community (Lau & Lee, 2019). Many MSMEs, for example, leverage indigenous skills and cultures combined with local materials to capture some niche markets. This stems from their ability to innovate and serve localized demands regardless of larger firms dominating the industry. Moreover, their close connection to the people allows them to be agile in responding to changes in customer needs and economic fluctuations.

Another important factor is the impact that MSMEs have on the development of the supply chain. Numerous small firms act as primary suppliers as well as service providers to large businesses, forming an associative network that improves the economy as a whole (Camacho, 2020). In manufacturing, MSMEs provide raw materials, subsystems, and unique designs that allow larger companies to operate optimally. In the agricultural industry, smallholders and small-scale food processors produce fresh fruits and locally marketed goods, thus reducing reliance on imports. MSMEs promote self-sufficiency and economic resilience, hence stabilizing local markets and decreasing vulnerability to external shocks.

Financial inclusion is one of the areas where MSMEs have a significant impact. These enterprises provide economic opportunities for those who lack formal employment, banking services, or even education in rural or marginal areas (Tiwari, 2019). Street vending, small-scale artisan work, and family businesses, for instance, offer alternative earning avenues to those who have no chance of becoming self-sustaining. Nonetheless, despite the importance of these businesses for financial inclusivity, a large number of MSMEs face difficulties accessing finance. Many small business owners are unable to obtain loans due to arduous banking policies, high interest rates, and troublesome collateral requirements (Pola & Gomez, 2021). The ability for these enterprises to expand their operations and sustain them would improve significantly if access to microfinance, government-sponsored loans, and adaptable credit programs were made available.

Apart from the ongoing technological transformation, MSMEs also contribute economically. In 2019, small businesses singlehandedly contributed to 63% of the employment in the private sector and accounted for almost 50% of business revenue. They also transformed the local economies by changing the purchasing power level of people (Krechtnikov, 2020; Ormrod, 2021). Small businesses were the ones who met about 40% of the primary open employment demand within the country immediately after the war while their small and medium-sized commercial sector brought forth in excess of 5 billion (term). Additionally, the emerging new technologies such as the computer are being embraced by accomplished corporations with the aim of overtaking, which has remarkably widened the marketplace along with the economy with a significant level of development.

The impact of the pandemic on the economy was severe, especially on Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) which account for more than 70% of total employment at a negative growth of 8 - 10 percent hacks. Many small businesses in their naivety relied on outdated revenue streams such as retail, pornography, simple services, strips, etc., and were hit the hardest by COVID-19. According to research, 44 percent of small-scale businesses globally estimate that they will take more than 2 years to recover from the deep impact of this pandemic. The social consequences will stretch for generations. Many will feel the casualization of work. The impact of the pandemic on the economy was severe, especially for the

SMEs which suffered the most. These have hit an iceberg and are bound to sink. Claiming that the economy will bounce back to where it used to be made no sense because we have yet to figure out a way to navigate out of this disaster.

Like every industry, MSMEs have faced boundless structural challenges ranging from limited financial access to regulatory and technology gaps. In today's world, where everything is being digitized, it has become crucial for all businesses to have access to modern equipment and e-commerce platforms. Such difficulties call for improved training programs, better accessibility to funding, small business friendly policies, and supportive legislation as part of a more holistic policy approach. With better access to resources, small businesses stand to compete on a larger scale, leading to an increase in economic growth. Having MSMEs assimilated with the public sector can transform them into an ever-growing powerhouse for the economy, while ensuring that behind the scenes support is also provided for infrastructure, information technology, and marketing. The public and private partnership is bound to unleash unforgettable inclusive opportunities that will drastically improve economic progression. MSMEs are now regarded as the backbone of modern economies due to the lasting social changes they bring, and are believed to lead the charge in shaping a more adaptive and sustainable future.

### **Synthesis**

The reviewed literature underscored the role of micro enterprises as drivers of economic growth and sustainability in both local and global contexts. Locally, micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, often engaged in subsistence-driven activities to generate additional income and meet household needs. However, these enterprises faced significant challenges, such as limited operational and marketing skills, as well as financial constraints, which hindered their growth potential. Research showed the need for capacity-building initiatives to equip entrepreneurs with essential tools and knowledge to enhance their business practices and sustainability efforts. International studies further confirmed the positive impact of sound and well-established business practices, including financial literacy and innovative strategies, on improving sales, productivity, and long-term enterprise survival. Integrating structured programs like the International Labour Organization's "Improve Your Business" initiative was particularly beneficial for rural enterprises, enabling them to adapt to market demands and align their operations with sustainable development goals. The ILOs, four key areas were marketing, costing and record keeping, buying and stock control, and financial planning were beneficial and applicable to the local setting of the micro enterprises particularly in Pandan, Antique.

Sustainability in micro enterprises, despite their size and resource limitations, had substantial potential to contribute to environmental and social well-being through the adoption of sustainable practices. Local studies suggested that sustainability efforts transcend geographic and sectoral boundaries, advocating for energy-efficient systems, waste reduction, and the utilization of renewable resources. Globally, small and medium-sized enterprises were increasingly aligning their business strategies with sustainability principles, recognizing the competitive and societal advantages of environmentally conscious operations. The literature highlighted that while micro enterprises often struggled with resource constraints, embracing sustainability-oriented approaches not only ensures ecological responsibility but also enhanced market competitiveness and operational efficiency. These insights reinforced the importance of fostering a culture of innovation and sustainability within MSEs to secure their economic viability and societal relevance in the evolving business landscape.

**Chapter 3****METHODOLOGY**

This chapter covers the research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, data gathering instrument, trustworthiness of the study, data gathering procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations. This chapter covers the research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, data gathering instrument, trustworthiness of the study, data gathering procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

**Research Design**

This research used a descriptive research design with both quantitative and qualitative methods in understanding the existing business practices, challenges, and interventions of the micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, especially concerning sustainability.

Descriptive research, as Krathwohl (2009) defines it, referred to the intentional collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to learn about existing conditions, practices, and trends, with or without statistical techniques.

The quantitative component of the research consisted of surveys to obtain quantifiable data on business operations, issues, and sustainability activities. These were examined through descriptive statistics to determine patterns and trends. At the same time, the qualitative component applied one-on-one interviews with owners and managers of micro enterprises to get a closer look at their experience, strategies, and drivers. These provided insights into the "why" of the numbers, giving a more comprehensive picture of the drivers of sustainability.

By integrating both approaches, the study provided a more complete picture of the micro enterprise scene in Pandan. The quantitative data indicated the extent of different business practices, while the qualitative results presented the context and actual problems that affected them, enabling more insightful interpretations and useful findings.

**Locale of the Study**

The study was carried out in Pandan, a municipality in the province of Antique, located in the Western Visayas region of the Philippines. As of January 1, 2025, Pandan was officially reclassified from a 4th class to a 2nd class municipality, an improvement that reflects its growing local economy and improved revenue generation. Antique itself is a first-class province, and Pandan is an important part of its growth, especially in the sectors of trade, tourism, and services. Pandan has 689 registered micro enterprises as of March 2025, distributed across a broad spectrum of industries.

The tourism industry is particularly vibrant, with small-scale facilities like inns, transient, and native hotels catering to tourists attracted by the picturesque beaches and eco-tourist attractions of the place. The merchandising industry is also booming, with mini-groceries, convenience stores, and franchise establishments catering to everyday consumer requirements. Service-oriented enterprises, such as computer shops, electronic repair shops, and tech-oriented services, have also arisen to address the increasing digital needs of the populace. The food sector also grows along with it, with local restaurants, sari-sari stores, and ice cream shops serving residents and tourists alike. With Pandan's recent reclassification and ongoing economic growth, it is the perfect place to learn about the sustainability interventions and entrepreneurial strategies of micro enterprises. This study aimed to learn how micro



enterprises work, what problems they face, and how they cope by remaining resilient and competitive in the face of changing economic realities.

### **Population and Sampling Techniques**

The study employed purposive sampling in selecting and determining its respondents. This approach, referred to as judgmental sampling, is a form of non-probability sampling in which respondents were selected based on particular traits that align with the objectives of the study. It permitted the researcher to exercise discretion in picking individuals most likely to give significant and relevant information (Berndt, 2020). This method is particularly efficient when the research calls for data from a focused group with particular experience or skills. The research in this instance was on twenty micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique with fifteen years of operation or above. These enterprises were chosen from a wide range of industries such as food, retail, services, tourism, and merchandising. The participants were either the owners, managers, or supervisors those who are directly engaged in day-to-day operations and have firsthand experience of the challenges and strategies of maintaining a micro enterprise. By choosing participants with long years of experience, the study hoped to obtain a balanced and in-depth picture of the micro enterprise situation in Pandan, ensuring that the findings would represent both practical and strategic insights.

### **Data Gathering Instrument**

The data collection tool employed in the research comprised two components.

The first was a modified adopted questionnaire from the research of McKenzie (2015) titled "Business Practices in Small Firms in Developing Countries" on Business Practices: Marketing, Buying and Stock Control, Costing and Record-Keeping, and Financial Planning. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part I identified the position or role of the respondent in the business. Part II assessed the business practices in terms of Marketing, Buying and Stock Control, Costing and Record-Keeping, and Financial Planning. Part III assessed the challenges encountered by the micro entrepreneurs. Part IV evaluated the contribution of business practices to the sustainability of micro enterprises. A modified adopted questionnaire, was comprised of fifty-four items was used to gather the necessary data.

The second was an interview with the use of a semi-structured interview guide designed by the researcher. The research employed an interview through the use of a semi-structured interview guide crafted by the researcher that is composed of questions regarding: 1. Introduction and Background, 2. About Business Practices: Marketing, Buying and Stock Control, Costing and Record-Keeping, and Financial Planning 3. Sustainability and 4. Recommendations for Improvement. Through these questions, the respondents were able to provide their experiences, perception, and observations on business practices towards sustainability.

### **Content Validity**

In the quantitative part of the study, the modified adopted questionnaire was content validated. The modified adopted questionnaire was validated by three (3) field experts in business, entrepreneurship, and local enterprises to ascertain that the questions were clear, complete, and relevant to the objectives of the study. Validator 1 is a Doctor of Management, Faculty of Aklan State University, and a business expert. Whereas, Validator 2 possesses a Master in Business Administration, Marketing Professor, Faculty of Saint Anthony College and a specialist in Marketing. Finally, Validator 3 is a Marketing Professor in

Aklan Catholic College, Certified Marketing Management Specialist, Top 10, and has a Master in Business Administration.

In the qualitative part, the interview guide ensured content validity by incorporating open-ended questions. These questions explored respondents' personal experiences and perceptions of their business practices, challenges, strategies, and interventions. Crafted based on research objectives and relevant literature, they addressed critical aspects of both constructs.

### **Reliability**

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the study's results, the research focused on both reliability for the quantitative part and trustworthiness for the qualitative part.

For the quantitative aspect, ten owners, managers, or supervisors of micro enterprises participated, five from Antique and five from Aklan were given for the pilot test of the study. The Reliability Test Result showed Cronbach's Alpha values for different variables, determining the internal consistency of the survey instrument employed in the study. The Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique were assessed in four of its most important areas: Marketing (.802), Buying and Stock Control (.889), Costing and Record-Keeping (.709), and Financial Planning (.802), all of which had acceptable to good reliability. The Challenges Encountered by Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique had a very good reliability measure of .948, which means there was strong internal consistency. Concurrently, the Business Practices Contributing to Sustainability had an acceptable score of .704, indicating moderate reliability. According to George and Mallery's (2003) interpretation, most of the variables had good reliability, making the questionnaire credible in measuring the correct business practices, challenges, and sustainability efforts of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique.

### **Trustworthiness of the Study**

Trustworthiness was ensured for the qualitative part. Four main guidelines were followed. These were credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was ensured through participant selection. Participants had long-term experience with the business practices, had been operational for more than fifteen years, and sustainability. They reviewed their answers for correctness. Transferability was addressed by providing sufficient details. Details about participants and setting were included. This allowed findings to apply to similar situations. Dependability was maintained through clear record-keeping. Data collection and analysis processes were documented. Confirmability was ensured by using participants' own words. Neutrality was maintained to avoid bias in the findings. The researcher made sure that the questions were clearly linked to the research aims, impartial, and unbiased. Instructions and definitions were clearly given to enable participants to answer honestly and accurately. Ethical issues, such as participants' anonymity and data privacy, were also ensured. The information gathered, in accordance with the respondents' answers, were properly analyzed by the researcher.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

During the data gathering, a formal letter was presented to the Dean of Faculty of Business and Management Education for approval. After receiving the consent to conduct data gathering, formal letters were sent to local DTI, BPLO, and Pandan's LGU. Upon confirming with the respective offices, and collecting the letters with official approval, formal letters were also sent to owners, managers, and

supervisors of selected micro enterprises. The formal letter introduced and explained the researcher's purpose, and requested their voluntary participation.

For the quantitative part, a modified adopted questionnaire was conducted among twenty-two micro enterprises. Two respondents had refused to answer the survey. Thus, twenty surveys were completed and collected. Upon completion, the questionnaires were collected and checked for completeness and clarity. The gathered data were then entered into a secure electronic system using SPSS software for analysis. The data were then organized, counted, analyzed, and presented in transparent tables. The results were then interpreted according to the research goals.

For the qualitative part, a request for their participation was made. After the enterprises had agreed, the researcher coordinated a suitable time for time for the face-to-face interview based on their preferred schedule. After these procedures, necessary tools and materials were prepared.

The researcher used a voice recorder to capture the conversations accurately, ensuring that the focus remained on the dialogue rather than on extensive note-taking. This method enabled freer and more spontaneous interviews, with the researcher being able to ask probing questions in order to clarify answers or pursue areas in greater depth. Three Interviews were carried out using respondents preferred language, namely English, Tagalog, and Kinaray-a, and resulted in the realization of effective communication and allowing participants to speak freely.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis of this study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The quantitative data collected in these categories were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, standard deviation, and mean, with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To establish the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, a mean scale was used with scores between 3.50 and 4.00 measuring practices that were Always as "Highly Practiced," between 2.50 and 3.59 measuring Often as "Practiced," between 1.50 and 2.49 measuring Seldom as "Slightly Practiced," and between 1.00 and 1.49 measuring Never as "Not Practiced." Likewise, for measuring the challenges faced by the micro enterprises, the mean scale between 3.50 and 4.00 represented Always as "Highly Encountered," between 2.50 and 3.59 represented Often as "Encountered," between 1.50 and 2.49 represented Seldom as "Slightly Encountered," and between 1.00 and 1.49 represented Never as "Not Encountered." The sustainability practices were measured on the same scale, where a mean between 3.50 and 4.00 represented Strongly Agree as "Highly Contributed," between 2.50 and 3.59 represented Agree as Often as "Contributed," between 1.50 and 2.49 represented Disagree as "Slightly Contributed," and between 1.00 and 1.49 represented Strongly Disagree as "Not Contributed." This enabled the study to measure business practices, challenges, and sustainability strategies as quantifiable data, which produced measurable data that could be used to identify trends and patterns throughout the sample of micro enterprises.

The qualitative data collected, using one-on-one interviews, were transcribed verbatim to maintain the integrity and exactness of the replies of the respondents. Thematic analysis, a commonly employed qualitative data analysis procedure, was then used on these interview transcripts. The process entailed thoroughly reviewing the textual data in an attempt to determine recurring themes, concepts, and structures of meaning that were found among the replies. Following Delahunt (2017), thematic analysis was done by reading the data several times in order to familiarize oneself with it, then coding appropriate passages of text. The codes were then categorized into more general themes that encapsulated the central ideas

expressed in the responses. The researcher narrowed and organized these themes in order to present them accurately and reflect the hidden patterns in the data. With this, it was able to reveal the story behind the practices of micro enterprises and the sustainability of owners in Pandan.

Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the study was able to present a comprehensive picture of the practices and sustainability of the micro enterprises.

The quantitative analysis, using descriptive statistics, offered numerical evidence and identified trends in the business practices, challenges, and sustainability strategies of micro enterprises. On the other hand, the thematic analysis of qualitative data provided deeper insights into the personal experiences, motivations, and perspectives of the business owners. Collectively, these approaches facilitated the researcher in providing a comprehensive understanding of Pandan, Antique micro enterprises' business practices, challenges and their sustainability.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are of great importance within this study with a focus on guaranteeing respondents' rights as well as confidentiality. Informed consent would be received from all respondents by notifying them of the purpose, procedures, and steps taken to protect confidentiality in the study. Respondents would be requested to sign an informed consent letter prior to participating in one-on-one interviews, and they would be provided with the interview guide beforehand to assist them in their preparation. In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, the study would ensure it took stringent precautions in concealing participants' identities and responses' confidentiality during the study process.

The research methodology ensures that the analysis is strictly based on the responses and inputs given by the respondents. No external information, interpretations, or further information would be added outside the purview of the participants' responses as recorded during the interview sessions. Also, the interviewing process would be transcribed according to rigid formats to ensure accuracy and adherence to the respondents' verbatim comments. This adherence to objectivity and sole utilization of respondents' responses guarantees the integrity and reliability of the study, with findings drawn only from firsthand experiences and observations of the subjects.

## **Chapter 4**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

This chapter presents the data gathered. It shows the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique. Also, it presents how do these business practices contribute to the sustainability of the micro enterprises. This chapter presents also what are the challenges encountered by the micro enterprises. It discusses what strategies and interventions need to be implemented to address these challenges toward enhancement of their sustainability.

#### **I. Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique**

Current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique as a whole. As shown in the table, the practices in buying and stock control is “practiced” (Mean=3.30; SD=.52). It also generated the highest over-all mean among the current business practices of micro enterprise. Also, both practices in costing and record-keeping (Mean=3.20; SD=.53) and financial planning (Mean=3.19; SD=.49) are “practiced”. However, the practices in marketing (Mean=2.47; SD=.63) is “slightly practiced”.

During the one-on-one interview among the selected micro enterprises owners, managers, and supervisors,

it appeared that they usually visit or survey the different stores in the barangay, negotiate prices of the suppliers, compare prices of the suppliers, study the prices and using rolling capital.

### **Visit or Survey the Different Stores in the Barangay**

In order to understand the availability of products, some of the micro enterprises business owners, managers, or supervisors conducted a survey of different stores in the barangay. This helped them in their pricing strategies and identifying customer preferences. This step provides valuable insights into the local market. Likewise, provided ideas on the potential business opportunities.

Participant 1 mentioned that they have tried to visit or survey the stores in various barangays.

So, ang among inubra, nag adto kami sa mga ibang barangay. We try to take time and effort to visit or survey sa mga stores sa mga barangay. Para maman-an kung ano ang mga andang goods , produkto, nga gina kinahanglan sa anda mga tinahan.

*("So, our work, we went to other barangays. We try to take time and effort to visit or survey the stores in the barangays. To see what kind of goods they have, products, that are needed by the convenience stores.")*  
(Participant 3, Line 472-475)

Surveying local stores helped the micro enterprises understood the market and strategize pricing and opportunities while negotiating with suppliers to ensure cost-efficiency and better profit margins for these businesses.

### **Negotiate Prices with the Suppliers**

It is essential to negotiate prices among suppliers in order to secure the best deals and maintaining cost efficiency. Businesses can choose suppliers that offered quality products but with reasonable prices by way of evaluating different options. This is further done identifying who among the suppliers has the most competitive prices and negotiating with them after, ensuring higher profit margins and sustainability.

Participant 1 highlighted that one of the ways was to negotiate with the supplier.

Iginanegosyar ko man sa supplier kung ano ang pinakanaba nanda nga presyo.

*("I also negotiate with the supplier that has the lowest price.")* (Participant 1, Line 80-81)

Micro enterprises needed to secure the best deals and maintain cost efficiency, and by evaluating different options, micro enterprises can choose suppliers offering quality products at reasonable prices. Identifying suppliers with the most competitive prices and negotiating with them further ensured higher profit margins.

### **Compare Prices of the Suppliers**

By comparing supplier prices, many businesses ensure cost efficiency. It may also lead to a better profit margin. By evaluating multiple suppliers, it helped businesses to identify the most affordable and high-quality sources. As a result, it may lead to competitive pricing and increased profitability.

These were being agreed by Participant 1 and Participant 3. They mentioned:

Iginanegosyar ko man sa supplier kung ano ang pinakanaba nanda nga presyo

*("I also negotiate with the supplier that has the lowest price.")* (Participant 1, Line 80-81)

Ginakumparar ko anay ang mga suplayer bago ako magbakal.

*("I also compare the supplier to each other before I buy.")* (Participant 3, Line 584)

Comparing supplier prices allowed the enterprises to calculate their income after they had identified what was the most feasible profit margin they could employ.



## Calculate the Income

In order to arrive with an income, businesses usually compute by determining total revenue and deducting expenses. This assesses businesses' profitability. It is also helpful to track financial performance, and making informed decisions for future growth.

In addition, Participant 1 stated that:

Gina estimate or ginacalculate ko ran kag kung may ano pinaka-mataas nga kita sa amu ran nga produkto. (*"I estimate or calculate if what is the highest income in a certain product."*)

(Participant 1, Line 89)

Participant 3 shared that determining mark-up is one of the practices. It was stated that:

Syempre ginastudyahan namon kung pinaganda nga ang presyo kung pira ang dapat naman i-mark up sa kada items, 3%, 5%, 7%. Pero usually maganda nga man nga mark up 5%.

(*"Of course, we study how much the price, how much should be marked up on each item, 3%, 5%, 7%. Only up to 7. 7 to 8. But usually a 5% mark up is nice."*) (Participant 3, Line 605-606)

Calculating income showed the enterprises their profit and helped them plan growth while they can plan the reinvestment of profits and applied the use of rolling capital. It ensured smooth operations and enabled them to invest in inventory and additional business opportunities.

## Apply Rolling Capital

Rolling capital is defined as the continuous reinvestment of earnings to sustain and expand a business. With proper management of rolling capital, businesses can ensure smooth operations. It also allows businesses to purchase inventory, cover expenses, and maximize growth opportunities among others.

Participant 3 mentioned about rolling capital. To detail:

Gina apply or gagamit lang ako rolling capital.

(*"I only apply or use rolling capital."*) (Participant 3, Line 625)

The result showed that there is a strong focus on inventory management among micro enterprise owners, managers and supervisors in Pandan, Antique. Recent evidence suggests the necessity of inventory management in micro-enterprise (Sapry and Yusof, 2019). It was identified in their study that many small businesses rely on manual inventory processes. This leads to inefficiencies and inaccuracies in stock management. However, the results indicate that there is a moderate application of costing and record-keeping practices. Recent study had reported that there is need for proper training in record-keeping processes to enhance financial management and decision-making among micro-enterprises (Hussain & Choudhury, 2023).

**Table 1.**

### Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique as a Whole

Business Practices	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Marketing	2.47	.63	Slightly Practiced
Buying and Stock Control	3.30	.52	Practiced
Costing and Record-Keeping	3.20	.53	Practiced
Financial Planning	3.19	.49	Practiced

1.00-1.49 – Not Practiced; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Practiced; 2.50-3.49 – Practiced; 3.50-4.00 – Highly Practiced

Current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of marketing as indicated in the table 2, the respondents “practiced” monitor competitor pricing (Mean=2.70; SD=1.08). Also, they “practiced” asking existing customers about additional products they would like the company to offer (Mean=3.00; SD=1.07), and “practiced” consulting suppliers about trending and high-selling products (Mean=2.90; SD=1.20). Respondents also “practiced” engaging with former customers to understand why they stopped purchasing (Mean=2.65; SD=1.08). However, respondents “slightly practiced” visiting competitor businesses to assess their product offerings (Mean=1.80; SD=.89), and use special promotions to attract customers (Mean=2.35; SD=1.30). Lastly, they “slightly practiced” engaging in advertising within the last six months (Mean=1.95; SD=.99).

Taken as a whole, the business owners, managers and supervisors “seldom” executed the marketing practices of the organization (Mean=2.47; SD=.63). This means that they “slightly practiced” marketing-related practices. The lower variability in responses of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggests a strong consensus among them regarding the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of marketing.

It appeared in the result of the study that there is a frequent monitoring of competitor pricing. This result aligned with findings from a study of Capiña (2021) in Marinduque, Philippines, where micro and small enterprises (MSEs) demonstrated a strong emphasis on marketing activities, achieving an average score of 3.95 out of 5, interpreted as "Mostly Practiced" (Capiña, 2021). Additionally, the respondents give emphasis on the importance of customer-centric strategies and supply chain collaboration. This is based on the result the practice of soliciting customer feedback on desired products and consulting suppliers about trending items were practiced. Recent study had reported that the effectiveness of entrepreneurial marketing practices, particularly in product and place strategies have something to do with business success study of (Palmare, 2019) which highlighted. It was also indicated that understanding customer preferences and market trends is important towards business success.

**Table 2.**  
**Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of Marketing**

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Monitor competitor’s prices.	2.70	3	1.08	Practiced
Visit competitor businesses to assess their product offerings.	1.80	7	.89	Slightly Practiced
Ask existing customers about additional products they would like the company to offer.	3.00	1	1.07	Practiced
Engage with former customers to understand why they stopped purchasing.	2.65	4	1.08	Practiced
Consult suppliers about trending and high-selling products.	2.90	2	1.20	Practiced
Use special promotions to attract customers.	2.35	5	1.30	Slightly Practiced

Have engaged in advertising within the last six months.	1.95	6	.99	Slightly Practiced
<b>Over-all Mean</b>	<b>2.47</b>		<b>.63</b>	<b>Slightly Practiced</b>

*1.00-1.49 – Not Practiced; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Practiced; 2.50-3.49 – Practiced; 3.50-4.00 – Highly Practiced*

Current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms buying and stock control as presented in the table, the respondents, compare multiple suppliers before making purchases (Mean=3.55; SD=.75). This was “highly practiced” by them. On the other hand, they “practiced” negotiating for lower prices with suppliers (Mean=3.40; SD=.82), and forecasting demand to avoid overstocking or understocking (mean=3.35; SD=.74). They also “practiced” regularly reviewing their suppliers to ensure quality and reliability (Mean=3.35; SD=.93), and consider seasonal demand changes when making stock purchases (Mean=3.30; SD=1.03). The respondents “practiced” maintaining buffer stock in the store (Mean=3.25; SD=.63.), and have a system to track inventory levels in real time (Mean=2.95; SD=.99). These were “practiced” by the respondents.

Taken as a whole, the business owners, managers and supervisors “practiced” executing the buying and stock control practices of the organization (Mean=3.30; SD=.52). The lower variability in responses of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggested a strong consensus among them regarding the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of buying and stock control.

It appeared in the result that the buying and stock control practices of micro-enterprises has demonstrated a proactive and strategic approach to inventory management. Recent development in buying and stock control practices is discussed by Industry Outbox (2024) highlighting the importance of thorough supplier research and negotiation to secure favorable terms. This activity was noted of leading to cost savings and enhanced supplier relationships. Moreover, the result showed that the business owners, managers, and managers “highly practiced” regularly reviewing suppliers to ensure quality and reliability and considering seasonal demand changes when making stock purchases. These are indicative of adaptive inventory management practices. According to HashMicro (2024), these strategies are essential for businesses to remain responsive to market fluctuations, inventory constraints, and maintain customer satisfaction among others.

**Table 3.**

### Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of Buying and Stock Control

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Negotiate for lower prices with suppliers.	3.40	2	.82	Practiced
Compare multiple suppliers before making purchases.	3.55	1	.75	Highly Practiced
Maintain buffer stock in the store.	3.25	6	.63	Practiced
Forecast demand to avoid overstocking or understocking.	3.35	3.5	.74	Practiced

Have a system to track inventory levels in real time.	2.95	7	.99	Practiced
Regularly review my suppliers to ensure quality and reliability.	3.35	3.5	.93	Practiced
Consider seasonal demand changes when making stock purchases.	3.30	5	1.03	Practiced
<b>Over-all Mean</b>	<b>3.30</b>		<b>.52</b>	<b>Practiced</b>

*1.00-1.49 – Not Practiced; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Practiced; 2.50-3.49 – Practiced; 3.50-4.00 – Highly Practiced*

Current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of costing and record-keeping as shown in the table 4, calculate the cost of each main product (Mean=3.55; SD=.75). They too “highly practiced” identifying which products generate the most profit each category (Mean=3.60; SD=.68). On the other hand, the respondents “practiced” using records to track cash flow (Mean=3.35; SD=.87), and maintain a written budget for monthly expenses (Mean=3.45; SD=.88). Simply, the respondents “highly practiced” the given practices in micro-enterprise. More so, they “practiced” keeping written financial records (Mean=3.25; SD=1.01) and recording every purchase and sale (Mean=3.20; SD=1.15). Also, they “practiced” using online payment system like GCash, Maya, and etc. to accept customer payments (Mean=3.45; SD=.88), and keeping financial records that demonstrate my ability to apply for bank loans (Mean=2.65; SD=1.34).

Taken as a whole, the business owners, managers and supervisors “practiced” executing the costing and record-keeping practices of the organization (Mean=3.25; SD=1.01). The lower variability in responses of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggest a strong consensus among them regarding the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of costing and record-keeping.

The results of the study provided that the respondents “highly practiced” calculating the cost of main products and “highly practiced” consistently tracking cash flow among others. These essential practices underscored a strong commitment to financial management. Recent literature provided that the performance of micro and small enterprises in the Philippines is an impact of diligent financial management in their business (Capiña, 2021), which highlighted that. Additionally, these observations aligned with findings from Micabalo et al. (2022), who noted that bookkeeping practices were moderately implemented among micro and small enterprises in Lapu-Lapu City. Further, it appeared that there was a significant relationship between the level of bookkeeping implementation and business growth.

**Table 4.**  
**Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of Costing and Record-Keeping**

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Keep written financial records.	3.25	5	1.01	Practiced
Record every purchase and sale.	3.20	6	1.15	Practiced
Use records to track cash flow.	3.35	4	.87	Practiced

Use online payment system like GCash, Maya, and etc. to accept customer payments.	2.55	8	.99	Practiced
Calculate the cost of each main product.	3.55	2	.75	Highly Practiced
Identify which products generate the most profit each category.	3.60	1	.68	Highly Practiced
Maintain a written budget for monthly expenses.	3.45	3	.88	Practiced
Keep financial records that demonstrate the ability to apply for bank loans.	2.65	7	1.34	Practiced
<b>Over-all Mean</b>	<b>3.25</b>		<b>1.01</b>	<b>Highly Practiced</b>

*1.00-1.49 – Not Practiced; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Practiced; 2.50-3.49 – Practiced; 3.50-4.00 – Highly Practiced*

Current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of financial planning as shown in table 5, the respondents “highly practiced” evaluating their financial performance monthly (Mean=3.60; SD=.68). This practice was “highly practiced” by the respondents. On the other hand, they “practiced” setting short-term or long-term financial goals (Mean=3.45; SD=.60), and regularly analyzing cash flow to ensure liquidity (Mean=3.35; SD=.74). The data also shows that the respondents “practiced” allocate funds for business expansion or improvement (Mean=2.85; SD=1.18), tracking and managing business debts effectively (Mean=3.15; SD=1.13), and conducting financial risk assessments to prepare for uncertainties (Mean=3.10; SD=.85). Also, the respondents “practiced” seeking professional financial advice when needed (Mean=3.25; SD=.91), and explore funding options such as loans, grants, or investments for business growth (Mean=2.80; SD=1.10).

Taken as a whole, the business owners, managers and supervisors “practiced” execute the financial planning practices of the organization (Mean=3.25; 1.01). The lower variability in responses of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggested a strong consensus among them regarding the current business practices of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of financial planning.

It appeared in the results that there were regular monthly evaluations of financial performance, setting of financial goals, and consistent cash flow analyses to ensure liquidity. This indicated that the financial planning practices among micro-enterprises in Pandan, Antique, reflected a commendable commitment to financial management. These activities enable businesses to monitor their financial health and make informed decisions. Previous studies have reported the importance of financial planning. One of those was the study conducted by Dolorso (2023) where it was emphasized the importance of financial planning among micro enterprises.

Nevertheless, the practices of using funds to grow the business, managing debt properly, undertaking financial risk evaluation, taking expert advice on finance, and researching funds such as loans, grants, or investment were “practiced.” The results confirmed other research in the area emphasizing that although micro and small businesses do appreciate the necessity of practicing good financial management practices, problems including limited financing and poor financial knowledge can slow their proper application. These findings indicate that even though companies cannot reserve funds for growth, designed to monitor



and control debts, outside assistance or funding are still not completely integrated into their business. This concurred with the study carried out by Igbuhay (2016) which emphasized that although micro and small businesses acknowledge the significance of financial management practices, limited access to funds and financial illiteracy are some of the issues that at some point, impede effective usage. Furthermore, Borromeo et al. (2024) emphasized that micro and small firms have difficulty in maintaining clear financial records. This is usually because of lack of knowledge and regulation.

**Table 5.**  
**Current Business Practices of Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique in terms of Financial Planning**

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Evaluate my financial performance monthly.	3.60	1	.68	Highly Practiced
Set short-term or long-term financial goals.	3.45	2	.60	Practiced
Allocate funds for business expansion or improvement.	2.85	7	1.18	Practiced
Track and manage business debts effectively.	3.15	5	1.13	Practiced
Conduct financial risk assessments to prepare for uncertainties.	3.10	6	.85	Practiced
Regularly analyze cash flow to ensure liquidity.	3.35	3	.74	Practiced
Seek professional financial advice when needed.	3.25	4	.91	Practiced
Explore funding options such as loans, grants, or investments for business growth.	2.80	8	1.10	Practiced
<b>Over-all Mean</b>	<b>3.19</b>		<b>.49</b>	<b>Practiced</b>

*1.00-1.49 – Not Practiced; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Practiced; 2.50-3.49 – Practiced; 3.50-4.00 – Highly Practiced*

## II. Challenges Encountered by the Micro Enterprises

As presented in the table, the respondents “encountered” experiencing high supplier prices affecting profit margins (Mean=2.75; SD=.85). In addition, the respondents “encountered” finding it difficult to attract new customers due to competition (Mean=2.50; SD=1.23), and have a limited budget for advertising and promotions (Mean=2.55; SD=.94).

However, the respondents “slightly encountered” struggling to identify customer preferences or market trends (Mean=2.00; SD=1.07). Moreover, they “slightly encountered” finding it difficult to maintain optimal stock levels due to demand fluctuations (Mean=2.35; SD=1.03) and facing inconsistent supply of goods from suppliers (Mean=2.35; SD=1.03). Also, the respondents “slightly encountered” having

inadequate record-keeping practices leading to financial mismanagement (Mean=2.05; SD=.94), and finding it difficult to calculate accurate costs for pricing products (Mean=1.90; SD=.91).

The table further provided that they “not encountered” lack of knowledge in maintaining proper financial documentation.

The lower variability in response of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggested a strong consensus among them regarding the various challenges encountered by micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique.

During the one-on-one interview among the selected micro enterprises owners, managers, and supervisors, it appeared that they have experienced challenges in their operation. These challenges included higher prices of supplies, capitalization, and money to use for operating expenses.

### **Higher Prices of Supplies**

One of the factors that affected significantly the business’s profitability is the rising cost of supplies. In order to maintain stable operations and competitive pricing, businesses may do monitoring price fluctuations and finding cost-effective alternatives.

Participant 1 mentioned about the implications of gasoline and sugar. According to Participant 1:

Ang dati bala, nagchange sanda it price it asukal kag gasolina kag syempre ang Ice Cream may content nga sugar. Ang presyo nagtaas man, transportation nagtaas man.

*(“In the past, the price changed because of sugar and gasoline and of course the ice cream has sugar content. The price has also increased, transportation has also increased. I was having a hard time.”)*  
(Participant 1, Line 124-126)

Rising supply costs affected profitability for micro enterprises in Pandan, requiring bigger capitalization, and total investment. It was crucial to ensure sufficient resources for procuring necessary supplies, continuing their daily operations, and achieving sustainable long-term growth.

### **Capitalization**

Capitalization is defined as the total funds invested in a business. This included initial investments and reinvestments. When capitalization is done properly, businesses may ensure its sufficient resources for purchasing supplies. It is also helpful for expanding operations and sustaining long-term growth. However, this may be a big challenge for many businesses especially those micro enterprises.

Participant 3 mentioned about its struggle in capitalization, stating:

Capitalization gid ang among biggest challenge sa business."

*(“Capitalization is really our biggest challenge in business.”)* (Participant 3, Line 722)

Participant 1 also shared that the micro enterprise has little capital and what is being done it to roll the capital. It was stated that:

Gamay ma lang bala ang akon nga kapital. Gina rolling roling ko lang ran.

*(“I have little capital. I'm just rolling it.”)* (Participant 1, Line 126)

Micro enterprises had inadequate capitalization and resulted to insufficient supplies, and hindering their daily operations. Money to use for experiences like salaries and utilities was difficult to maintain as capital is lacking.

### **Money to Use for Operating Expenses**

To keep a business running smoothly, businesses have to allocate funds for operating expenses such as for

payment for salaries, utilities, and representation among others. These expenses are daily or monthly operational costs, which must be managed efficiently. This is likewise essential to maintain financial stability. But, still, many businesses are having difficulty to handle it and able to achieve a more desirable result.

Participant 2 mentioned that:

Malulugi kami kasi nagpapasohod kami.

(*"We will lose money, because we are paying salaries."*) (Participant 2, Line 314)

Participant 3 shared:

Kapital, na paminsaran nga, may ibayad ka, o may kumpra ka nga bagay, utangin kailangan bayadan.

(*"It's the capital to pay off, you have to pay something or you have a mortgage or something else, you owe money to someone."*) (Participant 3, Line 754-755)

The result of the present study appeared that micro-enterprises in Pandan, Antique, encountered various challenges. These challenges impacted their operational efficiency and profitability. One of the notable concerns among micro enterprises was the frequent experience of high supplier prices affecting profit margins. Various literatures provided information that the dependence to supplier can negatively impact the profitability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Recent study conducted by Zhang et al. (2025) appeared that this situation was due to an increased reliance on suppliers may lead to higher costs and reduced bargaining power. Furthermore, the micro enterprises "seldom" struggle to identify customer preferences or market trends, maintain optimal stock levels amid demand fluctuations, or deal with inconsistent supply of goods from suppliers. The micro enterprise is challenged to improved market research and supply chain management practices. This is to maintain market adaptability and enhance responsiveness to market dynamics. Salazar-Elena and Guimón (2019) emphasized that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often face challenges in implementing sustainable business practices. However, in order to address it, adopting ethical marketing approaches is essential. Azmi et al. (2023) noted supply chain disruptions have significantly impacted the operations of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the Philippines especially observed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 6.**  
**Challenges Encountered by Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique**

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Find it difficult to attract new customers due to competition.	2.50	3	1.23	Encountered
Have a limited budget for advertising and promotions.	2.55	2	.94	Encountered
Struggle to identify customer preferences or market trends.	2.00	9	1.07	Slightly Encountered
Experience high supplier prices affecting profit margins.	2.75	1	.85	Encountered
Find it difficult to maintain optimal stock levels due to demand fluctuations.	2.35	4.5	1.03	Slightly Encountered

Face inconsistent supply of goods from suppliers.	2.35	4.5	1.03	Slightly Encountered
Have inadequate record-keeping practices leading to financial mismanagement.	2.05	7	.94	Slightly Encountered
Find it difficult to calculate accurate costs for pricing products.	1.90	10.5	.91	Slightly Encountered
Lack knowledge in maintaining proper financial documentation.	1.60	12	.75	Slightly Encountered
Have limited access to funding or loans for business expansion.	2.05	7	.68	Slightly Encountered
Struggle with poor financial forecasting and budgeting.	2.05	7	.99	Slightly Encountered
Find it difficult to manage debt and cash flow effectively.	1.90	10.5	.85	Slightly Encountered

*1.00-1.49 – Not Encountered; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Encountered; 2.50-3.49 – Encountered; 3.50-4.00 – Strongly Encountered*

### III. Contribution of Business Practices to the Sustainability of the Micro Enterprises

As indicated in the table 7, the respondents “strongly contributed” business partnerships and supplier relationships supported sustainable sourcing (Mean=3.65; SD=.58). In addition, the respondents “strongly contributed” that stock control practices reduce waste and enhance inventory efficiency (Mean=3.70; SD=.57), financial records provide insights for long-term sustainability planning (Mean=3.50; SD=.60), and budgeting and cost analysis strategies contribute to financial stability (Mean=3.55; SD=.60). These practices too were “strongly contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprises. More so, they “strongly contributed” that investment in eco-friendly practices enhances business sustainability (SD=3.65; SD=.48), and financial performance reviews align with business sustainability goals (SD=3.50; SD=.60). These practices were “strongly contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprises.

On the other hand, they “contributed” that marketing strategies contributed to the long-term sustainability of my business (Mean=3.35; SD=.67), and ethical advertising approach impacted brand reputation and customer loyalty (Mean=3.35; SD=.67). More so, the respondents “contributed” that the ability to secure funding supports sustainable business growth (Mean=3.35; SD=.74), financial planning ensures continuous business operations and growth (Mean=3.30; SD=.73), and the risk management strategies help sustain the business in times of uncertainty (Mean=3.45; SD=.68). These practices too were “contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprises.

The lower variability in responses of the respondents, as indicated by the standard deviations suggested a strong consensus among them regarding the various contribution of business practices to the sustainability of the micro enterprises.

However, the respondents “contributed” that debt management practices support long-term business viability. This practice was “strongly contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprises.

During the one-on-one interview among the selected micro enterprises owners, managers, and supervisors, it appeared that they have seen the contribution of the practices in the sustainability of their operations. According to them, it included saving time for the customer, payment of taxes which helped the

community, and provided jobs to the people. These may be other benefits and implications of the business practices to the customers and the community.

### **Saving Time for the Customer**

Providing efficient service and by making product available in the store generally enhanced customer satisfaction. Customers would no longer have a hard time to look for other stores where they can buy their products and services. Businesses, such as micro enterprises, that offer convenient solutions help customers save time. This could help them to save time and will lead to increased loyalty and repeat transactions.

Participant 3 mentioned that because of the existence of the micro enterprise, it enabled customers to save time because they do not need to go to the other place. It was mentioned that”

No need don sanda mag adto sa ibang lugar, kagaya Kalibo or other adjacent town, sa pagpangita lang it mga goods, o ang kinanglan. So at least, hindi don sanda mag uyang pati oras nang para magagto sa Aklan. (*“They also don't need to go to other places, like Kalibo or other adjacent towns, just to find these goods, that's all they need. So at least, they won't waste time going to Aklan.”*) (Participant 3, Line 677-679)

When customers can save time, they got efficient services and readily available products from micro enterprises. The customer loyalty increased, did repeat purchases, and local economy could thrived.

### **Payment of Taxes**

Another aspect is paying taxes. Paying taxes is a responsibility of the businesses. The taxes being paid will support community development in various ways and forms. Taxes are essential for public services such as infrastructure and healthcare. It is also for purposes of education. These, taken as a whole, could impact economic growth and social welfare in the community.

Participant 2 highlighted the contribution by way of paying taxes. It was stated that:

Syempre pag nag babayad ka talaga ng tax na yearly at monthly ata.

(*“Of course, if you actually pay taxes annually and monthly.”*) (Participant 2, Line 277)

Likewise, Participant 3 shared that micro enterprise can contribute to the sustainability by contributing taxes. It was stated that:

Gabayad man kami sa taxes

(*“Contribute to taxes.”*) (Participant 3, Line 642)

Paying taxes, which funded local development through essential services, and helped the community. It led to efficient environmental programs. Then, increased the government funds and got reinvested the budget to environmental programs such as local garbage cans, regular garbage pick-up and maintaining the cleanliness of the market. These same enterprises prioritized environmental care while earning profit.

### **Helping the Environment**

Earning a profit while maintaining environmental responsibility has been a priority by the micro enterprises. Not only were they able to comply with the environmental regulations. They supported the environmental programs of the government such as segregating the plastics, cardboard boxes, regular garbage collections and wrapping their products in used paper. Additionally, while garbage segregation, they were able to earn profit out of selling and recycling cardboard boxes.

Participant 1 mentioned the wrapping of their products with used paper. It was stated that:

Kung sa environment, ang sa environment man tana, wa man, friendly man ta kami, ang ginaputos man ta



namon sa amon negosyo ngaran is mga papel nga used.

*“If it is about the environment, it's about the environment, we're environmentally friendly, we wrap our business goods with used paper.”* (Participant 1, Line 24-25)

Participant 2 added the garbage collection schedule. It was confirmed that:

Nilalabas namin every day sa tabi ng kalsada na naka-garbage bag. And then daily, during the day, sa umaga, pinipick up na ang basura.

*“We go out every day on the side of the road with garbage bags. And then daily, during the day, in the morning, the garbage is picked up.”* (Participant 2, Line 293-294)

Additionally, Participant 3 confirmed the garbage segregation helped them earn additional profit. It was noted that:

Sa merkado ang basura. Ginatipon namon, plastic man ukon karton. Ginaseparar namon ang basura. Ang karton, kis-a gabenta kami mga 70 pesos.

*“In the market, like trash. We collect them, either plastic or cardboard. We put in the garbage can separately. Just the cardboard. We can sell them at P70.00.”* (Participant 3, Line 694-695)

While maintaining their environmental responsibility, micro enterprises helped the community by creating jobs. It provided jobs for their families, friends and the community.

Not only they created jobs, they were able to improve the lives of the persons they helped.

### **Provide Jobs**

Through business, it created employment opportunities among individuals mainly in the community. People were able to obtain jobs because of the employment opportunities available. As a result, it helped boost the local economy. Likewise, individuals can provide for their family, and their livelihoods may be improved. This situation even results to financial stability, skill development, and overall community growth.

Participant 1 shared and mentioned that:

Kung di maka-bulig man ako sa ana at least kahit papano may sweldo tana every month sa amuran niya ng community maka-bulig ako.

*“For example, I hope at least somehow my employee has a salary every month. That's how I can help the for the community.”* (Participant 1, Line 111-112)

Additionally, Participant 2 shared that it survived because it provides staff and able to hire staff. Stated clearly:

.At least naka-survive kami sa pang-hire ng tauhan.

*“At least we've been able to survive and can still hire staffs.”* (Participant 2, Line 202-203)

According to Participant 3, the micro enterprise provides jobs. Stated:

Maka tugro ubra sa mga sales girls, kag makabulig sa mga pamilya kag mga migo kag miga.

*“Provide jobs for sales girls, and help families and friends.”* (Participant 3, Line 656)

In the study, results appeared that respondents considered that marketing strategies contributed to the long-term sustainability of the business is “strongly contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprise in Pandan, Antique. This means that effective marketing strategies and ethical advertising are essential for building brand reputation. This can even further foster customer loyalty. Recent development in the field of marketing provides that ethical advertising practices contribute to the integrity and credibility of micro-enterprises. Further, these activities strengthening their competitive advantage in local markets (Ferrell & Hartline, 2021).

In addition, it appeared in the result that the ability to secure funding supports sustainable business growth. Literature supported the idea that the ability to secure funding and implement robust financial planning were ingredients in business growth. Recent study showed that in the cases of MSMEs, access to finance mediates the relationship between financial literacy and the sustainability of its operations and business (Zaniarti et al., 2022). Additionally, developing comprehensive financial plans can support continuous operations and expansion initiatives together with exploring diverse funding options.

**Table 7.**

**Contribution of Business Practices to the Sustainability of the Micro Enterprises**

Business Practices	Mean	Rank	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Marketing strategies contribute to the long-term sustainability of my business.	3.35	8	.67	Contributed
Ethical advertising approach impacts brand reputation and customer loyalty.	3.35	8	.67	Contributed
Business partnerships and supplier relationships support sustainable sourcing.	3.65	2.5	.58	Strongly Contributed
Stock control practices reduce waste and enhance inventory efficiency.	3.70	1	.57	Strongly Contributed
Financial records provide insights for long-term sustainability planning.	3.50	5	.60	Strongly Contributed
Budgeting and cost analysis strategies contribute to financial stability.	3.55	4	.60	Strongly Contributed
Debt management practices support long-term business viability.	3.25	12	.63	Contributed
Ability to secure funding supports sustainable business growth.	3.35	8	.74	Contributed
Investment in eco-friendly practices enhances business sustainability.	3.65	2.5	.48	Strongly Contributed
Financial planning ensures continuous business operations and growth.	3.30	11	.73	Contributed
Risk management strategies help sustain the business in times of uncertainty.	3.45	6	.68	Contributed
Financial performance reviews align with business sustainability goals.	3.50	10	.60	Strongly Contributed

*1.00-1.49– Not Contributed; 1.50-2.49 – Slightly Contributed; 2.50-3.49 – Contributed; 3.50-4.00 – Strongly Contributed*

#### **IV. Strategies and Interventions Need to be Implemented to Address the Challenges toward Enhancement of their Sustainability**

In any business, to ensure long-term success and stability, micro enterprises have to consider sustainability. However, they may still encounter various challenges. These challenges included high prices of the suppliers, ability to market the product, resource scarcity, financial availability and constraints, and other environmental concerns. Moreover, this situation often hindered sustainable development and business progress.

The implementation of a well-planned strategies and interventions were then necessary. To overcome these obstacles, organization have to craft practical and ideal strategies that promote efficiency, resilience, and responsible practices. There were many strategies that may be applied depending on the need of the organization, availability of the budget and other resources, and other external and internal factors.

Effective sustainability strategies may also require collaboration among stakeholders. These stakeholders included businesses, government agencies, and the local community who have at par involvement and contributions to the business success and sustainability.

In the case of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, they too have implemented practices in various aspects – marketing, buying and stock control, costing and record-keeping, and financial planning. These were commonly highly implemented and very highly implemented. However, it cannot be denied that they too have experienced challenges along the way.

By implementing these strategies and interventions among micro enterprises, many challenges can be mitigated and address some of the common issues they encountered. Moreover, micro enterprise can attain a more sustainable and resilient future.

#### **Cost Management and Supplier Negotiation**

The micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique should actively monitor price fluctuations and explore alternative suppliers. To mitigate the impact of high supplier prices, they have alternative through identification of suppliers offering the same product and quality at a lower price. To eliminate dependency on expensive external suppliers, they can source local materials and adopting cost-effective inventory management practices. They can also establish long-term partnerships with suppliers to build trust and confidence. The micro enterprise can negotiate bulk discounts. They can also participate in cooperative purchasing groups which is helpful to lower procurement costs.

#### **Strengthening Capitalization and Financial Planning**

To ensure business sustainability, the micro enterprise owners, managers, or supervisors should explore diverse financing options available. They can look at into the government grants, microfinance loans, and cooperative lending programs among others. These financial sourcing options may offer reasonable payment terms and interests. Encouraging financial literacy and budgeting practices among micro enterprise owners, managers, or supervisors, can also help optimize capital allocation. It is also helpful for portfolio monitoring and control, and reinvestment strategies. It can be gleamed that most of them is dependent on rolling capital options, they can implement a structured savings plan. They can also apply revolving capital system. These approaches can further support business expansion and resilience.

#### **Financial Documentation and Business Record-Keeping**

Maintaining accurate financial records enables the micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique to have effective

business management. The micro enterprises owners, managers and supervisors in Pandan, Antique should adopt simple bookkeeping systems that would track and record transactions. They can utilize accounting software, if budget permits. They may also seek professional guidance who have knowledge in business operation, and accounting and finance. This is to ensure proper documentation of transaction and other financial matters. By doing so, it does not only help in managing expenses but, it can also improve access to credit and funding opportunities. Good financial records will be helpful to have financial system and internal control.

### **Efficient Allocation of Operating Expenses**

To sustaining daily operations of business, proper financial planning and expense management are essential. The micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique should prioritize essential expenses. They can also implement cost-cutting measures and explore alternative revenue streams. These strategies able to at least cover some of the operating costs. They can further identify controllable and uncontrollable costs together with fixed and variables costs.

### **Collaboration Among Stakeholders**

Business sustainability can be achieved by collaboration among key stakeholders. These stakeholders may include other businesses, government agencies, and the local community. Each stakeholder the key stakeholders have its own role in ensuring business sustainability. Government agencies for instance, can craft policies and support programs. Thus, it is necessary to have dialogue with them and participate when there are invitations for discussions. In addition, community engagement is important so that they can also be aware of the presence of the micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique. They can create caravan or trade fair for exhibiting their products to the community. They can also create organization to strengthening partnerships and able to share practices that are helpful to have successful business.

### **Infographics**

Infographics is a clear and visual representation of data and information, leaning on elements like imagery, symbols, charts and diagrams, an infographic can make complex ideas easy to understand (Adobe Express, n.d.). In understanding and enhancing the sustainability of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique, the infographics was prepared to identify their current business practices and the challenges they encountered. By employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, such as modified adopted questionnaire and interview using semi-structured interview guide.

Infographics emphasized an importance of visual communication. It would present findings in an engaging manner. Infographics could aid the stakeholders and aspiring entrepreneurs who are newly registered micro enterprises. The complex information about business practices, challenges, strategies, and interventions could be aided by the visual presentation. Through implementing targeted strategies and interventions derived from the data, the infographics ultimately seeks to enhance the sustainability of micro enterprises, ensuring their longevity and meaningful contribution to the local economy. It could prepare them and guide the stakeholders and aspiring entrepreneurs of what are the well-established business practices to attain sustainability.

Three layouts were presented to the panels. Layout one was chosen. Suggestions in colors, visuals, and graphic objects were included from the panels' inputs. Revisions were made and taken into consideration before attaching the infographics in the study.



**Figure 2.**  
**Infographics**

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It also shows the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

#### Summary

This study was anchored on Business Practices and Sustainability. A quantitative-qualitative research de-



sign was employed. The respondents consisted of 20 micro enterprise owners, managers, or supervisors. For the quantitative part, a modified adopted questionnaire, comprising 54 items was used to gather the necessary data. The data were analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means. For the qualitative part, an interview based on a semi-structured interview guide using thematic analysis.

## Findings

Based on the results of the study, the following findings were observed:

1. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique, actively engaged in various marketing practices. They “slightly practiced” marketing-related practices particularly, they “practiced” monitor competitor pricing. They also “practiced” solicit customer feedback on desired products and consult suppliers about high-selling trends. However, they “slightly practiced” visit competitor businesses to assess their product offerings. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique actively and strategically manage their buying and stock control practices. They “highly practiced” negotiating for lower supplier prices, comparing multiple suppliers, and forecasting demand. They also “highly practiced” reviewing suppliers for quality and reliability and considering seasonal demand changes when purchasing stock. But, “practiced” have a system to track inventory levels in real time. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique were able to apply costing and record-keeping practices. They “highly practiced” the use of records to track cash flow, calculate the cost of each main product, identify which products generate the most profit each category, and maintain a written budget for monthly expenses. However, keeping financial records that demonstrate the ability to apply for bank loans was only “practiced”. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique actively engage in financial planning. They have “highly practiced” monthly financial performance evaluations and setting financial goals. They also “highly practiced” analyzing cash flow to ensure liquidity. However, they “practiced” explore funding options such as loans, grants, or investments for business growth. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique prioritized inventory management, with buying and stock control being the most consistently applied business practice. Costing, record-keeping, and financial planning were moderately practiced, while marketing activities were applied less frequently. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique usually visited or surveyed the different stores in the barangay, negotiated prices of the suppliers, compared prices of the suppliers, studied the prices and using rolling capital.
2. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique encountered various challenges. They “encountered” a high supplier prices affecting profit margins but “not encountered” lack of knowledge in maintaining proper financial documentation”. They “slightly encountered” other challenges including attracting new customers, budget limitations for advertising, identifying market trends, maintaining optimal stock levels, and dealing with inconsistent supply. It appeared that they have experience challenges in their operations. These challenges include higher prices of supplies, capitalization, and money to use for operating expenses.
3. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique “contributed” that business partnerships and supplier relationships supported sustainable sourcing together with stock control practices reduce waste and enhance inventory efficiency. This are “highly contributed” to the sustainability of the micro enterprise. Additionally, securing funding and adopting eco-friendly

practices were also recognized as “highly contributed” in sustaining operations and ensuring growth. However, they simply “contributed” that debt management practices support long-term business viability, and “financial planning ensured continuous business operations and growth”. The practices performed by them “contributed” to its business sustainability. According to participants, it includes saving time for the customer, payment of taxes which helped the community, and provided jobs to the people. These may be other benefits and implications of the business practices to the customers and the community.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique, they prioritized customer-centric strategies and supply chain collaboration. They also demonstrated a strong emphasis on marketing activities in their business.

The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique have a strong emphasis on cost efficiency and inventory optimization. To ensure ensuring business stability, they have adopted proactive and strategic inventory management practices. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique have commitment to costing and record-keeping. They have sound financial practices through consistent tracking of cash flow, calculating product costs, and identify profitable products among others. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique demonstrated a strong commitment to financial management. They focused on maintaining financial stability and making informed decisions. However, they have limited application in financial risk management and avail and/or access to external funding opportunities. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique exhibited systems and strong application of inventory management particularly evident in the practices done in buying and stock control. They were also active in applying various practices in marketing, costing and record-keeping, and financial planning.

2. The micro enterprise owners, managers, and supervisors in Pandan, Antique have strengthened their financial planning, supplier negotiations, and marketing efforts. Their operational efficiency and effectiveness were affected by the prices of the suppliers that may also further affect their profitability.
3. There various business practices in marketing, buying and stock control, costing and record-keeping, and financial planning significantly contribute to the sustainability of micro enterprises in Pandan, Antique. It was strongly influenced by effective implementation and application of these business practices. They also have the ability to sustain its operation and resilient in the changing time.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were forwarded:

1. The use and generation of infographics for visual communication that presented findings in an engaging manner. Infographics can aid the stakeholders and aspiring entrepreneurs about the knowledge of well-established business practices, challenges, strategies, and interventions toward sustainability A checklist would be provided at the start of their business endeavor.
2. The Local Government Unit (LGU) – Pandan, Antique could craft policy, rules and regulations, or ordinance to support the conduct of business of the micro enterprises in the area. Likewise, this could promote fair supplier pricing and support sustainable sourcing practices to help micro enterprise and

other businesses manage operational costs. The Local Government Unit (LGU) – Pandan, Antique can organize activities such as business networking events and trade fairs that could support and encourage collaboration among micro-enterprises, suppliers and other stakeholders.

3. Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique could enhance marketing efforts by regularly assessing competitor pricing. They should also continue to conducting customer preference surveys and exploring digital marketing platforms (considering mostly are for free) which could beneficial to the awareness and marketability of their products.
4. Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique should improve financial documentation practices. This may be made by keeping detailed written records of transactions that will ensure accurate cost calculations. They could also prepare necessary documents for loan applications and other funding opportunities, when needed.
5. Micro Enterprises in Pandan, Antique could use and implement the strategies and interventions in addressing the challenges toward enhancement of their sustainability.
6. Stakeholder of Pandan, Antique, particularly the suppliers, could provide more flexible pricing models. This could also to support the profitability of micro-enterprises. They could provide discounts for bulk purchases, and revisit the prices of the products being availed commonly by the micro enterprise.
7. Stakeholder of Pandan, Antique, specifically the banking and other financial institutions in the area, should design microfinance programs tailored to the needs of small business owners. This could be helpful in making it easier to access capital and other investment and portfolio management.
8. The aspiring entrepreneurs must acquire knowledge and skills in business planning, marketing, inventory control, costing and record keeping, and financial management.
9. The aspiring entrepreneurs can prioritize establishing strong relationships with suppliers and customers, understanding industry trends and customer demands, and utilization of online marketing.
10. Other researchers could conduct further studies on the long-term impact of different business practices to the growth and sustainability of micro-enterprises. They could also assess the strategies on how to manage different challenges encountered by business. Also, explore the other effects of practices not only to the operation but also other aspects of the business and to the community.

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