

# Building Value, Creating Change: Value Co-creation in Tourism Social Enterprises in the Philippines

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## Abstract

The study looks into the service-dominant logic and social capital theory in explaining the value co-creation process of Philippine tourism social enterprises. Through a multiple case study methodology, the research discusses and analyzes the value co-creation process of four stakeholders (i.e., enterprise, community, customer, government) across three tourism social enterprises: MAD Travel, Meaningful Travels PH, and Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm and their stakeholders, (e.g., customers, community partners, government institution related to tourism). We find that the tourism social enterprises, in collaboration with customers and community partners, play an active role in ensuring that social value is co-created through empowering communities, developing connections, creating awareness, and inspiring action. Meanwhile, the government ensures an enabling environment for value to be co-created and for businesses to thrive. This research provides a novel perspective on the value co-creation of tourism social enterprises through the lenses of service-dominant logic and social capital theory.

**Keywords:** Philippines, Operant Resources, Service-dominant logic, Social capital theory, Tourism social enterprises, Value co-creation

## Introduction

Tourism has become a vital tool for developing low-income and underserved communities by providing economic activities that generate livelihood and income to such areas. With sustained expansion and diversification, tourism has been continuously recognized for its potential as an engine of growth and development due to its significant role in generating a wide range of socio-economic opportunities and reducing inequalities in local urban and rural communities (The World Bank, 2018; Asian Development Bank, 2007). Representing roughly 10% of global gross domestic product, tourism is one of the fastest growing and most important sectors in the world over the years (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019). Particularly, the World Economic Forum (2019) reported that the industry's contribution to the global GDP over the next decade is expected to rise by as much as 50%. In the case of the Philippines, tourism accounted for 12.7% of the country's GDP in 2018, producing the tourism sector's highest contribution to GDP since 2012 (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019).

However, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has caused a drastic change in the tourism landscape as countries implemented lockdowns and other coordinated restrictive measures to contain the spread of the virus. Alongside these measures, uncertainty looms with regard to restoring consumer confidence in tourism, and this is expected to remain even when it is safe to travel. Without a doubt, tourism is regarded as the hardest-hit industry because of COVID-19. Consequently, as one of the high-risk COVID-19 countries reported by the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (2020), the Philippines' tourism industry is expected to suffer indefinitely, leaving the livelihoods of many people at stake.

**It is then undeniable that despite the immense benefits tourism provides in terms of economic stability, it has also produced a number of negative effects on the social, economic and cultural well-being of localities and its people.** Palafox (2018) cited Boracay, Philippines as the perfect example for this as imbalances in the region and damage to the environment was brought about by uncontrolled tourism developments. Evidently, despite the island's high contribution to GDP, it also caused overcrowding, overdevelopment, and pollution, which is why a call for rehabilitation was necessary. In line with this, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2016) emphasized that **it is vital for the tourism sector to operate in a responsible manner in order for the sector to continue its growth sustainably, and ultimately provide greater benefits to society.**

In recent years, businesses have ventured into social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector to counter the undesirable impacts that traditional tourism brings to society such as the destruction of natural resources, pollution in localities, and overpopulation of tourists (Kreag, 2001). Likewise, communities support tourism social enterprise for its socio-economic and cultural benefits (Aquino, 2021). These advantages include the creation of jobs, diversification of sources of income, improvement of infrastructure, revitalization of local cultures, and an increase in national pride. Tourism social enterprise also has the potential to enhance community development and well-being. Essentially, the company's social mission (i.e., long-term social return on investment) is at the core of social entrepreneurship, with sustainable impact as its central criterion instead of wealth creation (Dees, 2001).

Having said that, Sheldon, Pollock and Daniele (2017) define tourism social entrepreneurship as "a process that uses tourism to create innovative solutions to immediate social, environmental, and economic problems in destinations by mobilizing the ideas, capacities, resources and social agreements, from within or outside the destination, required for its sustainable social transformation" (p. 7). In achieving its financial and social objectives, tourism social enterprises (TSE) engage with local community members and other stakeholders in co-creating social value through holistic and sustainable practices. According to Kummitha et al. (2021), these practices take into consideration the process of empowering communities, developing connections, creating awareness, inspiring actions, and solving problems with the participation of TSE, local community partners, and customers. Furthermore, the authors believe that the government plays a role in ensuring that businesses flourish, while ensuring that the resources and opportunities in the destination are not exploited and neglected Sheldon, Pollock & Daniele (2017)

As opposed to traditional tourism businesses (e.g., travel agencies, tour operators, etc.) that are primarily concerned with increasing personal gain and shareholder wealth, tourism social enterprises cause societal transformation and eliminate the negative externalities arising from commercial operations (Newbert and Hill, 2014; Shaw and Carter, 2007; Altinay *et al.*, 2016; Sheldon *et al.*, 2017). In line with this, Sun & Im (2014) claim that value co-creation among relevant stakeholders is needed to solve social problems more effectively. Thus, exploring social value co-creation is critical in identifying growth opportunities in the field of tourism social enterprises.

**To create social value, Altinay *et al.* (2016) posit that the key resources tourism social enterprises require are natural, financial, political, and human capital.** Meanwhile, Windasari, Lin & Chen (2017) add that social capital is vital to build collaborative competence and co-create social value with and for stakeholders. Natural resources refer to the geography, natural environment and resources of a place, comprising its landforms and ecosystems, which enable TSEs to sustain their business as these resources make up the core tourist attractions of a destination (Aquino *et al.*, 2018). Meanwhile, financial resources are monetary resources, such as loans, grants, investment, and income (Barraket *et al.*, 2015), used in funding TSE projects and developing community infrastructures (Aquino *et al.*, 2018) or acquiring resources needed for innovating new developments and social activities (Dees, 2001; Miller and Wesley, 2010; Altinay *et al.*, 2016).

Political resources, on the other hand, refer to “power dynamics and relations between institutions within a community, including tourism social entrepreneur’s ability to influence local destinations” (Aquino *et al.*, 2018, p. 28). As for human capital, it is the “community’s talents, education and skills” (Aquino *et al.*, 2018). With the productive engagement of human capital, organizations can achieve their objectives as well as long-term viability (Harris & Kor, 2013), and are better equipped to scale social impact (Day & Denis, 2016). Finally, social capital refers to “social structures and networks within a community as well as tourism social entrepreneurs’ networking abilities” (Aquino *et al.*, 2018, p. 28) that enable the ecosystem to function and develop effectively.

The dynamics of the marketplace have fundamentally changed as consumers play an active role in creating value and increasing an organization's competitive advantage (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000). In the new marketplace, a competitive space for organizations is developed as external stakeholders, such as customers, contribute their “knowledge and skills, willingness to learn and experiment and ability to engage in an active dialogue” in co-creating experiences (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). In the context of social enterprises, value is created through the collaboration and combined efforts of the social enterprise and its employees, customers, and other entities (i.e., business partners and government institutions).

Drawing upon the service-dominant logic, key activities and services (Windasari *et al.*, 2017) and resource mobilization (Altinay *et al.*, 2016) must be explored and evaluated to ensure that social enterprises enable interaction not only with their customers, but with other stakeholders as well. Furthermore, Windasari *et al.* (2017) claim that a collective goal must be formulated by

the social enterprise so that the interest of all its stakeholders are accommodated, thus strengthening value co-creation.

**Having said this, prior literature has demonstrated how the service-dominant logic can be employed to evaluate the resource needs and mobilization of a TSE**, thus enabling the generation of social value across the organization, customers, local communities and institutions. However, Altinay *et al.* (2016) lacked the application of the foundational premises (FP) of the service-dominant logic in examining the value co-creation between tourism social enterprises and its stakeholders. Meanwhile, Windasari *et al.* (2017) find that the different dimensions of social capital influences value co-creation within social enterprises and across its stakeholders.

**Thus, the research gap that this paper intends to fill is the application of the foundational premises of the service-dominant logic as well as the dimensions of the social capital theory in explaining how value is co-created among the service ecosystem. Ultimately, the study aims to address the following research questions: (1) How do tourism social enterprises and relevant stakeholders create social value?; (2) What is the usefulness of a service-dominant logic in the tourism social enterprises?; and (3) How do the different stakeholders, namely, enterprise, customer, community, and institution factor in the framework?**

Through this study, we acknowledge the flaws of traditional tourism models, especially with regard to the uncontrolled tourism developments that ultimately deteriorate the overall well-being of Philippine localities. For this reason, **we find relevance in the need to shift to more sustainable tourism practices, where business enterprises and organizations remain accountable for all their dealings and interactions with the stakeholders and environment they serve.** More importantly, we find relevance on this study's impact toward potential entrepreneurs and business owners who want to marry profit and purpose effectively. As countries around the world, including the Philippines, ~~try to~~ weather the ~~current~~ pandemic, ensuring a sustainable economy moving forward remains a priority especially as the pandemic sheds light on environmental issues that have contributed to the build-up of problems in the response to COVID-19. It, then, continues to be relevant for business leaders to identify more sustainable and impactful approaches to generate social value for all stakeholders on top of their economic gains. **Ultimately, the research aims to contribute at the national level by helping entrepreneurs in their sustainability and social impact efforts in the hopes of being operationalized through legislation and national tourism programs.**

## **Framework**

Emphasizing the role of service and relationships, the research looks into two primary theories: social capital theory and service-dominant logic. As one of the three main forms of capital according to Bourdieu (1986), the social capital theory places emphasis on the service ecosystem and the role of networks in shaping collective work performance. Meanwhile, the service-dominant logic stems from the concept of value co-creation, wherein resources and capital are co-created among the different actors (enterprise, community, customer and government) functioning as part of the service ecosystem with an ultimate goal of generating mutual value (Grönroos and Gummerus, 2014).

### *Social Capital Theory*

When we examine the development of the concept of social capital, we see that it has evolved to be a very extensive area of study. Its history traces back to three great names who have established influential work around the concept. Bourdieu (1986), Putman (1993), and Coleman (1998), contribute to the social capital literature by citing its advantage and value. However, each perspective also demonstrates serious limitations.

Bordieu's conception of social capital situates it as the property of an individual who is able to exert power on groups that deploy the resources. He emphasizes an attachment to symbolic power, class, and status, further arguing that social capital, although derived from social networks, is not collective but controlled by those who strive to achieve it. The emphasis on structural constraints and unequal access are not welcomed by many. Hence, it may not be suitable to build on this interpretation when social capital is viewed as property of the collective.

Similar to Bordieu, Coleman's view of social capital does not deviate from social structure. However, it posits the existence of collective value where the efforts of one benefits the development of the entire social organization. Social capital, in the viewpoint of Coleman, is collaborative. It is used by actors to arrive at a shared benefit that they could not have achieved individually. The social structure in this light resides in bonding mechanisms as opposed to hierarchy in power and position.

In Putnam's conceptualization of social capital, 'trust' is a central notion for organizations to facilitate action and benefit from mutual gain. In contrast with the theory of Bordieu for social capital, Putnam argues that it is participatory and interpersonal. This perspective also takes from Coleman's view but heavily stresses the features and characteristics of the organization. Perhaps the most criticized aspect of Putnam's work is the downplay of the complex processes and interrelations of social capital within a social structure. The argument that social capital is present when there is sufficient amount of trust among the actors is problematic as it reduces it drastically to a cause and effect relationship.

Social capital theory **helps observe the role of multiple stakeholders and their role in co-creating value for a tourism social enterprise**. Specifically, social capital is observed in three manners: **structural, relational, and cognitive capital** (Windasari *et al.*, 2017).

**The structural dimension of social capital refers to the social structure such as the network ties that aid the sharing of resources and information between multiple stakeholders** (Claridge, 2018). In this sense, the structural dimension tackles the means of communication within a network and the extent of connection being facilitated (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005). Meanwhile, **the relational dimension of social capital pertains to the relationships formed through the multiple interactions that occur between the different actors in the service ecosystem** (Granovetter, 1992). The relational dimension is then defined by Claridge (2018) as the quality of the relationships formed between different stakeholders where trust, norms, and obligations are key concepts. Lastly, **the cognitive dimension focuses on the shared views and**

interests of the stakeholders (Claridge, 2018). Being part of the same service ecosystem, strengthened cognitive dimension would entail a shared objective for multiple parties, thus making communication easier given the same end goal (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005).

### Service-Dominant Logic

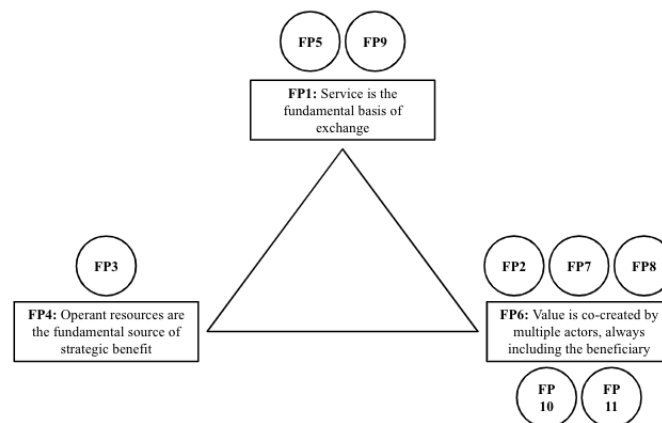
**In the context of tourism social enterprises, our utilization of different perspectives (i.e., enterprises, communities, customers, and government) will allow us to create a social value chain as a total service ecosystem.** This is supported by other studies (Mair and Martí, 2006; Ormiston and Seymour, 2013; Zahra *et al.*, 2009) that succeed in running a social enterprise.

Given that the very core of social enterprises is the value that they contribute to society, the study integrates multiple stakeholders in the process of contributing to society through the service-dominant logic. The updated Vargo and Lusch (2016) similarly emphasizes the importance of the service ecosystem and service beneficiaries in determining social value. Thus, building on the theoretical framework, Figure 1 shows service-dominant logic's three core foundational premises identified as:

FP1: Service is the fundamental basis of exchange.

FP4: Operant resources are the fundamental source of strategic benefit.

FP6: Value is co-created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary.



**Figure 1.**  
Service-Dominant Logic

Consequently, the foundational premises of the service-dominant logic can be bucketed into three key concepts: service (FP1), operant resources (FP4), and value co-creation (FP6). These are then supported by foundational premises that revolve around the respective concepts.

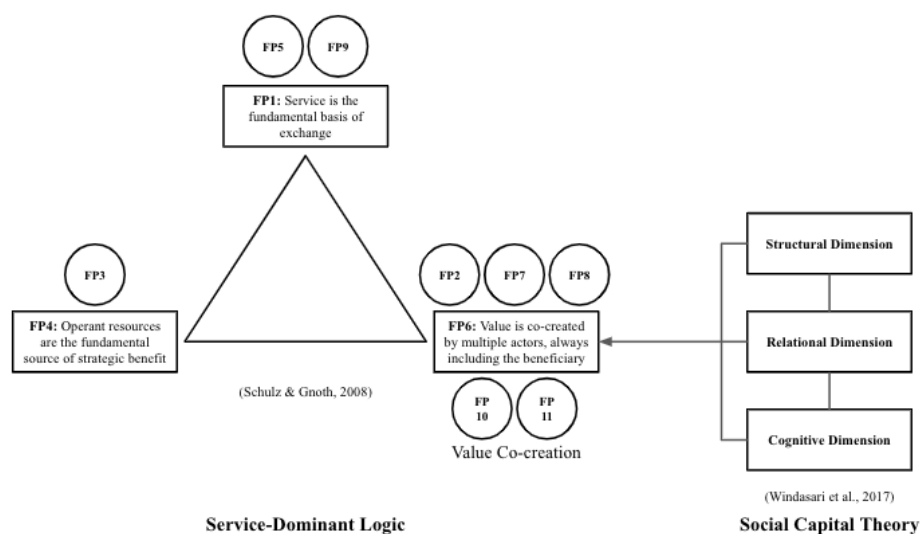
Building on the concept of service, FP1 is supported by FP5: *All economies are service economies*, and FP9: *All economic and social actors are service actors*. These premises put service at the core of running a business or economy and reinforces the role of the ecosystem and the multiple stakeholders in the delivery of service through the transfer of operant resources. Meanwhile, operant resources as described in FP4, is at the forefront of service ecosystems where goods merely act as a means to deliver a service. This is, then, stipulated by the supporting premise, FP3: *Goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision*. Through operant resources,

stakeholders are able to facilitate transfer of value across the service ecosystem, in the form of skills and knowledge.

Revolving on value as co-created by all stakeholders in a service ecosystem, the last key foundational premise in this study, FP6, places emphasis on the role of active participation across the ecosystem in order to sustainably co-create value. With this, FP2: *Indirect exchanges masks the fundamental basis of exchange and supports* the concept of value co-creation by showcasing how multiple actors may have indirect contribution or interaction that still act as an exchange. The concept of value co-creation is also supported by FP7: *Actors cannot deliver value but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions*, which shows the collaborative nature of co-creating value where no one actor may deliver value on their own. Next, FP8: *A service-centered view is inherently beneficiary oriented and relational*, and FP10: *Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary* both center on the contextual and relational nature of value determination of service economies given the role of multiple stakeholders in the process. Finally, FP11: *Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements* emphasizes the role of institutions in the success of generating value and creating an enabling environment for the service ecosystem.

### Conceptual Framework

Expanding on the study of Windasari *et al.* (2017), the study used the service-dominant logic and social capital theory, which focus on service and relationships, respectively, while also accounting for the specific foundational premises and dimensions that are core to the said theories. With this, we are able to observe the overall service ecosystem and the co-creation dynamic between the multiple stakeholders of the TSE.



**Figure 2.**  
Conceptual Framework

For the service-dominant logic, we present the three core foundational premises: FP1 (service), FP4 (operant resources) and FP6 (value co-creation). Figure 2 likewise shows the

importance of the overall service ecosystem and foundational premises in achieving value co-creation for the tourism social enterprise. Furthermore, for the social capital, **we hypothesize that the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions lead to the value co-creation stipulated in the service-dominant logic.** Overall, the conceptual framework aims to show the relationship of the service-dominant logic and social capital dimensions in explaining **the role of multiple stakeholders in co-creating value in the tourism** social enterprise's service ecosystem.

## Methodology

The research utilized an explanatory study in examining the financial and social value co-creation of *tourism social enterprises* and its stakeholders in the Philippines. Specifically, the chosen tourism social enterprises for this study are MAD Travel, Meaningful Travels PH, and Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, which are all Luzon-based enterprises that offer tour packages across the different regions in the country. The study further looks into the differences and similarities across the social enterprises' *perspective* on value co-creation.

We employed a case study method, particularly a multiple case study research design (Yin, 2015). According to Eisenhardt (1989), the case study method allows us to build on theories and generalize based on such findings. Thus, employing the case study method allowed us to come across a novel addition to our existing conceptual framework.

At present, existing literature on the topic is limited, especially in the context of the Philippines. Thus, employing a qualitative research design allowed us to obtain valuable insights on the intricate workings of stakeholder relationships in a service ecosystem through describing, explaining, and interpreting information from involvement in the actual experiences (Creswell, 2003). To be specific, we conducted a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions for the tourism social enterprises' founders, customers, and government officials. We also utilized the enterprises' social media pages to obtain information and observations from customer reviews.

On the one hand, we gathered information related to how the tourism social entrepreneurs operate their organization, deliver their value proposition, and interact with stakeholders to co-create financial social value. On the other hand, we uncovered insights from the enterprises' customers and relevant government offices and macro institutions about their perception of and exchanges with the tourism social enterprises to determine if the viewpoints of all stakeholders are aligned with each other. Additionally, to analyze the data and information gathered, the individual cases were interpreted to create an in-depth analysis of the background, experiences, and the role of the tourism social enterprises and each stakeholder in value co-creation.

To gather information from customers, we utilized the random sampling method. Given that we do not have any prior knowledge on the background of the customers, this option proves to be the best method to make simple and unbiased inferences about the population of interest.



Having said this, there is no limit with regard to the age and gender of the respondents to ensure that the study would be more all-encompassing and substantial.

Meanwhile, we resorted to various data collection procedures to get insights from the local community partners. In the case of MAD Travel, the enterprise founders mentioned that it would not be possible to reach the local community representatives via online platforms, thus we utilized readily available video resources from the enterprise as means for observation. As for Meaningful Travels PH, with the help of the founder, we were able to get in touch with a representative from the Quiapo Muslim Town through an audio conference. For Gawad Kalinga Farm, secondary information was derived from the study of Habaradas *et al.* (2019), which focused on the effectiveness of the social enterprise's business model as a social incubator and the role it plays in society. For customers, we gathered information by interviewing previous tour participants, and gathering observations and reviews from social media pages. Finally, the perspective from the government and macro institutions are obtained from interviewees with experience in the executive and legislative arms of the government, as well as a research manager for the academic perspective.

Through the open-ended interview questions, we were able to look into four key aspects of the tourism social enterprise: company background, qualitative results regarding the service-dominant logic as well as social capital theory dimensions, and effects of COVID-19. Consequently, from the qualitative data results, we first looked into the tourism social enterprise's business model and value proposition. We, then, framed the service ecosystem containing the relevant stakeholders for the value creation process of the business.

Using the responses of the stakeholders, we compared and contrasted the role of the service-dominant logic's foundational premises, the social capital dimensions and the enterprise's value proposition of the tourism social enterprise with the other actors in the service ecosystem in order to co-create value. This, then, helped us identify the applicability of the theories in Philippine tourism social enterprises and find the best practices that help ensure financial and social value co-creation. Finally, we also assessed how the recent COVID-19 has been impacting the tourism industry, as well as business pivots that stakeholders have been doing during this time.

## Findings

In order to get a holistic perspective across all stakeholders, the enterprise and institution findings will be bucketed into financial value co-creation, social value co-creation for both service-dominant logic and social capital theory, and COVID-19 insights and pivot.

### *Make a Difference (MAD) Travel*

For the financial value co-creation, MAD Travel generates its revenue from the immersive community tours and activities (e.g., tree planting, cultural demos, trekking, etc.) that it offers in places across the Philippines. However, an important insight from the enterprise founders is the company's commitment to the values that their enterprise is founded upon. Specifically, founder Rafael Dionisio shared that "One of our values is called creating value by sharing values, which literally means, in a simpler sense, to build trust so that you can create an economy." This, then, implies that in order to achieve the enterprise's financial goals, it must first establish its relationship with stakeholders.

Next, the concept of social value co-creation is viewed through the lens of service-dominant logic and social capital theory. For the service-dominant logic, Dionisio builds on his earlier point on value sharing. Specifically, the enterprise considers the introduction of ‘new friends’ to be a hidden service that they offer. Accordingly, they are able to build these relationships by sharing their values and understanding how communication works. As Dionisio explained, they use language, contextual, and cultural translation to their advantage when talking to the other stakeholders. This is a way for the stakeholders to better transfer skills and knowledge, which are important in co-creating value, as per the service-dominant logic. As Dionisio emphasized, the foundation for running their social enterprise is very simple, “it’s just friendship.” This finding is, then, supported and actualized with a customer who shared that they have made friends ~~that~~ they keep in touch with even after participating in the tours.

Consequently, the social capital theory insight builds on the service-dominant logic findings, where we find that friendship is the very foundation MAD Travel recommends to build on in order to mutually empower stakeholders in their goal of co-creating value. Acknowledging that even if relationships are built on friendship, there is an unspoken understanding of the obligations and expectations depending on the context on how and why the relationship is formed. Through this, it is evident how the conceptual framework is actualized, where the service-dominant logic and social capital theory are connected through the value co-creation premise. In this case, their hidden service also serves as the foundation of how their relationships are built. Ultimately, Dionisio mentioned that the company primarily wants people to connect with their shared humanity, which falls under the cognitive dimension of the theory. Co-founder Tom Graham, on the other hand, emphasizes that these relationships are a key aspect of what their social enterprise does, the relationship with their stakeholders.

In summary, MAD Travel’s social value co-creation is rooted on the simple concept of building authentic relationships within the ecosystem, whether across other stakeholders (e.g., enterprise to community, enterprise to customers) or within stakeholders (e.g., customer to customer). These relationships are formed through the shared experiences that are brought about by the service that MAD Travel offers.

Given the current pandemic, MAD Travel had to temporarily hibernate its main operations and look into business pivots to sustain the business. Currently, Dionisio handles MAD Market, which sells the different produce of the local community partners and in turn, helps provide income for the communities. With the relatively low value co-creation activity, given the activity’s transactional nature, we find that it is merely a business pivot to sustain their business which is a priority given the pandemic.

On the other hand, previous planning has allowed Tom Graham to fast-track MAD Courses, an existing business pivot to offer an online learning and virtual tour platform, which focuses on sustainability inclusion through education. Through this initiative, they partner with social enterprises and local communities to create courses that cater to school and university students. Essentially, MAD Courses allowed the enterprise to migrate travel experiences online, and ultimately target business growth at the time of the pandemic. With this, MAD is able to

showcase both low and high value co-creation through their business sustenance and growth activities.

### *Meaningful Travels PH*

Meaningful Travels PH is a travel company founded by Ann Marie Cunanan in July 2015. Fundamentally, Meaningful Travels PH combines adventure tours with cultural immersions in areas where there are usually no tourists like Quiapo, Marikina, Poblacion, and Lake Sebu. By doing so, they are able to achieve a fuller, richer, and more transformative travel experience, ultimately bringing more depth, joy, and purpose to the experiences of customers (Meaningful Travels PH, n.d.). Additionally, the founder mentioned that Meaningful Travels PH often works with other social enterprises, farmers' cooperatives, and women's cooperatives in delivering their tours and services. Financial value is, then, co-created through the cultural adventures and activities (e.g., farming, hiking, discovering local restaurants, visiting historical landmarks, etc.) that the enterprise provides.

Beyond revitalizing the economy of underserved communities through its tour services, Meaningful Travels PH prides itself in creating awareness and educating people about the culture of indigenous people and other minority groups. Essentially, Meaningful Travels PH's service has been a platform where local community members and customers can share and exchange knowledge with each other about their culture and lifestyle, which ultimately helps in breaking biases against differing beliefs. Drawing back to the foundational premises of the service-dominant logic, we see how service plays a role in enabling the exchange of operant resources, most especially knowledge on cultures and practices. Having said that, there is a mutually beneficial relationship across the three stakeholders as Meaningful Travels PH is able to execute its advocacy with its community partners, the local communities educate their guests, and customers learn and promote the company after attending the tours.

The service-dominant logic findings are, then, strengthened by the social capital theory dimensions. With the face-to-face interactions being the structural dimension of building social capital in Meaningful Travels PH, the enterprise's stakeholders are able to better communicate with each other, thus leading to a more holistic approach of understanding and respecting differences. Furthermore, this helps in improving the quality of relationship the enterprise builds with its stakeholders because the relationship built is more personal than transactional. Thus, by fostering an environment where all stakeholders understand, accept, and respect each other's differences, Meaningful Travels PH is able to strengthen the quality of the relationship across all of its stakeholders, as emphasized by the relational and cognitive dimensions of social capital theory. For this reason, Meaningful Travels PH has been successful in being a platform to bridge people who love travel and help communities.

Keeping in the mind the mission of the company to build inclusive economies by doing business with micro and small businesses especially in the rural areas, Meaningful Travels PH relaunched The Local Goodness PH as a way to help their partner communities generate income amidst the travel restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through The Local Goodness PH, Meaningful Travels PH aims to offer to the market the products of local artisans and small businesses, especially the farming cooperatives, women's groups and other social enterprises they work with. Cunanan shared that "the idea here is that since we [Meaningful

Travels PH] cannot go to these communities anymore, what we're doing is we're bringing their products here [Metro Manila] and we're selling them." She added that "that's [the Local Goodness PH] one of our strategies to stay uprooted, but hopefully in the long run, this will also strive and grow up to be an entity of its own."

#### *Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farms (GK EF)*

In terms of financial value co-creation, Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm envisions itself to be three things: 1) A Farm Village University, which provides jobs and livelihood for local community members; 2) A Silicon Valley for social entrepreneurship, which serves as a platform to raise social entrepreneurs; and 3) A Disneyland for social tourism, which people can visit for an extraordinary tourism experience (Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, n.d.). Essentially, by being a social business incubator that enables an environment to grow social enterprises (Habaradas *et al.*, 2019), GK EF gives local community members an opportunity to partake in the activities, management and operation of the said enterprises. The social enterprises in GK EF, then, serve as the key driver of tourism that attracts tourists who want to learn more about them.

By developing the capabilities of its social enterprises, GK EF also provides opportunities for employment and development to the local communities. This is because the materials and resources used in the products in most GK EF's social enterprises come from the farm's crops or animals, which are mostly managed by the local community members. Additionally, staying true to its name, GK EF enchants its customers through the stories and experiences of successful social enterprises as well as that of the individuals and communities behind such triumphs. By visiting key facilities and resources (e.g., various pioneer centers and social enterprises), developing basic knowledge and skills in social entrepreneurship (e.g., farming, making farm-based products, etc.), and gaining value-adding network (e.g., community interaction, social enterprise demos), GK EF is able to raise awareness toward its mission for the communities, while challenging its visitors to realize how they can make the greatest social impact. Thus, with regard to co-creation social value in the lens of the service-dominant logic, GK EF fosters an environment where operant resources are exchanged through the sharing of knowledge and experiences between stakeholders.

As for the social value co-creation through the social capital theory aspect, GK EF encourages guests to build organic relationships with the community members by letting them personally interact with each other to share stories and experiences. Consequently, rooted in its mission, "Where Goodness Grows," they put great emphasis in ensuring that their activities are geared towards uplifting the less privileged. In this regard, GK EF Head of External Relations and Strategic Partnerships, Austin Rabelas, shared that customers come back to the farm because they realize the effect of their contribution to the community members. Additionally, by empowering and enabling its local community members, GK EF is able to gain the trust and support from customers. This is, then, drawn to the cognitive dimension of social capital as GK EF's stakeholders develop genuine interest in joining the enterprise in their mission to uplift the poor.

In light of COVID-19, GK EF strengthened their BayanAnihan initiative, which delivers farm produce to Metro Manila in order to sustain the livelihood of the community members as well as the social enterprises in GKEF. Rabelas also shared that GK EF enterprises are pivoting towards manufacturing ready-to-eat bestseller foods to bring to the city to lessen the impact of

having no guests visiting the farm. Moreover, many of the social enterprises found are utilizing their online platforms to sell their products and continue business operations.

### *Government and Macro Institutions*

After gathering insights from the tourism social enterprise stakeholders, we find that the government acts as more of a facilitator of the transfer of value rather than an active participant. As Dionisio puts it, “The government is supposed to empower different people to create that value.” Therefore, this separate section looks into discussing the results and sharing the insights from government stakeholders.

In a straightforward manner, government institutions generate financial value through the taxes and fees they obtain from the enterprises that operate and the tourists that arrive in the local communities, respectively. Consequently, these funds are used to finance projects, preserve the environment, and grow the local economy.

For social value creation, the operations of government institutions provide an insight that helps us better understand the service-dominant logic, where the role of service will be specific to the market or country it operates in. Through the lens of the government, Philippine tourism and its social enterprises would be well-served in an environment where the industry creates and integrates the Filipino brand of service in our understanding of the premises, regardless of the kind of enterprise as Department of Tourism of the Philippines Assistant Secretary Alabado puts it.

However, as a government institution, bureaucracy is ever present in its system, which Assistant Secretary Alabado himself readily recognizes. This, then, acts as a roadblock to the social capital theory's structural dimension. He shared that, “I think it's up to us in the government not to wait for them [tourism social enterprises] to go up, but it's up to us to go down.” Overall, the same sentiment echoed by the enterprises is seen in the responses of the government interviewees, who are more focused on creating an enabling environment for the service ecosystem to do business and create value, rather than actively participating in the co-creation of value.

For the government's approach to COVID-19, we find that it is focused on industry sustenance, where they work with operators as well as provide training and seminars to restart tourism operations. What the government is essentially focused on at present is ensuring that domestic and international tourists do not forget the Philippines as a destination. In the words of Assistant Secretary Alabado, he shared that, “While it's COVID, stay at home, but just dream about the Philippines, sooner or later, you'll wake up in the Philippines when travel is back.”

## **Discussion and Analysis**

### *Financial Value Co-creation*

Rooted on the service-dominant logic, the tours offered by the enterprises can only offer a value proposition, but the other stakeholders in the entire ecosystem are needed to deliver the value. Having said this, a bulk of the enterprises' revenue stream is through the tour packages and activities that they offer to their customers. As for the other stakeholder's roles in the business model, customers avail of the tour packages where their payment funds the expenses of their trip, such as the tour activities, food, accommodation and transportation. On the other hand, regarding the local community partners, no clear cash outlay was uncovered. Instead, the partnership is

more on the exchange of other tangible and intangible resources. Lastly, as the facilitator of the transfer of value, the government institution receives taxes and other tourism fees which in turn is used to help maintain or grow the local economy.

The social enterprises' value proposition can, then, be bucketed into two, namely commercial and social impact value proposition. Evidently, the social enterprises' commercial value proposition lies on the tours they provide wherein the customers are able to experience the everyday lifestyle or culture of the communities that are not offered in a usual tourism experience. Meanwhile, by immersing in the culture of these communities, an empathetic and inclusive environment is cultivated. This kind of experience is then closely tied to their social impact value proposition of building meaningful human connection between local communities and customers, while contributing to local economic development and cultural education. Integrating both commercial and social impact value propositions into their business model, MAD Travel, Meaningful Travels PH, and Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm ensure an overall positive experience for the enterprise itself, the local community members, and the tourists.

### *Social Value Co-creation*

The theories of service-dominant logic and social capital theory have proven to be applied in the context of Philippine tourism social enterprises. However, a key factor to note is that in their application, the local tourism social enterprises have integrated nuances from the Filipino culture. A key insight on the service-dominant logic is the personal touch that the enterprises employ in managing and working with other stakeholders and which is found in the Filipino culture's collective nature. Furthermore, the social capital theory builds on this (personal touch) as evidenced by relationships that develop through personal interactions and grow over time. Rather than focusing on the rigidity of the concepts of value co-creation and social capital, the social enterprises simply viewed it as working together for the common good and building friendships with each other.

Finding the common ground among the three enterprises, it goes to show that value is co-created in a service ecosystem where marginalized communities are empowered, human connections are developed, social awareness is created, and taking action is inspired.

First, one of the most important roles of tourism social enterprises is their ability to empower marginalized communities by allowing them to play an active role in the tour services. Service plays a vital role as it becomes a tool for a more sustainable approach of uplifting the less privileged as opposed to one-off goods offerings. We also realize how operant resources are exchanged across stakeholders through skills and knowledge building. As explained by FP6 of the service-dominant logic, we see the role of all stakeholders in co-creation value, and how activities are predominantly centered toward benefiting local communities. Additionally, by having a partnership that is built on mutual trust and respect, as well as shared objectives and interest, the relationship formed between stakeholders is strengthened, as explained by the relational and cognitive dimensions of building social capital.

Second, building meaningful relationships with stakeholders is integral to the social mission of all three TSEs. Beyond the relationships built between the enterprise and the community, the travelers themselves are also able to build friendships and partnerships not only

with the community, but also with fellow customers. This is evidenced by the case of MAD Travel, where customers go through the tour experience as a collective group, and in Meaningful Travels PH, where customers got to bond and even do projects together after the tours. This, then, strengthens the role of the cognitive dimension of social capital as we see that it is not only the enterprises and communities who share the same vision, but the customers as well. Additionally, as supported by the structural dimension of social capital, the importance of face-to-face encounters is emphasized as this helps in connecting and strengthening the relationship of multiple stakeholders.

Third, education and awareness among stakeholders play a big role in value co-creation as they serve as fundamental elements in understanding differences and embracing diversity across various groups, communities and cultures. It is also through these interactions where operant resources are exchanged in the form of knowledge and skills sharing. Additionally, the importance of the structural dimension of social capital is amplified because it is through these face-to-face interactions where open dialogues are fostered and relationships are enriched.

Finally, the tourism social enterprises inspire not only local communities, but also customers to take action and initiate change. It is through the operant resources exchanged and learned from the tours where customers are motivated to initiate change, be it as simple as continuing to support and promote the enterprise's advocacy and mission after participating in the tours or establishing their own advocacy projects and social enterprises. Likewise, this is where the cognitive dimension of social capital is highlighted as the customers turn out to have a shared objective with the enterprise and its partner communities, which is to address pressing issues and ultimately make a lasting impact on society.

#### *COVID-19 Insights and Business Pivots*

Given the ongoing pandemic, the following are insights on how the industry should go about moving forward as well as how businesses can stay afloat during these times.

Firstly, a sentiment echoed across the tourism social enterprises and government institutions is that the Philippines has the wrong model for tourism, which is mass tourism. They shared that it is an important time of reflection and chance to pivot to more sustainable ways of travelling, placing more importance on the quality than quantity of tourists. From the enterprises' perspective, the founders revealed that there is an ability to pivot during the current pandemic, whether to sustain business operations or to grow the business in order to adapt to changing needs. The social enterprises show how the identification of business priorities and rational identification of available resources is important in identifying pivot strategies during times of uncertainty.

However, regardless of the business pivot, it remains pertinent to invest in digital platforms, especially in a time where there are global calls to stay at home. It, then, becomes important to leverage on technology to still be able to deliver service, as well as build or maintain the connection an enterprise has with their stakeholders. This draws back to the concept of social capital theory, where relationships are important in the value co-creation process of tourism social enterprises.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

### Summary of Findings

To summarize, we have identified that the enterprises' financial value is generated through their tours, which they deliver with their other stakeholders. Meanwhile, for government entities, financial value is created from taxes and fees, which they use to preserve the natural resources and to grow the local economy. Meanwhile, for social value creation, a commonality that we identified from the three enterprises' perspective is the interconnectedness of the service-dominant logic and social capital theory through the value co-creation premise of the former. In simpler terms, service serves as a tool not only to deliver value but also to build relationships.

As seen in Table I, when the stakeholders share resources and information, meet new friends, and work together as one ecosystem, they end up building a good foundation for their relationship as stakeholders. Meanwhile, as an enabler to the ecosystem, the government's perspective is more on integrating the Filipino brand of service as a blanket on the industry which in and of itself, is rooted on hospitality. Lastly, for the COVID-19 pivots, every single one of the enterprises was able to sustain their business at the very least through pivoting business sustenance initiatives which all leverage digital technology. MAD Courses stands out by being the sole enterprise to target business growth by expanding their key activities, specifically through creating travel experiences online.

<b>Table I.</b> Summary of Findings		<b>Financial Value Co-creation</b>	<b>Social Value Co-creation</b>		<b>COVID-19 Business Pivot</b>
			<b>Service-dominant logic</b>	<b>Social capital theory</b>	
	<b>MAD Travel</b>	Tour packages	Introducing 'friends' as the hidden service	Inter-stakeholder relationships	Growth and sustenance
	<b>Meaningful Travels PH</b>	Tour packages	Education and awareness building	Bridging people from different backgrounds	Sustenance
	<b>Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm</b>	Tour packages	Inspire stakeholders to initiate action	Develop organic relationships	Sustenance
	<b>Government Institutions</b>	Tour packages	Filipino brand of service	Bureaucratic	Sustenance

### Proposition Validation

Revisiting the theories, the service-dominant logic is utilized to see how the service ecosystem dynamics and resource exchange influence value co-creation, while social capital theory is employed to discover how each the structural, relational, and cognitive dimensions shape value co-creation.



Using the insights generated from the service-dominant logic across all enterprises, we saw how the key concepts of service and operant resources have effectively helped in strengthening the value co-creation process of MAD Travel, Meaningful Travels PH, and Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm. For the social capital theory, it was evident how relationships formed with their stakeholders were rooted on a shared goal, built on trust, and maintained even amid the pandemic, which remain essential in the value co-creation process of these enterprises. Accordingly, Table II shows that all propositions are validated. However, although the theories may be validated, we have gathered insights on how these theories can be better improved and be more representative of what happens in practice, and not merely in theory.

The service-dominant logic, as a western theory, falls short of emphasizing and identifying the *local* market differences that countries, such as the Philippines, may have. As Assistant Secretary Alabado had mentioned, the Department wants to instill a Filipino brand of service that could help set the tourism industry apart. In this same space, a localization preface to the theory will provide a more global and holistic perspective that would emphasize the different ways service may manifest per country.

For the social capital theory, although representative of the priorities of the enterprise, the terminology fails to capture the humanistic and social foundations where the theory was founded upon. It, then, becomes essential to build on and update the social capital theory that would focus more on building the *human and social* relationships between the stakeholders in a service ecosystem, rather than simply viewing each other as means of gaining capital, which creates a transactional exterior to the relationship.

<b>Table II.</b> Validation of Propositions	Theory	Proposition	Validation	Recommendation
	Service-dominant logic	Service ecosystem relationship dynamics influence value co-creation in tourism social enterprises	Validated	Localization preface to account for local market differences
		Service ecosystem resource exchange influences value co-creation in tourism social enterprises	Validated	
	Social capital theory	The structural dimension (social interaction) influences value co-creation in tourism social enterprises	Validated	Better terminology to reflect social and humanistic foundations
		The relational dimension (trustworthiness) influences value co-creation in tourism social enterprises	Validated	

The cognitive dimension  
(shared vision) influences  
value co-creation in tourism  
social enterprises      Validated

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### *Recommendations*

Building on the theoretical recommendations, we want to see concrete actions that could improve the local tourism industry .

At the very core of the study is the service ecosystem dynamics formed by the different stakeholders. Within the service ecosystem, we find that the social enterprise, in collaboration with its customers and community partners, ensure that social value is co-created through empowering marginalized communities, developing human connections, creating social awareness, and inspiring action. This, then, is best represented by the concept of ecosystem economy, which focuses on creating an economy through addressing the interest of all stakeholders which comprise the enterprise's ecosystem

Next, as we have identified and validated from our stakeholders, the government does not act as an active participant in the value co-creation. The research participants emphasized that the government must be responsible for creating institutional frameworks that foster an environment for social enterprises where barriers to entry and exit are low. Thus, it is fitting to bring the government's attention to pass the Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Act, which seeks to grow more social enterprises through support mechanisms from the government such as “loans, funds for research and development, training and capacity building activities, preferential procurement for social enterprises, facilitation of market access and linkage to the value chain, and insurance for social enterprises in times of disaster” (Ong, 2016, as cited in Habaradas *et al.*, 2019).

Essentially, enabling an environment that is conducive to social enterprises goes beyond providing access to finance as recognition and prioritization of these enterprise's needs are essential in co-creating social value. More importantly, the government must seek to put an end to its bureaucracy in terms of reaching out to tourism social enterprises as well as supporting potential enterprises in this field. For instance, the government could establish a dedicated office that would enable officials to address queries and concerns of aforementioned enterprises.

Lastly, as evidenced by the MAD Courses, integrating social interactions in the very business model -- from the enterprise, community, and customer -- is key in preserving the relationships that have been important in the success of tourism social enterprises in the Philippines. With relationships crucial to their financial and social value co-creation , leveraging digital technology becomes vital in maintaining constant communication across the service ecosystem. Pivot strategies that aim to pursue business growth should then allocate investments that would focus on improving one's digital capabilities and ensuring access for service ecosystem partners.

### *Further Research*

With sustainable enterprises growing steadily through the years as an alternative to purely profit-driven companies, we recommend further research by applying the above-mentioned theories to enterprises within and outside the tourism industry. In particular, investigate (1) how service could vary across geographies in the context of the service-dominant logic and (2) how to pivot to a more humanistic and social focus in the context of the social capital theory. In an especially precarious time for the tourism industry, further research on pivot strategies during crises could help sustain and restore industries.

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