



FROM STRENGTHS TO GROWTH: A PHOTO NOVELLA OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH PERSONNEL ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract : Empowering employees to reflect on their best experiences within an organization can serve as a powerful catalyst for initiating positive change. However, it is important to acknowledge that not all organizations have embraced this practice yet. Drawing upon the strengths of the institution, this study sought to explore the hopes and aspirations of the personnel as their organization transitioned to the next phase. A total of six participants completed the comprehensive inquiry process, utilizing a photo novella or photovoice design that aligned with the empowering nature of the study. The participants themselves captured the data through photographs, which were then analyzed and interpreted using the SHOWED framework (Wallerstein & Berstein, 1988). From the participants' photos, four prominent themes emerged: enabling and nurturing presence, intensified institution, integral approach, and enhancing values and building connections. These themes signify that growth can arise from the personnel's experiences within the organizational environment. Furthermore, these experiences challenge their value system and inspire them to envision and shape the future landscape of the organization. When the organization recognizes the significance of these dreams, it ignites the personnel's interest and enthusiasm, encouraging them to redouble their efforts in making it a reality, as they feel a sense of ownership over the vision.

IndexTerms - Photovoice or Photo Novella, Personnel Empowerment, Organizational Growth, Organization's Strengths, Appreciative Inquiry

I. INTRODUCTION

Change within an organization does not always originate from identifying problems. Many organizations tend to focus on addressing problems when initiating change. However, it is rare for institutions to evaluate themselves by considering the positive aspects. By closely examining the organization, one can uncover a wealth of untapped assets that can be leveraged for organizational development. One such valuable asset is the employees themselves. Employees have the potential to drive significant change within an organization, but they can also impede project implementation if not properly engaged. Employees who experience a positive work environment are often the ones who exhibit remarkable productivity (Alarcon, et al., 2021). Therefore, empowering employees to reflect on their best experiences within the organization can serve as a solid foundation for initiating organizational change. These best experiences, as seen from the employees' perspective, shed light on the organization's strengths. Recognizing and appreciating these strengths, as emphasized by Cooperrider & Whitney (2005), can be a powerful catalyst for change.

Everyone has dreams, including school administrators and top management. In many organizations, the vision for the future of the organization is typically confined to the hands of top management and organizational leaders. However, it has been observed through studies that involving all members of the organization, including the rank and file, in creating a dream for the organization can significantly correlate with their engagement and loyalty (Church, 2023). Research by Baran and Sypniewska (2020) further suggests that people-oriented management and active participation, such as co-decision making, are crucial for fostering work engagement.

The pursuit of institutional quality, particularly in higher education institutions, is an ongoing endeavor. Institutional evaluation serves as a constructive method for enhancing academic institutions and driving organizational growth. However, the opinions of important stakeholders involved in the evaluation are sometimes overlooked. Often, faculty members are excluded from decision-making processes related to various aspects of the school's academic operations (Toderas and Stăvaru, 2015). They are primarily involved in academic choices and program curricula, while budget decisions and allocation are typically made without their input (Kelliher, 2021). Nonetheless, faculty members also have valuable insights, particularly regarding their experiences with the school and their relationship with the school community. Recognizing the importance of their presence in the institution can empower them and foster personal growth initiatives (Joo, Par, and Lee, 2021). Research findings indicate that people-oriented management and active participation, such as co-decision making, are vital for work engagement.

In the context of this study, the higher education institution being examined has been providing educational services for 94 years, catering to both local and international students, including Filipino students residing abroad. The institution is accredited by three accrediting bodies: the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PAASCU), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) through Institutional Self-Assessment (ISA), and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). These accreditations have helped identify the institution's best practices as well as areas for improvement. Continuous evaluation and the use of self-assessment and external reviews are essential for any quality assurance provider seeking to enhance the quality of education (Purser, 2014). However, there is a lack of empirical data highlighting the core strengths and aspirations of other stakeholders, particularly the personnel who play a frontline role in delivering educational services as the institution adapts to the new normal. In response to the challenges posed by the global pandemic, the institution must become more agile and flexible in assessing its strengths and aspirations, while considering the perspectives of its personnel. This study aims to address this gap.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

With the dearth of literature addressing the need for empirical data on the institution's core strengths and aspirations of stakeholders, like the personnel who are the frontliners of the delivery of the educational services, as the school transitions to the New Normal, the institution must be more agile and flexible in exploring its strengths and aspirations from their perspectives ; hence, this study is hinged. The following research questions guided the study: 1. What are the exemplary practices of Lourdes College as it transitions to the new normal? (Discover); 2. What innovations can be envisioned to create an ideal Lourdes College during the new normal? (Discover); 3. What is the design of the ideal Lourdes College during the new normal? (Design); and 4. How can the ideal Lourdes College be implemented and sustained during the new normal? (Destiny)

1.2 Framework of the Study

This study anchors its framework on Paulo Freire's empowerment (1970), Social Constructionism (Berger & Luckman, 1966), and Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). These constructs firm up the researchers' assumptions that institutional assessment has to be participatory and empowering, which resonates with the essence of Photo Novella, which explicitly focused on other forms of empowerment through participation (Wang and Burris, 1997). The authors further contended that empowerment includes at least four kinds of access: access to knowledge, access to decisions, access to networks, and access to resources (Chu, Personal Communication). As a construct, photovoice has three main goals: (1) to enable people to record and reflect on their community's strengths and concerns; (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussions of photographs; and (3) to reach policymakers (Wang and Burris, 1994:172). In line with these goals, people can use photovoice as a tool for participatory research. Photovoice is highly flexible and can be adapted to specific participatory goals, different groups and communities, and distinct public health issues. The concept and methodology, with emphasis on the first goal, use photovoice to conduct a participatory needs assessment.

Another construct on which this study is hinged is Freire's method of problem-posing education, which starts with issues that people see as central to their lives and enables them to identify common themes through dialogue. Freire noted that one means of enabling people to think critically about their community and to begin discussing the everyday social and political forces that influence their lives was the visual image. He used line drawings or photographs that represented significant realities or "coded situation-problems." ⁷ Photo Voice takes this concept one step further so that the images of the community are made by the people themselves (Wang and Burris, 1997).

Furthermore, Social Constructionism (Berger and Luckman, 1966) asserts that all meaning is socially created. [Social constructs](#) might be so ingrained that they *feel* natural, but they are not. Instead, they are an invention of a given society and thus do not accurately reflect reality" (Viney, 2019). This construct is analogous to the feminist theory, which views women as authorities of their own lives, "constructing their knowledge about women as women, and empowering themselves through an ideology of accountability. Although the person participates in the assessment process of the said institution, there is a limited expression of the personnel's voice, which has been a natural phenomenon in meetings where only those who have confidence and adequate knowledge of the institution, more often than not, dominate the conversation. In empowerment theory, every voice matters. The approach of the conversation is such that the participants feel free to express themselves spontaneously without restraints. Furthermore, this photovoice study also utilizes its framework from Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperider, 1999), which focuses on the constructionist principle "words create worlds" and "reality, as a subjective vs. objective state, is socially created through language and conversations." Appreciative inquiry aims to foster change in an organization through the deep reflection of the participants on a situation, emphasizing its positive aspects (Fifolt & Lander, 2013). It uses a 4-D cycle with discovery, dream, design, and destiny as components when certain changes are intended (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). By sharing the positive aspects of the school and their dreams regarding the school, students learn to bring change together with their professors and the staff (Bloom et al., 2013). A positive environment is promoted wherein institutional growth can take place. In fine, the common factor shared by these theories is bringing about constructive community transformation through social action. Change is paramount on an individual level, where perceptions are transformed. The individual's experiences can potentially bring change to the community (Maneja, 2021).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design. This study employed the photo novella or photo voice design using the principles and processes of appreciative inquiry. Photo novella "originated as a tool for assessing the needs of rural women of Chengjiang and Luliang counties... and it provided a creative and appealing method by which the women documented the issues of greatest concern, communicating these concerns to relevant stakeholders." (Wang and Burris, 1994:178). The authors acknowledged the words of Freire who used photographs as "codes" to feature the realities that influence people's lives. Later, the authors used "photo voice" considering other meanings of the term photo novella which is used in other fields or contexts (Wang and Burris, 1997). The

authors further asserted that this design uses visual images to promote an effective, participatory means of sharing expertise and knowledge. The visual images taken in this study are related to the strengths of the organization, which is advanced by the principles of appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005), which further emphasizes the positive core of the organization and uses the 4-D cycle.

2.2 Sample and Sampling Procedures. The study employed purposeful sampling, applying the following inclusion criteria: 1) individuals employed by Lourdes College, 2) with a minimum of three (3) years of service at the institution, and 3) willing to participate in the research. Initially, twenty (20) personnel members were invited to participate; however, only seven (7) completed the entire inquiry process. Among the participants, three taught in the basic education department; two were non-teaching staff members with faculty status; and two were teaching in the higher education department.

2.3 Research Setting. The study was conducted in Lourdes College, a Catholic educational institution founded in 1928 by a Jesuit bishop. In the early years of its existence, it was exclusively for girls but later on accepted boys. It is administered by the Religious of Virgin Mary (RVM) Sisters and the boys by the Jesuits (LC History as stipulated in the Administrative Manual, 2020). The school serves learners from the nursery to the graduate school level. During the pandemic, all classes were held virtually, and considering the Level 1 health status of the city, the school developmentally transitioned to the new normal with limited students attending laboratory classes.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure: After obtaining approval from the School President, the researchers formally invited potential participants and provided detailed information about the study through the informed consent process. The data collection process took place over the course of five days, with different activities carried out on each day. On Day 1, the participants were oriented about the study's nature and purpose, the research design utilizing Photo Voice, the informed consent process, and the voluntary nature of their participation.

Day 2 involved training the participants in the basics of visual voices and photography. They were taught how to take pictures, including ethical considerations for capturing images relevant to the research questions. Using a set of research-related questions, the participants were guided to take pictures individually. Each participant captured between 12 to 100 pictures.

On Day 3, the participants were asked to select two photos that best represented their experiences related to each research question. They then provided titles and simple captions for each selected photo. The participants discussed their photos in groups under the guidance of the researchers. In the evening, one of the researchers sent them a copy of the PowerPoint template for the SHOWED Framework, which guided the participants in creating narratives about their photos. The SHOWED Framework, adapted from Wallerstein and Bernstein (1988), included guide questions such as: 1) What do you see in this photo? 2) What is happening? 3) How does this photo relate to our lives? 4) Why does this strength (or problem) exist? 5) How can we be empowered? and 6) What can we do to solve the problem or sustain good practices?

Day 4 involved printing and returning the participants' photos to them. Each photo was accompanied by a narrative based on the SHOWED Framework. The participants organized their photos collectively with the guidance of the researcher-facilitator. They discussed the stories behind each picture and were asked to group similar photos based on the narratives they created. After grouping the photos, the participants named or labeled the groups and further grouped similar labels. From this categorization process, four themes emerged, corresponding to the four cycles of the 4-D process: *enabling and nurturing presence, intensified institution, integral approach, and enhancing values and building connections*. The participants confirmed that these themes reflected their experiences of the institution's strengths and aspirations.

Day 5 marked the photo exhibition. The organized photos were displayed on PowerPoint slides and presented to guest administrators from both the higher education and basic education departments. For each group's photo exhibition, the guest administrators provided responses, recommendations, and concrete actions. The photo exhibition concluded with a debriefing among the researchers.

2.4 Trustworthiness. This study endeavored to observe trustworthiness using these evaluative criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility may be guided by the question, "How congruent are the findings with reality?" (Stahl and King, 2020). This study used methodological triangulation by complementing the photographs with other sources of evidence that reveal the strength of the organization, such as remarks from the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). When the themes were generated, and the story was articulated based on the 4D process, the participants were asked to verify if such a story reflected what they intended to express as capsulized in the themes. To contribute to transferability, the researchers instigated the participants to provide thick and rich descriptions of their experience along with the 4D process by taking as many photos as they could and describing the meaning of the photos with narratives. When these were described in detail, possible applications of the study may be possible in a similar context (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The researchers regularly conducted peer debriefing, and this contributed to the dependability of the study. This was evident at one time in the data analysis discussion when one member of the researcher's team made a remark which was not aligned with the process of eliciting participants' views. The other member made a gentle reminder to heighten the awareness of the team to get back on track. The researchers were mindful of the need to monitor the influence of their values and passion on the research process. Confirmability is getting as close to objective reality as possible (Stahl and King, 2020). In this study, the researchers facilitated the process that enabled the participants to articulate their stories based on their reality, and the study featured these stories precisely and accurately.

3. Results

The research questions were addressed by organizing the answers into themes and categories. Each theme and category were substantiated by notable quotations from participants' descriptions of their photos and dialogues during the focus group discussions. Furthermore, relevant images and pictures were included to enhance the depth of the findings.

Exemplary practices of Lourdes College as it transitions to the new normal (Discover). Every institution dreams of producing the best or exemplary practices as an emblem of productivity, excellence, and quality. The stories of the personnel participants (PPs) reveal their experiences of the practices of Lourdes College (LC) that they felt and considered laudable during pandemic times.

Through the dedicated men and women in Lourdes College who carried out their mission of promoting Ignacian values of faith, service, and excellence, different online activities were launched, which helped uplift my spirituality and emotionality. Home confinement led me to emotional imbalance and feelings of being alone. However, online activities and experiences helped me cope with these challenges. The spiritual and socio-emotional activities of LC greatly empowered me as an educator to become more resilient and adaptive to the new educational environment. (PP 6, Picture 41- Kasinati-an or Experience)

Emerging theme. From the stories shared by the participants, a prominent theme of "enabling and nurturing presence" emerged. This theme reflects the PPs' perspectives on the exemplary practice of LC, which is manifested through various aspects. Firstly, it encompasses the experience of personal and professional growth during the challenging times of the pandemic. Secondly, it covers the perceptible culture of care, particularly towards individuals who were most affected by the pandemic. Lastly, it envelopes the development of a culture of resilience.

The PPs expressed that they experienced the nurturing presence of LC through spiritual activities that provided solace and alleviated the pains and struggles brought about by the pandemic. An emotional moment during the workshop highlighted the impact of reducing online prayers to only one day per week instead of daily. The participant's face clearly displayed the significance of this activity in maintaining her sanity and connection with the school community. This nurturing and enabling presence extended beyond spiritual activities. It was deeply felt through the support received from the administration and fellow personnel, emphasizing a sense of unity and collective support within the school community.

I felt that the two pillars are expressions of giving attention, listening, and being more empathic to the needs of others, as shown by my co-workers and especially by the school. This speaks of my life in LC, where despite the pandemic, I can still feel the presence because of the strength and support they have given me, which made my life as an educator easier. The full support of LC is felt and experienced by me, and even amidst the problems in these trying times, they continue to be there for me, and I am confident that this will continue to be the new normal. (PP 4, Picture 23-Pag-amuma or nurturance)

Growth. One of LC's practices is giving the PPs an opportunity for growth even during the pandemic. LC has provided opportunities that enabled the PPs to develop their potential by mentoring and sending them to international webinars.

The picture speaks about my journey with Lourdes College during the pandemic. A one-of-a-kind roller coaster ride where I explore, discover, and experience the world. Despite being confined at home due to the pandemic, Lourdes provided me with opportunities and tasks where I explored beyond my capacities. International webinars and activities provide me with experiences to discover other horizons in life. This wonderful journey was made possible because of the wonderful opportunities vested in me by Lourdes College. Being entrusted with positions which are beyond my capacities and expertise like the ... provides me with opportunities to grow professionally and to explore new worlds ... (PP 6, Picture 40- Explore the world)

I was able to conquer my fear, and I am afraid because I had the feeling before that I don't know, I don't know much about technology...I fear that I cannot communicate well because I don't know how to present, but along the way, the school is very supportive of all the workshops and webinars that they have provided. I overcame my fear, and I grew professionally...(PP 3, Google Meet Video Recordings 2, Running Time 1:04:49-1:05:45)

Culture of Care. LC has created a mark in the hearts and minds of the PPs, as vividly captured in the photos. These photos were packed with meaningful stories bearing the following labels: journey with hope, pag-amuma (care), pagkamangihatagon (generosity), nobody left behind, pahinumdum (reminder), and suporta (support). All of these photos captured the PPs' experience of care in the institution.

...during the pandemic, we have experienced uncertainty..fear...I also felt fear because I am far away from my family. I am living alone, so I am anxious about whatever happens to me... I was reminded to be always hopeful even at the moment that I experienced the darkest moment in the world...I appreciated LC more during the pandemic because it continued... to reach more employees...concerned with the employees... employees were not left behind during the darkest moment...they helped the employees to sustain during that darkest moment (PP 2, Google Video Recordings 1, Running Time 44:09-47:38)

... I am reminded to do things following the school's vision and mission as well as its core values. With this constant reminder, I am awakened and guided to pursue my goals in life and to do things at its best. The reminders serve the purpose of keeping us focused and on track... (PP 3, Picture 17- Pahinumdum)

Resilience. Another significant aspect of LC is the cultivation of a culture of resilience among the participants, as depicted in the photos titled "grit" and "lig-on" (meaning strength). The long duration of service in LC contributes to the development of resilience among the PPs. During the workshop, one participant shared that her tenure in LC has solidified her connection to the institution, rendering her unshakable in the face of any unforeseen events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The support system and spiritual activities within the school community empower the PPs to remain steadfast amidst challenges.

I was challenged to teach online due to the pandemic. It was not easy for me to swim into this new way of teaching since I am not technology savvy. But because of my strong faith and confidence that I will be able to surpass all these challenges, then I was able to make it... being a teacher at Lourdes College, I should not stop teaching just because I am not "take" (tech-savvy), but I need to be positive that everything could be learned. Quitting is not a solution since I've developed trust and confidence during my long stay in this institution. (TNTP 1, Picture 1-Grit)

Amidst the challenges, the community remains strong to give quality education. (PP 5, Picture 38- Lig-on)

In one of my experiences, though I am only 3 years in the service, I felt and experienced the support system that despite the lack of resources, resources in general, the community is there to support and not only in terms of material resources but much more with the spiritual support. For me, this is a big help during the pandemic, especially the spiritual exercises given by the campus ministry. I could feel that one... the community that I belong to right now is different. (PP 5, Google Meet Video Recordings 2, Running Time 21: 47-24:44)

Innovations are envisioned to create an ideal Lourdes College in the new normal (Dream). As PPs narrated their positive stories about their experiences of commendable practices, they were also asked to envision an ideal LC during the new normal. Their photos speak of their ideals and aspirations for the school as it transitions to the new normal environment.

...During this pandemic, of course, we ventured into e-learning, and then we all know that our skills in terms of technology are not enough... especially for me. At my age also, one of my limitations is exploring the internet, but this is also my life-changing experience because I was able to explore the use of technology in teaching...we continue with this e-learning, but we need to equip ourselves more, and I look at myself in Lourdes College in the future nga fully equipped with e-learning pedagogies, materials, and different strategies... (PP6, Google Meet Video Recordings 1, Running Time 1:35:22-1:36:34)

Emerging theme. From the participants' narration of their experiences, one theme emerged. This theme is an intensified institution. What is an intensified institution? Through their photos, the PPs characterized an intensified institution as technologically competent, technologically advanced, and a breakthrough.

...the personnel who tirelessly and religiously work and become innovative, adaptive, and responsive upon embracing the new normal. This speaks about my inner desire for Lourdes College to be continuously innovative and adaptive. I have witnessed how the school and personnel adapt to the paradigm shift in the educational platform due to the pandemic and responsiveness to the needs of the students to empower them. I foresee the continuity of this responsiveness, adaptation, and technological innovation in the future. I observed that teachers also became innovative, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of the learners in the new educational platform; however, some teachers have encountered difficulties in coping with technological innovations and advancements, specifically in delivering lessons online. (PP 6, Picture 42- Adaptive Innovation)

Picture 42 was captioned "exploring learning pedagogies that are innovative, adaptive, and responsive." The caption speaks of her dream in the field of instruction and research, especially in enhancing the capability of teachers in the use of new technologies. She narrated that teachers have to adapt to these realities because this is already the new normal in education.

Technologically competent and advanced. Competence and advancement in the new technology in education are the demands not only of the new normal but also of contemporary education. This dream was spoken by the PPs in the following photos, which are entitled Reach out, full packed, adaptive innovation, and transmitting energy. For example, Picture 11 (PP 2)-Reach Out was given this caption "I need to reach out to students who need help in their information needs. Enhance technological competence." In her story during the workshop, PP 2 expressed the need to enrich her competence so that she can think of better ways to help the students in their need for information.

The electric wires represent energy transmitted. They speak with the quality of feeling energetic and enthusiastic in doing tasks. They also represent technological advancement. ...my desire for LC to become updated on the latest technological advancement and innovations in education... my desire that every Lourdesian has the energy and enthusiasm to update themselves on the latest technological advancement and innovations that we can use in delivering our lessons. Teacher plays a central role in the learning and teaching process. In the new normal, digital knowledge is of utmost importance. Success in learning depends mainly on how the teacher delivers the lesson in the digital world. Digitally knowledgeable teachers are empowered individuals. Digitally literate teachers use many apps and resources available online to deliver more thorough instruction. (PP 6, Picture 43- Transmitting Energy)

Breakthrough. From the stories of the PPs, almost all of them were talking about a new start for the school after the challenging experiences of the pandemic times. The photos talked about the positive perspectives of the PPs as they were saying that the new normal brings lots of prospects and opportunities for development and transformation.

I envisioned LC to flourish and prosper more in the new normal through collective efforts, teaching opportunities, more research, building community extension and a positive mental outlook on life, and maintaining good health. As a teacher of LC, I can see each one of us trying to be working together despite our differences. I can see a working environment that is nurturing, caring, and happy in a diverse workplace. Having a diverse working environment that is full of life, one that cares for each other, and a school that nurtures by encouraging and developing each personnel's growth to heighten an environment conducive to learning. (PP 4, Picture 26- Kariwasaan)

Like the butterfly, LC is a very resilient organization that, despite the recent pandemic, it continues to thrive, start again, and consider everything as a new beginning that could change the lives of personnel and students. I believe that someday we will become a university just like the caterpillar that will change into a beautiful butterfly in the future. I can see LC continuing to change the lives of the personnel and students. It may be subtle, but the impact is profound. (PP 4, Picture 25- New Beginnings; Changing lives)

Design of an ideal Lourdes College in the new normal. For this dream to be attained, strategic initiatives and processes as a prerequisite for the establishment of an ideal LC during the new normal were recounted by the PPs in their stories.

No matter how small my role is, this counts a lot in the realization of a bigger goal. Sharing my skills and talents in different stages, as other members of the community do, will pro-create a safe, loving, supportive environment. Collective participation is evident in the community... This image can strengthen these ideals by providing every personnel like me in this institution an opportunity to work and share with other offices in the institution in the attainment of the common dream... (PP 5, Picture 36- Gagmay'ng Linya)

Emerging theme. A theme emerged from the narration of the participants about the processes that they envisaged. This theme is an integral approach described by them as processes that include paradigm shift, clear strategic direction, collaboration and partnership, and maximization of both internal and external resources.

...This situation demands flexibility, understanding, perseverance, and love for me to do things passionately. ...I should be equipped with knowledge and skills in teaching subject areas. Though it requires time, energy, and confidence, I should be open-minded to whatever changes may happen. (PP 1, Picture 6- Open-minded)

Paradigm shift. For the PPs, there is a dire need, during the new normal, to shift to a new paradigm in education, or else the institution will be lagging. The PPs realized the need to start this dream in themselves by enhancing their previous practices in teaching and by moving on to a technology-based education and keeping themselves receptive to training on information communication technologies. As the caption of one photo said: "There are times that I need to let go and welcome new trends and strategies in teaching." (PP 1, Picture 5- Kabag-ohan)

Learners nowadays have a very short retention time and attention span in online classes and even in classroom discussions. As a teacher in this new normal, there is a need for me to let go and welcome new trends and strategies in teaching to engage my learners in online classes. ...Being a teacher in the classroom for quite a time, some strategies are already obsolete and need to be improved. Technology in classroom teaching is our life for this new normal. If I am not willing to let go of my usual practices of teaching face-to-face, then I will be left behind, and my learners will find my class boring. I will not stop learning by attending webinars and training and doing online class demonstrations for me to cope with the demands of the online way of teaching. (PP 1, Picture 5- Kabag-ohan)

Clear strategic direction. A dream needs to have a clear strategic direction. Stories of the PPs, as they showed their photos, revealed their concepts of strategic direction.

The walkway represents a focused vision of the objectives set for the institution. This is a specific strategy we can work on to achieve the dreams I envisioned for Lourdes College. Having a clear vision and a headstrong and steadfast objective will lead to a successful direction. ...We must set attainable, quantifiable, and clear objectives as an effective strategy to achieve what we dream for Lourdes College. ...we always focus on the objectives set to be achieved. Focus on the set goals will lead to success. Setting measurable performance goals produces outcomes. (PP 6, Picture 44- Panglantaw)

Waiting for the gate to open gives us a glimpse of going home after a hard day's work, just like making policies and implementing goals... I will try my best to continue to be a good person by maintaining professionalism at all times, especially in this new normal. (PP 4, Picture 27- Glimpse)

Collaboration and partnership. The dream of the PPs can be realized if there is a presence of collaboration and partnership within and even outside the school community. The photos of the PPs talk about interesting strategies of collaboration and partnership, such as the recognition of the individual's contribution, involvement in the tasks, a sense of belongingness, partnering and collaborating with local and international institutions, and strengthening the linkage endeavors.

As a member of this community, this made me reflect on the imagery that no matter how unimportant or small the function of each person or individual, if everyone does get involved and participates, then I can also make a difference and contribute towards a bigger goal. This serves as a reminder for me to keep myself involved to attain this vision... through the performance of my tasks as a guidance staff...Everyone has a significant role... this encouraged me to heighten my sense of belongingness to the institution. (PP 5, Picture 37- Linya)

In the picture is a green, strong, and flourishing plant standing steadily in one of the corners of Lourdes College. The plant signifies Lourdes College as a growing community. It speaks about growth and production as we continually partner and collaborate with other schools internationally and locally. Linkages and Partnerships are the best strategies for achieving my dreams for Lourdes College. I have seen how this activity develops students and educators to be globally competent individuals. This strategy empowers not only students but also educators to shine in the international arena. I witness how they display excellence and multicultural understanding. (PP 6, Picture 45- Flourishing)

Maximization of internal and external resources. The PPs during the workshop were in unison in saying that the school needs to maximize both internal and external resources. Leveraging the resources of the institution for the PPs means growing professionally, discovering personal capabilities, utilizing in-house experts, and sharing expertise.

The plants that are watered generously will grow healthy and lovely, just like an Ignacian Marian educator is showered with many opportunities and activities for him or her to grow professionally, becoming an efficient educator. ...They allow me to experience so many things in life that I have only first encountered since my employment...The RVM Sisters' generosity is very much appreciated because, through this, it helps me discover my capabilities and develop myself for the better. ...attending different webinars and seminars gives me a chance to enrich myself professionally. (PP 3, Picture 20-Paggalam)

...I am challenged to do my part to better serve our students and parents, especially during this time of the pandemic. With that, I need to equip myself with all knowledge and skills that I need for this educational endeavor and allow myself to grow and be of service to the institution I owe...Tapping LC personnel and sharing their expertise with their colleagues surely will intensify the professional growth of the personnel. Also, inviting resource speakers locally and internationally will hone the teacher's potential. (PP 3, Picture 19- Anahaw)

Implementation and sustainability of an ideal Lourdes College in the new normal. Strategies to reach the PPs dream should be realized in its implementation. However, it does stop in the implementation; it must also be sustained. The PPs narrated how their dream for an ideal LC during the new normal was implemented and sustained.

Emerging theme. From the stories of the personnel, a theme emerged. This theme is enhancing values and building connections. This theme is defined by optimism, commitment, and networks.

Optimism. Optimism is a positive response to challenging situations. From their stories, the PPs narrated their life-changing experiences by being optimistic. For the PPs, optimism enables them to see the goodness that life has in store for them, like happiness, success, and good health. They also see a supportive community. Optimism also means seeing inner values and openness to opportunities.

...Having an optimistic attitude helps us be happier, more successful, and healthier. It can protect against depression, making people more resistant to stress, and may even help people live longer. With this, I am reminded of the beauty of life. That there are good life's struggles, and that with the support of one another as Ignacian Marian personnel truly, we can conquer our fears and become successful and fruitful individuals. ...being optimistic in life's challenges ...no matter what kind of trials that life may bring, being positive or having an optimistic outlook in life ...will help me achieve my goals in life... I have hopes for myself that I can win battles courageously with God's providence. (PP 3, Picture 22-Kahayag)

The flower represents the personal commitment of every Lourdesian to attain my dream for the institution. As a Marian educator, I show my passion and love for teaching by exploring novel and imaginative teaching pedagogies to inspire students and enhance their learning. Innovative methods may help rekindle students' enthusiasm and interest in learning. Achieving one's goal necessitates love and passion in everything we do. The personal commitment to displaying passion and love for our noble task is a byproduct of teaching Ignacian values to our students. The values of service and excellence teach us to exemplify and live what we teach and develop in our students. Teaching success requires love and passion, which is a crucial component of the learning process. Passionate and loving teachers deeply care about our students' growth. We foster curiosity and enthusiasm in learning, thus, empowering our students to work hard. Our level of dedication to our careers inspires and motivates our students. (PP 6, Picture 46 -Love and passion)

Commitment. To implement and sustain their dream, the PPs narrated through their photos the importance of the commitment of an employee to the institution and their job. They expressed that although LC had already attained excellence, where it has the three stamps of excellence (ISO, ISA, PAASCU), LC, in the new normal, should maintain this excellence by being an intensified institution.

As LC climbs the ladder of success, establishing and maintaining stability and continuity is a must. The picture tells about the steps that Lourdes College takes to attain success. We may be able to reach our goals set but let us not forget consistency or maintaining what has been achieved. Although success is at hand, we will continue our commitment to work for service, excellence, and faith. Lourdes College exemplifies excellence as one of the Ignacian Values we develop for our students. As we continue striving for excellence, we promote continuity and stability as a way also to achieve excellence. Continuity and stability in progress show commitment and dedication in every endeavor we take. This will empower us as educators as well as our students. (PP 6, Picture 47- Padayon sa paglambo)

Networks. An ideal LC can be sustained through networks. Networks for PPs involved internal and external collaborations. LC has started its internationalization program that enables the school to collaborate and link with other colleges and universities in Asia.

During the pandemic, we were able to have connections with our students and the school through linkages and virtual meetings. It allowed me to connect with others. There is an opportunity to invite international speakers to help enhance learning, and at the same time, the linkage was improved and established more fully. Ensuring sustainability and collaboration with other schools globally, as well as the relationship with each other in school, is ideal. (PP 4, Picture 29- Linkages)

There are times in our life when it is difficult to be one with one another because we, too, are carrying a burden that may be detrimental to our growth in LC. ...it is essential for me to apply teamwork...understanding that "pagkaka-isa" will make the workload manageable. ...to sustain the ideal practice in the new normal, there should be unity, commitment, and willingness to help and learn. (PP 4, Picture 30- Pagkakaisa)

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

It is, thus, inferred that the personnel of Lourdes College have high and noble aspirations for the institution, as captured in their stories through the photo voice. They uphold and affirm the school's enabling and nurturing presence during the pandemic and envision an intensified institution using an integral approach by enhancing its value systems and strengthening its connections. The Photovoice has tremendously contributed to the eliciting of tacit knowledge of the strengths of the institution, taking the lens of the personnel as the institution transitions itself to the New Normal. Firstly, the process has heightened personnel's participation, thereby increasing their sense of ownership in the assessment of the school's practices during the transition phase to the New Normal. Secondly, the use of the process allows the participants to create a powerful image of their desired future of the institution with spontaneity, naturalness, and lightheartedness as they relate their stories with zest and enthusiasm. Thirdly, it also provides ample opportunities for the participants to affirm their positive qualities as well as the strengths of the institution, which are essential factors in leveraging the school's practices given the realities of the pandemic.

Finally, the use of Appreciative Inquiry instigates the participants to focus more on the strengths while reflecting on critical issues and concerns that need to be collectively addressed by all the stakeholders to weave those dreams and aspirations for the institution. From this hindsight, it thus behooves the institution to go back to the planning board and consider the inputs derived in this study and replicate the same process involving other stakeholders such as parents, students, and alumni. Such a move may be considered to get a holistic and varied perspective of the institution's desired future, given the context of the complex and highly volatile environment. Since the success of any organization necessitates collective efforts, the study's findings point to the need for personnel to continue aligning and enhancing their values of commitment, optimism, resilience, grit, flexibility, gratitude, and passion for growth which are essential ingredients for weaving and crafting the desired future.

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