

THROUGH THE LENS OF RESILIENCE: A SELF-SUPPORTING ORPHAN'S PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY

¹Anthony S. Morse*, ¹Joshua Miguel A. Abelardo, ¹Julieta III R. Lobaton, ¹Princess Ann T. Mangata, ¹Reshelle Joy M. Mantiza, ¹Lawrence ¹Miguel D. Nisperos, ¹Ian Carlo M. Patrimonio, ¹John Paul Al C. Serrano, and ¹Renato S. Roche

Abstract

The study was conducted to analyze the challenges experienced by a self-supporting orphan photographer, offering light on their experiences following the death of their parents. Orphans who seek a profession in photography have special obstacles that are sometimes neglected. Understanding these difficulties is essential for improving their professional development and general well-being by establishing support systems. A semi-structured interview with a self-supporting orphan photographer was done using a qualitative research technique, specifically a narrative approach. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participant to guarantee a thorough examination of their experiences. Thematic analysis was used to find similar themes and patterns, offering significant insights into this individual's issues. According to the study, the self-supporting orphan photographer encountered significant challenges such as financial difficulties, lack of clients, mental and emotional instability, and lost hope for the future. To handle these issues, the participant used tactics such as smart money management, adopting a realistic mentality, appreciating the moment, and taking cautious risks. Furthermore, these challenges motivated the participant to emphasize self-sufficiency, pursue a satisfying life, and undergo personal growth. This study emphasized the need for specific support connections in addressing the problems that the self-supporting orphan photographer experienced. Meeting their financial, social, and mentoring requirements can help them develop their careers and general well-being. The struggles experienced by orphaned people and those pursuing artistic pursuits are highlighted through the story of an independent orphan photographer. The general people may become more empathetic and understanding as a result.

Keywords: challenges, eye captures, photographer, self-supporting, strategies

*Corresponding Author: Anthony S. Morse; anthonymorse42@gmail.com

1.0 Introduction

The loss of one or both parents can be associated with a higher vulnerability for children, both from a short and long-term perspective. Several studies have shown an increased risk of mental health problems and threats to emotional well-being for affected children, such as anxiety, depression, and a perceived lack of control over what happens in one's life. Parental death in childhood is also associated with an increased long-term risk of suicide. A child's problems post-bereavement may also appear in school as concentration difficulties or behavioral problems (Bergman *et al.*, 2017). Thus, this paper is primarily concerned about such matters and focuses only on knowing the challenges experienced as a self-supporting individual.

A self-supporting orphan photographer's life provides a distinctive perspective on determination, drive, and creativity in the face of hardship. The study of such a person's journey can give insight into their personal experiences and struggles while striving to survive alone. By examining his story, the field gains insight into the potential of photography to transcend circumstances, inspiring others and acknowledging the chains of fortunate and unfortunate events which led him to the industry.

Following Garmezy's Resilience Theory in the field of psychology, resilience is the ability to recover and adapt in the face of challenging conditions. The following statement best expresses this idea: "Rather than simply being resistant to stress, resilience signifies the ability to recuperate and maintain adaptive behavior following an initial period of withdrawal or powerlessness when confronted with a stressful situation." In a similar line, this theory offers insightful information on how people may successfully handle stresses and develop resilience, a trait essential for achieving long-term success and well-being. The participant in the current study strengthened his belief when it came to see the value of building resilience as a way to deal with the difficulties and setbacks that come with life.

Furthermore, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), and its explanation of how to promote

intrinsic drive, social development, and general well-being are also of significant significance. According to this idea, people's motivation, goals, and ambitions are significantly influenced by their desire for relatedness, competence, and autonomy. Similar to how it does with our study, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) explains how the participant used photography as a coping mechanism and was able to motivate themselves despite the absence of a nurturing maternal figure in their life.

Aside from that, the Existential Theory (also known as Existentialism), which was developed as a notion by Søren Kierkegaard, can be viewed as a philosophical framework stressing that human decisions determine how an individual develops. The intrinsic freedom and responsibility of humans are emphasized under this idea. It affects how people give meaning to their lives and come to logical conclusions in an essentially illogical world. The key aspect of this theory is its focus on diverse aspects of a person's psychological health, which promotes a connection to self-awareness that is unaffected by structural or cultural pressures. However, it's critical to understand that some people are born into difficult environments where social institutions have a substantial impact on their life trajectories.

An investigation into this topic involves acknowledging the usefulness of methods of determining grief in adolescents. Particularly, the Adolescent Grief Inventory (AGI) surfaces as an innovative tool for assessing grief in adolescents. It is a comprehensive measure that is suitable for use with a broad range of bereaved adolescents, including those who may be at risk of experiencing negative mental health consequences as a result of their grief (Andriessen, Mowl *et al.*, 2018). Through AGI, the study may reveal a connection between valid grief assessment and bereaved adolescent experiences characterized by problems such as betrayal, self-blame, and suicide ideation, echoing the journey of the self-supporting orphan photographer.

One factor necessary in the photography industry is the success that a photographer can attain with their talents. Success

often comes from a combination of talent and opportunity, and that traditional education may not be necessary for everyone to achieve their goals (Worth Books, 2017). Relatively, Worth Books (2017) also cited examples of successful entrepreneurs and innovators who did not complete college but were able to excel in their fields through hard work and determination.

While narrative studies provide insights into the problems experienced by young individuals seeking early careers, there are substantial gaps in our present understanding of this field. For example, Andriessan, Mowll *et al.* (2018) stated that the development of suitable support for bereaved adolescents requires understanding and knowledge of how they experience their grief and mental health. This topic extends to the acknowledgment of challenges experienced by the self-supporting photographer, the strategies that he utilized to survive, and the effects of those challenges in driving his motivation. To address this gap, a research study is needed. Related to this problem, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (2019) states that research in this field can contribute to and provide coping strategies for grieving family loss — an idea that can improve the well-being of victims of similar cases. Nonetheless, these approaches have the potential to reduce long-term stress; however, they fall short of completely resolving it, particularly when not taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each individual impacted.

The loss of one's parents may be emotionally distressing, and it can harm one's mental health. Dealing with these emotional issues as a self-supporting photographer can be tough, since there may be no support structure in place to assist with coping. Being a self-supporting photographer can also be financially tough, as the trade does not always generate a consistent income. Without parental assistance, the financial load might grow even greater, necessitating more work and time to make ends meet.

With this context in mind, the present study aims to understand and narrate the challenges encountered by the self-supporting orphan photographer. This includes the motivations and strategies that the participant made use of to reach his current state. This research study is a method of accumulating knowledge from the participant relating to his past occurrences to be analyzed and used to provide knowledge about the involved and concerned agencies.

2.0 Methodology

The qualitative narrative study was conducted at Prk. Sonny's Farm, Brgy. Mabua, Tandag City, Surigao del Sur. The participant of this study was a 22-year-old self-supporting male photographer, living in Brgy. Tina, San Miguel, Surigao del Sur. Purposive sampling was applied where the chosen participant corresponds to the following criteria: must be a photographer, self-supporting, an orphan, and lives independently. The study used a semi-structured interview guide where the interview guide contained common questions about the challenges experienced by the self-supporting photographer. Questions were validated by experts and were asked during the in-depth interview with the participant. Thematic analysis was applied in analyzing the gathered data to determine the challenges experienced by the self-supporting orphan photographer.

This research applied an organized procedure to collect the data. First, we had to secure the required permits, which entailed getting the approval of the barangay captain and the principal of Tandag National Science High School. Mabua, Tandag City, to interview people. After verifying that our intended participant, an independent photographer and orphan, met our requirements, we

subsequently obtained their agreement. A consent form was used to make a formal agreement for participation. The interview was performed thoroughly, taking into account the participant's chosen setting and employing a conversational style to dive deeply into the subject. We promised anonymity, clarified the goal of the study, and welcomed any questions from the participant. The participant's replies were recorded throughout using their preferred audio recording technique and afterward typed down, with an emphasis on the main takeaways.

Researchers can learn more about participants' ideas, feelings, and the varied nature of their lived experiences by carefully studying their data, which may include interviews, narratives, or other types of qualitative material. The use of thematic analysis for data acquired from a single respondent is dependent on the study objectives and the level of insight desired. Since the goal is to dive deeply into that individual's unique experiences and opinions, thematic analysis can prove quite useful. The participant's data was examined about the themes by grouping the replies into several topic areas. The responses received from the participants were used to organize the data into some relevant topics. After analyzing the data, the results were returned and validated to the participant through online means. The process of validation involved participating in online conversations, messages, and follow-up contacts with the participant.

From our participant's experiences, the Resilience theory by Garmezy elaborates on his struggles as a whole. He recovered and adapted in the face of challenging conditions that approached him. By applying a narrative approach, this study successfully delivers the story of the participant from his perspective. However, this limits the researchers' capability to understand common and recurring patterns that emerged in his lifestyle. This opens more questions to be answered by future researchers who are studying related topics.

Guided by the ethical considerations of this research, the participant did not suffer any harm as a result of their participation. Before the study, the participant, the students, and the teachers at Tandag National Science High School provided their full consent. Moreover, the confidentiality of the research participant was protected. The participant's voluntary participation in the study was given great consideration. Also, if the participant chose to, they have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time.

In handling the data, an adequate level of confidentiality was ensured. Any form of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way, was avoided. Affiliations of any kind, funding sources, and potential conflicts of interest were disclosed. Acknowledgment of works of the other authors used in any part of the study was referenced with the use of APA format.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Concerning our study, various existing theories have been defined by many authors which paved the way for the progress of our research. Each one of them signifies a relation between the past and current situations experienced by the participant. In the field of psychology and his Resilience theory, the concept of resilience has been defined by Garmezy as the ability to recover and adapt in response to a stressful event, as described in the following quote: "not necessarily resistive to stress. Instead, resilience is meant to represent the ability to bounce back and continue adaptive behavior after initial withdrawal or powerlessness when a stressful situation first starts."

Relatively, this theory provides insights into how individuals can cope with stressors and develop resilience, which is crucial for achieving long-term success and well-being. In the case of this study's participant, he reinforced his idea to realize the importance of nurturing his resilience to help him navigate through life's challenges and setbacks. The enriching experiences and knowledge that broadened his understanding of his grievous situation became a factor for him to develop resilience and overcome adversities.

Moreover, the Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being (SDT) by Ryan and Deci (2000) is a theory of motivation that proposes that the need for competency, autonomy, and relatedness are all essential human mental and psychological needs; the fulfillment of which drive the motivation, aspiration, and ambition of the individual. Competence, autonomy, and relatedness being universal psychological and mental needs are key components of the theory. It is also concerned with the context of social situations and the differences between individuals' experiences and lives that drive internal, controlled, and autonomous motivation and use them to predict an individual's performance, psychological health, and progression.

Comparably, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) relates to our study primarily due to its proposed explanation of the subject's internal autonomous motivation in supporting themselves through photography and how they motivate themselves despite the loss of a providing maternal figure in their lives. The effects of the hardships and challenges faced by the participant can be seen through the lens of SDT and their competence in their work, autonomy in their life, and the relatedness of others around them. Alongside this, external factors in the context of their situation will also be considered.

From a different perspective, Existential Theory is a branch of philosophy that focuses on the meaning of life. Explored as an idea by Søren Kierkegaard, the Existential Theory (also referred to as Existentialism, Merriam 1828) can be taken as a philosophical theory that means that someone's development depends on their choice and which emphasizes that everyone is free and responsible. It is the view of humans that defines their meaning in life and tries to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe.

This theory gave the emphasis it places on various psychological well-being of an individual builds a connection to recognizing oneself without being affected or convinced by structural or social elements. However, it is vital to understand that some are born into a hostile world in which social systems have evolved. They have a large influence on how they live their life. Individuals begin to discover themselves and find meaning in such an environment through free will, choice, and personal responsibility. It also assists them to think and act without concern for anxiety or fear of messing up one's life.

All three theories provided ideas that can be used as the foundation to support the progress of the study. The Resilience theory, Self-Determination theory, and Existential theory complement each other and give rise to the succeeding theory to elaborate its relation to the challenges experienced by the self-supporting photographer. In our study, we examined how these theories are applied to the experiences of individuals who have undergone such an experience. By exploring his story, we can better understand how the participant navigated adversity and overcame those obstacles in life. Additionally, we gained insights into the factors that promote well-being and social development, which can inform well-being in individuals who have undergone similar experiences.

Table 1. Themes emerged from participant's responses

Challenges Experienced by an Orphan while Working as a Photographer	Strategies Utilized by Self-supporting Photographer to continue living	Effects of Challenges in Motivating the Self-supporting photographer
1. Financial Issues	1. Using Wealth Wisely	1. The Realization of Surviving Alone
2. Lack of Clients	2. Having a Practical Mindset	2. Living a Satisfying Life
3. Mental and Emotional Stability	3. Enjoying the Present	3. Transitioning into a Better Person
4. Losing Hope in the Future	4. Taking Risk	

1. Challenges Experienced by an Orphan while Working as a Photographer

Challenges experienced by orphans while working independently are hard, as life goes on we go through hardship life challenges that may affect our lives in ways we cannot comprehend easily. Some of these may have a positive or negative impact on the lives of people. Despite these challenges, such individuals' indomitable spirit and tenacity may lead to exceptional successes, as their personal experiences provide depth and a unique perspective to their creativity.

Some challenges such as finding employment to support themselves were faced by orphans. When working as a photographer, the self-sufficient photographer faced multiple challenges. He faced challenges with his finances, his capacity to find clients, and his mental and emotional stability. Despite these obstacles, the participant overcame them even without someone to encourage and assist him in the pursuit of his goals, which helped him become successful in the field of photography.

1. Financial Issues

This situation is crucial for individuals and businesses alike, empowering them to achieve stability and work hard to sustain. From managing personal budgets to making strategic business decisions, the realm of finance encompasses a wide range of challenges and opportunities. The photographer said:

"Waray nag support na angkol og ante sa ako so meaning tanan kwarta na inipon ko gipalit ko sa camera. Then problema nako kay 3 months straightan way client so waray kwarta. So murag na ngadto ako nagka problema kay... murag makita mo bitaw na basin (mikatawa gamay) masayang ako mga kahago, ing ana. Ing ana, ing ana ang ako first na problema sa pagsugod ko gaud sa photography ("I had no relatives to support me, so all the money I had saved, I used to buy a camera. Then, my problem was that for 3 straight months, I had no clients, which meant I had no income. You can see that my hard work did not pay off. This was the first problem I encountered when I entered the field of photography).

Financial issues can occur unexpectedly, often causing stress, uncertainty, and financial instability which the participant has experienced. The participant survived due to discipline, resilience, and a proactive approach. By implementing these strategies and remaining focused on long-term financial goals, the participant had

finally built a solid foundation for a secure financial future.

This situation correlates to the study of Thomson (2018) which states that a self-supporting photographer has also their own experiences and challenges faced in their daily living. These remote working environments and mediated communication have profound impacts on a photographer's development, roles, and responsibilities. Furthermore, orphaned adolescents are more vulnerable to crises due to the absence of assistance from their family members. Teens who have been abandoned do not inherit the personality growth that is supposed to take place in the original family environment, particularly with their parents (Mazaya & Supradewi, 2023).

2. Lack of Clients

The participant was negatively affected by the challenge of a lack of clients. He said that he did not have a client for three months in a row, therefore he did not have a source of earnings to maintain himself before. The photographer said:

"Then problema nako kay 3 months straightan way client so waray kwarta. So murag na ngadto ako nagka problema kay... murag makita mo bitaw na basin (mikatawa gamay) masayang ako mga kahago, ing ana. ("Then, for three straight months, my problem was that I had no clients, which meant I had no money. So my problems started there; you can see that my hard work did not pay off").

We have to start from the beginning when starting a business, which is one of the challenges of the photographer. Because most people in our place only hire photographers when there is a special occasion, it is difficult to get clients in the photography industry. Also, the fact that there are more well-known photographers, it follows that it is difficult to find. As a result, the participant encountered that issue and nearly gave up, believing that his efforts would be wasted

The self-supporting photographer has their own experiences and challenges faced in their daily lives. As studied by Thomson (2018), these remote working environments and mediated communication have impacts on a photographer's development, roles, and responsibilities. This relates to the photographic workforce and the proliferation of platforms, especially in the freelancing world. The experiences and challenges of freelance photographers are not just about enjoying the title "lens for hire" but also the disadvantages that include not having enough benefits and having an inconsistent workload in terms of photography.

3. Mental and Emotional Instability

Individuals with mental and emotional stability maintain their inner peace and composure in the face of trials and pressures. They are better prepared to deal with life's ups and downs, maintain good relationships, and make wise judgments. The participant said:

"Kuan... saaa... nadepress sa gud ako, 2020 nawa si mama ngadto gayud yashift an ako kuan ahhh. Kay gikan sa hayahay na kuan bitaw yaun sitwasyon na waray, yaun sa comfort zone... tapos pagkawa ni mama ngadto gayud ako naa... na laong pa nimo, uno pa yadton laong... nimo na nagkalisud about sa photography in general... in short na apektuhan sab an ako pag... photography kay syempre ano wala na

gayud ako madoulan. Nadepress ako, nakahunahuna na ngani ako nan mga... suicidal thoughts ba... tungod kay... yadto na time hopeless na gayud ako. Before ako nagpalit nan camera depress naay ako yadto. Bag-o ako nagdesisyon na magpalit nan camera, okay na ako yadto. So one year gayud ako depress ah tinoud ini one year gayud ako na depress, di laini gayud baya ma depress... kay mangaig kaw, di mo maatiman imo kaugalingon, tambay da kaw ga huna huna da kaw permi... amo amo yaun ako uhmmm kalisdan nan pagkawa nan ako pamilya... mama ("I was really depressed back in 2020 when my mom passed away. It really shifted my perspective. You see, I was in a comfortable and easygoing situation, and then when my mom was gone, well, you can't imagine what that feels like. It made me struggle, especially with photography in general. In short, my photography was affected because I lost all motivation. I felt depressed, even had suicidal thoughts because during that time, I felt completely hopeless. Before I decided to buy a new camera, I was already feeling depressed. After I made that decision, things started to get better. I was truly depressed for a whole year. It's really hard to be in that state because you really get unattended, you won't be able to take care of yourself anymore and constantly overthinking things. Those were my struggles when I lost my family, especially my mother.")

The participant felt uneasy at the time since he had lost his mother in 2020. His mother's death had an impact on his mental and emotional health since he had a wonderful easy existence before going out of his comfort zone and seeing what the real world was like. Therefore, his passion for photography was limited by the situation. Also, he had no one to talk to because he had lost both parents and had no siblings. He had to try his best to survive alone after losing both of his parents and having no siblings to rely on. Then, after a year of depression, he finally decided to buy himself a camera.

The mental and emotional struggles experienced by the participant support the study of Feigelman *et al.* (2017), which states that childhood parent loss is a painful occurrence associated with numerous short and long-term well-being consequences, such as worsening mental health and adjustment difficulties. Because they have more protective elements, including social support and knowledge about how to get the help that buffers against negative changes connected to parental death, children in households with more resources may be able to deal better.

4. Losing Hope in the Future

Losing hope in the future has a significant impact on a person's actions and way of thinking. We must take courage from our collective resilience and the innumerable examples of human ingenuity and compassion that have surmounted impossible odds in the face of tragedy. For the participant::

"Sauna... oo before nan... nan... kuan pagsugod ko... ming stop ako pag skuyla. Hibawo kaw... min stop ako pag skuyla... first year lang ako mi skuyla, first year college... mi stop ako pag... skuyla kay tungod... tungod sa kalisdan... then... then... amo yadton... kuan... ming stop ako pag skuyla then gipadayun ko gayud...

an... kuan photography since may ako na kita, ing an aba may ako makita na... this is the for me gayud na... na... word dili kung... dili kung sa sugod... makita ko is pangwarta da... and then nagkadugay nakita ko na ahh ini na baya an ako love... passion oo... ini na gayud baya an ako passion ("Back then, yes, before. You know... I stopped going to school... I only attended my first year of college... I quit going to school because of financial difficulties... and then...that's when... I stopped going to school and pursued...photography, since I had seen it, and, you know, I saw that this is really for me, not just for the money at the beginning... it was a realization that this is my love... my passion, yes, this is truly my passion")"

The weight of the sentiments left the participant with a heavy heart and an inability to see the good in things in the future, causing them to lose hope. It is critical, however, to recognize that hopelessness is not the end. The decision of the participant to pursue dreams over formal education resulted in a life of fulfillment, personal satisfaction, and extraordinary achievements.

This situation correlates to the study of Sydney (2023), which states that there is no reason why photography should not also be your craft. It is an art. A full-time freelance photography career gives you the chance to pursue your passion and improve your abilities while still achieving your financial objectives. Being a self-supporting photographer means taking a photograph as an independent contractor. It also requires meeting contract specifications that include shot lists set by clients and being specific to its subject. As stated by Kaye *et al.* (2020), no matter whether the objective is comfort or cure, hope can assist and create room for coping and healing. Importantly, it does not seem dangerous to rely on hope; in particular, parental optimism for a cure near the end of their child's life has not been linked to an increase in depressive symptoms or long-term complex grief. Instead of trying to ignore the pain, hope serves as a soother.

II. Strategies Utilized by the Self-supporting Photographer to continue living independently

In today's ever-evolving world, the landscape of professional photography has witnessed a significant transformation. The participant utilized strategies to continue living independently. These strategies include using wealth wisely, having a practical mindset, enjoying the present, and taking risks. As we continue progressing in life, there are different strategies that we utilized to sustain living independently. The participant relies solely on photography skills to generate income, allowing him to lead an independent lifestyle. However, navigating the challenges of sustaining a successful photography career, especially while pursuing an independent living, demands specific strategies and approaches.

We explored the various strategies employed by the self-supporting photographer to maintain an independent lifestyle. The participant utilized different strategies that fueled him to continue and pursue being a photographer. By delving into these strategies, aspiring photographers and industry professionals can glean valuable insights to enhance their careers and make informed decisions about pursuing independent photography.

1. Using Wealth Wisely

The participant's situation on managing the earned income is

one of the strategies utilized to sustain his living. This process has made him upkeep the earned income by being a photographer. This applied strategy has gained him more equipment to grow and expand his business. The field of business does revolve around this matter which they invest to have more and give better customer services. The photographer said:

"Na learn ko sab pag manage nan kwarta nan kuan na ako first year na sa photography, first... year sa photography... before pa ako nag practice gayud nan kuan. Six months sa gud yadton pag boom nan photography nako is grabe ako gastos, makita mo sa gud na... an imo tanan... hinaguan may makita mo na ba na... kuan may may result na... sa pag sugod sa... photography. ("I learned to manage my money in my first year in photography, before I really practiced in my job. This is because during my sixth month in photography, my job started to improve and I spent a lot of money, you can see that... all of your... hard work... has a result that... when you start... photographing")"

You can do everything with money. But by using it wisely, investing it, and making good use of it, you could grow or double the money you have invested. The participant invested his money more to expand his business to improve and give better quality to the clients. With this, he invested more in better equipment. Since the business was known to the public, he gained more and bought more equipment.

"Haud sa ako gihimo sa photography, gi invest ko tanan hibaw ako risk gayud yadto. Nadepress na gani ako yadto kay warae gayud, lisudi an ako sitwasyon pero tungod kay laong pa nila an life sugal sugal na, magtake kaw gayud nan risk, waray imo choice mo take kaw gayud nan risk ("Just like how I did in photography, I invested it all knowing that it was a risk. I was depressed because I have nothing, my situation was hard but because like what they said that life is a gamble, and you should take a risk, there is no choice you must take a risk")"

The participant showed how he invested in things and took risks with his photography. By using his earned money, he invested more in his equipment and managed to grow his business. The participant placed his trust in his business with perseverance; his business grew, and made some risks to have better customer service.

We have our wants because of the influence of society feeding us. From the website SEC saving and investing (n.d.), understanding how to safeguard your financial security is one of the most essential things you'll ever need. You do not require a genius to complete it. You just have to be aware of a few fundamentals, create a plan, and be prepared to follow it, regardless of how much or how little money you have. It is important to educate yourself about your options. Nobody can assure you that you will profit from your financial commitments. But if you learn the truth about saving and make an informed decision and plan, you can achieve financial security over time and make use of the advantages of money management.

2. Having a Practical Mindset

A practical mindset is crucial in our fast-paced world, allowing

us to approach problems realistically and make informed decisions. This could help us in choosing things. Furthermore, having a practical mindset could help us a lot. It helps bridge the gap between aspirations and reality, enabling individuals to adapt, save, and grow their businesses effectively. Having a practical mindset is one of the best strategies to do to grow and gain more from the business. By practically thinking about what to do, you could have your ways to save up for yourself and also for your business for photographers, especially those who are self-reliant, a practical mindset is a vital strategy for sustaining themselves and achieving financial stability.

"Kwarta, so kinahanglan pagsolbad nan problema is kinahanglan mo practisan an paghawid nan kwarta. Kinahanglan an mindset mo na is... maningkamot na ako, dili na ako magpa... ana ba. Amo gayud yaun ako gi huna huna, dina gayud ako magpa... laong pa... kun may ako man plano na mga madayaw, dina gayud ako magpa pugong. Syempre practicalan... then... then nagkadugay ngadto ko pa nakita gayud na... gustohi ko na gayud mag photographer." (Money, to solve a problem, you need to practice handling money. You need to have the mindset of striving hard, not just giving up. That's really what I think, I won't let myself... say. I really think that if I have good plans, I won't hold back. Of course, be practical. And... it took me a while to realize that... I really want to be a photographer)"

By knowing how to handle money, and having perseverance in life, you could strive and grow as an individual. Also, if you have good plans, do not hesitate, and do your way to achieve everything you have dreamed of. By having a practical mindset and investing in things for developing your skills, you could earn everything and see that you belong to that career.

The best is desired in today's environment. In a world where perfection is unaccepted, you will need to work toward your objective. It is common for us to overestimate our skills and prowess. The first obstacle you should get through in your attempt is by acting sensibly. To continue going above and beyond to accomplish your goal, it is preferable to slightly undervalue your talents. Many people lack practicality as they blindly pursue their goals. Some people even continue their interests without considering whether they could make a living from them. Alternatively, they may enjoy their job (Banerjee, 2022). Having a practical mindset is essential because this is the way to lead our future.

3. Enjoying the Present

All the struggles and challenges that the participant experienced have been paid off. The results that he sees today bring him to his contentment, as the participant stated:

"Oo, kontento gayud ako kay makita kun result. Oo... yaun... aw wara ko na, wara masayang tanan na experience ko" (Absolutely, I'm happy to see the results. I have no regrets about my experiences.)"

The results of the struggles given to him brought him to his satisfaction as he felt that all the challenges that he experienced had been fruitful. His perseverance enabled him to move forward toward his goals. He is content that all the things that he experienced did not

go to waste.

The participant is happy as he continues to progress in his photography career. The progress is not just improving as a photographer but also improving as a better individual; the participant said that:

"Oo nalipay ako sa pag continue saako kuan, sa progress sa photography kay damu nan makita ko na result ahh dili lang.. dili lang as a photographer, as an individual.. na change... murag... better na gayud bitaw kuman. ("I am happy to continue my progress in photography because I have seen a lot of results, not just as a photographer but also as an individual. It's like I feel really better now.)"

This tells the story of the participant, who is a self-supporting photographer. It mentions his challenges and driving motivation that made him strive to get to this point in life today. The participant was content with the results and mentioned that it was worth the experience. Moreover, he was glad that he made some progress in his journey as a photographer and that made him better not only as a photographer but also as an individual.

His mindset thinking that all the things that he experienced were all blessings from God enabled him not to regret all the things that he experienced. The way you think will depend on the outcome of your progress.

"Madepress kaw mali gayud an imo mga desisyon... amo gayud yaun na na naexperience nako... happy na ako kuman, happy na ako saako life na... as a photographer, as a... a... ahhh... ako da isa happy na gayud. Dili ko gayud basolan tanan nahitabo saako life... kay... isa gayud yaun na... pasalamatan ko sa ginoo ka. Dili tanan tao makaexperience nan ing ani na sitwasyon. It is a blessing na saako, dili siya... dili syaa... dili it is a blessing, sa sugod pagtuo mo dili blessing, pagtuo mo... kuan ba uhhh... Palpal ra saimo nan ginoo... but... it is a blessing gayud. ("You might be feeling depressed about your decisions, and that is what I've really experienced. I'm happy now, happy with my life, as a photographer, and as... um... just happy with myself. I don't regret everything that happened in my life because... it's one of those things that I thank God for because not everyone gets to experience this kind of situation. It is a blessing for me. It's not a blessing when you first believe it... like if God was really just testing you ... but... it is truly a blessing.")"

Concerning the people who have the will to succeed in life, those driving factors affected the self-supporting photographer. Those challenges made him strong and made those driving mediums to achieve his long-term goal. He was content with the results and mentioned that it was worth the experience to be included in our study. Also, he was glad that he made some progress in his journey as a photographer and that made him better not only as a photographer but also as an individual.

The experiences discussed by the participant align with the factors required for the driving mediums that motivated him. This correlates to the study of Chua *et al.* (2022) named "Relationship

between contentment and working memory capacity: experimental and naturalistic evidence". These factors are positive emotions like contentment and a strong will. These are defined by perceived goal attainment, a feeling of having or being enough, and a never-ending motivation to live a successful life that one can be proud of. The photographer endured those challenges and pursued the goal that made him progress in photography that he made along the way.

4. Taking Risks

It is hard to deny that every aspect of life has some amount of risk associated with it, some more than others. As far as the participant is concerned, there is inherently more risk involved as they do not have the safety net of their parents around. In addition to hard work, the participant realized that risk-taking and taking risks were needed for him to go on and make life better, whether financially or in general. The participant learned that everything was a risk, from education to work, thus one has no choice but to work to continue growing. As the participant states:

"So amo yaun fuel nako na-nanga naningkamot ako tungod kay nakita ko an reality ba na... kinahanglan mo gayud maningkamot sa life... Laong pa risk, risk, risk sagud tanan, risk gayud tanan." Ang mo skwela kaw, risk. Ma-ma manarbaho kaw, risk. Tanan risk so pasabot kinahanglan mo dakan itake an risk, tanan risk itake mo gayud dimo gayud siya... dimo gayud siya e, dikaw gayud mo mo mo kuan mugive-up. Haud sa ako gihimo sa photography, gi invest ko tanan hibaw ako risk gayud yadto. Nadepress na gani ako yadto kay warae gayud, lisudi an ako sitwasyon pero tungod kay laong pa nila an life sugal sugal na magtake kaw gayud nan risk, waray imo choice mo take kaw gayud nan risk, amo yaun siya na nagkadugay nagkadayaw an ako an ako na na experience, nagka gan-ay na. ("So that's my fuel on why I needed to strive because I've seen the reality that... you really need to strive in life... They always say risk, it's really all about taking risks. If you go to school, it's a risk. If you work, it's a risk. Everything is a risk, so it means you have to take risks immediately, you have to take all the risks, you can't really... just give up. Like what I did in photography, I invested everything, I knew it was a big risk. I even got depressed because it was really tough situation, but because they say life is a gamble, you have to take risks, you don't have a choice, you have to take risks, that's what made my experience become improved lately, it got better.")"

Risks are an inherent and unavoidable part of life, and as such one must learn to take them. Though the participant knew that everything was a risk, from his education to, especially his photography work, he knew not to give up and be discouraged, as they knew that they must take the risk. Once they risked everything and invested in their photography career, it paid off and he became more financially stable and happy.

These experiences and facts of risk-taking relate to the study undertaken by Ayton *et al.* (2020) titled "The Impact of Life Experiences on Risk Taking" where it is written that risk-taking behavior has a key role in business success or failure, the amount

and nature of innovation, health related-behaviors, and educational choices (Hetschko & Preuss, 2020). Also noted was the probability of being self-employed, as the participant (Schildberg-Horisch, 2018). As the participant chose and took the inevitable risks, be it in pursuing their education or investing in their business, they became more financially secure and happier as a result.

III. Effects of Challenges in motivating the self-supporting photographer

As we progress later in life, we are given a large responsibility that is set up by society. These come from many people and directly affect the way of our life. People who are blessed encounter situations like these and solve them thanks to their power and wealth. But for the less fortunate, just managing it usually takes a toll on their well-being. Furthermore, the arduous process of coping with these challenges constantly elevates people to do better and never submit to it in the future.

For the self-supporting photographer, difficulties in life are what made him the person he is now. The knowledge and skills he honed emerged from his development to keep living and motivate himself. The majority of those trials might have brought him into despair at the early stages of his life, but being practical greatly helped him in all of the aspects he is struggling with. The challenges he suffered since he was an orphan made him face reality, including his realization of surviving alone, his desire to live a satisfying life, and his character development.

1. The Realization of Surviving Alone

Realizing his current situation when he was young helped the participant make reasonable decisions and not resort to illegal actions. This process made him recollect his thoughts and do what he could to survive. The photographer said:

"Na realize ko na... ini na gayud an tinood na... yaun reality nan world kay... syempre ikaw ahh ako... ako dakan sa gayud... ngadto gayud nako nakita an real world bitaw na... walay mo tabang, walay maningkamot saimo kundili an imo kaugalingon da gayud. ("I realized that... this is really the... reality of the world because, of course, it's all me... I really saw it there, the real world, where there's no one to help, no one to rely on but yourself.")"

When we are young, it is normal to depend on our parents because of our limited capabilities. In this continuous process, we grow and develop into responsible adults who can survive on our own. But the participant, who was still young when he lost his parents, did not undergo this natural dependence on both of them. Instead, he had to improvise and change something in him quickly so that he will be adaptive to what challenges he will experience.

This progression agrees with the book "Getting your way: Strategic dilemmas in the real world" by Jasper (2019) which discusses that we cannot predict many moments in our lives and this results in us having to create genuine choices without the guarantee that it is the most rational thing to do. It also tells us that doing the predictable thing is often a mistake. Also, according to Keshri (2021), orphan care leavers perceive independence as both a difficulty and an opportunity. In the case of our participant, he decided to accept the reality he is living and took the route that is the most difficult and unpredictable — living and supporting himself by getting honest

work.

my life wouldn't have changed.”)

2. Living a Satisfying Life

The challenges endured by the photographer directed him to his need of living a satisfying life. The employment that he started on his own then gave him the necessities of supporting himself and maintaining a balanced work-life relationship. In the interview, he stated that:

“Yadton tanan naagihan ko na kalisud... dili nako ako gusto muagi ngadto sa kalisud, gusto ko na nan... yaun... yaun bitaw ma hayahay so amo yadton ga drive saako... na maningkamot para... mahayahay yadton ako kaagi sauna na kalisud. (“I don't want to go through all those hardships that I have been through. I want to have... a comfortable life. That's what drives me... to work hard so that I can have the life that I want and not go through what I have already dealt with.”)

The desire of the participant to live and survive on his own became a powerful tool in overcoming all of the struggles he had when he was young and still starting to build a career. By motivating himself to not live with the challenges holding him down, he slowly started to recuperate everything he lost after his parents' death. He also claimed that this mentality helped him strive harder for a bright future.

“Amo gayud yadto na dili ko na yadto gusto maagihan na... tun itlog sa buntag, hapon sabaw, pagka gabie itlog nasab. Pagkasilom... itlog pagka... hapon sabaw, amo gayud yaun ako routine nan sauna pa. (“That's really what I don't want to experience again... having eggs for breakfast, soup for lunch, and then eggs again for dinner. That what I had to eat back then.”)

With people's needs and desires, the self-supporting photographer does not like the idea of his monotonous diet when he was still young. Unfortunately, eating eggs and soup was the only thing he could afford back then. He even budgeted ₱100.00 for 2 weeks by buying affordable processed and canned goods. By having that desire to live a satisfying and comfortable life, he managed to solve this problem early on.

The experiences discussed by the participant align with the two factors required for long-term success in the study of Datu *et al.* (2022) named “The Satisfied Lives of Gifted and Gritty Adolescents: Linking Grit to Career Self-Efficacy and Life Satisfaction”. These two factors, passion and perseverance, have been associated with well-being in developing students and adults. The photographer endured and coped with the challenges he experienced, and by his response, he inclined himself in pursuing the talent he possesses and continuously grew passionate as time passes by.

3. Transitioning into a Better Person

All the challenges we encounter deliver an output capable of changing and affecting our lives in certain aspects. This serves as the medium of transition that we are being delivered to. The self-supporting photographer said:

“Tungod sab kun wara sab siguro nawa si mama di mabag-o an ako life. (“Perhaps, if my mom hadn't left,

He claimed that the death of his mother started that change in himself. Without the realization that he is now alone, he would not reach the stage he is now standing. Also, one factor to take note of is his early exposure to the difficulty of raising a life, much more his own without any major help.

“Ming-stop ako pag skuyla then gipadayun ko gayud... an... kuan photography since may ako na kita. “I stopped schooling, and then I pursued... photography since I had income from it.”)

Since his job as a photographer gave him an active income that he needs, he decided to drop out and work full-time. In this way, he can give his full attention to his career and reduce his fees and responsibilities. Furthermore, his practical mindset helped him choose this route because it is the more reasonable decision and he is happy with how things panned out now.

“Maningkamot kaw gayud sa life, waray gayud maningkamot saimo kundili imo kaugalingon da... tinood gayud yaun... sa ako naagihan tungod kay wara nay mag support, ngadto gayud nako na...na... na... kita ako kaugalingon na... kinahanglan mo gayud maningkamot... nan ikaw, dikaw magsalig yaun dikaw gayud magsalig, yaun na storya... oo. (“You really have to strive in life, there's really no one to work for you but yourself... that's the harsh reality. From my experience, because there was no one to have my back and support me, I had to... rely on myself. You really need to work hard for yourself, you can't depend on others in that concept.”)

Working hard in life is considered an essential thing for the self-supporting photographer. This perseverance enabled him to pursue and achieve his goals in life. It also provided him with the necessary means to support himself without motivation or help from others. The development experienced by the participant supports the introduction of the term ‘post-traumatic growth’ by Jayawickreme *et al.* (2021) in the study “Post-traumatic growth as positive personality change: Challenges, opportunities, and recommendations”. The term describes the lasting psychological growth that individuals go through when facing difficult situations, trauma, or extremely challenging life circumstances. For the photographer, every negative thing he experienced became a stepping stone to his success. If he did not go through all that, his life would have been completely different. Moreover, his decision on changing his mentality and attitude gave him the proper push in reassessing his life back.

With all the themes that resulted from the discussion, we highly recommend to the local government unit in offering more photographers who are struggling with their career with the assistance they require in continuing their job, especially individuals who get their active income in this line of work.

Some restrictions affect the study's more general applicability because just one participant was involved in the qualitative narrative method used to tell the story of a self-supporting orphan photographer. The single-participant restriction reduces the study's generalizability since it makes it difficult to apply findings to a wider group of self-supporting orphans. A single participant's experiences,

circumstances, and viewpoints could not accurately reflect the wide range of difficulties and successes that other people have encountered in comparable situations. Multiple in-depth interviews with the lone participant can provide a more thorough picture of their experiences and a more nuanced understanding of their path as a self-supporting orphan, which can help to alleviate this constraint.

4.0 Conclusion

Living independently and without assistance has an impact on numerous aspects of life and society. These difficulties are related to the challenging situations and troubling events they have had. Doubts about the future begin to surface as a result of not receiving financial and emotional support from parents. Additionally, some photographers struggle to locate customers. Your chances of thriving in the industry are lessened if you do not have any connections to potential clients. Orphans require particular programs to deal with their challenging circumstances. The self-supporting orphan photographer concentrated on wise financial decisions, practical reasoning, and taking note of current events. Photographers may sustain themselves and their way of life by making responsible financial decisions and living within their means. Being willing to take measured risks and invest in the future helps them to seize opportunities for development and success. These plans contribute to their happiness and well-being, providing them with the strength to develop fulfilling lives. The hardships of the participants inspired them to value living freely, finding joy, and maturing. This increased awareness compelled them to act and make important decisions. They were financially and emotionally dependent on their abilities and great enthusiasm for art and photography. Through these difficulties, the participant not only overcame obstacles but also accepted progress, becoming a tougher and more talented individual.

Acknowledgment

The researchers would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the individuals who stood by their side throughout the journey of conducting this research study. The researchers would like to express their deepest gratitude to their Research Adviser and panelist who provided them with invaluable advice and guided them throughout their study. Their support and guidance were instrumental in helping them improve and achieve their research goals.

References

American Society of Clinical Oncology. (2019). *Grieving the loss of a child*. Cancer.Net. <https://www.cancer.net/coping-with-cancer/managing-emotions/grief-and-loss/grieving-loss-child>.

Andriessen, K., Hadzi-Pavlovic, D., Draper, B., Dudley, M., & Mitchell, P.B. (2018). The adolescent grief inventory: Development of a novel grief measurement. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 240, 203-211. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.07.012>.

Andriessen, K., Mowll, J., Lobb, E., Draper, B., Dudley, M., & Mitchell, P. B. (2018). "Don't bother about me." The grief and mental health of bereaved adolescents. *Death studies*, 42(10), 607-615. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2017.1415393>.

Ayton, P., Bernile, G., Bucciol, A., & Zarri, L. (2020). The impact of life experiences on risk taking. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 79, 102274. <https://doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.joep.2020.102274>.

Banerjee, A. (2022 September 26). Be real! the practical mindset. *Reputation Today*. <https://reputationtoday.in/be-real-the-practical-mindset/> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).

Bergman, A.S., Axberg, U., & Hanson, E. (2017). When a parent dies—a systematic review of the effects of support programs for parentally bereaved children and their caregivers. *BMC Palliative Care*, 16, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12904-017-0223-y>.

Chua, K.Q., Ng, R., Sung, C.L., Hartanto, A., Oh, V.Y.S., & Tong, E.M.W. (2022). Relationship between contentment and working memory capacity: experimental and naturalistic evidence. *Current Psychology*, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03714-7>

Datu, J.A.D., Yuen, M., Fung, E., Zhang, J., Chan, S., & Wu, F. (2022). The satisfied lives of gifted and gritty adolescents: Linking grit to career self-efficacy and life satisfaction. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 42(8), 1052-1072. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316221096082>.

Feigelman, W., Rosen, Z., Joiner, T., Silva, C., & Mueller, A. S. (2017). Examining longer-term effects of parental death in adolescents and young adults: Evidence from the national longitudinal survey of adolescent to adult health. *Death studies*, 41(3), 133-143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2016.1226990>.

Hetschko, C., & Preuss, M. (2020). Income in jeopardy: How losing employment affects the willingness to take risks. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 79, 102175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2019.05.005>.

Jasper, J. M. (2019). *Getting your way: Strategic dilemmas in the real world*. University of Chicago Press. 244pp.

Jayawickreme, E., Infurna, F. J., Alajak, K., Blackie, L. E., Chopik, W. J., Chung, J. M., ... & Zonneveld, R. (2021). Post-traumatic growth as positive personality change: Challenges, opportunities, and recommendations. *Journal of Personality*, 89(1), 145-165. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12591>.

Kaye, E.C., Kiefer, A., Blazin, L., Spraker-Perlman, H., Clark, L., & Baker, J.N. (2020). Bereaved parents, hope, and realism. *Pediatrics*, 145(5), e20192771. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-2771>.

Keshri, A. K. (2021). Life after leaving institutional care: Independent living experience of orphan care leavers of Mumbai, India. *Asian Social Work and Policy Review*, 15(3), 255-266. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aswp.12239>.

Mazaya, K.N., & Supradewi, R. (2023). Self-concept and the meaningfulness of life in adolescents in orphanages. *Projections: Journal of Psychology*, 6(2), 103-112.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>.

- Schildberg-Hörisch, H. (2018). Are risk preferences stable?. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 32(2), 135-154. doi: 10.1257/jep.32.2.135.
- SEC. (n.d.) Sec saving and investing. <https://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/sec-guide-to-savings-and-investing.pdf> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).
- Sydney, O. (2023). *What is freelance photography about? be a Sydney freelancer*. Sydney Photographers. <https://orlandosydney.com/professional-photographers-freelance/#:~:text=Freelance%20photography%20means%20taking%20photographs,a%20'lens%20for%20hire>.
- Thomson, T. J. (2018). Freelance photojournalists and photo editors: Learning and adapting in a (mostly faceless) virtual world. *Journalism Studies*, 19(6), 803-823. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1215851>
- Worth Books. (2017). In Summary and analysis of outliers: The story of success: Based on the book by Malcolm Gladwell.