

Learning Strategies for Survival Adaptation of Mo Lam Entrepreneurs during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate learning strategies for survival adaptation and develop guidelines for Mo Lam entrepreneurs. Qualitative research was employed by collecting data through interviews and group discussion, including the band's owners and executives, the band's members, musicians, performers, and audiences. The learning successful of Mo Lam business owners were; confident in their performance ability, creative and capable of using technology in their performances, determined to work hard to achieve targets, and involved at all steps of the planning. Concerning the factors for successful survival strategies, the entrepreneurs reported having used various techniques to help them accommodate the need to surviving. By pressing the like and share buttons, online viewers help spread the brand's name. Money transfers were sparked by the internet Mo Lam business, which reduced business costs and made material movement easier. Furthermore, the web business aided in the prevention of epidemics by allowing audiences to communicate with one another. Most crucially, online performance enabled entrepreneurs to generate company returns with minimal expenditure, while crime and conflict rates were theoretically reduced as a result of online performances.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Learning successful, Pandemic, Self-adapting strategy

1. Introduction

Mo Lam is a style of traditional performance associated with the people of Thailand's northeast. Mo Lam has been updated to reflect the audience's evolving values throughout time. As it can be seen from the alteration of soloist singing, referred to in the local dialect as "Lam Phuen" or "ground vocal singing", to be Mo Lam that requires many performers. This traditional performance relevant to the process of learning in local culture and its transferring in local knowledge to young generation.

The dual singing that traditionally required a pair of singers, also known as Mo Lam Klon, has been transformed into Mo Lam Mu, literally means group traditional singing. This band singing is also well-recognized by the local Isan people as Lam Moo and Mo Lam Ploen. The change in the number of performers, other elements have also been modified such as the introduction of Western instruments; electric guitar, bass guitar, drum kit, and saxophone to the performance. Mo Lam's melody has been revolutionized into a more provocative chorographical style (Phonprathom, 1995). Over the past 60 years, the Mo Lam business, especially Mo Lam Mu or storytelling folk singing (known as "Mo Lam Ruang To Klon"), has proven to survive through various social and economical changes and be successful in preserving the art and culture of this traditional entertaining business (Tseng et al., 2019; Wattanapunkitti, 2021).

Mo Lam Mu has been through intimidation during the high-fly period of Lukthungband's advancement. Mo Lam's current business environment is amidst constant economic, social, political, and technological changes. The competition in this business is more intensified, causing Mo Lam bands to strive harder for survival. New working principles are needed to place the organization in a better position than its competitors. To foster future survival, the Mo lam executives have to create strategies that help them to sustain their profession into the future. Leading Mo Lam business owners usually take proactive measures to achieve the objectives of the organization. Modern management should, therefore, be integrated with the core competency of the band to help the organizations achieve sustainability (Akkapram, 2020).

The attempts to develop core competence can be accomplished by employing manpower management (Wimonchairuek, 2017). The Mo Lam business has managed to survive by accommodating the present day's conditions while being able to maintain the cultural aspect of this performing art. Even though Mo Lam's business has enjoyed its lucrative time, it is not possible to determine how much money this traditional business can generate per year. In addition to providing fundamental knowledge about Mo Lam, fostering employment and creating an ecosystem of Isan music are other key responsibilities of the Mo Lam group. Behind the success of each Mo Lam's performance, several complex details of artwork have been crafted based on the connections of people with diverse talents (Creative Economy Agency, 2021).

Rabiab Watasil band is a Mo Lam band that was established more than 58 years ago. The band has evolved and kept itself updating consistently, causing it to have a large number of viewers and fans. As for Narm Wihok Band and Jai Gern Roi, Band, the two newly offspring Mo Lam band, have created their own identity as a new era Mo Lam. They have dedicated for the refinement of lead actors and actresses, clowns, stage performances, new performing materials, equipment and technology, and other elements to successfully attract customers, causing the bands to earn employments almost all year round.

However, the COVID-19 epidemic has a stretching effect on health and the overall economy. All levels of businesses and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are traumatized by this crisis. Both demand and supply for goods and services have decreased drastically. To

accommodate the situation, some businesses reduce their production capacity following the lower demands. While many others have to face business closure due to their inability to carry the burden of expenses before the economic recovery (Pantarak, 2017). The protracting COVID-19 pandemic impacts on people and business operators of all types, especially Mo Lam business and learning strategies to deal with uncertainty situations (Duangpim et al., 2021).

Many Mo Lam groups have to disband while many others have to find different techniques to earn enough money for maintaining bands. The reserved performances have been all canceled following the government policies to prevent the epidemic. To thrive for future survival, Mo Lam performance has found a new way of performance and alternative channel to present itself to the public. Therefore, Mo Lam business operators need to have competitive competence over other competitors to be able to survive during this period. Newer strategies that need to be employed to help generate revenue streams include; live performances, merchandising, and teaching Mo Lam performances.

Compared to other past issues, the cancellation of live music due to COVID-19 is not a detriment to the music industry whose sources of revenues rely mainly on live music performances and music festivals. The cancellation does not yield higher proportion of effect on the business than the other previous issues. The cancellation, however, indirectly affects other groups of people involving in the industry such as; the contract workers who accompany the Mo Lam bands to various places, the group of vendors who trade during the musical performances, and the transportation business group. Under the COVID-19 situation, it has been rather challenging for the music bands, especially Mo Lam bands and the parade music vehicle operators, to earn money through online channels. This is because Mo Lam performances are fundamentally associated with an annual carnival where local people meet and use music as a means of engaging the festival's participants in a joyful interaction.

Based on the aforementioned issues, the researcher was interested in investigating the adaptation strategies for the survival of Mo Lam entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study aimed to learn about the codes of practices of Mo Lam bands which should be used as guidelines for the survival of Mo Lam bands in the future, to study the factors affecting the success, learning strategies in survival adaptation, and to study the guidelines for the development of Mo Lam business entrepreneurs in northeast of Thailand.

2. Method

This research study, based on a qualitative methodology, investigated specific strategies for Mo Lam business management during the COVID-19 pandemic in 3 provinces-Khon Kaen, Mahasarakham, and Udon Thani.

2.1 Informants

Rabiab Watasil Band, Jai Gern Roi Band, and Nam Wihok Band were among the Mo Lam business entrepreneurs. The first band has a long history in the industry, whereas the latter two bands rose to prominence swiftly. All of these bands are regarded as successful Mo Lam businesspeople. As a result, the researcher looked into the characteristics of successful

entrepreneurs in order to identify the aspects that contributed to their success. The population includes several groups of persons involved in the Mo Lam business, such as heads of Mo Lam bands, band members, consumers, or audience members who had seen the three bands perform. The informants were divided into three groups, a) Key Informants consisting of knowledgeable people and academics, and owners and administrators, b) Casual Informants which was a group of Mo Lam practitioners such as band leaders, band members, musicians, and c) General Informants which were a group of audiences. These samples were selected using the purposive sampling method and the in-depth interviews were conducted across all groups of participants.

2.2 Research Tools

Structured interviews, in-depth interviews, participatory and non-participatory observations, and group discussion were used as research methodologies. Between May and July 2021, the researcher and study assistants finished data gathering. Prior to the data collection process, the sample was sent an interview request and consent form.

2.3 Data Collection

The review of linked works of literature from both primary and secondary documents, books, textbooks, research papers, and the Internet encompassed two areas of data collecting. The information was sorted and categorised into different topic groupings. Basic surveys, formal and informal interviews, in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and focus groups were all employed to collect data in the field.

2.4 Data Analysis

Induction analysis and typological analysis were used to analyze the data using the qualitative research approach. The descriptive analysis approach was used to provide the data analysis results in the order of the research objectives, with tables and relevant illustrations.

Following the collection of field data, the researcher organized the material into content groupings. The Investigator Triangulation approach was then used to test the veracity of the classified information. The classified version of the material was forwarded to the three groups of informants, who were asked for their thoughts on the veracity of the summary data. The degree of opinion co-efficiency among the three groups of informants, according to this method, determines the reliability of information.

The information gathered was examined using qualitative research methods. Induction analysis and typological analysis were the qualitative data analysis methodologies used in this approach. These are the two techniques. The results of the data analysis were given in accordance with the research objectives by the researcher. includes tables and related visuals as part of a descriptive analysis approach

3. Results

3.1 Characteristics of a Successful Entrepreneur

Autonomy and Independent Administration: It was commonly observed that the successful

Mo Lam entrepreneurs tended to have had independent administration and exhibited a state of autonomy. They were found to; be a pond of the performing art, be proud of being Isan people, have confidence in their abilities and performances, and be positive to create the band. Some Mo Lam business entrepreneurs were decisive to set up the band despite insufficient funds in the initial stage.

Some new band owners reported having borrowed money from their relatives to subsidize the band. Under that hardship during the onset of band development, some materials, equipment, and costumes used in the performance would be borrowed or rented from other troupes. During the early stage of establishment, the bands had to plan and do everything by themselves, which was supported by their experience working for other groups before establishing their own bands. Good management was observed in all processes of the success Mo Lam band starting from, band advertising, finding and training band members to earn funding. The band leaders were also observed to have; had a high level of leadership, been knowledgeable on the principles of management, been capable of band management, and worked well with others.

Innovativeness: The successful Mo Lam entrepreneurs were innovation users with creativity in organizing the shows. The strength of each band was founded to be founded on the uniqueness of performances. The successful bands were conscientious when composing songs, designing the dancers' costumes, and adopting modern technology and media for the shows. LED screens were also used to enhance the beauty of the show and add modernity. Newer audio systems were installed while a hydraulic system and sling cable were used to lift the performers up and down in the air. Some successful brands used social media channels, such as Facebook, to help them reach their fan through live online shows. The audiences were charged to view from online. The Nam Wihok band exploited their expertise in movie making to conduct a new and fascinating show play. The band had revised their dialogues, costumes, and illumination system which made it more outstanding than other bands. The Nam Wihok band utilized special effects to make the show look real and they also focused on marketing communications. The band reported having hired a professional to set up a standard on-tour concert via online channels.

Proactiveness: The successful Mo Lam business owners were found to have been proactive. The Jai Gern Roi and The Nam Wihok were two newly established bands who had been struggling to create their reputation in the business. These newly founded bands had to work against the clock to pay back the loans. They had to encounter many different challenges involving finding the dialogue composers, selecting performers, designing costumes, and planning transportation and band logistics. Both bands had to stay adaptive to the COVID-19 situation while having to attain the highest quality of performances. They were reported to have hired professionals to assist in the perfection of their performances and to increase the competitive capacity of their bands. The Rebiab Watasin Band, who had been long prevailing in Mo Lam business, had to strive to maintain their performance standard and retain the revenues. The band which had been long known as a successor paternal system had to stay tuned to the situation and keep updating their performance standard. The Rabian Watasin band had exploited complex lighting and illumination system, hydraulic system and always had their

costume changed after each round of the dance.

Competitive Aggressiveness: The Rabiab Watasin Band has been run based on a family management system. This large Mo Lam band has been established for a long time and has clear administration roles. The head of the band takes care of making decisions and solving the band's major problems. The producers were placed for the show designing while the actors and dancers are responsible for conveying the style and beauty of the shows to the audiences. The musicians are responsible for the delivery of fun and enjoying music. The Jai Gern Roi and The Nam Wihok, had quite similar administration systems. Since they are newly established bands, the owners of the two younger bands had to craft everything very carefully on their own starting from performance to financial planning. The contracted employers had to pay some deposit to guarantee the hiring of the bands. Some part of the revenue was set aside for other investments. The bands had to regularly conduct meetings among their members to disseminate rules and allocate tasks to the members of the bands. The bands reported having hired professionals to help improve their standard of performances.

Risk-Taking: The Jai Gern Roi and The Nam Wihok bands, were quite different from The Rabiab Watasin band since the first two bands are new on the business. The owners of the two news bands were decisive to establish the bands even though they had to face budget insufficiency. Both The Jai Gern Roi and The Nam Wihok bands had to resort to some loans from the bank to develop their business and both were positive for their economic gain from this performing art. With support from fans and sponsors, these two Mo Lam bands have to spend millions of baht for the betterment of their performances every year.

3.2 Adaptation Strategies for Survival of Mo Lam Entrepreneurs

Developing a Sales Strategy: The three Mo Lam Bands attempted to create their own strengths. It was found, however, that the main actor was the factor that help the bands to attract the most number of the audience, followed by the heroines, the clowns, and the dancers. Due to the high level of competition, every Mo Lam band has to constantly develop their skills to remain competitive in the market. Each band had to thrive to create its own identity by always updating its performances, and creating new choreography. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the onsite hiring had been canceled. Mo Lam bands have to find other channels to earn money and this is where the online performance was developed. Mo Lam business had accordingly been placed on digital platforms. It was important for the entrepreneurs to regularly reach out to the audiences via online tools such as; Facebook, and live performances on YouTube.

The entrepreneurs were reported to earn some additional income from advertisements. To standardized their online performances, some bands were reported to have hired a professional administrator to record their performances, edit them into episodes and present them on Facebook Live or Youtube. The bands could learn some money from the online garlands and online advertisements. The Rabiab Watasin band also had to perform online. They were reported to have composed new songs, trained new actors and actresses in their careers.

Target Customer Classification: The bands' owners have divided their target customers into; temples, houses, fan clubs, event organizers, and organizers in Bangkok. Having clear categories of target customers makes it possible for the band to contact each target group easily. Moreover, it helps the bands' owners to satisfy each group of fans with specific requirements. With a clear customer grouping, the entrepreneurs were able to address the specific group of fans within a short period of time at a very low cost. It was learned from this research that most of the audiences were middle-aged groups and teenagers. However, more and more people become interested in Mo Lam performances because there are more varieties of Mo Lam shows.

In addition, this performing art has been adjusted to accommodate the musical tastes of people of all ages. Mo Lam has made a significant change in the show's contents, converting from folk tales to more modern content. In addition, modern technologies have been introduced to make the show more interesting. The performing technology helps the bands to communicate more successfully with the target audience. To earn money, Mo Lam bands sometimes host public performances to collect the entrance fee from the audience. Regularly, Mo Lam bands are employed to perform as a part of the merit-making celebration in some villages.

Product Positioning Strategy: The Jai Gern Roi and The Narm Wihok bands have been established for less than 5 years. Since the founders of these two bands were formers' main actors in the traditional band of Rabiab Watasil, the bands were found to have been capable of conducting quality acting, dancing, and singing. Among these two bands, more contemporary music has been composed with the combination of more diverse musical genres and newer content. These qualities help place the bands in the fans' hearts and make them a representative of modern Mo Lam.

The most determined selling point for these two new bands was having a Lukthung Mo Lam concert. They also compose songs for their singers. The bands were hired to perform at various events such as on annual festivals, and private merit-making rituals. Sometimes, they threw the performances upon the sponsorship of some merchandisers. Sometimes, the bands organized their own public performance and collect tickets from the audiences. As for The Rabiab Watasil band, music, choreography, performances, and storytelling were reported to have been adjusted to keep their performance ever favorable for their fans.

Organizational Structure Design: Regularly, Mo Lam faculty may undergo management challenges since they are always of a large group of band members. Most of the time, the bands' owners are the ones who have to be responsible for almost all of the administration themselves. However, there was quite a similar organizational structure in all of the three bands. Members for each band have been categorized into 1) Artist Group, such as performers such as Mo Lam artists, dancers, musicians, comedians, and broadcasters, 2) Composers such as lyricists, poems, and dialogue creators, 3) Productions such as costume design, scene design, performance and rehearsal department, music Department, stage department, and light and sound department, 4) Public Relations and Advertisement, and 5) Facilitation Departments such as stage and audio operators, kitchen departments, vehicles

departments, and security personnel. A supervisor is to be assigned to each department to assist in controlling and coordinating with faculty members. It was observed that meetings had been regularly held to plan and find mutual agreements between the band members.

Other Marketing Adaptations: Some measures relating to marketing adjustments had been implemented in order to make the shows, dancers, and performances look new, entertaining, and pleasing to the audiences. Some bands reported having hired choreographic trainers to help them create fascinating performances. New songs and lyrics, and melodies were composed or bought from other composers. In addition, technologies such as LED screens were exploited to generate a more beautiful show. With the help of an LED screen, products could also be advertised through the screen during the show. Moreover, more investment had been placed on the hydraulic system and the light and sound system. Online performances through Facebook and YouTube had been used to help the bands earn reputation.

3.3 Guidelines Learning Success during the COVID-19 Pandemic

It is important to create more online channels, such as Facebook, TikTok, Line, Youtube, and Twitter, to help Mo Lam business to communicate with their customers and sponsors. In addition, the entrepreneurs should create a studio to produce various content to broadcast stories about the Mo Lam group and their products and services. The contents should be presented creatively via images, infographics, audio, or video in order to disseminate the band's contents to the abundant online customers. The contents should be made in order to entertain, persuade, and inspire the audiences to the Mo Lam products. It is important to also have communication with the audiences via both the online and offline platforms.

The presentation should be made interesting via multiple channels to disseminate the band's performance schedule to the fans. Facebook Live and Youtube should be used as new platforms for Mo Lam performances. Mo Lam entrepreneurs can earn income from the advertisements. Making music videos, short drama, and modern singing online should help the business earn more money under the COVID-19 crisis.

Mo Lam business should focus on marketing strategy by using information technology for sales and brand promotion and to attract customers. It is important for the Mo Lam business to take advantage of the online media to help reduce operating costs and reach out to specific target groups. Some marketing activities such as sales models should be implemented to help the Mo Lam entrepreneurs to accommodate to specific requirements of some particular groups of audiences.

The Mo Lam owners should be knowledgeable to make their bands more competitive in the market. It is important to find some measures to address the ever-changing needs of the customers. The performances, the songs, the music, and the choreography should always be updated. Moreover, the settings, the stage, the lighting system, and the sound system must be updated and be of high quality. The Mo Lam business often faces difficulties due to the lack of actors, dancers, and workers in various departments. The competitors from another form of musical entertainment also create problems for the Mo Lam faculties. To become successful in the Mo Lam business requires strong commitment and high level of confidence, and

performing art competencies. The business owners need to update their performances more regularly while providing trustful services to the employers and the audiences should create longevity and sustainability to the bands.

4. Discussion

4.1 Characteristics of a Successful Entrepreneur

Autonomy and Independent Administration: It was commonly observed that the successful Mo Lam entrepreneurs tended to have had independent administration and exhibited a state of autonomy. They were found to be a pond of the performing art, be proud of being Isan people, have confidence in their abilities and performances, and be positive to create the band. This is consistent with the study of Bumrungsri (2015) who postulated the characteristic that had been shared by most of the performing art artists was the passion for singing and the unique talent to attract different groups of audiences. It was observed particularly in this research that most of the band owners used to work for some prevailing Mo Lam bands before establishing their own band. Since erecting a new band requires a huge amount of investment, the band owners need to be knowledgeable and know how to manage and administer the band. They must dare to make decisions in different situations or to solve problems decisively.

Innovation: In organizing the shows, Mo Lam band has to bring out the strengths and uniqueness of the band to the fans. It is important to use modern technology and media to create beauty and add modernity to the shows. This is consistent with Srimarat (2019) who found that Mo Lam is performing art that never stops growing. It can cope well with the changing culture of the entertainment industry. Mo Lam shows are constantly adapting to the market mechanisms and the requirements of the sponsors, the fans, the hosts, and the organizers. Modern technology has been used in every part of the preparatory process right up to the stage performance. Mo Lam's business helps preserve the art of Mo Lam as an Isan folk performing art while fitting itself well into a modern-age entertaining industry.

Each Mo Lam performance is a clear reflection of consistent learning and multiple skills development. Technologies have been used to make the Mo Lam performances more interesting while the adjustment of music and choreography helps Mo Lam bands to attract the audiences' interest. Online performances allow the bands to reach a larger group of audiences under the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The high competition in Mo Lam business is a force that leads all the bands to always find newer tools to attract the fans' attention and stay competitive in the business through technology-enhanced learning (Dostal & Prachagool, 2016).

Proactiveness: The successful Mo Lam business owners were found to have been proactive. The Jai Gern Roi and The Nam Wihok were two newly established bands who had been struggling to create their reputation in the business. These newly founded bands had to work against the clock to pay back the loans. The Rebiab Watasin Band, who had been long prevailing in Mo Lam business, had to strive to maintain their performance standard and retain the revenues. The band who had been long known as a successor of the paternal system had to

stay tuned to the situation and keep updating their performance standard. This is in line with Bantherngjai (2021) who found that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had affected all public sectors, including business and entrepreneurs.

The impact could be divided into 3 dimensions, the social dimension, the economic dimension, and the career dimension. The Mo Lam groups had adapted many measures to help them survive through the situation including changing channels of performances, changing careers, and financial planning. Mo Lam bands had to find their own ways to survive and there had been direct assistance from the government. The explanation for this pattern of result should be based on the fact that the establishment of a Mo Lam group requires large investments, and the band owners had to borrow or raise that funds from relatives or friends. Under this monetary limitation, it requires that the faculty owner act as proactively and rigorously as possible in order to be successful.

Competitive aggressiveness: The Rabiab Watasil band was known to have been successfully using family-based management to administer the band. The two newer bands the Narm Wihok and The Jai Gern Roi bands, had a similar form of administration because the owners of these groups were young and decisive to achieve their goals. This is consistent with the study of Wan-Udom (2006) on the extent that the strengths of each Mo Lam band are on the outstanding of stage performances, lights and sound technology, and active beat music style. Some groups began their show by performing folk drama and story-telling during the early evening. Late at night, it was all about the live concert that lasts until dawn. The music used in the concert was quite selective with the combination of modern indie music old famous folk songs.

It was a tendency that more and more old folk songs were brought back to the show each year. The performance was a good mix and match to address the different imaginations of the audiences. Some groups prefer to play modern songs with especially beautiful dancers to attract young audience targets. Particularly in the Isan region, most Mo Lam bands were likely to have longer sessions of story-telling that was performed interchangeably with the folk and upbeat singing. The performance design, choreography, lyrics, melodies, and poems had been planned by professional music teachers and dance teachers who had been hired for that particular purpose. Similar to Arshed et al. (2021), developing their marketing and advertising to improve brand awareness. New marketing in response to their customers' new way of life due to COVID-19, The Clear Coach hired a new publicist to engage more with the media. In all these circumstances, the SMEs saw that their market had changed as a result of the pandemic, quickly responding to increase their chances of survival. This pattern of finding should be due to the fast alterations in consumer behaviors and the direction of the entertainment business. The competition in the entertainment industry has been especially high in the music and performing art commercials.

There has been more advancement on Lukthung bands and other singing and performing businesses, causing the bands' owners to thrive in making the significant change on their stage performance methods. For this purpose, various technologies and management systems had been introduced to the bands to cater to consumers' satisfaction. The bands' owners need clear communication with the support groups and other employer groups through both online and

offline platforms. Moreover, the bands' owners had to be prepared to solve the future possible issues to their fullest capability.

Risk-Taking: The founders of the Narm Wihok and the Jai Gern Roi Bands share a common beginning when both decided to create the bands, that is the offspring of the traditional band like The Rabiab Watasil. The two new bands were created amidst the insufficiency of budget and supporters. However, the founders of these two bands had foreseen their future gain from the business, which was the main inspiration for them to establish the new Mo Lam bands. A similar idea was also articulated with Pattarabunjerd (2011) on the extent that entrepreneurs tended to avoid high-risk investments but would be more favorable on the investment that involved a medium-risk job. This level of risk is assessed and deemed possible to provide business returns in the future.

To be successful in each business, the entrepreneurs had to look for several alternatives to operate their business such as business investment and market planning. It is important to choose proper production, use suitable equipment and management principles, and calculate the expected returns under the given economic, social, political conditions. Business owners should research thoroughly before making a decision, and they need to be ready to face any problems that might take place. It is explainable from this research finding that Mo Lam bands' owners had the desire to establish their brands and had been determined to succeed after having placed large investments in the business. The owners had foreseen that the return they would yield was worthy because there had already been some groups of fans. The bands were positive that they would gain the business return soon after they could gain more supporters.

4.2 Adaptation Strategies for Survival of Mo Lam Entrepreneurs

Selling Strategy Development: It was observed that the main actors were the ones who could lure more audience. Other techniques that had been used by the bands included; show adaption and gaining audiences' engagement in the shows. The performances were recorded and edited using special techniques to be presented on online platforms such as Youtube and Facebook Live had been used to reach more audiences. The Rabiab Watasil band had adjusted their performances every year. Close attention had been paid to composing new songs and training new main actors. Online performance was one of the sources of survival for this traditional band.

A similar finding was observed in the study of Boriwongtrakul (2016) who postulated that online media has been continually exploited by the owner of Mo Lam's group. The online technology helps the bands to communicate with their fans whose devices were used for the bands' development. For this instance, the fan clubs are among the very important factors for the survival of Mo Lam bands. Sri (2021) found that 90% of SMEs use social media in marketing. The social media are Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp and e-commerce (Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Shopee and Lazada). They use social media because it is easy to use, low-cost and can reach a broader range of consumers. The cost spent for social media during the pandemic is 1 million rupiahs per month, with a profit rate of 20%. It is concluded that social media has helped SMEs optimize marketing and can help SMEs in maintaining their

business sustainability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The above findings should have resulted from the changing behaviors of the consumers. Since there are more channels for the fans to witness the shows, the competition in the entertainment industry has been intensified. Accordingly, the Mo Lam owners need to find some secrets to help them develop their presentations to accommodate the needs of consumers. It is important for the bands to introduce a new show and use different online platforms to help them communicate with the audiences.

Classification of Target Customers: The regular customers of Mo Lam business are divided into temples, houses, fan clubs, event organizers, and organizers in Bangkok. Mo Lam's audiences are mostly middle-aged people. However, teenagers become interested in Mo Lam performances at the present because the shows come in many forms and address better to the diversified audiences' tastes. This finding was also articulated with Srimarat (2019) on the extent that performance development is done without a total changing culture of the folk culture. Mo Lam's performances are constantly adjusted in accordance with the market mechanism, the requirements of the fans and the sponsors, and the satisfaction of the employers. Light and sound technologies have been used to make the stage performance more attractive to the audience. Moreover, prior to each performance, the feedback from the fans and the specific requirements of the employers have been used as a clue for the performance amendment.

Product Positioning Strategy: The Nam Wihok and the Jai Gern Roi Band have positioned themselves as a modern Mo Lam with a unique Mo Lam singing concert style. These two bands the on-demand performances, and perform as a part of the celebration of some important events. They also give concerts following the hiring of some product owners. The Rabiab Watasil Band keeps updating their music, performances, storytelling to accommodate the requirements of the employers. Music and dance choreography are often adjusted to make it more pleasing for the audience. A similar idea was also observed by Thapkao (2018) who explained that Mo Lam's business has to modernize themselves in order to create new experiences for the audiences.

In addition to stage performances adjustment, the bands have to think about their logistics to make the transportation of the show more convenient. The literature and poems of the Mo Lam portray the image of Isan folk culture. These Isan cultures were narrated in an adaptive way to the audiences. The development of the choreography requires an understanding of the principles of contemporary culture while the mode of presentation should be shaped and changed to fit with the natures of the modern age audiences. The fact that the bands have to position themselves in a particular or with a fixed style of performance should result from the need to stand out from other bands. Finding their own standing points is a tool that the Mo Lam bands can effectively use to attract audiences or supporters. The bands with unique styles can stay competitive in the folk-performing art business.

Organizational Structure Design: The owners of the three Mo Lam bands are in charge of making key decisions for the bands. However, tasks have been distributed to the bands' members that are classified quite similar across the three groups, which include; 1) Artists

and performers, 2) Composers, 3) Production, 4) Public Relations, and 5) Facilitation Department. A similar pattern of Mo Lam organization was described by The Creative Economy Promotion Agency (Public Organization) (2021). Based on this agency, the value chain of the Mo Lam industry consists of; 1) Artists and performers such as Mo Lam artists, dancers, musicians, comedians, and spokespersons, 2) Composers such as lyrics writer and Scriptwriter, 3) Production Department consisting of; costume design, production department, scene design, performance design, rehearsal department, music department, stage Department (including stage rental business), light and sound department (including audio equipment rental business), 4) Public relations and advertisement, 5) Facilitation departments such as stage and audio operators, kitchen departments, vehicles departments, security personnel, 6) Vendors including; employer group, dealers such as mat rental, fan rental, 7) Consumer goods sponsor, 8) Mo Lam Association such as Provincial Mo Lam Club, and 9) Music Company including the owners of copyrights for Lukthung Mo Lam songs that are used in performances. This pattern of finding can result from the fact that the administration in most Mo Lam bands is based on the self-management system. The tasks should be distributed to other members of the bands based on the kind of duties that each particular group of people in the band has to perform. The bands' members are responsible for a smaller scale decision while the decision-making for a more complex situation was taken care of by the head of the bands.

Other Marketing Adaptations: To make the performance fun and attractive for the audiences, the bands have to hire professional teachers for choreography design, new lyrics writing, and melody composing. Performance technology and online presentation have been utilized. The bands have to create events to disseminate the products to the audiences. Online media have been used to spread the bands' reputation to the fans. It was explained that Mo Lam has to develop himself and make their shows updated (Sriputta, 2019). Performance technology should be exploited to attract the audiences' attention and to disseminate the band's name to the new group of fans. Any band who can bring out their strength to the fans will earn more competition power in this traditional entertaining business. Laoakka (2021). The heart of filmmaking and television series is the content. It must be congruent with the way of life of the people in that community, which is currently trendy in the certain period of time. Most importantly, it is presented so that it can further develop other promotion methods to benefit the community.

Mo Lam's business has become more competitive since each band attempts to offer unique performances to the audiences, causing innovation in the art of Mo Lam singing. Accordingly, advancement in the singing styles has been added to the traditional singing of Khon Kaen melody, Kalasin melody, and Mahasarakham melody. Strong competition is placed on the dancing shows. Modern light and sound systems are installed to add more color to the stage performances. The bands that cannot adapt successfully to these aforementioned areas may not earn support from the fans and may eventually be out of business.

5. Conclusion

Due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, entrepreneurs and business sectors have been severely affected. In order to prevent the collapse of the nation's economic system, the

government, the private sectors, the banks, and other agencies have created measures to help stick-walking the entrepreneurs who have been affected by the pandemic. Some business sectors are benefited from government policy in the forms of tax and interest reduction. However, there are some types of businesses that do not receive the supplement from government policy. Therefore, they have to find ways to survive in such conditions. Since they do not receive any support from the government, Mo Lam bands have to struggle to find their own way to survive.

6. Suggestions for the Implication

Mo Lam business has become more competitive while having to struggle to maintain the endorse value of Isan art and culture in the midst of rapidly changing global trends mobilized by the economic, social and cultural forces. This current research was intended for providing knowledge and guidelines for those who wish to investigate into the show management. It was intended to be a part in the attempts to preserve and disseminate the arts and culture of the Isan region. Below are suggestions on how to make use of the findings of this current research.

(1) It is important to create a presentation mode that disseminates the information of the band including the new production, the performance schedules. The contents should be presented via effective use of pictures and graphics, video, or infographics. The data should be presented both via online and offline platforms.

(2) The bands should focus on developing music, and choreography. The bands must have their own songs for their protagonists and the heroines. The bands should create incentives among the audiences by creating many channels of communication to help spread the news of the bands to the fans and the supports.

(3) There should be a proper marketing adjustment and increasing use of online media to help reduce operating costs. Marketing activities should be applied such as conducting a sales promotion activity that is responsive to the need of a particular group of audiences. Digital technology should be used to help the Mo Lam bands to reach out to all the audiences from all groups of ages.

(4) The bands should find ways to make their products outstanding from the products of the competitors. Uniqueness should be equipped for all shows, dancers, stage arrangements, and lighting and sound systems.

(5) The Mo Lam bands should make a financial record and the investment cost should be used for the calculation of the hiring price. In this regard, the government should provide financial support by suggesting a source of a loan with low-interest rates.

(6) There should be an establishment of the Mo Lam network to create value and foster credentials in Mo Lam business. Having Mo Lam association should help create confidence and collaboration among the Mo Lam entrepreneurs. The network should be advocating for the advancement of this folk-performing art business.

There should be research on the cultures and factors that affect the viewing of Mo Lam

among customers and fans. It also should be research that investigates the problems and problem-solving in some particular bands of Mo Lam. The art of lyrics composing and melodies and songwriting for each Mo Lam band in order to compare and find the uniqueness or strengths of each band. Also, the marketing and advertising strategies that lead to success in Mo Lam business should be more studied.

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