



Community Empowerment by Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Mindset to Mitigate Poverty

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ABSTRACT

Poverty is an ongoing issue that affects communities all around the world. It needs a lot of attention since it continues to dash prospects, endanger the future, and waste the lives of every family that is born into it.

The UN has opted to prioritize eradicating poverty at the top of its list of sustainable development objectives (SDGs). Through its 2030 set of goals concentrating on the different global concerns faced on the well-being, economic success, and environment protection, the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals aim to inspire significant actions to improve the status of the globe.

National and international organizations have highlighted that non-governmental organizations and industry partners must take part in the effort to end poverty in order to lessen its effects on the community. Companies, particularly those that are owned and controlled by the government, are strongly encouraged to take part in initiatives and programs that promote social advancement. As a result, businesses must engage in CSR activities and adopt local communities for extension programs.

This study aims to evaluate the economic standing of the locals in downtown Cebu City's Barangay Tejero by providing skills training that will open a business opportunity to mitigate poverty.

Keywords: Skills training, community empowerment, entrepreneurship, poverty

INTRODUCTION

Globally, poverty is an endemic problem faced by communities. It requires great attention that continues to stifle hopes, jeopardize the future, and waste the lives of each family born into it.

The United Nations have decided to put poverty as the first among the list of sustainable development goals (SDGs). The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals intend to spur major initiatives to improve the state of the world through its 2030 set of agenda focusing on the various international issues faced on the well-being, economic success and environment protection (Pradhan, 2017). Thus, universities as part of its social responsibility to its stakeholders extends support to the community through programs and services that will promote their well-being. These programs are anchored on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to generally contribute to the betterment and sustainable future through tourism. Several works have shown the relationship between poverty and criminality (Bharadwaj, n.d.). Specifically, in the context of property crime which is directly associated with the increase of drug related crimes, use, and selling.

In a developing country like the Philippines, poverty is prevalent, some of the causes of this poor condition are as follows, but not limited to the same, considering that each culture have varied causes: historical background, lack of education, lack of skills, lack of access to available source of income, underemployment and at some point, corruption in ranks of the governmental structure (Blomberg et al., 2013; da Costa & Dias, 2015; Davids & Gouws, 2013). In the recent years however, it can be observed that leadership in the government have done tremendous effort to eradicate these causes of poverty, for instance, the leadership of the current Duterte administration have strongly imposed a crackdown on corruption among government officials and employees (Quah, 2019). The majority of Filipinos, in general, want for a quality, long-term employment. So, this is how a family makes a living and may enjoy the beauties of life. However, the majority of Filipinos are jobless and face a variety of obstacles in their daily life. Extreme economic disparity is damaging and worrisome for a number of reasons: it is morally dubious; it can inhibit economic growth and alleviate poverty; and it can increase social issues. Other injustices, like the disparity between men and women, are made worse.

National and International organizations have emphasized that in order to mitigate the impact of poverty in the community, Non-Government organizations and Industry Partners must participate in the quest towards the eradication of poverty (Haig, 2014). Companies including those Government Owned and Controlled Corporations are highly encouraged to participate in activities and projects that enables social progress. This means that corporations must perform, Corporate Social Responsibility and adopt communities for Extension Programs (Blocker et al., 2013; The Role of Education and Income in Poverty Alleviation, n.d.).

This work intends to assess the economic conditions of the local residents of barangay Tejero in downtown Cebu City. It is located in an urbanized area of the city. Tejero, formerly known as *Villa Gonzalo*, is a barangay in Cebu City. Its population as determined by the 2020 Census was 14,084. This represented 1.46% of the total population of Cebu City(philatlas.com).

METHODOLOGY

The data was gathered utilizing the institutionalized Training Need Assessment survey and supplemented with focus group discussion with the beneficiaries of the program. The results of the survey and the answers to the question helped the proponent to assess their needs the enable the university to develop suitable program to capacitate them to augment their economic condition.

Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the beneficiaries, as reflected in Fig. 1, revealed that most of them are already matured, in fact, 10% were members of the senior citizens and are still very much willing to undergo training in the hope of earning income that can help them augment their economic life. Majority of the beneficiaries are in their fifties, composed the 40% of the beneficiaries. Married women are more interested to participate in the training holding 75% of the respondents. They want to provide more for more their children and not just depend on their partners, specially, that the income of their partners is not enough for the family. Only 30% of the beneficiaries are working, and having an income of less than six thousand a month, while the 70% of the beneficiaries are not working and are dependent of the income of their husband and partners. A listing of beneficiaries full name and age is provided for further information.

Table 1

Profile of the respondents

AGE			MARITAL STATUS			INCOME LEVEL		
	f	%		f	%		f	%
36-40	3	15	Single	3	15	4200	4	20
41-45	3	15	Married	15	75	4700	1	5
46-50	2	10	Widow	2	10	5200	1	5
51-55	8	40	OCCUPATION			None/Dependent to partner	14	70
56-60	2	10	Brgy Worker	6	30			
61-65	2	10	None	14	70			
Total	20	100		20	100		20	100

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Discussion of the Pre-training

In Barangay Tejero, a number of residents were identified as not employed and if employed their income is not sufficient to cover for their basic needs considering the number of the family members in a household. Based on the feedback of some residents in the barangay when interviewed, most of their concerns are on the struggle to make sufficient income for their daily necessities since most of them are not working and are dependent of their spouses' income. Insufficient economic practices and business opportunities are lacking for the application of the learning from seminars they undergone before. Skills training are very important however it will have no impact unless it will be translated to additional income and the creation of new jobs in the community. It will only be then that the community can be empowered. Barangay Tejero residents need skills training and to learn important business concepts for them to be capacitated so that they can improve their economic and social status.



B. Discussion of the post training evaluation results including a summary of beneficiary's comments and suggestions.

Criteria of Evaluation	5	4	3	2	1	Weighted mean
A. Pagkab-ot sa Tumong (Achievement of goal)						4.8
1. Ang tumong sa maong pagbansay-bansay linaw nga gipahibalo sa di pa mag sugod ang sesyon.(the goal of the training is informed and explained before the start of the activity)						
2. Ang mga tumong nakab-ot paghuman sa programa/proyekto.(the goal is achieved at the end of the training)						4.8
B. Programa/Proyekto(Project)						4.7
1. Ang programa/proyekto naghatag kanako og kaalam nga magamit nako sa akong trabaho.(the project /program help me learn new things to earn money)						
2. Hapsay ang dagan sa maong pakigpulong og linaw ang paghan-ay sa mga pagtanyag.(the experience of the training is smooth and good)						4.8
C. Kahanas sa pagtuon(expertise)						4.4
1. Ang tibuok pagtanyag nagpahayag sa kabantog sa mga butang nga nahisgutan.(the trainors are espert in their field)						
2. Ang mga butang nga nahisgutan kay mapuslanong napadayag.(the training and discussion were relevant and effective)						4.5
D. Ang gidugayon sa panahon(time)						4.7
1. Ang oras nga gigahin sa pakipulong kay igo ra.(the time in the conduct of meeting is enough)						
2. Ang oras nga gigahin sa pagbansay-bansay kay igo ra.(the time conducted in the training is enough)						4.8
E. Lugar (place)						4.3
1. Ang lugar sa pagbansay-bansay kay comfortable og hayahay. (the place of the training is comfortable and well ventilated)						
2. Ang lugar kay dali pangitaon og duolon.(the place is accessible)						4.4
3.						
	GRAND MEAN					4.6

The training was successfully implemented, as evidenced by the evaluation results as perceived by the trainees with a grand mean 4.6 of has a verbal description of PINAKAMAAYO(Excellent)

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

As reflected in the graph below, the beneficiaries although they are very interested in learning technical skills and important business concepts, in order to earn a living, they still have some issues and concerns that set as barriers if it is not answered properly. They want to make sure that they will really learn something out of the training and if the training will require them to pay an amount. If the schedule of the training will be in conflict with their time in tending their household works. The most concern of them is if the training will really give them opportunity to earn an income and if their life will be better after the training.



CONCLUSION

Poverty is not a problem without solution. Though it is apparent that such solution is a challenging quest. With proper management of the resources, though scarce, may have considerable impact on the mitigation of this perennial problem. Researches around the world have resulted to suggest countless ways to battle poverty. Countless means can be resorted to in order to address the same. This paper would end in propagating the concept of social empowerment, where the citizens must be educated well about the laws and regulations about daily conduct, and that opportunity to those who seems not to have been afforded to them. This is where the role of government and non-government institution to fulfill its role in the society, to effect change. With all the available avenue, it was recognized clearly the responsibility handed over to higher educational institutions whose expertise may change the world as we see it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to encourage entrepreneurship in the Philippines and boost the economy, the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) includes a number of methods. In addition, the strategy seeks to develop the Industries and Services sector so that it can compete on a worldwide scale. Additionally, it wants to boost commerce, which will open up new business opportunities. The National Competition Policy attempts to level the playing field in the Filipino market for both small and large firms. Smaller firms will be able to flourish as a result of giving consumers more options.

Poverty cannot be completely eradicated, as it largely caused by human factors. Over the past years there has been a lot of Poverty Alleviation Programs designed to break the cycle of poverty in many households and communities in the world. The result is remarkable, but there is still a lot to be done. The 4Ps program of the government is very good, however, it is not a lifetime solution because the government cannot support it forever. The idea of giving them a fish so that they can eat is not practical it will make them dependent; you should teach them how to catch fish so that they can eat for their lifetime. Below are the desired outcomes of the College.

Business Mindset. An enabled citizen is the one whose mind is set in the course of progress through a perspective that focused on business. Educating communities where there is existence of poverty, of the new ways of business strategies, empowering methods that encourages start-ups and build small enterprises (Malshe et al., 2017). Molding of future entrepreneurs is one of the best ways to escape the horrors of poverty. Poor communities must be enabled to start their own business by teaching them product development, packaging, and marketing. Through this, those that does not have knowledge on running the business might gain meaningful insights that would help them propel progress in the future (Pouw et al., 2019; Santos et al., 2019; Speelman et al., 2019; Udagedara RMU & Allman, 2017).

Micro-Enterprises. Starting a new business might be difficult, but studies shows, that when someone have the head for progress and positive change, one must start a small business (Manyara & Jones, 2007; Sedlmayr et al., 2019; Tohari et al., 2019). In this case, partnership with Department of Trade and Industry, and Higher Educational Institution that teaches business and commerce may come in, in order to empower such entrepreneurs for a start-up educative activity. Source funding and start-up capital may be sourced from DTIs programs for Medium, Small and Micro-Enterprises, where the government have provided considerable amount of funding (Fields, 2014; Gindling & Newhouse, 2014; Rogers et al., 2019)

Since the College of Management and Entrepreneurship has a pool of experts whose forty is on Business and Entrepreneurship, a socio-economic upliftment can be achieved through small scale business seminars, entrepreneurship trainings, and livelihood programs. This may be a herculean task, but it is not impossible. It can be started with single baby steps. As long as there are willing to be trained and to engage in business the College will always be there.

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