

Quality of Training and Management Practices as Key Drivers of Livelihood Sustainability in DOLE-Assisted Projects in a Municipality in Bukidnon

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ABSTRACT

Livelihood programs in the Philippines aim to empower beneficiaries to establish microenterprises and improve socio-economic conditions. Despite these interventions, sustaining livelihood projects remains a persistent challenge due to beneficiaries' limited managerial skills and inconsistent access to high-quality training. Studies show that deficiencies in financial and managerial competencies can hinder the long-term success of livelihood initiatives, particularly among small-scale and community-based enterprises (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Sachs, 2015). However, existing literature has largely focused on program outputs, with limited examination of how the quality of training and management practices influences long-term sustainability outcomes.

Anchored on Becker's Human Capital Theory (Becker, 2018), this study assessed the quality of training and management practices among beneficiaries of a government-assisted livelihood project in a municipality in Bukidnon and examined their influence on livelihood sustainability. Using a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 154 beneficiaries via a factor-analyzed, researcher-modified survey questionnaire and analyzed using means, standard deviations, and multiple linear regression.

Findings revealed high levels of perceived effectiveness and relevance of training, indicating that participants viewed it as practical, skill-enhancing, and aligned with their livelihood activities. Management practices, including monitoring, financial record-keeping, and technical support, were also rated highly, indicating effective program implementation and ongoing guidance. Multiple regression analysis showed that both training quality and management practices significantly influence livelihood sustainability, with management practices emerging as the stronger predictor.

It is recommended to strengthen post-training support mechanisms, enhance monitoring and evaluation systems, and improve organizational and financial management practices. Future researchers are encouraged to examine additional factors such as market access, entrepreneurial competencies, social support, and financial resources, and to replicate similar studies in other localities to validate and expand these findings. These insights provide a foundation for policy refinement and program enhancement of government-assisted livelihood initiatives.

Keywords: Quality of Training, Management Practices, Livelihood Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability of livelihood programs is a critical global priority, ensuring that interventions targeting marginalized communities provide long-term socio-economic benefits rather than temporary relief. Research indicates that the success of livelihood programs depends not only on the provision of resources but also on effective training and management practices (Hisrich, Peters, & Shepherd, 2017; Kuratko, 2021). Without these skills, many livelihood projects fail after the initial support period, highlighting the persistent challenge of maintaining continuity and impact in government-assisted initiatives.

In the Philippines, the government has consistently supported disadvantaged individuals through livelihood assistance programs. Initiatives such as the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP) provide resources,

technical knowledge, and opportunities to establish or improve micro and small enterprises (DOLE, 2022). While these programs empower beneficiaries to venture into small-scale enterprises, many struggle to sustain their projects once external support is withdrawn (Briones, 2017; Manasan, 2016).

The quality of training and management practices has been identified as a key determinant of livelihood sustainability. High-quality, context-relevant training equips beneficiaries with technical and managerial skills to operate enterprises, make informed decisions, and adapt to local conditions (DILP Evaluations, 2025; Indigenous Peoples' Livelihood Training Study, 2023). Effective management practices, including structured planning, transparent processes, monitoring mechanisms, and stakeholder engagement, ensure that resources are used efficiently and that projects remain viable beyond initial support. Despite these insights, there is a limited understanding of how specific aspects of training quality and management effectiveness influence the sustainability of DOLE-assisted livelihood projects at the municipal level. Addressing this gap is crucial for enhancing program outcomes, especially in rural settings like Bukidnon, where communities rely heavily on livelihood interventions for socio-economic development.

In a municipality in Bukidnon, livelihood sustainability is essential for long-term economic stability and improved socio-economic well-being. The municipality, classified as first-class, has a poverty incidence of approximately 25.3% as of 2023. Despite economic dynamism, reliance on agriculture, small enterprises, and community cooperatives leaves many households vulnerable to fluctuating crop prices, limited market access, and economic shocks. Strengthening training through tailored modules, continuous capacity-building, and post-training mentorship, alongside improving management systems through participatory governance, structured monitoring, and collaborative planning, can significantly enhance long-term project success.

This study examines the quality of training and management practices as key drivers of livelihood sustainability in DOLE-assisted projects within a municipality in Bukidnon. By identifying which training and management factors most strongly influence project performance, the research seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations to refine program implementation, improve policy frameworks, and ensure that livelihood initiatives deliver lasting socio-economic benefits to rural communities.

The significance of this study is multifaceted. For government agencies such as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Local Government Units (LGUs) through the Public Employment Service Office (PESO), the findings provide insights into how training programs and management practices influence the long-term success of livelihood initiatives. This knowledge can guide policy refinement, improve program implementation, and strengthen monitoring systems. For beneficiaries, the study offers practical guidance to enhance technical and managerial skills, organizational capacity, and the ability to sustain livelihood activities beyond the period of external support. Furthermore, the study aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 1: No Poverty and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainable livelihood development is a central concern in community-based employment programs, particularly in government-assisted initiatives such as those implemented by DOLE in Bukidnon. While financial assistance provides initial capital, the long-term sustainability of livelihood projects largely depends on the quality of training provided and the effectiveness of management practices adopted by beneficiaries. Weak implementation of these components often results in poor financial control, limited market access, and eventual business discontinuity.

This study is anchored on the 21st-Century Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF 21C), Sustainable Entrepreneurship Theory, and Human Capital Theory. The SLF 21C emphasizes that sustainability is achieved through the dynamic conversion of assets into resilient outcomes rather than merely through asset availability. In DOLE-assisted projects, training builds human capital, while management practices function as conversion mechanisms that transform resources into sustained income and enterprise continuity. Sustainable Entrepreneurship Theory highlights long-term viability through responsible resource use, innovation, and market responsiveness.

High-quality training equips beneficiaries with technical and financial competencies; however, sustainability is realized only when these competencies are applied through effective budgeting, record-keeping, monitoring, and marketing strategies. Human Capital Theory posits that investments in education and training enhance productivity and economic performance. In livelihood programs, financial literacy, planning skills, and marketing competence strengthen beneficiaries' capacity to manage enterprises effectively.

Thus, management practices represent the operational application of accumulated human capital. Guided by these theories, the study examines the influence of training quality and management practices on livelihood sustainability. The independent variables are the quality of training and management practices. In contrast, the dependent variable is livelihood sustainability, measured by income stability, business continuity, resilience to economic challenges, and long-term enterprise viability.

The following figure shows the schematic diagram of the concepts studied.

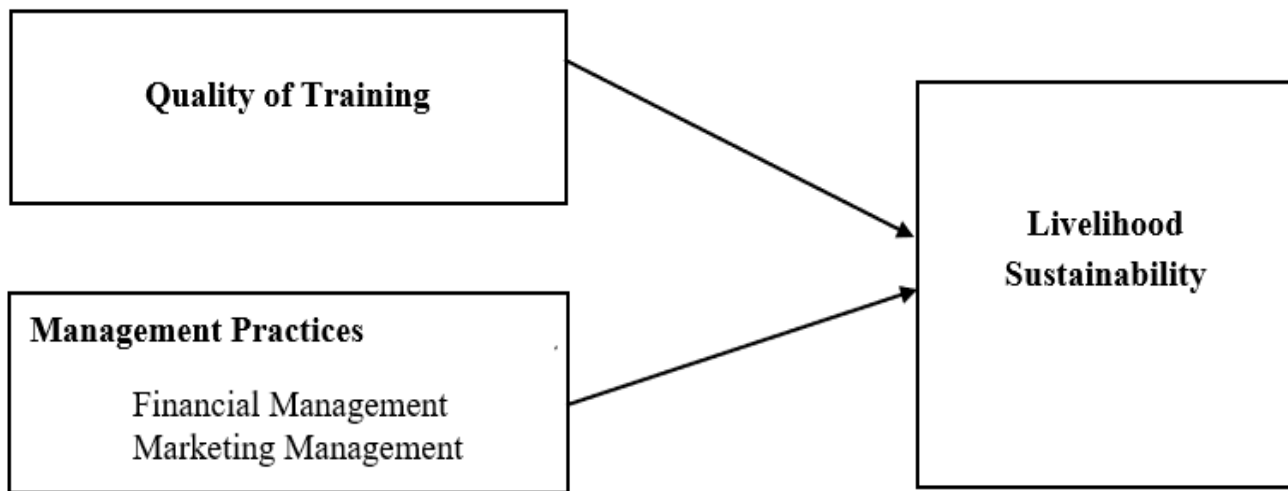


Figure 1. Schematic Presentation of the Study

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks to assess the quality of training and management practices of a government-assisted livelihood project in a Municipality in Bukidnon, Philippines, and to determine their influence on beneficiaries' livelihood sustainability. Specifically, this study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What is the participants' assessment of the quality of training received?
2. What is the participants' assessment of their management practices in terms of:
 - 2.1 Financial Management
 - 2.2 Marketing Management
3. What is the participants' level of livelihood sustainability?
4. Do the participants' quality of training and management practices directly significantly influence their livelihood sustainability?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to examine the influence of training quality and management practices on livelihood sustainability. The respondents consisted of 154 beneficiaries of DOLE-assisted livelihood projects in a municipality in Bukidnon who had participated in the program within the past five years.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of three main sections: (1) quality of training, (2) management practices, and (3) livelihood sustainability. The instrument utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions.

To ensure reliability, the questionnaire was pre-tested and evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Content validity was established through expert review, where specialists assessed and refined the instrument for clarity and relevance. After data collection, factor analysis was conducted to confirm the underlying constructs and ensure that the items adequately represented the intended variables.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and given the right to withdraw at any time. Data collection was conducted over three weeks using both printed questionnaires and online surveys.

Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data. Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine the extent to which training quality and management practices influence livelihood sustainability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of Quality of Training Received

Table 1 presents a summary of the mean, standard deviation, and interpretation of participants' assessments of the quality of the training received.

Table 1. Summary of Mean, Interpretation, and Standard Deviation of Quality of Training Received

Factor	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Quality of Training	4.41	High	.59

Legend: 4.51 to 5.00 – Very high 1.51 to 2.50 – Low

3.51 to 4.50 – High 1.50 to 1.50 – Very low

2.51 to 3.50 – Moderate

The table shows the percentage distribution and mean of participants' assessments of the quality of the training received. With an overall mean of 4.41, the findings indicate that the quality of training was generally perceived as very high. The standard deviation of 0.59 indicates relatively low variability in responses, suggesting a shared, consistent assessment among participants of the training program's effectiveness.

Overall, the results showed that the training served as an effective mechanism for human capital development and capacity building, as reflected in the high level of evaluation across the assessed variables under the established scoring interpretation. This finding aligns with the principles of Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes that investments in training and skills development enhance individuals' productivity and long-term economic outcomes, as discussed by Becker (2018). Moreover, it supports the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, which highlights capacity building as a critical factor in improving livelihood resilience and sustainability (Scoones, 1998). These results suggest that well-designed training interventions not only improve immediate competencies but also contribute to sustained livelihood performance over time.

Assessment of Management Practices

Table 2 presents a summary of the mean, interpretation, and standard deviation of participants' assessments of management practices in financial and marketing management.

Table 2. Summary of Mean, Interpretation, and Standard Deviation of Management Practices

Factors	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Financial Management	3.98	High	.75
Marketing Management	4.17	High	.52

Legend: 4.51 to 5.00 – Very high 1.51 to 2.50 – Low
 3.51 to 4.50 – High 1.50 to 1.50 – Very low
 2.51 to 3.50 – Moderate

The results revealed that respondents demonstrated a high level of management practices, both in financial management (M=3.98) and in marketing management (M=4.17). This indicates that beneficiaries consistently practice sound financial management, including budgeting, record-keeping, and proper allocation of resources. Similarly, the high rating for marketing management reflects active engagement in promoting products or services, identifying market opportunities, and implementing strategies to sustain and improve business performance. The relatively lower standard deviation values indicate moderate consistency in responses among participants. This finding is supported by studies in small business management, which emphasize that effective financial practices and marketing strategies are key determinants of enterprise sustainability and performance. Additionally, empirical work by Abdul Ganiyu demonstrates that strong marketing capabilities positively influence business growth and competitive advantage, reinforcing the importance of these practices among livelihood beneficiaries.

Overall, the findings indicate that beneficiaries demonstrate strong management practices, particularly in maintaining financial control and implementing marketing strategies, thereby contributing to the effective operation and sustainability of their livelihood enterprises. This indicates that, beyond technical training, beneficiaries' ability to internalize and apply managerial competencies plays a critical role in sustaining enterprise outcomes. Studies in entrepreneurship and small business management indicate that financial discipline, such as regular record-keeping, budgeting, and cost control, directly influences profitability and long-term viability (Drucker 2007). Moreover, strong marketing orientation enables enterprises to remain responsive to customer needs and market trends, which enhances competitiveness and business resilience, a concept supported by Kotler (2017) in modern marketing theory. Effective financial control reflects the beneficiaries' capacity to allocate resources efficiently, monitor financial performance, and make informed decisions. This supports the findings of Akther et al. (2024), who emphasized that strong management capabilities, including financial practices, significantly enhance sustainable business performance. Similarly, Alam and colleagues (2020) highlighted that financial management practices are directly associated with improved operational efficiency and long-term enterprise viability among small businesses. These findings suggest that beneficiaries who exercise financial discipline are better positioned to sustain their livelihood projects and withstand economic uncertainties.

Assessment on Livelihood Sustainability

Table 3 presents a summary of the mean, interpretation, and standard deviation of the participants' assessments of livelihood sustainability.

Table 3: Summary of Mean and Interpretation of Livelihood Sustainability

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Livelihood Sustainability	4.22	.68	High

Legend: 4.51 to 5.00 – Very high 1.51 to 2.50 – Low
 3.51 to 4.50 – High 1.50 to 1.50 – Very low
 2.51 to 3.50 – Moderate

The participants’ assessment of the level of livelihood sustainability was interpreted as high, with most respondents expressing agreement or strong agreement that they effectively control costs, use financial records, plan for long-term growth, and maintain confidence in the continuity of their projects. The results indicate that beneficiaries demonstrate financial discipline and operational efficiency. Furthermore, respondents agreed that they utilize financial records to track expenses and profits ($M = 4.19$) and to control operating costs to maintain profitability ($M = 4.18$). These practices reflect structured financial management and accountability, which are essential components of livelihood sustainability. The application of record-keeping systems and cost monitoring enhances transparency and informed decision-making.

Overall, the results imply that sustainability is not only reflected in income generation but also in beneficiaries’ confidence, financial control, and long-term growth planning. Continuous monitoring, mentorship, and advanced business development support may further reinforce these sustainability outcomes and ensure long-term impact. From a research perspective, these findings highlight that livelihood sustainability is multidimensional, encompassing both economic and behavioral components. The observed confidence among beneficiaries suggests a strengthened sense of self-efficacy, which is critical in decision-making and enterprise resilience. This aligns with the principles of Social Cognitive Theory, particularly the concept of self-efficacy introduced by Bandura (1997), where individuals who believe in their capabilities are more likely to sustain and grow their ventures.

Thus, studies on sustainable livelihood approaches indicate that long-term sustainability involves empowerment, enabling individuals to build confidence, negotiation capacity, and skills that contribute to sustained benefit, beyond mere income generation. Such outcomes are seen as part of social and human capital that underpin long-term livelihood resilience. This aligns with the literature on Bandura’s foundational work on self-efficacy, which emphasizes how personal beliefs in one’s capabilities influence motivation, persistence, and performance outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, studies on entrepreneurship and livelihood programs highlight that higher self-efficacy among small business owners or beneficiaries is associated with better financial management, proactive decision-making, and long-term business sustainability ((Markman & Baron, 2003; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998). These works collectively reinforce the notion that behavioral confidence is a key driver in sustaining livelihood outcomes.

Results on the Influence of Quality Training and Management Practices on Livelihood Sustainability

Do the participants’ quality of training and management practices directly significantly influence their livelihood sustainability?

HO₁: Quality of training and management practices does not significantly influence livelihood sustainability.

HO₂: Quality of training does not influence livelihood sustainability.

HO₃: Management practices do not influence livelihood sustainability

Table 4 presents the multiple regression analysis of the influence of quality training and management practices on livelihood sustainability in this problem.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Analysis on the Influence of Quality Training and Management Practices on Livelihood Sustainability

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P-Value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.877	.384		2.284	.024
Quality Training	.24**	.083	.208	2.834	.005

Management Practices	.56**	.088	.469	6.390	.000
Model Summary					
R = .593 R ² = .452 Adjusted R ² = .443 F = 41.017 P = <.001					

** Significant at 0.01 level

The multiple regression analysis results showed that the combined effects of quality training and management practices on livelihood sustainability are statistically significant ($F = 41.017, p < .001$), with an explained variance of 45.2% ($R^2 = .452$). This indicates that, while these predictors substantially contribute to livelihood sustainability, a considerable portion of the variance (54.8%) remains attributable to other contextual factors, such as access to capital, market linkages, institutional support, and socio-economic conditions. Given the overall significance of the model, the null hypothesis $H_0 1$, stating that these variables do not significantly influence livelihood sustainability, is rejected.

Among the predictors, management practices emerged as the strongest and most significant factor ($B = .564, t = 6.390, p < .001$), highlighting the critical importance of financial control, planning, and market-oriented decision-making in sustaining livelihood initiatives. This finding suggests that sustainability is not solely dependent on resource availability but is largely shaped by how effectively beneficiaries manage their enterprises. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with the Sustainable Livelihood Framework, which emphasizes that while access to financial capital is important, long-term sustainability depends on individuals' ability to utilize and manage their resources effectively (DFID, 1999; Scoones, 1998). Similarly, microenterprise development studies affirm that sound management practices such as budgeting, monitoring, and strategic planning serve as mechanisms that translate resources into sustainable outcomes. Thus, the null hypothesis $H_0 2$, stating that management practices do not significantly influence livelihood sustainability, is rejected.

Quality training also showed a statistically significant positive effect on livelihood sustainability ($B = .236, t = 2.834, p = .005$), indicating that improvements in training quality enhance participants' ability to sustain their livelihood activities. Although its effect is relatively weaker than management practices, training plays a crucial enabling role by strengthening participants' knowledge, skills, and competencies. This supports Human Capital Theory, which posits that investments in education and training improve individuals' productivity and economic outcomes (Becker, 1964). Furthermore, within the Sustainable Livelihood Framework, training is viewed as a capacity-building intervention that enhances human capital, enabling individuals to maximize the use of available resources (DFID, 1999; Ellis, 2000). Empirical evidence also shows that entrepreneurship and business training improve financial literacy, planning, and enterprise performance (Karlan & Valdivia, 2011). More recent studies continue to confirm this relationship: for example, Xu and Jiang (2024) found that financial literacy significantly enhances entrepreneurial behavior and, by extension, business outcomes; research on SMEs highlights that financial literacy positively affects enterprise performance and sustainability through improved financial decision-making and planning (Kurniasari, Hamid & Lestari, 2025). Therefore, the null hypothesis $H_0 3$, stating that quality training does not significantly influence livelihood sustainability, is rejected.

Overall, the findings indicate that livelihood sustainability is strongly influenced by a combination of quality training and sound management practices in terms of financial and marketing management. While management practices are the primary driver of sustainability, quality training plays an essential complementary role by equipping participants with the skills and confidence needed to manage their livelihood activities effectively. These results suggest that programs aimed at improving livelihood sustainability should not only invest in high-quality training but also emphasize the development and consistent application of sound management practices to achieve lasting and sustainable outcomes.

These findings also emphasize the complementary role of training, as entrepreneurial and financial literacy training improves both knowledge and the practical application of managerial skills, thereby enhancing decision-making, resource allocation, and overall enterprise sustainability (Adewale & Adeniran, 2023; Galang & Reyes, 2025). Together, this body of literature supports the conclusion that programs aimed at improving livelihood

sustainability should not only invest in high-quality training but also emphasize the consistent application of sound financial and marketing management practices to achieve lasting and sustainable outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, this study concludes that the quality of training provided to beneficiaries is highly effective and contributes significantly to skill development, confidence building, and practical application in livelihood activities. The training program is perceived as relevant and aligned with participants' needs, supporting human capital development.

Moreover, beneficiaries demonstrate strong financial and marketing management practices, indicating that training and support interventions have strengthened their entrepreneurial and managerial capacities. The level of livelihood sustainability among participants is very high, suggesting that most beneficiaries perceive their livelihood projects as profitable, well-managed, and capable of long-term operation. The results further conclude that both the quality of training and management practices significantly influence livelihood sustainability, with management practices exerting a stronger direct impact.

Overall, livelihood sustainability is achieved when beneficiaries receive relevant training and consistently apply effective financial and marketing management strategies in their livelihood projects. Thus, the findings of the study provided empirical support for Gary Becker's Human Capital Theory and the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework. The results revealed that the participants demonstrated a high level of management practices, particularly in financial management and profit reinvestment, indicating that the knowledge and skills gained from training were translated into practical business management behaviors. These findings affirmed the central assumption of Human Capital Theory that investments in education, training, and skill development enhance individuals' productivity and economic capacity. At the same time, the results are consistent with the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, which emphasizes strengthening people's capabilities and resources to achieve sustainable livelihood outcomes. The high level of training quality and management practices suggested that capacity-building interventions have enabled beneficiaries to manage their livelihood enterprises and improve their economic resilience effectively.

Thus, the findings validated the applicability of both theoretical perspectives in explaining how training and management competencies contribute to livelihood sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed for groups involved in livelihood sustainability:

1. Government-led livelihood projects

That they may strengthen program design by integrating technical skills training with managerial competencies, particularly in financial literacy, marketing strategies, cost control, record-keeping, and operational planning. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems should be enhanced by incorporating sustainability indicators, including profitability, business continuity, reinvestment practices, and market expansion. In addition, program implementers may consider expanding the scope of future program assessments by including multiple municipalities or adopting a comparative or multi-site approach. This will enhance the external validity and generalizability of program outcomes and provide a broader evidence base for policy refinement.

2. Local Government Unit

That they may integrate findings into the Municipal Comprehensive Development Plan by aligning livelihood initiatives with the most effective training and management practices identified in this study, ensuring that programs target the skills and competencies that directly enhance sustainability, also, they may also ensure long-term planning by including strategies for scaling successful livelihood projects, expanding market access, and supporting business continuity over multiple years. In addition, they may allocate resources strategically to

provide follow-up support, mentoring, and capacity-building opportunities for beneficiaries after initial training, reinforcing project sustainability.

3. Public Employment Service Office (PESO)

That they may enhance training facilitation by adopting participatory, practical, and adult-learning approaches, strengthening post-training monitoring and evaluation activities, is essential to assess the extent to which beneficiaries apply the management practices they have acquired. Additionally, PESO may intensify technical assistance in key areas, including bookkeeping, budgeting, cost control, pricing strategies, and customer engagement. Continuous professional development for PESO personnel is also recommended to improve their capacity in livelihood enterprise development and sustainability monitoring.

4. Beneficiaries of Government-assisted projects

That they may sustain a disciplined financial management practice, such as systematic record-keeping, budgeting, savings allocation, and profit reinvestment; continue applying market-oriented decision-making by gathering customer feedback and adapting to market demand; and engage in continuous learning and capacity-building activities to enhance enterprise resilience. They may also participate in cooperatives and peer-learning groups to strengthen collaboration and market access, and seek technical guidance if necessary to improve operational efficiency and long-term viability.

5. Community.

That they may support and patronize local livelihood enterprises, participate in community-based business networks and cooperatives, and strengthen collaboration between households, local leaders, and institutions.

6. Future Researchers

That they may explore additional variables that may influence livelihood sustainability, such as digital literacy, innovation capacity, access to credit, and social capital, conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term outcomes and sustainability of beneficiaries' livelihoods after the implementation of livelihood assistance programs, undertake comparative studies across different municipalities or regions to enhance the generalizability of the findings and to determine whether similar patterns exist in varying contexts. They may also investigate the role of government and institutional support mechanisms in strengthening the sustainability of livelihood programs.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

Prior to the actual data gathering, formal approval was obtained from the appropriate officers to secure their cooperation and ensure full compliance with ethical standards and research protocols.

Upon approval of the request to conduct the survey, the researcher coordinated with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Provincial Field Office of Bukidnon, through the Public Employment Service Office of Manolo Fortich and its respective Barangay PESOs, to assist in distributing both the printed questionnaire and Google Form survey and facilitate a smooth data collection process to enhance respondent participation significantly. At the beginning of both the online and hard-copy versions of the survey, a brief informed consent form was provided to participants, clearly explaining the purpose of the study, assuring confidentiality, and emphasizing the voluntary nature of participation. Participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

The survey was administered via both printed (hard-copy) questionnaires and an online platform to ensure greater accessibility and inclusivity. The instrument consisted of structured questions measuring the quality of training and management practices using a 5-point Likert scale. Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey. Friendly reminders were communicated through designated points of contact to encourage timely

submission and maintain a high response rate. All returned hard copy questionnaires and online responses were carefully reviewed for completeness and consistency.

After the designated data collection period, the online survey form was officially closed, preventing further submissions and restricting access exclusively to the researcher. This ensured that no additional or unauthorized entries were recorded beyond the approved timeline. Only valid and fully accomplished questionnaires, both printed and online, were included in the final analysis. All data from hard copies was securely encoded into a protected database, while online responses were downloaded and stored in a secure file. No personally identifiable information was collected or disclosed.

This structured and ethical data-gathering approach ensured that the process was respectful, non-intrusive, and aligned with academic and institutional research standards.

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