



Narratives of the Community Skills Development Program Completers in District 1, Makati

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Abstract

The Community Skills Development Program (CSDP) is a term encompassing all the skills training taken by our completers as implemented by TESDA or DSWD in partnership with other government bureaus, the local government units (LGUs), and/or with the support of private entities or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide skills training to the low-income and vulnerable sectors of the municipality. The study focused on the completers from the 1st District of Makati, exploring their perspective and experiences in taking the CSDP to highlight the achievement of its main goal of combating poverty by enhancing the participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, thereby increasing their employability, productivity, and capacity. The completers, as described in this study, are the participants of the CSDP who completed any form of livelihood training, and skills training, particularly those who were awarded a Certificate of Competency (COC) by completing a particular or cluster of units of competency, or a National Certificate (NC) by completing all units of competency that comprised a Qualification. The Study also explored how the CSDP completers achieve long-term socioeconomic benefits through the free barangay skills training program and the distribution of financial grants and training materials such as Seed Capital Funds, training allowances, tool kits, and more. The CSDP is a sustainable and cost-effective program that allows people to develop and upgrade their skills to adapt to the challenges of globalization.

Keywords: Community Skills Development Program, Livelihood training, Poverty alleviation, Barangay Skills Training Program

INTRODUCTION

One of the many problems plaguing the Philippines, more so than its neighboring asian countries, is poverty, which is due to the lackluster performance of the economic policies and the influence of powerful elites that hinder economic reforms (Mendoza et al., 2022). In many parts of the Philippines, it is common to see poor communities located near Central Business Districts (CBDs). Makati City is often regarded as a model for urban development and is known as one of the wealthiest cities in the Philippines. Despite this recognition, poor communities exist alongside the posh gated communities and highly developed areas (Tomeldan et. al., 2014). The 1st district of Makati, where the Central Business District (CBD) is located and where most of the city's prosperity originates,

exemplifies this phenomenon. According to Garrido (2023), “There is a parallel growth of informal settlements at the perimeter of villages that is continuing apace in the CBDs.” Given this reality, there is a need to conduct further studies on various aspects of this situation, including the government’s efforts to bridge the gap by introducing capacity-building programs aimed at developing and enhancing the skills of community members to create more livelihood opportunities and manpower resources—ultimately reducing poverty and unemployment.

To contribute to improved national well-being, the government continuously works to meet the country’s evolving needs by implementing Community Development Programs (CDPs). A community is defined as a group of individuals who share a common identity and face similar challenges, yet possess untapped potential for self-improvement (Phillips & Pittman, 2009, as cited in Pfortmueller, 2017). One key strategy for uplifting communities and alleviating poverty is through the provision of skills training programs, offered as part of CDPs, which enable individuals to acquire new skills or upgrade existing ones. Skills training, in general, is a vital component of both personal and professional development. Whether through basic workplace instruction or more comprehensive training offered by private institutions and government agencies, these programs serve as powerful tools for enhancing the social and economic well-being of participants.

In the Philippines, various government bureaus have been established to help improve the country’s social conditions, including the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). According to the TESDA website, it is a government agency that manages the country’s technical education, skills development, and certification system by implementing a competency-based education and training framework known as TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training). This system aims to meet the demands of the labor market by producing skilled Filipino workers.

TVET is delivered through four modalities: school-based programs, center-based programs, community-based programs, and enterprise-based programs (Wu et al., 2019). TESDA’s skills training is particularly directed toward the poor and marginalized sector groups characterized by low skill levels, limited management capabilities, and minimal access to formal training or capital. In partnership with local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), people’s organizations, and other agencies, TESDA’s Community-Based Training and Enterprise Development (CBTE) not only provides training but also aims to jumpstart the creation of livelihood enterprises, empowering individuals to become responsible and productive citizens.

Since 1960, TESDA and its predecessor have introduced various community-based training programs, such as the National Agricultural Skills Training Program (NASTP), Training for Entrepreneurial Development (TREND), Training Delivery for the Informal Sector (TDIS), Community-Based Training and Entrepreneurship (CBTE), and

the Special Training for Employment Program (STEP). TESDA continues to ensure that every individual, especially those in underserved communities, has equal opportunities to acquire and enhance skills that can lead to improved social and economic outcomes (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority [TESDA], 2022).

Another government agency tasked with addressing the ills of Philippine society is the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Like TESDA, DSWD has taken the lead in providing opportunities for income-generating activities and livelihood development through the implementation of the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) since 2011. Social protection (SP) schemes have proven to be practical tools for reducing poverty in many countries, including the Philippines. (PDP) (NEDA, 2017, as cited in Acosta & Avalos, 2018). Through the implementation of the SLP, selected individuals from marginalized sectors benefit from increased wages and self-employment opportunities, leading to overall socio-economic well-being through access to productive assets and sustainable income (Acosta & Avalos, 2018).

This study focused on the experiences of Community Skills Development Program (CSDP) completers from District 1, Makati City. The individuals interviewed had completed one or more skills training programs offered by TESDA, DSWD, and other government agencies, private entities, and NGOs over the past five years. The Makati Social Welfare Department (MSWD) is the primary agency responsible for facilitating these skills training programs. It has recently implemented initiatives such as TESDA's Community-Based Training and Enterprise Development (CBTE), the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), and other training programs from various institutions at the barangay level. The CSDP aligns with the goals of skills development programs: to equip individuals with job-relevant and in-demand skills, promote entrepreneurship and innovation, and align skill supply with labor market demand (International Labor Organization, 2018). This research presents the narratives of CSDP completers, detailing their experiences during training and the resulting changes or improvements in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Their stories help illustrate the value of continuous skill development and how it contributes to personal and professional growth. The study also explored the challenges completers faced during and after the training. Furthermore, it provides an overview of the CSDP's structure, implementation, and the support provided by the local government to encourage program completion, offering a comprehensive understanding of its benefits and impact.

Theoretical Framework

Skills training is an essential economic activity, and various theories and philosophies have influenced the creation of different methods and practices in this field to better deliver the intended outcome. One relevant theory is the Skills Development Theory, proposed by Alexander Romiszowski, which defines skill as the “capacity to perform a

given type of task or activity with a specified degree of effectiveness, efficiency, speed, or other measures of quantity or quality” (Moyo et al., 2023). In general, skills training allows an individual to perform a task with depth and understanding; it is thought that an individual who participates in skills training will show a significant improvement in that trade or task. Romiszowski indicates that a trained individual should display the essential aspects of the performance execution and management, namely: (1) intellectual or cognitive skills, (2) motor, sensorimotor, or psychomotor skills, and (3) reactive or interpersonal skills (Mohd Hajaraih et al., 2016). These classifications are crucial when practicing a skill, especially for performing more complex and sophisticated tasks. The evaluation of an individual's mastery or proficiency in a skill is usually done by measures of effectiveness, such as the time consumed in completing the task, the number of outputs produced within a given time frame, the quality of those outputs, the feedback from clients, and other criteria. Collectively, these measures indicate the use of broader developmental facets, not just the skills themselves.

Another critical theory that applies to skills training is the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which describes learning as a process of gaining knowledge through experience (Devi and Thendral, 2023). According to Kolb (2012), as cited in (Taneja et. al., 2022), learning through experience offers a lasting transformation in an individual's behavior and beliefs, which is not possible in rote learning.

Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience (Kolb, 1984 as cited in Cherry, 2019), so various educational settings such as internships, classrooms, laboratory activities, vocational education programs, and distance learning programs benefit from this theory (KingKaew et. al., 2023). Kolb's model identifies four (4) stages in the learning cycle wherein learners should ideally progress namely: (1) concrete experience (CE, grasping experience), (2) abstract conceptualization (AC, forming new ideas), (3) reflective observation (RO, reflection on experience) and (4) active experimentation (AE, applying ideas), these four stages represent how effective learning occurs (Devi and Thendral, 2023). Training is a daunting task since the class often comprises individuals with different personalities and learning preferences. ELT is therefore useful in improving instructional design and for understanding how students learn (Kolb, 1984, as cited in Cherry, 2019). ELT learners improve by actively engaging in concrete experiences and then reflecting on those experiences (RO), forming new abstract ideas (AC), and finally applying these new ideas in practice (AE) (Devi and Thendral, 2023). This cycle is continuous and iterative as learners test and refine their understanding with new experiences.

The assessment and interpretation of the learning outcomes of each participant in this study are guided by the Skills Development Theory. Since the theory states that every successful training develops the (1) cognitive skills, (2) motor or sensorimotor

skills, and (3) interpersonal skills of an individual (Reigeluth & Carr-Chellman, 2009), the researcher concentrated on determining the improvements of the completers in these areas. Following Romiszowki's skills classification, the results demonstrated the improvements of the participants' theoretical understanding of the trade (intellectual skills), the practical execution of tasks (psychomotor skills), and displayed confidence and the use of good communication in serving others (interpersonal skills). In the same manner, the experiential learning theory shaped the research design and analysis. The interview questions were designed to elicit participants' descriptions of their concrete experiences and their reflections. At the same time, the study looked for evidence of their development following Kolb's four stages of learning. Many of the participants discussed their hands-on training (concrete experience), reflection of their experiences (reflective observation), developing new concepts or methods (abstract conceptualization), and applying them in real situations (active experimentation). For example, participants shared that they gained confidence by practicing their skills (AE) following the correct procedures and safety protocols (RO and AC). The results of the study proved that the CSDP's impact is aligned with the established model of Skills Development and Experiential learning theories, thereby supporting the study's conclusion regarding the program's effectiveness in enhancing the completer's competencies.

METHODOLOGY

The research design employed is the qualitative method, used to answer questions about experience, meaning, and perspective using the participant's standpoint (Hammerberg et al., 2016). The researcher used a descriptive qualitative study to thoroughly examine and discuss the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the topic. This design is useful when participants are invited to share their reflections on their experiences. The chosen method enabled the researcher to assess whether the program was effective and to detail every step in the process to determine which parts were problematic as experienced by the recipients of the CSDP that affected the expected results.

The in-depth interview (IDI) method was used to gather relevant and vital information essential to this study. An IDI is defined as a long-duration, face-to-face interview conducted to achieve a detailed understanding and in-depth information (Showkat and Parveen 2017). In an IDI, the interviewer prepares questions covering the most essential concepts, situations, or areas for a deeper understanding of a subject or concept (Kvale 1996, cited in Showkat and Parveen 2017). The interviewer also builds rapport to establish trust and encourage the interviewee to talk openly and freely about the topic. It is also encouraged to have brief, informal conversations to help the interviewee feel at ease. The interview questions contain general interview guides and standardize open-ended questions that allow exploration of the topic.

The participants of the skills training program were the main source of information regarding the CSDP of District 1 and all relevant information for the study. The study focused on nine (9) barangays in the 1st District of Makati City, which is closest to the Makati CBD and expected to have a highest number of skilled workers and economics growth: (1) Tejeros, (2) Carmona, (3) Olympia, (4) Kasilawan, (5) Singkamas, (6) La Paz, (7) Santa Cruz, (8) San Antonio, and (9) Bangkal. The barangay officials handpicked the participants following the criteria set by the researcher, such as (i) they completed any form of barangay livelihood training, and (ii) being holders of either a Certificate of Competency (COC) or a National Certificate (NC). Aside from the interviews, the researcher supplemented the study with pertinent sources from different books, journals, and research from the National Library of the Philippines and the Makati City Public Library, as well as online sources that offer relevant digital copies of information.

To analyze the qualitative data, the researcher employed the thematic analysis technique following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework (Ahmed et. al, 2025). This process begins with (1) data familiarization, where all interviews were transcribed verbatim, and goes through repeated readings during which notes are taken on interesting points and recurring topics. Next is (2) initial coding, the segment in which data were highlighted and assigned codes - short phrases like "program goals", "safety protocols", and "confidence" are significant ideas applied through the dataset to ensure comparability. The codes are then carefully examined to identify a wider pattern and used to (3) generate initial themes, which are coherent and distinct from one another. Themes are further refined through (4) reviewing them and cross-checking with the original transcript to see if there were missing or redundant data. Each theme is then (5) defined and named concisely, ensuring that supporting quotes and detailed descriptions are present for clarity. The researcher then organized these findings and 6) writing a report or research, which includes a detailed account of themes, data extracts, and analysis. The report provides a meaningful interpretation of data and links findings to the literature for transparency. The thematic analysis revealed these major themes: Knowledge of Program Content, Skills Development, Improvement in Attitude, Challenges, and Benefits Experienced by the Completers.

The CSDP completers reported acquiring explicit knowledge about the program's objectives, essential concepts, and safety guidelines related to their skills, particularly in the use and maintenance of tools and equipment. They also understood the program as an initiative aimed at providing economic opportunities by equipping them with practical skills and recognizing the value of training not only for employment but also for contributing to their financial independence and personal growth. In terms of skills development, the CSDP improved the completer's hard skills (e.g., trade-specific technical skills) and soft skills (e.g., communication, leadership, and collaboration). Participants reported better job performance, increased client trust, and new opportunities, such as mentoring

others or securing community-based work. While some employment was informal, many participants valued the economic stability gained through side jobs or microenterprises. The completers reported significant improvements in their attitudes and professional behavior, citing that the training boosted their confidence, sociability, and sense of competence through earning certificates that validated their skills. Participants also developed essential interpersonal and work ethics, such as humility, patience, discipline, cleanliness, and professionalism. These positive attitude changes highlight the program's holistic impact on both personal and professional development. For the completers, obtaining a TESDA certificate through the CSDP was a top priority, as it signified credibility and improved employability. They also experienced personal fulfillment through volunteer services and helping others. The program effectively enabled participants to gain or enhance skills, leading to new job opportunities, business prospects, and additional income streams. The start-up kits, seed capital, and allowances helped them begin earning immediately, contributing to their economic stability. Most of the completers are mothers balancing family duties, work, and the training. They overcame time and financial challenges through perseverance, time management, and family support. Despite working in the informal sector, they remained resourceful in ensuring income stability. Some, particularly in massage therapy, faced stigma and inappropriate behavior due to misconceptions about their profession. Participants emphasized the need for training modules on handling harassment and maintaining professional boundaries, highlighting the importance of protection and empowerment for women in the industry.

To identify and correct grammatical errors, generative AI tools such as Grammarly and ChatGPT were used. These tools were not used to write or rewrite the content of the study but served solely to ensure that messages were communicated effectively. Additionally, the aforementioned AI tools helped translate Filipino statements into English.

Ethical Considerations

Before interviewing each of the completers who satisfied the criteria, the researcher sought approval from barangay officials to ensure ethical considerations were observed and to obtain permission to interview with their constituents. All interview questions were evaluated by the thesis adviser and three (3) experts knowledgeable in the writing and training fields. Practice interviews were also done with two (2) experts through video conferencing and face-to-face settings. The researcher constructed the questions using multiple references, which helped explore the essential concepts of the study. Approval was also obtained to establish communication with barangay officials and the participants before conducting the interviews.

In the investigation process, the researcher adhered to ethical standards to uphold the integrity of this academic activity. The researcher ensured the safety of all

participants by securing approval and consent forms before conducting the research. Once an interviewee consented, the researcher interviewed in a secure and comfortable environment as agreed upon by both parties. Recording devices and assistants (if any) were disclosed, and all contents will be considered HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL. The completers were treated with utmost respect, and their voluntary cooperation was requested. Any refusal to answer questions was respected. Confidentiality and anonymity (if requested) of the participants and the organization were prioritized. The researcher sought permission before recording the interview and oriented participants on the purpose of the interview beforehand. After conducting the interviews, the researcher transcribed the audio materials to provide a text basis for analysis along with supplementary data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of the Community Skills Development Program in Terms of Knowledge

As with any other training program, the CSDP is essential for the development and mastery of its completers, preparing them for active roles in the community and the country's economic activities. The program's most notable benefit is the enhancement of the participants' knowledge, which is measured by how well they understand (1) the goals of the CSDP and the key concepts applied to their skill, (2) the tools required for their trade, and (3) the health and safety protocols necessary for each occupation.

The completers demonstrated a clear understanding of the CSDP's aim to provide economic opportunities through skills training. They viewed the program as a local government initiative that empowers individuals to become self-sufficient by equipping them with relevant knowledge and abilities for their chosen trade.

Para ano...Siyempre magandang anu yan kasi ang livelihood nakakatulong din sa mga katulad namin na walang trabaho. Parang binibigyan ng opportunity na kung sakaling makatapos kami ng ganyang proyekto mai-apply namin sa trabaho. Madali kaming matanggap.

(Of course, that's (CSDP) good because livelihood training helps people like us who are unemployed. It allows us to apply the skills to jobs. We get hired more easily.)

Furthermore, the completers emphasized that the training was not only crucial for employment or the industry itself but also as a way to serve people who need these services. They also highlighted the importance of the program to women, saying it significantly contributes to their economic freedom and sense of self-fulfillment.

Ah, una po kasi ano yun, ah para talaga ito sa mga taong walang hanapbuhay. Kumbaga, tambay sa madaling salita, na gustong matuto't pwede nilang gawing hanapbuhay—para hindi sila simpleng katulad ko na nanay lang, nasa bahay lang. Kailangan din po talagang may matutunan para hindi tayo maging bahagi ng malaking bilang ng mga walang hanapbuhay.

(This is really for people who don't have jobs, those who do nothing at home, but are eager to learn and have a job. So they don't end up like me, a stay-at-home mom. We need to know something so we don't become part of the growing unemployed population.)

A crucial aspect of knowledge acquisition is understanding the concepts necessary to develop or acquire skills. The completers showed a clear understanding of these concepts, which serve as guidelines for them to perform their work correctly and safely, thus reducing the risk of accidents or mistakes. They also discussed how these concepts help them learn new skills and contribute not only to their well-being but also to the well-being of their clients.

(1) Oo, may gloves. May gloves kami. Oo, may mask kami. Kasi gumagamit kami ng mga antiseptic sa CR. Kami nung nag-housekeeping, tinuruan kami. Kapag underwears, may lagayan talaga.

(Yes, we have gloves and masks because we use antiseptic products in the bathroom. We were taught about proper handling in our housekeeping training. There's a designated container just for underwear, too.)

(2) Una po siyempre 'yung hygiene mo rin sa sarili mo. Kasi pag humarap ka sa tao na parang sarili mo di mo kayang linisin, nakakahiya. Karaniwan kong naririnig sa mga customer ko: 'Yung manikyurista pa ang hindi marunong maglinis ng kuko.' Tapos kailangan po talaga sa manicure, doble ingat para 'di makasugat, lalo na sa mga senior na may diabetes o sensitive ang balat. Present of mind din po—'wag kang lutang sa trabaho.

(Of course, hygiene starts with yourself. It is embarrassing to face your customers unkempt. I often hear complaints from my customers about manicurists who can't keep their nails clean. You also have to be extra careful not to wound anyone, especially seniors with diabetes or sensitive skin. You must stay focused, don't be absent-minded while working.)

Knowledge of the proper use and care of tools and equipment is essential to mastering a skill. Naturally, participants were introduced to the tools they needed to perform their services effectively. Those who joined the Beauty Care training program (manicure, pedicure, hairdressing, and massage) listed the basic tools required for

their work and mentioned that they must be well-maintained—cleaned, sterilized, and organized—to ensure client safety.

(1) Yung nipper, cuticle pusher—lalo na ‘yung nipper, kailangan talagang isanitze. Tapos ‘yung pang-foot spa, binigyan din kami sa training. Hindi nga lang ‘yung mga mamahaling makina kasi mahal talaga. Siyempre, safety first. Minsan kasi may alipunga ‘yung client, o sugat na puwedeng makahawa. Kailangan talaga secure ang gamit.

(The nipper and cuticle pusher really need to be sanitized. They gave us some tools for the foot spa during the training, but not the expensive machines because they’re costly. Still, safety first. Sometimes clients have fungal infections or wounds that can be contagious. We have to make sure our tools are secure.)

(2) Tripleng ingat po talaga ang ginagawa ko. Lalong lalo na po sa pagkukulay kasi meron ding kaming mga customer na allergic. Kailangan hypo, ano hypo yung gagamitin mo sa buhok nya. Hypoallergenic para hindi madamage yung scalp nya, mga ganun po. Ayun po, saka inaalam ko muna talaga kung allergic, may allergy sya, may sakit sya na bawal yung gagawin namin. Opo, lalo na kung may kulay o kaya aalamin ko muna kung nagkukulay na ba dati, hindi ka ba allergic sa gantong brand, parang ganun po. Lalo na kung mga senior.

(I really take triple precautions, especially when it comes to hair coloring, because we also have customers who are allergic. You need to use hypoallergenic hair dyes to avoid damaging their scalp. I also make sure to ask first if they have any allergies or medical conditions that would prevent us from doing the procedure. Yes, especially when it involves coloring, I first ask if they’ve had their hair colored before, or if they’re allergic to a particular brand, things like that. This is even more important when the client is a senior citizen.)

As part of the CSDP, the LGU provided toolkits containing basic beauty care tools for use during training and to help start a livelihood afterward. In the Housekeeping Training, the trainer shared extensive knowledge of hotel appliances, tools, supplies, and cleaning products crucial to the daily operations of the hotel industry. Learning about the latest hotel technologies may also benefit those planning to apply their skills abroad. Health and safety protocols were emphasized as a core concept throughout the training to help avoid potential medical or legal issues due to negligence.

(1) Mga vaccum. Mga automatic na washing machine. Pero madali naman. Tapos may extra pay yata yung lilinisin mo yung anu ng lababo? Yung parang tubo ng lababo, kasi natatanggal yata yun. May extra pay yung pag-aanu ng tubo. Nagti-training kami pinaghahawak kami ng mga iba’t-ibang klase na ginagamit

sahousekeeping kagaya ng mga tawag nito, mga mop, mga washing machine, mga vaccum. Iba't-ibang klase ng washing machine. Kasi pwede mong apply ung NCII housekeeping mo sa abroad.

(The vacuum cleaners and automatic washing machines are easy to use. There's also an extra pay when you clean the drain pipe of the sink? I think that part can be removed. There's extra pay for dealing with the pipes. During the training, we were made to handle various equipment used in housekeeping, like mops, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and other cleaning tools. That's because you can apply your NCII in-housekeeping for work abroad.)

The completers have internalized that their livelihood depends on their knowledge and professionalism, which serve as the foundation for their continued growth and long-term success.

Assessment of the Community Skills Development Program in Terms of Skills

Skill is defined as the ability to perform a task effectively. Improvements in a person's skills can be assessed through opportunities to teach others (mentoring), self-assessment (including perceived improvement, practical application, and usefulness), and client feedback.

The completers mentored others using both the knowledge acquired from the CSDP and their personal work experience. They trained not only family members but also people in their communities, applying strategies learned during the program.

(1) Una sa anak ko—tinuturuan ko siya kung paano maglinis ng kuko ko. Minsan, kapag kinukulang kami ng trainee, kami na ang hinuhugot bilang assistant ng trainer. Gaya sa San Lorenzo, nakapag-assist na rin ako doon.

(First, I taught my child how to clean my nails. Sometimes, when there are not enough trainees, the trainers pull us in as assistants. Like in San Lorenzo, I was able to assist there.)

(2) Oo, marami akong naturuan sa District 2. Isang oras lang naman 'yon, may kita ka na agad. Sabi ko sa kanila, hrap kayo sa buhay? Mag-aral kayo. Gusto mo turuan kita? Hindi naman ako madamot. Marami akong naturuan at marami silang natutunan.

(Yes, I've taught many people in District 2. Just one hour of work and you already earn something. I tell them, if you're struggling, study. Want me to teach you? I'm not selfish—I taught a lot of people and they learned a lot.)

The participants indicated that their performance improved significantly after the training. They supported this self-assessment with examples demonstrating enhanced problem-solving skills, a growth in their client base, and expanded job opportunities. The improved performance also increased their confidence.

(1) Nag-boost po sya lalo ng confidence kasi po noon po talaga mahihiya pa akong maglinis kasi wala pang tiwala sakin bago pa lang ako mga ganyan customer ko isa lang halos sa isang buwan yun po, tapos dun na sya nag-start simula nung nagtraining ako nagka-confidence, nagka-tiwala din po mga tao kasi trained na nga daw po ako.

(It boosted my confidence because before that, I felt embarrassed to clean because people didn't trust me since I was just starting out. I used to have only one customer a month, but things began to change after my training. I gained more confidence, and as a result, people started to trust me too, saying that I was already trained.)

(2) Ayun nga! Sabi ko, bago ako nag-training, hindi ganoon karami ang skills ko. Hindi pa ganoon kalawak ang knowledge ko sa paghawak ng mga tools. Nung nag-training ako, doon ko natutunan lahat. Doon talaga dumami ang customer ko. Siyempre, nagtatanong ang iba: 'Nakapag-training ka ba? Ang galing mo kasi.

(Before the training, I didn't have enough knowledge and skills in handling tools. After the training, I learned so much. That's when my customers increased. People would even ask me if I had training because they thought I was excellent at what I do.)

It is also important to note that the Makati City Government gives hiring priority to CSDP completers through its partnerships with private entities. Moreover, several participants were able to supplement their main jobs with side gigs based on the skills they acquired, proving how the program helped them live more comfortably despite broader economic challenges.

(1) Opo yan sila kagawad mga customer ko po yan. Opo pag po merong pong mga events sa barangay na may mga kailangan ng manicurista maggugupit kami po yung priority ni kap.

(Yes, the barangay councilors are my customers. Whenever there are events in the barangay and they need manicurists or hair cutters, we are the ones prioritized by the barangay captain.)

(2) *Kasi mayroon kaming ano nun pagkatapos nang nag-graduate ng 6 months ng beauty care binigyan kami ng pagkakataon na mag barangay barangay [services paid by city hall].*

(After we graduated from the 6-month beauty care course, we were allowed to go from one barangay to another to offer our services, and the city hall paid us for these.)

(3) *Nagho-home service ako, on-call ako. Malaking bagay talaga ‘yan sa akin kasi nakakatulong sa pamilya. Minsan tatlong service lang, may kita ka na. Minsan five hundred, minsan three hundred—malaking halaga na ‘yon sa akin. Hanggang ngayon, dala ko pa rin ‘yan—patuloy pa rin ako sa pagse-service.*

(I do on-call home service, and it’s a huge help to my family. Sometimes with just three clients, I already earn something - Php500, sometimes Php300. That’s already a significant amount for me. Until now, I still carry that skill, I’m still offering my services.)

Some completers chose to work independently through freelance or on-call arrangements, appreciating the flexibility in managing their time. However, this form of employment falls under the informal economy, which comes with limitations in terms of job security and benefits. Still, it allows them to earn extra income and live beyond subsistence. Another notable benefit of training in their field of interest is the opportunity to establish microbusinesses, further contributing to their financial stability and long-term goals.

Assessment of the Community Skills Development Program in Terms of Attitude

Skills training is viewed as a holistic approach to human development. It not only enhances technical competencies but also cultivates interpersonal skills, of which attitude is an essential component. Interpersonal skills may be described as a form of “social intelligence,” involving processes such as attention and decoding. The impact of training does not end with completing the required hours or passing assessments—it extends to how participants apply what they have learned in real-life settings and how they reap its benefits over time.

Completers shared that their self-confidence significantly improved after undergoing the skills training, not just in how they spoke or carried themselves, but more importantly, in how they performed their jobs. This confidence was further solidified by the certificate of completion, which validated their competency and gave them a sense of credibility and pride in their work.

Lalo pa akong ano nagkaroon ako ng confident na kaya ko pala, kaya ngayon kaya ko na! kasi sa tutuusin mahiyain ako e, nnahihiya pa ako kasi baka mapintasan ung gawa ko kasi hindi pa naman ganun kaano talaga mag-training. Dati kasi tumatanggi ako parang alanganin na ako. Dati nung wala pa akong training. Pero nung bandang huli hindi na, naging confident na ako sa sarili ko. Hindi na ako nahihiya, nagkakaroon ka na rin ng kaibigan. Yun na rin ung pumapasok na rin sa punto na ganun.

(As my confidence increased, the more I believed that I could actually do it. Now, I know I can! To be honest, I used to be very shy and afraid that people would criticize my work because I hadn't received proper training. As a result, I used to decline clients out of hesitation. However, after the training, I was no longer like that. I became confident in myself, overcame my shyness, and started making friends. That was a turning point for me.)

This increased confidence was also reflected in the changes they saw when interacting with people. Since the skills they acquired involve providing services, constant interaction with clients of diverse personalities is expected. As such, patience, empathy, and adaptability were emphasized throughout the training to prepare them for everyday challenges, including complex or demanding clients.

The completers also noted the importance of discipline and being systematic in their work. Due to the technical nature of their jobs, which often relate to health, hygiene, and personal care, they were taught to be meticulous and detail-oriented. They applied this rigor not just in performing services, but in maintaining cleanliness, orderliness, and professionalism always.

(1) Makita rin ng mga customers mo na organized ka na hindi ka taranta na andun lahat kumpleto mo gamit mo mga ganun po. Opo lalo sa bahay kailangan organized ka. Organized naman po kaso syempre mas naaply ko ngayon lalo na sa mga gamit mga tools po kailangan sanitized kasi hindi nain alam kung yung mga germs ng paa nila baka kumapit dun sa tools ko yun po kailangan isasanitize mo lagi after gamitin sa isang customer.

(Customers easily notice if you are organized, calm, or if your tools are complete. It is especially important to be organized when you're at somebody's home. I used to be pretty organized, but now I apply it more deliberately, especially with tools that must always be sanitized. You never know what kind of germs clients may carry on their feet, so everything has to be disinfected after each use.)

(2) Yung minsan nga ung pagiging organized ko sa trabaho inaanu ko na bahay. Tapusin niyo ung nililinis niyo. Pagkatapos niyo maglinis magsaing na kayo. Kung

anu ung dapat niyong gawin isunod sunod niyo na. Para matapos ang trabaho niyo ng maaga at maayos.

(Sometimes, my organizational skills at work carry over into home life. I tell my kids, “Finish cleaning first, then start cooking. Do things in order so you can finish early and more efficiently.”)

Completers recognized the improvement in their organizational skills, noting that these habits are essential for safety and efficient workflow. Since most of their tasks require them to keep tools clean and follow precise procedures, they developed structured routines that extended into their personal lives. Other positive changes in attitude also emerged: treating clients with respect, especially elders; practicing polite and clear communication; staying calm and composed under pressure; and upholding dignity in their profession. These values were reflected in how participants carried themselves, with honesty, courtesy, and genuine passion for their craft.

(1) Syempre magalang dapat lalo na pag matatanda yung mga customer mo tapos minsan may mga customer na madadaldal papa-kinggan pakinggan mo na tas sasagot ka na yung makikinig ka na lang po sa mga sasabihin nila para di naman po sila ma offense.

(Of course, you must be respectful, especially with older clients. Some of them like to talk a lot, so you just have to listen patiently and respond in a way that doesn’t offend them.)

(2) Kahit makulit, kailangan mong magpakumbaba. Tayo diba pag nagtatrabaho, may problema ka sa inyo? Iwan mo na. Eh nagtatrabaho ka. Kahit anu man ang gulo na nangyayari sa buhay mo at saka hindi mo ku-kwentuhan ang pasyente mo ng buhay mong magusot.

(Even if a customer is demanding, you must remain humble. When you’re at work, leave your problems behind. No matter what chaos is going on in your life, you don’t share it with your client.)

Benefits of Completing the CSDP

Acquiring a TESDA certificate was the top priority of the CSDP completers. They noted that both customers and employers tend to prefer hiring individuals who have received formal training from TESDA, as it is an indication of trustworthiness and proficiency. The completers also shared that the training encouraged them to be more considerate toward others by volunteering their services to senior citizens and other social groups, helping ease their clients’ “physical worries.”

Lastly, the participants agree that joining a CSDP is one way to acquire skills or upskill and improve their knowledge to either find a job or improve their existing job. Furthermore, the completers claimed that the skills training opened the doors for more business prospects, government employment, and consistent side jobs gained through referrals, all of which contributed to their economic stability. Through the support of the MD track and the provision of start-up kits and allowances, they were equipped with essential tools and materials. This enabled them to begin accepting clients as soon as they felt confident enough, saving them from having to make significant personal investments just to start working.

Challenges Encountered by the Participants during and after Taking the CSDP and How They Overcame Them

All the completers were mothers, and they shared that aside from participating in personal growth activities like attending the CSDP, they also managed responsibilities and challenges related to their families and work. To overcome these challenges, the participants relied on effective time management skills and persistence to juggle domestic and professional life. They described themselves as “students of life,” having learned to be resourceful in the face of adversity, particularly poverty, which they identified as the most pressing issue in the country. Despite working in the informal economy, they devised ways to ensure a steady flow of income for their families.

Another recurring concern raised by participants was the challenge of adapting to an ever-changing world, which affects both their work and their relationships with clients. These changes are constant and unavoidable. When asked about the problems they faced after completing the program, especially in practicing their skills, all massage therapy or reflexology completers lamented distressing incidents involving sexual advances from clients. Most people attributed this to the negative stereotype that links “massage” with prostitution, largely due to unregulated or illegal spas and wellness centers that offer such illicit services. This stigma severely undermines the credibility of professionals who practice massage ethically. The participants expressed concern that this misrepresentation can lead to abuse of women, and unfortunately, some had personally experienced such situations. Although the government is making efforts to shut down illegal establishments, public perception is harder to control. When asked whether their instructors had prepared them for these risks, all participants confirmed that they were warned. Instructors gave practical advice on how to respond to sexual harassment or advances should they arise. Given the vulnerability of women in these professions, participants suggested that the Beauty Care and Housekeeping training programs should include modules on handling harassment and setting professional boundaries. This will significantly contribute to women’s empowerment and ensure greater safety and confidence for trainees working in these fields.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Skills and Confidence

During the interviews, participants carried themselves with confidence and professionalism. The completers demonstrated a firm grasp of essential technical knowledge that could help them build a sustainable livelihood. The information provided in the training ensures ongoing productivity and creates opportunities for further learning, should they wish to expand their skills. The completers also showed perseverance and a good disposition in navigating life's challenges. The CSDP formed a renewed interest and motivation to learn. In many ways, skills training can be just as beneficial as earning a college degree in shaping one's future. Although their paths may differ, the participants considered the CSDP a meaningful step in achieving a stable future and sustaining their families. With the rise of social media due to rapid technological advancement, the completers found alternative ways to supplement their learning by exploring online resources, helping them further develop and refine their skills.

Resilience through livelihood and economic participation

A training program that focuses on skills acquisition is paramount in community efforts to alleviate poverty. The CSDP helped transform individuals into contributing members of society by developing new skills and enhancing existing ones for improved productivity. This study presented examples of skill improvement among completers, showing their ability to take on roles that require mastery of skills immediately. To ensure a seamless transition from training to employment, the CSDP also provided "start-up kits," enabling participants to launch small businesses. These kits were sufficient to begin offering services and eventually invest in more tools. In certain barangays, participants also received allowances, which supported their personal needs or helped them grow their businesses.

TESDA COCs and NCs

All participants expressed that the most significant change in their attitude was increased confidence, validated by their successful completion of the TESDA assessment and the receipt of a certificate. The program's interactive nature also allowed them to expand their personal and professional networks. Some barangays further supported their entrepreneurial goals by offering opportunities during community festivals and referring them to local businesses. These efforts aligned with the CSDP's goal of helping participants achieve long-term economic independence. Barangay officials also played a key role in supporting their constituents in generating or supplementing income.

Women Empowerment

Most of the participants were women and mothers, making women's empowerment a critical theme in this research. Many of them faced family and marital issues that pushed them to find livelihood opportunities to raise their children. The CSDP provided a platform for women to discover or enhance their talents for economic gain. As a result, many mothers gained confidence and recognized their potential to become productive citizens. Some were even able to support their partners financially, helping to provide a more comfortable life for their families. Due to the difficulty of balancing work, family, and training, a few participants were unable to complete the full CSDP program required for NCII certification. However, they were awarded the Certificates of Competency (COCs), which they reported were already beneficial in their current work or business. Those who received COCs expressed little interest in completing the remaining requirements, either due to a lack of interest or because their role as mothers with young children took priority.

Gaps in Program Monitoring and Delivery

Despite the overall positive results, some challenges in the implementation of the CSDP were noted in the nine (9) barangays included in this study. One key issue was the absence of post-training evaluations. Initial data collection was difficult due to limited records on the CSDP offerings over the past five years. The importance of post-training assessment cannot be overstated. Regular follow-ups with participants would help measure success, adjust the program as needed, and inform future improvements. Such evaluations are essential for barangays to monitor program effectiveness and ensure alignment with community needs.

Future-proof Training Programs

Another issue was the inconsistent implementation of CSDP policies, particularly in terms of training schedules, start-up kit distribution, and allowance provision. These inconsistencies should be explored in future studies to address disparities across barangays. Additional programs tailored to the BPO and ICT sectors should also be considered, while existing programs effectively develop local talent, nearby areas indicate a strong demand for ICT and BPO-related skills, which have become major sources of employment. As the industry grows and technology evolves, too will the need for a broader and more diverse workforce.

Overall, the CSDP proved to be a valuable program in promoting the socio-economic well-being of its participants. It supports livelihood development and contributes to the government's efforts to improve the lives of its constituents. The LGU plays a vital role in this process, using the CSDP as a tool to meet the intellectual, mental, and economic needs of its people. The program helps individuals develop their soft skills, preparing

them for formal roles in their chosen fields. It unites the community by empowering the vulnerable sectors and helping them realize their capacity to contribute meaningfully to society. Going forward, the program must remain responsive to globalization and its accompanying socio-economic challenges. With regular improvements, the CSDP can help ensure that the city remains rich in talent and continues to grow in overall social well-being.

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