

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Development and Design of Help Alleviating Poverty among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) through Amplifying Skills (HAPLAS) Extension Project

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Abstract

The LGBTQ in the Philippines is one of the marginalized sectors in our society that is also highly affected by the pandemic that causes economic deprivation and is often forgotten in gender analyses and gender policy discussions. This study aimed to assess the skills training needs of LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon; to determine the profile of the projects in terms of extension thrust, numbers of beneficiaries, budget allocation, resources, activities, and implementation; to develop and design an extension program. The Help Alleviating Poverty among LGBTQ through Amplifying Skills (HAPLAS) is an extension project that was developed and designed to address the pressing issues among LGBTQ. The needs assessment was conducted among the members of Samahang Ikatlong Lahi ng Infanta (SILI) with a total of twenty-four (24) participants who were purposively selected. This study is a quantitative descriptive employing frequency and percentage in the analysis of data. As identified in the needs assessments, the skills and training development programs to be implemented in the projects are hair cutting, hair perming, hair coloring, and hair and makeup, all are cosmetic-related activities. Moreover, financial literacy seminar is also to be integrated into the project because managing finances is one of the topmost issues and problems LGBTQ members have mentioned. For technical assistance, the project's proponents established a partnership with Junior Pitimini, an LGBTQ organization with members prominent in Quezon Province. Moreover, a partnership was also established in the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Infanta for the venue and supplemental budget. This descriptive study revealed that the project has sufficient volunteers/workforce and facilities to implement the project. It is highly recommended that the project may replicate in other municipalities that may identify needs for the training of LGBTQ. Additional budget could also be increased to cover other significant results from the needs assessment. However, evaluation should be properly implemented to determine the sustainability of the project.

KEYWORDS:

Development, Design, Extension Project, Amplifying Skills, LGBTQ

1 | INTRODUCTION

The Southern Luzon State University is one of the premier state universities in Quezon Province with trifocal functions; wit: instruction, research, and extension. In addition, the university is mandated to provide extension services to help develop and build the underserved and depressed communities in the province. According to Mojares and Baconguis (2015), HEIs play a significant role in human resource development. Given the array of specialization and expertise provided to the community by the HEIs, these institutions are considered effective partners in the community's development process. Moreover, extension programs are the interventions of HEIs to the respondents that aim to make a great contribution to members of the community. Although according to Bibad and Campiseño (2010), demand-driven are among the SUC's most extension programs, the demand-driven is usually a community-based project designed to establish and promote the well-being of the beneficiaries, particularly the urban-rural populace.

Reid (2020) stated that LGBTQ people worldwide are more vulnerable to poverty, especially in times of pandemics. The LGBTQ in the Philippines is one of the marginalized sectors in our society that is also highly affected by the pandemic that causes economic deprivation. Moreover, LGBT and intersex people are often forgotten (or deliberately left out of) in gender analyses and gender policy discussions. Furthermore, among others, one of the discriminations encountered by LGBT is difficulty finding a job. Based on the article published by Outrage (July 14, 2018) that 30% of LGBT Filipinos report workplace discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE). It is more prevalent for the marginalized LGBT to be discriminated against often leads to difficulty in finding a job. According to Sameluis and Wagberg (2005), freedom to express sexual orientation and gender identity is closely connected to economic freedom. Norms concerned with gender and sexuality determine the sexual and intimate aspects of people's lives and affect access to economic resources and employment.

LGBTQ+ people primarily suffer from repression in cultural injustice (being rendered invisible, maligned, harassed, violated, and disparaged in everyday life) and legal injustice (being denied legal rights and equal protection under the law). As a consequence of cultural and legal injustice, LGBT people also suffered economic injustice (being denied employment or summarily dismissed from work, being denied family-based social welfare benefits, etc.) Cultural, legal, and economic disadvantages reinforce each other, and thus, the discrimination of LGBT people forms an escalating negative circle of injustice and poverty. Moreover, Badgett, Nezhad, Waaldijk, and Meulen (2014) found out that LGBT people are limited in their freedom in ways that also cause economic harm, such as (1) workplace discrimination causes LGBT people not to be employed, which means their full productive capacity is not being used; and (2) LGBT students face discrimination in schools by teachers and other students, which hampers their learning and encourages students to drop out, in turn reducing their skills and knowledge related to the workplace. Also, it was concluded that at this micro-level, the costs to the economy of exclusionary treatment include lost labor time and loss of productivity from LGBT.

Moreover, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued CHED Memorandum Order 1, series of 2015 instituting Gender and Development (GAD) among Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to establish policies and guidelines on gender and development – since the Philippines is being a State Party to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), which is signed on July 15, 1980, and ratified on August 5, 1981, is obligated to pursue and implement programs, projects and activities that will contribute to the achievement of women's empowerment and gender equality. Thus, the proponents thought of the extension program that is aligned with the priority of the program of the university which is Gender and Development (GAD).

The project was dubbed "HAPLAS" which stands for helping alleviate the poverty of LGBTQ through amplifying skills. The word "haplas" connotes applying and rubbing something into the skin with friction for healing and calming effect. Like the definition, this program will give the beneficiaries of hope from healing in poverty.

Specifically, this paper aims to: 1. to assess the skills training needs by LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon; 2. to determine the profile of the projects in terms of extension thrust, numbers of beneficiaries, budget allocation, resources, activities, and implementation; and 3. to develop and design an extension program.

2 | METHODOLOGY

2.1 | Research Design

This study used a quantitative descriptive approach. Mainly, it sought to conduct a needs assessment among LGBTQ members in Infanta, Quezon, to wit: to determine the training, seminar, technical assistance, and formal and informal education preferred by the participants.

2.2 | Profile of the Respondents

The needs assessment was participated by the SILI members. Among 24 respondents which were purposively selected, 91.7% (n=22) were gay and 8.3% (n=2) were bi-sexual. In terms of civil status, there were 24 respondents, 91.7% (n=22) were not married and 8.3% (n=2) were married. Also, in terms of educational attainment, 50% (n=12) of the respondents were college undergraduates; 33.3% were high school graduates, and 16.7% of respondents were college graduates. Moreover, the respondent's mean age was thirty-three (33) years old; the average number of household members was four (4), and the average number of children of the respondents was 0.3; however, the average monthly income of the respondents was eight thousand two hundred seventy-three (PHP 8,273.00).

2.3 | Instrument

The needs assessment was conducted through a survey questionnaire and was composed of three (3) parts; the first is the assessment of skills training needs of LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon; the second part is the program (training, seminar, technical assistance, and formal and informal education) that beneficiaries want to implement in their locality; and lastly, the problem that beneficiaries observed in their locality.

2.4 | Data Gathering Procedure

The questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher to the respondents during the annual meeting conducted by SILI. Constant communication was made by the researcher to the respondents using video conferencing and through Facebook chat for the validation and clarification of answers made by the respondents on the questionnaire, this is due to travel restrictions brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.5 | Data Analysis

The data gathered from the needs assessment were tabulated, tallied, and computed using excel. The results were analyzed according to the appropriate statistical measurements. The frequency distribution and the percentile were utilized in determining the respondents' preference in the training, seminar, technical assistance, and formal and informal education.

3 | RESULTS

The significant findings are presented following the order of specific objectives.

3.1 | Needs Assessment

This section determined the needs of beneficiaries as to training, seminar, technical assistance, and formal and informal education preferred.

3.1.1 | Training Preferred by Beneficiaries

Table 1 presents the training preferred by the respondents. As indicated in the table, the descriptive result revealed that the majority of the respondents preferred to have training in hair and makeup with 83 percent (n=20). Sewing was also one of

TABLE 1 Descriptive results according to training preferred by beneficiaries

Training Preferred by Beneficiaries	<i>f</i>	Percentage
Hair and make up	20	83%
Sewing	4	17%
Flower Arrangement	2	8%
Wood Curving	2	8%

the respondent's choices; four (4) of the respondents stated that they also preferred sewing 17 percent. Furthermore, flower arrangement and wood carving were also among their top choices for the training to be given to them with 8 percent (n=2).

TABLE 2 Descriptive results according to seminar preferred by beneficiaries

Seminar Preferred by Beneficiaries	<i>f</i>	Percentage
Environmental Awareness	7	29%
Entrepreneurship	6	26%
Basic Accounting/Marketing	3	13%
Health Awareness	8	33%
Family Planning	4	17%
Good Governance	7	29%
Physical Fitness	5	21%
Gender and Development	6	26%
Financial Literacy	2	8%

3.1.2 | Seminars Preferred by Beneficiaries

Table 2 presents the seminars preferred by beneficiaries. As indicated in the table, the three (3) seminars that respondents preferred with the highest mean were basic accounting/marketing with 33 percent (n=8), followed by environmental awareness and good governance with 29 percent (n=7), then lastly, entrepreneurship and gender and development with a mean value of 26 percent (n=6)

TABLE 3 Descriptive results according to technical assistance preferred by beneficiaries

Technical Assistance	<i>f</i>	Percentage
Construction houses	1	4%
Consultation on the development plan	1	4%
Water and waste management	3	13%
Research and Production	2	8%
Cooperative management	7	29%
Agricultural management	4	17%

3.1.3 | Technical Assistance

Table 3 presents the technical assistance preferred by respondents. As indicated in the table, cooperative management was the top pick of the respondents with 29 percent (7), followed by agricultural management with 17 percent (n=4), and the last with one of the highest values in the water and waste management system with 13 percent (n=3).

TABLE 4 Descriptive results according to formal and informal education

Formal and Informal Education	<i>f</i>	Percentage
Alternative Learning	4	17%
Children skills training	4	17%
Art workshop	4	17%
Dance workshop	3	13%
English and mathematics enhancement	5	21%

3.1.4 | Formal and Informal Education

Table 4 presents the formal and informal education preferred by some beneficiaries. The table indicates that English and mathematics enhancement has the highest value with 21 percent (n=5), followed by alternative learning, children’s skills training, and art workshop with 17 percent (n=4).

3.2 | Profile of the HAPLAS Project

The program profile of the HAPLAS extension project is presented in Table 5 . The project’s profile includes its extension thrust or agenda, nature and number of beneficiaries, resources including budget, workforce, facilities used, and activities and strategies. The extension project HAPALS is under the thrust of gender and development (GAD) and livelihood and skills training. The SLSU as Higher Educational Institution (HEI) has set a thrust where activities of the university, like extension programs, were anchored from.

The beneficiaries of the program are 100 LGBTQ from Infanta, which are members of Samahang Ikatlong Lahi ng Infanta (SILI). SILI is an active organization of LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon. The members of SILI are mostly living below the poverty line with an average income of Php 8,273.00. According to the Philippines Institute for Development Studies, an individual earning PHP 10,000.00 and below is considered living below the poverty line. Moreover, most of them obtained are college undergraduates.

Another important aspect of the project is the resources. The project was awarded an amount of Php 117,000.00 from SLSU and Php 50,000.00. Therefore, the amount of total allotted budget for this project is Php 167,000.00. On workforce or human resources, eight (8) trainers for cosmetology came from JPAL- an association of LGBTQ in Lucban, Quezon, whose members are commonly prominent in cosmetic science. Three (3) facilitators of the project would come from the College of Administration, Business, Hospitality, and Accountancy (CABHA), and one (1) speaker for financial literacy would come from the BSBA-FM faculty. Moreover, since the beneficiaries are from Infanta, Quezon, the LGU Infanta provided the venue for every activity. Finally, for the activities and strategies, the project included skills and training development, to wit: haircutting, hair perming, hair coloring, and makeup. In addition, complementary activities such as financial literacy seminars will also be implemented. These activities were implemented in the first phase of the project.

3.3 | Design of HAPLAS Extension Program

After analyzing the needs assessment, the extension project was designed and developed. The extension project was dubbed "HAPLAS," which stands for helping alleviate the poverty of LGBT through amplifying skills. The word “haplas” connotes applying and rubbing something into the skin with friction for healing and calming effect. Like the definition, this program will give the beneficiaries of hope from healing in poverty.

TABLE 5 Program Profile of HAPLAS Extension Project

Profile	Descriptors
Extension Thrust/ Agenda	- Gender and Development - Livelihood and Skills and Training Development
Beneficiaries	- 100 Student-beneficiaries (SILI members – LGBTQ organization)
Resources	
Budget	- SLSU Counterpart: PHP 117,000.00 - LGU Infanta Counterpart: PHP 50,000.00 - Total: PHP 167,000.00
Workforce	- 8 Trainers for Skills Training - 3 Facilitators - 1 speaker for financial literacy
Facilities	- Venue and other needed materials (LGU Infanta counterpart)
Activities and Strategies	- Seminar for financial literacy - Skills and training development

The main component of Help Alleviating Poverty of LGBT by Amplifying their Skills (HAPLAS) is a skills training and development program. Through skills training and development, the LGBT living on the poverty line would be able to uplift their economic status by helping them establish the livelihood needed by both the community and beneficiaries. Specifically, these are to actions to be undertaken: 1.) Skills Training and Development program, 2.) financial literacy seminar, and 3.) help establish a livelihood.

This project is to be facilitated by faculty members from the College of Administration, Business, Hospitality, and Accountancy (CABHA). They will act as the oversight committee representing the CABHA and provide financial literacy seminars. Training and capacity building will be provided by JPAL, a non-profit organization of LGBT in Lucban, Quezon. Moreover, the basic unit that will serve as the intermediary agency to represent the government's side that supports them in matters of implementation of the program will be LGU Infanta.

3.3.1 | Objectives

1. General Objectives

In lieu of GAD hominization of gender equality, this project aims to help the LGBT in amplifying the skills that will give them sustainable livelihood for economic upliftment.

2. Specific Objectives

- (a) 75% of LGBTQ SILI members will be provided training in skills development and empowering them to engage in the project.
- (b) 75% of LGBTQ SILI members will be educated on financial literacy.
- (c) Help the SILI association to establish a livelihood to be managed by SILI and monitored by the project proponents.

3. Expected Outcomes and Impacts: Through this effort, it is expected to realize the following:

- (a) 100 LGBTQ members will improve their level of economic sufficiency.
- (b) 100 LGBTQ members will be engaged and developed in quality livelihood and/or jobs.
- (c) Effectively monitor and evaluate the livelihood of selected beneficiaries.

4 | DISCUSSION

4.1 | Needs Assessment

The project was developed and designed because of the result of the needs assessment. Most of the members of SILI as target beneficiaries were college undergraduate or high school graduates without a permanent job. Their average age was 33 years old, and the monthly income was around Php 8,000.00 which consider below the poverty line, and commonly their source of income is in cosmetology.

According to Badgett, Durso, and Scheenbaum (2013), LGBTQ people are vulnerable to conditions of poverty. The same study shows that LGBTQ people aged 18-44 are living at or below the poverty line. Therefore, it is indeed necessary for a member of the LGBTQ to be given free training to amplify their skills since it is their source of income. Moreover, based on the results, the most preferred training by the beneficiary is hair and makeup, with a mean value of 0.83 (n=20). That is why the proponents conceptualized an extension project that will address the needs of LGBTQ. Moreover, hair and makeup are cosmetology-related jobs that are commonly the source of income among the LGBTQ who are unemployed, or when they are employed, it serves as their part-time work. According to Tan (2001), there are many LGBTQ groups formed in the Philippines, some of them with national memberships, such as the organizations of hairdressers and parlor workers that help their members amplify their skills.

Although other significant results in the needs assessment should also be given attention under seminar, technical assistance, and formal and informal education, the most striking result is the need for training for hair and makeup.

4.2 | Design and Development of HAPLAS Extension Project

The Southern Luzon State University (SLSU) as SUC is mandated to provide extension services to the depressed community. Although according to Bibad and Campiseño (2010), demand-driven are among the SUCs' most extension programs, the demand-driven is usually a community-based project designed to establish and promote the well-being of the beneficiaries, particularly the urban-rural populace. To fulfill the mandate of SLSU, the proponent proposed an extension project that will address the needs of LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon. The basis of this project was the result of the needs assessment. The project will be divided into three (3) phases such as (1) haircutting, hair perming, and hair coloring training; (2) makeup-related training; (3) financial literacy seminar. The project will run for four (4) quarters, starting the second quarter of 2021.

The following are the details of the implementation plan:

Implementation Plan:

1. Description

- (a) *Skills training and development program* - Design to conduct training and development programs to amplify the skills of LGBT. The skills training program was based on the result of the needs assessment and profiling of the selected beneficiaries.
- (b) *Financial Literacy Seminar* - Financial illiteracy and ignorance about money management are one of the major reasons for recurring poverty. This financial literacy seminar will help beneficiaries be money smart and financially literate for them to make appropriate decisions in managing their finances.
- (c) *Help establish a livelihood* - This ensures that selected beneficiaries will be assisted in their livelihood program and monitor their progress afterward. This is to secure their living by ensuring their source of income.

2. Inputs

- (a) Trainers
 - i. JPAL – for skills training development.
 - ii. Faculty members of the CABHA for training and lecture geared toward financial literacy.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation Schemes

Monitoring and evaluation schemes will be done to measure the effects of the extension project. Monitoring and evaluation forms prescribed by the Office of Extension Services to know if there is a positive impact of the training programs and

for future development and improvement. A tracer study may follow to know the employability of the beneficiaries or to know their engagement in livelihood activities as they finish the skills training and development. The monitoring and evaluation schemes will be implemented regularly and an impact assessment will be executed in the second semester of AY 2022-2023(third and fourth quarter of 2022)

5 | CONCLUSION

The project was anchored in gender and development and livelihood and skills training extension thrusts, thereby, fulfilling the mandate of SLSU and responding to the needs of LGBTQ. This descriptive study revealed the need for training preferred by LGBTQ in Infanta, Quezon. Moreover, it was identified that there are sufficient workforce and appropriate facilities to implement the project. The project was institutionally funded with the supplemental budget from LGU Infanta.

6 | RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the uncovering of the study and its conclusions, it is recommended to replicate the study in another municipality of Quezon Province to assess the possible implementation of the HAPLAS project. Furthermore, an additional budget could also be increased to cover other significant results from the needs assessment. However, evaluation should also be properly implemented to determine the success and sustainability of the project.

7 | ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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