

The Implementation and Appreciation of the Social Services Programs of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay

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Abstract

This study determined the implementation and appreciation of the social services programs in the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay. Specifically, it answered the following sub-problems: 1. What are the social services programs implemented by the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay?; 2. What is the level of implementation of the programs along with Children Welfare Programs, Women Welfare Programs, Older Persons Welfare Programs, Solo Parents Welfare Programs and Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations?; 3. What is the level of appreciation of the social welfare programs?; 4. Is there a significant relationship between the level of implementation and the level of appreciation of the social services programs?; 5. What are the challenges met in the implementation of the programs?; and 6. What action plan may be proposed to address the challenges? It tested the null hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the level of implementation and the level of appreciation of the social services programs along with Children Welfare Programs, Women Welfare Programs, Older Persons Welfare Programs, Solo Parents Welfare Programs, and Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. To address this challenge, the international community committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and create a better world for all. Human development is the core of public administration. This is reflected in the practices, processes, programs, and innovations all directed to improve the living conditions of every human being. Governance and public administration play an important role in promoting economic growth and sustainable development. Thus, there is a need to implement programs as well as evaluate the different social programs that affect the conditions of citizens. After years of recognizing poverty as a key development problem and devising various strategies and programs for its reduction, the Philippine government is still confronting high levels of poverty and hunger among Filipinos. Section 2 of Republic Act 8425 states that:

It is the policy of the State to ...adopt an area-based, sectoral and focused intervention to poverty alleviation wherein every poor Filipino family shall be empowered to

*meets its minimum basic needs of health, food and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation...*¹

Section 3 paragraph 3 of Administrative Order No. 21 dated November 8, 2001 provides for the institutionalization and enhancement of the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) which embodies the results of the series of consultation and summits on poverty alleviation. It articulates that it is the policy of the state to:

Adopt a sustainable, integrated, area-based, sectoral and focused intervention to poverty alleviation wherein every poor Filipino family shall be empowered to meet its minimum basic needs of health, food and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, income security,...²

Community driven initiative approaches have been used to address bottlenecks in the local delivery of basic services. The principles follow that of participatory planning and community control of investments and resources. This policy calls for the integration of programs and projects in the national budget that will empower the poor and accelerate the progress of the countryside. Executive Order No. 221 of 2003 amended the Executive Order No. 15 series

of 1998, which redirected the functions of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to:

*Provide assistance to Local Government Units, Non-government Organizations, other National Government Agencies, Peoples' Organizations and other members of the civil society in effectively implementing programs, projects and services that will alleviate poverty and empower individuals, families and communities for an improved quality of life...*³

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the primary government agency tasked with providing social protection programs and poverty-reduction initiatives for the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged. It offers a range of services, including financial aid, skills training, and livelihood support, to improve the quality of life for marginalized sectors. Key programs such as the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP), and Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens address issues like health, education, income generation, and elderly care. Local government units (LGUs), guided by the Local Government Code, play a vital role in delivering these services to their communities.

The Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) of Albay implements DSWD programs to support its residents, focusing on timely and effective interventions for poverty alleviation. This study aims to evaluate the status and impact of these programs, identify challenges, and enhance the researcher's understanding of her role as a social worker. By analyzing the current efforts and outcomes, the study seeks to contribute to improved service delivery and better quality of life for Albay's marginalized populations.

➤ *Theoretical Framework*

This study is based on four interrelated theories; The Social Exchange Theory by E. J. Lawler; Crisis Intervention Theory by A. R. Roberts; The Anti-discriminatory Theory by N. Thompson; and The Welfare Theory of Aging Health by L. Nordenfelt. The lifted theories are very important propositions that supported the writer in crafting her own research theory. Figure 2 illustrates the theoretical paradigm of this study.

The Social Exchange Theory by Lawler (2001)⁴⁵, suggests that relationships.

➤ *Conceptual Framework*

This study utilized the general system theory which was developed by von Bertalanffy (1968)⁴⁹, that provides an analytical framework which can be used to describe the implementation the social services programs of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay.

The system approach illustrates that a research process consists of three (3) interrelated sub-systems connected by feedback. These sub-systems are coordinated and directly leads to the main concept of the study. The sub-systems are the inputs, process and output. The feedback is embedded in the system to preset the cyclical nature of the research.

The inputs of the study are the specific problems addressed by the writer. These are the various social services

programs implemented by the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay; the level of implementation of the social services programs along: children welfare programs, women welfare programs, older persons welfare programs, solo parents' welfare programs and assistance to individuals in crisis situations; the level of appreciation of the social services programs and the challenges met in the implementation of the program.

The process sub-system comprised the gathering of the data, analysis and interpretation of the data. However preliminary activities such as preparation of survey tool, validation of the research instrument and administration of the tool to the respondents were also treated as activities. The data analysis started when the data gathered were entered into the master tally sheet. The responses were treated with appropriate statistical measures. After the data analysis, the results were presented in tables and interpreted.

The output of this study is an action plan to address the challenges met. The researcher will used frequency count and ranking. The topmost challenge based on the responses was addressed.

II. REVIEW ON THE RELATED LITERATURES AND STUDIES

Based on the work of Bello et al., (2016)¹³ this has compelled key stakeholders – the national government, local government units, non-government organizations, peoples organizations, and donor agencies – to find ways to ensure that the remaining resources would bring fundamental and sustained improvements to the lives of the poor.

National economic development policies frequently undermine anti-poverty efforts. A policy of economic deregulation and liberalization can threaten the immediate security of life and livelihood of many poor households, as when it leads to the conversion of productive agricultural land to non-agricultural use. There is wide acceptance today that economic growth alone cannot be a sufficient response to poverty. Fundamental changes are needed in the distribution and control of productive assets like land.

The immediate and urgent (short-term) needs of the poor for subsistence and the concern for sustainable (long-term) changes require a complicated balancing of interests, demands, and limited development resources as noted by Suansing (2017).

A clear implementation plan should enforce existing laws and policies and have well-crafted implementing rules. Many good laws become ineffective due to poor implementation. This is the case of such laws as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (R.A. No. 6657), the Urban Development and Housing Act (R.A. No. 7279), the FARMCS, the IPRA and other pro-poor legislation. Often, these laws end up not protecting the interests of the poor because they were either not properly implemented or not given effective implementation rules. Flaws in implementation make it possible for powerful blocs in the government bureaucracy to bend laws to promote narrow interests.

Okello (2016)²⁴, discussed the role of social protection initiatives in the context of transforming and empowering vulnerable households to poverty and explored the opportunities for promoting a gender-equal agenda and women's empowerment. Included in the discussions were data on the emergence of social protection and how it is linked to economic and social policy. The paper also reviewed the contexts, concepts, and definitions relevant to social protection policies and identified gender-specific social and economic risks and corresponding instruments, drawing on country-level experiences.

Rahmawati et al., (2023)²⁵ examined the role of social assistance in the community by emphasizing the usefulness of assistance, routine assistance, and evaluation of social assistance for the community. The study focused on the impact of social assistance on the community before and after social assistance is provided. The design used is a literature review. The research was carried out from February 2022 to September 2022, with the object of the research being the role of poverty assistance in the community. They collected data using the literature review method on twenty (20) relevant research articles published from 2012 to 2021. The findings of this research show that social support plays the biggest influence when providing non-cash essentials. Social assistance in the form of cash is vulnerable to being used inappropriately, such as buying consumer goods. The role of social assistance is to provide social protection, social empowerment, social security, economic strengthening, and educational support for the recipients of social assistance.

Shahidi et al., (2019)²⁹ conducted a systematic review of research examining the health impact of social assistance programs in high-income countries. They identified empirical patterns through a qualitative synthesis of the evidence. They also evaluated the empirical rigor of the selected literature. The results reveal that seventeen (17) studies met the inclusion criteria. Thirteen (13) descriptive studies rated as weak ($n=7$), moderate ($n=4$), and strong ($n=2$) discovered that social assistance is associated with adverse health outcomes and that social assistance recipients exhibit worse health outcomes relative to non-recipients. Four (4) experimental and quasi-experimental studies, all rated as strong ($n=4$), found that efforts to limit the receipt of social assistance or reduce its generosity were associated with adverse health trends.

The study of Sta. Romana (2017)³², entitled, Trade and poverty issues: A country case study of the Philippines presented the poverty situation in the Philippines. It then takes a brief look at the poor in the rural areas, followed with a discussion of the poor in the informal sector. The different social protections programs to address poverty were also identified and discussed. It then, brings these two sectors together, with an examination of the poor and the urban/rural and formal/informal divides. It concludes with a discussion of the relationship among trade, poverty and the structural transformation of the Philippine economy. The researcher employed a documentary analysis in presenting the poverty issues. Included in the paper were direct observations collected from series of discussions with representatives from the rural communities.

The general purpose of the work of Delfino (2017)³³, is to examine the impact of the KALAH-CIDSS project on community development in the east coastal area of Lagonoy, Camarines Sur, Philippines, after its implementation. Background examining the impact of the KALAH-CIDSS project on community development helps to determine the program's priority issues that the government should be able to address. This study used a purely qualitative method in gathering data following the case study design, and employed three different data gathering techniques. This method was used to develop in-depth analysis and provide appropriate baseline information on the impact of the KALAH-CIDSS project on community development

The qualitative study of Nicolas (2021)³⁴, highlighted how social work practitioners themselves interpret creativity in their everyday lives. With the social work agency as context, the phenomenological inquiry focuses on the meanings which they attach to, or which they have of, creativity. Ten social workers specializing in program and policy development provide metaphorical themes and definitions of how they see themselves, their contributions, and the work that they do as creative. The creative journeys of social workers open the possibility for a Filipino notion of creativity and suggest the need for systematic theorizing in this area. To draw out from the respondent social workers the meanings of creativity, which they have associated with their practice of their profession or have derived from their everyday experiences in the workplace, the study utilized several methods, such as observation of actual practice, reflective exercises and in-depth interviews. The similarity that this study has with the previous work is the respondents and the nature of the studies conducted.

The research study of Moreno (2020)³⁵, intended to benefit children in conflict with the law (CICL), clients who have been discharged from the National Training School for Boys (NTSB). Located in Barangay Sampaloc, Tanay, Rizal, NTSB is a residential center under DSWD Field Office IV-A that provides care and rehabilitation to male CICL who are 9-17 years old. This study focuses on assessing the implementation of aftercare programs and services provided by the LGUs to discharged CICL clients in the Metro Manila and Region IV-A area who have availed of aftercare services in response to the recommendations of the Regional Research Development-Technical Working Group (RD-TWG). Nineteen (19) discharged CICL, clients were randomly selected as respondents for the study using one on one interviews and reviews of individual case folders and other documents. The findings of the study revealed that aftercare services in the local government units under study were not fully implemented as provided for under Republic Act No. 9344, which mandates local government units through the local social welfare and development office to provide aftercare services. The need for close coordination between and among the family members, community, and the local social welfare and development office was evident in the process.

The above study has a significant relation to this study since it explored the program that handles children in conflict with the law (CICL). This study also covered the clients covered by the previous work. The studies differ on research methodology. The prior work utilized qualitative methodology and observed as well as conducted interviews

with children in conflict with the law clients. This study employed a descriptive -survey and a questionnaire to gather the data.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive-survey method of research. Vizcarra (2003)¹, noted that descriptive research method explains the nature, characteristics, relationships and differences of the current conditions. It is designed to produce statistically reliable data about any condition. It utilized the descriptive method since it identified the social services programs of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office of Albay; the level of implementation of the programs and the level of appreciation.

The survey design was applied since it utilized a questionnaire to gather the needed data. It also identified the challenges met in the implementation of the programs. The relationship of the level of implementation and the level of appreciation was likewise determined.

IV. FINDINGS

➤ The Salient Findings of the Study are:

- The programs most implemented by the office are *children's welfare programs* and *womens welfare programs*, with forty-seven (47) out of total respondents of sixty (60), or 78.33 %. This is followed by *older persons welfare programs* with forty (40) out of sixty (60) or 66.67 %; *assistance to individuals in crisis situations* with thirty-seven (37) or 61.67 % and lastly *solo parents' welfare programs* with thirty (30) or 50 %.
- The combined averages obtained as rated by the implementers and clients illustrate the following: *solo parents welfare programs* with 4.66; *assistance to individuals in crisis situations* with 4.39; *older persons welfare programs* with 4.28; *children welfare programs* with 4.20; and *women welfare programs* with 4.09. The level of implementation of the social services programs of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development of Albay along the five (5) areas covered in this study has an average weighted mean of 4.32 as perceived by the implementers and clients with an adjectival description of *very high*.
- All the indicators used in this study on the level of appreciation of the social service programs have the same adjectival description of very high both on the side of the implementers and on the client, although with varying average weighted means. On the part of the implementers, the social services program with the highest level of appreciation is *solo parents' welfare programs* with 4.59; *assistance to individuals in crisis situation* with 4.48; *older persons welfare programs* with 4.41; *children welfare programs* with 4.37; and *women welfare programs* with 4.33. The average weighted mean obtained on the level of appreciation as rated by the implementers has a value of 4.34, which is *very high*.
- The computed Pearson r along *Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations* obtained the highest value of 0.85 and was interpreted as *high positive correlation*, followed by *children welfare programs* with 0.70, which is a *moderately positive correlation*, and *solo parents' welfare programs* with 0.41, or *low positive correlation*.

This is immediately followed by *older persons welfare programs* with 0.40 with an interpretation of *low positive correlation* and lastly, *women welfare programs* with 0.25 or *negligible positive correlation*.

- The computed t values of r with their tabular value counterparts are as follows: 5.31 in *Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations* and a tabular value of ± 2.13 ; *children welfare programs* with 2.37 as compared to ± 2.13 tabular value; *older persons welfare programs* with 0.82 and a tabular value of ± 2.13 ; *solo parents welfare programs* with 0.85 and a tabular value of ± 2.13 ; and lastly, *women welfare program* with 0.46 and a tabular value of ± 2.13 .
- The challenge in *children welfare programs* with the highest number of frequencies with a value of fourteen (14) as rated by the implementers is *changing needs of children* which was also the highest on the client side with seven (7) with a rank of first and a total rank of 2 and of final rank of first. Along *women welfare programs*, the challenge of *inadequate capacity development activities for women* has a frequency of seventeen (17) implementers and twelve (12) clients with a rank of first, a total rank of 2 and a final rank of first. The challenge in *older persons welfare* with the highest number of frequencies of twelve (12) is obtained in *diverse personalities of older persons* with a rank of first as rated by the implementers and eight (8) clients with a total rank of 2 and final rank of first. Along with *solo parents welfare programs*, the challenge of the *scarcity of appropriate interventions to solo parents* has a total frequency of twelve (12) with a rank of first. This has also the same frequency on the client side and the same rank. Finally, the challenge in providing *assistance to individuals in crisis situations* with the highest number of frequency of 11 and with a rank of first is *lack of budget to respond to all cases*.
- An action plan may address the challenges met.

V. CONCLUSION

- The social services programs implemented mostly in the Province of Albay are children welfare programs and women welfare programs, while the solo parents welfare programs are least implemented.
- The level of implementation of the social services in the Province of Albay, along with children's welfare programs, women's welfare programs, older persons welfare programs, solo parents' welfare programs, and assistance to individuals in crisis situations is *very high*.
- The level of appreciation of the social services in the Province of Albay, along with children's welfare programs, women's welfare programs, older persons welfare programs, solo parents' welfare programs, and assistance to individuals in crisis situations is *very high*.
- There is no significant relationship between the level of implementation and level of appreciation of the social services in the Province of Albay, along with children's welfare programs, women's welfare programs, older persons welfare programs, solo parents' welfare programs, and assistance to individuals in crisis situations.
- The challenges that obtained a final rank of first are the following: *changing needs of children* along *children welfare programs*; *inadequate capacity development activities for women* along *women welfare programs*;

diverse personalities of older persons in older persons welfare programs; scarcity of appropriate interventions to solo parents in solo parents welfare programs; and lack of budget to respond to all cases in Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations.

- An action plan may address the challenges met in the implementation of social services programs in Albay Province.

RECOMMENDATION

- The Province of Albay may conduct more culturally sensitive activities for the elderly all year round.
- To sustain the very high level of implementation of the social services programs, the Province of Albay, through the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office may produce a handbook of their best practices which other local government units may also follow.
- The Province of Albay may continue to provide a community of practice that all local government units in the province may consider.
- The researcher suggests that other social services like welfare programs for persons with disabilities, may be another area for research to look into the relationship between the implementation and appreciation of the programs in the Province of Albay.
- The list of challenges identified in this study may be presented and discussed among program implementers and selected clients for discussion
- The action plan may be incorporated in other plans of the Province of Albay so that the delivery of social services will be sustained.

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