

# Assessment of the Status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and Its Influence on the Livelihood and Development of Beneficiaries

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## Abstract

This study assessed the level of implementation and livelihood outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program as perceived by grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. Specifically, it examined the demographic profile of the respondents, the level of program implementation in terms of training and capacity-building, financial and credit assistance, and market linkages and promotion, and the level of livelihood outcomes. It also determined whether significant differences exist in program implementation and livelihood outcomes when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profiles. In addition, the study explored the challenges and barriers experienced by grantees in establishing and sustaining their businesses, and formulated recommendations to enhance program effectiveness. A descriptive-comparative research design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods was employed. Data were gathered from 80 grantee-respondents through survey questionnaires and follow-up qualitative inquiries. Statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA were used for quantitative analysis, while thematic analysis was applied for qualitative data interpretation. Findings revealed that the overall level of program implementation was High ( $M = 2.94$ ), with training and capacity-building obtaining the highest rating. The livelihood outcomes were also rated High ( $M = 3.10$ ), indicating positive effects on income, market access, and entrepreneurial skills. Significant differences were found in program implementation in terms of age and sources of income, while gender, income level, and other demographic variables showed no significant differences. For livelihood outcomes, significant differences were observed in terms of gender, sources of income, and the number of trainings attended. The study also identified key challenges such as market competition, financial constraints, digital limitations, administrative requirements, and lack of sustained support.

The study concludes that the DTI Go Negosyo Program is generally effective in improving livelihood outcomes; however, its impact is influenced by demographic factors and structural barriers. It is recommended that the program strengthen continuous mentoring, simplify financial processes, enhance digital access, and improve market linkage support to ensure inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial development.

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of Study

Entrepreneurship has become an important poverty reduction and sustainable development strategy and

an important area that is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals (Chaves, 2022). Entrepreneurship generates income, creates employment, and enhances economic resilience, particularly in vulnerable and marginalized communities across different contexts around the world.

In developing regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Entrepreneurship initiatives have also had a significant impact on livelihoods in developing countries, including programs like microfinance schemes in Bangladesh, enterprise development initiatives in India, and women-focused livelihood projects in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sagbigal, 2022). On the other hand, in developed economies, innovation and technology drive entrepreneurship, small businesses in the United States provide nearly half of private employment (De Leon, 2024), and the European Union supports startups through financing mechanisms and regulatory reforms (Briones et al., 2023). International organizations such as the World Bank and the International Labor Organization also reinforce entrepreneurial ecosystems by offering policy assistance, financing, and capacity-building programs to support inclusive and sustainable growth (Briones et al., 2023). In the Philippines, entrepreneurship is recognized as a cornerstone of national development and is institutionalized through several laws and government programs that support micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Republic Act No. 10644, also known as the Go Negosyo Act, established Negosyo Centers nationwide to provide entrepreneurs with access to training, financing, market linkages, and mentoring, under the leadership of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in partnership with local government units and private sector stakeholders (Magno-Ballesteros & Ancheta, 2022). MSMEs constitute over 99 percent of registered businesses and employ approximately 63 percent of the national workforce, highlighting their significant contribution to the Philippine economy (Fulay & Habla, 2021). Supplementary policies, including Republic Act No. 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises Act and Republic Act No. 11337 or the Innovative Startup Act, further strengthen the entrepreneurial landscape by offering incentives, tax exemptions, and access to financing (Rovillos, 2020). These initiatives are aligned with the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028, which identifies MSME development, innovation, and productivity as key drivers of inclusive and resilient economic growth (Ramos & Ylagan, 2022).

At the local level, entrepreneurship programs in Davao Oriental, particularly through the implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program, have been instrumental in empowering communities by making business support services more accessible. Negosyo Centers operated through partnerships between the DTI and local government units provide services such as entrepreneurial training, business registration assistance, and market linkage facilitation to both rural and urban residents (Aldaba & Anthony, 2024; Carlos et al., 2022). Complementary local initiatives, including livelihood assistance projects, trade fairs, and cooperative-based partnerships, further customize support to address community-specific economic needs (Songco, 2022). This localized approach ensures that national entrepreneurship policies translate into tangible livelihood outcomes, enabling beneficiaries to improve income levels, stabilize their enterprises, and enhance community resilience (Anthea & Redison, 2020).

Despite the extensive implementation of entrepreneurship programs in the Philippines, there remains a notable gap in empirical studies examining their effectiveness, particularly in terms of livelihood outcomes among program beneficiaries (Diaz, 2022). While policy frameworks demonstrate strong government commitment to entrepreneurship-led development, there is limited evidence on whether programs such as the DTI Go Negosyo Program effectively achieve their intended goals of income improvement, welfare enhancement, and livelihood sustainability at the community level (Halcon & Vilorio, 2023). Without

systematic investigation, challenges such as limited access to capital, insufficient market linkages, and uneven mentoring support may continue to hinder the long-term success of beneficiaries.

Considering these gaps, a comprehensive study is necessary to examine the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood and development of beneficiaries in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. By focusing on beneficiaries' real-life experiences, this study seeks to generate empirical evidence on how the program contributes to income improvement, welfare enhancement, and sustainable livelihood outcomes. The findings of this study aim to provide valuable insights for policymakers, implementers, and stakeholders to strengthen program implementation and formulate responsive intervention strategies that maximize the program's contribution to inclusive and sustainable national development.

Therefore, this chapter presents the context and rationale of the study, outlining the background of the research problem and establishing the need for the investigation. It also introduces the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, hypotheses, assumptions, scope and limitations, and the significance of the study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aims to evaluate the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and determine its influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries. Specifically, this study is directed at providing answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the DTI Go Negosyo beneficiaries in terms of the following?
2. What is the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the beneficiaries in terms of the following?
3. What is the level of influence of the DTI Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries in terms of the following?
4. Is there a significant difference between the DTI Go Negosyo Program and the livelihood and their perceptions of the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program?
5. Is there a significant difference between the DTI Go Negosyo Program and the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries when grouped according to its profile?
6. What challenges and barriers are faced by DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees in establishing and sustaining their businesses after program participation?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what recommendations or intervention programs can be formulated to enhance the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program in improving the livelihood of its grantees?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and determine its influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries. To achieve this, the study aims to:

1. Determine the profile of the DTI Go Negosyo beneficiaries in terms of:
2. Assess the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the beneficiaries in terms of:
3. What is the level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of the DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as perceived by the grantees when grouped across their demographic profiles?

5. Is there a significant difference in the level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the grantees when grouped across their demographic profiles?
6. What challenges and barriers are faced by DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees in establishing and sustaining their businesses after program participation?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what recommendations or intervention programs can be formulated to enhance the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program in improving the livelihood of its grantees?

### Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it seeks to evaluate the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries. By examining the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of the program, the study will generate valuable insights that can guide policymakers, implementers, and stakeholders in strengthening entrepreneurship initiatives, thereby contributing to inclusive growth and sustainable community development.

1. **Program Beneficiaries (Entrepreneurs and Aspiring Entrepreneurs).** The primary beneficiaries of this study are the individuals who have participated or wish to participate in the DTI Go Negosyo Program. By highlighting their experiences, challenges, and success stories, this study will provide them with a platform to voice their needs and concerns. The findings may result in improvements in program delivery, more responsive interventions, and better access to services that can enhance their businesses, increase their income, and ultimately uplift their quality of life.
2. **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).** The DTI, as the lead implementing agency of the Go Negosyo Program, stands to benefit greatly from this study. The results will serve as a feedback mechanism that can help DTI assess the program's strengths and weaknesses in its implementation at the grassroots level. Through this evaluation, the department can refine its strategies, optimize resources, and enhance the efficiency of Negosyo Centers in addressing the unique needs of beneficiaries across diverse communities.
3. **Local Government Units (LGUs).** LGUs are key partners in implementing and promoting the Go Negosyo Program within their jurisdictions. The findings of this study can help them identify gaps in local program support, determine areas where additional assistance is needed, and develop localized policies that are responsive to the specific needs of entrepreneurs in their communities. Stronger LGU participation, guided by the study's findings, can result in more effective community-level entrepreneurship initiatives that contribute to balanced regional development.
4. **Policymakers and Legislators.** Policymakers and legislators will benefit from the insights provided by this study, particularly in crafting or amending laws and policies related to entrepreneurship and MSME development. The research findings can serve as evidence-based references in evaluating the effectiveness of existing programs, such as Republic Act 10644 (Go Negosyo Act) and related legislation, and in formulating new measures that will further strengthen support systems for entrepreneurs, thereby ensuring that national policies remain relevant and impactful.
5. **Future Researchers.** This study will also serve as a valuable reference for future researchers who wish to explore related topics in entrepreneurship, livelihood development, and program evaluation. By providing empirical data and insights, it can act as a foundation for further studies that may focus on specific industries, regions, or beneficiary groups. Additionally, the study can inspire comparative

analyses between the Go Negosyo Program and other entrepreneurship initiatives, enriching the body of knowledge on inclusive economic development and sustainable livelihood strategies.

### Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on evaluating the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries. It covers the assessment of beneficiaries' profiles in terms of age, gender, and civil status, as well as their perceptions of the program in areas such as training and capacity-building, financial and credit assistance, and market linkages and promotion. Furthermore, the study examines the extent of the program's influence on livelihood and development outcomes, the relationships between the beneficiaries' profiles and program perceptions, and the challenges encountered in accessing program services. The scope is limited to beneficiaries within the chosen locality, ensuring that the findings remain relevant to the specific context under study while still contributing to broader discussions on entrepreneurship development.

The study is limited by several factors that may affect the generalizability of its results. First, the data gathered will rely primarily on self-reported information from the beneficiaries, which may be influenced by personal perceptions or biases. Second, the study will focus only on selected aspects of the Go Negosyo Program, excluding other potential areas such as mentorship networks, innovation support, or long-term business sustainability measures. Third, the geographical coverage of the study is confined to a specific locality, and as such, the findings may not fully reflect the experiences of beneficiaries in other regions. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and areas for improvement, serving as a foundation for future research and program enhancement.

### Definition of Terms

To provide clarity and a common understanding of the concepts used in this research, the following terms are defined operationally as they apply to the study. These definitions are specific to the context of evaluating the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries.

1. **Go Negosyo Program.** In this study, the Go Negosyo Program refers to the initiative of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) aimed at supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through Negosyo Centers. It includes services such as business registration assistance, training, financing facilitation, and market linkages, which are directly evaluated based on the experiences of the beneficiaries.
2. **Beneficiaries.** Beneficiaries are the individuals or groups who directly receive services and support from the Go Negosyo Program. In this study, they are the focus of evaluation, as their profiles, experiences, and perceptions determine how the program has influenced their livelihood and development.
3. **Livelihood.** Livelihood refers to how the beneficiaries earn a living through their business or entrepreneurial activities. Operationally, this study considers livelihood as the outcome of beneficiaries' participation in the Go Negosyo Program, measured by improvements in income, business stability, and economic opportunities.
4. **Development.** In this study, development pertains to the overall improvement in the quality of life of the beneficiaries brought about by their involvement in the Go Negosyo Program. This includes

aspects such as increased self-reliance, empowerment, and the capacity to contribute to household and community welfare.

5. **Training and Capacity-Building Programs.** This term refers to the seminars, workshops, and skills development sessions provided by the Go Negosyo Program through Negosyo Centers. Operationally, it is evaluated based on the beneficiaries' access to, participation in, and perceived usefulness of these activities in improving their entrepreneurial skills.
6. **Financial and Credit Assistance.** Financial and credit assistance refers to the program's facilitation of access to loans, grants, or financial literacy initiatives for entrepreneurs. In this study, it is defined as the degree to which beneficiaries were able to avail themselves of financial services that supported the growth or sustainability of their businesses.
7. **Market Linkages and Promotion.** This term pertains to the Go Negosyo Program's efforts to connect beneficiaries to potential customers, suppliers, and trade opportunities. Operationally, it includes participation in trade fairs, exhibitions, and promotional activities that expand market reach for beneficiaries' products or services.
8. **Negosyo Centers.** Negosyo Centers are the physical hubs established under the Go Negosyo Act (RA 10644) where entrepreneurs can access business development services. In this study, they are defined as the main service delivery points that beneficiaries utilize for training, financial linkages, and market opportunities.
9. **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).** MSMEs are businesses classified according to asset size and number of employees, as defined by Philippine law. For this study, MSMEs represent the enterprises owned or managed by the beneficiaries of the Go Negosyo Program, serving as the primary context for livelihood evaluation.
10. **Program Status.** Program status refers to the overall condition and effectiveness of the Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the beneficiaries. In this study, it is defined operationally through the beneficiaries' assessment of how well the program delivers its services in training, financial assistance, and market linkages.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL

This chapter presents a review of related literature and studies that provide a foundation for understanding the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on beneficiaries. It is organized into key themes, namely: Entrepreneurial Empowerment and Capacity-Building, which discusses how training and skills development enhance entrepreneurial potential; Access to Resources and Opportunities, which examines the role of financial support, credit facilities, and market linkages; and Livelihood Improvement and Community Development, which highlights the outcomes of entrepreneurship on income, sustainability, and social well-being. The chapter also outlines the theory base that anchors the study, and the conceptual framework that illustrates the relationships among the study variables and guides the research direction.

#### Literature and Studies

##### *Entrepreneurial Empowerment and Capacity Building*

Entrepreneurial empowerment and capacity-building are recognized as critical components in strengthening the ability of individuals to establish and sustain their businesses. Studies reveal that empowerment is not limited to financial resources but extends to knowledge, skills, and confidence that enable entrepreneurs to make informed decisions and take risks in pursuing their ventures (Mamo et al.,

2023). Findings show that when individuals are equipped with entrepreneurial competencies, they become more capable of managing enterprises, adapting to changing environments, and ensuring business continuity. This underscores the importance of structured interventions that combine both technical training and personal development (Mamo et al., 2021).

Capacity-building is often framed as the process of enhancing the abilities of individuals and organizations to perform functions effectively and sustainably. Studies highlight that for entrepreneurs, capacity-building includes exposure to financial literacy, marketing strategies, production techniques, and customer relationship management (Tóth-Pajor et al., 2023). Training sessions, workshops, and mentorship programs are among the most effective mechanisms to deliver these competencies. Findings suggest that entrepreneurs who undergo such programs report improved productivity, stronger business planning, and greater confidence in navigating competitive markets (Diapepin et al., 2024).

Globally, governments and institutions have prioritized capacity-building programs as part of their economic development strategies. For example, in many developing countries, small business training programs supported by the World Bank and the International Labour Organization have been shown to increase survival rates of micro and small enterprises (Sajuyigbe et al., 2021). Studies claim that training initiatives that emphasize practical applications—such as bookkeeping, pricing strategies, and market expansion—produce tangible improvements in enterprise performance (Mamo et al., 2021a). This demonstrates that empowerment, when anchored in real-world application, leads to measurable outcomes. In the Philippines, capacity-building has been institutionalized through initiatives such as the Department of Trade and Industry's Go Negosyo Program. Findings show that Negosyo Centers across the country serve as venues for training and seminars that address the specific needs of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Studies highlight that MSMEs account for 99.59% of registered businesses in the country and employ around 64% of the workforce, making their development essential to national economic growth (Chen & Barcus, 2024). By equipping entrepreneurs with knowledge and skills, programs like Go Negosyo directly contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive development.

Studies also reveal that entrepreneurial empowerment fosters self-reliance and reduces dependency on unstable employment opportunities. When individuals are trained to think innovatively and manage resources effectively, they gain the confidence to generate income on their own terms (Karnavat et al., 2024). Findings suggest that empowerment is particularly impactful for marginalized groups, such as women and rural communities, who often face limited access to formal employment. Through capacity-building, these groups are able to translate their skills and creativity into viable business opportunities that improve household income and social standing (Chea, 2022).

Capacity-building programs have been found to improve access to networks and mentorship, both of which are vital to entrepreneurial success. Studies highlight that entrepreneurs who are connected to mentors and peers benefit from shared experiences, advice, and collaboration (Hukom et al., 2021). Findings show that mentorship helps entrepreneurs avoid common pitfalls and develop more resilient business strategies. Furthermore, networking opportunities provided during training programs expose entrepreneurs to potential suppliers, customers, and investors, broadening their access to markets and resources (Ishak, 2024).

Another critical aspect of entrepreneurial empowerment is the promotion of financial literacy. Studies claim that many entrepreneurs, particularly in developing economies, struggle with recordkeeping, loan management, and reinvestment of profits. Findings reveal that training programs focused on financial management significantly improve the ability of entrepreneurs to sustain their operations and qualify for

credit facilities (Sawe, 2021). Improved financial literacy not only enhances business survival but also fosters responsible borrowing and better relationships with financial institutions. Entrepreneurial empowerment also extends to fostering an innovative mindset. Studies show that capacity-building programs that encourage creativity, adaptability, and problem-solving lead to enterprises that are more resilient to shocks, such as economic downturns or global crises (Sriyani, 2022). Findings from post-pandemic recovery programs highlight that entrepreneurs who received training in digital skills, e-commerce, and online marketing were better able to sustain their businesses compared to those without such training. This suggests that empowerment must evolve alongside technological changes to remain relevant (Bonin et al., 2021).

In the Philippine context, studies reveal that capacity-building efforts are often tailored to specific industries, such as food processing, handicrafts, and agriculture. Findings highlight that localized training ensure entrepreneurs acquire practical skills that directly apply to their enterprises (Kania et al., 2021). For instance, agricultural entrepreneurs benefit from programs that teach value-adding techniques, post-harvest processing, and sustainable farming practices, which increase profitability and competitiveness (Poi, 2021). This indicates that empowerment is most effective when aligned with local needs and industry demands.

Ultimately, entrepreneurial empowerment and capacity-building are not one-time interventions but ongoing processes that evolve with the entrepreneur's journey. Studies claim that continuous training, refresher courses, and updated mentorship are necessary to ensure that entrepreneurs remain competitive in dynamic markets (Naik & Panda, 2023). Findings show that entrepreneurs who consistently participate in capacity-building activities are more likely to scale their businesses, contribute to job creation, and strengthen community development. By fostering a culture of lifelong learning and empowerment, entrepreneurship programs ensure that beneficiaries are not just surviving but thriving in their ventures.

#### *Access to Resources and Opportunities*

Access to resources and opportunities is widely regarded as a fundamental pillar of entrepreneurship and enterprise development. Studies reveal that entrepreneurs, particularly those from marginalized sectors, often face barriers such as limited capital, restricted market access, and inadequate information that hinder their ability to grow their businesses (Ukwoma & Onyebinama, 2021). Findings show that programs designed to address these barriers play a vital role in enabling individuals to transform ideas into viable enterprises. When entrepreneurs are given access to resources like financial services, training, and technology, they are better equipped to overcome systemic obstacles and achieve sustainable livelihood outcomes (Bapuji et al., 2023).

One of the most critical resources for entrepreneurs is access to finance. Studies claim that limited capital remains one of the primary reasons why micro and small businesses fail to survive their first few years (Larsen & Dupuy, 2023). Findings highlight that entrepreneurs often struggle to meet collateral requirements or navigate complex loan processes in formal banking institutions (Bilal et al., 2022). Programs like the DTI's Go Negosyo, along with credit facilities from microfinance institutions, are therefore essential in bridging the financial gap. By facilitating access to loans, grants, and livelihood assistance, these initiatives empower entrepreneurs to expand production, invest in equipment, and sustain operations.

Equally important is access to markets, which studies emphasize as a crucial determinant of entrepreneurial success. Findings reveal that even when entrepreneurs produce quality goods and services, many struggle to connect with customers beyond their immediate communities. Entrepreneurship

programs that create linkages to local trade fairs, national expos, and international markets expand the reach of small businesses. Studies highlight that market opportunities not only increase income but also inspire innovation, as entrepreneurs adapt to consumer preferences and competitive standards (Henderson & Loreau, 2023).

Access to technology and digital platforms has become increasingly important in today's business environment. Findings show that during the COVID-19 pandemic, entrepreneurs who were able to transition to e-commerce platforms and online marketing were more resilient compared to those reliant on traditional sales channels (Boscardin et al., 2023). Studies reveal that programs offering digital literacy training, e-commerce facilitation, and access to technological tools enable small businesses to tap into larger, more diverse markets. This shift underscores the need for entrepreneurship programs to integrate digital capacity as a key resource (Kaddoura & Al Husseiny, 2023).

Mentorship and knowledge-sharing opportunities are another form of resource that significantly influences entrepreneurial growth. Studies claim that access to experienced mentors provides entrepreneurs with guidance in managing challenges and seizing opportunities. Findings indicate that mentorship enhances problem-solving skills, strategic decision-making, and business planning (Adeshola & Adepoju, 2023). Moreover, networking opportunities with peers create a collaborative environment where entrepreneurs learn from shared successes and failures, reinforcing the idea that knowledge is a powerful resource for empowerment (Khan et al., 2022).

Studies also reveal that opportunities created by government programs and supportive policies greatly impact on the survival and expansion of small businesses. In the Philippines, laws such as the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBE) Act and the Innovative Startup Act provide entrepreneurs with tax incentives, funding opportunities, and technical support. Findings highlight that these policy-driven opportunities reduce the burden of operational costs and open pathways for innovation-driven enterprises to thrive (Sepino & Garcia-Vigonte, 2022). Such legal frameworks function as enablers, ensuring that entrepreneurs have a supportive environment in which to grow. Geographical access to resources is another factor emphasized in studies, as rural entrepreneurs often face more significant barriers compared to their urban counterparts (Depante & Manalo, 2025). Findings show that the establishment of Negosyo Centers across the Philippines helps address this imbalance by bringing business development services closer to local communities. These centers act as accessible hubs where entrepreneurs can register their businesses, attend training, and seek advice without the need to travel long distances. Studies highlight that decentralizing support services increases inclusivity and ensures that opportunities reach grassroots entrepreneurs (Jumlail Jr. & Sta. Ana, 2023).

Opportunities for collaboration and partnership also enhance entrepreneurial prospects. Findings reveal that when entrepreneurs relate to cooperatives, associations, and private sector networks, they gain collective bargaining power, better access to supplies, and shared marketing platforms (Manipol, 2023). Studies emphasize that partnerships not only provide access to resources but also strengthen the social capital of entrepreneurs, fostering resilience and innovation through collective action.

Moreover, access to information is a resource that studies claim is often overlooked but is critical in entrepreneurial development. Findings show that timely and accurate information about market trends, customer needs, government regulations, and financing options enables entrepreneurs to make informed decisions (Macatumbas-Corpuz & Bool, 2021). Entrepreneurship programs that facilitate access to information through seminars, online portals, and advisory services empower beneficiaries to anticipate challenges and proactively respond to opportunities.

Findings reveal that programs must ensure that marginalized groups—such as women, youth, and rural communities—are not left behind in the distribution of support. True empowerment is achieved when resources and opportunities are equitably accessible and consistently available, allowing entrepreneurs to sustain growth and contribute to community development. By ensuring inclusivity, entrepreneurship programs like Go Negosyo fulfill their mandate of fostering broad-based, sustainable economic growth.

#### *Livelihood Improvement and Community Development*

Livelihood improvement and community development are central goals of many entrepreneurship programs, particularly in developing countries where poverty reduction and inclusive growth remain pressing concerns. Studies reveal that livelihood goes beyond mere income generation—it encompasses the stability, sustainability, and dignity of work that individuals pursue (Ramaano, 2021). Findings show that entrepreneurship initiatives such as the DTI's Go Negosyo Program contribute to livelihood improvement by equipping beneficiaries with the skills, resources, and opportunities needed to create and sustain small businesses. These enterprises, in turn, serve as engines of local economic activity and foster stronger, more resilient communities (Abiddin et al., 2022).

Studies claim that improved livelihood often manifests in increased household income, better access to education, and enhanced capacity to meet basic needs. Findings highlight that entrepreneurs who benefit from structured programs are able to diversify their income sources, making them less vulnerable to shocks such as job loss or natural disasters (Stone & Stone, 2020). As livelihoods become more secure, families can reinvest earnings into health, education, and housing, creating a cycle of development that strengthens both individuals and communities. This connection illustrates how livelihood improvement directly contributes to long-term community well-being (Liu et al., 2021).

Job creation is another crucial outcome of entrepreneurship programs that contributes to community development. Findings show that when micro and small enterprises grow, they not only provide income for the business owners but also create employment opportunities for others in the community (Brooks et al., 2023). Studies highlight that this multiplier effect strengthens the local economy by circulating money within the community, supporting local suppliers, and encouraging further business development (Chatkaewnapanon & Lee, 2022). The Go Negosyo Program, by supporting microenterprises, plays an important role in facilitating this ripple effect of livelihood expansion.

Studies also reveal that entrepreneurship enhances social empowerment by fostering self-reliance and reducing dependency on government subsidies or unstable wage employment. Findings suggest that when individuals are empowered to create their own sources of livelihood, they develop a stronger sense of agency and confidence (Ramaano, 2021b). This empowerment spills over into the community, where individuals become role models, inspiring others to pursue similar opportunities. In this way, livelihood improvement is not only an economic outcome but also a social transformation that fosters collective progress.

Community development is further strengthened when entrepreneurship programs encourage cooperation and collective action. Findings highlight that many small businesses thrive when organized into cooperatives or associations, which enable shared access to resources, joint marketing initiatives, and stronger bargaining power (Akter et al., 2022). Studies claim that collective entrepreneurship initiatives improve trust, solidarity, and mutual support within communities. These dynamics create a stronger social fabric that is essential for sustainable community development.

Livelihood improvement also contributes to reducing inequalities, especially in marginalized sectors. Studies reveal that women, youth, and rural residents often face systemic barriers to employment and

income opportunities (Ramaano, 2021c). Entrepreneurship programs that prioritize these groups help to close gaps in access to resources and empower them to participate actively in economic life. Findings show that women entrepreneurs, in particular, often reinvest earnings into their households and communities, leading to improved education and health outcomes (Ayalu et al., 2022). This demonstrates how inclusive entrepreneurship contributes to broader community development goals.

Environmental sustainability is another dimension connected to livelihood improvement and community development. Studies highlight that entrepreneurship programs that promote sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly production or responsible resource use, create opportunities for “green livelihoods.” (Stacey et al., 2021). Findings suggest that communities engaged in sustainable enterprises not only improve income but also protect natural resources for future generations. This integration of livelihood and environmental stewardship strengthens the long-term resilience of communities.

Findings also show that livelihood improvement fosters community resilience in times of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, small businesses played a key role in sustaining local economies and providing essential goods and services. Studies reveal that communities with active entrepreneurial sectors were better able to cope with economic disruptions, as small enterprises adapted quickly by shifting to online platforms or repurposing production (Zikargae et al., 2022). This adaptability demonstrates how strengthened livelihoods contribute to community resilience during uncertain times. The cultural dimension of livelihood improvement is also significant. Studies claim that entrepreneurship often revives traditional crafts, skills, and local knowledge, transforming them into viable income sources. Findings highlight that communities that embrace entrepreneurship often experience a resurgence of cultural pride, as local products and services gain recognition in wider markets (Saifullah et al., 2021). This not only preserves cultural heritage but also promotes communities to benefit economically from unique cultural identities.

Ultimately, livelihood improvement and community development are inseparable outcomes of effective entrepreneurship programs. Findings show that when individuals improve their economic standing, they contribute to the social and economic vibrancy of their communities. Studies reveal that these improvements, whether through increased income, job creation, empowerment, or cultural preservation—create a cycle of development that uplifts entire communities. Programs like Go Negosyo exemplify how targeted entrepreneurship support can translate into tangible improvements in livelihood and sustainable community development.

### **Theory Base**

The Resource-Based View (RBV) of the Firm was developed in the mid-20th century and became more prominent through the works of Edith Penrose, Birger Wernerfelt, and later, Jay Barney. This theory highlights that the resources of a firm control—both tangible and intangible—serve as the foundation for achieving competitive advantage and superior performance (Lubis, 2022). RBV emphasizes that resources must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) to provide sustainable advantages. Over time, scholars have extended the theory to include capabilities, skills, and organizational processes that enable firms to deploy resources more effectively. RBV remains influential in management and entrepreneurship studies, as it provides a framework for understanding why some enterprises succeed while others fail despite being in similar environments.

The core components of RBV focus on the classification and utilization of resources. Tangible resources include physical assets like land, equipment, and capital, while intangible resources cover skills,

knowledge, brand reputation, and organizational culture. Proponents argue that sustainable business success lies not only in possessing resources but also in how they are managed, combined, and protected against competitors. This view places strategic emphasis on leveraging internal strengths rather than relying solely on external market conditions. By recognizing resources as heterogeneous across firms, RBV explains why businesses in the same sector often experience different growth trajectories and outcomes.

The relevance of RBV to this study lies in its application to the evaluation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program. Beneficiaries of the program gain access to critical resources such as training, financial support, and market linkages—resources that are valuable and often difficult to access independently. By equipping entrepreneurs with knowledge and networks, the program enhances their intangible assets, aligning with the VRIN criteria of RBV. This study evaluates how well the Go Negosyo Program provides these resources and how they translate into improved livelihood and development. In essence, RBV provides a theoretical lens for understanding how program-delivered resources empower entrepreneurs to achieve sustainability and competitiveness.

Human Capital Theory emerged from the works of economists such as Adam Smith in the 18th century and was further developed in the 20th century by scholars like Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker. The theory posits that individuals' knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences are forms of capital that contribute to economic productivity. Unlike physical capital, human capital cannot be separated from the individual; it grows through education, training, health, and personal development. Over the decades, the theory has shaped public policy and academic discourse by emphasizing that investments in people are as crucial as investments in infrastructure and technology (Griffen, 2023). Human capital is now widely recognized as a central factor in national development and organizational competitiveness.

The theory's components revolve around the idea that the productivity of individuals and organizations increases when resources are devoted to enhancing human capabilities. Education and training are seen as critical investments that yield returns in the form of higher income, improved employability, and greater innovation. Schultz and Becker demonstrated how human capital contributes not only to individual advancement but also to societal progress by driving economic growth and reducing poverty. By equipping individuals with skills and knowledge, human capital becomes a renewable resource that creates long-term benefits for both individuals and communities.

The Human Capital Theory fits this study as it directly relates to the training and capacity-building initiatives of the DTI Go Negosyo Program. Through seminars, workshops, and mentorship, beneficiaries enhance their human capital, which, in turn, improves their entrepreneurial performance and livelihood outcomes. This study evaluates whether such investments in human capital translate into tangible development benefits for beneficiaries, such as increased income, self-reliance, and business sustainability. By applying Human Capital Theory, the study situates Go Negosyo's interventions as strategic investments in people that contribute not only to individual empowerment but also to broader community and economic development.

The Empowerment Theory is rooted in social work, psychology, and community development literature, with significant contributions from scholars like Julian Rappaport in the 1980s. The theory emphasizes that empowerment is both a process and an outcome through which individuals and groups gain control over their lives, acquire critical skills, and develop the confidence to participate actively in decision-making (Sharma et al., 2022). Historically, empowerment theory emerged from movements advocating for marginalized populations, highlighting the need for systems and structures that allow people to move

from dependency to autonomy. Over time, the concept has been applied across fields such as education, health, and entrepreneurship, where empowerment is seen as a pathway to sustainable development and social justice.

The theory comprises several components, including psychological empowerment, which refers to increased self-efficacy and confidence; organizational empowerment, which relates to structures and resources; and community empowerment, which focuses on collective participation and shared benefits. Studies highlight that empowerment is multidimensional, encompassing social, economic, political, and psychological dimensions. It is not limited to resource provision but includes the fostering of agency and the capacity to act meaningfully within one's environment. Empowerment theory underscores that true development occurs when individuals and communities are equipped not only with tools but also with a sense of control and ownership over their growth.

This theory aligns with the study by framing the DTI Go Negosyo Program as an empowerment initiative. By providing beneficiaries with access to training, financial opportunities, and market linkages, the program empowers them to take charge of their entrepreneurial journeys. This empowerment extends beyond economic gains, as beneficiaries also build confidence, social capital, and resilience. The study examines the extent to which the Go Negosyo Program fulfills its empowering role by enabling participants to achieve livelihood improvement and contribute to community development. Empowerment Theory thus provides a lens for analyzing the program's transformative potential in uplifting beneficiaries and fostering inclusive development.

### **Worldview and Theoretical Lens**

This study is anchored on the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF), which emphasizes that access to livelihood assets, human, social, financial, natural, and physical, determines the capacity of households to sustain and improve their well-being. The livelihood program granted to the beneficiaries in Boston, Davao Oriental, can be viewed as an intervention that strengthens these assets, thereby influencing their overall livelihood outcomes.

In addition, the Empowerment Theory supports this study by highlighting that access to resources and opportunities enables individuals and communities to gain control over their economic and social conditions. Similarly, the Human Capital Theory underpins the notion that investment in training and livelihood initiatives improves productivity, employability, and income-generation capacity of the grantees. Therefore, these theories provide a solid foundation in examining how the program influences the grantees' livelihood and serves as a basis for designing an appropriate intervention program. This study is anchored on the following theories:

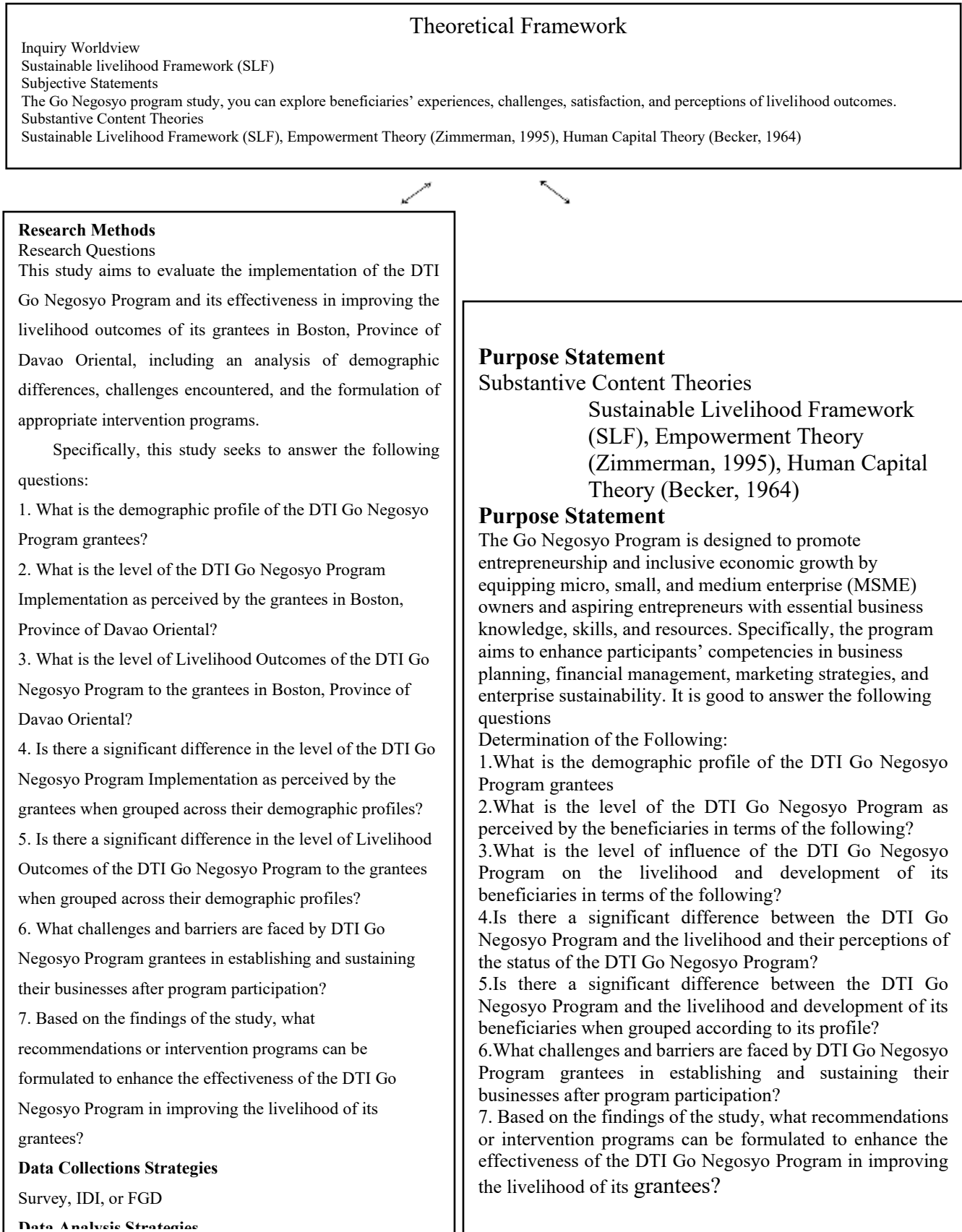
**Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF).** The SLF emphasizes that households sustain and improve their well-being by accessing livelihood assets such as human, social, financial, natural, and physical capital. The livelihood program provided to the beneficiaries can be considered an intervention that strengthens these assets, thereby influencing their overall livelihood outcomes.

**Empowerment Theory (Zimmerman, 1995).** This theory highlights that individuals and communities gain control over their lives when given access to resources, skills, and opportunities. It supports the idea that livelihood programs not only improve income but also empower grantees to participate actively in community development.

**Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964).** Human Capital Theory suggests that investment in training, education, and capacity-building increases productivity and earning potential. The livelihood program,

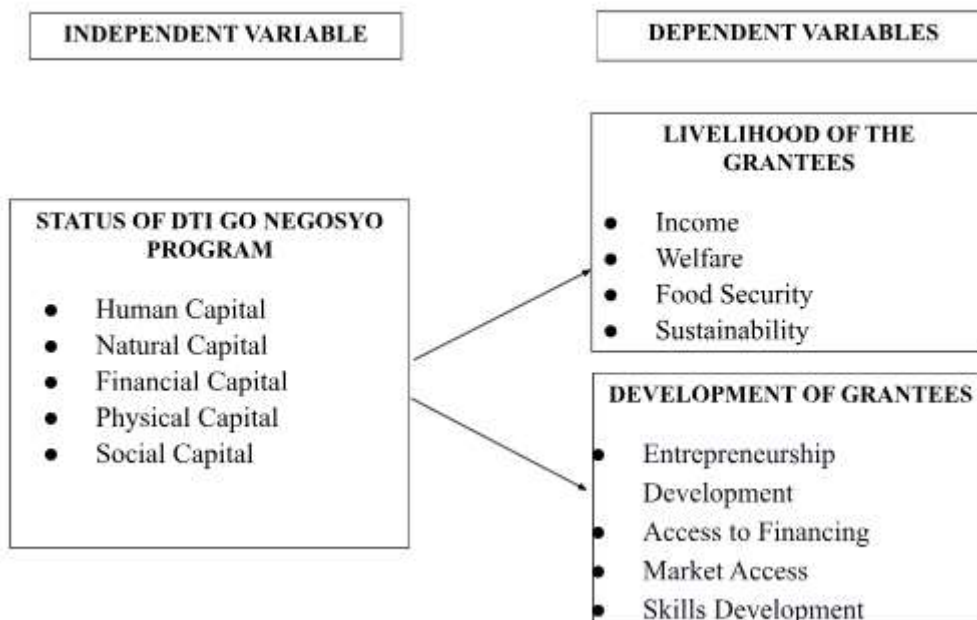
therefore, can be seen as an investment that enhances beneficiaries' skills and competencies, leading to improved economic opportunities.

**Figure 1 Mixed-methods research proposal framework**



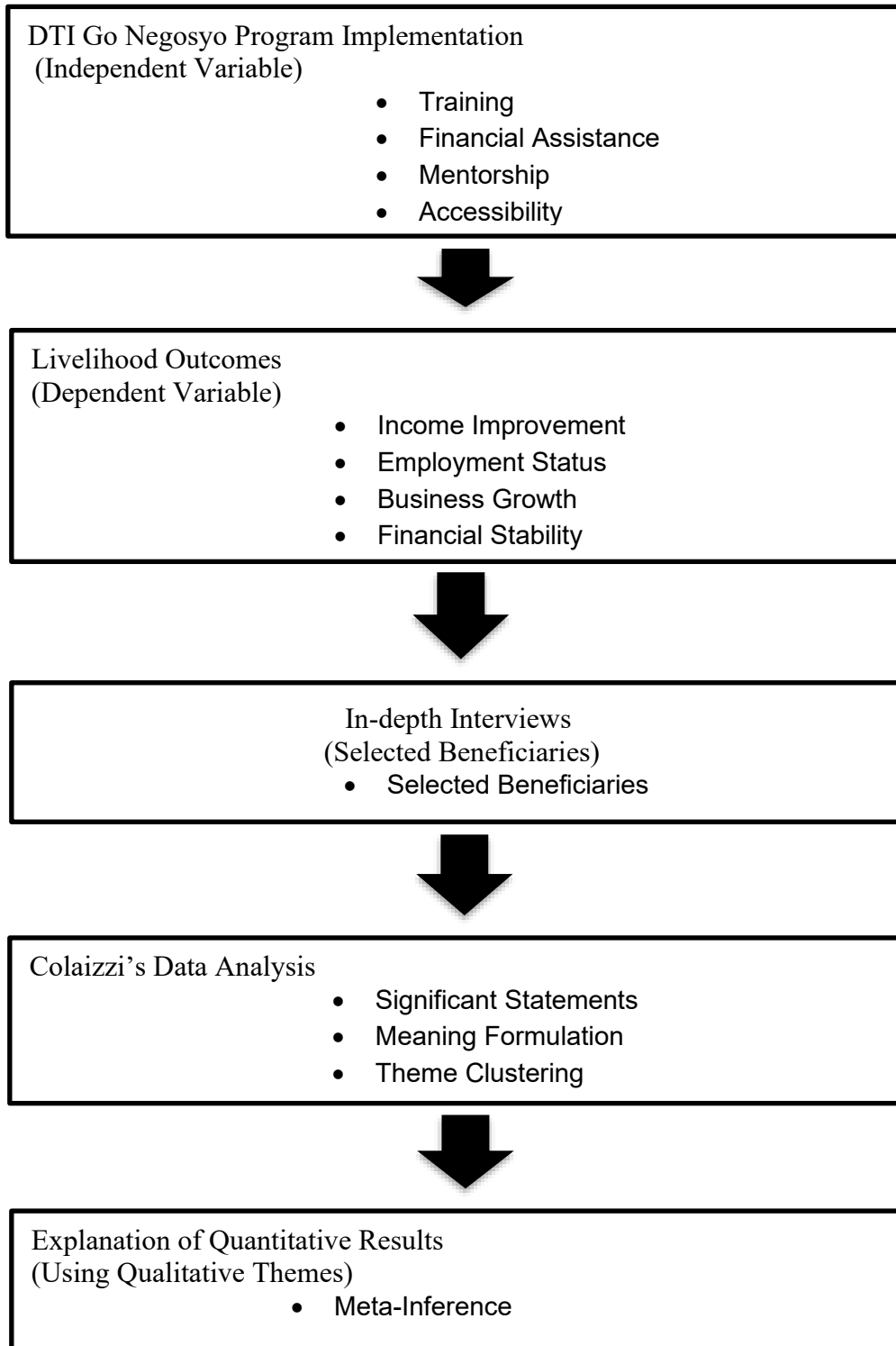
This theory aligns with the study by framing the DTI Go Negosyo Program as an empowerment initiative. By providing beneficiaries with access to training, financial opportunities, and market linkages, the program empowers them to take charge of their entrepreneurial journeys. This empowerment extends beyond economic gains, as beneficiaries also build confidence, social capital, and resilience. The study examines the extent to which the Go Negosyo Program fulfills its empowering role by enabling participants to achieve livelihood improvement and contribute to community development. Empowerment Theory thus provides a lens for analyzing the program’s transformative potential in uplifting beneficiaries and fostering inclusive development. The process of the study involves the methods and procedures employed to gather, analyze, and interpret data, which in this case is a mixed-method approach with quantitative and qualitative phases. The data gathering procedure consists of the use of structured survey questionnaires administered to the selected beneficiaries of the Go Negosyo Program within the locality. This approach allows for the collection of quantifiable data that can be statistically treated to determine patterns, relationships, and levels of perception. The descriptive design provides an accurate picture of the status of the program as perceived by its beneficiaries, while the quantitative method ensures objectivity and reliability of results. Through this process, the study systematically captures how inputs are transformed into measurable findings that reflect the program’s impact. The conceptual framework depicted in Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrates the interrelationships among the variables of study. The diagram indicated the status of Go Negosyo programs as independent variables, while livelihood and development of beneficiaries as dependent variables.

**Figure 2**  
***Conceptual Framework of the Study***



**Figure 3**  
**Conceptual Framework (Sequential-Explanatory Design)**

**QUANTITATIVE PHASE**



**QUALITATIVE PHASE**

The present study employs a sequential-explanatory mixed-method design, wherein the research is carried out in two separate phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. In the quantitative phase, the study

investigates the relationship between the implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program (independent variable) and the livelihood outcomes of the beneficiaries (dependent variable) using statistical tools (frequency, mean, correlation), which are then followed by the qualitative phase that explains the quantitative results through interviews of selected beneficiaries that will be analyzed using Colaizzi's method of extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, and developing thematic clusters. The qualitative findings will then be integrated into the study to explain and support the quantitative results. In the Philippine context, livelihood programs that are implemented through the Department of Trade and Industry provide financial and technical support to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which are in line with development theories that emphasize capacity building and resource access as pathways to improved economic conditions. The study hypothesizes that the level of implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program, which consists of training, financial assistance, mentorship, and accessibility of services, is **the independent variable** of the study. This is in line with the literature on livelihood and development programs, which underscores that government interventions contribute to the improvement of economic conditions and the quality of life of beneficiaries. Studies on entrepreneurship development show that training and mentorship are key to entrepreneurial competence development. Innovation and systematic support for innovation (Peter Drucker 1985), as well as motivation and learned skills (David McClelland 1961) can be developed through structured programs and training initiatives, respectively. The livelihood outcomes of beneficiaries, such as improved income, employment, business growth, and financial stability, are the **dependent variable** of the study. The linkage between program implementation and livelihood outcomes is backed by human capital theory, which states that investments in education and training yield higher productivity and income (Gary Becker 1993), as well as by sustainable livelihood frameworks that highlight that access to assets, skills, and institutional support contributes to enhanced livelihood outcomes. The qualitative aspect of the study is intended to deepen understanding of the quantitative findings and employs a phenomenological analysis. John Creswell (2014) stated that mixed-methods research supports using qualitative methods to examine complex phenomena, combining numbers with participants' lived experiences. The data gathered are analyzed using the method developed by Paul Colaizzi (1978), which focuses on the voice of the beneficiaries to ensure that the voices of the beneficiaries are captured and interpreted correctly to understand how and why the DTI Go Negosyo Program affects livelihood outcomes. Additionally, Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie (2010) noted that the integration of qualitative and quantitative data enhances validity through a meta-inference.

### **Audience**

This study is significant as it examines the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program in improving the livelihood, welfare, and sustainability of its beneficiaries in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. Entrepreneurship and livelihood programs play a critical role in addressing poverty, unemployment, and economic vulnerability, particularly in rural and developing communities. This study provides meaningful insights that can guide decision-making, policy development, and program enhancement for various stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in livelihood development initiatives by generating empirical evidence on program effectiveness. Specifically, the findings of this study may benefit the following stakeholders, ranked according to the degree of benefit: Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Community, Academe, Business and Management Research, Aspiring Entrepreneurs, Business Owners, Local Government Units, Researcher, Future Researchers.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Go Negosyo Program

in the Municipality of Boston, Davao Oriental, using a mixed-methods research approach. Quantitatively, the study aims to measure the level of program implementation and its effects on business skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, business performance, and decision-making confidence of barangay residents engaged in micro and small enterprises. Qualitatively, the study seeks to explore the participants lived experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding the program's training, mentoring, and support services to explain and enrich the quantitative findings. By integrating quantitative and qualitative results, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the Go Negosyo Program contributes to entrepreneurial development and local economic improvement in the community.

Moreover, poverty and income inequality were ongoing issues in the Philippines, particularly in rural and marginalized areas (Tuaño, 2019). As a result, the government has a range of social protection programs, including the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), to provide financial assistance to vulnerable households and alleviate poverty. Subsequently, the local government implemented a Go Negosyo Program, a government initiative aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and economic development in the Philippines, that has been providing financial support and training to individuals and small businesses since 2014 (Guliman, 2019). Go Negosyo Program is an initiative in the Philippines aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to improve the livelihoods of Filipinos (Martinez et al., 2022). As a result, this study aims to assess the influence of the program on the livelihood of its grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. The program's effectiveness in improving the economic well-being and sustainability of DTI grantees is of particular interest. As such, the study's outcome can serve as a basis for the intervention program that it also aims to formulate.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its effectiveness in improving the livelihood outcomes of its grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, including an analysis of demographic differences, challenges encountered, and the formulation of appropriate intervention programs.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the DTI Go Negosyo Program grantee?
2. What is the level of the DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as perceived by the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental?
3. What is the level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of the DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as perceived by the grantees when grouped across their demographic profiles?
5. Is there a significant difference in the level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the grantees when grouped across their demographic profiles?
6. What challenges and barriers are faced by DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees in establishing and sustaining their businesses after program participation?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what recommendations or intervention programs can be formulated to enhance the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program in improving the livelihood of its grantees?

## **Chapter III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents a detailed description of the research design, participants, research locale, research

instrument procedures, validation procedures, data-gathering procedures, data-analysis procedures, Sequence, Emphasis, Mixing procedures, methodological issues, trustworthiness of the study, and ethical considerations. The research also discusses the method that the researcher will use and the procedures that will be applied to obtain the data from the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, on the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo program on the livelihood of the grantees that is needed in this study. Also, this chapter will help the researcher to gather the needed data and to analyze these data through various tools for analysis.

### **Research Design**

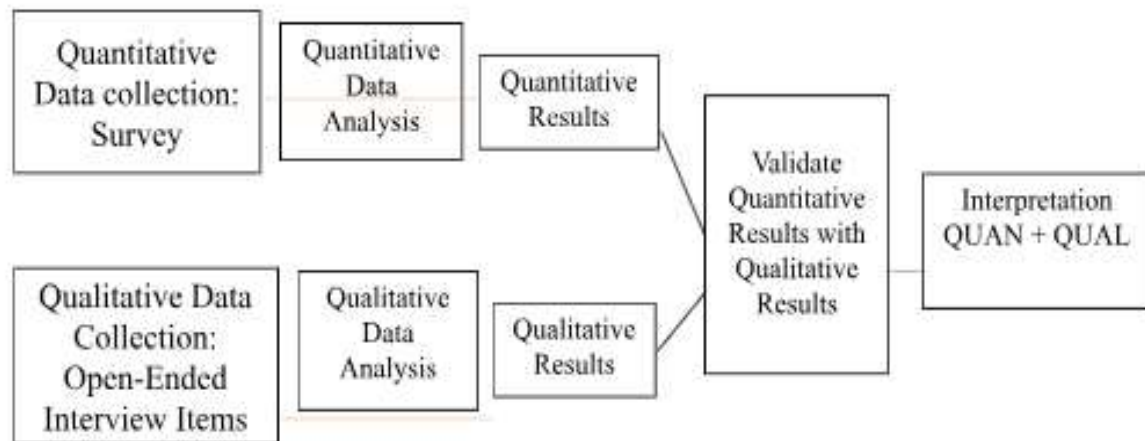
This study employs an explanatory–sequential mixed methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively assess the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of its grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. The explanatory–sequential design involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data in the first phase, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis in the second phase to explain, expand, and give deeper meaning to the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014).

In the quantitative phase, the study utilizes a descriptive–correlational research design to systematically determine the demographic profile of the grantees, the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program, and its effectiveness on livelihood outcomes in terms of income, welfare, and sustainability. Quantitative data will be gathered from eighty (80) grantees using a structured survey questionnaire. This phase allows the researcher to measure patterns, levels, and relationships among variables through statistical analysis, providing an objective assessment of program effectiveness (Creswell, 2012).

The results from the quantitative phase will guide the qualitative phase of the study. Specifically, areas requiring further clarification or deeper understanding—such as variations in income improvement, welfare conditions, and sustainability of livelihood activities—will be explored through qualitative methods. In the qualitative phase, an in-depth, open-ended interview will be conducted with eight to ten (8–10) purposively selected participants drawn from the survey respondents and key program implementers. This phase seeks to capture the lived experiences, perceptions, challenges, and insights of participants regarding the program’s effectiveness.

Data integration occurs sequentially, where quantitative findings are categorized first and then explained through qualitative thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke’s thematic analysis will be employed to identify recurring patterns and themes that help explain the statistical results. This approach ensures that numerical trends related to income, welfare, and livelihood sustainability are supported by participants’ narratives and contextual realities.

The explanatory–sequential mixed methods design is particularly suitable for this study as it strengthens the validity of findings by combining breadth from quantitative data and depth from qualitative inquiry. By using this design, the study provides a more nuanced and credible assessment of the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program, offering evidence-based implications for policy improvement and intervention development.



**Figure 3: Triangulation Design: Validating Quantitative Data Model (Creswell, 2006)**

### Triangulation Design: Validating Quantitative Data Model

The presented model above, which is the validating quantitative data model, is a triangulation design that validates and expands the quantitative findings from the survey by including open-ended qualitative questions. As such, the researcher used the mixed method in the process of triangulation design: validating a *quantitative model* to validate the answer of the survey through the answer of the participants in the interview questionnaires asked on how they perceived or viewed the influence of DTI's Go Negosyo Program on their livelihood. Further, the validity of the result will be based on the responses of experts or professionals in Boston, Davao Oriental DTI station.

In a calculation using a Slovin's formula, the total of one hundred (100) population grantees that was projected by the DTI of Boston, Province of Davao Oriental was used as a population size with a 5% margin error, 95% confidence level, and a 50% response distribution. As a result, a total of eighty (80) respondents is computed which will be selected to answer the researcher-made survey and from it, the researcher will select eight (8) grantees who will response to the interview questions after answering the survey questions. Meanwhile, the researcher will also select five (5) personnel from the local government unit or DTI station of Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, who are aware of the DTI's Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood of the grantees who will stand as the study's experts. As such, the place and population are limited to the response to the post-COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, to attain the goal of this study, the target subjects should meet the following characteristics:

1. DTI Go Negosyo Program Grantees and DTI personnel located or residing in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, from the year of 2021 to 2026.
2. Been a DTI Go Negosyo Program grantee for 3 years, and working as a DTI personnel member for almost 3 years and above;
3. Aware or Knowledgeable about the standards, requirements, and process of DTI Go Negosyo Program;
4. With internet connection or data available; and
5. Willing to participate and available for this study.

To summarize, a total of eighty (80) respondents will be selected for the quantitative method, and 8 participants from it, then 5 DTI personnel as experts for the triangulation will be chosen for the qualitative method, for an overall total of ninety-two (92) subjects. As support, the article of Zappi (2022) shows that

the 80 and above sample is good due to it being a cost-efficient baseline, and the survey can get a greater accuracy of responses. On the other hand, Crouch & McKenzie (2019) note that the small samples in an interview-based study using fewer than 30 participants, such as 10 to 25, during a qualitative research study will result in better data. They also remind the researchers that having 15 to 30 participants is the maximum to reach saturation in qualitative research.

### **Place of Study**

This study will take place at Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines. It is known for being a 3rd class municipality in Davao Oriental, Philippines. In addition, Boston is a seaside municipality covering an area of 357.03 square kilometers, with a population of 14,618 as per the 2020 Census (National Statistics Office, 2020). Also, accounting for 2.54% of Davao Oriental's population, Boston stands out for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant community, making it a significant hub for commerce, education, and community activities. Its coastal location not only influences the local lifestyle but also drives its economy, which is a blend of traditional practices and modern entrepreneurial ventures (Boston Municipal Profile, 2021).

Moreover, this study focuses on the influence of the Department of Trade and Industry's Go Negosyo Program in Boston, specifically examining its impact on the livelihoods of its beneficiaries. The Go Negosyo Program, a key initiative by the Philippine government, aims to stimulate economic growth by supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through various means such as training, financial assistance, and market linkages (DTI Annual Report, 2022). In Boston, the program has transformed local industries like handicrafts, agriculture, and small-scale manufacturing, aligning with the town's vision for sustainable and inclusive growth (Davao Oriental Economic Development Plan, 2023). Due to these, this study seeks to investigate the tangible and intangible impacts of the program, including changes in income levels, employment opportunities, business growth, and overall community well-being (Philippine Entrepreneurship & Livelihood Research Center, 2023). Furthermore, the researcher chose to conduct this study in this place, since Boston's economy is characterized by its diversity, spanning sectors from agriculture and fishery to emerging local entrepreneurship. As such, the integration of the Go Negosyo Program has been pivotal in fostering a vibrant entrepreneurial culture, enhancing the competitiveness of local businesses, and promoting innovation (Boston Economic Profile, 2022; Boston Business Development Office, 2023).

Subsequently, employing mixed methods for data collection, including surveys, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews with program participants and local officials, the study will utilize both qualitative and quantitative data analysis to offer a holistic understanding of the program's impact (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2024; Patel & Davidson, 2023). The findings are expected to contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness of government-led initiatives in rural coastal communities, guiding future programmatic and policy decisions in Boston and similar contexts (Santos & Lim, 2023). Additionally, the researcher chose this locale for this study because, despite the program's implementation and potential benefits, there is a lack of comprehensive research assessing its actual influence on the livelihood of grantees in rural coastal municipalities like Boston. Boston, with its unique blend of traditional and modern economic activities and its significant role in the province of Davao Oriental, presents an ideal case study to examine this issue. The municipality's economic landscape is diverse, but it faces challenges typical of rural coastal areas, such as limited access to markets, vulnerability to environmental changes, and the need for sustainable economic development strategies.

As a result, the gap in understanding how the Go Negosyo Program, designed to support micro, small, and

medium enterprises (MSMEs), affects the economic conditions, job creation, business growth, and overall quality of life of its participants in such contexts. This lack of detailed insight into the program's real-world impact in Boston limits the ability of policymakers and stakeholders to make informed decisions about the continuation, modification, or expansion of similar initiatives. Therefore, the study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical data and insights on the program's effectiveness, thereby helping to shape future economic development policies and initiatives tailored to the needs and characteristics of rural coastal communities like Boston. This study will add to the literature on entrepreneurship and livelihood development, particularly in developing economies (Journal of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, 2023).

**Figure 4. Map of Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines**

Lastly, the researcher has been DTI personnel in Boston, Davao Oriental for almost 3 years. Because of this, the researcher became motivated to assess the grantee's life after they have been granted to the DTI Go Negosyo Program. As such, the locale was chosen by the researcher because it has availability and accessibility to give data and ensures that most of the respondents are situated along with each other. In line with this, the researcher chose this municipality as a locale of the study because his family lives in the area, and he is also working in the municipality's DTI department.



**Figure 4. Map of Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines**

**Participants**

**Quantitative Component**

This study will target eighty-five (85) subjects in total, composed of DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees and DTI personnel as experts located in Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines, who are also willing or available to answer the questions provided. Specifically, the researcher will select five (5) DTI staff-participants and five (5) participants from the eighty (80) grantees. These five grantees as participants should meet the criteria to answer the interview, namely being willing to participate and knowledgeable about the study. In addition, there is a total of one hundred (100) DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees as

reported by the DTI department of Boston, Davao Oriental for this year of 2026. As a result, there will be enough respondents or subjects to participate in this study.

The researcher will also use a random sampling method in gathering the respondents for the quantitative context because this is a technique in which each sample has an equal probability of being chosen. A sample chosen randomly is meant to be an unbiased representation of the total population (Alchemer, 2021). The researcher will randomly select DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees to answer the survey questionnaires because there are enough respondents to participate. However, those who are only willing and available to answer the survey and be interviewed will be chosen. Meanwhile, the selection of the participants will be made purposively because there is a criterion that the participants should meet, especially for the DTI personnel that will stand as the experts of this study. In definition, Statistica (2016) clarifies that purposive sampling is a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which participants are selected because they have characteristics that the researcher needs in this study. In other words, participants are selected "on purpose" in purposive sampling. In short, the participants will undergo a judgment to make sure they are the right candidate to answer the given questions.

### **Qualitative Component**

The researcher will use primary and secondary sources to collect information for this study. It will be done to assess the influence of the DTIs' Go Negosyo program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, who are willing to participate. To elaborate, the primary sources of this study will come from the respondents or participants. The responses from the interview and survey questionnaires will be collected and stand as the primary foundation of this research. Meanwhile, the secondary sources of this research will come from journals, articles, magazines, books, reports, previous studies, published theses, and dissertations that are all related to this study's topic, which is about the influence of the DTIs' Go Negosyo program on the livelihood of the grantees. These sources will stand as related literature and studies that will strengthen this research and will provide input in answering the research problem.

Moreover, the researcher will use a researcher-made survey questionnaire as the primary tool, while the second tool is an in-depth open-ended interview to gather depth and specific data. This will be made from created materials and statements that could generate the desired results. As such, a three-part self-administered questionnaire in a 4-point Likert scale form will be used to gather data to quantify the variables of this study. Additionally, the questionnaires will first be drafted for the approval of the adviser or other members of the faculty who are knowledgeable on the topic. The main research instrument that will be used in this study is a fifty (50) questionnaire checklist developed by the researcher and patterned from the work or surveys of previous researchers. Further, based on previous studies, the uni-dimensional 4-point Likert scale composed of 4-item scores such as "(1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Agree and (4) Strongly Agree, that demonstrated high reliability and validity coefficients with Cronbach's alpha of 0.60 and above (Labrague, 2020), implying that the scale can be a dependable tool to measure the level of the variables.

To elaborate, the researcher will also provide an introductory statement about the concept of DTIs' Go Negosyo program for the respondents to have an idea or knowledge to answer the statements and the variables that the researcher presented.

Further, a set of questionnaires in the quantitative aspect will be divided into four (4) parts:

### **Part 1 – Profile of the Respondents**

This will generate demographic information of the respondents regarding their age, gender, civil status,

highest educational attainment, number of dependents, family monthly income, source of income, number of years living in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, and number of seminars or trainings attended related to the LGU livelihood programs.

### **Part 2 – Status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program**

This section will generate information on the concurrence of the status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental in terms of human, natural, financial, physical, and social capital.

### **Part 3 – Influence of DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the Livelihood**

This section will generate information on the extent of influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston Province as to income, welfare, vulnerability, food security, and sustainability of natural resources.

### **Part 4 – Influence of DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the beneficiaries**

This section will generate information on the concurrence of the influence of DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the grantees in Boston Province, in terms of entrepreneurship development, access to financing, market access, skills development, and inclusivity and marginalized groups.

In addition, the instruments that will be used in the qualitative part are the in-depth open-ended interviews, bracketing, multiple realities, and intuition. These instruments are assured to be related to each other.

**In-depth Open-Ended Interview.** This study will use an in-depth open-ended interview with the selected eight (8) grantees and five (5) experts in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental. They will undergo an open-ended interview that will use a video recorder or voice recorder to understand the answers to the questions that the researcher used, to make the informants' perceptions or insights more valid, and to be a basis in this study (Creswell, 2012).

**Bracketing.** Qualitative researchers will be bracketing their perspectives as well as their assumptions. According to Tufford and Newman (2010), in qualitative research, bracketing is a method used to lessen the possible harmful effects of preconceptions that may affect the study or research process. This method will let the researcher minimize or ignore their own personal insights, judgments, and experiences aside from the participants' views or statements. These predetermined outcomes of the study will not affect the validity and certainty of the study. In the study, the researcher will hold in abeyance of their notions or view regarding the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, to not affect the findings of the study.

**Multiple Realities.** In qualitative research, multiple realities happen or occur. According to Zartler (2011), multiple realities relate to the truths or facts that could not be studied individually and could not be predicted or controlled. In the study, multiple realities would pertain to the different perspectives of the participants regarding the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo program on their livelihood. However, if connected, a better understanding of the topic will be achieved. In some cases, the different perspectives and insights of the participants focus more on the acceptance of multiple realities and not forcing them to rely on a single reality (Yin, 2011, p. 13). As each participant's views and opinions are uniquely different from each other, they will be treated as an unbiased interpretation of all the participants' views or insights.

**Intuiting.** According to Janesick (2016), intuiting occurs when the researcher can remain open to the meanings and perceptions given by the participants. In the study, these views or insights of the participants towards the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo program on their livelihood will be accepted as true. The researcher must not show any form of bias to the information given by the participants. In qualitative research, the researcher will focus on how the participants will respond to the questions that will be given

by the researcher. Through an online or face-to-face interview, the researcher will be able to know the perceptions and unseen views of the participants (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Additionally, in the study, the researcher will be using open-ended questions to help the participants to easily express and share their feelings, thoughts, and insights relating to the study. The facial expressions, movements, gestures, and tone of voice will be observed and noted by the researcher to support the information, views, and statements provided or given by the participants. The researcher will not be asking any inappropriate questions and will not be forcing the participants to answer any questions that will make them feel uneasy or uncomfortable. True expression of thoughts from the participants will be encouraged by the researcher.

**Instruments**

**Quantitative component**

In the quantitative phase, the researcher used self-made survey questionnaires, each designed to assess the implementation and outcomes of the Go Negosyo Program in Boston, Davao Oriental. This study employed a structured survey questionnaire developed by researchers based on relevant literature, the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF), and previous studies on entrepreneurship development programs.

The questionnaire targeted key aspects of the Go Negosyo Program, including program accessibility, training and capacity building, mentoring and technical assistance, business skills development (human capital), business performance (financial capital), market access and networking (social capital), and program sustainability. The indicators were tailored to ensure their relevance for the beneficiaries of the Go Negosyo Program in Boston, Davao Oriental.

Respondents completed the questionnaire using a four-point Likert scale to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. The Likert scale used in this study is outlined below:

Mean Interval	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation	Scale Value
3.26-4.00	Strongly Agree	The indicator is highly evident	4
2.51-3.25	Agree	The indicator is evident	3
1.76-2.50	Disagree	The indicator is less evident	2
1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree	The indicator is not evident	1

**Figure 5: The four-point Likert scale**

Each part of the questionnaire was aligned with the specific objectives and variables of the study. The items aimed to capture beneficiaries’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the Go Negosyo Program in enhancing entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, business performance, and overall livelihood conditions. Before collecting data, the research instrument was validated for content by experts in entrepreneurship and research methodology to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. A pilot test was administered to select Go Negosyo beneficiaries who were not part of the main sample. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results showed an acceptable to high internal consistency, confirming that the questionnaire is reliable and suitable for the study administration in the actual study. program evaluation research. The

scale values were interpreted using weighted mean ranges to describe the level of agreement of the respondents on the next chapter.

### **Qualitative Component**

The qualitative component of this study employed a descriptive phenomenological approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of Go Negosyo Program beneficiaries in Boston, Davao Oriental. This approach was used to complement the quantitative findings by exploring how and why the program influenced the entrepreneurial skills, business practices, and livelihood conditions of the participants. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research allows researchers to understand participants' perspectives and lived experiences, making it appropriate for program evaluation studies such as this research.

The participants of the qualitative component consisted of selected Go Negosyo Program beneficiaries in Boston, Davao Oriental. The participants were chosen using purposive sampling, where individuals who had actively participated in Go Negosyo trainings, mentoring, or financial assistance were intentionally selected. A total of 8–12 participants were deemed sufficient to reach data saturation, ensuring that recurring themes and insights emerged from the interviews.

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts were carefully read multiple times to ensure familiarity with the data. Initial codes were generated, and similar codes were grouped into categories. From these categories, emerging themes related to program effectiveness, business improvement, challenges, and sustainability were identified. The qualitative findings were then integrated with the quantitative results to provide a comprehensive assessment of the Go Negosyo Program. This process follows the thematic analysis procedures recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006).

### **Validation Instrument**

The first draft of the researcher-made survey questionnaires will be administered and validated with the help of the research adviser or will be analyzed through a reliability test of Cronbach Alpha. This is essential to determine the points that need to be improved and clarified. Reactions and suggestions will be noted and incorporated in the final form before it is administered to the target group of respondents. Moreover, the questionnaires will undergo approval of the researcher's adviser and the thesis panel during the oral presentation hearing. The results of the reliability test showed that the instrument achieved an acceptable to high level of internal consistency, indicating that it is reliable and suitable for use in the actual study. It means that the research instrument is reliable to be distributed as a final survey questionnaire. When validity and reliability tests were completed, an approval to conduct the data gathering procedures will be requested from the research professor and adviser, with an endorsement letter sent to the concerned heads or LGU representative of Boston, Davao Oriental, who will approve the data gathering procedure of the researcher with the Ethics clearance from the researcher's University. Afterwards, letters will be sent to the respective respondents or participants.

### **Data Collection**

#### **Quantitative Component**

The quantitative component involves analyzing numerical data collected through structured survey questionnaires. Responses are first coded and entered SPSS, checked for completeness, and examined for consistency. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, summarize respondents' demographic profiles and program-related perceptions. Inferential statistics,

including t-tests, ANOVA, and correlation analysis, are applied to determine significant differences or relationships among variables, with a significance level of 0.05.

### **Qualitative Component**

The qualitative component focuses on participants' personal experiences gathered through semi-structured interviews. The data are transcribed verbatim, coded into meaningful units, and grouped into recurring themes, such as improved business skills, entrepreneurial confidence, and networking benefits. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify patterns and provide rich interpretations of the program's impact. Finally, both quantitative and qualitative findings are integrated through triangulation, ensuring a robust understanding of how the Go Negosyo Program influences participants' business capabilities and overall satisfaction.

### **Sequence, Emphasis, and Mixing Procedures**

**Sequence:** This refers to the structured order in which the Go Negosyo Program is implemented for participants in Boston. The program follows step-by-step progression to ensure effective learning and application. *Orientation and Registration:* Participants are introduced to program objectives, modules, and expectations. *Training Modules:* Key areas in financial management, marketing, operations, and entrepreneurship fundamentals are delivered sequentially. *Mentoring and Coaching:* Participants receive guidance from experienced business mentors to apply the learn concepts. *Monitoring and Evaluation:* Participants' progress is assessed through follow-ups, business performance check-ins, and feedback sessions. *Networking:* Program completion is marked by recognition, and participants are encouraged to engage in local entrepreneurial networks. This sequence ensures that participants gradually build knowledge, skills, and confidence by applying concepts to their businesses.

**Emphasis: highlights** the aspects of the program that receive special focus to maximize learning outcomes. *Practical Application,* Real-life business scenarios, and exercises are emphasized over purely theoretical content. *Entrepreneurial Skills:* Emphasis is placed on decision-making, problem-solving, and financial management to strengthen participants' business capabilities. *Networking Opportunities:* Participants are encouraged to build social and professional connections to enhance support systems. *Sustainability and Growth,* Long-term business strategies and scalable practices are stressed to ensure sustainable entrepreneurial success.

By emphasizing these areas, the program ensures participants gain actionable knowledge that can be directly applied to their business ventures.

**Mixing Methods:** the mixing procedure integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches in program assessment, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of its effectiveness:

Quantitative Mixing – Data from structured surveys using Likert-scale items measure improvements in skills, confidence, and satisfaction numerically. Qualitative Mixing – Insights from interviews capture participants' personal experiences, challenges, and success stories.

Integrated Interpretation – Triangulation combines survey results with thematic findings to identify trends, validate outcomes, and provide a holistic understanding of the program's impact. The mixing procedure ensures that program evaluation is data-driven, evidence-based, and enriched by participant narratives, providing a complete picture of Go Negosyo's effectiveness in Boston.

### **Figure of Procedures**

#### *Data gathering procedures:*

Assessing the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, Philippines, can provide valuable insights into the efficiency and outcomes

of the LGU livelihood programs. Due to this, the pattern below will be used as a step-by-step guideline that will show the data collection of the study:

- *Research Questions and Objectives Formulation:* The researcher will clearly define the research questions and objectives related to the demographic profile of the respondents, the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees, and the status of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program.
- *Data Collection:* The researcher will gather data from grantees and DTI personnel in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, through a researcher-made survey questionnaire and interviews. These methods will allow grantees-respondents to express the influence of the program on their livelihood.
- *Administration of Questionnaire.* After such approval of the process, the new validated questionnaire will be ready to distribute to the target respondents using Google Forms. The researcher will explain the purpose of the study to the respondents and will request them to answer as objectively as they could.
- *Retrieval of the Questionnaire.* After answering, the researcher will collect the questionnaire from the respondents. The researcher will express his deepest gratitude to all the respondents and give a token of appreciation.
- *Scheduling of Interview.* The researcher will then select ten (10) subjects to answer or participate in the qualitative process using an in-depth open-ended interview or focus-group discussion.
- *Scoring of Responses.* With the retrieval of the answered questionnaires from the respondents, the researcher will compute, analyze, and interpret the data gathered. The researcher will also seek information and literature for the conceptualization of the research instruments of the study. Also, the researcher will thematically code the responses of the participants and use them to support the quantitative results.
- *Data Transcription and Preparation:* If applicable, the gathered responses from the survey questionnaires will be tallied and organized for analysis. The researcher will ensure that the data is de-identified to maintain confidentiality.
- *Data Analysis:* The researcher will analyze the data to identify the responses related to demographic profile, influence of DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood, status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program, as well as the grantees' challenges encountered.
- *Interpretation and Findings:* The researcher will interpret the findings within the context of the research questions and objectives.
- *Discussion and Implications:* The researcher will discuss the implications of the findings for livelihood influence, practices, entrepreneurship policies, and further research. Address how these insights can contribute to enhancing the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihoods of the grantees.

#### ***Statistical procedures:***

After the distribution, collection, and completion of the distributed questionnaires, the researcher will tally and categorize the gathered data, using frequency, percentage, average, weighted mean, Spearman's rho, and interpretation and ranking for analysis. The gathered data in researcher-made survey questionnaires will be entered into a spreadsheet to facilitate analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences ver. 23 software program will be used in the analysis. As such, the descriptive and inferential statistics will be utilized to analyze the data.

Moreover, the following formulas will be utilized to systematically organize, present, analyze and interpret the data:

1. **Frequency and Percentage Distribution.** This is a distribution of frequency and percentage that displays the data that specifies the percentage of observations that exist for each data point or grouping of data points. It is a particularly useful method of expressing the relative frequency of survey responses and other data. This is a statistical tool that will be utilized for the respondents; profile questionnaire (Scribbr, n.d). This will allow the researcher to describe the gathered demographic information such as age, gender, civil status, number of dependents, highest educational attainment, family monthly income, source of income, number of years living in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, and number of seminars or trainings attended related to local government livelihood programs.

The formula is presented as follows:

Formula of the Percentage:  $\% = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$

$\%$  = percentage

$f$  = frequency

$N$  = number of cases

Formula of the Frequency:  $N = \frac{f}{\%}$

$f$  = frequency or total

$N$  = number of cases

2. **Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation.** The weighted mean is a type of mean that is calculated by multiplying the weight (or probability) associated with a particular event or outcome with its associated quantitative outcome and then summing all the products together (Scribbr, 2016). Meanwhile, the standard deviation is an indicator of how widely values in a group differ from the mean. It is useful for comparing different sets of values with a similar mean (Statista, 2018).

This statistical tool will be utilized for the following:

- 2.1 *Status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program:* This allows the researcher to calculate the mean and standard deviation scores and identify the status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, in terms of human capital, natural capital, financial capital, physical capital, and social capital.
- 2.2 *Influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on Livelihood:* this allows the researcher to calculate the mean and standard deviation scores and identify the degree of influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province in terms of income, welfare, vulnerability, food security, and sustainability of natural resources.
- 2.3 *Influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the Grantees:* This allows the researcher to calculate the mean and standard deviation scores and identify the degree of influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the grantees in Boston, Province in terms of entrepreneurship development, access to financing, market access, skills development, and inclusivity and marginalized groups.

The formula is presented as follows:

Formula of the Weighted Mean:  $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum W_n X_n}{\sum W_n}$

$\sum$  denotes the sum

$w$  = the weights

$x$  = the value

Formula of the Standard Deviation:  $S_x = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - \bar{X})^2}{n-1}}$

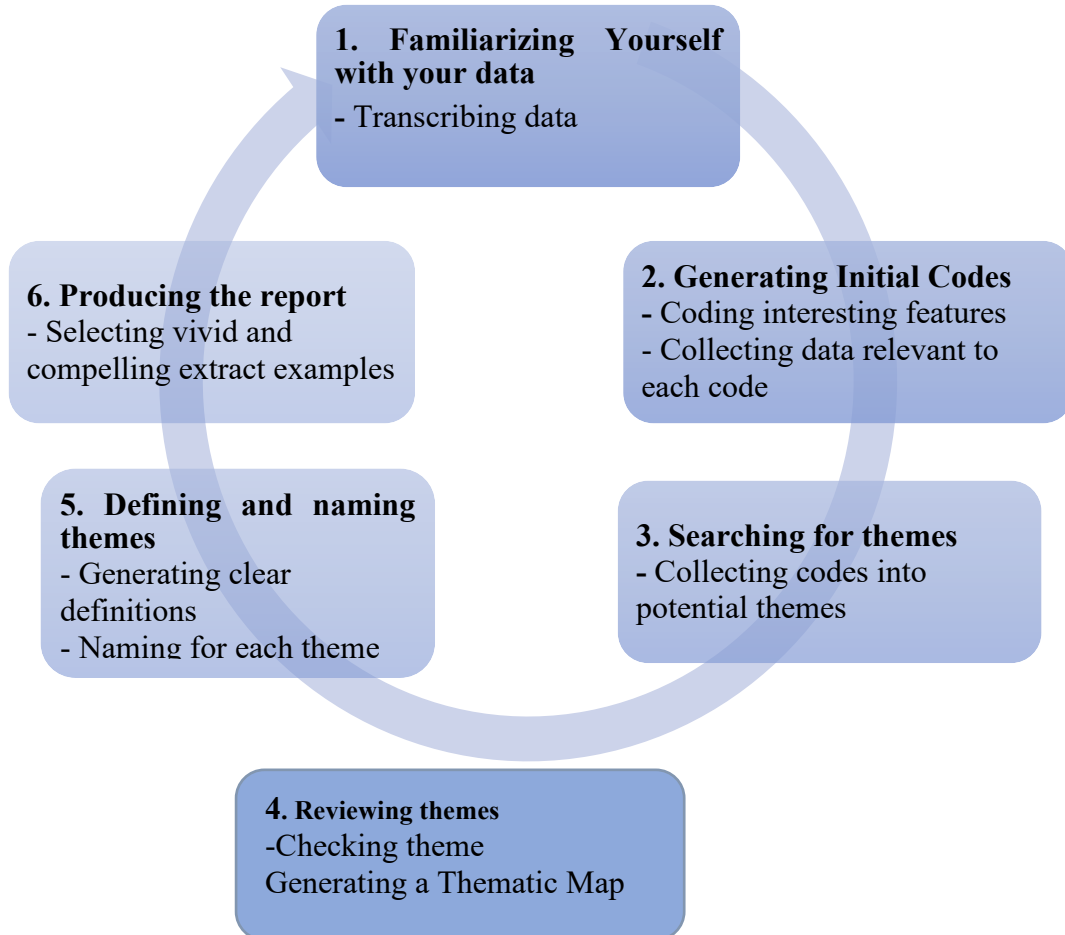
$n$  = the number of data points

$X_i$  = each of the values of the data

$\bar{X}$  = the mean of  $X_i$

- Spearman Rho.** This statistical tool measures the relationship between two or more variables. Also, Spearman's rho is a non-parametric statistical test of correlation that allows researchers to determine the significance of their investigation. In this study, this will be used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the status of DTIs Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood of the grantees.

**Data Processing in Qualitative Context**



**Figure 6. Braun and Clarke’s (2006) Six Phases of Thematic Analysis**

The gathered data from the in-depth open-ended interview will undergo a transcribing method and thematic analysis that will help the researcher to support the collected quantitative data and to fully understand the insights or perceptions of the participants towards the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, for the academic year of 2023 to 2024.

The researcher will use *Thematic Analysis* by Braun and Clarke (2006) to treat the gathered data. This method shows the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. It is particularly useful when a research project aims to discover themes and concepts embedded throughout qualitative data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In this process, the researcher will

The gathered data from the in-depth open-ended interview will undergo a transcribing method and thematic analysis that will help the researcher to support the collected quantitative data and to fully understand the insights or perceptions of the participants towards the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, for the academic year of 2023 to 2024.

The researcher will use *Thematic Analysis* by Braun and Clarke (2006) to treat the gathered data. This method shows the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. It is particularly useful when a research project aims to discover themes and concepts embedded throughout qualitative data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In this process, the researcher will transcribe the data that will be gathered based on the answers of the grantees and experts to the open-ended qualitative questions. After collecting the data, the researcher will use color-coding to generate the codes that are connected and relevant. The researcher will collate all the potential codes that would be the basis for creating a theme. In checking the theme, the researcher will create and combine all the data and the name of the theme that represents the data. The researcher will also produce a theme and explain it with the results of data and search examples, and studies that connect to the theme.

Moreover, thematic analysis enables the researcher to be more flexible in interpreting the collected data and approach it more easily by categorizing it into broad themes. The researcher will closely examine the data and the collected studies about the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees to identify common themes (Caulfield, 2019). The researcher will conduct the thematic analysis by coding. Thematic coding is a method of qualitative analysis involving the recording or identifying passages that are linked to common themes, enabling the researchers to index the text into categories and thereby providing a structure of thematic ideas (Gibbs, 2007).

**Colaizzi's Coding.** This was developed by Edward (2011) and will also be used in this study as data analysis. Below are the specific procedures of Colaizzi's treatment. Colaizzi's method of data analysis is rigorous and robust, and therefore a qualitative method that ensures the credibility and reliability of its results. It allows researchers to reveal emergent themes and their interwoven relationships. Researchers using a descriptive qualitative approach should consider using this method as a clear and logical process through which the fundamental structure of insights and studies can be explored. Colaizzi's methodology can be used reliably to understand people's insights and review the collected or compiled studies from related literature. This may prove beneficial in assessing the insights of grantees regarding their challenges and barriers faced in the DTI's Go Negosyo Program. As such, Colaizzi's distinctive 7 step process provides a rigorous analysis, with each step staying close to the data.

The stages are illustrated below:

**Transcribing all the Participants' Descriptions.** The researcher will transcribe the audio- and video-recorded interviews, including the participants' descriptions and responses to the given questions. The researcher will do this while incorporating and analyzing the compiled studies or literature. The transcription will be verbatim.

- a. *Familiarization.* The researcher will familiarize himself with the data by reading the participants' responses or listening to the tape recordings of their responses several times.
- b. *Extracting significant statements.* Based on the transcribed statements of the participants, the significant statements about the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental will be extracted. The data will be coded according to categories that reflect similarities among statements which are significant, and the researcher will encircle or underline these statements.
2. *Creating formulated meanings.* In this process, from the extracted statements of the participants, the researcher will formulate more general statements or meaning. Creation of meaning and themes will be done depending on how they are interpreted and expressed by the participants.
3. *Aggregating formulated meanings into theme clusters.* From the formulated general statements or meaning, the researcher will categorize or put them into final theme clusters. The general category will be labelled with its corresponding proper theme, including the sub-themes for more specific categories identified that fall under the general category.
4. *Developing an exhaustive description.* This can be developed through a synthesis of all theme clusters and will be associated with formulation of meanings explained by the researcher. By combining all the study themes that will emerge, the complete structure of the grantees and professionals working in DTI responses and the gathered review studies about the influence of the DTIs Go Negosyo Program on the livelihood of the grantees in Boston, Province of Davao Oriental, will be presented.
5. *Producing the fundamental structure.* The researcher condenses the exhaustive description down to a short, dense statement that captures just those aspects deemed to be essential to the structure of the phenomenon.
6. *Seeking verification of the fundamental structure.* The researcher returns the fundamental structure statement to all the participants to ask whether it captures their experience. He may go back and modify earlier steps in the analysis in the light of this feedback.

### **Methodologies Issues**

**Design Complexity:** In the context of entrepreneurship programs like Go Negosyo, careful attention to design complexity is essential. Studies by Delgado et al. (2020) on small business training in rural areas indicate that misaligned instruments or poorly coordinated data collection can compromise findings, highlighting the importance of methodological rigor. By planning the integration of surveys and interviews effectively, researchers can ensure that both quantitative and qualitative components complement each other, providing a holistic understanding of program effectiveness.

**Time Constraints:** Research on entrepreneurship programs underscores the challenge of participant availability in data collection. Delgado et al. (2020) note that small business owners often have irregular schedules, limiting participation in surveys and interviews and potentially affecting sample size and data quality. Similarly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) highlight that time constraints in mixed-methods studies can prolong research, particularly when multiple data sources must be aligned and analyzed sequentially. In rural program evaluations, Pascual (2018) observes that researchers frequently struggle to balance participants' business responsibilities with research requirements. Effective time management, through flexible scheduling, advanced coordination, and prioritization of key data collection activities, is essential to meet research objectives without compromising data integrity.

**Participant Selection:** In the context of the Go Negosyo Program in Boston, Davao Oriental, careful consideration was given to balancing these factors. By selecting participants who had fully attended and engaged with the program, the study aimed to capture authentic insights into program effectiveness while acknowledging that findings may primarily reflect the experiences of the selected group. Participant selection is a crucial aspect of research methodology, as it directly affects the validity, reliability, and generalizability of study findings. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), purposive sampling is commonly used in program evaluation studies when researchers aim to select participants who have specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research objectives. This method ensures that only individuals who have actively participated in the program are included, allowing for more meaningful insights into program outcomes. However, purposive sampling has inherent limitations. Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) note that while purposive sampling provides access to participants with relevant experience, it may reduce the generalizability of the results because the sample is not randomly selected. This challenge is particularly relevant in studies involving entrepreneurship programs, where participants vary widely in business type, experience, and level of engagement. Research by Delgado et al. (2020) highlights that heterogeneity among small business participants can make it difficult to ensure representativeness while still maintaining practical accessibility.

**Resource Limitations:** Resource limitations are a common challenge in program evaluation research, particularly in studies involving multiple data collection methods. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), constraints in manpower, funding, and materials can significantly affect the scope, sample size, and overall quality of research. Limited resources often necessitate prioritization of data collection activities, careful planning, and efficient allocation of available tools and personnel. In program evaluation studies, especially those involving entrepreneurship training, resource limitations can impact both the breadth of coverage and the depth of analysis. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) note that conducting face-to-face interviews and surveys in resource-constrained settings may require trade-offs, such as reducing sample size, limiting geographic reach, or simplifying instruments. Similarly, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) highlight that resource constraints may affect data processing, transcription, and timely analysis, which are critical for mixed-methods research where qualitative and quantitative components must be integrated.

In the context of the Go Negosyo Program in Boston, Davao Oriental, resource limitations influenced logistical planning, including transportation for field visits, printing of survey instruments, and use of recording equipment for interviews. Researchers had to manage these constraints efficiently to ensure that the study still captured meaningful insights about program implementation, effectiveness, and participant experiences.

### **Trustworthiness**

*Trustworthiness of the Study.* Four aspects of trustworthiness demand attention in any qualitative research project: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. As such, it integrates the many qualitative validation methodologies. As per Creswell (2007), trustworthiness consists of prolonged engagement and persistent field observation; triangulation and multiple data sourcing; peer review and debriefing for external checks; negative case analysis; clarifying of researcher bias; member checking; thick description; and external audits. Creswell (2014) also employs the words credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to unite distinct methods under broader goals and to provide alternative names to positive notions. When findings match the meanings stated by the respondents as precisely as feasible, trustworthiness is established (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To address these trustworthiness

challenges, qualitative researchers must employ several tactics to report study findings in a way that accurately conveys the meanings as expressed by respondents (Creswell, 1998, 2007; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Padgett, 1998).

**Credibility.** To study credibility even further, the researcher will enlist the assistance of the research adviser, the panel of examiners, and other relevant studies as references. Furthermore, meticulous data collection, analysis, and interpretation will be documented and evaluated throughout the study's conduct to allow readers to examine the credibility of the process and findings provided by the study. Recording and transcribing interviews, both individual and focus group discussions, and then verifying the transcripts with participants strengthened credibility by ensuring accuracy. Triangulation using multiple data collections and analysis methods further enhanced the accuracy of the data.

**Transferability.** This refers to the extent to which studies are transferable to other research environments or other research respondents. When evaluating qualitative research, the criterion of transferability is satisfied when the findings 'fit' into various contexts and when readers can apply the findings to their own experiences. Transferability is also strengthened when the research findings are significant to people who were not part of the study (Busetto, 2020). In this study, certain precautions will be taken to overcome transferability difficulties. *First*, the researcher will give background information to create the study's setting. Following this advice, the researcher will document as much as possible every step and metric he took throughout the study process. *Second*, the researcher will use a detailed explanation of the research methods, disclosing every component of this study from the beginning to the final chapter, including the appendices linked to this document. As a result, the approach, methods, instruments, and forms will all be mentioned in this paper. Of course, this did not include any information that may identify the respondents' identities. *Third*, the researcher will offer extensive descriptions of the phenomena by adding enough related literature as well as methodically summarizing the facts reported in this study.

**Dependability.** This refers to the consistency of findings throughout time and under varied study situations. As such, it is an assessment of the quality of the interconnected processes, which include data collection, data processing, and phenomenological interpretations. A research study's dependability can be demonstrated by demonstrating a decision trail at each stage of the research process. According to Koch (2006), this gives evidence for the reader regarding the decisions and choices taken throughout the study regarding theoretical and methodological difficulties and entails presenting the rationale for such decisions directly. Additionally, each stage of the research must be traceable and well recorded (Nowell, Deborah, White and Moules, 2017).

**Confirmability.** This refers to the researcher to demonstrate how he arrived at their results and judgments. Its purpose is to demonstrate that the findings are clearly deduced from the data (Tobin and Begley, 2004). Confirmability is typically established in conjunction with the attainment of credibility, transferability, and dependability. First and foremost, the researcher will confess and define the study's research ideas and assumptions. This will be done so that the readers can determine how valid and acceptable the findings are. The researcher will also acknowledge the limits of this study by stating that this research attempt is confined to a small number of respondents and that descriptions with no generalizations are only obtained after the completion of this investigation.

Similarly, a more in-depth explanation of the study's methodological descriptions will be suggested. This step will be taken to offer the readers the essential platform to confirm whether the study's findings are authentic, acceptable, and real. Circumstances such as the research design, researchers' roles, research respondents, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations are thoroughly

documented to allow other researchers to examine the details of the research process and make necessary adjustments to acclimate the study to their own setting

### **Ethical Considerations**

The Davao Oriental State University Ethics Board supervised the study, which involved participants with good moral values. To protect their privacy and ensure they are not harmed, the researcher will obtain written permission from each participant. The consent form explained that participants could leave the study at any time and that their opinions would be recorded. This will also allow them to consider whether they want to participate in the studies or not. The questionnaire included the purpose and how it would be conducted and guaranteed to keep all their details confidential. Both the researcher and participants signed it to confirm that they understood everything.

**Voluntary participation.** The research will be implemented in accordance with *Republic Act No. 11055*, also known as the Philippine Health Research Ethics Law. The research respected the fact that individuals would be allowed to decide whether to participate without any form of coercion or pressure being applied to them. Information on their rights. This gave them the right to make their own decisions. They were further allowed to leave the study without any form of punishment. The researcher adhered to the principle of voluntary participation, ensuring that participants' well-being was respected, protected, and maintained throughout the study.

**Privacy and Confidentiality.** The researcher ensured that all undertakings related to Republic Act (RA) No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012 will be carried out; therefore, protection of privacy and confidentiality, security measures will be put in place for any collected personal information for the study. These measures included encryption, password protection, and limited access to sensitive information to keep it safe. Participants gave their consent to the overall purpose of the research, with the understanding that their data would only be used for this purpose. Personal identifiers will be anonymized or pseudonymized by changing personal details to unique codes, which were known only to the researcher. There will never be an instance of information being shared with unauthorized parties without permission. The data retention policy specifies that all collected data will be securely stored for a period of 36 months. Participants have the right to access, review, and request corrections to their records during the study through a formal request. After the study concludes, all personal data will be securely disposed of through methods such as digital deletion and physical shredding of documents.

**Informed Consent Procedure.** One of the main procedures followed in the study will be obtaining informed consent. The researcher will be responsible for soliciting consent from participants, ensuring they will be informed about the research' purpose, methods, and potential risks. This allowed them to decide whether to participate. The process will be conducted step-by-step. Participants will receive a written document explaining the study and will be given time to review it. After reading the form, participants will be encouraged to ask questions, with sufficient time provided to consider their participation before giving consent.

**Risk.** The researcher will ensure that no physical or medical procedures are conducted on the participants. All ethical guidelines will be strictly followed to protect the participants' well-being. The researcher will be careful in assessing and managing any potential risks, particularly health-related ones, and will take necessary steps to reduce or remove them. The safety and welfare of the participants will always be the researcher's top priority.

**Plagiarism.** The study will be done without plagiarism since the researcher followed the Republic Act No. 8293, or the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, which prohibits the act of plagiarism and

safeguards the authors' rights. Any work borrowed from another author was properly cited since credit was given to the originators. The study will be conducted with honesty and integrity, respecting intellectual property rights. Fabrication. The study adheres to the Philippine Technology Transfer Act of 2009, which prohibits the manipulation or alteration of data. This may result in a lack of information or misrepresentation. The researcher ensured that his data and results were obtained without any false information or misrepresentation, thereby ensuring the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

**Vulnerability.** The protocol does not identify any vulnerable population among the participants. Falsification. The research will be truthful. Therefore, there will be no alteration of data to validate an expected outcome. At this stage, the researcher presents data that is original and unaltered. By being truthful, the study will remain authentic and credible.

**Conflict of Interest.** The study complied with Republic Act No. 10173 by ensuring that no personal information would be collected or used without the consent of the individuals involved. Researchers declared that they had no individual or financial interest that could potentially affect the scientific objectivity of the study. Any potential conflicts will be revealed and properly managed to ensure the credibility and ethical compliance of the research. Deceit. The research adhered strictly to ethical standards, and no data manipulation will be involved. The researchers adhered to principles of honesty and transparency throughout the study, and all results and conclusions appeared accurate and verifiable.

**Community Consideration.** The study will respect community engagement. It helped the community identify challenges in language acquisition and developed teaching aids to address these issues. Authorship. The researcher complied with the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines (RA No. 8293). Authorship rights will be extended to the author of the research paper. In many instances, the adviser of the researcher, who had read the paper and ensured that it was free from any ethical implications, was considered a co-author. Recruitment. Participants consented to their involvement through the signed informed consent form. Participants must sign it to participate in the study. Benefits. The findings of this study will benefit the students by providing them with action research to better prepare them for their future careers.

## Chapter IV

### Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the findings of the study, both the quantitative and qualitative phases, are presented with statistical analysis of the quantitative data (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and thematic analysis of the qualitative data.

#### **QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

##### *Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Training and Capacity-Building Programs*

The first objective of this study was to determine the level of implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program as perceived by the grantees in terms of training and capacity-building programs is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Training and Capacity-Building Programs**

<i>Statements</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
1. I am aware that DTIs provide training programs to enhance entrepreneurial skills.	3.11	0.66	Agree
1. I have attended capacity-building activities supported by DTIs.	2.98	0.75	Agree
1. I believe the training programs helped me improve my business or livelihood.	3.00	0.81	Agree
1. I feel confident applying the skills I learned from DTI’s training.	3.08	0.74	Agree
1. I am aware that DTI’s capacity-building programs are open to different groups, including marginalized sectors.	3.05	0.71	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s training programs are relevant to my needs.	3.01	0.74	Agree
1. I am aware of the schedules and opportunities for DTI-led seminars or workshops.	2.96	0.80	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s training has increased my ability to sustain my livelihood.	2.99	0.77	Agree
1. I share the knowledge I gained from DTI’s training with others in my community.	3.00	0.75	Agree
1. I feel that DTI’s training programs contribute to long-term personal development.	3.03	0.81	Agree
<b><i>Overall Training and Capacity-Building Programs</i></b>	3.02	0.56	<b>Agree (High)</b>

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean of 3.02 (SD = 0.56) is interpreted as Agree (High), which means that respondents perceived the training and capacity-building component of the program to be well implemented. All indicators received “Agree” ratings, which means that there is consistency in the positive perception of the training initiatives. Respondents especially noted the program’s impact on long-term personal development (M = 3.03) and their awareness of training opportunities (M = 3.11), and the confidence in applying acquired skills (M = 3.08). In general, the results show that the training and capacity-building component of the DTI Go Negosyo Program is perceived as highly implemented and relevant, accessible, and beneficial in improving entrepreneurial competencies. These findings are consistent with Human Capital Theory, which holds that education and training investments increase human capital by raising the skills and productivity of individuals (Gary Becker 1993). The high scores in training awareness (M = 3.11) and long-term personal development (M = 3.03) suggest that the program builds entrepreneurial capacity, as Peter Drucker (1985) posits. From this perspective, the DTI Go Negosyo Program has a key role in providing learning and competence for beneficiaries on how to sustain and grow their business. Additionally, the high mean scores for the confidence in applying the acquired

skills (M = 3.08) signify effective knowledge transfer consistent with Experiential Learning Theory of David Kolb (1984), which states that learning occurs best when we can apply the concepts in real life so that both understanding and skill development are reinforced. The results indicate that the training activities of the program are both informative and practical, and that the findings are consistent with studies from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019), which state that entrepreneurship training programs increase the performance, innovation, and adaptability of small business owners, and with the World Bank (2020), which notes that capacity-building efforts are crucial to building micro and small enterprises, especially in emerging economies, because it provides managerial skills and strategic decision-making.

*Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Financial and Credit Assistance*

**Table 2. Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Financial and Credit Assistance**

<i>Statements</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
1. I am aware that DTI supports financial and credit assistance programs.	2.91	0.77	Agree
1. I have availed of financial or credit support facilitated by DTI.	2.74	0.88	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s assistance provides relief from financial constraints.	2.88	0.83	Agree
1. I feel more confident in managing business finances due to DTI’s support.	2.78	0.90	Agree
1. I am aware of the procedures in applying for DTI-related credit or loans.	2.93	0.84	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s financial support is accessible to ordinary beneficiaries like me.	3.04	0.85	Agree
1. I am satisfied with the amount of financial assistance provided by DTI.	2.86	0.85	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s financial assistance contributes to business growth and stability.	2.99	0.85	Agree
1. I am aware that DTI’s financial services are designed to reduce poverty and improve livelihood.	3.05	0.76	Agree
1. I feel that DTI’s financial and credit assistance encourages me to pursue entrepreneurship.	2.91	0.89	Agree
<b><i>Overall Financial and Credit Assistance</i></b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>Agree (High)</b>

The Agree (High) category overall mean of 2.91 (SD = 0.70) in Table 2 corresponds to financial and credit assistance being generally perceived as well implemented, with all of the indicators being generally in the

Agree (High) category, especially that financial services are designed to reduce poverty (M = 3.05) and are accessible (M = 3.04), though with somewhat lower means in actual availment (M = 2.74) and financial management confidence (M = 2.78), which would suggest some limitations in use and effect. This suggests that although financial support is available and recognized, there may be challenges with access, sufficiency, or use. The results indicate that the financial and credit assistance component of the DTI Go Negosyo Program is well implemented (M = 2.91, High), which is consistent with the Financial Inclusion Theory, which states that financial inclusion (access to affordable financial services [credit, savings, insurance] that enables the poor to become more active participants in the economy) (Asli Demirgüç-Kunt et al. 2018). The relatively high scores on accessibility (M = 3.04) and poverty reduction orientation (M = 3.05) indicate that government-led financial programs are inclusive growth-oriented. This is aligned with Muhammad Yunus (2003), who argued that microcredit programs enable the poor to earn a living, and in turn a living is a central component of Empowerment Theory, which holds that access to financial resources will allow individuals to exercise choice and control over their lives, including their economic status. However, the actual ratings for element (M = 2.74) and financial management confidence (M = 2.78) are lower, suggesting that availability does not always equal effective use, which is in alignment with the assertion of Robert Cull et al. (2014), that although financial services may be accessible, they are not always effective due to low financial literacy and the inability of beneficiaries to use the services. This is consistent with the research of Robert Cull et al. (2014), who argued that financial services may be accessible, but they might not have an effect on beneficiaries due to low financial literacy and lack of capability (the World Bank (2022) also claims that financial education is a key ingredient to ensure that people can use financial products to improve their welfare). This is both a structural and a behavioral barrier, and it is consistent with the Capability Approach Theory (Amartya Sen, 1999), which states that development must not only provide resources but also enhance the ability of individuals to transform those resources into what is valuable to them, i.e., beneficiaries may have access to financial services, but they may not be able to fully utilize those services due to lack of knowledge, lack of confidence, or lack of support.

*Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Market Linkages and Promotion*

**Table 3. Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees in terms of Market Linkages and Promotion**

<i>Statements</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
1. I am aware that DTI helps connect beneficiaries to wider markets.	2.96	0.95	Agree
1. I have participated in trade fairs or exhibits supported by DTI.	2.88	0.92	Agree
1. I believe DTI has helped promote my products or services.	2.90	0.89	Agree
1. I feel that market linkages facilitated by DTI improved my income.	2.90	0.92	Agree

1. I am aware of DTI’s role in creating opportunities for market access.	2.88	0.80	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s promotions enhanced the visibility of local products.	3.01	0.75	Agree
1. I am satisfied with the opportunities DTI provided to showcase my business.	2.85	0.75	Agree
1. I feel DTI’s market support helped me compete with larger enterprises.	2.86	0.85	Agree
1. I believe DTI’s efforts opened access to regional or national markets.	2.94	0.77	Agree
1. I feel that DTI’s market linkages strengthened my business sustainability.	2.89	0.87	Agree
<b>Overall Market Linkages and Promotion</b>	2.91	0.69	<b>Agree (High)</b>

Table 3 shows a mean of 2.91 (SD = 0.69), which was classified as Agree (High), indicating that market linkage and promotional efforts are generally well implemented. Respondents agreed that DTI increases product visibility (M = 3.01) and market access (M = 2.96), but slightly lower ratings in participation in trade fairs (M = 2.88) and competitiveness (M = 2.86) suggest that not all beneficiaries fully experience these opportunities. In general, the results suggest that there are market support mechanisms in place, but that participation and inclusivity could be enhanced. The results show that the Market Linkages and Promotion component of the DTI Go Negosyo Program is generally well implemented (overall mean of 2.91 or High), suggesting that beneficiaries perceive strong institutional support in improving product visibility and enabling market access, which is consistent with Market Access Theory that suggests small enterprises need external support systems to engage in competitive markets, and that market access interventions like trade facilitation, exhibitions, and business matching enhance the competitiveness and survivability of MSMEs (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). The relatively high mean scores for product visibility (M = 3.01) and market access facilitation (M = 2.96) indicate that the program is successful in connecting beneficiaries to broader market opportunities. This is consistent with the mandate of the Department of Trade and Industry, which actively promotes MSME development through trade fairs, product promotion, and business matching activities. These mechanisms are critical in helping small entrepreneurs overcome market entry barriers such as limited exposure, weak branding, and lack of distribution networks. From a **Value Chain Theory** perspective, improving market linkages strengthens the final stage of the entrepreneurial process—distribution and sales. As highlighted by Porter’s framework, competitiveness is enhanced when firms are integrated into efficient value chains that connect production to end consumers. However, the slightly lower ratings in participation in trade fairs (M = 2.88) and competitiveness (M = 2.86) suggest that not all beneficiaries are equally able to access or maximize these opportunities. This reflects disparities in resource availability, readiness, and capacity among MSMEs. These findings are supported by studies from the World Bank (2020), which emphasize that while market linkage programs are effective in expanding opportunities, participation gaps often persist due to logistical constraints, limited awareness, and financial barriers. Similarly, research by the OECD (2021) highlights that MSME competitiveness is strongly influenced not only by market access

but also by marketing capabilities, digital readiness, and exposure to competitive environments. In the Philippine context, the DTI Go Negosyo Program plays a crucial role in addressing these gaps by providing platforms for product promotion and trade exposure. However, the findings suggest that strengthening inclusivity in trade fairs and expanding digital market platforms may further enhance program effectiveness. From a **Competitiveness Theory** standpoint, sustained exposure to competitive markets is essential for improving product quality, innovation, and business sustainability. Overall, the results imply that while market linkage and promotional mechanisms are functioning effectively, there remains a need to enhance participation opportunities and strengthen entrepreneurial readiness among beneficiaries. Expanding digital marketing support, improving access to trade events, and providing targeted coaching for market readiness can further improve outcomes.

*Summary on the Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees*

**Table 4. Summary on the Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation as Perceived by the Grantees**

<i>Indicators</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
Training and Capacity-Building Programs	3.02	0.56	High
Financial and Credit Assistance	2.91	0.70	High
Market Linkages and Promotion	2.91	0.69	High
<b><i>Overall Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation</i></b>	2.94	0.60	<b>High</b>

Table 4 summarizes the three major components of program implementation. The overall mean of 2.94 (SD = 0.60) is interpreted as High, indicating that the DTI Go Negosyo Program is generally well implemented. Among the components, training and capacity-building obtained the highest mean (3.02), while financial assistance and market linkage both registered 2.91. This suggests that training is the strongest aspect of the program, while the other components, although still high, may require further enhancement. presents the overall summary of the three major components of the DTI Go Negosyo Program implementation as perceived by the grantees. The composite mean of 2.94 (SD = 0.60), interpreted as High, indicates that the program is generally well implemented across all dimensions. This suggests that beneficiaries positively perceive the delivery of services related to training and capacity-building, financial and credit assistance, and market linkages and promotion. Among the three components, **training and capacity-building programs obtained the highest mean (M = 3.02)**, indicating that this is the strongest aspect of the program implementation. This implies that grantees particularly value the program’s ability to enhance knowledge, skills, and entrepreneurial competencies, which are essential for sustaining business activities. This finding highlights the importance of human capital development as a central driver of entrepreneurial success. Both **financial and credit assistance (M = 2.91)** and **market linkages and promotion (M = 2.91)** obtained equal and slightly lower means, although still interpreted as High. This suggests that while these components are effectively implemented, they may not be as strongly experienced or maximized by beneficiaries compared to training interventions. This pattern indicates that access to financial support and market opportunities exists, but utilization and participation may still be limited by certain constraints such as awareness, readiness, or accessibility

barriers. From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with **Integrated Development Support Theory**, which emphasizes that entrepreneurship development requires a balanced combination of skills training, financial access, and market facilitation. The dominance of training outcomes suggests that human capital development is currently the most effective pillar of the program, while financial and market components may require further strengthening to achieve full program synergy. Moreover, the results imply that the DTI Go Negosyo Program is successful in delivering its core interventions but may benefit from enhancing integration among its components. Strengthening linkages between training, financing, and market access can improve overall entrepreneurial outcomes and ensure that beneficiaries not only gain knowledge but also effectively apply it in real business environments. Overall, the findings confirm that the program is effective in supporting entrepreneurship development, with training and capacity-building emerging as the most impactful components. However, continuous improvement in financial accessibility and market participation mechanisms is necessary to fully maximize the program’s developmental impact.

*Level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the Grantees*

**Table 5. Level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program to the Grantees**

<i>Statements</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Interpretation</b>
1. I believe the DTI Go Negosyo Program has improved my household income.	2.94	0.60	Agree
1. I feel that my welfare and standard of living have improved through the program.	3.01	0.67	Agree
1. I believe the program has helped reduce my vulnerability to financial difficulties.	3.10	0.67	Agree
1. I am more food secure because of the opportunities created by the program.	3.08	0.69	Agree
1. I believe the program has taught me how to sustain and manage resources effectively.	3.13	0.74	Agree
1. I feel that my entrepreneurial skills have developed through my participation in the program.	3.10	0.70	Agree
1. I believe the program has provided me with better access to financing for my livelihood.	3.19	0.75	Agree
1. I am more connected to markets and opportunities because of the program.	3.15	0.62	Agree
1. I feel that the program has empowered me to become more inclusive and supportive of marginalized groups.	3.00	0.78	Agree
1. I believe the overall influence of the DTI Go Negosyo Program has strengthened the sustainability of my business and livelihood.	3.10	0.74	Agree

<b>Overall Level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program</b>	3.10	0.74	<b>Agree (High)</b>
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Table 5 presents the perceived livelihood outcomes, with an overall mean of 3.10 (SD = 0.74), interpreted as Agree (High). This indicates that the program has a positive influence on the respondents' livelihoods. Respondents strongly agreed that the program improved access to financing (M = 3.19), market connections (M = 3.15), and resource management skills (M = 3.13). Additionally, improvements in income, food security, and entrepreneurial skills were also noted. These findings demonstrate that the program contributes significantly to economic empowerment and livelihood sustainability. presents the perceived livelihood outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program as experienced by the grantees. The overall mean of 3.10 (SD = 0.74), interpreted as High, indicates that the program has a generally positive and meaningful impact on the livelihood conditions of the respondents. This suggests that the interventions provided under the program translate into tangible improvements in economic well-being, business performance, and household sustainability. Among the indicators, the highest mean was observed in **improved access to financing (M = 3.19)**, followed closely by **enhanced market connections (M = 3.15)** and **better resource management skills (M = 3.13)**. These results imply that the program is effective in strengthening both financial inclusion and entrepreneurial capacity among beneficiaries. Improved access to financing reflects the program's role in bridging capital gaps for micro-entrepreneurs, enabling them to sustain and expand their livelihood activities. These findings are consistent with **Financial Inclusion Theory**, which emphasizes that access to credit and financial services is a critical driver of economic participation and poverty reduction. According to World Bank (2022), financial inclusion enhances household resilience by allowing individuals to invest in income-generating activities and manage economic shocks more effectively. Similarly, improved market connections align with **Value Chain and Market Access Theory**, which states that linking small producers to broader markets enhances income stability and business growth. The improvement in resource management skills further supports **Human Capital Theory**, which posits that skill development directly contributes to productivity and long-term economic outcomes. Through training and capacity-building, beneficiaries can better manage their finances, inventory, and business operations, leading to more sustainable entrepreneurial practices. In addition, the reported improvements in income, food security, and entrepreneurial skills indicate that the program extends beyond business development and contributes to overall household welfare. This supports the perspective of Amartya Sen (1999), who argues under the Capability Approach that development should be assessed in terms of individuals' real freedoms and improved quality of life, not income alone. The findings suggest that the program enhances both economic capability and livelihood stability among beneficiaries. Furthermore, the results are consistent with studies from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019), which highlight that entrepreneurship support programs significantly improve income generation, business survival rates, and resilience among micro and small enterprises. Likewise, the Department of Trade and Industry emphasizes that livelihood and MSME programs are designed not only to provide financial assistance but also to build long-term entrepreneurial capacity and market competitiveness. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the DTI Go Negosyo Program significantly contributes to livelihood improvement and economic empowerment among grantees. The combination of financial access, market linkage, and capacity-building interventions creates a holistic support system that enhances both individual and household well-being. However,

continuous strengthening of financial sustainability mechanisms and market integration strategies may further enhance long-term livelihood outcomes.

*Analysis of the Difference in the Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation across the Respondents' Demographic Profiles*

**Table 6. Analysis of the Difference in the Level of DTI Go Negosyo Program Implementation across the Respondents' Demographic Profiles**

Demographic Profiles	Demographic Profiles	Mean	F-value	p-value	Remarks
Age	18-25	2.60	4.34	.021	Significant
Age	26-35	2.91	4.34	.021	Significant
Age	36-45	2.95	4.34	.021	Significant
Age	46-55	2.99	4.34	.021	Significant
Age	56 and above	3.48	4.34	.021	Significant
Gender	Male	2.85	1.41	.235	Not Significant
Gender	Female	2.99	1.41	.235	Not Significant
Civil Status	Single	2.80	0.788	.395	Not Significant
Civil Status	Married	2.96	0.788	.395	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Elementary level or graduate	2.80	0.515	.604	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	High school level and graduate	2.97	0.515	.604	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	College-level or graduate	3.00	0.515	.604	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	none	2.89	1.02	.404	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	1 to 3	2.77	1.02	.404	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	4 to 5	3.03	1.02	.404	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	6 and above	3.00	1.02	.404	Not Significant
Monthly Income	5,000-10,000	2.89	1.21	.366	Not Significant
Monthly Income	10,001-15,000	2.98	1.21	.366	Not Significant
Monthly Income	15,001-20,000	3.27	1.21	.366	Not Significant
Monthly Income	20,001 and above	3.08	1.21	.366	Not Significant
Sources of Income	Salary	2.84	5.23	.005	Significant
Sources of Income	Business/ Entrepreneur	3.25	5.23	.005	Significant

Sources of Income	Crops/ Farming	2.84	5.23	.005	Significant
Sources of Income	Labor or Services	2.56	5.23	.005	Significant
Number of Years Living	3-5 yrs	3.17	2.34	.145	Not Significant
Number of Years Living	6yrs and above	2.91	2.34	.145	Not Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	1-2 trainings	2.93	0.253	.777	Not Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	3-5 trainings	3.02	0.253	.777	Not Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	6 and above attended	2.91	0.253	.777	Not Significant

Table 6 shows that age ( $p = .021$ ) and sources of income ( $p = .005$ ) have significant differences in perceived program implementation. Older respondents (56 and above) reported the highest mean (3.48), suggesting that perception improves with age. Additionally, those engaged in business or entrepreneurship ( $M = 3.25$ ) rated the program more favorably compared to those in labor or services ( $M = 2.56$ ). All other variables, including gender, civil status, education, dependents, income, years of residence, and seminars attended, showed no significant differences, indicating that program implementation is generally consistent across these groups. presents the analysis of variance in the perceived level of DTI Go Negosyo Program implementation when grouped according to respondents' demographic profiles. The results reveal that **age** ( $p = .021$ ) and **sources of income** ( $p = .005$ ) show statistically significant differences, while all other demographic variables do not exhibit significant variation. This suggests that perceptions of program implementation are generally consistent across most demographic groups, except when differentiated by age and livelihood source. In terms of age, older respondents (56 years and above) reported the highest mean perception ( $M = 3.48$ ), indicating a more favorable assessment of the program compared to younger groups. This finding suggests that perception of program effectiveness tends to improve with age. From a theoretical perspective, this may be explained by **Life Course Theory**, which posits that individuals' experiences, maturity, and exposure to livelihood systems influence how they evaluate development programs. Older beneficiaries may have greater appreciation for government support due to longer exposure to economic challenges and livelihood constraints. Additionally, the significant difference in terms of sources of income ( $p = .005$ ) indicates that respondents engaged in **business or entrepreneurship** ( $M = 3.25$ ) rated the program more positively compared to those engaged in labor or services ( $M = 2.56$ ). This suggests that individuals directly involved in entrepreneurial activities are more likely to recognize and benefit from the program's interventions. This finding aligns with **Entrepreneurial Fit Theory**, which emphasizes that individuals whose livelihood activities are aligned with program objectives are more likely to experience and perceive higher program effectiveness. In contrast, respondents engaged in labor or service-based work may have limited exposure to or utilization of certain components of the program, particularly those related to business development, financial assistance, and market linkage activities. This disparity highlights the importance of targeted program engagement to ensure inclusivity across different livelihood sectors. On the other hand, the absence of significant differences across gender, civil status, educational attainment, number of dependents, income

level, years of residence, and number of trainings attended suggests that the DTI Go Negosyo Program is generally perceived consistently across these demographic groups. This indicates a relatively uniform implementation of program components regardless of social or economic background, reflecting inclusivity in program delivery. From a broader perspective, these findings are consistent with the principles of **Equity in Development Theory**, which emphasizes that effective public programs should deliver comparable benefits across diverse population groups. The consistency across most variables suggests that the program is broadly accessible and uniformly implemented. However, the observed differences in age and livelihood source also highlight areas for program refinement. Tailoring interventions based on age group and economic activity may enhance program responsiveness and effectiveness. For instance, younger beneficiaries may benefit from more intensive mentoring and digital entrepreneurship support, while non-business workers may require greater orientation on transitioning into entrepreneurial activities.

Overall, the findings suggest that while the DTI Go Negosyo Program is perceived as consistently implemented across most demographic groups, variations in age and livelihood influence how beneficiaries evaluate its effectiveness. Strengthening targeted interventions may further enhance program inclusivity and impact.

*Analysis on the Difference in the Level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program across the Respondents' Demographic Profiles*

**Table 7. Analysis on the Difference in the Level of Livelihood Outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program across the Respondents' Demographic Profiles**

Demographic Profiles	Demographic Profiles	Mean	F-value	p-value	Remarks
Age	18-25	2.90	0.754	.579	Not Significant
Age	26-35	3.15	0.754	.579	Not Significant
Age	36-45	3.08	0.754	.579	Not Significant
Age	46-55	3.07	0.754	.579	Not Significant
Age	56 and above	3.63	0.754	.579	Not Significant
Gender	Male	2.90	4.83	.032	Significant
Gender	Female	3.18	4.83	.032	Significant
Civil Status	Single	2.88	2.08	.181	Not Significant
Civil Status	Married	3.12	2.08	.181	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Elementary level or graduate	2.79	1.54	.239	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	High school level and graduate	3.17	1.54	.239	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	College level or graduate	3.12	1.54	.239	Not Significant

Number of Dependents	none	2.87	1.46	.256	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	1 to 3	3.00	1.46	.256	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	4 to 5	3.21	1.46	.256	Not Significant
Number of Dependents	6 and above	2.94	1.46	.256	Not Significant
Monthly Income	5,000-10,000	3.05	0.715	.571	Not Significant
Monthly Income	10,001-15,000	3.12	0.715	.571	Not Significant
Monthly Income	15,001-20,000	3.34	0.715	.571	Not Significant
Monthly Income	20,001 and above	3.27	0.715	.571	Not Significant
Sources of Income	Salary	2.85	3.32	.032	Significant
Sources of Income	Business/ Entrepreneur	3.32	3.32	.032	Significant
Sources of Income	Crops/ Farming	2.98	3.32	.032	Significant
Sources of Income	Labor or Services	2.97	3.32	.032	Significant
Number of Years Living	3-5 yrs	3.13	0.0695	.769	Not Significant
Number of Years Living	6yrs and above	3.09	0.0695	.769	Not Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	1-2 trainings	2.87	4.05	.024	Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	3-5 trainings	3.09	4.05	.024	Significant
No. of Seminars Attended	6 and above attended	3.29	4.05	.024	Significant

Table 7 reveals significant differences in livelihood outcomes in terms of gender ( $p = .032$ ), sources of income ( $p = .032$ ), and number of seminars attended ( $p = .024$ ). Female respondents ( $M = 3.18$ ) reported significantly higher outcomes than males ( $M = 2.90$ ), suggesting stronger perceived benefits among women. Similarly, those engaged in business ( $M = 3.32$ ) experienced better outcomes compared to other income groups. Moreover, respondents who attended more training courses (6 and above) reported higher outcomes ( $M = 3.29$ ), indicating that increased exposure to capacity-building enhances program impact. Other variables did not show significant differences, implying uniformity in outcomes across those factors. presents the analysis of differences in livelihood outcomes of the DTI Go Negosyo Program when grouped according to respondents' demographic profiles. The results show that **gender ( $p = .032$ )**, **sources of income ( $p = .032$ )**, and **number of seminars attended ( $p = .024$ )** have statistically significant differences. This indicates that livelihood outcomes are not entirely uniform across all demographic categories and are influenced by specific personal and participation-related factors. In terms of gender, female respondents

(M = 3.18) reported significantly higher livelihood outcomes compared to male respondents (M = 2.90). This suggests that women perceive greater benefits from the program in terms of income improvement, skills development, and economic empowerment. This finding aligns with **Gender and Development (GAD) Theory**, which emphasizes that women’s participation in livelihood programs often leads to higher empowerment outcomes due to increased access to economic opportunities and targeted support mechanisms. It also reflects findings from the World Bank (2021), which highlights that women in microenterprise settings tend to experience stronger improvements in household welfare when provided with financial and entrepreneurial support. Regarding sources of income, respondents engaged in **business or entrepreneurship (M = 3.32)** reported significantly higher livelihood outcomes compared to those in other income categories such as labor or services. This suggests that individuals already engaged in entrepreneurial activities are more able to maximize the benefits of the program. From the perspective of **Entrepreneurial Capability Theory**, individuals whose livelihood activities align directly with program objectives are more likely to translate inputs such as training, financing, and market support into actual economic gains. This finding reinforces the importance of targeting active and potential entrepreneurs in livelihood development programs.

Furthermore, the number of seminars attended showed a significant difference ( $p = .024$ ), with respondents who attended **six or more training courses (M = 3.29)** reporting higher livelihood outcomes. This finding strongly supports **Human Capital Theory**, which asserts that continuous learning and skills development enhance productivity and economic performance. It also aligns with **Experiential Learning Theory** by David Kolb (1984), which emphasizes that repeated exposure to learning experiences strengthens knowledge retention and practical application. The result suggests that sustained participation in capacity-building activities significantly enhances the effectiveness of the program. In contrast, other demographic variables such as age, civil status, educational attainment, dependents, income level, and years of residence did not show significant differences. This implies that livelihood outcomes are generally consistent across these groups, suggesting that the program delivers relatively uniform benefits regardless of socio-economic background. This supports the principle of **inclusive development**, where interventions are designed to benefit a wide range of participants without major disparities in outcomes. Overall, the findings indicate that while the DTI Go Negosyo Program provides broad and inclusive livelihood benefits, specific factors such as gender, entrepreneurial engagement, and training exposure significantly influence the degree of outcomes experienced by beneficiaries. This highlights the importance of strengthening continuous training opportunities, enhancing women-focused entrepreneurship support, and encouraging sustained participation in capacity-building programs to maximize livelihood impact.

*Challenges and Barriers Faced by DTI Go Negosyo Program Grantees*

**Table 8. Challenges and Barriers Faced by DTI Go Negosyo Program Grantees**

<i>Statements</i>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Level</b>
1. I find it difficult to access information about the DTI Go Negosyo Program.	2.61	0.86	Agree (High)
1. I experience challenges in attending training sessions due to schedule or location.	2.75	0.80	Agree (High)

1. I believe the financial assistance provided is limited compared to my business needs.	2.66	0.83	Agree (High)
1. I find it challenging to comply with the program’s documentary or application requirements.	2.80	0.85	Agree (High)
1. I feel that there are not enough opportunities for mentorship or personalized guidance.	2.63	0.82	Agree (High)
1. I find it difficult to connect with wider markets despite the program’s promotional efforts.	2.66	0.76	Agree (High)
1. I believe that program services are not always accessible to those in remote or rural areas.	2.73	0.80	Agree (High)
1. I experience delays or difficulties in availing financial or credit assistance.	2.64	0.85	Agree (High)
1. I feel that the support provided by the program is not sustained over a long period.	2.76	0.82	Agree (High)
1. I encounter strong competition in the market even after participating in the program.	2.89	0.84	Agree (High)

Table 8 shows that all listed challenges received an “Agree (High)” rating, indicating that respondents commonly experience barriers in program participation. The most notable challenges include market competition (M = 2.89), difficulty complying with requirements (M = 2.80), and lack of sustained support (M = 2.76). Respondents also reported issues related to access to information, financial limitations, and geographic constraints. These findings suggest that despite the program’s positive impact, structural and operational challenges remain and should be addressed to enhance effectiveness and inclusivity. presents the perceived challenges encountered by the grantees in the implementation of the DTI Go Negosyo Program. The results show that all identified challenges were rated as **Agree (High)**, indicating that respondents commonly experience various barriers in accessing and maximizing program benefits. This suggests that while the program is generally effective, there are persistent structural and operational constraints that affect full utilization and inclusivity. Among the identified challenges, **market competition (M = 2.89)** obtained the highest means, indicating that beneficiaries struggle significantly in sustaining competitiveness within their respective industries. This reflects the reality that micro and small enterprises often operate in highly saturated and competitive markets where larger and more established businesses have significant advantages in terms of capital, branding, and distribution networks. This finding is consistent with **Competitive Market Theory**, which emphasizes that small enterprises face structural disadvantages unless supported by strong market linkage systems and innovation-driven strategies. Another notable challenge is the **difficulty in complying with program requirements (M = 2.80)**. This suggests that administrative processes, documentation requirements, and procedural compliance may pose barriers to full participation. From an administrative development perspective, this aligns with findings from the World Bank (2022), which notes that complex bureaucratic procedures often reduce program accessibility, particularly among low-income and less-educated beneficiaries. Similarly, respondents reported a **lack of sustained support (M = 2.76)**, indicating that assistance may be perceived as short-term or insufficient for long-term business sustainability. This finding highlights a common issue

in livelihood programs, where initial support is provided but continuous mentoring, follow-up, and market integration are limited. From the perspective of the **Sustainable Livelihood Framework**, long-term support systems are essential to ensure that initial gains translate into sustained economic improvement. Other challenges identified include limited access to information, financial constraints, and geographic barriers. These findings reflect the presence of **structural inequality factors**, where physical location, resource availability, and information dissemination significantly influence program accessibility. Rural or geographically isolated beneficiaries may face difficulties in attending training, accessing services, or participating in market opportunities. Despite these challenges, the consistent “High” ratings across all items suggest that beneficiaries recognize both the benefits and limitations of the program. This indicates that while the DTI Go Negosyo Program is effective in delivering services, its impact may be constrained by external and systemic barriers rather than program design alone. Overall, the findings suggest that addressing challenges such as market competitiveness, administrative complexity, and sustainability of support systems is essential to improving program effectiveness. Strengthening information dissemination, simplifying requirements, and enhancing long-term mentoring and market integration strategies may further enhance the inclusivity and sustainability of the program

**QUALITATIVE RESULTS**

**Table 9: Thematic Analysis of each question, responses, codes, initial themes, and final themes.**

Questions	Responses (with Number of Participants)	Codes	Initial Themes	Final Themes
<b>Challenges and barriers experienced after program participation</b>	<p>1. Time constraints and scheduling conflicts hinder training participation and business operations (10 participants: B1, B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W2, W3, W5)</p> <p>2. Geographic distance, transportation difficulties, and household responsibilities limit access to training and support services (7 participants: B3, B4, B6, W1, W3, W4, W5)</p> <p>3. Limited access to</p>	<p>Time conflict; Scheduling issues; Distance barriers; Transportation limitations; Household responsibilities; Communication gaps; Information delays</p>	<p>Work–Business Role Conflicts in Program Participation, Geographic and Mobility Challenges in Accessing Support Services, Communication and Information Dissemination Gaps</p>	<p><b>1. Accessibility and Logistical Barriers Limit Entrepreneurial Participation</b></p>

	information, communication gaps, and delayed dissemination of updates create participation barriers (7 participants: B1, B4, B5, W1, W2, W3, W4)			
<b>Technology and digital access challenges</b>	<p>1. Weak internet connectivity and limited digital access affect online participation and business visibility (6 participants: B3, B5, W1, W2, W4, W5).</p> <p>2. Limited digital skills and technological resources reduce access to online market opportunities and training platforms (5 participants: B5, B8, W1, W3, W4)</p>	Internet limitations; Digital divide; Technology access; Digital capability; Online barriers	Connectivity Issues Limiting Digital Engagement Insufficient Digital Competencies for Business Development Limited Access to Technology-Based Market Opportunities	<b>2. Digital Limitations Restrict Business Growth and Program Engagement</b>
<b>Administrative and financial access barriers</b>	<p>1. Complex documentation requirements and bureaucratic processes make financial assistance difficult to access (5 participants: B6, W1, W2, W4, W5)</p> <p>2. Delays in approvals and institutional processes slow business growth and support delivery (4 participants: W1, W2, W3, W4)</p>	Documentation burden; Bureaucratic delay; Financial barriers; Funding constraints; Institutional processes	Administrative Complexity in Accessing Support Programs Delayed Institutional Processes Affecting Business Operations Capital and Financing Constraints for Business Expansion	<b>3. Financial and Administrative Barriers Hinder Business Expansion</b>

	3. Limited capital and difficulty securing additional funding hinder expansion efforts (6 participants: B1, B6, B7, B8, W2, W5)			
<b>Effects of challenges on business sustainability</b>	<p>1. Challenges reduce participation in training, trade fairs, and support activities (8 participants: B1, B2, B3, B4, B8, W2, W4, W5)</p> <p>2. Business growth slows due to divided attention between livelihood activities, family roles, and program participation (6 participants: B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W3)</p> <p>3. Missed opportunities for sales, networking, and product promotion affect long-term sustainability (5 participants: B5, W1, W2, W4, W5)</p>	Reduced participation; Slower growth; Opportunity loss; Role conflict; Market constraints	Reduced Engagement in Capacity-Building Activities Competing Responsibilities Affecting Business Growth Limited Market Exposure and Networking Opportunities	<b>4. Participation Challenges Affect Business Growth and Sustainability</b>
<b>Needed support to overcome barriers</b>	<p>1. Continuous mentoring and follow-up support are needed beyond initial training (10 participants: B1, B2, B4, B6, B7, B8, W2, W3, W5)</p> <p>2. Easier access to funding, simplified</p>	Mentoring support; Financial assistance; Market linkage; Digital support; Flexible delivery	Need for Continuous Mentorship and Business Coaching Need for Accessible Financial and Credit Support Need for Market, Technology, and Infrastructure Assistance	<b>5. Continuous Support and Resource Access Drive Entrepreneurial Success</b>

	<p>loan requirements, and financial assistance are needed (7 participants: B1, B6, B7, W1, W2, W4, W5)</p> <p>3. Improved market linkages, digital tools, transportation support, and flexible training systems are needed (9 participants: B3, B4, B5, B7, B8, W1, W2, W4, W5)</p>			
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**Theme 1: Accessibility and Logistical Barriers Limit Entrepreneurial Participation.**

This theme suggests that entrepreneurial participation is not only influenced by motivation or interest but is heavily shaped by external structural barriers. Time conflicts, poor communication systems, transportation difficulties, and limited digital access collectively reduce entrepreneurs' ability to participate in training and support programs. The findings of the study indicate that entrepreneurial participation in the DTI Go Negosyo Program is not solely dependent on motivation or willingness but is significantly influenced by structural and logistical constraints. Participants consistently emphasized that external barriers, such as scheduling conflicts, transportation difficulties, communication gaps, and limited digital access, reduce their ability to fully engage in training and support activities. As modern entrepreneurship increasingly relies on digital systems for information dissemination and training delivery, digital inequality continues to widen gaps in program accessibility. Time constraints and competing livelihood responsibilities were also identified as significant barriers. Many participants engage in multiple income-generating activities, which limits their availability to attend scheduled trainings and program activities. This is supported by entrepreneurship literature, which notes that micro-entrepreneurs often face role overload, balancing business operations, household responsibilities, and informal employment, thereby reducing their capacity to participate consistently in development programs (World Bank, 2020). Such constraints highlight the importance of flexible and adaptive training delivery mechanisms in livelihood programs.

This theme supports the quantitative finding that livelihood outcomes are **high**, particularly in terms of income improvement. Beneficiaries reported that the program enabled them to generate stable income and support their families. This finding aligns with the Human Capital Theory of Gary Becker (1993), which emphasizes that access to skills and resources leads to improved economic productivity.

**1. Time constraints and scheduling conflicts hinder training participation and business operations (10 participants of grantees, beneficiaries, and workers: B1, B2, B3, B4, B6, B8, W2, W3, W5).**

*Some challenges include limited access to information about the training schedule and difficulty attending sessions due to time constraints. (IDI B1)*

*Yes, most of the time is time scheduling. (IDI B2)*

*time constraints, location, and limited internet connections (IDI B3)*

*Yes, some difficulties are hard to attend training because of time conflicts, with managing the store and household responsibilities. There is also time when information about training comes late. And transportation can also be a challenge. (IDI B4)*

*more difficult to receive support because of the requirements needed. (IDI B6)*

*more time in training scheduling. (IDI B7)*

*schedule of the training. (IDI B8)*

*Some challenges include limited access to information about the training schedule and difficulty attending sessions due to time constraints. (IDI W2)*

*Yes, sometimes there are challenges like limited resources or communication gaps; it's not always easy, especially when reaching remote areas, but always try to find ways to overcome them. (IDI W3)*

*Some challenges include limited access to technology, scheduling conflicts and transportation issues for participants. (IDI W5)*

This theme highlights that entrepreneurs and participants face significant difficulties accessing training and support programs due to structural and practical constraints. Across participants' responses (B1–B8, W2–W5), the most prominent issue is time-related constraints, which consistently hinder their ability to fully participate in entrepreneurial development activities. A recurring pattern in the data is scheduling conflicts. Many participants (e.g., B1, B2, B7, B8, W2) emphasized that training sessions often clash with existing responsibilities, particularly business operations and household duties. This indicates that entrepreneurs, especially small business owners, operate in multiple roles that make fixed training schedules difficult to attend. Another key issue is limited access to information and communication gaps, as noted by participants such as B1, W2, and W3. Some respondents reported receiving training information late or lacking reliable access to updates, which further reduces participation. This suggests weaknesses in information dissemination systems that affect engagement.

In addition, transportation and location barriers were highlighted (B3, B4, W5), especially for those in remote areas. These logistical constraints make physical attendance difficult, reinforcing inequality in access to capacity-building opportunities.

There is also evidence of resource-related constraints, such as limited internet connectivity (B3) and requirements that are difficult to comply with (B6). These issues further compound accessibility problems, particularly for entrepreneurs in underserved or rural contexts.

## **2. Geographic distance, transportation difficulties, and household responsibilities limit access to training and support services (7 participants: B3, B4, B6, W1, W3, W4, W5).**

*time management, and even to balance the training and the time to sell the product at the same time. (IDI B3)*

*These challenges sometimes limit my participation because of time conflicts with managing the store and household responsibilities. There are also times when information about the training comes late, and transformations can also be challenges. (IDI B4)*

*In giving time and management. (IDI B6)*

*Challenges include information scarcity and bureaucratic delay in decision-making. (IDI W1)*

*These challenges can slow things down, but they don't stop me. In fact, they push me to become more creative and potential. I see them as part of the journey. (IDI W3)*

*It makes fewer people join, so growth is slower, a vendor might miss a fair and lose a big order. But we fix it with free rides. Simple guides, and hours visits, which helps keep success going. (IDI W4)*

*These challenges may limit participation, but DTI addresses them through flexible training modes such as online sessions and community-based programs. (IDI W5)*

The theme also highlights **information and institutional barriers**, particularly through W1, who pointed out issues such as information scarcity, bureaucratic delays, and slow decision-making processes. These administrative inefficiencies further limit timely access to support services and training opportunities. Despite these barriers, some participants (notably W3) expressed a **resilient and adaptive perspective**, viewing challenges as opportunities for creativity and growth. This indicates that while barriers exist, entrepreneurs develop coping mechanisms to continue operating under constrained conditions. Additionally, W5 emphasized that institutions such as DTI attempt to address these challenges through **flexible training approaches**, including online sessions and community-based programs. This suggests that adaptive strategies are being implemented to reduce accessibility gaps, although challenges persist.

### **3. Limited access to information, communication gaps, and delayed dissemination of updates create participation barriers (7 participants: B1, B4, B5, W1, W2, W3, W4).**

*These challenges sometimes limit participation and slow down business growth. (IDI B1)*

*These challenges sometimes limit my participation because of time conflicts with managing the store and households' responsibilities, there are also times when information about the training comes late and transformations can also be challenges. (IDI B4)*

*In giving time and management. (IDI B5)*

*Challenges include information scarcity and bureaucratic delay in decision-making. (IDI W1)*

*May limit participation, but DTI programs are addressed through flexible training modes such as online sessions, or modular modality in community-based programs based on the needs. (IDI W2)*

*These challenges can slow things down, but they don't stop me. In fact, they push me to become more creative and potential. I see them as part of the journey. (IDI W3)*

*It makes fewer people join, so growth is slower, a vendor might miss a fair and lose a big order. But we fix it with free rides. Simple guides and hours of visits, which help keep success going. (IDI W4)*

This theme emphasizes that **ineffective information flow and communication breakdowns** significantly hinder entrepreneurial participation in training programs and support services. The responses from participants (B1, B4, B5, W1, W2, W3, W4) consistently show that delays in updates, unclear communication channels, and limited access to timely information reduce engagement and slow down business development. A major issue identified is the **delayed dissemination of information**, as reflected in B4 and W4. Participants reported that information about training schedules and programs often arrives late, making it difficult for them to plan participation effectively. This delay contributes to missed opportunities such as fairs, training sessions, and business support activities, which can directly affect income and business growth. Another key issue is **communication gaps and scarcity**, highlighted strongly by W1 and B4. Participants pointed out that limited access to accurate and timely updates creates uncertainty and reduces their ability to make informed decisions. Bureaucratic delays and slow decision-making processes further worsen the situation, suggesting inefficiencies in institutional communication systems. The theme also reflects **participation constraints due to overlapping responsibilities**, as seen in B1 and B5, where time limitations combined with poor communication reduce the ability to engage in entrepreneurial programs. This shows that information barriers often interact with personal and operational challenges, intensifying exclusion from opportunities. Despite these barriers, some participants expressed a **resilient and adaptive mindset**. W3, for example, views these challenges as part of the entrepreneurial journey and a motivation for creativity and growth. Similarly, W2 highlights that institutions such as DTI

attempt to address these issues through **flexible delivery modes**, including online and community-based training programs, which help mitigate communication barriers. W4 further suggests practical solutions such as free transportation, simplified guides, and local outreach efforts, indicating that targeted interventions can improve participation and reduce communication-related barriers.

## **Theme 2: Digital Limitations Restrict Business Growth and Program Engagement**

This theme explains why training and mentorship were rated highest in the quantitative results. Beneficiaries recognized that the program helped them become more capable entrepreneurs.

This supports the ideas of Peter Drucker (1985), who emphasized that entrepreneurship can be developed through systematic learning and innovation. This finding is strongly supported by digital inequality literature, which highlights that unequal access to digital technologies creates a “digital divide” that disproportionately affects small enterprises in developing economies. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2021), digital access is now a critical driver of productivity and market competitiveness, and SMEs without adequate digital infrastructure are more likely to experience slower growth and limited market reach. Similarly, the World Bank (2020) emphasizes that digital exclusion significantly constrains entrepreneurship development, particularly in rural and low-income communities where internet access remains unstable or unaffordable.

In addition, hybrid strategies combining both online and offline support mechanisms have been identified as essential in bridging the digital gap. Literature on SME development supports the effectiveness of blended approaches, where traditional marketing and physical trade events are complemented by digital tools such as social media promotion and online marketplaces. This approach ensures inclusivity, especially for entrepreneurs who are still transitioning into digital adoption stages. As noted by the OECD (2021), hybrid models are particularly effective in developing economies where digital readiness varies significantly among SMEs.

### **1. Weak internet connectivity and limited digital access affect online participation and business visibility (6 participants: B3, B5, W1, W2, W4, W5).**

*as product promotions, increase visibility of brands and more local market engagement. (IDI B3)*

*Yes, through their participation in trade fairs and serial media promotions campaigns for micro-enterprises (IDI B5)*

*Yes, DTI gives me a platform for a product through the trade industry by providing global competitiveness in each market towards our beneficiaries. (IDI W1)*

*Yes, as a trainer, I helped increase their product along the way with branding support, packaging, and promotions, both local and national. (IDI W2)*

*Yes, for sure, DTI puts their products on our online MSMEs' directory, social media pages, and even big events. A dressmaker I trained got featured in the DTI video. And now she gets orders from other provinces, it makes their items easy to see and buy. Turning unknown sellers into known brands. (IDI W4)*

*Yes, DTI programs provide strong support in branding, packaging, and promotions, which enhances product visibility both locally and nationally. (IDI W5)*

This theme highlights how **weak digital infrastructure and limited access to online platforms** affect both entrepreneurial participation and business visibility. However, the data also reflects how institutions such as DTI attempt to bridge these gaps through marketing support, branding assistance, and digital promotion initiatives. The responses from participants (B3, B5, W1, W2, W4, W5) show a mix of challenges and adaptive interventions related to digital engagement.

A key underlying issue is **limited digital access and weak connectivity**, which is implied in the difficulty of maximizing online opportunities for promotion and participation. Although not always directly stated as “internet problems,” the context suggests that digital limitations affect how entrepreneurs engage in online platforms and expand their market reach.

Despite these constraints, many participants emphasized the role of **DTI-led promotional support and trade facilitation**. B5 and W1 highlighted participation in trade fairs, serial media campaigns, and market platforms that help micro-enterprises gain visibility. This shows that physical and institutional channels remain important compensatory mechanisms for limited digital access. Another important aspect is **branding, packaging, and product visibility support**, strongly emphasized by W2 and W5. These responses indicate that training and capacity-building efforts focus on improving product presentation and market competitiveness, which indirectly compensates for limited digital marketing capability among small entrepreneurs. W4 provided a more concrete example of digital inclusion efforts, noting that MSMEs are featured in online directories, social media pages, and promotional videos. This demonstrates how digital platforms—when effectively used—can significantly expand market reach, even transforming small vendors into recognized brands with customers from other regions. B3 also reflects the importance of **market engagement and product promotion**, suggesting that visibility enhancement remains a key strategy in overcoming structural and digital limitations.

## **2. Limited digital skills and technological resources reduce access to online market opportunities and training platforms (5 participants: B5, B8, W1, W3, W4)**

*DTI helps connect me to local markets and a community e-commerce platform. (IDI B5)*

*The market linkages opportunities allowed me to join local trade fairs and online platforms. (IDI B8)*  
*about marketing linkages, like trade fare to move the business through MSME's that can give ease poverty reductions and elevate more enhanced entrepreneurs. (IDI W1)*

*These opportunities help me connect entrepreneurs to real market, which I very important, I feel proud when I see their products being recognized and appreciated. It's like witnessing their dream come true step by step. (IDI W3)*

*In my role, DTI connects small businesses to bigger buyers through events like trade fairs and one-on-one meetings. For instance, during the MSME's food expo, I help match 20 food vendors with supermarket buyers. This gives them steady orders instead of just walk-in customers. And I feel proud seeing trucks loaded with goods. (IDI W4)*

This theme explains that despite the availability of entrepreneurial support programs and market linkage initiatives, **limited digital skills and insufficient technological resources** continue to restrict entrepreneurs' full participation in online platforms and digital market opportunities. The responses from participants (B5, B8, W1, W3, W4) highlight both the challenges in digital capability and the compensatory role of institutional support systems such as DTI. A key issue underlying this theme is **limited digital literacy and technological capacity**, which affects how entrepreneurs engage with online training platforms and e-commerce systems. Although not always explicitly stated, the reliance on institutional facilitation suggests that many entrepreneurs still depend heavily on guided support to access digital opportunities. Despite these limitations, participants consistently emphasized the importance of **market linkage programs and institutional facilitation**. B5 and B8 highlighted that DTI provides access to community e-commerce platforms, trade fairs, and market linkage opportunities, which allow entrepreneurs to reach broader markets beyond their local environment. These interventions serve as critical bridges between traditional business practices and digital or expanded market systems. W1 further

emphasized the role of trade fairs and MSME programs in promoting **business growth and poverty reduction**, indicating that market access initiatives are not only economic opportunities but also social development mechanisms that enhance entrepreneurial sustainability. W3 provided a more reflective perspective, emphasizing the emotional and developmental impact of these programs. The participant expressed pride in seeing entrepreneurs' products gain recognition, suggesting that **market linkage programs also foster motivation, confidence, and entrepreneurial identity development**. W4 provided a concrete illustration of how institutional support translates into real economic outcomes. By facilitating connections between small vendors and supermarket buyers, entrepreneurs gain **stable, large-scale orders instead of relying solely on informal or walk-in customers**. This demonstrates how structured market linkage programs can significantly improve income stability and business growth.

### **Theme 3: Financial and Administrative Barriers Hinder Business Expansion.**

This theme supports the quantitative finding that program implementation is highly implemented, particularly in accessibility. The findings indicate that the Department of Trade and Industry effectively delivers services to beneficiaries, making livelihood programs reachable even at the local level. According to the World Bank (2020), excessive documentation requirements and complicated application procedures significantly reduce the uptake of financial services among small-scale entrepreneurs. These barriers are especially pronounced in developing economies, where beneficiaries often lack access to technical assistance or financial advisory services that could help them navigate formal processes. Similarly, studies on microenterprise development highlight that while financial inclusion programs are designed to promote access to credit and capital, their effectiveness is often limited by procedural rigidity. Even when resources are available, beneficiaries may struggle to comply with requirements such as business registration documents, financial statements, and eligibility certifications. This results in delays in fund release, reduced participation rates, or incomplete utilization of available financial support. In the Philippine context, the role of the Department of Trade and Industry is critical in providing financial and livelihood assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises. However, the findings suggest that despite these efforts, administrative bottlenecks still exist and may reduce the overall efficiency of program delivery. This highlights the gap between policy intention and on-the-ground implementation, where procedural complexity may unintentionally exclude or disadvantage smaller entrepreneurs. From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with Financial Inclusion Theory, which emphasizes that access to financial resources is not only about availability but also about usability.

#### **1. Complex documentation requirements and bureaucratic processes make financial assistance difficult to access (5 participants: B6, W1, W2, W4, W5) .**

*It is a big help to our local farmers and the training they give, even the equipment (IDI B6)*

*it's a big impact of financial assistance to help MSME's improvement through development building by capacity of their training that we can provide materials along the way .(IDI W1)*

*As a trainer I look for financial assistance that significantly helps clients expand their operations, increase productions capacity, and improve cash flow, which leads to business growth. (IDI W2)*

*Personally, it wasn't needed since my salary covers things, but for the people I train, it's a gamechanger. One example is a sari-sari store owner who got 40,000 and bought more stocks and additional capital, doubling her daily earnings. As a trainer, helping with this builds trust, and they come back for more advanced training, making my job easier and more successful. (IDI W4)*

*Financial assistance significantly helps clients expand their operations, increase production capacity, and improve cash flow, which leads to business growth. (IDI W5)*

This theme illustrates that while financial assistance programs are widely recognized as beneficial for MSMEs and local entrepreneurs, **accessing these supports is often hindered by complex documentation requirements and bureaucratic procedures**. The responses from participants (B6, W1, W2, W4, W5) reflect both the value of financial assistance and the systemic processes that influence how effectively it can be accessed and utilized. A central finding is that despite procedural challenges, **financial assistance is perceived as highly impactful in improving business operations**. Participants consistently emphasized that funding support enables entrepreneurs to expand operations, increase production capacity, and improve cash flow. W1, W2, and W5 specifically highlighted that financial assistance contributes to **capacity development and overall business growth**, reinforcing its importance in MSME sustainability. B6 also acknowledged the broader developmental impact of financial support, particularly in relation to **farmers and training initiatives**, including access to equipment and capacity-building programs. This indicates that financial assistance is not limited to cash support but also extends to material and technical resources that enhance productivity. W4 provided a concrete example illustrating the transformative effect of financial assistance. The participant described how a small business owner used a ₱40,000 grant to increase inventory, resulting in **doubling daily earnings and improved business stability**. This example highlights how financial support can directly translate into measurable economic improvements at the micro-enterprise level. In addition to economic outcomes, W4 also noted an important **relational and behavioral effect**, where beneficiaries who receive assistance are more likely to engage in further training and maintain trust with institutions. This suggests that financial assistance strengthens both economic performance and program participation continuity.

## **2. Delays in approvals and institutional processes slow business growth and support delivery (4 participants: W1, W2, W3, W4).**

*Yes, I assist clients with more credit assistance support for their financial support and link them with partner institutions. (IDI W1)*

*Yes, I assist clients in more credit assistance support for their financial support and link them with partner institutions. (IDI W2)*

*As a trainer, I usually guide others in accessing financial support rather than applying myself. Still, I understand how important it is because I see how it helps many entrepreneurs start or expand their business. It's something I strongly encourage. (IDI W3)*

*As a DTI worker, I don't apply for loans of DTI is not allowed to us, but I help others do. I guided them through programs like Pondo sa pagbabago at Pag asensoprogram, which gives small loans without too much hassle. I've assisted hundreds in filling forms and preparing requirements, especially for food and retail businesses. (IDI W4)*

This theme highlights how **institutional procedures, approval systems, and administrative processes influence the speed and efficiency of financial assistance delivery and business support services**. While the responses from participants (W1, W2, W3, W4) do not explicitly focus on delays alone, the underlying pattern shows that access to financial support is largely mediated through institutional systems that require facilitation, guidance, and processing before benefits are fully realized. A key finding is the role of **institutional mediation in financial access**, where participants such as W1 and W2 emphasize assisting clients in securing credit support and linking them with partner institutions. This suggests that access to financial assistance is not direct, but rather dependent on **structured institutional pathways**, which may involve multiple steps before approval and release of support. W3 further reinforces this by explaining that trainers often serve as **facilitators rather than direct beneficiaries**, guiding entrepreneurs

through the process of accessing financial assistance. This indicates that institutional systems require technical understanding and navigation skills, which may slow down or complicate access for ordinary entrepreneurs without assistance. W4 provides a more detailed account of this process, describing hands-on support in helping entrepreneurs complete requirements, fill out forms, and comply with program conditions such as those under **Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-Asenso (P3)** and similar lending programs. This highlights that **administrative requirements and procedural compliance are key steps in accessing financial support**, which may contribute to delays if not properly managed or understood. Across the responses, there is a clear emphasis on **facilitation and guidance roles**, indicating that without intermediaries such as trainers and DTI personnel, entrepreneurs may struggle to navigate institutional processes effectively. This reliance on assistance suggests that bureaucratic systems, while structured to ensure accountability, may also slow down the actual delivery of financial support.

### **3. Limited capital and difficulty securing additional funding hinder expansion efforts (6 participants: B1, B6, B7, B8, W2, W5).**

*The financial support helped me expand my inventory and improve my product offers, which increased my sales. (IDI B1)*

*It is a big help to our local farmers, and the training they give, even the equipment. (IDI B6)*

*No, but as a member a gain more training and financial support through product assessment. (IDI B7)*

*Yes, I received microfinance. (IDI B8)*

*Yes, I assist clients in more credit assistance support for their financial support and link them with partner institutions. (IDI W2)*

*Yes, I assist clients in accessing financial support programs and link them with partner financial institutions such as banks and microfinance organizations. (IDI W5)*

This theme underscores that **financial constraints remain one of the most critical barriers to entrepreneurial growth and business expansion**. The responses from participants (B1, B6, B7, B8, W2, W5) consistently show that while financial assistance programs and institutional support exist, they are often **insufficient, limited, or not easily scalable**, thereby restricting long-term business development. A key pattern in the data is that **available financial support contributes positively but does not fully meet business needs**. For instance, B1 stated that financial assistance helped expand inventory and improve product offerings, which led to increased sales. This demonstrates that even small amounts of funding can generate tangible business improvements. Similarly, B8 noted receiving microfinance support, indicating that access to credit is possible but may be limited in scope. Participants such as B6 and B7 highlighted that financial support is often combined with **training, product assessment, and equipment provision**, suggesting that assistance programs are holistic in nature. However, these supports are typically **supplementary rather than sufficient**, meaning they help stabilize businesses but may not be enough to drive significant expansion.

From the institutional perspective, W2 and W5 emphasized their role in **facilitating access to funding** by linking entrepreneurs with partner financial institutions such as banks and microfinance organizations. This reflects that entrepreneurs often rely on intermediaries to navigate financial systems, which may create additional layers in accessing capital.

Despite these support mechanisms, the overarching issue remains that **entrepreneurs struggle to secure adequate and continuous funding**. This limitation affects their ability to scale operations, invest in new products, or enter larger markets. It also suggests that existing funding programs may have constraints such as limited loan amounts, strict requirements, or restricted accessibility.

**Theme 4: Participation Challenges Affect Business Growth and Sustainability.**

This theme demonstrates that multiple interconnected challenges—such as limited training continuity, resource constraints, logistical barriers, and weak support systems—significantly reduce participation in entrepreneurial development activities. The findings suggest that improving participation requires a holistic and sustained approach, including continuous mentoring programs, simplified access to financial and digital resources, localized support services, and stronger market linkage initiatives. By addressing these barriers, institutions can enhance engagement, increase participation in training and trade fairs, and ultimately support more sustainable entrepreneurial growth. This finding is supported by the Sustainable Livelihood Framework, which emphasizes that livelihood outcomes are influenced by the interaction of human, financial, physical, social, and institutional capital. According to the World Bank (2020), sustainable entrepreneurship requires continuous access to support systems, including training, financial services, and market opportunities. When these support systems are fragmented or inconsistently delivered, entrepreneurial growth becomes unstable and difficult to sustain. In addition, literature on MSME development highlights that training continuity and sustained capacity-building are essential for translating knowledge into long-term business success. One-time or irregular training interventions are often insufficient to build deep entrepreneurial competencies. Instead, continuous mentoring, follow-up coaching, and progressive learning models are necessary to reinforce skills and ensure application in real business contexts (OECD, 2019). This aligns with the findings of this study, where respondents expressed the need for more consistent and long-term support mechanisms. Logistical barriers and resource constraints were also identified as significant factors limiting participation. These include transportation difficulties, scheduling conflicts, and limited financial capacity to attend training or trade events. Such barriers are widely recognized in development literature as structural constraints that disproportionately affect micro-entrepreneurs, particularly in rural or geographically dispersed areas. According to the Asian Development Bank (2020), inadequate infrastructure and limited access to support services reduce participation rates in entrepreneurship programs and weaken overall program effectiveness.

Furthermore, weak support systems—particularly in terms of follow-up assistance and market integration—were highlighted as limiting factors in sustaining entrepreneurial growth. The absence of continuous guidance and post-training support reduces the likelihood that entrepreneurs will fully implement and scale their learned skills. This is consistent with the findings of the OECD (2019), which emphasize that entrepreneurship programs are most effective when combined with integrated support systems that include mentoring, networking, and market access facilitation. The findings suggest that improving entrepreneurial participation requires a holistic and sustained approach. This includes strengthening continuous mentoring programs, simplifying access to financial and digital resources, expanding localized support services, and enhancing market linkage initiatives. The Department of Trade and Industry has implemented various MSME support programs; however, the results indicate that further strengthening of program integration and continuity is necessary to maximize impact.

**1. Challenges reduce participation in training, trade fairs, and support activities (8 participants: B1, B2, B3, B4, B8, W2, W4, W5).**

*beneficiaries may need a more accessible training schedule, continuous mentoring, and easier access to financial assistance. (IDI B1)*

*more training and continue to enhance mentoring. (IDI B2)*

*More training and mentoring support to access and even invite more suppliers and buyers for the development of our local products. (IDI B3)*

*I think beneficiaries like me still need more continuous training support from DTI. Especially for the development and help of local traders. (IDI B4)*

*more training, support, and a management system. (IDI B8)*

*beneficiaries need continuous mentoring, access to digital tools, additional funding opportunities, and stronger market linkages. (IDI W2)*

*They need more help, like free tricycles for travel, easier one-page loan forms, shared kitchens for food testers, and classes just for women youth, also, cheap internet spots in barangays. (IDI W4)*

*These challenges may limit participation, but DTI addresses them through flexible training modes such as online sessions and community-based programs. (IDI W5)*

This theme highlights that **various structural and resource-related challenges collectively reduce entrepreneurs' participation in capacity-building and market engagement activities**, such as training programs, trade fairs, and institutional support initiatives. The responses from participants (B1, B2, B3, B4, B8, W2, W4, W5) consistently point to the need for more inclusive, accessible, and sustained support systems. A dominant pattern in the data is the strong demand for **continuous training and mentoring support**. Participants such as B1, B2, B3, B4, and B8 emphasized that one-time training is not sufficient. Instead, they require ongoing guidance to enhance their skills, improve business operations, and adapt to market demands. This suggests that **entrepreneurial development is a continuous process**, not a one-time intervention. Another important issue is the need for **improved access to resources and support mechanisms**. B1 and W2 highlighted the importance of easier access to financial assistance, digital tools, and mentoring systems. These findings indicate that participation is not only affected by the availability of programs but also by how accessible and user-friendly these supports are. W4 provided detailed, practical insights into **context-specific barriers**, such as transportation difficulties, complex loan requirements, lack of shared production facilities, and limited internet access in barangays. These challenges reflect the everyday realities of small entrepreneurs, particularly those in local or rural settings, and demonstrate how logistical and infrastructural limitations directly reduce participation in programs and activities.

Additionally, there is a clear need for **stronger market linkages and networking opportunities**, as noted by B3 and W2. Participants expressed the importance of connecting with suppliers, buyers, and broader markets to sustain and grow their businesses. Limited participation in trade fairs and networking events restricts these opportunities. W5 acknowledged that, while these challenges exist, institutions like DTI attempt to address them through **flexible training approaches**, such as online sessions and community-based programs. This indicates that adaptive strategies are already being implemented, though gaps in accessibility and inclusivity remain.

**2. Business growth slows due to divided attention between livelihood activities, family roles, and program participation (6 participants: B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W3).**

*time constraints, location, and limited internet connections. (IDI B3)*

*Yes, I have had difficulty attending training due to time conflicts with managing the store and household responsibilities. There are also times when information about training comes late. And transportation can also be a challenge. (IDI B4)*

*more difficult to receive support because of the requirements needed. (IDI B6)*

*more time in training scheduling. (IDI B7)*

*The schedule of the training most of the time conflicts to family responsibilities. (IDI B8)*

*Yes, sometimes there are challenges like limited resources or communication gaps. It's not always easy, especially when reaching remote areas, but always try to find ways to overcome them. (IDI W3)*

This theme highlights that **entrepreneurs struggle to balance multiple responsibilities**, which significantly affects both their business growth and participation in development programs. The responses from participants (B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W3) show that managing business operations, household duties, and program engagement simultaneously creates **role conflict and time-related constraints**. A central issue emerging from the data is **time constraints and competing priorities**. Participants such as B3, B4, B7, and B8 consistently reported that training schedules often conflict with business operations and family responsibilities. For example, B4 emphasized the difficulty of attending training while managing a store and household duties, while B8 directly noted that training schedules frequently clash with family obligations. This indicates that entrepreneurs, particularly those in micro and family-run businesses, must constantly divide their attention across multiple roles. Another important factor is the presence of **logistical and resource-related barriers**, such as limited internet connectivity (B3), transportation challenges (B4), and complex requirements for accessing support (B6). These constraints further complicate participation, as entrepreneurs must invest additional time and effort just to access available programs. The responses also reflect **institutional and communication challenges**, including delayed information and scheduling inefficiencies, which intensify time conflicts and reduce opportunities for engagement. When combined with existing responsibilities, these issues make it even harder for entrepreneurs to plan and participate effectively. W3 provides a broader perspective by acknowledging that these challenges are common, especially in reaching remote areas, but also emphasize **resilience and adaptability**. This suggests that while entrepreneurs face structural barriers, they actively try to cope and find ways to continue participating when possible.

### **3. Missed opportunities for sales, networking, and product promotion affect long-term sustainability (5 participants: B5, W1, W2, W4, W5).**

*The training taught me to create structured budgets and track daily expenses systematically, which replaced my previous method of managing finances. (IDI B5)*

*The training greatly improved the way I manage my work by shifting from traditional manual processes to more efficient digital systems. It introduced the use of e-commerce platforms and digital tools, enabling better coordination, monitoring, and service delivery. This transition has helped MSME's become more competitive by adapting to online business strategies. (IDI W1)*

*I now emphasize practical applications, innovations, and sustainability in business practices. (IDI W2)*

*That training changed everything for me as a trainer. Before, I just read from slides but now I make sessions interactive. I used easy tools like drawing a business map on paper, where everyone writes their goals, cost, and customers. This way, trainees remember better and use it right away in their shops, it makes my work more effective, and they see faster results in their business, like more sales after one session. (IDI W4)*

*Training has improved my approach by making it more structured, data-driven, and client - centered. I now emphasize practical applications, innovation, and sustainability in business practices. (IDI W5)*

This theme highlights that **limited participation in training and support activities can lead to missed opportunities for sales growth, market expansion, and networking**, which are essential for long-term business sustainability. The responses from participants (B5, W1, W2, W4, W5) reflect how training and program engagement directly influence entrepreneurs' ability to improve business practices, adopt innovations, and access wider markets. A key insight from the data is that **training plays a critical role**

**in enhancing business management and financial practices.** For instance, B5 noted improvements in budgeting and expense tracking, which are essential for financial stability and informed decision-making. Without access to such training, entrepreneurs may continue using inefficient systems, limiting their growth potential. Another important pattern is the role of **digital transformation and innovation** in expanding business opportunities. W1 emphasized that training introduced MSMEs to e-commerce platforms and digital tools, enabling them to become more competitive and reach broader markets. This suggests that participation in training is directly linked to **increased visibility, improved coordination, and enhanced service delivery.** W2 and W5 further highlighted that training strengthens **practical application, innovation, and sustainability practices.** These elements are crucial for long-term success, as they allow entrepreneurs to adapt to changing market conditions and maintain competitiveness. Without such exposure, entrepreneurs may miss opportunities to innovate and improve their operations. W4 provided a concrete example of how improved training methods—such as interactive and practical approaches—lead to **immediate business results,** including increased sales and better customer engagement. This demonstrates that effective training not only builds knowledge but also translates into tangible economic outcomes. Overall, the data suggests that when entrepreneurs are unable to fully participate in training and support activities, they risk missing out on **critical opportunities for sales growth, networking with buyers and suppliers, and product promotion in wider markets.** These missed opportunities can accumulate overtime, ultimately affecting business sustainability.

#### **Theme 5: Continuous Support and Resources Access Drive Entrepreneurial Success.**

This theme demonstrates that **entrepreneurial development is a continuous process that extends beyond initial training sessions.** While training builds foundational knowledge and skills, **continuous mentoring and follow-up support are essential for sustaining improvements, reinforcing learning, and adapting to evolving business challenges.** The findings of the study demonstrate that entrepreneurial development is not a one-time intervention but a continuous process that extends beyond initial training sessions. Respondents emphasized that while training programs provide essential foundational knowledge and skills, sustained mentoring, follow-up support, and continued access to resources are crucial for maintaining business growth and adapting to changing market conditions. Without continuous support, the application of learned skills becomes inconsistent, limiting the long-term effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs. This finding is consistent with the **Human Capital Theory,** which posits that skills and knowledge require continuous reinforcement to remain productive and relevant. According to Gary Becker (1993), investments in human capital—such as training and education—yield higher returns when they are continuously developed through practice, experience, and reinforcement. In the context of entrepreneurship, this means that initial training must be complemented by ongoing support mechanisms to ensure sustained business performance. The results are also aligned with the **Experiential Learning Theory,** which emphasizes that learning is a cyclical process involving experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. As proposed by David Kolb (1984), individuals learn more effectively when they are continuously exposed to real-life applications and guided reflection. In this study, respondents indicated that follow-up mentoring and coaching sessions help them apply training more effectively in actual business operations, thereby strengthening entrepreneurial competence over time. Furthermore, literature from development institutions highlights that continuous support systems are essential for MSME sustainability. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2019) emphasizes that entrepreneurship programs are most effective when they include post-training support such as mentoring, networking opportunities, and access to business development services. These

elements help entrepreneurs navigate challenges such as market competition, financial management, and operational scaling. Similarly, the World Bank (2020) underscores that access to sustained resources, financial, technical, and advisories is critical for ensuring that small enterprises transition from survival-stage businesses to growth-oriented enterprises. Without continuous support, many micro-entrepreneurs struggle to maintain stability and scale their operations effectively. In the Philippine context, the Department of Trade and Industry has implemented various MSME development initiatives that include training, financing, and market support. However, the findings of this study suggest that strengthening post-training engagement mechanisms, such as regular mentoring and localized support services, can further enhance program effectiveness and sustainability.

**1. Continuous mentoring and follow-up support are needed beyond initial training (10 participants: B1, B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W2, W3, W5).**

*The training programs provided by DTI are helpful, especially in business planning, financial literacy, and marketing strategies. After attending the training, I became more organized in managing my finances and started keeping records of my sales and expenses (IDI B1)*

*It is a big help: experience training in DTI, especially in business plan, financial literacy, and marketing strategies. (IDI B2)*

*learned skills in marketing and financial marketing. (IDI B3)*

*My experience in attending DTI training programs is helpful and a need for the small owner, especially in local areas, because in the training we realized how we can improve our business more. I am thankful that we have training, and hopefully we will have more. (IDI B4)*

*I know how to budget the income, and how to manage the money properly. (IDI B6)*

*It changes me a lot how to handle the business. (IDI B7)*

*After I joined the training, I organized a small business, and I started to keep track of my finances. (IDI B8)*

*I now emphasize practical applications, innovations, and sustainability in business practices. (IDI W2)*

*It helped me become more organized and intentional in everything I do. I learned to value planning, communications, and continuous improvement, honestly, it made me a better trainer and a better person. (IDI W3)*

*Training has improved my approach by making it more structured, data-driven, and client - centered. I now emphasize practical applications, innovation, and sustainability in business practices. (IDI W5)*

This theme emphasizes that while **initial training programs provide valuable knowledge and skills**, entrepreneurs and trainers strongly express the need for **continuous mentoring, follow-up support, and sustained engagement** to ensure long-term business improvement and success. The responses from participants (B1, B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, W2, W3, W5) consistently highlight both the benefits of training and the necessity of ongoing support. A key pattern in the data is that **training significantly improves knowledge and business practices**. Participants such as B1, B2, and B3 noted gaining skills in business planning, financial literacy, and marketing strategies. These foundational competencies enabled them to become more organized, particularly in managing finances, tracking sales, and making informed business decisions. Several participants (B6, B7, B8) emphasized **behavioral and operational changes** after training, such as improved budgeting, better money management, and more structured business operations. These responses indicate that training has a transformative effect, helping entrepreneurs shift from informal practices to more systematic and professional approaches. B4 further highlighted that training is especially important for **small business owners in local areas**, as it provides practical insights into

improving business performance. However, the statement also implies a desire for **more frequent and continuous training opportunities**, suggesting that one-time interventions are not sufficient for sustained growth. From the trainers' perspective, W2, W3, and W5 emphasized the importance of **practical application, innovation, and continuous improvement**. W3 noted personal and professional growth because of training, including becoming more organized, intentional, and effective in delivering support. This reflects that continuous mentoring benefits not only entrepreneurs but also program facilitators. Despite these positive outcomes, the overarching implication across responses is that **skills gained from initial training need reinforcement through follow-up mentoring, coaching, and continuous guidance**. Without ongoing support, there is a risk that entrepreneurs may struggle to fully apply or sustain what they have learned.

## **2. Easier access to funding, simplified loan requirements, and financial assistance are needed (7 participants: B1, B6, B7, W1, W2, W4, W5)**

*Since joining the program, my income has improved and I am more financially stable. (IDI B1)*

*Yes, we received a micro loan, like materials for our business needs. (IDI B6)*

*No, but as a member a gain more training and financial support through product assessment. (IDI B7)*

*As a DTI worker, we typically guide beneficiaries in accessing financial assistance rather than directly availing loans ourselves, while we are cautious in recommending credit programs due to potential risks.*

*We ensure that the entrepreneurs are provided with the necessary information, resources, and support.*

*DTI focuses on offering non-financial assistance such as training, mentorship, and provision of materials, or livelihood support to help beneficiaries sustain their business. (IDI W1)*

*Yes, I assist clients with more credit assistance support for their financial support and link them with partner institutions. (IDI W2)*

*As a DTI worker, I don't apply for loans because DTI is not allowed to us, but I help others do. I guided them through programs like Pondo sa pagbabago at Pag asenso, Or proogram, which gives small loans without too much hassle. I've assisted hundreds in filling forms and preparing requirements, especially for food and retail businesses. (IDI W4)*

*Yes, I assist clients in accessing financial support programs and link them with partner financial institutions such as banks and microfinance organizations. (IDI W5)*

This theme highlights that **financial support is essential for entrepreneurial stability and growth**, but access to funding must be **simplified, expanded, and made more inclusive**. The responses from participants (B1, B6, B7, W1, W2, W4, W5) reflect both the positive impact of financial assistance and the continuing need to improve how these resources are delivered.

A key pattern in the data is that **financial assistance directly improves business performance and stability**. For example, B1 reported increased income and improved financial stability after joining the program, while B6 shared that microloans and material support helped sustain business operations. These responses confirm that access to funding—whether in cash or in-kind—has immediate and tangible benefits for entrepreneurs. However, not all participants have equal access to financial resources. B7 noted that while direct financial assistance was not received, support was provided through training and product assessment. This suggests that **financial support mechanisms may be uneven or limited**, and not all beneficiaries can fully access them. From the institutional perspective, W1 emphasized that DTI primarily provides **guidance, information, and non-financial support**, such as training and mentorship, while carefully recommending credit programs due to associated risks. This indicates that **access to loans is mediated and regulated**, which, while ensuring responsible lending, may also limit ease of access for

some entrepreneurs. W2, W4, and W5 highlighted the active role of trainers and DTI personnel in **facilitating access to financial assistance**, including linking entrepreneurs to banks, microfinance institutions, and government programs such as *Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-Asenso (P3)*. W4 specifically noted hands-on support in helping beneficiaries' complete requirements and process applications, showing that **assistance often requires guidance and administrative support**. Despite these efforts, the repeated emphasis on facilitation suggests that **loan application processes and requirements may still be complex or difficult for entrepreneurs to navigate independently**. This reinforces the need for simplification and more user-friendly systems.

### **3. Improved market linkages, digital tools, transportation support, and flexible training systems are needed (9 participants: B3, B4, B5, B7, B8, W1, W2, W4, W5).**

*so grateful to DTI program to improve my business and help continue running my small business. (IDI B3)*

*Overall, my experience with the DTI program has been helpful and positive. I learned many practical things that I can apply in my sari-sari store. I am thankful for the opportunity because it helped improve my business and made me a more confident small store owner. (IDI B4)*

*I am very grateful for the program; it gave me the skills and confidence to run my small home-based and online selling business. (IDI B5)*

*My experience is joyful, even tiring, but it is needed for myself and for my family. (IDI B7)*

*gives more help with the DTI go Negosyo program. (IDI B8)*

*DTI is more resilient, and more creative in changing global products. (IDI W1)*

*The DTI go Negosyo program is highly impactful in improving MSME's and continuous will further strengthen its effectiveness. (IDI W2)*

*DTI Go Negosyo is like a family. It changes lives for the better. I've watched shy vendors become confident bosses. If you are a small business owner, come to our free training in Davao Oriental. Text our tabang Negosyo center. (IDI W4)*

*The DTI Go Negosyo program is highly impactful in empowering MSME's, and continuous improvements will further strengthen its effectiveness. (IDI W5)*

This theme reflects that while entrepreneurs generally have **positive experiences with DTI programs**, there is a strong need to further enhance support systems by improving **market access, digital integration, logistical assistance, and flexible learning approaches**. The responses from participants (B3, B4, B5, B7, B8, W1, W2, W4, W5) highlight both appreciation for existing programs and the need for continued development. A dominant pattern in the data is the **positive impact of DTI programs on business improvement and confidence-building**. Participants such as B3, B4, and B5 expressed gratitude, noting that the programs helped them improve their businesses, gain practical skills, and build confidence as entrepreneurs. This indicates that current interventions are effective in **capacity-building and empowerment**. Another important element is the role of programs like **Go Negosyo** in strengthening MSMEs. Participants (B8, W1, W2, W4, W5) emphasized that these initiatives contribute to making entrepreneurs more resilient, creative, and competitive. W4's statement highlights the **transformational impact** of the program, describing how it helps small vendors evolve into confident business owners. Despite these positive outcomes, the theme also implies the need for **expanded and more accessible support systems**. Although not always explicitly stated, the broader context of responses suggests that entrepreneurs benefit most when they have:

- **Stronger market linkages** (connections to buyers, suppliers, and wider markets)

- **Access to digital tools and platforms** for online selling and promotion
- **Transportation and logistical support** to attend training and market events
- **Flexible training systems** that accommodate their schedules and responsibilities

B7's response, which reflects both effort and fatigue, suggests that while participation is valuable, it can also be **physically and emotionally demanding**, reinforcing the need for more accessible and flexible program delivery. From the institutional perspective, W1, W2, and W5 emphasized the importance of **continuous program improvement and innovation** to enhance effectiveness. This indicates that while current systems are impactful, there is recognition that **ongoing enhancement is necessary to meet evolving entrepreneurial needs**.

## **Integration of Findings: Relationship and Difference with the Theoretical Framework**

### ***1. Relationship of Findings to Theoretical Framework***

Overall, the findings of the study support the integration of **Financial Inclusion Theory, Human Capital Theory, and Capability Approach**. The results consistently show that access to financial assistance, training programs, and market linkages contribute positively to entrepreneurial development and livelihood improvement. The high rating of financial and credit assistance supports Financial Inclusion Theory, which emphasizes that access to financial services enables individuals to improve income and reduce poverty. Similarly, the strong results in training and capacity-building confirm Human Capital Theory, which states that skills development enhances productivity and entrepreneurial performance. Meanwhile, improvements in livelihood outcomes such as income, market access, and resource management skills align with the Capability Approach of Amartya Sen, which focuses on expanding individuals' real opportunities to improve their quality of life. This means that the empirical findings of the study support and strengthen the applicability of the anchored theories, as the program outcomes reflect both improved access to resources and enhanced individual capabilities.

### ***2. Difference Analysis in Relation to Theory***

The test of differences revealed that some demographic variables, such as age, gender, sources of income, and number of trainings attended, show significant differences in perceived outcomes and program effectiveness. This partially supports the theoretical framework. While **Financial Inclusion Theory and Human Capital Theory** assume equal benefit once access is provided, the results of this study show that benefits are not uniformly experienced across all groups.

For example:

- Older respondents reported higher perception → suggests experience and maturity influence program utilization
- Entrepreneurs gained more benefits than laborers → confirms that alignment with economic activity matters
- More training exposure leads to better outcomes → supports Human Capital Theory (learning accumulation effect)
- Gender differences (women have higher outcomes) → supports the Gender and Development perspective

This implies that while the theories are applicable, contextual and demographic factors moderate their effects, meaning that access alone is not enough—utilization and capability also matter.

## ***Quantitative Discussion***

### **Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

The demographic distribution of respondents provides important contextual grounding for interpreting the effectiveness of the DTI Go Negosyo Program. The data show that most respondents belong to the age groups 36–45 (40.00%) and 46–55 (36.30%), indicating that the program primarily serves individuals in their economically productive and household-responsible years. This is consistent with findings from the World Bank (2022), which noted that livelihood and microenterprise programs tend to have higher participation among middle-aged individuals due to their greater financial responsibilities and stronger motivation to stabilize household income. The dominance of female respondents (70.00%) reflects the growing feminization of microenterprise participation. This supports OECD (2020) reports that women disproportionately engage in informal and micro-scale entrepreneurship as a coping mechanism for income insecurity and limited formal employment opportunities. Women are often more active in home-based enterprises such as food vending, retailing, and small trading, which aligns with the livelihood profiles identified in this study.

The civil status distribution, where 90.00% are married, further emphasizes the economic burden carried by households in the study area. Married individuals typically engage in livelihood programs to support dependents, consistent with the livelihood coping strategies described in the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (DFID, 1999), which highlights that household survival strategies are strongly influenced by dependency ratios. Educational attainment results show that most respondents are high school graduates (66.30%), which reflects a moderate educational background typical among MSME operators in developing economies. According to the Asian Development Bank (2019), MSME owners in Southeast Asia often rely more on experiential learning and informal training rather than formal tertiary education. The presence of 52.50% of respondents with 4–5 dependents indicates high household financial pressure, reinforcing the importance of livelihood interventions. Monthly income levels concentrated at ₱5,000–₱10,000 (72.50%) confirm that the sample belongs to the low-income sector, consistent with the Philippine Statistics Authority (2023) MSME poverty-linked profiles. Overall, the demographic data suggest that the program primarily serves low-income, high-dependency households engaged in informal and semi-formal economic activities, making them highly relevant beneficiaries of livelihood enhancement programs.

### **Training and Capacity-Building Programs**

The training and capacity-building component obtained a high overall mean of 3.02, indicating strong perceived effectiveness. Respondents consistently agreed that the program enhances entrepreneurial knowledge, financial literacy, and practical business skills. This finding strongly aligns with human capital theory (Becker, 1993), which posits that investment in education and skills directly improves productivity and economic outcomes. The results also support McKenzie and Woodruff (2017), who found that business training programs significantly improve managerial practices among microentrepreneurs in developing countries, particularly in areas such as record-keeping, pricing, and financial discipline.

The high rating for confidence in applying skills ( $M = 3.08$ ) suggests that training is not merely theoretical but is effectively translated into practice. This is consistent with the International Labor Organization (2021), which emphasizes that experiential and applied learning approaches are more effective in MSME development programs than purely lecture-based training. Furthermore, respondents' recognition of long-term personal development highlights the sustainability of learning outcomes. This suggests that training contributes not only to immediate business improvements but also to long-term entrepreneurial identity formation and capacity strengthening.

### **Financial and Credit Assistance**

Financial and credit assistance obtained a moderately high overall mean of 2.91, indicating positive but uneven implementation. Respondents acknowledged that financial support is accessible and contributes to poverty reduction and business development. However, the relatively lower scores in actual utilization ( $M = 2.74$ ) and confidence in financial management ( $M = 2.78$ ) suggest that access alone is not sufficient to ensure impact. This finding is consistent with Banerjee et al. (2015), who found that microcredit programs often yield mixed results when beneficiaries lack sufficient financial literacy or when institutional barriers limit access. Similarly, the Asian Development Bank (2019) emphasizes that financial inclusion must be paired with capacity-building to ensure that beneficiaries can effectively manage and sustain borrowed capital. The result also reflects OECD (2020) findings that MSMEs in developing regions often face bureaucratic and procedural challenges in accessing credit, which limits full program utilization. Thus, while financial assistance is recognized as beneficial, its effectiveness depends heavily on accessibility, simplification of processes, and prior entrepreneurial preparedness.

### **Market Linkages and Promotion**

Market linkage and promotion also obtained a high mean score (2.91), indicating effective program implementation in enhancing market access and visibility. Respondents highlighted participation in trade fairs, online platforms, and branding activities as major contributors to business exposure. This finding is consistent with Porter's (2008) competitive advantage theory, which emphasizes that market access and differentiation are critical determinants of enterprise success. Additionally, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2021) highlights that MSME participation in trade fairs and digital marketplaces significantly improves market integration and sales performance.

However, lower participation rates among some respondents suggest uneven access to market opportunities. This aligns with OECD (2020), which notes that MSMEs in rural and semi-urban areas often face logistical, digital, and resource-based constraints that limit full participation in market linkage programs. Despite these limitations, the overall findings confirm that market linkage initiatives play a crucial role in improving MSME visibility, competitiveness, and sustainability.

### **Livelihood Outcomes**

The livelihood outcomes obtained a high mean of 3.10, indicating strong perceived impact on economic and social well-being. Respondents reported increased income, improved living standards, enhanced food security, and greater financial stability. This finding aligns strongly with the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (DFID, 1999), which states that livelihood interventions improve well-being by strengthening access to financial, human, and social capital. The increase in access to financing ( $M = 3.19$ ) and market connectivity ( $M = 3.15$ ) suggests that the program enhances both resource acquisition and economic participation. Furthermore, Khandker (2005) found that microfinance and livelihood programs contribute significantly to poverty reduction when combined with skills development and market access. The results of this study support this conclusion, as beneficiaries reported both income growth and improved household stability. The improvement in entrepreneurial skills and resource management further indicates that the program contributes to long-term sustainability rather than short-term income gains alone.

### **Differences in Program Implementation Across Demographics**

The analysis revealed significant differences in age and source of income. Older respondents (56 and above) reported higher perception scores, suggesting that experience and life stage influence program appreciation. This aligns with Shane and Venkataraman (2000), who argue that entrepreneurial cognition improves with experience and exposure. Similarly, individuals engaged in business activities rated the

program more positively than those in labor or service work. This supports findings from the World Bank (2021), which indicate that individuals already engaged in entrepreneurship are more likely to benefit from business development programs due to higher relevance and absorptive capacity.

### **Differences in Livelihood Outcomes**

Significant differences were found in gender, income source, and training attendance. Female respondents reported higher livelihood outcomes, which is consistent with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2022), which states that women often reinvest income gains into household welfare, resulting in stronger perceived livelihood improvements. Similarly, respondents engaged in entrepreneurship reported higher outcomes compared to other income groups, reinforcing the importance of business alignment in program effectiveness. Additionally, those who attended more training reported significantly better outcomes, supporting McKenzie and Woodruff (2017), who emphasized that training intensity is strongly correlated with improved firm performance.

### **Challenges and Barriers**

Despite positive outcomes, respondents reported persistent challenges such as market competition, documentation complexity, limited access to information, and geographic barriers. These findings are consistent with OECD (2020) and World Bank (2021), which identify structural constraints such as regulatory burden, weak digital infrastructure, and limited institutional reach as major barriers to MSME development in emerging economies. The high-rating for-market competition ( $M = 2.89$ ) reflects the increasingly saturated nature of micro-enterprise markets, particularly in food retail and small trading sectors. This suggests that while programs improve capacity, external market conditions still significantly affect business sustainability.

### **Qualitative Discussion**

#### **Theme 1: Accessibility and Logistical Barriers Limit Entrepreneurial Participation**

The findings reveal that accessibility and logistical barriers significantly affect the ability of DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees to actively participate in post-program entrepreneurial activities. Many participants reported experiencing time constraints due to competing responsibilities between business operations, household obligations, and attendance in training or support activities. Geographic distance, transportation difficulties, and mobility limitations further restricted their access to mentoring sessions, seminars, and market-related opportunities. Additionally, communication gaps and the delayed dissemination of program information created missed opportunities for participation. These findings suggest that logistical and accessibility-related challenges remain critical barriers that limit beneficiaries' sustained engagement in entrepreneurial development initiatives.

A major issue identified is **role conflict and time poverty**, where entrepreneurs must simultaneously manage business operations, household responsibilities, and program participation. This aligns with the concept that micro-entrepreneurs often experience "time scarcity" due to overlapping economic and domestic roles, which reduces their capacity to engage in external development programs (Dutta & Banerjee, 2018). When training schedules are rigid or not aligned with participants' availability, attendance becomes inconsistent, thereby limiting skill development and program impact.

Another significant barrier is **geographic and transportation limitations**, particularly for participants in remote or underserved areas. According to the World Bank (2020), spatial inequality remains a major constraint in access to entrepreneurial support services, especially in developing regions where infrastructure and transport systems are limited. In this study, participants reported difficulty attending

training sessions due to distance and lack of transportation support, which directly affects their exposure to capacity-building opportunities and market linkages.

The theme also highlights **communication gaps and delayed information dissemination**, which contribute to missed opportunities for participation. Ineffective communication systems reduce awareness of training schedules, financial assistance programs, and market events. As noted by OECD (2019), timely and transparent information dissemination is essential for inclusive participation in MSME development programs, as delays can disproportionately disadvantage small entrepreneurs with limited access to digital platforms.

Furthermore, these barriers reflect broader issues of **institutional accessibility**, where program design may not fully account for the realities of micro-entrepreneurs. Flexible and decentralized program delivery—such as community-based training, hybrid learning models, and localized outreach—is increasingly recommended in MSME development literature to address these gaps (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2021).

### **Theme 2: Digital Limitations Restrict Business Growth and Program Engagement**

The data indicates that digital limitations pose significant challenges to business growth and continued engagement in entrepreneurship support programs. Participants emphasized that unstable internet connectivity, limited access to digital devices, and inadequate technological infrastructure hindered their participation in online trainings, virtual mentoring, and digital marketing activities. Furthermore, insufficient digital competencies limited their ability to maximize online platforms for product promotion, customer engagement, and business expansion. These findings imply that despite the growing importance of digital entrepreneurship, many beneficiaries continue to face technological barriers that restrict their competitiveness and participation in digitally driven business opportunities. A key issue identified is the **digital divide**, which refers to unequal access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). According to Van Dijk (2020), the digital divide is not only about access to devices but also includes disparities in skills and usage, which directly affect individuals' ability to participate in the digital economy. In this study, participants reported limited ability to engage in online training and e-commerce platforms due to poor connectivity and lack of technological resources, highlighting both first level (access) and second-level (skills) digital divides.

Another important factor is **limited digital literacy**, which reduces entrepreneurs' capacity to effectively utilize online tools for business growth. As noted by OECD (2020), digital skills are essential for MSMEs to remain competitive, especially in areas such as online marketing, customer engagement, and digital financial management. Without adequate training and exposure, entrepreneurs are less able to transition from traditional to digital business models. The findings also emphasize that **digital exclusion directly affects market competitiveness and business scalability**. MSMEs that cannot fully participate in digital platforms often miss opportunities for wider market reach, online branding, and customer acquisition. This aligns with the findings of the World Bank (2021), which states that digital adoption among small enterprises is strongly linked to increased productivity, innovation, and market expansion.

Furthermore, limited infrastructure, particularly in rural or underserved areas, exacerbates these challenges. Weak internet connectivity and a lack of reliable access to digital tools create structural barriers that prevent consistent engagement in online entrepreneurial ecosystems. This reinforces the need for inclusive digital infrastructure development and capacity-building initiatives.

### Theme 3: Financial and Administrative Barriers Hinder Business Expansion

The findings demonstrate that financial and administrative barriers substantially constrain the expansion and sustainability of businesses among program grantees. Participants highlighted difficulties in complying with documentary requirements, navigating bureaucratic procedures, and securing timely approval of financial assistance or business support services. Many also expressed challenges related to limited capital and difficulties in accessing additional funding for business improvement or expansion. Delays in institutional processes further slowed operational decisions and growth initiatives. These findings suggest that administrative complexity and financial inaccessibility remain major obstacles that hinder beneficiaries from fully translating entrepreneurial knowledge into sustainable business growth. The findings reveal that **financial constraints and administrative complexities significantly hinder the expansion and sustainability of MSME businesses** among DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees. These barriers manifest in two interconnected dimensions: (1) limited access to financial capital, and (2) complex institutional and bureaucratic processes required to access support services. A major issue identified is **limited access to financial resources and capital insufficiency**, which restricts entrepreneurs' ability to scale operations, increase production capacity, and invest in business improvements. According to Beck and Demirgüç-Kunt (2021), access to finance is a critical determinant of MSME growth, as financial constraints directly limit innovation, expansion, and competitiveness. In this study, participants reported difficulties in securing additional funding, indicating that existing financial assistance mechanisms may not fully meet the capital needs of micro and small enterprises.

Another significant barrier is **administrative complexity and bureaucratic procedures**, particularly in relation to documentation requirements and loan processing systems. Participants expressed difficulty in complying with multiple documentary requirements and navigating institutional processes to access financial support. This aligns with the findings of Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt, and Maksimovic (2019), who noted that excessive regulatory and administrative burdens disproportionately affect small enterprises, reducing their ability to access formal financial systems. The theme also highlights **delays in approval processes and institutional inefficiencies**, which further slowdown business decision-making and growth opportunities. According to the World Bank (2020), bureaucratic delays in financial and business support systems can significantly reduce MSME productivity by limiting timely access to capital and resources needed for expansion. In the context of this study, such delays hinder entrepreneurs from responding quickly to market demands and investment opportunities.

Additionally, the reliance on **intermediary facilitation for financial access** suggests that entrepreneurs often depend on institutional support personnel to navigate complex systems. While this support is beneficial, it also reflects underlying structural inefficiencies that make financial access less direct and more time-consuming.

### Theme 4: Participation Challenges Affect Business Growth and Sustainability

The findings show that participation-related challenges directly influence the growth and long-term sustainability of beneficiaries' businesses. Due to time conflicts, family responsibilities, logistical limitations, and other external constraints, many participants reported reduced involvement in training programs, trade fairs, networking opportunities, and other capacity-building activities. The findings indicate that **participation-related challenges significantly affect both the growth and long-term sustainability of MSME businesses** among DTI Go Negosyo Program beneficiaries. These challenges arise from a combination of time constraints, family and livelihood responsibilities, logistical limitations, and structural barriers that reduce active engagement in entrepreneurial development activities.

A key issue identified is **role overload and time poverty**, where entrepreneurs must simultaneously manage business operations, household responsibilities, and program participation. This finding aligns with the work of Brush et al. (2019), who emphasize that women and micro-entrepreneurs often experience role strain due to overlapping domestic and economic responsibilities, which limits their ability to participate in external development programs. In this study, such competing demands resulted in reduced attendance in training sessions, trade fairs, and mentoring activities. Another important factor is **limited participation in capacity-building and networking opportunities**, which directly affects entrepreneurial performance. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2020), entrepreneurial success is strongly influenced by access to networks, knowledge exchange, and market exposure. When participation is limited, entrepreneurs miss opportunities for product promotion, buyer engagement, and strategic partnerships, all of which are essential for business scaling and competitiveness. Additionally, reduced participation contributes to **slower business decision-making and limited operational growth**, as entrepreneurs are less exposed to updated business practices, innovation strategies, and market trends. This limits their ability to adapt to changing economic environments and weakens long-term sustainability.

#### **Theme 5: Continuous Support and Resource Access Drive Entrepreneurial Success**

The findings underscore the importance of continuous support and accessible resources in promoting long-term entrepreneurial success among DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees. Participants consistently emphasized the need for ongoing mentoring, follow-up coaching, and technical guidance beyond the initial training phase to help them address emerging business challenges. They also highlighted the importance of easier access to financial assistance, simplified funding processes, stronger market linkages, digital tools, and flexible delivery of support services. These findings suggest that sustained institutional support, resource accessibility, and continuous capacity-building mechanisms are essential in empowering beneficiaries to maintain business operations, adapt to challenges, and achieve long-term entrepreneurial success. The findings emphasize that **continuous institutional support and accessible resources are essential drivers of long-term entrepreneurial success** among DTI Go Negosyo Program grantees. Participants consistently expressed that initial training alone is not sufficient; instead, sustained mentoring, follow-up coaching, and ongoing technical assistance are necessary to help entrepreneurs respond effectively to evolving business challenges. A key element of this theme is the importance of **continuous capacity-building and post-training support systems**. According to Henry and Lewis (2018), entrepreneurship development is most effective when learning is reinforced through iterative mentoring and coaching rather than one-time training interventions. In this study, participants highlighted the need for continuous guidance to improve decision-making, operational efficiency, and business sustainability. Another significant factor is **access to financial resources and simplified funding mechanisms**. Financial accessibility remains a core determinant of MSME growth, as emphasized by Beck and Demirgüç-Kunt (2021), who argue that improved access to finance enables firms to invest in innovation, expand operations, and stabilize cash flow. Participants in this study stressed the need for easier loan processes, more inclusive funding systems, and timely financial assistance to sustain business operations. The findings also highlight the importance of **strong market linkages and digital integration**, which enhance business visibility and competitiveness. According to OECD (2020), MSMEs that are integrated into digital platforms and market networks are more likely to experience growth and resilience due to increased access to customers, suppliers, and business opportunities. Participants noted that stronger linkages with buyers and suppliers, as well as access to digital tools, significantly improve their business performance.

Additionally, **flexible program delivery systems** were identified as a key enabler of participation and success. Flexible training modalities—such as hybrid learning, community-based sessions, and online platforms—allow entrepreneurs to engage more effectively despite time, location, and resource constraints. This aligns with the findings of World Bank (2021), which emphasize that adaptive and inclusive support systems are critical for strengthening MSME ecosystems in developing economies.

## Chapter V

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

This study assessed the status of the DTI Go Negosyo Program and its influence on the livelihood and development of beneficiaries. It specifically examined the demographic profile of respondents, the level of program implementation, the extent of livelihood outcomes, and the relationship between program implementation and beneficiary development. Using mixed methods sequential explanatory design, quantitative data were collected through survey questionnaires and supported by qualitative responses to provide deeper insights. The findings revealed that most respondents are married, high school graduates, with 4–5 dependents, and earning between ₱5,000–₱10,000 monthly, indicating that beneficiaries belong to low-income households with high dependency levels. The DTI Go Negosyo Program was generally assessed as effectively implemented, particularly in terms of entrepreneurial training, skills development, and business support services. However, areas such as access to financial assistance, continuous mentoring, and market linkage were identified as needing improvement. In terms of livelihood outcomes, beneficiaries experienced moderate to significant improvements, including increased income, enhanced entrepreneurial skills, and improved ability to meet family needs. Statistical analysis showed a significant relationship between program implementation and livelihood outcomes, indicating that better implementation contributes to greater beneficiary development.

#### Conclusions

Based on the integrated quantitative and qualitative findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

##### **1: To determine the demographic profile of the respondents**

The respondents of the study are predominantly married, high school graduates, with 4–5 dependents, and earning between ₱5,000–₱10,000 monthly. This indicates that the beneficiaries of the DTI Go Negosyo Program largely belong to the low-income sector with high household dependency, making them economically vulnerable and in need of livelihood support interventions.

##### **2: To determine the level of the DTI, the Go Negosyo Program implementation**

The DTI Go Negosyo Program is generally effectively implemented, particularly in the areas of entrepreneurial training, skills development, and business support services. However, certain components, such as access to financial assistance, continuous mentoring, and market linkage require further strengthening to enhance program effectiveness.

##### **3: To determine the level of livelihood outcomes of the beneficiaries**

The beneficiaries experienced moderate to significant improvements in their livelihood, including increased income, improved entrepreneurial skills, and enhanced capacity to support household needs. This suggests that the program contributes positively to the economic condition of the beneficiaries.

#### **4: To determine the relationship between program implementation and livelihood outcomes**

There is a significant relationship between the level of program implementation and livelihood outcomes, indicating that better and more effective implementation leads to improved livelihood and development among beneficiaries. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Department of Trade and Industry's Go Negosyo Program has a **significant and positive influence on the livelihood and development of its beneficiaries**. The program is generally **highly implemented**, particularly in terms of training, mentorship, and accessibility, which contributed to improved income, business growth, and financial stability among participants. The significant relationship between program implementation and livelihood outcomes confirms that effective delivery of support services enhances entrepreneurial capacity and economic well-being. Furthermore, the qualitative findings revealed that while beneficiaries experienced financial improvement and skills development, challenges such as limited capital and market competition still affect business sustainability. Overall, the study affirms that the Go Negosyo Program is an effective government intervention for livelihood development, although continuous support and program enhancement are necessary to ensure long-term success among beneficiaries.

#### **Recommendations**

Considering the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

##### **1: What is the demographic profile of the respondents?**

Since the beneficiaries are mostly low-income individuals with high dependency levels, it is recommended that:

1. The DTI should prioritize vulnerable households in program targeting to ensure that assistance reaches those with the greatest economic need.
2. Additional social support services (e.g. financial literacy, family budget seminars) should be integrated to help beneficiaries manage limited resources effectively.

##### **2: What is the level of the DTI Go Negosyo Program implementation?**

Given that the program is generally effective but with identified gaps, it is recommended that:

1. The DTI should enhance access to financial assistance by strengthening partnerships with banks, cooperatives, and microfinance institutions.
2. A continuous mentorship program should be institutionalized to guide beneficiaries beyond initial training.
3. The program should expand market linkage initiatives, including digital marketing support, trade fairs, and product promotion platforms.

##### **3: What is the level of livelihood outcomes of the beneficiaries?**

To further improve livelihood outcomes, it is recommended that:

1. The DTI should provide advanced and specialized entrepreneurial training, particularly in business management, innovation, and digital skills.
2. Beneficiaries should be encouraged to diversify income sources to strengthen economic resilience.
3. Establish monitoring systems to track income growth and business progress over time.

##### **4: Is there a significant relationship between program implementation and livelihood outcomes?**

Since a significant relationship exists, it is recommended that:

1. DTI should continuously improve program delivery quality, as better implementation leads to better outcomes.
2. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure consistency and effectiveness of services.

3. Allocate more resources to high-impact components (training, mentoring, financial support) that directly influence livelihood success.

Considering the findings, it is recommended that the Department of Trade and Industry further strengthen the Go Negosyo Program by enhancing access to financial assistance through expanded capital support, flexible loan schemes, and closer linkages with financing institutions. The agency should also sustain and upgrade training and mentorship programs by incorporating advanced entrepreneurial skills, digital marketing, and financial management to ensure business competitiveness. To address sustainability issues, continuous monitoring, coaching, and post-program support should be provided to beneficiaries, particularly in navigating market competition. Strengthening partnerships with local government units and private sectors is also recommended to improve program accessibility and resource availability. Lastly, future researchers may conduct similar studies in other areas or include additional variables to further evaluate and improve the long-term effectiveness of the program.

#### Recommendations for Future Researchers

1. Conduct similar studies in other municipalities or provinces to compare results.
2. Include additional variables such as business sustainability, profitability, and long-term impact.
3. Utilize a larger sample size and longitudinal approach to measure changes over time.

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