

The Psychological Impact of Social Enterprise: A Case Study on Bote Central and their Partner Community in Sagada

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INTRODUCTION

Social enterprises have been identified as a viable solution to poverty. They are businesses with a social objective, hence, they are financially sustainable and socially relevant. However, most people only look at the managerial side of social enterprise – the entrepreneurs, what kinds of businesses there are, and what are the different strategies. As a social phenomenon, it is also very important to look at the perspective of the community where the social enterprises are based to give a fuller and richer perspective of the phenomenon. Thus, our study aims to look at the psychological impact of these social enterprises on the community, specifically the psychosocial prosperity and empowerment produced by these social enterprises.

Thus, the researchers aim to look at these factors in the lives of the people in the community as influenced by the social enterprise by asking these research questions:

1. What is the psychological impact of the social enterprise on the partner beneficiaries in the community?
2. Are there manifestations of psychosocial prosperity and empowerment due to the social enterprise?

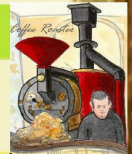
Through intensive review of related literature, the researchers came up with the following framework to guide their research:



METHODS

To know the psychological impact of the partners and their perspective, **six semi-structured interviews** were conducted in Sagada. This social enterprise sells coffee roasting facilities to coffee-growing communities. Their social objective is to empower farmers to produce coffee “from soil to cup”. The roasting facility, allows farmers to sell roasted coffee that yields a higher profit compared to green beans.

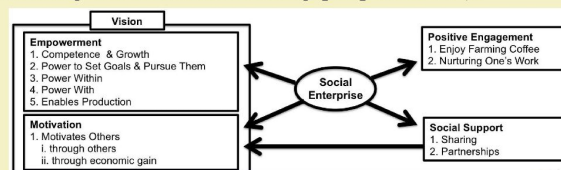
The participants were two founding partners who manage the coffee roasting facility in Sagada, one local government unit representative, and three farmers. The data was analyzed through an **investigative method of thematic analysis** where even themes not found in the literature were explored.



RESULTS

The locals are generally happy in their community even before the involvement of the social enterprise. However, Bote Central did succeed in uplifting the coffee industry in Sagada (“When Bote Central was involved, the coffee programs in that area was uplifted.”), and from this the following themes of psychological impact arise. First is **Imparting the Vision** where they echoed the vision of Bote Central to build the coffee industry in Sagada, even though some of them did not have a direct contact with the SE. This means that over time, the vision circulated and was accepted by the community as their own (“gusto namin...ito yung coffee capital ng Mountain Province.”). The vision empowered the partners to work towards it as a community. Second, **Empowerment** has several sub-themes: competence & growth when they learn from fellow farmers about coffee planting, power to set long-term goals & to pursue them by taking concrete steps to achieve the vision, power within where they have the confidence that they can contribute to their family financially, power with by forming groups to achieve the goal, and enables production where productivity is

enhanced though more coffee trees are still needed. Third, **Motivation** is divided into motivation through others by seeing the success of fellow farmers that inspire them, and motivation through economic gain. Fourth, **Social Support** is experienced through sharing of knowledge & resources and in partnerships formed such as between Bote Central and the local government. Lastly, **Positive Engagement** is about their newfound passion of planting coffee despite the difficulties as expressed through enjoying one’s work (“relaxing, naappreciate mo ang nature”), and nurturing one’s work (“Growing a tree it’s like caring [for] a child.”).



DISCUSSION

Through this study, we were able to support claims that aside from economic impact, SE has a psychological impact to its partners. It implies that the Filipino farmers can be empowered by inspiring in them a **vision to work towards: a vision out of poverty**. It also suggests that if the vision is clear, simple, strong enough, and is internalized by the people, they can work towards it as a community. These findings imply that through **equal partnership** between the entrepreneur and the community, they can prosper in their objective. It urges the SE

to **frequently communicate** with the community in order to: (1) discern if the message was internalized, (2) be informed when there is a need to strengthen and increase facilities, and (3) foster continuous honesty, openness, and sharing of knowledge with their partners. Furthermore, sometimes SEs do not necessarily have to affect communities in all aspects of their lives (i.e. all elements of psychosocial prosperity); the impact can be specific but widely felt, such as the uplifting of the coffee industry in Sagada.

