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RESEARCH ARTICLE

LIVELIHOOD AND TRAINING NEEDS OF MAMANWA TRIBE

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ABSTRACT

This study delves on the livelihood and training needs of Mamanwa tribe in the existence of local assets like forest, agriculture, and marine resources as a competitive edge in the locality including occupational tools to design a sustainable livelihood preparation intended for Mamanwa which is considered as the oldest and second poorest indigenous group in the Philippines. Mamanwa mainly rely on shifting agriculture with hunting and gathering forest resources. These natural resources are no longer sufficient to support their livelihood needs of their family. Thus, Mamanwa Tribe has difficult way of living and is financially hard-up due to no permanent work. Hence, the researchers conducted this study to identify the relevant resources found in their community and to suggest livelihood programs, projects, and activities. The researchers utilized a descriptive survey through a researcher-made questionnaire. The high poverty incidence of Mamanwa is attributed by large family sizes and poor educational attainment despite majority of its population belongs to labor force of the economy. Secondly, the disparity of population in terms of gender poses a challenge that affected their livelihood. The Mamanwa relied on subsistence farming and fishing.

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INTRODUCTION

Mamanwa is one of the surviving oldest ethnic inhabitants in the Philippines particularly in Caraga bearing distinctive class of breed in their looks and physical features. They have a dark skin complexion, kinky-haired, snub-nosed and with black eyes (shorturl.at/ewzH9). They have an equal and parallel physical likeness to the Negritos and Monobos (ICCA, 2018). The Mamanwas and Manobos are the original inhabitants of Tandag City before the Spaniards came (Malong, 2018). The term Mamanwa is etymologized from the words *man* means first and *banwa* as forest thus, widely known as the *first forest dwellers*.

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They are nomadic in nature, relying mainly on hunting, shifting agriculture, gathering forest resources such as rattan, wild fruit bearing trees, and grow minimal crops to supplement their foraging activities. Yet, these natural resources are infrequent, gradually insufficient, and no longer abundant to sustain their daily livelihood activities as a need of their family to survive. Hence, Mamanwa is considered as the second poorest Indigenous People group in the Philippines (Burton, 2003). Mamanwas are financially hard-up due to no permanent work although they produced excellent winnowing baskets, rattan hammocks, and other household containers because they transfer from a place to another place especially in case of deaths to leave and forget grief, sadness, great sorrows, and painful memories. This obviously remarkable practice of Mamanwa tribe leads them a difficult way of living. Most especially that Mamanwa is consequently ranked number one

among the least literate and the least in number among the tribes in the Philippines (shorturl.at/iwxA4). Illiteracy is very evident to most of Mamanwa which redound to multi-faceted dilemma within their society like malnutrition, discrimination, and the like (Tejano, 2016). Mamanwas are also considered as the most needy, underprivileged, deprived, and vulnerable indigenous people in Mindanao (Tomaquin, 2013). Although indigenous cultures underwent major upheavals, many of the fundamental values, beliefs, and practices have survived and are beginning to be recognized as having a fitting confession as valid for today's generation as it is for generations past Barndahard (2008) as cited by Picardal (2017). Mamanwa's unique culture and distinctive traditions, beliefs, and ways of life have been acculturated and practiced from generation to generation (Tejano, 2016). The Mamanwas cultural and social milieu is very rich in oral traditions, indigenous knowledge system, and values that should be preserved as part of the Filipino heritage (Malong, 2018). The Mamanwas are very simple and peace-loving people. They have a very humble life and do not have much worldly possessions. As a general rule of livelihood or "Panginabuhian" (*Visayan language*), Mamanwa typically creates basket making and mat weaving. They usually do "manguway" which refers to the process of stripping the barks of rattan plant or "uway", the primary material for making baskets. They also used "uway" to make "bukag" (a kind of basket), "duyan" (hammock), and other furniture. They also produce other weaving from other raw materials such as "lagahit" (strings made from plant bark), "banig" (mat for sleeping made from a plant called "baliw"). This is probably one of the main reasons why the Mamanwas who are engaged in basket weaving prefer to live near the mountains. Their economic activities explained the nomadic nature of the Mamanwas. They keep on searching for ideal settlements that would support their livelihood activities which explains why they are dispersed all across North-Eastern Mindanao and Eastern Visayas. They transferred to location where the land supported their livelihood (Diaz, 2014). This exploration on the livelihood and training needs of the Mamanwa Tribe is to contribute as basis of intervention to augment their daily living. Through this study, the researchers would be able to identify the relevant resources found in their community and to suggest livelihood programs, projects, and activities such as training on handicraft and in modern farming that could lead them to generate additional income out from the abundance of means in their locality. Efficient and proper utilization of resources will also be introduced to them so they will be equipped with the necessary skills for economic independence. Hence, Mamanwas will no longer be dependent to the government subsidy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted to the forty-two (42) Mamanwas representing each household in Sitio Libas, Barangay Sibahay, Lanuza, Surigao del Sur. The place is 2.5 kilometers away from the barangay proper sited at the eastern part of Lanuza. It is surrounded by mountains, wild trees, grasses, and embraced with the resounding flows of fresh river water. The study is delimited on identifying the livelihood and training needs of the Mamanwa Tribe as basis for intervention to augment their living. The researchers purely utilized a descriptive survey through a checklist questionnaire which is deemed to be an appropriate quantitative design, where the respondents have to choose the identified indicators on local resources or competitive edge, occupational tools, challenges met,

livelihood needs, and training needs. It composed of six (6) problems with six parallel questions and boxes of possible answers where the respondents will tick their chosen answers. The questionnaires were validated by experts and undergone reliability test with 0.79 reliability index.

Procedure: In consonance to DO 51, s. 2014 or the guidelines in the conduct of activities and use of materials involving aspects of indigenous peoples' culture, the researchers asked for a Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) from the office of National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). However, as this study was for the delivery of fundamental services, it did not require compliance with FBI/FPIC requirement as provided in the guidelines of NCIP Administrative Order No.3, series of 2012. The results of this endeavor must be given back to the ICCs/IPs as the intervention activities to uplift the livelihood of the Mamanwa community. Upon the approval, researchers then went to the site at Sitio Libas, Barangay Sibahay, Lanuza, Surigao del Sur to float the research questionnaires. The researchers distributed and facilitated personally the questionnaires to the Mamanwas with the help of their Tribal Elders, Day Care Workers, and Barangay Kagawads or councils. The results of the gathered data were then tallied and analyzed. With the availability of the needed numerical data, interpretations were drawn and findings, conclusions, and recommendations were also offered. To treat the collated data, the following statistical tools were used: a.) Frequency Counting to determine the profile of the respondents, competitive edge or resources in the locality, occupational tools, challenges met, livelihood needs and their training needs; and b.) Simple percentage of the gathered data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data revealed that 30.95% of the respondents are 26-35 years old while only 4.76% are 36-45 years old. In terms of sex, the locality has more number of females than the males as reflected in the data where 73.81% are girls and 26.19% are boys. Further, it revealed that most of them are married with a modal number of children ranging from 1-3. As to livelihood status, all respondents rely on farming with an average monthly income of Php 1,000.00 and below. This can be attributed to their vulnerable educational attainment where only 64.29% have reached primary level. Tomaquin (2013) conforms that most of Mamanwa cannot read and write which highly redound much to its poor economic condition. The lack of interest to education among them is likewise due to extreme discrimination and to what is very much acculturated among the Mamanwa parents that preferred their children to help for their living and do household chores rather than sending them to school. Thus, high incidence of Mamanwas illiteracy is very evident. Balacuit (2018) stressed that socio-economic factor greatly affects the academic performance, scholastic endeavours, and motivation of the students. Furthermore, abject poverty contributed to their lack of interest in education. Tejano (2016) added that even those Mamanwa maternal women who suffer from pregnancy malnutrition also prejudice the health of babies in their womb is due to the lack of education. Thus, Mamanwas economy, livelihood, health, and practices are tremendously affected of their educational attainment. Rabasso, R. & Rabasso, J. 2014 added that non-formal education through the IPCC becomes a key element for the learning process in an environment where sustainable practices are part of the upbringing of the Mamanwa community.

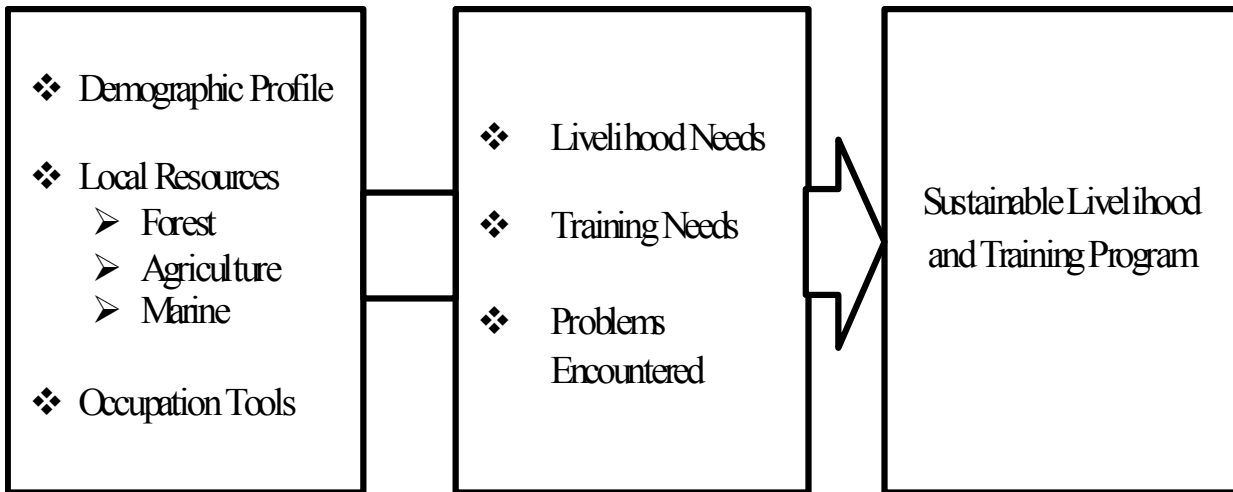


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Study

Distribution of the Respondents

Respondents	Number	Percentage
Male	11	26.19%
Female	31	73.81%
Total	42	100%

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

PROFILE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
	Age	
15 – 25	11	26.19%
26 – 35	13	30.95%
36 – 45	2	4.76%
46 – 55	10	23.81%
56 and above	6	14.26%
	Gender	
Male	11	26.19%
Female	31	73.81%
	Civil Status	
Married	38	90.48%
Widow	4	9.52%
	Occupation	
Hunt	2	4.76%
Farm	42	100%
Fish	3	7.14%
Labor	5	11.90%
Business	1	2.38%
	Monthly Income	
1k – Below	31	73.81%
1 – 2k	9	21.43%
2 – 3k	1	2.38%
3k and above	1	2.38%
	No. of Children	
0	2	4.76%
1 – 3	23	54.76%
4 – 6	13	30.95%
7 – 10	4	9.535
	Educational Attainment	
None	9	21.43%
Primary	27	64.29%
Intermediate	3	7.14%
Secondary	2	4.76%
High School Graduate	1	2.38%
College Graduate	0	0%
	Religion	
Roman Catholic	10	23.81%
Protestant	32	76.19%
Others	4	9.52%

Table 2. Resources in the Locality

A. FOREST WEALTH	Frequency	Percentage
Agsam/Nito	32	76.19%
Ban-ban	36	85.71%
Logs	35	83.33%
Rattan	40	95.23%
Bamboo	33	78.57%
Wild Animals	5	11.90%
B. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES		
Falcata	32	76.19%
Vegetables	28	66.66%
Copra	32	76.19%
Root Crops	35	83.33%
Banana	33	78.57%
Fruit Trees	27	64.28%
C. AQUA MARINE RESOURCES		
Fish	15	35.71%
Shells	5	11.90%
Shrimps	7	16.66%

Table 3. Tools Used in Occupation

TOOLS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Ax	14	33.33%
Bangkaw	6	14.29%
Bow & Arrow	33	78.57%
Chainsaw	1	2.38%
Cross Cut Saw	12	28.57%
Sharp Bolo	42	100%
Lit-ag	16	38.10%
Pick Mattock	28	66.67%
Pintik	16	38.10%
Rake	1	2.38%
Sickle	25	59.52%
Dull Bolo	40	95.24%

Table 4. Livelihood Needs of Mamanwa Tribe

Livelihood Needs	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Materials and equipment for handicraft making	42	100%
Seedling, fertilizer, equipment / tools in farming	42	100%
Tilapia Fish Culture	42	100%

Table 5. Training Needs of Mamanwa Tribe

Types of Training	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Handicraft Making	42	100%
Upland Farming Techniques	42	100%
Tilapia Fish Culture	42	100%

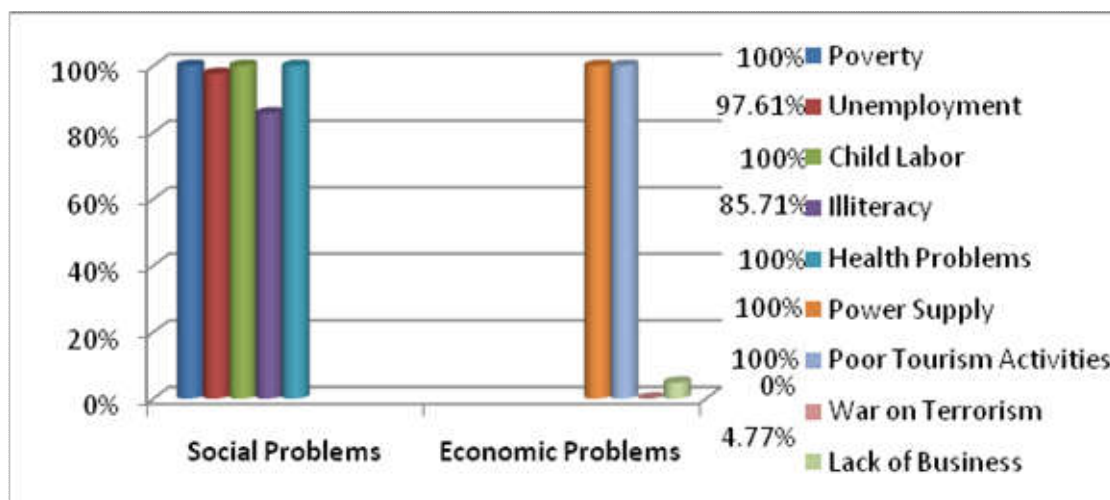


Table 6. Problems Encountered by Mamanwa

Thus, the need of education among the Mamanwas and to their community must be emphasized. Diaz (2014) highlighted that education helps the Mamanwa better understand and enforce their rights aside of alleviating their financial situation. If only the Mamanwas are better educated, they would have more organized leadership and coordination among all the communities that will help them better fight for their ancestral land and enforce their rights as indigenous people. In terms of religious affiliation, 76.19% are Protestants; 23.81% are Roman Catholics; and only 9.52% are practicing other beliefs. This implies that majority of the Mamanwas are Christian who have already adapted the dominant traditional beliefs in the Philippines. Tomaquin (2013) added that Mamanwas were able to retain indigenous religion, institutions, and rituals even socio-cultural changes are slowly taking place in their social milieu. Their acceptance and openness to Christianity affords a new avenue of gregariousness and sociability.

Table 2 presents the available livelihood resources used by the Mamanwa people. The table 2 shows that the primary livelihood of the Mamanwas revolved in forest and agriculture resources. Rattan is their dominant source of forest wealth where 95.23% of the members of the tribe have responded that they have engaged in its production. In agriculture, root crops are among the primary source of staple foods where 83.33% of the households relied to the abundance of this supply while fruit tree production is the least with 64.28%. This implies that the Mamanwas still relied on traditional method of livelihood with heavy emphasis on subsistence farming as manifested by its strong reliance in root crops. Diaz (2014) affirmed that Mamanwas make their living through subsistence farming, hunting, and labor contracting. They are also most famous for their basket and mat making.

Further, the data on aqua marine resources revealed that the Mamanwas have also relied heavily in fresh-water fishes. This is ascribed to the fact that they are forest dwellers with no access to coastal areas where most of the variety of seashells will be found. Table 3 below presents the distribution of frequency and percentage on the different tools used by the Mamanwas in the means of their livelihood activities. The data showed that 100% of the Mamanwa-respondents have sharp bolo as their essential tool for living while 2.38% have chainsaw and rake. This table shows that dull bolo is a common tool used by most of the Mamanwas in sustaining their livelihood of which 40 out of 42 respondents or 95.24% have responded. The least tool used by the Mamanwa tribe is the rake where only 2.38% or 1 out of 42 respondents used this tool.

Sharp and dull bolos are the commonly used tools by most of Mamanwas for it has many uses not just in weeding but also in cultivation and other farming and gardening ways. In the Philippines, it is used to cut grasses and small branches generally for the clearing operations prior to soil cultivation. Fraser (2016) states that the bolo knife (also called iták in Tagalog, sundáng in Cebuano, and binangon in Hiligaynon) has been a tool used for clearing jungle bushes and for various agricultural purposes. To this day, bolo knives are forged in villages across the archipelago, signifying that they work with it in the fields or jungles. Picardal (2017) added that the Mamanwa tribe produces a variety of agricultural products. The data showed that all of the respondents need materials and equipment for handicraft making, seedling, fertilizer and equipment/tools in farming, including Tilapia fish culture. It

could be attributed to their low socio-economic status. Yet, there were no enough local government programs, projects, and activities extended to the Mamanwa tribe in Sitio Libas, Sibahay, Lanuza, Surigao del Sur that submerged this tribe to extreme poverty. In fact, Burton (2003) cited that Mindanao ranked as the second rural area which contributed the total poverty incidence in the Philippines where 46% of populations in this region are indigenous people. The Mamanwas are in need of government development programs to alleviate them from poverty. Tomaquin (2013) mentioned that the Province of Surigao del Sur have offered government services in the form of livelihood projects that greatly helped the economic conditions among the indigenous people. However, Mamanwa has not been a recipient of those government aids. They badly need capital for such livelihood activities and that they need professional help to maintain the supply of raw materials for their products (Diaz, 2014). Burton (2003) revealed that there is a lack or if not is inadequate assistance of government that has been filled-in by the NGO and Church-based agencies to implement programs and projects that would uplift the lives of the Indigenous People in the Philippines. Still there are many who have not been reached until the present. That is why they keep on searching for ideal settlements that would support their livelihood activities which explains why they are dispersed all across Northeastern Mindanao and Eastern Visayas (Diaz, 2014).

The table below shows the result on training needs by Mamanwa people. The data revealed that all the respondents are eagerly in need of trainings on handicraft making, upland farming techniques, and Tilapia fish culture production. This is due to their geographical location where most of their livelihood as mentioned in table number 2 revolved in subsistence farming and fishing. The introduction of modern farming technologies would enhance the farm harvest (Tomaquin, 2013). The table 6 shows the problems or challenges encountered by the Mamanwa tribe. It was discovered that the common social problems to most of Mamanwa people in Sitio Libas, Sibahay, Lanuza, Surigao del Sur are poverty, child labor, and related to health glitches. The major social problems are 100% poverty and child labor, 100% health problems, unemployment (97.61%), and illiteracy (85.71%). It conforms to the high unemployment rate of the Mamanwas of about 97.61%. Burton (2003) affirmed that Mamanwa in the Philippines is considered the second poorest indigenous people. It is in relation to what has been acculturated amongst the Mamanwa parents not to send their children at school because they wanted them to help make a living and household chores. This tribal practice and belief of the Mamanwa is incongruous to Balacuit, (2018) that parents are the essential push and motivation for their students in encouraging them to learn and play at school. Thus, Mamanwas' livelihood, economy, and practices are affected of their educational attainment and scholastic awareness. On economic problems, both power supply and poor tourism activities were revealed as the most rampant issues because of quiet distance from the centrality. Hence, the above-mentioned social problems are affected by the absence of electricity which hinders them to use technology. In addition, the place is not active in tourism industry due to lack of important facilities and utilities such as accessible farm to market roads, bridges, and basic transportation that strongly leads to a great dilemma among the most of Mamanwas. Guadalupe (2017) identified the main economic issue that halts the economy back in growing in its full potential is the economic protectionism

designed by the rich elites in the country. It requires that all foreign investments in the country should be owned by 60% of Filipinos and 40% by foreigners.

RESULTS

The study revealed that in terms of demographic profile, the modal age of the respondents is between 26-35 years old. In terms of sex, there are more females than male respondents due to the common observation that males are in the mountain looking for food and earning for a living. As to socio-economic status majority has an average monthly income of below ₱ 1,000.00. This means that there is high case of poverty incidence in the locality throughout the Mamanwas. This may be attributed because of the large family sizes where each household has an average of 5 family members. Further, poverty incidence is due to poor educational attainment where none of them graduated tertiary education. Only one of the Mamanwa has graduated in high school because most of them have at least reached primary schooling. However, despite of this instance, the Mamanwa people have high spiritual belief as manifested that most of them are Christians.

The Mamanwa of Sitio Libas is bestowed with forest and agriculture resources. This is based from the result of the collated data where rattan is the dominant source of forest wealth. In agriculture, root crops are among the primary source of staple foods while fruit-tree production is the least produced product. This implies that the Mamanwas still relied on traditional methods with heavy emphasis on subsistence farming than fresh-water fishing. The Mamanwas are good upland farmers. However, despite their years of experience in farming they were hindered by the lack of access to technologies and facilities in farming. This was based from the result of the study where majority of them are using traditional tools in farming such as sharp and dull bolos, bow and arrow, pick mattock, sickle, and the like. These are the common tools they used in their daily livelihood activities. Moreover, all the Mamanwas responded that they needed materials and equipment for handicraft making, fertilizers, and crop and fish (seedlings).

The mentioned livelihood needs should be supplemented with appropriate trainings in order to augment the living of Mamanwas. This is in consonance from the result of the study where all have responded that they needed trainings on handicraft, upland farming techniques, and tilapia fish culture production. The identified trainings are suitable to the needs of the Mamanwa tribe considering their geographic location. Despite the potentials of Sitio Libas in forest and agriculture resources, the dwelling is being challenged by the major social problems among the Mamanwa tribe which are poverty, child labor, health problems, unemployment, and illiteracy due to no formal education and decent jobs. The development of the place was also affected by lack of access to technology, lack of facilities and utilities such as farm to market roads, bridges, basic transportation, and absence of electricity. These difficulties are manifestations of the inadequate government assistance to the Mamanwa people.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, following conclusions were drawn:

High poverty incidence of Mamanwa is attributed to large family sizes, poor educational attainment despite majority of its population belongs to labor force of the economy. Secondly, the disparity of population in terms of sex poses a challenge that affected their livelihood. The Mamanwas heavy emphases on traditional methods in farming and fishing have also affected the productivity of the place despite its abundance in forest, agriculture, and marine resources. This made the Mamanwas relied on subsistence farming and fishing. Furthermore, years of experience by the Mamanwas in tilling their lands did not translate to growth and development as a result to their strong adherence to utilize traditional tools in farming. This is brought by the lack of access to technologies and important farming facilities. Trainings on handicraft making, upland farming techniques, and tilapia-fish culture production were perceived as the most important livelihood activities to augment the living of Mamanwas considering its suitability to their geographic location and availability of the resources. This means that livelihood trainings are essential to support alleviate the lives of indigenous people especially those living in rural or remote areas. Thus, uplifting the livelihood of indigenous people especially the Mamanwas would require the provision of important technologies and facilities such as farm to market roads, bridges, basic transportations, and electricity. This is to address the issues and challenges of Mamanwa related to high-unemployment rate and no formal and decent job.

Recommendation

Based from the foregoing findings and conclusions of this study, recommendations are offered:

It is humbly suggested by the researchers that any educational institutions and government agencies may conduct extension services to the Mamanwas through orientations and seminars on population control and women empowerment to provide opportunities for Mamanwa female to be aware of their roles in the local economic growth and development. Further, the parents from indigenous groups shall encourage sending their children at school to achieve their scholastic dreams of walking at the middle of an isle during commencement exercises wearing their best outfit of the day as pre-requisite to land a decent and stable job. The Local Government Unit (LUG) may also conduct poverty alleviation programs through the provision of important farming tools, facilities, equipment, crop and fish seedlings, and fertilizers to be used in daily livelihood activities. Thus, efficiency and proper utilization of resources shall also be inculcated to every tribal group. The Department of Social Welfare and Development office may intensify its Conditional Cash Transfer Program (CCTP) which focuses on the awarding of educational grants to the identified deserving Mamanwa pupils and students to minimize illiteracy and maximize educational excellence that may contribute much to the development of Mamanwas' tribal economy. Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA) throughout the Philippines may also conduct trainings on livelihood skills particularly on handicraft making, upland farming techniques, and fish culture production.

The Department of Public Works and Highways may launch a project that would provide the Mamanwas' convenience and accessibility from farm to market road and important public utilities such as schools and health centers to address the challenges of most Mamanwa people as one of the indigenous

groups in the Philippines. Future researches may be conducted further to assess and strengthen the implementation of various government development programs, projects, and activities to indigenous people as a supporting poverty alleviation agenda.

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