

Level of Management Practices of Micro and Small Businesses in Ilocos Norte

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Abstract

This research work determined the similarities and differences of the management practices and entrepreneurial competencies of micro business and small business owners in Ilocos Norte.

This study focused on the similarities and differences of the management practices of micro business and small business owners in the Province of Ilocos Norte. It looked into the entrepreneur profile such as personal characteristics, entrepreneurs' competencies and on the organizational profile and management practices. The respondents consisted of two groups; a sample of business owners coming from the different municipalities namely Badoc, Burgos, Bacarra, Pasuquin, Bangui, Pinili, Piddig, Solsona, Currimao, Batac, Banna, Marcos, Paoay, Sarrat, Pagudpod, Dingras, San Nicolas and Laoag City and sample of employees of these business owners. The respondent businesses were limited to those who have been existing for five years and more because they are already established and successful businesses considering their number of years of existence.

Questionnaires were constructed by the researcher to determine the level of management practices and for the level of skills and competencies, questionnaire was adapted to the PECs Questionnaire of McClelland and Mcber.

The micro-businesses and small business owners in Ilocos Norte is relatively young dominated by college graduate and married women. Most of them have not attended seminars and trainings and are not members of professional organizations. The small business owners, on the other hand, are also relatively young, dominated by college graduate and married men. They have attended seminars and trainings and are members of professional organizations. Majority of the micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte have existed for less than 5 years engaged in retailing and are sole proprietor. Majority of the micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte started with less than P 500,000.00 as initial capital from their savings and hired 1-2 employees who are usually family members. Lastly, they are averaging below P 150,000 annual sales. On the other hand, small businesses in Ilocos Norte have existed for at least five years and are engaged in retailing and are sole proprietors. Majority of them have at least 10 employees. Micro business and small business owners have the capability to handle and manage businesses as revealed by their level in the personal entrepreneurial competencies survey. Micro-entrepreneurs of Ilocos

Norte observe moderate level of management practices while small business owners observe high level of management practices.

1. The Problem

Entrepreneurship is the practice of starting new businesses or developing new products or services. It is receiving greater attention from policymakers and experts in developed and developing countries. New dynamic enterprises contribute to economic development in several ways: as an important channel to convert innovative ideas into economic opportunities, as the basis for competitiveness through the revitalization of social and productive networks, as a source of new employment, and as a way to increase productivity. The latest studies are gradually demystifying the enterprise creation process. This process covers the period from a potential entrepreneur's initial inspirational spark and motivation to begin a new venture up through its startup and early development. Entrepreneurship is defined by Periquet (2007) as the ability to marshal resources in order to seize new business opportunities which have uncertain outcomes. It has become central to economic growth in light of the rapid advancement of information technology and growing importance of knowledge. Entrepreneurship has long been recognized by development managers as an important aspect in development. It puts together the three other aspects of production – land, labor and capital. Entrepreneurship entails several benefits. Among others, it improves the quality of life or uplifts the standard of living of the people in the society. Entrepreneurship is very much alive in the Philippines. The Philippine government recognizes that entrepreneurship is a strategic intervention that could hasten rural development process. Among the 10 Point Agenda of Pres. Arroyo is the creation of six million jobs in six years through more opportunities given to entrepreneurs. Moreover, gauging the importance of entrepreneurship in the country, the President had created Office of the Presidential Consultant for Entrepreneurship in 2005 whose mandate is the creation of three million entrepreneurs by the end of Ms. Arroyo's term in 2010. In addition, the Philippines also enacted R.A. No. 9178, a law that promotes the establishment of Barangay Micro Business enterprises by providing incentives and benefits in promoting the formation of micro enterprises, which serve as seedbeds of Filipino entrepreneurial talents, by giving them fiscal and non-fiscal incentives that will help them survive and grow into viable enterprises.

The importance of entrepreneurship in the development of the country had been undeniably significant. Private sector development and entrepreneurship development are essential ingredients for achieving the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty. While sound macroeconomic policies and providing market access are crucial, emerging markets need to nurture and develop entrepreneurs able to take advantage of opportunities created by globalization. History shows that economic progress has been significantly advanced by pragmatic people who are entrepreneurial and innovative, able to exploit opportunities and willing to take risks. Recognizing the need for a framework and detailed strategies to promoting the culture of entrepreneurship, the Philippines has prepared the National Small Medium Enterprises Agenda which is now integrated into a Medium Enterprise Development Plan for 2006-2010.

The great bulk of local enterprises are micro-businesses, making up to 91.9%, with small and medium enterprises comprising only 7.8% of the total entrepreneurs. Large enterprises account for merely 0.33% of total enterprises.

Studies reveal that business success is contributed to the management practices, entrepreneurial competencies and personal characteristics of business owners while study of Parilla (2009), emphasized the link of management practices, entrepreneurial competencies and business success, however, there is still a limited literature to prove on the comparison of management practices of microbusiness owners and small business owners. It is in this context that this study was conceptualized and it elicited information on the differences and similarities of management practices of microbusiness and small business owners. This study benefited the businesses owners as this provided them information on the management practices for them to have benchmark.

Statement of the Problem

This research work determined the similarities and differences of the management practices and entrepreneurial competencies of microbusiness and small business owners in Ilocos Norte.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of business owners in terms of:
 - a. Age,
 - b. Sex,
 - c. Educational Attainment,
 - d. Membership to organizations, and
 - e. Seminars/Trainings Attended?
2. What is the organizational profile of the micro and small businesses in terms of:
 - a. Years of existence,
 - b. Type of operations,
 - c. Form of ownership,
 - d. Number of workers,
 - e. Start-up capital
 - f. Present Capital
 - g. Average annual sales,
 - h. Source of capital, and
3. What is the level of competencies of microbusiness and small business owners in terms of:
 - a. Opportunity-seeking and initiative,
 - b. Risk taking,
 - c. Demand for efficiency and Quality,
 - d. Persistence,
 - e. Commitment to work,
 - f. Information seeking,
 - g. Goal setting,
 - h. Systematic planning and monitoring,
 - i. Persuasion and networking, and

- j. Independence and self-confidence?
4. What are the management practices of micro-businesses and small businesses in terms of:
 - a. Marketing,
 - b. Human Resources, and
 - c. Finance?
5. What are the similarities and differences in the management practices of micro and small business owners in Ilocos Norte?

Research Design and Methods

Research Design. In this study, descriptive method was used to determine the similarities and differences of the management practices and personal competencies of micro-business and small business owners.

Data Gathering Instrument. In this study, questionnaires were the main instrument to be used. There are two sets of questionnaires that were prepared. Set 1 was used for the samples of business owners. Set 2 was used for the employees of the businesses.

The questionnaire for the business owners consisted of three parts. Part 1 elicited personal and business profile: age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, seminars attended, membership to organizations, years of existence, business form, type of business, number of workers, start-up capital, and source of capital. Part II provided the management practices such as human resources, financial management and marketing management. Part III elicited information about entrepreneurial competencies.

The second set of questionnaire for the micro-business employees likewise consisted of 2 parts: Part 1 supplied on the assessment of the employees of the management practices of their organization along human resources, financial management and marketing management. The 2nd part provided for the assessment of the employees along the entrepreneurial competencies of the business owners.

The researcher prepared the items in the questionnaires. However some of the items of the questionnaires were patterned from the questionnaires of dissertations conducted by Ancheta(2004), Velasco (2003), Moreno (2001), Tagay (2003), and Parilla (2009) likewise as for the personal entrepreneurial competencies questionnaire, it was adapted to the questionnaire of Professor McClelland and Mcber.

Records of the business owners' list of the Department of Trade and Industry served as sources of data. Finally, the SME Agenda of the President also served as important sources of information.

A five point scale , 5-1 with answer options of " very highly practiced" as 5, "highly practiced" as 4, "moderately practiced" as 3, "slightly practiced" as 2 and "not practiced" as 1, was used in assessing respondents' management practices. Moreover, a five point scale, with answer options of "always" as 5, "often" as 4, "sometimes" as 3, "seldom" as 2, and "never" as 1, will be used in assessing entrepreneurial competencies.

The following norms for interpretation were used in the study:

1. The level of personal entrepreneurial competencies of business owners.

Statistical Range	Descriptive Rating
5.00 – 4.21	Very High Competence (VHC)
4.20 – 3.41	High Competence (HC)
3.40 – 2.61	Moderate Competence (MC)
2.60 – 1.81	Low Competence (LC)
1.80 – 1.00	Very Low Competence (VLC)

2. The level of management practices of businesses.

Statistical Range	Descriptive Rating
5.00 – 4.21	Very Highly Practiced (VHP)
4.20 – 3.41	Highly Practiced (HP)
3.40 – 2.61	Moderately Practiced (MP)
2.60 – 1.81	Slightly Practiced (SP)
1.80 – 1.00	Not Practiced (NP)

Population and Sample. The population of the study consisted of 2 groups namely: business owners and employees.

In the determination of sample size, the formula given was used:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where: n = sample size

N = population size

e = marginal error at .05

Table 1.1 is presented for the distribution of population and sample.

Table 1. Distribution of Population and Computed Sample of Respondents

	Owners/Entrepreneurs		Employees	
	N	n	N	n
Microbusiness	595	239	930	280
Small	55	48	700	255
TOTAL	650	287	1630	535

Results

Problem 1. What is the profile of entrepreneurs in terms of:

- a. Age,
- b. Sex,
- c. Civil Status,
- d. Educational Attainment,
- e. Seminars/Trainings Attended, and
- f. Membership to professional organizations?

Personal Profile of entrepreneurs in Ilocos Norte

Table 2 presents the distribution of the micro and small entrepreneurs in terms of personal factors.

Age. Table 2 shows that there are two hundred thirty nine (239) micro-entrepreneurs and forty eight (48) small business owners included in this study. Of this number of micro-business owners 101 (42.25%) belongs to the age group ranging from 27-37 years old. It implies that a great percentage of the respondents are at their prime age. On the other hand, of the 48 small business owners, 17 (35.41%) belongs to the age group ranging from 38-48 years old. Comparing it to the micro business owners, small business owners are older.

Table 2
Distribution of Micro Business and Small Business Owners
in Ilocos Norte in Terms of Personal Profile

Personal Profile	Micro Business		Small Business	
	F	%	F	%
Age				
Below 27	21	8.79	13	27.08
27-37	101	42.25	9	18.75
38-48	88	36.82	17	35.41
49-59	22	9.21	6	12.50
60 & above	7	2.93	3	6.25
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Sex				
Male	114	47.70	27	56.25
Female	125	52.30	21	43.75
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Civil Status				
Single	69	28.87	17	35.42
Married	156	65.27	29	60.42
Widow/er	14	5.86	2	4.17
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Educational Attainment				
Elementary Graduate	13	5.44	1	2.08
High school Graduate	32	13.39	3	6.25
College Level	49	20.50	3	6.25
College Graduate	143	59.83	39	81.25
Masters Graduate	2	.84	2	4.17
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Seminars Attended				

None	221	92.47	12	25.00
1	6	2.51	6	12.50
2	10	4.18	10	20.83
3	1	.42	12	25.00
4 and above	1	.42	8	16.67
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Membership to Professional Organizations				
None	231	96.65	21	43.75
1	2	.83	20	41.47
2	4	1.67	3	6.25
3	1	.42	2	4.16
4 and above	1	.42	2	4.16
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00

Gender The micro-business owners are dominated by female (125 or 52.30%) are and 114 (47.70%) are male. As for the small business owners, it is dominated by male (27 or 56.25%) and 21 (43.75%) are female.

Marital Status. It appears that as to marital status, it can be observed that most of the micro-business owner-respondents are married (156 or 65.27%). Since majority of the respondents are female and that they are married, it seems that they are house wives trying to seek opportunities on how to augment their family income.

On the contrary, it appears that as to marital status, it can be observed that most of the small business owner-respondents are married (29 or 60.42%). Since majority of the respondents are male and that they are married, comparing it to micro business owners where their businesses are just to augment family income, these are businessmen where their businesses are their main income generating activity.

Educational Attainment. The table also presents that the highest number of micro-entrepreneurs are college degree holders (143 or 59.83%). This implies that micro-entrepreneurs in the province of Ilocos Norte value their education. This is also true with the small business owners. The table also presents that the highest number of small-entrepreneurs are college degree holders (39 or 81.25%).

Seminars Attended. As to seminars attended, most of the micro-business owner-respondents (221 or 92.47%) did not attend any seminars yet. This implies that micro-entrepreneurs in Ilocos Norte do not give priority to attending to seminars that could enhance their businesses. It shows that the government and other agencies like the Department of Trade and Industry do not coordinate with these micro-businesses for seminars that could improve their skills and competencies in managing the businesses. This is an indication of poor programs of these agencies of the government.

On the other hand, fro the small business owners, a great number of the respondents (12 or 25.00%) have attended 3 seminars. This implies that as compared to micro-

entrepreneurs in Ilocos Norte, small business owners give priority to attending to seminars that could enhance their businesses.

Membership to Professional Organizations. The table shows that most of the micro-business owner-respondents (231 or 96.65%) have no affiliation to professional organizations. This implies that micro-entrepreneurs do not necessarily put emphasis in having networks by being members of professional organizations that could help in their businesses. This is not a good indication because based from a study of Gustafson (2005), networking of micro-entrepreneurs is a necessary element to the success of the microbusiness.

Most of the respondents (21 or 43.75%) have no affiliation to professional organizations. This implies that small business entrepreneurs do not necessarily put emphasis in having networks by being members of professional organizations that could help in their businesses.

Problem 2. What is the organizational profile of the micro-businesses in terms of:

- a. Years of existence,
- b. Type of Business,
- c. Form of ownership,
- d. Number of workers,
- e. Start-up capital,
- f. Average annual sales,
- g. Source of capital, and

Organizational Profile of Entrepreneurs in Ilocos Norte

Table 3.1
Distribution of Micro-entrepreneurs in Ilocos Norte in Terms of Business Profile

Business Profile	Micro Business		Small Business	
	F	%	F	%
Years of Existence				
5-10	159	66.53	21	43.75
11-15	23	9.62	14	29.17
16-20	21	8.79	5	10.42
21-25	22	9.21	5	10.42
Over 25	14	5.86	3	6.25
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Type of Business Operations				
Wholesaling	12	5.02	1	2.08
Retailing	189	79.08	27	56.25
Manufacturing	1	.42	2	4.17
Service	37	15.48	18	37.50
TOTAL	239	100.00	48	100.00
Business Form				

Sole Proprietorship	211	88.28		32	66.67
Partnership	21	8.79		12	25.00
Corporation	7	2.93		4	8.33
Cooperative	0	0		0	0
TOTAL	239	100.00		48	100.00
Number of Workers					
1-2	197	82.43		24	50.00
3-4	17	7.11		22	45.83
5-6	12	5.02		1	2.08
7-8	7	2.93		1	2.08
9-10	6	2.51		0	0.00
TOTAL	239	100.00		48	100.00
Start-Up Capital			Start-Up Capital		
Below 500,000	201	84.10	3,000,001- 4,500,000	15	31.25
500,001-1,000,000	25	10.46	4,500,001-6,000,000	12	25.00
1,000,001-1,500,000	4	1.67	6,000,001-7,500,000	8	16.67
1,500,001-2,000,000	2	.83	7,500,001-9,000,000	5	10.42
2,000,001-2,500,000	4	1.67	9,000,001-10,500,000	3	6.25
2,500,001-3,000,000	3	1.26	10,500,001-12,000,000	5	10.42
TOTAL	239	100.00	12,000,001- 13,500,000	0	0
Present Capital			13,500,001-15,000,000		
Below 500,000	192	80.33	TOTAL	48	100.00
500,001-1,000,000	34	14.23	Present Capital		
1,000,001-1,500,000	4	1.67	3,000,001 – 4,500,000	14	29.17
1,500,001-2,000,000	4	1.67	4,500,001-6,000,000	13	27.08
2,000,001-2,500,000	3	1.26	6,000,001-7,500,000	8	16.67
2,500,001-3,000,000	2	.84	7,500,001-9,000,000	5	10.42
TOTAL	239	100.00	9,000,001-10,500,000	3	6.25
			10,500,001-12,000,000	5	10.42
			12,000,001- 13,500,000	0	0
			13,500,001-15,000,000	0	0
			TOTAL	48	100.00
Average Annual Sales					
below 150,000	196	82.01		7	14.58
150,001-250,000	39	16.32		11	22.92
250,001-350,000	2	.84		28	58.33
350,001-450,000	0	0		0	0.00
450,001-550,000	2	.84		1	2.08
more than 550,000	0	0		1	2.08

TOTAL	239	100.00		48	100.00
Source of Capital					
Savings	219	91.63		11	22.92
Loan	21	8.79		27	56.25
Combination	8	3.35		10	20.83
Help from an Agency (DTI,DOST)	0	0.00		0	0
TOTAL	239	100.00		48	100.00

Table 3 presents the distribution of micro-business owners and small business owners in terms of business profile.

Years of Existence. As presented in the table, most micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte existed for 5 years to 10 years (159 or 66.53%). This implies that micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte are still at the early stage of existence. On the other hand, a great number of small businesses in Ilocos Norte existed for 5 years to 10 years (21 or 43.75%). This implies that these businesses in Ilocos Norte are still at the early stage of existence.

Type of Business. Majority of the microbusiness owner-respondents (189 or 79.08%) are engaged in retailing. This implies that in Ilocos Norte, most of the microbusinesses established are into retailing business because it requires minimal machineries and equipment since the main business is just selling the commodities that were produced by manufacturers. This includes sari-sari stores and boutiques.

. Majority of the small business owner-respondents (27 or 56.25%) are engaged in retailing.

Form of Ownership. The table also presents that the highest number of micro-businesses are sole proprietorship in business form (211 or 88.28%). These businesses are owned by a single owner. This can be attributed to the fact that establishing sole proprietorship is less complicated and complex as compared to establishing corporations or partnerships.

On the contrary, the highest number of small businesses is sole proprietorship in business form (32 or 66.67%). These businesses are owned by a single owner. This can be attributed to the fact that establishing sole proprietorship is less complicated and complex as compared to establishing corporations or partnerships.

Number of Workers. In terms of number of workers, it can be observed that most of the respondents have 1 to 2 employees (197 or 82.43%).

As for the small businesses, it can be observed that half of the respondents have below 10 employees (24 or 50.00%).

Start-Up Capital. Table 3 also presents the start-up capital of the micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte. There are 201 (84.10%) micro-businesses who have started with a capitalization of less than P 500,000.00.

There are 15 (31.25%) small businesses that have started with a capitalization of P 3,000,001-4,500,000.

Present Capital. In terms of present capital, majority (192 or 80.33%) have at present capitalization of less than 500,000.00.

There are 14 (29.17%) small businesses that have a capitalization of P 3,000,001-4,500,000.

Annual Sales. In addition, the table also shows the annual sales of micro-businesses. As presented in the table, 196 (82.01%) have an annual sales of below P150,000.00. This implies that micro-businesses only realized minimal sales since their stocks of inventory and capitalization is also limited.

For the small businesses, as presented in the table, 28 (58.33%) have an annual sales of 250,000-350,000.

Source of Capital. Great majority of the capital of micro-businesses in Ilocos Norte comes from the own savings of the entrepreneurs (219 or 91.63%).

Majority of the capital of small businesses in Ilocos Norte comes from their loans (27 or 56.25%). The small business owners have loaned out their capital while the micro-business entrepreneurs made use of their own money.

3. What is the level of competencies of microbusiness and small business owners in terms of:

- 3.1 Opportunity-seeking and initiative,
- 3.2 Risk taking,
- 3.3 Demand for efficiency and Quality,
- 3.4 Persistence,
- 3.5 Commitment to work,
- 3.6 Information seeking,
- 3.7 Goal setting,
- 3.8 Systematic planning and monitoring,
- 3.9 Persuasion and networking, and
- 3.10 Independence and self-confidence?

Level of Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies of Micro-Business Owners

Table 4 presents the item mean ratings showing the level of personal entrepreneurial competencies of micro and small-business owners.

The table reveals that the overall ratings on the level of personal entrepreneurial competencies by the two groups of respondents (owners and employees) are 4.0 and 3.71 respectively with a descriptive rating of "high competence". This is an indication that micro-business owners are highly competent to handle and manage their respective businesses as evidenced by the high level of competence in the different criteria set. A closer look at the table would reveal that all items in the criteria, except on "***Makes a personal sacrifice or expands extraordinary effort to complete a job***" which got "Sometimes", have descriptive rating of high "Often". This means that micro business owners do have much more important priorities than their micro-business such as their family. Moreover, it is apparent in the table that the competencies that got the highest means are independence and self-confidence ($x=4.36$), persistence($x=4.21$), and demand for quality and efficiency ($x=3.86$). This could mean that micro business owners really want their businesses to prosper and that through committing themselves to the work and quality of the products and services and having persistence will make their businesses flourish and progress.

Table 4.1
Item Mean Ratings showing the level of Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies of Micro-Entrepreneurs

Competencies	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Opportunity Seeking and Initiative				
1. Does things before asked or forced to by events.	4.03	O	3.21	S
2. Acts to extend the business into new areas, products or services.	4.23	O	3.42	O
3. Seizes unusual opportunities to start a new business, obtain financing, equipment, land work space or assistance.	4.20	O	4.01	O
\bar{x}	4.15	O	3.55	O
B. Risk Taking				
1. Deliberately calculates risks and evaluates alternatives	3.67	O	3.44	O
2. Takes action to reduce risks or control outcomes	4.12	O	3.47	O
3. Places self in situations involving a challenge or moderate risk	3.76	O	3.56	O
\bar{x}	3.85	O	3.49	O
C. Demand for Efficiency and Quality				
1. Finds ways to do things better, faster, or cheaper	4.27	A	4.29	A
2. Acts to do things that meet or exceed standards of excellence	3.43	O	3.45	O
3. Develops or uses procedures to ensure work is completed on time or that work meets agreed upon standards of quality	4.07	O	3.67	O
\bar{x}	3.92	O	3.80	O
D. Persistence				
1. Takes action in the face of a significant obstacle	4.00	O	4.05	O
2. Takes repeated actions or switches to an alternative strategy to meet a challenge or overcome an obstacle	4.32	A	4.33	A
3. Takes personal responsibility for the performance necessary to achieve goals and objectives.	4.44	A	4.12	O
\bar{x}	4.25	A	4.17	O
E. Commitment to the Work Contract				

1. Makes a personal sacrifice or expends extraordinary effort to complete a job	3.21	S	3.33	S
2. Pitches in with workers or in their place to get a job done	4.32	O	4.01	O
3. Strives to keep customers satisfied and places long term good will over short term gain	4.24	A	4.23	A
x	3.92	O	3.86	O
F. Information Seeking				
1. Personally seeks information from clients, suppliers or competitors	3.90	O	3.43	O
2. Does personal research on how to provide a product or service	3.87	O	3.84	O
3. Consults experts for business or technical advice	3.75	O	3.73	O
x	3.84	O	3.67	O
G. Goal setting				
1. Sets goals and objectives that are personally meaningful and challenging	4.32	A	3.52	O
2. Articulates clear and specific long range goals	3.45	O	3.99	O
3. Sets measurable short term objectives	3.85	O	3.39	S
x	3.87	O	3.63	O
H. Systematic Planning and Monitoring				
1. Plans by breaking large tasks down into time-constrained sub-tasks	3.97	O	3.34	S
2. Revises plans in light of feedback on performance or changing circumstances	4.88	A	3.34	S
3. Keeps financial records and uses them to make business decisions	3.34	S	3.84	O
x	4.06	O	3.51	O
I. Persuasion and Networking				
1. Uses deliberate strategies to influence or persuade others	3.38	S	3.26	S
2. Uses key people as agents to accomplish own objectives	4.36	A	3.56	O
3. Acts to develop and maintain business contracts	3.38	S	3.32	S
x	3.71	O	3.38	S
J. Independence and self-confidence				
1. Seeks autonomy from the rules or control of others	3.91	O	3.63	O

2. Sticks with own judgment in the face of opposition or early lack of success	4.62	A	4.51	A
3. Expresses confidence in own ability to complete a difficult task or meet a challenge.	4.89	A	3.82	O
x	4.47	A	3.99	O
OVERALL	4.00	HC	3.71	HC

Legend:

Statistical Range	Item Mean Rating	Overall Descriptive Rating
5.00 – 4.21	Always	Very High Competence (VHC)
4.20 – 3.41	Often	High Competence (HC)
3.40 – 2.61	Sometimes	Moderate Competence (MC)
2.60 – 1.81	Seldom	Low Competence (LC)
1.80 – 1.00	Never	Very Low Competence (VLC)

On the other hand, table 4.2 showed the mean ratings of personal entrepreneurial competencies of small business owners in Ilocos Norte.

The table reveals that the overall ratings on the level of personal entrepreneurial competencies by the two groups of respondents (owners and employees) are 4.34 and 4.31 respectively with a descriptive rating of “very high competence”. This is an indication that small business owners are very highly competent to handle and manage their respective businesses as evidenced by the high level of competence in the different criteria set. As compared to the competencies of the micro-business owners, the small owners have higher mean ratings. This is indications that the owners of small businesses are more competent in handling their businesses. They are more serious in terms of their commitment to the work and are more persistent because of the fact that capitalization involved in small businesses is higher than that of micro-businesses.

Table 4.2

Item Mean Ratings showing the level of Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies of Small Business Entrepreneurs

Competencies	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Opportunity Seeking and Initiative				
1. Does things before asked or forced to by events.	4.53	A	3.51	O
2. Acts to extend the business into new areas, products or services.	4.73	A	4.42	A
3. Seizes unusual opportunities to start a new business, obtain financing, equipment, land work space or assistance.	4.28	A	4.81	A
x	4.51	A	4.25	A
B. Risk Taking				

1. Deliberately calculates risks and evaluates alternatives	4.67	A	4.44	A
2. Takes action to reduce risks or control outcomes	4.42	A	4.46	A
3. Places self in situations involving a challenge or moderate risk	3.96	O	4.56	A
x	4.35	A	4.49	A
C. Demand for Efficiency and Quality				
1. Finds ways to do things better, faster, or cheaper	4.88	A	4.69	A
2. Acts to do things that meet or exceed standards of excellence	3.76	O	4.45	A
3. Develops or uses procedures to ensure work is completed on time or that work meets agreed upon standards of quality	4.74	O	3.09	S
x	4.46	A	4.08	O
D. Persistence				
1. Takes action in the face of a significant obstacle	4.44	A	4.45	A
2. Takes repeated actions or switches to an alternative strategy to meet a challenge or overcome an obstacle	4.56	A	4.65	A
3. Takes personal responsibility for the performance necessary to achieve goals and objectives.	4.54	A	4.62	A
x	4.51	A	4.57	A
E. Commitment to the Work Contract				
1. Makes a personal sacrifice or expends extraordinary effort to complete a job	4.22	A	4.53	A
2. Pitches in with workers or in their place to get a job done	4.36	A	4.71	A
3. Strives to keep customers satisfied and places long term good will over short term gain	4.26	A	4.43	A
x	4.28	A	4.56	A
F. Information Seeking				
1. Personally seeks information from clients, suppliers or competitors	4.90	A	4.53	A
2. Does personal research on how to provide a product or service	4.34	A	4.34	A
3. Consults experts for business or technical advice	3.45	O	4.73	A
x	3.86	A	3.93	A
G. Goal setting				

1. Sets goals and objectives that are personally meaningful and challenging	4.42	A	4.52	A
2. Articulates clear and specific long range goals	3.50	O	3.59	O
3. Sets measurable short term objectives	3.67	O	3.67	O
x	3.86	O	3.93	O
H. Systematic Planning and Monitoring				
1. Plans by breaking large tasks down into time-constrained sub-tasks	3.78	O	3.98	O
2. Revises plans in light of feedback on performance or changing circumstances	4.88	A	3.67	O
3. Keeps financial records and uses them to make business decisions	3.98	O	4.84	A
x	4.21	A	4.16	O
I. Persuasion and Networking				
1. Uses deliberate strategies to influence or persuade others	3.98	O	3.76	O
2. Uses key people as agents to accomplish own objectives	4.66	A	3.66	O
3. Acts to develop and maintain business contracts	4.38	A	4.32	A
x	4.34	A	3.91	O
J. Independence and self-confidence				
1. Seeks autonomy from the rules or control of others	4.91	A	4.66	A
2. Sticks with own judgment in the face of opposition or early lack of success	4.32	A	4.76	A
3. Expresses confidence in own ability to complete a difficult task or meet a challenge.	4.59	A	4.42	A
x	4.61	A	4.61	A
OVERALL	4.34	VHC	4.31	VHC

Legend:

Statistical Range	Item Mean Rating	Overall Descriptive Rating
5.00 – 4.21	Always	Very High Competence (VHC)
4.20 – 3.41	Often	High Competence (HC)
3.40 – 2.61	Sometimes	Moderate Competence (MC)
2.60 – 1.81	Seldom	Low Competence (LC)
1.80– 1.00	Never	Very Low Competence (VLC)

4. What are the management practices of micro-businesses and small businesses in terms of:

- h. Marketing,**
- i. Human Resources, and**
- j. Finance?**

Table 5.1.a Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Marketing Practices

Marketing Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Buying				
1. Buys goods/raw materials in big quantities	2.48	SP	2.12	SP
2. Buys goods/raw materials exclusively from particular suppliers	4.10	HP	3.55	HP
\bar{x}	3.29	MP	2.84	MP
B. Selling-Product				
1. Designs packaging for customers' convenience	2.1	SP	1.8	NP
2. Improves the product/service continuously.	3.25	MP	3.0	MP
3. Designs packaging to suit customer budget.	3.10	MP	3.20	MP
\bar{x}	2.82	MP	2.67	MP
C. Selling-Price				
1. Sets price prevailing in the market	4.10	HP	4.20	HP
2. Sets price depending on terms of payment	2.5	SP	2.55	SP
3. Sets price based on desired profit.	3.15	MP	3.89	HP
\bar{x}	3.0	MP	3.55	HP
D. Selling-Promotion				
1. Advertises its products/services	2.10	SP	2.25	SP
2. Seeks help of middlemen	3.25	MP	3.40	MP
\bar{x}	2.68	MP	2.83	MP
E. Financing				
1. Maintains ready cash for the purchase of raw materials/goods/supplies	2.10	SP	3.10	MP
2. Buys raw materials/goods/supplies on credit	2.10	SP	3.20	MP
3. Insures commodity	3.15	MP	3.0	MP
4. Resorts to hedging strategies	3.15	MP	3.15	MP
\bar{x}	2.63	MP	3.11	MP
F. Market Information				
1. Observes changing needs of the customers	2.01	SP	3.15	MP
2. Determines future demand from the target market	2.10	SP	2.2	SP
3. Conducts surveys from target market	1.56	NP	1.89	SP
4. Asks for feedback from regular customers.	1.35	NP	3.15	MP
\bar{x}	1.76	MP	2.60	SP
OVERALL	2.70	MP	2.93	MP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21
4.20 – 3.41
3.40 – 2.61
2.60 – 1.81
1.80 – 1.00

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)
Highly Practiced (HP)
Moderately Practiced (MP)
Slightly Practiced (SP)
Not Practiced (NP)

Looking closer at the table, the lowest means are “Conducts surveys from target market” (\bar{x} =1.56 for owners and \bar{x} = 1.89 for employees) with descriptive ratings of “Slightly Practiced”. This can be attributed to the fact that micro businesses’ customers are not complicated and that they are just serving the basic needs of their customers, which is why it is not necessary for them to conduct market surveys. The results indicate that microbusiness owners do not practice some marketing practices which may be crucial to their operations. They do not know the importance of marketing practices in managing their enterprises. According to Kotler (2000) marketing practices are important in managing the enterprise since it involves all the activities in providing customer satisfaction and facilitating the exchange of goods from the enterprise to its customers and eventually building a strong customer base. But basing from the results, there is a need to enhance the marketing practices of microbusinesses.

Table 5.1.b Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Human Resources Practices

Human Resources Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Job Orientation				
1. Introduces the business and the job to the new employees	2.15	SP	2.20	SP
2. Introduces the new employee to fellow workers	3.0	MP	3.15	MP
3. Familiarizes the new employees at the physical lay-out and facilities of the business	2.15	SP	3.20	MP
\bar{x}	2.43	SP	2.85	MP
B. Compensation and Fringe Benefits				
1. Provides competitive compensation	3.15	MP	2.1	SP
2. Provides Fringe Benefits	3.0	MP	1.59	NP
3. Gives overtime pay	1.29	NP	1.30	NP
\bar{x}	2.58	SP	1.66	NP
C. Working Condition				
1. Provides adequate facilities for the workers.	2.15	SP	1.80	NP
2. Provides adequate equipment for the workers.	3.15	MP	1.91	SP
3. Maintains cleanliness of the work area .	4.0	HP	3.85	HP
4. Observes proper ventilation.	3.15	MP	2.18	SP
\bar{x}	3.14	MP	2.44	SP

D. Motivation				
1. Provides incentives to employees	3.0	MP	1.59	NP
2. Involves workers in planning and implementation	3.89	HP	2.85	MP
3. Pays workers on a regular basis.	3.59	HP	3.15	MP
4. Recognizes exemplary performance of employees.	3.18	MP	2.11	SP
x	3.42	HP	2.43	SP
OVERALL	2.89	MP	2.34	SP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21

4.20 – 3.41

3.40 – 2.61

2.60 – 1.81

1.80 – 1.00

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)

Highly Practiced (HP)

Moderately Practiced (MP)

Slightly Practiced (SP)

Not Practiced (NP)

As exhibited in the table, the overall assessment on the level of human resources practices is “Moderately Practiced and Slightly practiced” respectively (\bar{x} = 2.89 for owners and \bar{x} = 2.34 for employees. This implies that microbusiness owners are practicing to a certain extent the different human resources practices. This can be attributed to the fact that most of the employees of the micro-businesses are family members so there is no formal human resource structure of the said businesses.

Table 5.1.c Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Financial Practices

Financial Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Financial Planning				
1. Prepares projected statement that reflects revenue, costs and expenses.	3.15	MP	2.85	MP
2. Prepares projected statement that reflects assets, liabilities and owner’s equity.	3.87	HP	2.74	MP
3. Prepares projected cash inflow and cash outflow.	3.15	MP	2.14	SP
4. Prepares a budget.	3.80	HP	2.11	SP
x	3.49	HP	2.46	SP
B. Financing Decision				
1. Borrows funds from banks and other financial institutions.	2.15	SP	2.40	SP
2. Receives additional investments/shares from owners	3.15	MP	3.06	MP
3. Controls costs and expenses	4.15	HP	3.80	HP
4. Avail of purchase discount	4.15	HP	3.73	HP
5. Insures workers	3.15	MP	2.89	MP

6. Insures properties	2.74	MP	2.80	MP
x	3.25	MP	3.11	MP
C. Working Capital Management				
1. Maintains ready cash for the payment of expenses.	3.15	MP	3.24	MP
2. Deposits money in the bank.	1.89	SP	1.25	NP
3. Set aside cash for future investments	2.15	SP	2.81	MP
4. Invests in other profit making ventures.	1.59	NP	1.34	NP
5. Adopts strict credit extension policy.	3.15	MP	2.25	SP
6. Adopts strict credit collection policy.	3.80	HP	2.18	SP
x	2.62	MP	2.18	SP
D. Capital Budgeting				
1. Buys equipment and furniture for use in the business.	2.18	SP	3.01	MP
2. Leases equipment for use in the business.	2.59	SP	2.48	SP
3. Prepares alternative courses of action relative to capital investment decision.	1.91	SP	2.18	SP
x	2.23	SP	2.56	SP
OVERALL	2.92	MP	2.58	SP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21
4.20 – 3.41
3.40 – 2.61
2.60 – 1.81
1.80 – 1.00

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)
Highly Practiced (HP)
Moderately Practiced (MP)
Slightly Practiced (SP)
Not Practiced (NP)

The table indicates that the overall assessment on financial practices is “Moderately Practiced” for owners and “slightly practiced” for employees (\bar{x} = 2.92 for owners and \bar{x} = 2.58) This implies that financial practices (financial planning, financial decision, working capital management and capital budgeting) are given moderate importance by microbusiness owners in Ilocos Norte.

Microbusiness owners have overlooked some important financial practices which are very crucial in the operations of the business including its profitability as indicated by a low mean rating on the financial practices.

**Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Marketing Practices
by Small Business in Ilocos Norte**

Marketing Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Buying				
1. Buys goods/raw materials in big quantities	4.18	HP	3.89	HP
2. Buys goods/raw materials exclusively from	4.89	VHP	3.25	MP

particular suppliers				
x	4.54	VHP	3.57	HP
B. Selling-Product				
1. Designs packaging for customers' convenience	3.15	MP	2.89	MP
2. Improves the product/service continuously.	4.34	VHP	3.74	HP
3. Designs packaging to suit customer budget.	3.18	MP	3.64	HP
x	3.56	HP	3.42	HP
C. Selling-Price				
1. Sets price prevailing in the market	4.91	VHP	3.88	HP
2. Sets price depending on terms of payment	4.35	VHP	4.18	HP
3. Sets price based on desired profit.	4.48	VHP	4.22	VHP
4. Gives discounts	4.80	VHP	4.91	VHP
5. Designs packaging to suit customers budget				
x	4.64	VHP	4.30	VHP
D. Selling-Promotion				
1. Advertises its products/services	4.54	VHP	4.10	HP
2. Seeks help of middlemen	4.21	VHP	4.12	HP
x	4.38	VHP	4.11	HP
E. Financing				
1. Maintains ready cash for the purchase of raw materials/goods/supplies	4.22	VHP	4.10	HP
2. Buys raw materials/goods/supplies on credit	4.11	HP	4.02	HP
3. Insures commodity	4.22	VHP	4.11	HP
4. Resorts to hedging strategies	4.11	HP	4.28	VHP
x	4.17	HP	4.13	HP
F. Market Information				
1. Observes changing needs of the customers	4.17	HP	4.01	HP
2. Determines future demand from the target market	4.28	VHP	4.01	HP
3. Conducts surveys from target market	3.18	MP	2.17	SP
4. Asks for feedback from regular customers.	4.74	VHP	4.21	VHP
x	4.09	HP	3.60	HP
OVERALL	4.23	VHP	3.86	HP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21

4.20 – 3.41

3.40 – 2.61

2.60 – 1.81

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)

Highly Practiced (HP)

Moderately Practiced (MP)

Slightly Practiced (SP)

1.80 – 1.00

Not Practiced (NP)

The table indicates that small business owners are highly applying marketing practices as indicated with the mean rating of 4.23 for owners with a descriptive rating “Very Highly Practiced” and for employees $\bar{x}=3.86$ with a descriptive rating of highly practiced. The results indicate that small business owners know the importance of marketing practices in managing their enterprises. Comparing the results to that of the micro-businesses, it is evident that small business owners are following marketing standards more than that of the micro-businesses. This is attributed to the fact that small businesses have more formal structure than micro-businesses.

Table 5.2.b Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Human Resources Practices by Small Businesses in Ilocos Norte

Human Resources Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Job Orientation				
1. Introduces the business and the job to the new employees	4.21	VHP	4.18	HP
2. Introduces the new employee to fellow workers	4.31	VHP	4.14	HP
3. Familiarizes the new employees at the physical lay-out and facilities of the business	4.18	HP	4.21	VHP
\bar{x}	4.23	VHP	4.18	HP
B. Compensation and Fringe Benefits				
1. Provides competitive compensation	4.21	VHP	4.01	HP
2. Provides Fringe Benefits	4.18	HP	3.74	HP
3. Gives overtime pay	4.21	VHP	4.02	HP
\bar{x}	4.20	HP	3.92	HP
C. Working Condition				
1. Provides adequate facilities for the workers.	4.18	HP	4.17	HP
2. Provides adequate equipment for the workers.	4.31	VHP	4.27	VHP
3. Maintains cleanliness of the work area .	4.12	HP	4.08	HP
4. Observes proper ventilation.	4.18	HP	4.09	HP
\bar{x}	4.20	HP	4.15	HP
D. Motivation				
1. Provides incentives to employees	4.21	VHP	4.13	HP
2. Involves workers in planning and implementation	3.81	HP	2.89	MP

3. Pays workers on a regular basis.	4.81	VHP	4.17	HP
4. Recognizes exemplary performance of employees.	4.22	VHP	4.07	HP
x	4.26	VHP	3.82	HP
OVERALL	4.22	VHP	4.02	HP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21

4.20 – 3.41

3.40 – 2.61

2.60 – 1.81

1.80 – 1.00

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)

Highly Practiced (HP)

Moderately Practiced (MP)

Slightly Practiced (SP)

Not Practiced (NP)

As exhibited in the table, the overall assessment on the level of human resources practices are “Very Highly Practiced” (\bar{x} =4.22) as perceived by owners and highly practiced as perceived by the employees.. This implies that small business owners are practicing to a great extent the different human resources practices. The “Highly Practiced” assessment can be attributed to the high regards of the owners about the importance of maintaining a motivated pool of personnel.

Table 5.2.c Item Mean Ratings of the Level of Financial Practices by Small Businesses in Ilocos Norte

Financial Practices	Owners		Employees	
	\bar{x}	DR	\bar{x}	DR
A. Financial Planning				
1. Prepares projected statement that reflects revenue, costs and expenses.	4.13	HP	3.27	MP
2. Prepares projected statement that reflects assets, liabilities and owner’s equity.	4.17	HP	3.89	HP
3. Prepares projected cash inflow and cash outflow.	4.75	VHP	4.12	HP
4. Prepares a budget.	4.81	VHP	4.25	VHP
x	4.47	VHP	3.88	HP
B. Financing Decision				
1. Borrows funds from banks and other financial institutions.	3.89	HP	3.24	MP
2. Receives additional investments/shares from owners	4.17	HP	3.89	HP
3. Controls costs and expenses	4.74	VHP	4.69	VHP
4. Avail of purchase discount	4.55	VHP	4.01	HP
5. Insures workers	4.27	VHP	3.74	HP
6. Insures properties	4.18	HP	3.91	HP
x	4.30	HP	3.91	HP
C. Working Capital Management				

1. Maintains ready cash for the payment of expenses.	4.64	VHP	4.15	HP
2. Deposits money in the bank.	3.27	MP	3.16	MP
3. Set aside cash for future investments	4.16	HP	3.74	HP
4. Invests in other profit making ventures.	3.80	HP	3.17	MP
5. Adopts strict credit extension policy.	3.17	MP	3.18	MP
6. Adopts strict credit collection policy.	4.17	HP	4.21	VHP
x	3.87	HP	3.60	HP
D. Capital Budgeting				
1. Buys equipment and furniture for use in the business.	4.21	VHP	4.18	HP
2. Leases equipment for use in the business.	4.19	HP	4.17	HP
3. Prepares alternative courses of action relative to capital investment decision.	4.21	VHP	4.22	VHP
x	4.20	HP	4.19	HP
OVERALL	4.21	VHP	3.89	HP

Legend:

Statistical Range

5.00 – 4.21

4.20 – 3.41

3.40 – 2.61

2.60 – 1.81

1.80 – 1.00

Descriptive Rating

Very Highly Practiced (VHP)

Highly Practiced (HP)

Moderately Practiced (MP)

Slightly Practiced (SP)

Not Practiced (NP)

The table indicates that the overall assessment on financial practices are “very highly Practiced” (\bar{x} =4.21) as perceived by owners and highly practiced (\bar{x} =3.89) as perceived by the employees. This implies that financial practices (financial planning, financial decision, working capital management and capital budgeting) are also given importance by small business owners in Ilocos Norte. According to Mejorada (1993), the common yet costly mistake for many entrepreneurs whose business went into bankruptcy is poor financial management like allocation, sourcing and effective utilization of the financial resources of the enterprise. This means that financial practices should also be taken into consideration.

6. What are the similarities and differences in the management practices of micro and small business owners in Ilocos Norte?

Table 6. Similarities and differences in the Management Practices of Micro and Small Businesses

Area of Concern	Micro Business	Small Business
A. Marketing		
1. Buying	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced

2. Selling – Product	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
3. Selling – Price	Moderately Practiced	Very Highly Practiced
4. Selling – Promotion	Slightly Practiced	Very Highly Practiced
5. Financing	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
6. Market Information	Slightly Practiced	Highly Practiced
B. Human Resources		
1. Job Orientation	Moderately Practiced	Very Highly Practiced
2. Compensation and Fringe Benefits	Slightly Practiced	Highly Practiced
3. Working Condition	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
4. Motivation	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
C. Finance		
1. Financial Planning	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
2. Financing Decisions	Moderately Practiced	Highly Practiced
3. Working Capital Management	Slightly Practiced	Highly Practiced
4. Capital Budgeting	Slightly Practiced	Highly Practiced

The table shows that there are major differences of management practices of small and micro businesses in Ilocos Norte. In the marketing practices, it is noteworthy to emphasize that major difference lie on the area of promotion, where the micro business owners only slightly practice, where as small business owners very highly practiced promotions of their products and services. This indicates that small business owners promote intensively their products and services whereas for the micro businesses, they do not promote their products and services. This is due to the fact that micro businesses only have minimal capitalization and budget for them to spend on promotions. Instead, they use their funds for more important priorities such as buying of goods to sell.

As for the human resources practices, the main difference lies on the area of fringe benefits and salaries. Since the micro businesses employ their family members, they do not strictly implement rules on salaries and benefits while for small businesses, they have more formal structure and they employ not only their family members they are more strict in practicing salaries and benefits' rules and regulations.

Lastly, as for the financial practices, small business owners are more strict in implementing and following these practices as compared with micro businesses.

To sum it up, this result can be attributed to the fact that small businesses have more formal structures because they have higher capitalization and the room of errors in managing a small business should be minimal or avoided. With this, small business owners should really be religious in practicing different established standards so that to ensure the success of the businesses.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby advanced:

1. The Department of Trade and Industry should focus on developing the owners of micro and small businesses in Ilocos Norte. Support from the local government should also be encouraged. Such support can be in the form of financial and technical aspects. The local Government through the Department of Trade and Industry and some local banks should provide financial assistance to the micro and small owners. Tax exemptions and lowering of license fees are also ways on how to support the micro and small business owners. On the technical side, the local government should sponsor some business venturing seminars and training and it should be well advertised and the prospective participants be well informed.
2. The government of the Province of Ilocos Norte should align some of its funds and budget to support micro-businesses and small businesses especially those that exhibit a strong capability to grow and eventually develop into globally competitive enterprise.
3. The microbusiness and small business owners of Ilocos Norte should organize an Association of Microbusiness and Small business Owners to promote, support and inform owners of the current trends, problems faced, opportunities, support programs and other key areas of concern for micro and small business owners.
4. The microfinance sector and other financial institutions should make available financial support especially to those viable microbusinesses being threatened by stiff competition. Moreover, they should look at the perceived high interest rates and stringent paper requirements and the long waiting period before the loan proceeds are released.
5. Northwestern University, as an academic institution, can help in the improvement of the micro and small businesses' operations. The University, particularly the College of Business Education can educate the owners of these enterprises and conduct seminars and trainings about managing businesses, capital budgeting and other business related topics. This can be the community extension service of the College, looking and helping these enterprises especially those that are not performing well. The first phase of the project can be scouting of probable beneficiaries (especially those that are not performing well) and then conducting a needs assessment of these businesses. Then after the initial stage the College can come up now with the different seminars and trainings that can answer the needs of these businesses.
6. A similar research should be undertaken to determine what specific assistance and support the micro-businesses and small businesses in the province need most and on the impact of these government assistance programs for micro-businesses and small businesses.

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