



Beyond Prison Walls: Business Proposal Design Awareness Among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)

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Abstract

This study explored the level of awareness in designing business proposals among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Passi District Jail, Passi City, Iloilo, Philippines. Using a descriptive-survey design, the study examined how awareness varied across socio-demographic characteristics, including age, civil status, educational attainment, and length of incarceration. Findings indicated that PDLs generally possess a moderate understanding of business proposal development, with minimal variation across demographic groups, suggesting that factors such as age, gender, education, and incarceration period do not significantly influence awareness. Despite basic entrepreneurial knowledge, gaps were identified in areas requiring practical skills, highlighting the need for structured and targeted interventions. In response, the study proposed the “Unlocking Potential: A Business Proposal Project for PDLs”, which incorporates workshops, mentorship, networking, and post-release support to strengthen entrepreneurial competencies. The study emphasizes the importance of economic empowerment and skill development in correctional settings to facilitate rehabilitation, reintegration, and the transformation of PDLs into productive, self-reliant members of society.

Keywords: Persons Deprived of Liberty, business proposal design, workshop, mentorship, entrepreneurship



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INTRODUCTION

Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) are among the most marginalized sectors of society, often facing multiple and interconnected challenges during incarceration and upon reintegration into the community. After release, many former PDLs encounter limited employment opportunities, disrupted family relationships, healthcare barriers, social stigma, inadequate access to capital, and weak support systems, all of which increase the risk of unemployment and recidivism (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). These challenges are further intensified by the lack of practical skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and confidence necessary to participate meaningfully in economic activities (International Labour Organization, 2020).

In recent years, correctional systems have increasingly shifted from punitive approaches toward rehabilitation, restorative justice, and reintegration-focused programs. In the Philippines, agencies such as the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) emphasize livelihood training and skills development as core components of inmate rehabilitation programs (Department of the Interior and Local Government, 2019). Economic empowerment, particularly through entrepreneurship, has emerged as a viable strategy to help PDLs achieve self-reliance and social reintegration.

Entrepreneurship offers an alternative livelihood pathway for individuals who may face discrimination in formal employment due to their incarceration history. Studies have shown that entrepreneurial and livelihood programs

inside correctional institutions improve self-esteem, enhance employability, and significantly reduce recidivism rates (Visher et al., 2017; UNODC, 2018). These programs enable PDLs to develop competencies that are essential for post-release survival and community reintegration.

One crucial aspect of entrepreneurial readiness is business proposal development. Business proposal writing equips individuals with fundamental skills such as opportunity identification, business planning, financial forecasting, marketing strategy formulation, and risk assessment (Scarborough & Cornwall, 2019). For PDLs, awareness and understanding of business proposal development can serve as a foundation for microenterprise creation and participation in livelihood assistance programs provided by government agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

This study seeks to examine the level of awareness of PDLs at the Passi City District Jail regarding business proposal development. Assessing their awareness is essential in identifying gaps in entrepreneurial knowledge that may hinder effective participation in livelihood programs. Without a clear understanding of their baseline awareness, training interventions may fail to address the actual needs of PDLs (ILO, 2020).

By exploring the awareness of PDLs regarding business proposal development, this study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on correctional education, entrepreneurship, and rehabilitation. The findings of this study may serve as a basis for the development of targeted entrepreneurial training programs that enhance the entrepreneurial competencies of PDLs, promote economic independence, and support their successful reintegration into society.

Research Objectives. This study aims to determine the level of awareness in designing business proposal among Persons Deprived of

Liberty (PDL) and use the findings to guide the development of a community intervention program. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness in designing business proposal among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) when taken as a whole and classified as in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, length of incarceration?
2. Is there a significant difference in the level of awareness in designing business proposal among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) when taken as a whole and classified as in terms of age, gender, educational attainment, length of incarceration?
3. What intervention plan may be developed to address the level of awareness in designing business proposal among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL)?

Paradigm of the Study. This study is anchored on Human Capital Theory as proposed by Gary Becker (1964), which posits that investments in education, skills development, and training enhance an individual's productivity and economic potential. In the context of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), developing competencies such as business proposal writing is considered a form of human capital investment that can improve employability, foster entrepreneurial capability, and reduce the likelihood of recidivism. By equipping PDLs with knowledge and skills in business planning, the "cost" of returning to crime may be reduced, while opportunities for lawful income generation are increased. Thus, this theory provides the foundational explanation of why enhancing awareness in business proposal design is expected to produce positive reintegration outcomes.

Guided by this theoretical lens, the study adopts an Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework, where the input variables consist of the socio-demographic profile of PDLs, including age, civil status, educational attainment, and length of

incarceration, while the output variable is the level of awareness in designing a business proposal. The process involves the assessment and analysis of how these variables interact to influence awareness levels, which will serve as the basis for the development of an intervention program.

It is hypothesized that the socio-demographic profile of the PDLs significantly influences their level of awareness in designing a business proposal. This proposition is grounded in existing literature suggesting that individual characteristics shape learning capacity, motivation, and access to knowledge. For instance, age is associated with cognitive flexibility and experiential learning, where younger individuals may adapt more easily to new business concepts, while older individuals may rely on accumulated life experiences. Civil status is included based on the assumption that family responsibilities can influence motivation toward economic preparation and entrepreneurial engagement.

Educational attainment is expected to be the primary predictor of awareness, as supported by prior studies (e.g., Antonio, 2024), which emphasize that individuals with higher educational backgrounds demonstrate stronger competencies in comprehension, analytical thinking, and structured planning—skills essential in business proposal development. Meanwhile, length of incarceration is considered a contextual factor influencing exposure to institutional programs; longer incarceration may provide access to training opportunities, although it may also limit familiarity with current market trends. These variables were selected because they are consistently identified in previous research as significant determinants of learning outcomes and entrepreneurial readiness.

The dependent variable, which is the level of awareness in designing a business proposal, refers to the extent to which PDLs understand essential components such as business objectives, product or service description, market analysis, financial planning, and

implementation strategies. A higher level of awareness indicates greater preparedness for entrepreneurial activities and economic reintegration, while a lower level suggests the need for targeted educational interventions.

Furthermore, this study is delimited to PDLs in Passi District Jail with a total of 45 respondents, and it specifically focuses on awareness in designing business proposals for micro-enterprises. The emphasis on micro-enterprises is appropriate given the practical and accessible nature of small-scale business opportunities for PDLs upon release, requiring minimal capital and resources. This delimitation ensures that the findings remain context-specific, relevant, and applicable to realistic post-release livelihood options.

The identified relationships between the socio-demographic profile of PDLs and their level of awareness in designing a business proposal provide a strong empirical basis for the development of an intervention program. By analyzing how these variables influence awareness, the proposed program can be tailored using differentiated instructional strategies, simplified modules, and practical activities suited to the needs of specific groups. Ultimately, the intervention aims to enhance entrepreneurial awareness, promote economic self-sufficiency, and support the successful reintegration of PDLs into society.

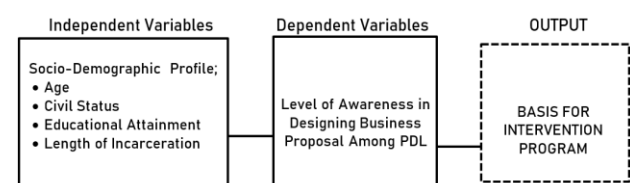


Figure 1
The Conceptual Design Depicting the Relationship Between Variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research indicates that educational and livelihood programs within correctional settings play a crucial role in rehabilitation, skill development, and reintegration. In the Philippines, initiatives such as the “College

Education Behind Bars Program" in Iligan City Jail exemplify efforts to provide Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) with practical skills and knowledge, including entrepreneurship, literacy, and craftsmanship, that support personal growth and future employment opportunities upon release (Antonio, 2024). Similarly, entrepreneurship and financial literacy training programs conducted at Iloilo City District Jail have been shown to enhance income-generating capabilities, instill a positive entrepreneurial mindset, and introduce basic business planning concepts such as starting a business and simple business plan usage (French, 2025). These local efforts reflect a broader trend toward incorporating economic empowerment in rehabilitation frameworks for PDLs.

Studies also emphasize the importance of comprehensive rehabilitation beyond traditional punitive measures. For instance, community involvement in prisoner rehabilitation programs in Iriga District Jail highlights the value of work and livelihood training as part of holistic rehabilitative approaches, although implementation challenges such as limited funding and institutional support persist (Leonor, 2023). At the national level, programs like JCI Philippines' Beyond Prison Walls initiative focus on skills development and livelihood opportunities for PDLs as part of reintegration strategies grounded in restorative justice principles (JCI Philippines, 2026).

To provide a broader regional context, studies from the ASEAN region further reinforce the role of correctional education in rehabilitation. In Malaysia, research has shown that structured prison education and entrepreneurship programs significantly improve inmates' employability skills, self-efficacy, and readiness for reintegration, particularly when aligned with market-relevant competencies (Zainal et al., 2023). In Indonesia, correctional institutions have implemented vocational and entrepreneurial training programs that emphasize small-scale business development, demonstrating positive outcomes in skill acquisition and post-release livelihood

engagement among inmates (Sutanto & Prasetyo, 2022). Similarly, in Thailand, prison-based education programs integrating technical skills training and informal entrepreneurship education have been associated with increased self-reliance and reduced likelihood of recidivism, highlighting the importance of continuous learning opportunities within correctional settings (Kittipong, 2021). These ASEAN-based studies collectively suggest that correctional education systems across the region are increasingly adopting skills-based and livelihood-oriented approaches to support inmate rehabilitation.

International research further supports the integration of entrepreneurship in prison education. Systematic reviews on prison entrepreneurship education underline that structured programs can enhance entrepreneurial skills and contribute to cognitive transformation, opportunity recognition, and desistance from criminal behavior (Anjos et al., 2025). Programs such as The Last Mile in the United States illustrate how business plan development and entrepreneurship training inside prisons help participants conceptualize ventures and prepare pitches, equipping them with marketable competencies for post-release employment or enterprise creation (Wikipedia, 2026). Likewise, systematic reviews show that entrepreneurship opportunities may reduce recidivism by providing former inmates with income-generating pathways and improving their socioeconomic stability after release (Zainal et al., 2024).

A related international study in Malaysia found that former prisoners demonstrate varying levels of entrepreneurial literacy, underscoring the need for targeted training to enhance business knowledge and livelihood readiness post-incarceration (Zainal et al., 2023). Research on incarcerated individuals also suggests that entrepreneurship education fosters cognitive changes, improves opportunity identification skills, and supports behavioral transformation that may influence post-release success (PubMed, 2024).

Collectively, these studies suggest that strengthening awareness and skills related to business proposal development particularly in the context of micro-enterprises can be a meaningful component of rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for PDLs.

METHODOLOGY

Design. This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey research design to address and answer the research questions. A quantitative approach was selected over a qualitative design to allow for the systematic measurement, statistical analysis, and generalization of findings within the identified population of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in Passi District Jail. Specifically, the descriptive design was deemed appropriate as it enables the researcher to determine the current level of awareness in designing business proposals and examine its relationship with selected socio-demographic variables without manipulating any conditions. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2013), descriptive research involves the systematic collection of quantifiable data to answer questions concerning the present status of a phenomenon.

Setting, Population and Sampling. The study was conducted at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) Passi City District Jail, located in Barangay Sablogon, Passi City, Iloilo. At the time of the study, the sampling frame consisted of the total population of PDLs currently detained in the facility (N = 200). From this population, forty-five (45) respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique to ensure that each eligible PDL had an equal chance of participation.

Instrumentation. This study utilized a researcher-made survey questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The instrument was designed to assess the level of awareness in designing business proposals among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), both as a whole and when classified according to

age, civil status, educational attainment, and length of incarceration. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts. The first part gathered information on the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The second part measured the respondents' level of awareness in business proposal development, including knowledge of business objectives, product or service description, market analysis, financial planning, and implementation strategies. Responses were measured using a Likert-type scale to quantify awareness levels.

To ensure content validity, the instrument was evaluated by three experts in the fields of Entrepreneurship, Business Education, and Criminal Justice/Correctional Education. These experts assessed the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the items with the study objectives. Their recommendations were incorporated to refine the instrument and improve its overall validity. For reliability testing, a pilot test was conducted among five (5) PDLs from a similar correctional facility. The responses were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.87, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability of the instrument. The validated questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher, with guidance provided to ensure comprehension of each item. This facilitated accurate data collection and minimized response errors.

Table 1
Awareness Level Scale and Interpretation.

Scale	Range	Interpretation
5	4.21 – 5.00	Very High Awareness
4	3.41 – 4.20	High Awareness
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderate Awareness
2	1.81 – 2.60	Low Awareness
1	1.00 – 1.80	Very Low Awareness

Data Analyses. The collected data were summarized, tabulated, and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics, including frequency count and percentage, were used to describe the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, civil status, educational attainment, and length of incarceration. The

mean and standard deviation were used to determine and interpret the level of awareness in designing business proposals.

To examine the influence of socio-demographic variables on the level of awareness, appropriate inferential statistical tests were employed. Specifically, the Independent Samples t-test was used to determine differences in awareness when respondents were grouped into two categories (e.g., civil status), while One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied for variables with more than two groups (e.g., age, educational attainment, and length of incarceration). In addition, the Chi-square test of independence was utilized where applicable to examine associations between categorical variables. These tests provided statistical evidence to support or reject the hypothesis on the influence of socio-demographic factors on awareness levels.

All data were computer-processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to ensure accuracy, reliability, and consistency of results.

Ethical Considerations. To ensure transparency and ethical rigor in working with a vulnerable population, specific inclusion criteria were established. Participants were included if they: (1) were currently detained at Passi District Jail, (2) possessed basic literacy in English or Hiligaynon, and (3) voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. Those who were unable to provide informed consent or had conditions that limited their ability to complete the questionnaire were excluded. The random selection of respondents was conducted using the fishbowl technique, wherein the names of all eligible PDLs were written on slips of paper, placed in a container, and drawn randomly until the required sample size of 45 participants was reached. This procedure ensured fairness and minimized selection bias.

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured formal permission from the BJMP Passi City District Jail administration and endorsement

from the BJMP Regional Office. In addition, the research protocol was reviewed and approved by the University Ethics Committee, ensuring compliance with ethical standards for research involving human participants, particularly those in custodial settings. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents, and informed consent was obtained. Participants were assured that their involvement was voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time without consequence, and that all responses would be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity. The respondents were guided and supervised while answering the questionnaire to ensure proper understanding of the items. Health protocols and institutional guidelines were strictly followed throughout the data collection process. After retrieval, all questionnaires were checked for completeness and accuracy prior to data processing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of Awareness in Designing Business Proposal Among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL), When Taken as a Whole, and Classified as to Age, Civil Status, Educational Attainment, Length of Incarceration. Table 2 reveals the level of awareness in designing business proposals among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). As shown in the table, the entire group of PDLs obtained a mean score of 3.43 with a standard deviation of 0.294, which is described as Moderate. This indicates that, overall, PDLs possess a fair understanding of the processes involved in designing a business proposal but still require further training to attain a higher level of competency.

When classified according to age, both the younger ($M = 3.45$) and older ($M = 3.47$) groups recorded moderate levels of awareness. The slightly higher mean for the older group suggests that maturity and life experience may contribute to a better grasp of business-related concepts, although the difference between the two age groups is minimal.

In terms of civil status, both single ($M = 3.49$) and married ($M = 3.48$) respondents reflected

moderate awareness levels, indicating that marital status has little to no influence on PDLs' awareness in business proposal design. When grouped according to length of incarceration, those with a shorter period of incarceration (M = 3.48) showed slightly higher awareness compared to those with a longer period of incarceration (M = 3.43). This may imply that prolonged confinement could limit exposure to learning opportunities and updated entrepreneurial knowledge.

Table 2
Level of Awareness in Designing Business Proposal Among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) When Taken as a Whole and Classified as to Age, Civil Status, Educational Attainment, Length of Incarceration and Educational Attainment.

Statements	SD	Mean	Description
Entire Group	.294	3.43	Moderate
Age			
Younger (18-40 years old)	.256	3.45	Moderate
Older (above 40 years old)	.377	3.47	Moderate
Civil Status			
Single	.289	3.49	Moderate
Married	.311	3.48	Moderate
Length of Incarceration			
Shorter	.295	3.48	Moderate
Longer	.285	3.43	Moderate
Educational Attainment			
High School Level	.202	3.23	Moderate
High School Graduate	.325	3.28	Moderate
College Level	.233	3.47	Moderate
College Graduate	.325	3.48	Moderate

With regard to educational attainment, results revealed that college graduates (M = 3.48) and college-level (M = 3.47) PDLs exhibited higher awareness levels compared to high school graduates (M = 3.28) and high school level (M = 3.23) respondents. Although all groups fall within the moderate category, the results indicate that higher educational attainment contributes to better understanding and application of business concepts.

Overall, the findings suggest that PDLs possess moderate awareness of business proposal design regardless of demographic classification. This highlights the need for

targeted entrepreneurship and business training programs, such as the proposed "Unlocking Potential" project, to further enhance their skills and prepare them for successful reintegration into society through sustainable livelihood opportunities.

These results align with the study, Sa Likod Sang Rehas: Educational Needs of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) as Basis for an Extension Program (WVSU, 2023) revealed that PDLs expressed strong needs for training in financial literacy and livelihood development, particularly in preparing business or budget plans and identifying income-generating activities. These findings are further supported by Aloysian Publications (2023), which emphasized that while PDLs at Iwahig Prison had gained basic technical and entrepreneurial skills, they still faced challenges in sustaining business ventures and aligning them with market demands.

In addition, local initiatives such as the Department of Trade and Industry's "Project SIKAP Entrep" and the Iloilo City PDL Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Training (Daily Guardian, 2024) highlight the recognized need to strengthen PDLs' business competencies through continuous training and mentoring.

Significant Difference in the Level of Awareness in Designing Business Proposal Among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) When taken as a Whole and Classified as in Terms of Age, Gender, Educational Attainment, Length of Incarceration. The results in Table 3 reveal that there is no significant difference in the level of awareness in designing business proposals among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) when classified according to age, gender, educational attainment, and length of incarceration. This is supported by the results of the inferential tests presented in Table 3, where all computed p-values for age (p = 0.438), gender (p = 0.671), educational attainment (p = 0.291), and length of incarceration (p = 0.392) are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted,

indicating that these socio-demographic variables do not significantly influence the level of awareness in designing business proposals.

Table 3
Inferential Analysis on the Influence of Socio-Demographic Variables on the Level of Awareness in Designing Business Proposals among PDLs

Variables	Test Used	Test Statistic	df	p-value	Decision
Age	One-Way ANOVA	F = 0.842	2, 42	0.438	Not Significant
Gender	Independent t-test	t = 0.428	43	0.671	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	One-Way ANOVA	F = 1.284	3, 41	0.291	Not Significant
Length of Incarceration	One-Way ANOVA	F = 0.956	2, 42	0.392	Not Significant

$p > 0.05$

Similarly, the results of the Chi-square test of independence in Table 4 further confirm that there is no significant association between the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and their categorized level of awareness. All variables age ($p = 0.711$), gender ($p = 0.612$), educational attainment ($p = 0.647$), and length of incarceration ($p = 0.541$) yielded p-values greater than 0.05, reinforcing the conclusion that awareness levels are relatively consistent across different groups.

The overall pattern of findings suggests that the level of awareness among PDLs is relatively uniform regardless of their background characteristics. This implies that factors such as age, gender, educational attainment, and length of incarceration do not create meaningful differences in how PDLs understand business proposal development. One possible explanation for this result is that the correctional environment serves as a leveling context, where individuals are exposed to similar routines, limitations, and access to learning opportunities. As a result, differences that are typically observed in open educational settings may be minimized within the jail environment.

These findings partially contrast with existing literature, which often identifies educational attainment and age as significant predictors of learning outcomes and entrepreneurial competence. For instance, previous studies

(e.g., Antonio, 2024) emphasize that individuals with higher education tend to demonstrate better comprehension of business concepts. However, the present study suggests that such differences may not be as pronounced among PDLs, possibly due to restricted access to differentiated learning resources and the standardized nature of correctional programs.

On the other hand, the results are consistent with studies highlighting that PDLs, regardless of demographic background, generally require structured and targeted entrepreneurial training, particularly in technical areas such as financial planning and business implementation. This supports the idea that awareness alone is not sufficient and must be reinforced through practical, skills-based interventions.

In relation to the objectives of the study, the findings clearly indicate that while PDLs possess a moderate level of awareness, this awareness is not significantly influenced by their socio-demographic profile. This directly informs the development of the proposed intervention plan, suggesting that a generalized yet flexible training program is more appropriate than one that is highly segmented by demographic factors. Instead, the intervention should focus on addressing common gaps in knowledge and skills experienced by PDLs as a group.

Overall, the absence of significant differences highlights the need to prioritize inclusive and comprehensive entrepreneurship programs within correctional facilities. Such programs should aim to enhance practical competencies, promote economic self-sufficiency, and support the successful reintegration of PDLs into society, regardless of their personal background.

Proposed Intervention Plan to Address the Level of Awareness in Designing Business Proposal Among Persons Deprived Of Liberty (PDL). Table 4 presents the proposed intervention plan developed to address the moderate level of awareness in designing business proposals

among Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs), as identified in the study. The problem statement highlights the need to enhance PDLs' entrepreneurial competence and practical skills, which forms the foundation of the project. To address this, the plan aims to strengthen PDLs' ability to develop and implement viable business proposals through guided workshops and entrepreneurship training sessions, ensuring that participants acquire the necessary knowledge and practical skills.

Table 4
Chi-Square Test of Association Between Socio-Demographic Variables and Level of Awareness (Categorical)

Variables	χ^2 value	df	p-value	Decision
Age × Awareness Level	$\chi^2 = 2.134$	4	0.711	Not Significant
Gender × Awareness Level	$\chi^2 = 0.982$	2	0.612	Not Significant
Educational Attainment × Awareness Level	$\chi^2 = 4.215$	6	0.647	Not Significant
Length of Incarceration × Awareness Level	$\chi^2 = 3.102$	4	0.541	Not Significant

$p > 0.05$

Table 5
Proposed Intervention Plan

Component/Aspect	Details	Goal/Objective	Key Activities/Interventions
Problem Statement	PDLs have a moderate level of awareness in designing business proposals, indicating a need to strengthen their competencies and practical skills.	Enhance PDLs' entrepreneurial competence and practical skills in business proposal design.	Series of Guided Workshops and Entrepreneurship Training Sessions.
Project Title	"Unlocking Potential: A Business Proposal Project for Persons Deprived of Liberty"	Empower PDLs by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and mentorship necessary to design and implement viable business proposals.	Mentorship activities and Networking opportunities.
Lead Implementer	ISUFST-SEC, College of Management	Spearhead and manage the project execution under the broader Program CEKLAB.	Project development, coordination, and resource mobilization.
Broader Program	Program CEKLAB (Community Empowerment through Knowledge, Livelihood, and Assistance for the Bound)	Promote rehabilitation, empowerment, and social inclusion for PDLs.	Align activities with ISUFST's mission to serve the least, the last, and the lost.
Target Participants	Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs)	Transform PDLs into self-reliant and productive members of the community.	Training and support tailored to the needs of PDLs.
Implementation Site	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Passi District Jail, Brgy. Sablogon, Passi City	Provide a structured environment for the project's delivery.	Conduct of workshops and training within the BJMP facility.
Key Partners	Local Government Unit (LGU)	Ensure successful implementation and sustainability through community support and partnership.	Collaboration for resources, access, and eventual post-release support.
Post-Release Strategy	Participants who complete the program.	Assist participants in establishing sustainable livelihood ventures upon reintegration into society.	Provision of Post-Release Support.

The project title, “Unlocking Potential: A Business Proposal Project for Persons Deprived of Liberty,” reflects the overarching goal of empowering PDLs by equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and mentorship required for successful business planning. Key activities under this component include mentorship sessions and networking opportunities, which provide guidance, practical advice, and exposure to real-world business contexts.

The lead implementer, ISUFST-SEC, College of Management, is responsible for managing and coordinating the project under the broader Program CEKLAB (Community Empowerment through Knowledge, Livelihood, and Assistance for the Bound). This ensures that the intervention is aligned with the university's mission to promote rehabilitation, empowerment, and social inclusion for PDLs. Activities such as project development, resource mobilization, and coordination are carried out to ensure smooth implementation and alignment with program goals.

The target participants of the project are the PDLs housed at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Passi District Jail, Brgy. Sablogon, Passi City. The program is designed to provide a structured environment for delivering workshops and training sessions, allowing participants to gain practical entrepreneurial skills within the correctional facility. Additionally, the key partners, including the Local Government Unit (LGU), play a crucial role in providing support, resources, and ensuring sustainability of the program, including post-release assistance.

The post-release strategy is a critical component of the intervention, as it aims to assist participants in establishing sustainable livelihood ventures upon reintegration into society. Through continuous mentorship and support, the program seeks to transform PDLs into self-reliant and productive members of the community, ultimately reducing recidivism and promoting long-term economic empowerment.

Overall, the intervention plan is a comprehensive approach that combines training, mentorship, institutional support, and post-release assistance to enhance PDLs' entrepreneurial competencies. By directly responding to the findings of the study, the plan provides a practical and sustainable solution to improve awareness and skills in business proposal design among PDLs.

Conclusion. The findings of the study indicate that Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) possess a moderate level of awareness in designing business proposals, regardless of their age, civil status, length of incarceration, or educational attainment. The overall mean score of 3.43 suggests that while PDLs have a fair understanding of the components and processes involved in business proposal development, there remains a need for further enhancement of their entrepreneurial knowledge and practical skills. Classification according to socio-demographic variables revealed minimal differences in awareness: older PDLs and those with higher educational attainment exhibited slightly higher awareness, while civil status and length of incarceration showed negligible influence. These results underscore that PDLs, despite basic exposure to entrepreneurial concepts, require structured interventions to improve their competencies.

In response to these findings, the study proposed the “Unlocking Potential: A Business Proposal Project for Persons Deprived of Liberty,” which aims to enhance PDLs' entrepreneurial skills through guided workshops, mentorship sessions, networking opportunities, and post-release support. Spearheaded by ISUFST-SEC, College of Management, under the broader Program CEKLAB, the intervention provides a structured framework for capacity building, practical skill development, and sustainable livelihood preparation. By delivering training within the BJMP facility and collaborating with the Local Government Unit (LGU), the program ensures both accessibility and long-term support for participants.

The study also acknowledges several limitations. First, the small sample size ($n = 45$) and the focus on a single geographic location (Passi City) may limit the generalizability of the findings to other correctional facilities or regions. Second, the study utilized a cross-sectional design, which captures awareness at a single point in time and does not allow for assessment of long-term outcomes or behavioral change. Third, the study relied on self-reported responses, which may be influenced by social desirability or limited understanding of some business concepts.

Given these limitations, future research is recommended to adopt a longitudinal design to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed intervention over time, particularly in terms of reducing recidivism and enhancing sustainable livelihood after release. Expanding the study to include larger samples across multiple correctional facilities in the Philippines or the ASEAN region would also provide a broader perspective and increase the external validity of the findings.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of targeted entrepreneurship training and mentorship programs in increasing the awareness and practical capabilities of PDLs in business proposal design. The proposed intervention not only addresses the moderate awareness levels identified but also contributes to the broader goals of rehabilitation, empowerment, and social reintegration. By equipping PDLs with essential entrepreneurial competencies, the initiative promotes self-reliance, reduces the risk of recidivism, and fosters productive participation in society after release.

Author contributions. Pia Paz: Writing – original draft; Conceptualization; Project administration; Methodology | Janice Ching: Data curation; Formal analysis | Jose Falcasantos: Writing – review & editing.

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