

Short Paper

One Town, One Product Program Implementation through SDG'S Compliance: Basis for Sustainable Development

Leonora V. Divina

Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Philippines / Romblon State University,
Philippines

profleonoradivina@gmail.com
(corresponding author)

Christopher C. Mantillas

Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Philippines
ccmantillas@pup.edu.ph

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Abstract

In an era defined by globalization, digital transformation, and urgent sustainability imperatives, place-based development programs like One Town, One Product (OTOP) have become critical tools for harnessing local identity and entrepreneurial capacity. Modeled after Japan's One Village, One Product (OVOP) initiative, OTOP fosters inclusive growth by empowering micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that capitalize on culturally significant resources. Across Asia, OTOP has demonstrated success in revitalizing traditional industries, preserving heritage, and stimulating grassroots innovation. In the Philippines, OTOP was institutionalized under Republic Act No. 11960, emphasizing product development, market competitiveness, and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, its tangible sustainability outcomes—particularly in resource-rich provinces like Romblon—require closer scrutiny. Romblon, renowned for marble craftsmanship and artisanal traditions, grapples with systemic challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, financial constraints, and environmental pressures linked to local production. This study adopts a mixed-methods design, integrating surveys of 270



stakeholders (beneficiaries, government officials, and investors) with qualitative interviews of key local actors. It evaluates OTOP's implementation across Romblon's municipalities and its contribution to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 8 (Decent Work), 9 (Industry Innovation), 12 (Responsible Consumption), and 17 (Partnerships). Quantitative findings indicate strengths in capacity-building initiatives, marketing support, and information dissemination. However, critical gaps persist in access to business resources, customer networks, policy awareness, and technical assistance, with financial support being the most pronounced deficiency. Qualitative insights corroborate these challenges, revealing systemic support gaps and policy misalignments. To enhance OTOP's efficacy, this study proposes: (1) strengthening financial mechanisms through localized micro-financing schemes, (2) delivering context-specific training and mentorship programs, and (3) implementing the T.I.P.S. framework (Training, Information, Products, and Sustainable Financing) at the grassroots level. While the study's scope is limited to three municipalities, its findings offer actionable insights for refining place-based policies like OTOP, ensuring they deliver equitable and sustainable development.

Keywords – sustainable, implementation, development, partnership, economic growth

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable local development has emerged as a critical strategy for fostering inclusive economic growth, preserving cultural heritage, and enhancing community resilience. Among the most effective approaches to community-based development is the One Town One Product (OTOP) program, which originated from Japan's One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative. This model has been widely adopted across Asia, including in Thailand, South Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as a means to stimulate local economies, empower small-scale producers, and promote regional identity. By focusing on unique, locally made products, these programs help communities leverage their comparative advantages while addressing economic disparities.

In the Philippines, the OTOP program has evolved into a key national policy for strengthening Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which form the backbone of the country's economy. The program encourages towns and municipalities to identify and develop distinctive products rooted in local resources, skills, and traditions (Mendoza & Garcia, 2021). The institutionalization of OTOP under Republic Act No. 11960 (OTOP Philippines Act) further solidifies its role in providing comprehensive support to MSMEs, fostering innovation, and enhancing multi-stakeholder collaboration. Under the leadership of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the program has entered its OTOP Next Gen phase, which emphasizes product development, digital transformation, and sustainable practices (Ortega et al., 2022).

Several studies have documented the positive impacts of OTOP on rural livelihoods and economic development. Vega and de Guzman (2020) found that the program has contributed to employment generation and poverty reduction in marginalized communities by creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs. Similarly, Castro (2021) highlighted how OTOP has improved the financial viability and market reach of MSMEs, enabling them to compete more effectively. Beyond economic benefits, the program also plays a crucial role in cultural preservation. Ferrer and Santos (2022) noted that OTOP helps sustain traditional crafts and indigenous knowledge, preventing their erosion in the face of globalization. Moreover, recent research by Serrano et al. (2023) suggests that OTOP is increasingly aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), by promoting eco-friendly and ethically made products.

Despite these successes, challenges remain in the program's implementation, particularly in resource-rich but economically disadvantaged regions like Romblon. Known for its high-quality marble and artisanal crafts, Romblon has actively participated in OTOP, yet local MSMEs continue to face obstacles such as limited access to digital platforms, competition from cheaper imports, financial constraints, and environmental concerns linked to unsustainable marble extraction. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive studies assessing OTOP's effectiveness in Romblon, especially in terms of its alignment with broader sustainability objectives.

This study seeks to address this gap by evaluating the implementation and outcomes of the OTOP program in selected municipalities of Romblon province. Specifically, it examines the program's contributions to key SDGs, including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). By analyzing the program's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement, this research aims to provide actionable recommendations for optimizing OTOP's impact on sustainable local development.

The findings of this study will contribute to the growing body of literature on place-based economic strategies and their role in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. Furthermore, it will offer policymakers, local government units, and MSME stakeholders in Romblon valuable insights into how OTOP can be further enhanced to address existing challenges while maximizing its potential for long-term community development.

Ultimately, this research underscores the importance of localized economic programs like OTOP in fostering resilience, preserving cultural heritage, and advancing sustainable development in the Philippines and beyond. By bridging the gap between policy and practice, this study aims to support more effective and equitable implementation of OTOP in Romblon and similar regions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section synthesizes existing research on the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program in the Philippines, examining its role in fostering sustainable development through capacity building, market access, sustainable practices, and supportive policies. It also critically engages with comparative studies and identifies empirical gaps in OTOP's alignment with global sustainability frameworks.

Capacity Building and Training for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores capacity-building as essential for achieving the SDGs, particularly through Targets 17.8 and 17.9, which promote institutional and human resource development in developing nations. In the Philippines, OTOP has prioritized entrepreneurial training, with government agencies collaborating with international organizations to deliver programs on food safety, digitalization, and financial access—key factors in enhancing MSME resilience.

As evidenced in regional disparities persist and while some provinces (e.g., Ilocos and CALABARZON) benefit from robust digital infrastructure and training initiatives, Romblon faces challenges in digital access and skills development, limiting MSME competitiveness. Comparative studies on Vietnam's OCOP program further reveal that structured, long-term training—backed by local government and private sector partnerships—yields higher sustainability outcomes than ad-hoc workshops (Nguyen, 2018). This suggests that OTOP may require more standardized and continuous training models to bridge regional gaps.

Marketing and Market Access for Local Products

Marketing innovation is a key driver of economic growth, yet OTOP enterprises often struggle with branding, packaging, and digital integration. Thailand's OTOP experience highlights how weak branding and unattractive packaging can hinder market expansion despite strong local demand. Similarly, in Romblon, marble and handicraft producers face difficulties in differentiating their products in both domestic and international markets.

Empirical studies indicate that sales performance correlates strongly with pricing strategies and store management, suggesting that targeted marketing interventions—such as e-commerce training and branding support—could enhance OTOP's impact (Ines, 2025). However, comparisons with Vietnam's OCOP reveal that localized branding strategies and stronger public-private collaborations have enabled better market penetration (Nguyen, T. 2018), a lesson that could be adapted for OTOP.

Sustainable Development and the Role of OTOP

While OTOP aligns with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) and SDGs, empirical gaps remain in monitoring sustainability integration. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a global framework for addressing economic, social, and environmental challenges by 2030. The SDG Tracker compiles official data to monitor progress, yet gaps remain in assessing sustainability and economic inclusivity. This issue also affects the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program, which supports local entrepreneurship and aligns with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 8 (Inclusive Economic Growth). However, OTOP's current assessments lack standardized metrics to measure environmental impact and inclusive growth. Strengthening data collection and integrating global SDG frameworks would enhance OTOP's ability to contribute more effectively to sustainability and economic inclusivity (Our World in Our Team, 2023). This contrasts with OECD/APEC frameworks, which emphasize sustainability benchmarking for MSMEs through indicators like carbon footprint reduction and circular economy adoption (OECD, 2020).

Studies on Thailand's eco-friendly OTOP production demonstrate how sustainability can be embedded in local industries through waste reduction and renewable material use (Nildam et al., 2024). Romblon's marble and bamboo sectors could benefit from similar models, yet limited policy enforcement and resource constraints hinder progress (Serrano et al., 2023). Addressing these gaps requires stronger SDG-aligned monitoring systems, as seen in Vietnam's OCOP, where sustainability certifications have improved market credibility (Nguyen, T. 2018).

Economic Policy and the Enabling Environment

The Philippine government's Medium-Term Fiscal Framework prioritizes MSME support through OTOP, focusing on financial access, production networks, and resilience-building. However, comparative analysis with ASEAN peers reveals that Philippine MSME policies lag in sustainability integration. For instance, while Malaysia and Thailand incorporate green business incentives, OTOP remains primarily focused on economic viability over environmental impact (OECD, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine the implementation and policy compliance of the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program in selected municipalities in a province in the Philippines.

Research Locale and Participants

This study was conducted in selected municipalities identified as primary research sites due to their active participation in the One Town One Product (OTOP) program and their potential to benefit a substantial number of stakeholders. These municipalities were selected based on their proven competence in OTOP implementation, making them exemplary models in the field.

The Likert scale and survey questionnaire used in this research were validated by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), given its expertise in OTOP program implementation.

The quantitative phase utilized purposive sampling, with 270 respondents comprising OTOP beneficiaries, elected officials, and local investors. The qualitative phase included in-depth, video-recorded interviews with a key informant (a municipal mayor) and a representative from a leading local industry to gather contextual insights into policy implementation, support mechanisms, and entrepreneurs' lived experiences.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

For the quantitative phase, a researcher-developed survey questionnaire was employed, assessing key domains of OTOP implementation: capacity building, marketing support, information dissemination, technical and financial assistance, and alignment with selected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 8, 9, 12, and 17).

The instrument underwent pilot testing to establish reliability, confirming strong internal consistency. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and verbal interpretations to summarize and interpret responses.

For the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2022) six-phase framework. This methodological approach facilitated the identification of recurrent patterns and emergent themes pertaining to the institutional and operational dimensions of the OTOP program.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The research adhered to ethical guidelines for human subject research, ensuring confidentiality, voluntary participation, and transparency.

Ethical clearance was secured from the appropriate institutional review board, in compliance with the university research ethics committee (UREC) of Polytechnic University of Philippines.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics to determine mean scores and identify implementation gaps. Each indicator was evaluated using a standardized Likert scale to assess the level of program implementation and compliance with SDGs.

Qualitative data were coded and organized into themes such as institutional support, financial accessibility, inter-agency collaboration, and entrepreneurial development, supporting the quantitative findings with context-rich narratives.

RESULTS

Table 1 provides a comprehensive demographic profile of OTOP beneficiaries, reflecting regional entrepreneurial patterns identified in previous studies. The majority of respondents are aged 41 and above (41%), followed by those in the 31–40 age range (36%).

Table 1. Summary Data on Demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile Category	Key Findings
1. Age	Majority are aged 41 and above (41%), followed by 31–40 (36%), and the smallest group is 21–30 (23%).
2. Gender	Females dominate (69%) across all respondent types, compared to males (31%).
3. Business Name	No responses recorded, indicating a lack of disclosure or engagement in naming businesses.
4. Type of Business	Sole Proprietorships dominate (78.6%), followed by Associations (20%); no participation in Cooperatives or Corporations.
5. Town/Municipality	Most respondents are from Odiongan (52%), followed by Looc (31%) and Romblon (17%).
6. Years as OTOP Beneficiary	Majority have been beneficiaries for 1–3 years (63%), followed by <1 year (27%), and >3 years (10%).
7. Average Monthly Income	Highest proportion earn ₱20,000–₱29,999 (37%), followed by ₱30,000 and above (30%); only 5% earn below ₱10,000.
8. Number of Family Members	Most respondents have 3–5 members (51%), followed by 6–10 members (42%), and only 7% have 11 or more.
9. OTOP Product/Service Type	Most OTOP members promote Handicrafts (40%) and Food Products (38%); Textiles (1%) and Other products (21%) are less represented.

Table 2 presents the overall assessment across all five components of the OTOP program indicates that respondents generally find it helpful, with marketing support (2.99) and capacity building (2.87) receiving slightly more favorable ratings. Trade fairs and exhibitions (3.31) and mentorship programs (2.94) are recognized as key drivers of business growth. However, gaps remain in technical assistance (2.57) and funding guidance (2.39), highlighting areas for improvement.

Table 2. Respondents' Assessment on OTOP Implementation in Selected Municipalities

Program Component	Highest Rated Indicator (Mean)	Lowest Rated Indicator (Mean)	Grand Mean	Interpretation
Capacity Building	Continuity of training for beneficiary needs (3.05)	Access to business development resources (2.69)	2.87	Agree
Marketing Support	Support for trade fairs and exhibitions (3.31)	Connection with new customers/networks (2.48)	2.99	Agree
Information Dissemination	Timely updates on OTOP developments (3.20)	Information on policies/guidelines (2.43)	2.86	Agree
Technical Support	Guidance on sustainable production practices (3.04)	Technical assistance for product quality improvement (2.57)	2.86	Agree
Financial Support	Financial aid meets basic business needs (3.00)	Guidance on accessing funding (2.39)	2.78	Agree

Legend: V.I. – Verbal Interpretation

3.40 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA)

1.80 – 2.59 = Disagree (DA)

2.60 – 3.39 = Agree (A)

1.00 – 1.79 = Strongly Disagree (SDA)

Table 3 indicates that OTOP policy implementation in Romblon municipalities aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in fostering inclusive economic participation (SDG 1), employment-related skill development (SDG 8), and eco-friendly production practices (SDG 12). While OTOP supports livelihoods (3.00) and skills development (2.97), gaps remain in increasing incomes (2.45) and enforcing fair labor

conditions (2.44). This suggests that economic opportunities do not always lead to improved living standards or worker protections.

Table 3. Compliance of OTOP Policy Implementation in Selected Municipalities Aligned with Sustainable Development Goals

SDG Focus Area	Highest Rated Indicator (Mean)	Lowest Rated Indicator (Mean)	Grand Mean	Verbal Interpretation
SDG 1: No Poverty	Sustainable livelihoods creation (3.00)	Increased income for local producers (2.45)	2.84	Implemented
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Skills development for employability (2.97)	Fair employment practices (2.44)	2.75	Implemented
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Use of technology and innovation (3.16)	Innovation support for local products/services (2.54)	2.80	Implemented
SDG 12: Responsible Consumption & Production	Use of sustainable packaging/materials (3.17)	Waste minimization practices (2.35)	2.76	Implemented
SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals	Agency collaboration support (3.03)	LGU-business sector cooperation (2.55)	2.69	Implemented

Legend: V.I. – Verbal Interpretation

3.40 – 4.00 = Highly Implemented (HI)

2.60 – 3.39 = Implemented (I)

1.80 – 2.59 = Not Implemented (NI)

1.00 – 1.79 = Highly Not Implemented (HNI)

Table 4 shows Issues and Challenges Encountered by OTOP implementers and identified the three primary challenges faced by OTOP implementers: meeting product quality standards, ensuring effective distribution and marketing, and fostering creativity in product development. With the highest mean of 3.02, quality assurance remains a critical

concern. Marketing challenges (2.78) emphasize the importance of strategic visibility and innovation (2.65) plays a crucial role in maintaining competitiveness.

Table 4. Issues and Challenges Encountered by OTOP Implementers in Selected Municipalities of Romblon

Challenges Encountered	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Meeting quality requirements and adhering to product standards	3.02	Agree	1
2. Lack of proper distribution channels and marketing strategies	2.78	Agree	2
3. Limited support for product development and creativity among local producers	2.65	Agree	3
4. Insufficient training and capacity-building programs	2.57	Disagree	4
5. Limited financial support, access to credit, and investment opportunities	2.54	Disagree	5

Legend: V.I. – Verbal Interpretation

3.40 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA)

1.80 – 2.59 = Disagree (DA)

2.60 – 3.39 = Agree (A)

1.00 – 1.79 = Strongly Disagree (SDA)

Table 5 provides the T.I.P.S. framework strategically addresses the multifaceted challenges confronting OTOP implementation by integrating training, information, product innovation, and sustainable financing within a policy framework aligned with the SDGs. The proposed policies target key gaps in capacity building, visibility, eco-friendly production, and financial access—issues confirmed in field data and echoed in the thematic interviews. For instance, Mayor Trina stressed the importance of institutionalizing support through ordinances and inter-agency partnerships, reinforcing Reyes et al.'s (2019) view that capacity-building and local governance are central to inclusive development. Similarly, the interview with a marble industry worker underlined product stagnation, limited market reach, and

pricing difficulties, confirming Anuradha et al.'s (2023) findings on the role of innovation and quality standards in building consumer confidence and sustainable branding.

Table 5. Proposed Policy Innovations for Sustainable OTOP Implementation Based on the T.I.P.S. Framework

T.I.P.S. Component	Proposed Policy	Key Challenge Addressed	RRL Support	Relevant SDGs
Training/Seminars	Institutionalize regular capacity-building programs for OTOP beneficiaries	Limited skills in business, product, and compliance management	Reyes et al. (2019): Training fosters inclusive growth and supports poverty reduction	SDG 1, SDG 8
Information Drive	Implement multi-platform public advocacy campaigns	Lack of awareness, low program visibility	ESCAP (2021): Effective communication boosts civic participation and program reach	SDG 11, SDG 17
Product Innovation & Standards	Adopt policy on sustainable and eco-friendly product standards	Low innovation, poor product competitiveness	Anuradha et al. (2023): Eco-marketing and quality standards elevate market trust and sustainability	SDG 9, SDG 12
Sustainable Financing	Create localized micro-financing policies for OTOP beneficiaries	Inadequate capital, lack of financial access	Ebbesson & Hey (2022): Financial inclusion is vital to eradicating poverty and improving resilience	SDG 1, SDG 8
Partnerships & Linkages	Develop policy for strengthening public-private partnerships	Weak inter-agency coordination, limited market linkages	Reyes et al. (2019), UNDP: Inclusive partnerships ensure scalable, shared development outcomes	SDG 17

Moreover, the lack of consistent financing and trade access experienced by grassroots entrepreneurs supports Ebbesson & Hey's (2022) and Rivera & Gonzales's (2021)

calls for micro-financing policies and market-based partnerships to sustain rural industries. The qualitative findings emphasized that while DTI and local LGUs offer temporary support (e.g., trade fair booths and packaging), these are insufficient for long-term resilience. Through the T.I.P.S. framework, OTOP can transition from ad hoc support to structured, sustainable development—anchored on SDGs 1, 8, 9, 12, and 17. Ultimately, policy innovations rooted in T.I.P.S. ensure that entrepreneurial growth, community empowerment, and environmental stewardship are not just concurrent goals but interconnected pathways toward inclusive national progress.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The demographic profile of OTOP beneficiaries in Romblon, largely experienced women operating sole proprietorships with moderate incomes, mirrors broader rural entrepreneurship patterns (Pascual et al., 2024; Soriano, 2019; Tadeo & Muralla, 2022). This highlights OTOP's local economic reach but also signals a need for tailored interventions to support business formalization and growth beyond the micro-scale.

While beneficiaries generally found OTOP support helpful, consistently lower ratings for crucial areas—business development resources, market access, policy information, technical assistance for quality, and financial aid—underscore significant operational challenges impeding the program's full potential. These findings align with existing literature on OTOP enterprises' struggles in marketing and technical aspects (Srivibon et al., 2024; Santos & Villanueva, 2023) and the documented need for enhanced financial literacy and policy awareness among MSMEs (Garcia, 2024; Mendoza & Alonzo, 2023).

A notable divergence emerged in financial support perceptions: beneficiaries rated "Financial aid meets basic business needs" relatively positively, yet implementers cited "Limited financial support" as a key challenge, and qualitative feedback emphasized financial constraints. This suggests a potential disconnect between the availability of basic aid and its adequacy for meaningful business expansion, warranting further exploration and potentially reflecting differing views on the program's scope.

OTOP's alignment with SDGs shows a foundational contribution to livelihoods, skills, technology, and sustainable packaging. However, less favorable ratings for income increase, fair employment, innovation support, waste minimization, and LGU-business cooperation highlight the difficulty in translating broad policy into tangible local outcomes, echoing concerns about access barriers, informal labor, and multi-stakeholder partnership challenges.

Implementers' challenges pinpoint practical hurdles in product quality, effective marketing, fostering innovation, and providing sufficient training and financial support. Top concerns like quality and marketing align with MSME success factors (Smith, 2020; Johnson & Lee, 2021; Lee & Kim, 2019; Brown, 2022). Their lower ranking of training and

financial support as primary challenges, despite beneficiary concerns, may suggest systemic constraints or differing assessments of current provisions' sufficiency.

The proposed T.I.P.S.-based policy innovations offer targeted strategies, drawing from established development interventions. Focusing on institutionalizing support, promoting sustainability, localized financing, and strengthening collaborations provides a pathway for enhancing OTOP's long-term impact in Romblon.

In conclusion, while OTOP in Romblon provides a framework for supporting local MSMEs and aligning with SDGs, critical gaps in operational support and perceptual mismatches, particularly concerning financial resources, must be addressed. Implementing targeted innovations—enhancing capacity building, market access, product innovation, sustainable financing, and inter-sectoral partnerships—is crucial for maximizing the program's effectiveness and its meaningful SDG contribution in Romblon. Future research should delve into reasons for differing financial support perceptions and explore mechanisms for more effective LGU-business collaboration within the OTOP framework.

CONCLUSIONS

The research findings indicate that the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program in Romblon has effectively involved middle-aged women as sole proprietors, showcasing its impact within this demographic. However, this focus also points to gaps in inclusivity and a limited adoption of scalable business models like cooperatives and corporations. To unlock greater entrepreneurial potential, future OTOP initiatives should strategically target underrepresented groups, such as younger individuals, and encourage collaborative enterprises. Sustained growth within the program necessitates strengthening access to business development tools, improving networking opportunities, ensuring clear policy communication, and enhancing technical assistance for product quality and production efficiency. Additionally, providing accessible funding guidance is critical for maintaining business competitiveness.

Aligning OTOP with sustainable development goals requires a focus on income generation, promoting fair employment practices, and fostering grassroots innovation. Raising awareness about waste minimization and fortifying partnerships between local government units and the private sector will significantly boost long-term impact and environmental responsibility. Maintaining consumer confidence and market competitiveness relies heavily on ensuring rigorous quality control and adherence to product standards, as a strong reputation for reliability and value underpins sustained business success. Ultimately, the T.I.P.S. framework—encompassing Training, Information Drive, Products, and Sustainable Financing—offers a strategic blueprint for enhancing OTOP policy implementation. Integrating these key pillars into the program's design will foster sustainable development and contribute to a resilient local economy in Romblon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the OTOP program in Romblon, the following targeted recommendations are proposed.

1. *Inclusive Outreach and Support:* To broaden engagement, the program must implement specialized initiatives, including youth-led startup incubators, gender-inclusive entrepreneurship workshops, and incentives for cooperative business structures. Expanding the beneficiary base will enhance innovation and resilience.
2. *Comprehensive Capacity Building:* Addressing gaps requires a multi-stakeholder approach with training in product quality, branding, and digital marketing. Collaborations with universities, financial institutions, and industry mentors will improve market access, technical skills, and financial management.
3. *Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals:* Embedding sustainability principles across OTOP implementation ensures economic and social impact. Strategies should promote higher-income enterprise models, fair labor practices, rural industry innovation, and environmental education focused on responsible production and consumption.
4. *Addressing Implementers' Challenges:* Establishing quality control hubs, improving marketing channels, fostering innovation through competitions, and facilitating access to micro-lending schemes will strengthen MSME growth. Long-term business coaching and incubation programs will ensure lasting success.
5. *Operationalizing the T.I.P.S. Framework:* Formal adoption through LGU ordinances, systematic training, accessible information dissemination, product development support, and inclusive financing mechanisms will drive measurable policy outcomes. Strong monitoring tools will track progress and sustainability.

By implementing these recommendations, the OTOP program can enhance local entrepreneurship, align with sustainable development, and improve economic resilience in Romblon.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study underscore the critical need for a more inclusive, well-coordinated, and sustainable implementation of the One Town, One Product (OTOP) program in the studied municipalities. While the program demonstrates promising contributions to poverty alleviation, entrepreneurial development, and local economic growth, gaps in technical support, financial accessibility, policy awareness, and innovation highlight systemic limitations that may hinder its long-term impact. The study implies that without comprehensive support mechanisms—such as strengthened inter-agency collaboration, institutionalized training programs, and accessible financing structures—many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) may continue to struggle with

market access and business sustainability. Therefore, policy adjustments and capacity-building efforts rooted in localized needs are essential to fully realize OTOP's potential as a driver of inclusive and sustainable development.

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DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest exist between the authors that are significant to the article's content.

Informed Consent

All participants involved in the study provided informed consent.

Ethics Approval

Approval for conducting the study has been granted. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the institutional research ethics committee.

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Author's Biography

Professor Leonora V. Divina is an Assistant Professor IV at Romblon State University. She holds two doctorate degrees—the first in Business Administration from the Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology, and the second in Public Administration from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, expected to be completed by the end of the semester. Her contributions are recognized for their impact on social service and community development.

Professor Christopher C. Mantillas is a faculty member at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. He has served in key academic roles such as Head of the Political Science Department, Chair of the Department of Public Administration, and Associate Dean of the College of Political Science and Public Administration. His research and presentations have significantly contributed to academic discourse globally.