

Strengthening Business Management Literacy Through Community Service Programs in China

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Abstract

Business management literacy has become increasingly important in supporting entrepreneurial sustainability, organizational adaptability, and community economic resilience in contemporary economic environments. Rapid technological transformation, digital business expansion, and global market competition require local business communities to possess strong managerial competence and strategic business understanding. This community service program aimed to strengthen business management literacy among community business participants in China through participatory educational activities and collaborative mentoring approaches. The program employed a qualitative participatory method involving small business owners, local entrepreneurs, family business operators, and community business groups through workshops, business simulations, mentoring sessions, and collaborative discussions. Educational activities focused on financial management, business planning, leadership development, operational coordination, digital business adaptation, and customer communication strategies. The results demonstrated significant improvement in participants' managerial competence, financial literacy, organizational awareness, communication skills, and understanding regarding digital business systems. Participants also showed increased confidence in applying structured business planning, budgeting practices, and technology-based marketing strategies within their business operations. In addition, collaborative learning activities positively influenced participants' problem-solving abilities, entrepreneurial motivation, and organizational adaptability. Despite challenges related to differences in educational backgrounds, technological familiarity, and managerial experience, participatory educational approaches and continuous mentoring contributed positively to strengthening sustainable business management practices. Overall, the implementation of community-based business management education provided valuable opportunities for improving entrepreneurial resilience, strengthening organizational sustainability, and supporting long-term economic participation within local business communities in China.

Keywords

Business Management Literacy; Community Service; Entrepreneurial Education; Digital Business; Organizational Sustainability; Financial Literacy



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INTRODUCTION

Business management literacy has become an increasingly important component in supporting entrepreneurial sustainability, organizational adaptability, and economic resilience within contemporary society. Rapid technological advancement, digital business transformation, and global economic competition require businesses and local communities to possess strong managerial competence, financial literacy, and strategic decision-making abilities. In modern economic environments, business success is no longer determined solely by production capacity or market opportunities but also by the ability to manage operations effectively, adapt to technological change, and maintain sustainable organizational development.

Business management literacy refers to the ability to understand, apply, and evaluate managerial principles related to financial planning, operational coordination, leadership, communication, marketing, and organizational sustainability. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, managerial competence and entrepreneurial literacy contribute significantly to improving business sustainability and strengthening economic resilience within rapidly changing economic systems. Business owners and entrepreneurs who possess strong managerial competence are generally more capable of adapting to market challenges, utilizing technological innovation, and maintaining organizational competitiveness.

China has experienced significant economic transformation over recent decades through rapid industrialization, technological innovation, and digital business expansion. The growth of small enterprises, local entrepreneurial communities, and digital commerce platforms has contributed significantly to economic development and employment opportunities within various regions of China. According to World Bank, small and medium-sized enterprises play essential roles in supporting economic growth, employment generation, and community development within emerging economies. However, rapid economic transformation also increases the need for strong managerial competence and sustainable business practices among local business communities.

The increasing integration of digital technology into business operations has transformed communication systems, customer interaction patterns, financial management practices, and market competition within contemporary business environments. Online marketing platforms, digital payment systems, e-commerce

applications, and technology-based customer engagement strategies have become essential components of modern business operations. According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, digital business literacy significantly improves entrepreneurial competitiveness and supports broader economic participation within globalized markets. Therefore, local business communities require continuous educational support to improve technological adaptability and digital management competence.

Despite the rapid economic development in China, several small business operators and community entrepreneurs continue to experience challenges related to business management literacy and organizational sustainability. Some business owners rely primarily on informal managerial practices without structured financial planning, operational evaluation, or strategic business analysis. Limited understanding regarding budgeting, bookkeeping, customer management, leadership practices, and digital business systems can influence business performance and long-term organizational sustainability. These conditions highlight the importance of community-based business education programs that provide accessible and practical managerial learning opportunities for local business communities.

Community service programs have become important strategies for improving entrepreneurial competence and strengthening sustainable business development within communities. Through participatory educational activities, collaborative mentoring, and practical managerial training, community service programs help participants improve operational understanding, financial literacy, and organizational coordination. According to Asian Development Bank, participatory entrepreneurial education positively influences business adaptability because participants become actively involved in collaborative problem-solving and reflective learning experiences related to real business conditions.

Financial management literacy is one of the most important components supporting business sustainability and organizational stability. Businesses that possess effective budgeting systems, financial recording practices, and operational evaluation mechanisms are generally more capable of maintaining economic resilience and responding to market fluctuations. However, several local entrepreneurs still experience difficulties related to financial organization and structured bookkeeping practices. Community-based financial management education therefore provides important opportunities for strengthening business

accountability and improving operational decision-making among small business operators.

Leadership competence and organizational communication also play significant roles in supporting business development and operational coordination. Effective leadership encourages teamwork, communication discipline, employee motivation, and organizational responsibility within business environments. According to World Economic Forum, leadership adaptability and collaborative management competence are increasingly important within contemporary business systems because organizational sustainability depends on innovation, communication quality, and strategic coordination. Therefore, educational activities related to leadership and communication management contribute positively to strengthening organizational effectiveness and workplace productivity.

The importance of business adaptability became increasingly evident during periods of global economic disruption, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly affected operational systems, customer behavior, and market stability worldwide. Many small businesses experienced operational challenges due to reduced market access, changing consumer patterns, and technological transition demands. According to United Nations Development Programme, sustainable economic recovery requires entrepreneurial resilience, digital adaptability, and community-based business support systems that strengthen local economic participation. This condition demonstrated that business management literacy is essential for improving organizational flexibility and long-term economic sustainability.

Community-based business education programs also contribute positively to strengthening innovation awareness and entrepreneurial motivation among participants. Through collaborative discussions and mentoring activities, participants can share business experiences, identify operational challenges, and explore adaptive business strategies appropriate to changing economic environments. These educational experiences encourage participants to become more proactive, reflective, and innovative in managing business operations and responding to market competition.

Despite the benefits of business management education programs, several challenges remain in implementing managerial literacy effectively within local business communities. Differences in educational backgrounds, managerial experience, and technological familiarity frequently influence participants' understanding and engagement during educational activities. Some participants may

also experience uncertainty regarding digital transformation and technology-based business systems due to limited previous exposure to technological learning environments. These conditions require adaptive educational approaches that emphasize practical learning experiences, collaborative mentoring, and simplified communication methods appropriate to participants' social and educational conditions.

Another important challenge involves maintaining sustainable managerial behavior and continuous organizational learning among participants following the completion of educational programs. Business management competence requires continuous practice, adaptation, and strategic reflection to remain relevant within dynamic economic environments. Therefore, participatory educational approaches and long-term mentoring support become essential components in strengthening sustainable entrepreneurial development and organizational resilience.

Based on these conditions, strengthening business management literacy through community service programs in China has become an important initiative for improving entrepreneurial competence, organizational sustainability, and community economic participation. Through collaborative educational workshops, mentoring sessions, practical business simulations, and digital business training, participants can improve financial literacy, strategic planning abilities, leadership competence, and technological adaptability within modern business environments.

Therefore, this community service program aims to strengthen business management literacy and entrepreneurial adaptability among community business participants in China. The program focuses on improving participants' managerial competence, financial organization, digital business understanding, leadership skills, and sustainable business practices through participatory and collaborative educational approaches. By integrating practical learning experiences and continuous mentoring activities, this program is expected to contribute positively to sustainable business development and community economic resilience within contemporary economic systems.

METHODS

The community service program entitled "*Strengthening Business Management Literacy Through Community Service Programs in China* " employed a qualitative participatory approach aimed at improving business management competence, entrepreneurial adaptability, financial literacy, and organizational sustainability among community business participants. The implementation of the program emphasized collaborative educational activities, practical managerial training,

mentoring sessions, and participatory learning experiences to support sustainable business development within local communities. According to World Bank, community-based entrepreneurial education contributes significantly to strengthening small business resilience and improving economic participation in rapidly changing business environments.

The participants involved in the program consisted of small business owners, family business operators, local entrepreneurs, and community business groups in China who demonstrated interest in improving managerial competence and business sustainability. Participants were selected purposively based on their active involvement in business activities and their need for business management education and operational development support. The diversity of participants' business backgrounds and managerial experiences created collaborative learning environments that encouraged interaction, knowledge-sharing, and practical problem-solving among participants.

The implementation process was conducted through several stages, including preparation, needs analysis, socialization, educational workshops, mentoring activities, business simulations, and evaluation. During the preparation stage, the service team coordinated with local business communities, entrepreneurial groups, and community representatives to identify managerial challenges and determine educational materials relevant to participants' business conditions. Preliminary observations and informal interviews were conducted to analyze participants' understanding regarding financial management, operational planning, customer communication, digital business adaptation, and organizational management practices. The findings indicated that several participants still relied on informal management systems and experienced limitations related to structured financial recording, strategic planning, and digital business utilization.

The socialization stage aimed to introduce the importance of business management literacy and sustainable entrepreneurial practices within modern economic environments. Facilitators explained the objectives of the program and encouraged participants to engage actively in collaborative educational activities and practical business discussions. Participants received explanations regarding the importance of structured business planning, financial organization, leadership competence, and technological adaptability in supporting business sustainability. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, managerial literacy and entrepreneurial competence significantly influence business sustainability and economic resilience in contemporary markets.

The educational workshop stage became the core activity of the community service program. Participants attended workshops related to business planning, financial management, organizational coordination, customer communication, leadership development, and digital business transformation. The educational materials included budgeting practices, bookkeeping techniques, operational management strategies, marketing approaches, and digital communication systems. Practical learning methods were emphasized to ensure that participants could directly apply managerial concepts within their own business operations. Facilitators utilized collaborative discussions, business case analyses, and practical exercises to strengthen participants' understanding and encourage active participation during learning sessions.

Digital business education was also integrated into the program to strengthen participants' understanding regarding technological adaptation and online business opportunities. Participants were introduced to digital marketing strategies, online business platforms, customer engagement applications, and technology-based communication systems commonly utilized in contemporary business environments. According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, digital literacy and technological adaptability improve small enterprises' competitiveness and support broader economic participation within global markets. Therefore, practical demonstrations and guided digital learning activities were conducted to help participants improve technological confidence and digital business competence.

Collaborative learning methods were implemented throughout the educational activities to strengthen participants' communication skills, teamwork abilities, and problem-solving competence. Group discussions and collaborative assignments encouraged participants to share entrepreneurial experiences, discuss operational challenges, and identify practical strategies for improving business sustainability. These participatory educational experiences also strengthened participants' confidence and managerial awareness because they became actively involved in reflective discussions and collective business learning processes.

Mentoring activities were conducted continuously throughout the implementation process to provide additional support and guidance for participants. Facilitators assisted participants who experienced difficulties understanding financial analysis, digital business systems, organizational planning, or customer communication strategies. Mentoring sessions were conducted through direct interaction, reflective consultation, and collaborative business discussions. Participants were encouraged to discuss operational problems, evaluate business

performance, and develop adaptive business strategies collaboratively. According to Asian Development Bank, continuous entrepreneurial mentoring positively influences business sustainability because it supports practical learning and strengthens participants' adaptability within changing economic environments.

Business simulation activities were also conducted to strengthen participants' practical managerial competence and decision-making abilities. Participants engaged in simulated business planning exercises, budgeting activities, customer communication practices, and operational management scenarios designed to improve strategic thinking and organizational coordination. These practical learning experiences helped participants connect theoretical management concepts with real operational situations commonly encountered within their businesses.

Evaluation activities were conducted at the end of the program to measure the effectiveness of the implementation and identify participants' learning outcomes. Evaluation data were collected through observations, participant reflections, practical business exercises, mentoring discussions, and informal interviews. The evaluation focused on measuring participants' improvement in financial literacy, business planning competence, digital business understanding, communication abilities, and organizational management awareness. The findings demonstrated that participants experienced significant improvement in managerial understanding, entrepreneurial confidence, and technological adaptability.

Documentation techniques were also used to record educational activities, participant involvement, collaborative discussions, mentoring sessions, and business simulation processes. Attendance records, workshop materials, participant assignments, photographs, and reflective notes were collected as supporting data for program reporting and analysis. The collected data were analyzed descriptively to identify the strengths, challenges, and impacts of the community service implementation.

Overall, the participatory and collaborative method applied in this community service program successfully strengthened business management literacy, entrepreneurial adaptability, and organizational sustainability among community business participants in China. Through practical educational activities, mentoring sessions, collaborative learning experiences, and digital business training, participants improved managerial competence, financial awareness, communication skills, and confidence in implementing sustainable business strategies within contemporary economic environments.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the community service program entitled “*Strengthening Business Management Literacy Through Community Service Programs in China*” demonstrated significant contributions to improving business management understanding, entrepreneurial competence, and organizational adaptability among community business participants. Business management literacy has become increasingly important in contemporary economic environments because rapid technological transformation, digital business expansion, and global economic competition require communities and local businesses to possess strong managerial competence and strategic decision-making abilities. Community-based educational programs therefore provide valuable opportunities for improving business knowledge, operational management skills, and sustainable entrepreneurial practices among local business communities.

The program involved participants from small businesses, community enterprises, family-owned firms, and local entrepreneurial groups in China who demonstrated interest in improving management competence and business sustainability. Most participants operated small-scale businesses and possessed practical business experience; however, several participants still experienced limitations related to financial management, marketing strategies, organizational planning, and digital business adaptation. Preliminary observations conducted before the implementation process indicated that many participants relied primarily on traditional business management practices and had limited exposure to formal managerial education and strategic business development training.

The implementation of the community service activities involved educational workshops, collaborative discussions, practical business simulations, mentoring sessions, and business planning exercises designed to strengthen participants’ understanding regarding business management principles and organizational sustainability. Educational materials focused on financial planning, operational management, leadership development, marketing strategies, customer communication, and digital business adaptation. According to World Bank, business literacy and managerial competence contribute significantly to improving small business sustainability and strengthening community economic resilience. Through participatory educational activities, participants were encouraged to connect business management concepts with practical operational situations experienced within their own business environments.

One of the important findings observed during the implementation process was the improvement in participants’ understanding regarding strategic business

planning and organizational management. At the beginning of the program, several participants demonstrated limited awareness regarding structured business planning, operational evaluation, and long-term business sustainability strategies. Many business decisions were conducted informally without systematic planning or documented financial analysis. However, after participating in workshops and collaborative discussions, participants demonstrated improved understanding regarding budgeting, business target setting, operational coordination, and organizational planning. Participants became more aware of the importance of structured management systems in supporting business growth and sustainability.

The implementation of financial management education also contributed significantly to improving participants' understanding regarding budgeting, bookkeeping, and financial decision-making. Several participants initially experienced difficulties organizing financial records and evaluating business income and expenditures systematically. Through practical financial management exercises and mentoring sessions, participants learned how to prepare financial reports, organize operational budgets, and analyze business performance more effectively. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, financial literacy and business management competence are essential for supporting entrepreneurial adaptability and sustainable economic participation. The practical financial management training therefore strengthened participants' confidence in making business-related financial decisions.

Another important finding observed during the implementation process was the improvement of participants' awareness regarding digital business transformation and technological adaptability. The rapid expansion of digital commerce, online marketing, and digital communication platforms in China has significantly transformed business operations and customer interaction patterns. Several participants initially demonstrated limited familiarity with digital marketing strategies, online business platforms, and digital communication systems. Through educational workshops and practical demonstrations, participants were introduced to digital business tools, social media marketing strategies, and online customer engagement practices. According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, digital business literacy strengthens small enterprises' competitiveness and improves access to broader economic opportunities within contemporary markets.

The collaborative learning approach applied during the implementation process also strengthened participants' communication competence and problem-solving

abilities. Group discussions and case-study analyses encouraged participants to exchange business experiences, discuss operational challenges, and identify practical business development strategies collaboratively. Participants shared experiences related to customer management, market competition, financial difficulties, and business adaptation challenges during changing economic conditions. These participatory educational activities created supportive learning environments where participants could reflect on business practices and develop more adaptive management strategies. Research conducted by Asian Development Bank indicates that participatory business education improves entrepreneurial engagement because participants become actively involved in collaborative problem-solving and practical business learning experiences.

The implementation of leadership and organizational management training also positively influenced participants' managerial confidence and decision-making abilities. Participants learned the importance of communication discipline, teamwork coordination, employee motivation, and organizational responsibility in supporting business operations. Several participants recognized that effective leadership and organizational communication contribute significantly to improving workplace productivity and customer satisfaction. The educational activities encouraged participants to adopt more collaborative and systematic approaches in managing business operations and organizational relationships.

Furthermore, the program contributed positively to strengthening entrepreneurial motivation and business innovation awareness among participants. Through mentoring sessions and business planning discussions, participants became more motivated to develop business expansion strategies and improve operational efficiency. Several participants demonstrated increased interest in exploring new marketing opportunities, improving customer service quality, and integrating digital technology into business operations. According to World Economic Forum, adaptability and innovation are essential competencies for supporting sustainable business development within rapidly changing global economic environments.

The implementation of the educational activities also strengthened participants' awareness regarding sustainable business practices and ethical management behavior. Discussions regarding customer trust, financial transparency, responsible communication, and business ethics encouraged participants to recognize that business sustainability depends not only on profitability but also on responsible organizational behavior and positive community relationships. Participants became more aware of the importance of maintaining customer satisfaction, organizational

accountability, and collaborative business relationships in supporting long-term business development.

Despite the positive outcomes observed during the implementation process, several challenges remained during the educational activities. One major challenge involved differences in participants' educational backgrounds, managerial experience, and technological familiarity. Some participants required additional guidance and practical demonstrations to understand business management terminology, digital platforms, and financial analysis techniques effectively. Facilitators therefore needed to utilize adaptive educational methods and simplified communication approaches to ensure that all participants could engage actively in the learning process.

Another challenge related to participants' adaptation to digital business transformation. While digital business systems provide significant opportunities for market expansion and operational efficiency, some participants initially experienced uncertainty regarding the use of online platforms, digital communication systems, and technology-based marketing strategies. Limited technological familiarity influenced participants' confidence in integrating digital systems into business operations. Therefore, facilitators emphasized practical demonstrations and continuous mentoring to support participants' technological adaptation processes.

Maintaining sustainable business management behavior and continuous learning among participants also became important considerations following the completion of the program. Business management literacy requires continuous practice, reflection, and adaptation to changing market conditions and technological developments. Therefore, participants were encouraged to continue collaborative learning activities, apply structured management practices consistently, and participate actively in future business development initiatives. According to United Nations Development Programme, sustainable community empowerment programs are more effective when participants actively contribute to long-term knowledge-sharing and organizational development within local business communities.

Overall, the implementation of the business management literacy program in China provided significant contributions to improving managerial competence, entrepreneurial adaptability, and organizational sustainability among community business participants. Participatory educational methods, collaborative discussions, mentoring activities, and practical business management exercises helped participants strengthen financial literacy, strategic planning abilities, communication competence, and digital business awareness. Although challenges related to

technological adaptation, educational diversity, and sustainable behavioral change remained important concerns, the implementation of community-based business education contributed positively to strengthening entrepreneurial resilience and sustainable economic participation within local business communities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of the community service program entitled “Strengthening Business Management Literacy Through Community Service Programs in China ” demonstrated significant contributions to improving business management competence, financial literacy, entrepreneurial adaptability, and organizational sustainability among community business participants. The educational activities successfully strengthened participants’ understanding regarding strategic business planning, operational management, financial organization, leadership development, and digital business adaptation through participatory and collaborative learning approaches. The findings revealed that workshops, mentoring sessions, practical business simulations, and collaborative discussions positively influenced participants’ managerial confidence and problem-solving abilities. Participants demonstrated improved awareness regarding structured business planning, budgeting practices, customer communication, and organizational coordination. In addition, digital business education strengthened participants’ understanding regarding online marketing, technological adaptability, and the importance of digital transformation within contemporary business environments. These educational experiences encouraged participants to adopt more systematic, innovative, and sustainable business management practices. Despite the positive outcomes, several challenges remained during the implementation process, including differences in educational backgrounds, managerial experience, and technological familiarity among participants. Some participants required additional mentoring and simplified educational approaches to understand financial analysis techniques, digital business systems, and strategic management concepts effectively. These challenges highlighted the importance of adaptive educational strategies, continuous mentoring, and inclusive participatory learning methods in supporting sustainable business literacy development within community business environments. Overall, the implementation of community-based business management education provided valuable opportunities for strengthening entrepreneurial resilience, improving organizational competence, and supporting sustainable economic participation within local business communities. Through collaborative educational activities, practical managerial training, and continuous

mentoring, participants improved their business management skills, communication competence, and confidence in responding to changing economic conditions. The experiences implemented in China also demonstrate that community service-based business education can contribute positively to sustainable business development, economic empowerment, and long-term community resilience in contemporary economic environments.

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