

STUDY ON THE TEACHING OF THE MICRO SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PRACTICAL COURSE

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ABSTRACT. *This teaching practice study aims to explore the Micro Social Enterprise, an entrepreneurship practical course, offered by the General Education Center. This course is taught by teachers and industry mentors. The subject of study is the sale of tomatoes produced by the school's tomato farm and their extended products. Students were taught how to apply business management philosophies while setting up a microenterprise. In this practical process, teachers strengthened the students' understanding of products, experience, advertising, propaganda, pricing, sales, etc. They used the results of this practical curriculum as a basis for competition and awards. It is hoped that in the future, more interesting and beneficial courses can be developed for students. The academic contribution of this paper is to integrate professional knowledge into general education through the planning of activities in order to overturn traditional teacher and student stereotypes regarding the curriculum.*

Keywords: Teaching practice study, Micro social enterprise entrepreneurship practical course, Business management philosophies

1. Introduction. The teaching practice of the Micro Social Enterprise Practical Course is based on the “Love.Happiness Farm” established by the school in recent years. It combines the eco-friendly cultivation and marketing of chemical free, organic healthy tomatoes and fruits, blue economy, and social enterprise concept into the entrepreneurship core curriculum offered by the General Education Center. Through this practical platform and curriculum that offers interdisciplinary training, it is hoped that students could acquire basic innovative thinking and entrepreneurial ability.

The course is designed in collaboration with local social enterprises that care for the environment as good examples. The feature program of the Micro Social Enterprise Practical Course combines the three major learning areas of business studies and production practice, propaganda design and information application, as well as marketing planning and operation practice. The products of the school farm (tomato, ice plant, butterfly pea flower, etc.) give the students the opportunity to learn about eco-friendly agricultural practices, blue economy and product value, propaganda design, narrating ability, e-commerce application, marketing practice, and financial statement production. In addition, interdisciplinary learning and integration are done in the workshop. Practical evaluation and sharing of the end-of-the-year results are presented together with the sales performance of the school tomato CEO competition which has been running for many years.

2. Literature Review. Organic agriculture has been developing since 1980. This plays an important role in ecological conservation. Organic substances are recycled, water resources are maintained, and the sustainable management of the earth is practiced to protect the earth's ecology. However, Taiwan's food safety problems have been emerging in an endless stream. While pursuing a healthy eating atmosphere, the drive to promote the vigorous development of an organic produce market was initiated. Some scholars have discussed success factors, such as organic farming and management marketing [1]. Other scholars have studied the effects of practicing eco-friendly and organic farming on the psychological level. With a concern for local agriculture, they explored the use of abandoned agricultural space in rural settlements. They were able to restore the connection of the people to material, labor, and natural environment, thus establishing an organic farm with local characteristics [2].

Of course, farming methods, production content, land use, and other organized operational methods affect ecological conservation and food safety. It also changes the structure of urban and rural land usage, drawing global attention on ecological issues and sustainable development planning concepts [3]. Therefore, many scholars have carried out studies on farming methods, in hopes of obtaining more organic ingredients to reduce environmental pollution and sustain the land [4-8]. Furthermore, the populace also provided farming experience education to school children to give them the opportunity to learn about the hard work of farming, understand how to cherish food, work using their hands, and cultivate a good character of hard work and frugality [9]. The course studied in this paper is a new subject; hence, related research is almost non-existent. Therefore, the organic agriculture of the tomato garden was discussed in depth.

3. Creative Concept. The school's "Love.Happiness Farm" internship enterprise has been established for many years. During the financial crisis of 2008, many parents were put on unpaid leave and even dismissed from work. As a result, many students wanted to apply for academic leave to help their families. In response, the school cleared out a piece of land to give students work opportunities. The students were instructed on how to plant tomato seedlings. Ripe tomatoes were then sold, and the income was added to the school education care fund to bail-out and help disadvantaged families of students.

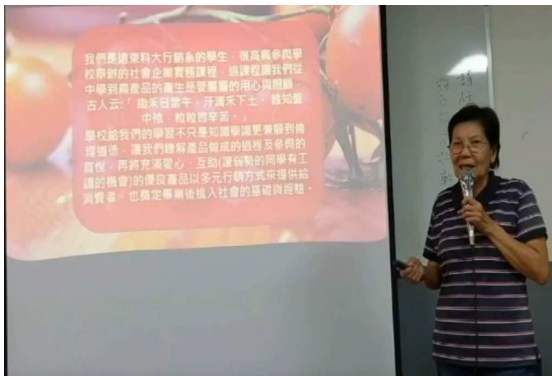
The size of the tomato farm has gradually expanded. The school has 0.5 hectares of land. In addition, it leased the neighboring one hectare of farmland for chemical-free cultivation. The farm emphasizes natural, healthy, eco-friendly, and chemical-free farming method. The entire process of caring for the tomatoes is also an important part of the educational service learning for students.

The happy farm built for charity by the school has dozens of crops planted in it, but it is mainly intended for the cultivation of cherry tomatoes. Harvest is from December to January every year. In order to make the charity sustainable, the management, harvesting, processing, packaging, and marketing of the farm produce are all done according to the business management model. At the same time, this acts as a workplace learning platform for student training. They make a documentary about the tomato growth process, design packaging, host marketing competition, and design an online shopping system or mobile APP for online orders. This enables the tomato charity bazaar to be always sold out in just a few hours. The theoretical foundation of the course is to promote the relevant theories of business and business entrepreneurship through the teaching of actual sales techniques combined with Internet technology.

4. Design Results. This teaching practice study aims to take the Micro Social Enterprise entrepreneurship practical course as its main scheme. Teachers work together with industry mentors and give lectures about their respective professional knowledge. They provide students with practical experience in the process of planting, cultivating, pest



(a) Sharing of tomato CEO case study



(b) Share business management practices

(c) Sharing of presentation production skills



(d) Planting, cultivating, pest control



(e) Harvesting



(f) Love.Happiness Farm



(g) Love.Happiness Farm



FIGURE 1. Curriculum practice results

control, harvesting, packaging, marketing, and management of tomatoes. They train students and equip them with the knowledge of micro-entrepreneurship using methods, such as sharing of tomato CEO case study, sharing of presentation production skills, presentation-speaking skills, filming with a cell phone and editing, teaching e-commerce, live broadcast, farm feast, meal making, etc. For related information, please refer to the website (<https://www.facebook.com/itomato.feu>).

On the qualitative side, students' responses to the learning outcomes showed that the course was diverse. A lot could be learned from each activity. Students learned how to grow tomatoes and sell them, how to make tomato dishes, and various techniques for marketing. These processes were really beneficial. They allowed everyone to learn a lot of very interesting new things, whether it was the CEO competition, planting and fruit picking, or learning to make dishes, etc. The hard work of the team members and teachers is greatly appreciated.

In terms of quantity, students were not unfamiliar with online direct sales. They were very eager to try and meet the challenge. The number of groups registered reached the quota in a short period of time. The sales volume also went beyond the expected target in just a few hours. These achievements were the greatest encouragement for the teachers and students involved. At the end of the course, each group presented the process from start to finish in a short film and gave every teacher and student a deep impression. This acted as the motivation to work hard again next time (Figure 1). In this paper, the evaluation of student learning outcomes is based on the amount of sales during the competition and what the students had learned after the course.

5. Conclusions. In 2018, the General Education Center started offering the entrepreneurship practice course, Micro Social Enterprise, with the aim of cultivating student thinking and ability for micro-entrepreneurship. The main objects for sale are two varieties of chemical free tomatoes produced by the school, namely Jinmi tomatoes and Yunu

tomatoes. Secondly, the following products were developed as extended goods available for sale: tomato enzymes and dried tomato.

The Micro Social Enterprise entrepreneurship practical course is rich in content and is available to students with an interest in this topic. It aims to train students so that they can acquire the concept and experience of microenterprise management. Seven professional industry mentors were invited to teach and share business management practices with young entrepreneurs. This was the first time that teachers and industry mentors gave lectures in turn, allowing the students to no longer sit passively in the classroom. During the class, students were able to design and make films. They were taught how to start a business and personally experience moneymaking.

The course is worth 4 credits. It is an innovative course sponsored by the Ministry of Education. It consists of theories and practice as well as group teaching. Students can receive a subsidy of NTD 3,000 for materials per group. The practical results were well received by the public. The students especially greatly benefited from the learning content. This changed their concept of the general education curriculum. They realized that the curriculum can be diverse and interesting. This is worthy of reference and promotion in relevant education field in the future. In the future, this paper will continue to conduct research on related topics which could be used as reference for subsequent related fields by extending student learning through the integration of curriculum theory and practice.

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