

THE LIVELIHOOD RESOURCES, PRACTICES AND VALUES OF AETAS IN MID-BAYTAN, ZAMBALES, PHILIPPINES: IMPLICATIONS TO EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The study describes the livelihood resources, practices and values of Aetas in mid-Baytan, Botolan, Zambales, located in Central Luzon, and Philippines. It aimed to provide a basis for an indigenous development program and drew implications on education and community development. Specifically, this study described 1) the characteristics of the residents, 2) livelihood resources and practices, 3) cultural practices and values, and 4) their problems. Participants and key informants were interviewed during fieldworks. Documents were gathered from pertinent offices. Data were analysed drawing patterns and categories. Participants were 21 to 76 years old, mostly women, married, with elementary education and 2-5 members per household. Livelihood resources were family-owned or communal. Livelihood practices included enterprise combinations, production and marketing processes. The majority of the participants are into farming, gathering mountain products, and hired labour. Family roles and traditions were well-defined. Prominent values are shared, trust in God and determination. The g-string and arrows symbolized their practical philosophy and open-mindedness. Low prices for products and inadequate capital resulted to low income that led to poor health, absenteeism and early marriage. The study concludes that the Aetas of mid-Baytan possess the needed resources, skills and values to break the cycle of poverty. Family culture keeps their marriage and community peaceful. It is, therefore, recommended that 1) formative IPED emphasize the role of the Aetas in Philippine history and study their way of life; 2) an indigenous development program be drawn encompassing leadership, local governance, livelihood enhancement, gender sensitivity integrating culture and cohesiveness; and, 3) line agencies collaborate for more directional impact.

KEYWORDS: *Aeta, Community Development, Culture, Indigenous Education, Livelihood*

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