

**LIFE DYNAMICS AS LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP TOOLS FOR GRADUATING LIBERAL ARTS AND EDUCATION STUDENTS OF JOSE RIZAL UNIVERSITY TO DEVELOP SOFT--SKILLS FOR CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY**

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**Abstract**

Students' language and communication skills and leadership abilities in today's times are focused on strengths management. Life Dynamics begins by identifying the individual's basic orientation to life, or personal style. Based on this foundation of self-knowledge, powerful strategies are manifested and these enable individuals and groups to work more effectively together as they achieve better results in teams. Graduating students of liberal arts and education of Jose Rizal University are encouraged to maximize their potentials by use of their soft--skills. Graduating students of Jose Rizal University are given a series of context specific surveys in language and communication. The surveys measure behavioral style preferences as it is essential to establish context. As the graduating students manage their communication skills, they become aware of their preferences in managing their strengths as they begin to implement the developmental strategies that will have an immediate impact on productivity. In coordination with the Student Development Office (SDO) and the College of Liberal Arts, Criminology, and Education (CLACE) of Jose Rizal University, Life Dynamics resulted to learning activities that are carefully sequenced so that graduating students can build confidence in acquiring relevant language and communication skills, leadership, perspective, and insights. The program termed as ASCEND (Achieving Excellent English, Self--Awareness for Behavioral Management, Communicative Competence for Professional Purposes, Enhancing People's Capacity, Nature of Communication, Discipline of Communication) yields enormous productivity improvements that can be realized using common language to communicate, thus enhancing productivity among graduating students of Jose Rizal University to develop soft skills for campus sustainability.

**Keywords:** Campus Sustainability, Language and Communication, Leadership, Soft Skills

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Language and communication skills are one of the elements of standard skills that are critical among college students. The university's role in producing graduates in a variety of fields to fulfill the industry needs does not only focus on academic achievement, but also on generic skills or "soft skills" required for them to compete in the global market. Furthermore, employers now place great importance on generic skills and personality in choosing their future employees.

Mastery of technical skills alone is no longer adequate for employees in the highly competitive marketplace (Lazarus, 2013) of the 21st century. The need for individual soft skills has taken on heightened importance (Seetha, 2014). The most valuable employees in the organization have a mix of both hard and soft skill competence (Griffith & Hoppner, 2013).

Life Dynamics is a method that helps individuals, teams, and organizations improve communication skills, productivity, and results by working more effectively together. This organizational development tool support people to value and manage their strengths and those of others in order to achieve greater satisfaction and better outcomes, take advantage of people's strengths to create high performing organizations that deliver results, and create an exchange between people where they celebrate their differences so that they all feel comfortable and do well together. It begins by identifying the individual's basic orientation to life, or behavioral style. Based on this foundation of self--knowledge, it offers powerful strategies that enable individuals and groups to be more productive in their work and more influential when dealing with key people. People behave using the four basic styles, which are based on the four basic ways of how humans interact: GIVING, TAKING, HOLDING, and DEALING, in two conditions, FAVORABLE, when things are going well and;; UNFAVORABLE, when things are in stress and conflict and six strategies for making CHANGE – ways to deal with other people effectively and address the things that get in the way of being effective.

Graduating students in the College of Liberal Arts and Education of Jose Rizal University are given life dynamics surveys, a self--reporting assessment that provides participants specific feedback for personal and professional development that stemmed from language and communication skills and competence that will give the graduating students a clear concept of their strengths, translating them into productivity on campus sustainability that will help not only the university but also the community.

Jose Rizal University established in 1919 is one of the premier universities in the Philippines. The vision of the university is to be a market leader in the use of technology for innovation in teaching and learning to produce graduates of social importance. Its aim is to develop its students to become useful and responsible citizens through the effective transfer of relevant knowledge and desirable values.

The aim of this paper is to provide a view on the use and application of Life Dynamics that resulted to ASCEND as language and communication and leadership tools for

graduating liberal arts and education students of Jose Rizal University to develop soft skills for campus sustainability.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Language and communication skills, leadership skills are powerful instruments for university graduates to succeed in the professional world. An individual's technical skills are no longer sufficient as the demand for soft skills is increasing (Robles, 2012). Demand for individuals who have skills such as the ability to communicate effectively is on the rise with the individuals poised for success in the highly competitive marketplace (Lazarus, 2013).

Communication skills are listed by numerous executives as prime requisites for obtaining and retaining employment (Hartman & LeMay, 2004). Davis and Brantley (2003) concurred that the ability to communicate is essential for success in career growth and personal relationships. Lehman and Du Frene (2008) asserted that regardless of the field, communication skills are important to all twenty-first century job applicants.

Jose Rizal University, in coordination with the Student Development Office, uses Life Dynamics as a tool for develop soft skills. Part of its program is the **Go Green Campaign** that encourages students to ensure that campus sustainability programs are implemented in the university campus. Liberal arts and education students are active in promoting campus sustainability programs. Graduates are encouraged to serve the university and the community to obtain and achieve continuous campus sustainability in Jose Rizal University.

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime" (Chinese proverb, n.d.). This adage supports the integration of soft skills into the liberal arts and education curriculum. According to Perreault (2005), individuals who seek to acquire new skills and in turn take the initiative to apply those skills in a productive way will be highly desired in the twenty-first century workforce, for these skills help students develop social responsibility. Social responsibility is translated to service in the community that is through involvement in the university's campus sustainability endeavors.

Heightened awareness of corporate sustainability is leading many businesses to make major changes to their core value systems. They are no longer pursuing old models of mass production and consumption, with profit as the single goal. Companies today are being forced to reconsider their roles in the economy, in human societies, and in the environment. Anticipating these changing roles, companies are seeking innovations that challenge previous value systems.

The UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, 2002 adopted a concept of the three pillars of sustainability: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social responsibility.

### *Eco--Sustainability*

Environmental innovations, also called "eco--innovations", seek to use technology and science in balance with nature. Such eco--innovations as low emission vehicles, energy saving appliances and compact fluorescent light bulbs permeate everyday life. Consumer awareness of environmental issues has led to the immense popularity of eco--friendly products and this popularity is reinforced by the promise of saving money while protecting the environment. The economic benefits of eco--innovative products are very easy to assess. A business' long term success may hinge on the company's ability to position itself as environmentally responsible and an eco--innovator.

### *Economic Initiatives*

Innovations in economic and social sustainability often grow out of answering the fundamental needs of communities. And often grow out of severe social injustice and economic impoverishment. Market opportunities for social innovations are not often as easily defined, and often their profit potential is underrated, thus there are fewer examples of successful economic and social innovations to point to.

One example of a social and economic innovation is the micro--financing phenomenon Grameen Bank which began, in 1976, issuing small loans to the impoverished without requiring collateral using a group borrowing model that uses peer pressure to ensure repayment. The Grameen model resulted in 98% of loans going to women in the community raising women's economic outlook in the poor nation. Grameen Bank and its founder, Mohammed Yunus, were jointly awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for their work developing the economy from the bottom up. Today Grameen bank is largely owned by the collection of borrowers as shareholders.

Since the advent of the internet age, and with the apparent success of Grameen, other micro--financing entities have grown. Now individuals all over the world can make an investment loan through microventures.com, microplace.com and kiva.org, just to name a few. Anyone can lend as little as \$25 to an individual that may be able to make a substantial difference in their lives for a very small amount.

### *Social Strides*

Another organization that is making great strides in societal innovation. Ushahidi, a not--for--profit organization in Kenya which creates open--source software and tools. Ushahidi is dedicated to the democratization of information, societal transparency and lowering the barriers for individuals to share their stories.

The organization began in response to the media blackout put in place after the 2008 Kenyan elections. It was difficult for citizens to find any information about the riots. Ushahidi developed open--source software that would collect information posted by the public via SMS, email and internet, and then represent that information on a map. The software was developed so that anyone using it would be able to learn what was happening and where.

Since it was developed in response to unrest following the Kenyan elections, Ushahidi has found popular use in other countries where the free flow of information is curtailed. Its use has expanded, and Ushahidi has been very effective in gathering

information on the ground during natural disasters such as the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan. There is the potential for commercial applications as well.

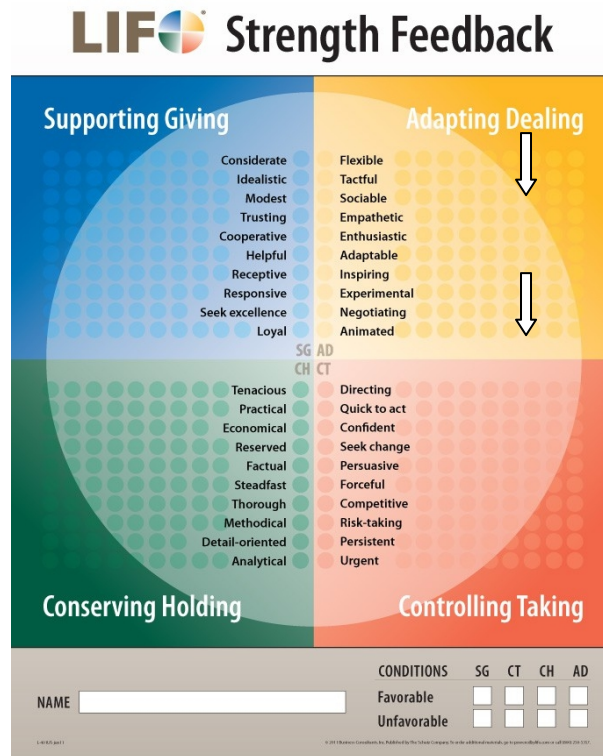
Initiatives in service of social or economic change would not, in the past, have been considered economically profitable. Today, however, those initiatives are succeeding at anticipating social needs and changes in consumer awareness and becoming commercially successful. Sustainable companies of the future will need to balance economic profitability with environmental and societal responsibility, and be ready to innovate to respond to the changing global world.

Using the Life Dynamics Framework of Dr. Stuart Atkins (2014) shown on Figure 1, students are encouraged to assess their individual styles to develop a framework of values, using them to support the campus sustainability programs of the university. This framework as language and communication and leadership tool supports communication preferences and styles, developmental strategies will be implemented that result to immediate impact on productivity. The four orientations include GIVING, TAKING, HOLDING, and DEALING.



**Figure 1:** Life Dynamics Framework

In a 360° perspective that creates a positive environment for values clarification and strengths management, feedback is centered on the strengths the students see in themselves and reinforced by how others view their strengths in relationships to them;; includes observed strengths and strengths to use more and less of. This tool helps the students in mapping their plans and goals to understand how to work more effectively on their own, or with teams, in implementing campus and community sustainability programs. The strengths feedback chart is used as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Life Dynamics Feedback Chart**

The Life Dynamics Program can be applied in training, coaching, consulting, and organizational development. Applications include: Appreciating diversity, better relationships, building on and utilizing strengths, effective leadership behavior, improved performance, increased resilience, increasing morale at all levels in organizations, job and career satisfaction, organizational effectiveness and culture, teamwork and collaboration, and social responsibility.

The world is full of innovation. Simply defined as the application of new ideas, innovation is often the driving force in government, business, technology, and education. People are often praised for their innovation, held in high regard for the new ideas that lead to organization paradigm, and asked to share this shift in thinking with their colleagues. With so much value placed on innovation, it is important to understand the primary factors that promote and obstruct innovation.

There are two basic forces that influence innovation. Restraining forces have a negative effect on innovation and include bias, excessive obsession, and preoccupation. These forces limit new ideas and prohibit successful organization paradigm shift. The positive forces (Takayama 1982) that influence innovation are known as driving forces. Embracing change, taking risks, and embracing other cultures are all examples of driving forces. It is important to note that the restraining forces are all influenced by our self--constraining straps or taga. In the past, when an attempt was made at translating taga from Japanese to English (Tsukasa, 1982), finding a word that would match the original meaning of the Japanese expression became a point of discussion. Thinking hoops, thought straps, or limitations in one's thinking, were all considered as possible translations for the term. It was highly debated

whether these terms would actually succeed in accurately conveying the meaning of the concept or not.

Many professionals held the opinion that it would be better to introduce this concept by using the original Japanese word taga (箍)—which would join other borrowed Japanese words such as: Fujiyama, tempura, or kaizen. Simply put, tagas are self-limiting parameters that prohibit innovation. Japanese companies wanted to proclaim their elimination of taga, and wanted to express how they have come to use innovation by facing their challenges, failures, and successes.

Taga, (Mizutani 1998) can be divided into numerous categories.

### Thinking Taga

The thinking tagas can be divided into three types. The first type is called the circumstantial taga. There are individuals, groups, and organizations in which this particular kind of taga is especially strong. When holding meetings to discuss new ideas and proposals, people with this kind of taga would claim that they cannot accomplish the task given the current situation. Often the condition of the market, customer base, and economy is to blame. The second kind of thinking taga is the historical taga, and there are cases in which this limitation is so strong that one cannot move forward. The historical taga includes obsession with what has occurred in the past. Former employers, transactions, behaviors, and other negative past occurrences cloud the positive potential and innovation that could occur without this taga. The third type is the resources taga, where the lack of proper resource management becomes an obstruction to innovation. This particular taga can be divided into four types:

- The first type is called the human resources taga. When this taga is present, preoccupation with the number of employees available to work on a project is present. This preoccupation becomes the excuse why projects can't be completed, deadlines are missed, and new projects are impossible.
- The second type of is the funds taga, which often results in discussions ending in statements about the lack of financial means and the limitations that the lack of funds places on the team.
- The third type of resources taga is the technical taga. This kind of taga can be often found in engineering departments. Believing that the lack of technology prohibits an idea is what this limitation is all about. Team members with this taga often claim that the idea is technically impossible to complete. Indeed the wall to overcome this way of thinking may be high, but in these cases taga stops innovation before one has even attempted to start something.
- The fourth, and final, kind is the time taga. Even when most people are in agreement in regards to the next step that must be to taken, they will claim that they do not have time for that step. Busy with research, lectures, and other projects are given as excuses for the lack of completion. When they are conscious of the problems, they may actually talk about the reasons why they are not doing anything. Since this taga is a rather subconscious matter, it is often difficult to overcome.

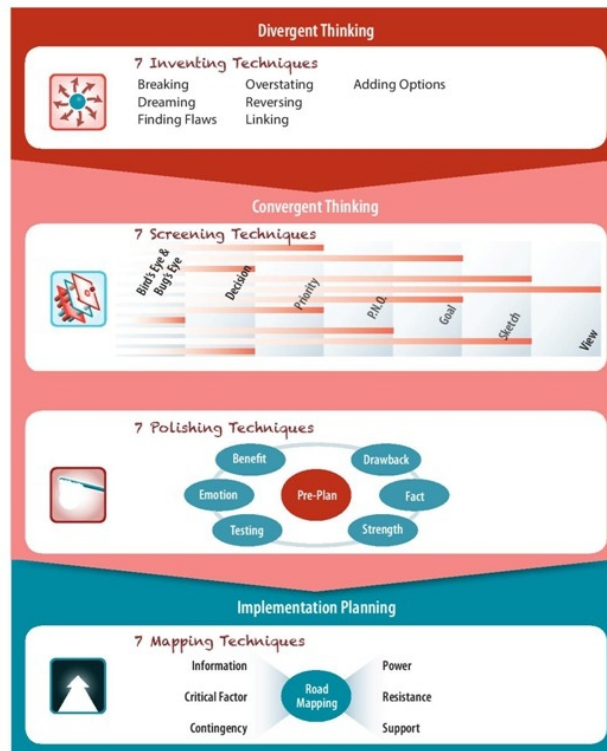
The system taga, Shibao (1999), is the limiting parameter that uses past rules and processes as the excuse for organization paradigm and innovation failure. Recalling the rules and claiming project difficulty due to the systems that are currently in place prohibit true innovation. Any attempt to bring suggestions about ways to circumvent the current system is met with resistance. For individuals, departments, and organizations with these thought straps or taga, it is very difficult to innovate or to create reform. Their taga is observed when people claim that they cannot complete a project, participate in an information exchange, or successfully innovate because others are an obstacle. These kinds of people are highly unlikely to ever take part in any new challenge as they believe that anything they do may go to waste as long as the manager does not change. This is the most frightening aspect of thought straps, or taga;; the fact that someone can truly believe, from the bottom of their heart, that the primary factor which prevents them from working on something new is actually caused by somebody else. This is indeed an unconscious act, but there are people and departments where this kind of taga has become resolved.

According to Shibao (1999), with taga, universities can ensure innovation by putting the following systems in place:

- Ownership: When students are given ownership of their projects, they feel responsible for the outcome. This sense of belonging creates a feeling of importance and urgency and helps to reduce the their taga and my taga that often take place.
- Collaboration: Ridding the workplace of system taga is often as easy as asking for input before certain systems are put into place. When students feel like their thoughts are valued, they are more willing to work to change systems that may be interfering with innovation.
- Climate: People are eager to work harder when they are in a positive climate. While it is important to provide students with enough time, technology, and people to complete a task, those who enjoy their working environment are happy to provide assistance when resources are scarce.
- Information: The saying that knowledge is power is never more true than when dealing with someone with a taga. Keeping the lines of communication open helps to battle the thinking tagas that exist. Encouraging dialogue and welcoming open debate encourages innovation. Organization paradigm shift occurs when people's eyes are opened to the truth and wide--variety of possible outcomes. Providing everyone with necessary information also shows them that they are valued enough to be brought into the conversation.

Taga resulted to the 7s of innovative thinking as shown on Figure 3.





**Figure 3:** The 7s of Innovative Thinking

In today's world, innovation is the driving factor for businesses and individuals to achieve success and to grow. But what is the best way to nourish innovation? An individual might start with a desire or need to change something and this desire can enable one to overcome unimaginable hardships, or help them fulfill their wildest dreams. But although an individual is passionate about an idea, but working alone, the implementation of that goal may never be reached. For successful implementation, the individual using the 7s of innovative thinking, (divergent thinking, convergent thinking, polishing techniques, and mapping techniques), has to learn how to collaborate with and benefit from others.

In an article published by Business Consultants, Inc., it stated that, innovation bolsters resources through human connections. An early step in any project is to determine what resources are needed and in striving for innovation, a key resource will be that of social capital. Capital is a common word used in the business world -- financial capital refers to your monetary resources and physical assets while human capital refers to the benefits available through your human resources such as the knowledge and experience of your employees. Social capital, on the other hand, refers to the benefits derived from social relationships -- this isn't about gathering the knowledge of the individual, but about figuring out how to leverage the knowledge of several people working together, to create new knowledge and ideas.

Human connection has proven to positively influence all aspects of life. Tacit knowledge, also known as informal knowledge, is the unwritten, unspoken, and hidden warehouse of information held by every human being. Within an organization, social capital can be gained by individuals working together and taking advantage of the

tacit knowledge of each person. The tacit knowledge of your employee base can't be copied by the competition -- it can provide a valuable resource in your pursuit of innovation. To do that, you have to learn to effectively take advantage of the tacit knowledge by constructing and nurturing strong bonds between individuals.

All of us are guilty of depending on emails and webpage postings to communicate information. This sharing without a true two--sided discussion is one of the shortcomings of the digital world. Just as important, perhaps more important, is the knowledge we can gain beyond that which is communicated digitally. When we try to "go it alone" without involving our co--workers, we sacrifice personal relationships, which in turn inhibits personal connections. It's natural to want to learn and strengthen our own expertise;; but we must remember that by using social capital we increase the level of innovation that might be achieved because of the additional resources that come from human connection.

As individuals, we tend to validate ourselves based on our individual actions and judge ourselves based on our own accomplishments. And the harder we try, the more we become aware of our shortcomings. "If only I was more skilled in this area..." "If only I had more knowledge in that field..." When we let ourselves dwell on only individual abilities, we feel a lack of skill and knowledge to accomplish the goal. No doubt you've experienced starting a project but ultimately giving up before the final implementation because you convince yourself it was beyond your capabilities.

Professor Nobuyuki Ueda of Doshisha Women's University said that, "the key question is not "How can I do it?" but rather "How can WE do it?" (Business Consultants, Inc., 2012) Studies have shown that there is a great psychological distance between what people feel they can accomplish on their own, and what they feel could be accomplished with the aid of others. Professor Ueda has interpreted this as an important element in human motivation. People are motivated not by what they can already do, but rather by what they could learn to do. When we want to accomplish something that seems too much for us alone, collaborating with others brings us closer to our goal, making the implementation of the goal possible. (Business Consultants, Inc., 2012)

By consciously cooperating with others, we grow our own potential exponentially. Rather than impose limits on ourselves by focusing too much on our current capabilities, we should identify the others that we want "in our corner" and learn how to work with them. By working in conjunction with the people we believe can help us achieve our goals, greater possibilities open up for us in the implementation process. We become more innovative and feel more successful because we've got someone in our corner. What kinds of measures are being implemented to bring about innovation within our organizations?

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

This study integrates the use of Life Dynamics, Taga Innovation in the application and implementation of the programs for graduating students of liberal arts and education to further other programs in campus and community sustainability. The researchers

used mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative methods, participant observation, in--depth interviews, and focus groups--discussion. A qualitative research design is concerned with establishing answers to the whys and hows of the phenomenon in question. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the "human" side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. (Denzin, 2000). The underlying reason for carrying out any qualitative research is to gain a richly detailed understanding of a particular topic, issue, or meaning based on first--hand experience. This is achieved by having a relatively small but focused sample base because collecting the data can be rather time consuming;; qualitative data is concerned with depth as opposed to quantity of findings. ([www.djsresearch.co.uk/glossary/item/Qualitative--Research--Design](http://www.djsresearch.co.uk/glossary/item/Qualitative--Research--Design)).

The Life Dynamics survey is also being used. It is a self--reporting assessment that takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers and the results provide participants specific feedback for personal and professional development

For contextual and situational aspects, there are a series of context specific surveys with topics ranging from language and communication styles to leadership styles. The surveys measure behavioral style preferences, which may change in different environments, so it is essential to establish context. The survey is a contextual assessment of behavioral styles, in other words, "what you do", as opposed to a static review of your personality type, "who you are," translating action and productivity skills to develop and implement campus sustainability programs that channel to the community.

#### **4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Life Dynamics resulted to **ASCEND** as language and communication and leadership tools for graduating liberal arts and education students to develop soft skills for campus sustainability, including community sustainability. This is an integration of education, innovation, and leadership. **ASCEND** trains university students to do active community participation. For instance, if their local community faces a particular social problem, they can use their skills to research the causes and possible solutions of the problem, work with others by listening and collaborating on developing a solution, and then present their views and solutions as citizens to their community leaders.

**A--Achieving Excellent English for the Professional Environment --** This course combines specialized classes in International Business English communication skills and concepts with general English language skills. This course is designed to give students the English skills they need to work effectively in today's global marketplace. English skills and vocabulary are developed through exercises, case studies, role plays and research on business and social topics.

**S--Self Awareness for Behavior Management--** This course will provide learners with the knowledge and skills to self--reflect, understand emotional intelligence and

the various learning styles. As well as outlining the various personality types, and theories surrounding emotional intelligence, this section will provide you with all the resources, diagrams and descriptions of some of the most important models regarding self-awareness, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the Johari Window, Force Field Analysis, Life Orientations.

**C--Communicative Competence for Professional Purposes and Intercultural Sensitivity--** It is common knowledge that in today's increasingly globalized world problems of intercultural understanding and communication are becoming more and more important. Living in a multicultural world and interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds is not easy if you have not developed "intercultural sensitivity," a specific feature that shows the ability of students to see and understand cultural differences, and "intercultural competence", the ability to think and act in an inter-culturally appropriate way. The course is devoted to communication between different cultures and includes the study of two aspects of intercultural communication – theory and practice.

**E--Enhancing people's economic capacity and people's coping strategies for reducing disaster risk--** This course is intended to provide fundamental understanding of different aspects of Disaster Management. It will expose the students to the concept and functions of Disaster Management and to build competencies of students to be ready for disaster management professionals. It would also provide basic knowledge, skills pertaining to Planning, Organizing and Decision-making process for Disaster Risk Reduction. This also includes strengthening people's economic capacity, enhancing people's coping strategies, firming up social and organizational support structures, accessibility of health and medical services, and advocacy and positive influence.

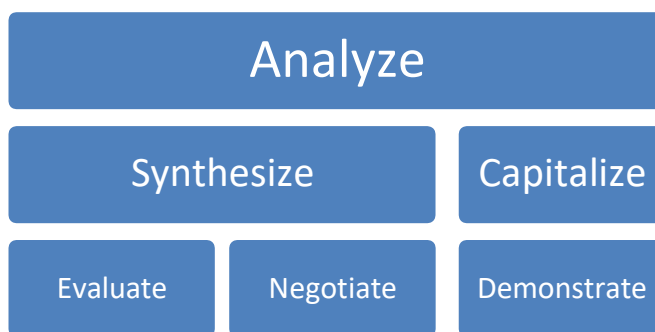
**N--Nature of communication, principles and functions for values clarification--** This course guides the students to examine their beliefs, attitudes and values behind decisions and actions including whether behavior matches stated beliefs, evaluating consequences of choices and developing a process that will enable the development of personalized value.

**D--Discipline of communication for leadership and soft skills for campus and social sustainability.** This course is designed for participants to work collaboratively to build an empirical model of effective leadership based upon their own observations and personal experience, as well as professional research findings on the discipline of communication. The empirical model on campus sustainability consists of an operational definition of leadership;; identification of the essential qualities and characteristics of leadership;; and specific skills necessary for students to realize their unique potential as leaders in campus sustainability and social and community sustainability.

Graduating liberal arts and education students of Jose Rizal University all have undergone **ASCEND** for them to be holistic community leaders. Upon graduation, they serve their respective communities on several sustainability programs. Alumni of the university also serve Jose Rizal University in various campus sustainability programs

that revolve the university's **Go Green Campaign**. The primary purpose of **ASCEND** is to develop individuals holistically for them to serve their communities with their innate sense of service and purpose.

At the heart of all human functioning is the self. The best solutions to organizational and leadership issues require self--awareness as an essential first step. Deeper self--awareness leads to self--acceptance and then self--esteem. As individuals gain self--awareness and self--esteem, they become more open and honest with their co--workers. They redirect the energy they now use for defensiveness, withholding, and other interpersonal struggles into productive work. **ASCEND** shown on Figure 4 is translated to reinforcing skills for action and productivity, for students to develop the sense of sustainability in the campus and the community.



**Figure 4:** ASCEND Action and Productivity Skills

Facilitators of **ASCEND** have different ways to incorporate soft skills into curriculum: Build in personal & facilitated reflection, connect the dots between lessons and life, personal relevance to student experience, hands on application of information, solve real problems/ puzzles, interview practice -- situational/ behavioral based, create marketing campaigns, sustainability campaign management programs, students create assignments based on Instructor provided learning outcomes, case studies of current topics and trends and frequent benchmarks, progress checks to meet deadlines.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

**ASCEND** resulted to the human element factor of all students. As language and communication and leadership tools, graduating students of liberal arts and education students of Jose Rizal University acquire and develop soft--skills for campus sustainability that transcends towards community. True to the university core values, being responsible, courteous, considerate, and living in utmost integrity, **ASCEND** develops accountability, self--regard, responsibility, openness, and role--fit of purpose and service. In the midst of technology and globalization, the clarification of values among students is what the Jose Rizal University implements among its students. The human element is what we need to have a firm grasp on campus sustainability. The elements of awareness from life dynamics have developed to a series of psychometric instruments for **ASCEND**. Each element measures one aspect of a person or relationship. Together, these instruments comprise the backbone of **ASCEND**.

The purpose of all of the elements of awareness is to provide information for expanding self-awareness first hand. Increased self-awareness improves understanding of why people behave in the way that they do, how they interact, and the relation between behavior and consequences in the personal and professional environment. The result is greater effectiveness as students, leaders, managers or team members.

The elements of awareness in **ASCEND** are integrated into human element programs and combined with a variety of experiential methods to form a holistic, transformational learning experience that leads to profound improvements in individual, team, and organizational performance and better results to further develop, implement, and serve in campus sustainability programs integrating to social and community sustainability.

Using **ASCEND** as language and communication and leadership tools for graduating liberal arts and education students of Jose Rizal University further translates values clarification in the contextual and situational human elements in developing soft skills bringing forth execution culture and actionable ways for campus and community sustainability.

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