

Author	Calayag, Roxanne
Title	A Perception Study of Behavioral Change Through Communication: The Edukasyon Social Marketing and Mobilization Project
Year	2017
Program	Master in Development Communication

ABSTRACT

Sustainable behavioral change is a by-product of communication through action. This scenario happens when people realize the perceived benefits and values of making a change in one's behavior, for instance, towards exercising the right of children to education. Given the power of communication as reflected in social marketing and social mobilization programs, this study aimed to analyze the perception of parents towards the potential influence of communication (through the Eduk-Aksyon Program) in insinuating sustained behavioral change. Through focused group discussions, interviews and cross-case analyses of parents who continued to send their children to school even without government reinforcement through the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT), it was found out that Eduk-Aksyon Program led to a sustained change in behavior of parents. Change was brought about by communication – through – action – via channels including the distribution of school supplies and the realization of perceived benefits of their children's schooling. The factors intrinsic about the Eduk-Aksyon project that parents mostly value that led them to sustained behavioral change included the distribution of school supplies, the rewards and incentives systems, and the holistic development initiated by the program both mentally and spiritually. These factors were viewed as a means to alleviate the burden from the family by shouldering a portion of the overhead expenses at school. Meanwhile, the parent's motivations in sending their children to school would be their personal and moral obligation to provide their kids the right to education; and the vision that education is the key to escape the vicious cycle of poverty. As compelling as it sounded, the rationalized benefits from the perceived outcome of completing or graduating from school, contributed to sustained behavioral change of parents. The findings from the content analyses of the transcripts affirm what Bandura suggests – that behavioral change can be determined by an interplay of both personal motivations and external factors. In this case, the respondent's behavior, together with their responsiveness towards gaining benefit through rewards and incentives that Eduk-Aksyon program provide, led them to have a sustained behavior. Based on these findings, it appeared that the future social marketing and social mobilization programs can be sealed and ensured if the programs offer both short-term and long-term benefits that could entice parents to be an active influencer for the kids to finish their schooling. For as long as the perceived benefits are rationalized by parents [and the perceived benefits exceeded the costs of education], social marketing and social mobilization programs such as the Eduk-Aksyon could continue to serve as communication platforms that drive behavioral change of the targeted audience which are the parents.