

Innovations

Impact Assessment of the Extension and Community Outreach Services in a Higher Education Institution in Baguio City

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Abstract: *Extension and community outreach services fulfill an organization's corporate social responsibility by assessing livelihood, skills, health, computer literacy, and advocacy programs. Descriptive statistics were employed to assess the impact of the extension outreach program, integrating a 4-point Likert scale with 67 respondents from Barangay Lucnab. The findings show that respondents regarded the success of the program and subsequent assessment of the value and application of community extension services as particularly significant. A finding that transpired in the study is that most respondents had a highly positive response to the computer literacy program, leading to substantial improvements in their capabilities. It recommends that program activities should be aligned with community needs for meaningful impact, and future research proposals should mirror program objectives to assess effectiveness. Furthermore, extension services significantly boost institutional awareness through policy advocacy, fostering relationships and community trust in its outreach programs.*

Keywords: *Community outreach assessment, Corporate Social Responsibility, Improvement of community extension programs, higher education institution.*

Introduction

In the Philippines, universities and colleges have been directed by the Commission on Higher Education (C.H.E.D.) through C.H.E.D. Memorandum Order (C.M.O.) No. 46, series of 2012 "to help improve the quality of human life of Filipinos; respond effectively to changing societal needs and conditions; and provide solutions to problems at the local community, regional and national levels." The study of this work may be of interest to higher education institutions (H.E.I.s) that are designing community extension programs optimized societal outcomes (Llenares&

Deocar,2018). Supported by its Memorandum Order (C.M.O.) number. 52, series of 2016, p. 12, to "provide the space to discover practical, evidence and science-based answers that can address real-world social, economic, and environmental challenges of partner citizens and communities." Assessment is important to learn how the relevant projects, programs, and organizations operate in addition to determining implications.

The program of U.B., which is the Community Advancement through Responsive Extension Services (C.A.R.E.S.) is a core initiative of the University of Baguio focused on social engagement. It emphasizes empowering individuals, particularly those who are impoverished and indigenous and aims to develop needy communities. This program is administered by the RDC-ECOS office in collaboration with various university schools, departments, and offices, and it encourages stakeholders to support and participate voluntarily. UB CARES is committed to fulfilling its social responsibility by creating programs and projects and coordinating activities to empower community residents and families, promoting both individual and community development. Importantly, it operates sustainably and aligns its efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, benefiting not only from its graduates but also from the institution's active involvement in addressing the needs of communities, particularly indigenous populations.

UB CARES has increased volunteerism and involvement from the stakeholders that would facilitate and fast-track the accomplishments of the projects. Given the extensive coverage, demands, and needs of the communities, the University of Baguio, through UB CARES and partnerships, would be able to accomplish more programs and alleviate the lives of the indigenous communities.

Literaturereview:

Assessments enable universities to meet quality standards, adapt to diverse applications, remain competitive, contribute to global knowledge, and successfully partner effectively across nations to strive for continual improvement along with projects and programs, (Elago& Malibiran, 2022) and to lead the community to a self-sustaining livelihood (Fang et al., 2018).

The ultimate aim of the study is to benefit the community of Barangay Lucnab by providing actionable recommendations to improve the school/department's community extension program. It also seeks to contribute to the overall development of Barangay Lucnab by establishing a framework for future implementation of extension and community outreach services, guided by valuable insights and best practices identified through this study. In doing so, it is connecting the social contexts between schools and higher education in order to foster collaboration and information exchange among institutions; breaking down social

barriers and disparities, and fostering critically aware, self-directed learners (Wagg, 2020).

The Universities that implement community outreach services share valuable contributions to the realization and meeting of the recalibrated target indicators of U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (S.D.G.) integrated in the Philippines. Many Universities incorporate community partnership as its pillar in building advocacy in the community, particularly in health interventions, quality education, and environmental development (Garay et al.,2021; Quiambao et al., 2020; Pereyras, 2021; Amparado& Colonia, 2020; Salazar,2020). Nonetheless, the articles on community impact assessment need to place a stronger emphasis on the community's future sustainability. Instead, they focus heavily on participants' self-perceived assessments. In a nutshell, prior impact assessment studies conducted at the University of Baguio (U.B.) had barriers in determining the long-term impact on both the community and the partner institution. In addition, activities that were carried out by various schools and departments in the adopted barangay often have a brief duration, which shows a lack of continuity and connection with previous initiatives. The study echoes the importance of the meaningful impact of activities following a well-structured evaluation strategy that builds on previous activities' outcomes.

The term community impact assessment is a multifaceted, interactive approach that goes beyond typical environmental or socioeconomic analyses intended to connect with communities, to examine both quantitative and qualitative components of effect, and adopt a more holistic and long-term approach to understanding community transformation (Meringolo et al., 2019). Nonetheless, the study's approach is anchored in the theoretical framework presented by Salazar (2020) and Llenares and Deocarís (2018). Outreach and engagement involve the transfer of knowledge and technology from the University to its constituents (Byrne, 2019). According to Seranno et al. (2022), community programs focus on building partnerships, relationships, and connections with the community, which is essential for achieving educational objectives (Galang, 2020), creating employment opportunities, and alleviating poverty (Dauz, 2019). Several studies highlight the wide range of opportunities associated with community outreach. These programs aim to provide access to medical care (Hubinette et al., 2017), support small farmer livelihoods (Salazar et al., 2018), offer computer literacy programs in primary schools (Germino, 2021), promote leadership (Curry-Stevens, 2018), enhance skills training, provide health education, improve computer literacy, support advocacy programs, and encourage livelihood programs (Salazar, 2020). The engagement of R&D and extension programs in community outreach aims to promote learning and research advancement, offer assistance to underserved communities, and establish effective partnerships and leadership roles. This involvement underscores the significance of

higher education extension in the teaching and learning process, where students and researchers apply their subject-specific knowledge to address real issues in marginalized communities. The importance of impact assessment lies in understanding how the community has utilized and applied the concepts, procedures, and principles from extension programs.

A number of educational institutions establish a specific center responsible for outreach programs, generally inside the academic division, as they develop their community outreach operations, Vidal et al., (2002); Soska et al., (2013). In the Philippines, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (D.S.W.D.) takes the lead in implementing the Sustainable Livelihood Program, offering opportunities for income-generating activities and livelihood development. Several studies (Acosta & Avalos, 2018; Salazar, 2020; Payumo et al., 2020; Borbon & Ylagan, 2021; Ferrer, 2022) support the implementation of D.S.W.D. programs by evaluating their impact on community extension programs and their contributions to socioeconomic well-being, ultimately enhancing the quality of services provided. Furthermore, the Republic Act No. 7722, also known as the Higher Education Act of 1994, emphasizes the state's responsibility to make affordable quality education accessible to all citizens at all levels. Higher education institutions (H.E.I.s) play a significant role in the social development of the country. They can bridge the gap between H.E.I.s and underprivileged sectors of society through community engagement (Bhatnagar, 2020).

The community extension is one of the three pillars of the University as mandated by the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 3 Series of 2015. Sermona et al. (2020) explore the extension services in the selected State Universities and Colleges (S.U.C.s) in the Philippines and with the Higher Education Institutions (H.E.I.) to share their respective expertise with the community. The R.D.C.'s engagement in the community is to exercise learning and research advancement, disseminate support to indigent groups, and develop responsibilities for effective partnership and leadership. In addition, there was an appreciation of the impact of higher education extension in the teaching and learning process as students and researchers apply their disciplinary knowledge to help address the realities in marginal communities.

The study covered in the sources focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators for the Philippines in several important areas. First, it assesses community outreach services, including as healthcare delivery and awareness campaigns, to track progress toward guaranteeing healthy lives and enhancing overall well-being, in line with SDG 3. Second, the study targets SDG 4 by looking at how these services affect educational results, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for everyone. Finally, the study intends to evaluate the success of these services in reaching and positively benefiting disadvantaged communities,

under SDG 10's goal of reducing inequalities. The initiative provides as a foundation for meaningful attempts to improve the lives of indigenous communities, focusing on livelihood projects, skills training, and health education.

Methodology

Study Design:

The use of a descriptive quantitative research method was critical to this investigation. The primary goal of this research was to assess the success of community initiatives that had been implemented, to enhance these programs in the future. Simultaneously, the study sought to determine if participants spontaneously used the knowledge learned and practical concepts gained through these activities.

Population of the Study:

The data collection involved the distribution of survey questionnaires to residents of Barangay Lucnab. The study employed purposive sampling to select participants, focusing on individuals who were actively engaged and willing to participate in the survey to assess the impact of RDC-ECOS extension services provided by the University. A total of 83 respondents, with 16, were used for the reliability testing of the research questionnaires. Thus, a total of 67 served as respondents to the study. The profile of Barangay Lucnab in this study includes the following: age, gender, affiliation, and district. These data provide insights into the composition of the respondent sample and the representation of different groups within the study population.

Data Gathering Tools & Procedures:

Data was collected through survey questionnaires distributed to individuals in Barangay Lucnab. The questionnaire assessed five aspects: (1) Skills and training, (2) health program, (3) livelihood program, (4) computer literacy, and (5) advocacy program, each focusing on a specific target impact. It consisted of three parts: Part I gathered respondent information, including age, affiliation, program category, and year of implementation. Part II evaluated program implementation and outputs based on learned knowledge. Part III assessed personal satisfaction, experience, and activity importance. The Likert scale measured respondent perspectives. The questionnaire was adapted from the study "Impact of Extension and Community Outreach Services Delivery to Barangay Lucnab" by Bonifacio et al. (2018).

Overall, these high Cronbach's Alpha coefficients provide evidence for the reliability of the measures used in the study, indicating that the items within each construct reliably measure high internal consistency reliability ranging from 0.964 to 0.982.

Treatment of Data:

The questionnaire consisted of multiple sections. The first part focused on gathering demographic information about the participants to understand the respondents' backgrounds and how they might influence their perception of the extension services offered. Part I of the questionnaire aimed to evaluate the quality of services in the barangay. Part II intended to assess the satisfaction of the respondents regarding the University's services. Part III evaluated the importance of community training, seminars, and workshops. The final section aimed to assess how residents had been empowered by utilizing these training opportunities in their own lives.

The analysis of the data involved using descriptive statistics, which included calculating the weighted mean and standard deviation to assess the extension program's effectiveness.

Ethical Considerations:

The research ethics was observed in the study, in which the corresponding answers were treated with confidentiality throughout the entire process of the research. Hence, permission to collect information from the participants was honored and voluntary, while respondents could withdraw anytime during the data gathering. Accordingly, the respondents were informed that whether or not they participated, they would not suffer any physical, emotional, or psychological harm from participating in the research. It was also the responsibility of the researchers to shred and dispose of survey questionnaires upon the withdrawal of the respondents. The purpose of the study was explained through an informed consent form to elaborate on the roles of the participants in the study. The data collection procedures practiced by the researchers maintained the anonymity of the participants and assured the confidentiality of information. All participants were informed about the general purpose of the study and that they were participating voluntarily. The participants did not spend any of their financial resources while participating in the study. The participants will be informed of the research's findings at the Barangay level with their Barangay Captain and officials. At the same time, subsequent dissemination will be discussed in research colloquia or a publication. A copy of the abstract and the recommendations of the study, as well as the results of the study, will be shared with the participants, particularly with the barangay officials, through the summative report.

Results and Discussion:

This section presents the comprehensive data collected to address the research questions and provide a solid foundation for meaningful interpretations. The foremost objective was to assess the programs in Barangay Lucnab across five distinct categories: livelihood program, skills and training program, health

education, computer literacy, and advocacy through the perspective of the respondents. Furthermore, the least emphasized component of the study is the aspect of sustainability, and it is worth highlighting that the series of evaluations of these independent activity's objectives should have been included in the data acquired.

Quality Of Services Implemented:

The Livelihood Program, Skills & Training, Health Education, Computer Literacy, and Advocacy projects' service quality was evaluated using variables such as customer satisfaction, efficacy, and responsiveness. Most Livelihood Program products earned a "Excellent" rating from respondents, indicating significant satisfaction. The Skills & Training programs were rated "Excellent" overall, suggesting that participants profited considerably from the efforts; however, respondents expressed less enthusiasm for the Art/Theater Workshop. The Health Education projects also achieved an "Excellent" level, reflecting the University's dedication to meeting societal needs and offering high-quality health education. However, the activity on sitting posture obtained a "Good" grade, indicating that respondents showed less interest and suggesting that engagement strategies should be improved.

The Computer Literacy program attained its objectives, and the majority of respondents rated it "Excellent". This implies that the initiative effectively increased digital proficiency among barangay officials and instructors, resulting in enhanced public service delivery. The Advocacy Project also received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with the majority of respondents rating it "excellent." This initiative, spearheaded by various schools within the university, including the School of Natural Sciences, School of Dentistry, and School of Nursing, included impactful activities such as healthcare consultations, dental services, and blood donation programs. The lobbying also involved the creation of a community-specific network and information system, which demonstrated the project's creative and collaborative spirit. The success of these initiatives demonstrates the University's dedication to community participation and social responsibility, which contribute to the overall well-being and growth of the community.

Table 1. Overall descriptive rating of the degree of excellence in the services implemented

The excellence of the services implemented	Mean	SD	DI
Livelihood Program	3.33	0.512	Excellent
Skills & Training	3.55	0.490	Excellent
Health Education	3.59	0.476	Excellent
Computer Literacy	3.61	0.640	Excellent
Advocacy	3.67	0.469	Excellent
Over-all Mean	3.59	0.463	Excellent

A significant majority of the items in the UB-CARES programs were rated as "Excellent" by the respondents, according to the results shown in the table. The average mean rating received was 3.59, further demonstrating the high level of excellence that is attributed to the services that have been implemented. These assumptions reflect a positive consensus among the stakeholders regarding the outstanding activities and demonstrate the efficacy of the services offered in each category.

The assessment of the degree of excellence in the implemented services met the expectation of client satisfaction and achieved the desired outcomes in providing excellent service. The study findings will be used as dynamic tools to influence and modify the program's design continually, as well as to commit to making evidence-based decisions for program development.

Satisfaction of the Respondents on the Services Provided:

Table 2 shows that respondents' satisfaction with the Livelihood Program's offerings varies. Respondents gave the financial literacy lecture a "Very Satisfied" evaluate, indicating sense of satisfaction. Collaboration with stakeholders, as proposed by Visco (2022) and Malinao (2022), can improve program efficacy, implying a need for greater community engagement in these areas. Challenges such as sporadic visits by implementers and inconsistent monitoring were highlighted, underlining the necessity of community participation and ongoing efforts in community outreach

programs. Nonetheless, the general opinion of UB CARES's skills training was "Very Satisfied," suggesting excellent knowledge and skill transfer, especially in seminars, workshops, and disaster management training. This shows that the institution effectively assisted participants in developing knowledge and skills.

Activities such as basic hygiene workshops and dengue prevention were well-received, displaying community participation and interest. Similarly, programs targeting early pregnancy got favorable comments, emphasizing the significance of such interventions in supporting community health. Computer literacy training was also effective, demonstrating that the institution's efforts in this area fulfilled the demands of the community, particularly barangay authorities. Furthermore, the advocacy program achieved high satisfaction ratings, notably for medical missions and the distribution of necessary supplies, demonstrating its success in meeting community demands.

Table 2. Overall descriptive rating of satisfaction level of the respondents on the services provided

The satisfaction level of the respondents with the services provided	Mean	SD	DI
Livelihood Program	3.29	0.689	Very satisfied
Skills & Training	3.55	0.496	Very satisfied
Health Education	3.62	0.481	Very satisfied
Computer Literacy	3.59	0.600	Very satisfied
Advocacy	3.70	0.492	Very satisfied
Over-all mean	3.59	0.504	Very satisfied

The study's findings reveal a remarkably high level of satisfaction among the respondents regarding the services provided by the University. As depicted in Table 2, the overall weighted mean score of 3.59 indicates a "very satisfied" descriptive value, reflecting the positive feedback received from the respondents. These findings indicate that the UB CARES program has efficiently administered its extended activities, showed excellence, and provided quality services.

The overwhelming satisfaction of the respondents is a resounding proof of the University's notable success in exceeding their expectations. This finding is important because it shows the success of the coordinated efforts and initiatives made by different schools, departments, and organizations within the University. However, it also emphasizes how well the barangay community views the services offered.

Furthermore, this high level of satisfaction is a testament to the University's ability to cultivate an environment that prioritizes quality services and consistently addresses the unique needs of the individuals it serves. Through its dedicated endeavors, the University has successfully fostered a supportive and responsive atmosphere that caters to the diverse requirements of the community members.

The results mentioned above are supported by qualitative responses on the satisfaction of the services implemented as mentioned by the respondent,

In summary, the resounding satisfaction expressed by the respondents stands as strong evidence of the University's exceptional performance in fulfilling expectations. It showcases the efficacy of the collaborative efforts made by different entities within the University. It signifies the institution's achievement in establishing an environment that promotes high-quality services and effectively caters to the needs of its constituents.

The importance of training, Seminar, and workshops in the community

The data given emphasizes the significance of training, seminars, and workshops in the community across different fields. In the Livelihood Program, financial literacy, backyard coffee farming, and papermache workshops are perceived as significant by the community, with financial literacy and coffee farming rated as "very important." The collective sub-mean rating of 3.40 indicates an overall positive perception of these activities, emphasizing their value in improving community livelihood practices. Skills and training activities are also highly appreciated, with participants continuously ranking them as "very important." These community outreach extensions serve an essential role in skill development, knowledge growth, and empowering individuals to flourish in a variety of areas, as seen by the sub-mean rating of 3.73.

The community recognizes the importance of health education initiatives, with all activities rated "very important." The positive impact of these programs is evidenced by the sub-mean rating of 3.75, highlighting the community's proactive approach to health awareness and knowledge enhancement. Similarly, in Computer Literacy, training, seminars, and workshops are regarded as vital, with a significant focus on their role in breaking down barriers to education, employment, and social interaction. The data supplied by the sub-mean rating of 3.74 backs up the community's perception of the importance of these activities in increasing digital skills and overall quality of life.

Table 3. Overall descriptive rating of the importance of training, seminars, and workshops in the community

Importance of training, seminars, and workshops in the community	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Livelihood Program	3.40	0.562	Very important
Skills & Training	3.73	0.422	Very important
Health Education	3.75	0.431	Very important
Computer Literacy	3.74	0.513	Very important
Advocacy	3.75	0.422	Very important
Over-all mean	3.69	0.434	Very important

The survey findings demonstrate the importance of training programs in community development. The respondents consistently regarded the Livelihood Program, Skills and Training, Health Education, Computer Literacy, and Advocacy as "Very important." The weighted mean ($M=3.69$, $SD=0.434$) provides a comprehensive view of the community's collective importance of these training programs. These findings suggest that the respondents recognize and value the importance of the training programs offered in livelihood, skills development, health education, computer literacy, and advocacy.

The above responses demonstrate the program's effectiveness in providing relevant knowledge and skills that participants found valuable in both their personal and professional lives. It also coincides with the study of Libo-on et al. (2021) that the barangay officials and staff require the appropriate technical know-how in basic computer operations processing of Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and the Internet. However, some barangays need help to modernize themselves, especially when it comes to computerization. Overall, the data entails that the training programs delivered by the University through collaborative efforts of the E.C.O.S. Coordinators are very significant to the community's needs, especially to the Barangay Official, to hasten their knowledge and ability to use computer software and hardware.

Application of Availed Training:

The findings from the activities show that participants have a favorable perspective on how to use their newly learned knowledge and abilities. Notably, in the area of livelihood, although financial literacy knowledge was consistently utilized abilities for Backyard coffee growing and Paper Mache workshops were rated low in the evaluation, indicating distinct level of practical application. Participants in Skills & Training had a highly favorable opinion of effectiveness, with "always" being the most prevalent response, suggesting persistent use of learned information.

However, obstacles in continuing mobilization and planning activities in the face of changing conditions may influence the community's progress and the implementation of lessons learned from these sessions.

Table 4. Overall descriptive rating of Personal application of availed training, Seminar, and workshop

Personal application of availed training, seminar, and workshop	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Livelihood Program	3.19	0.605	Sometimes
Skills & Training	3.62	0.478	Always
Health Education	3.63	0.425	Always
Computer Literacy	3.64	0.572	Always
Advocacy	3.64	0.505	Always
Overall Mean	3.62	0.459	Always

As gleaned from the table, the respondents' perspective was "Always" in some of the items mentioned. The result only means that the Extension programs of UB CARES positively affect the respondents in terms of the Personal Application of the availed training, seminars, and workshops. The data revealed that the overall assessment of the extension programs is very high, as reflected in the overall computed mean score of 3.62.

A noteworthy response that illustrates the program's effectiveness in imparting knowledge and skills that participants find applicable in their careers, education, and personal lives, reflecting its broad and practical impact. By encouraging continuous learning, addressing challenges, and creating a supportive environment, we can ensure that training, seminars, and workshops leave a lasting and transformative impact on individuals' lives. Emphasizing the importance of personal application will pave the way for a more skilled, informed, and empowered society.

Conclusions:

Based on the salient findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The evaluation of community extension services' quality and satisfaction revealed that the programs were valued and appreciated.
2. The significance and application of community extension services were evaluated, and the results showed that the services were always applied and of great relevance.
3. Certain extension services provided valuable contributions to the participants as they engaged in a variety of programs, encompassing livelihood initiatives, skill development, health education, advocacy efforts, and computer literacy programs.

The assessment of the extension activities under various programs, which were attended by individuals of different affiliations from Barangay Lucnab, was a meaningful and purposeful endeavor. Thus, participating actively in community outreach services holds great importance in establishing and nurturing rapport and trust within the community.

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