

Original Research Paper

Community Extension Programs in a Small Suburban Community: Its Impact and Basis for Institutional Sustainability and Support

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Abstract: In order to assess the value and effects of an implemented institutional extension program, it needs to be evaluated after some time. This study aims to investigate the level of program outputs and impacts of programs in an adopted community of a local college. It also attempts to discover the relationship between the level of program outputs and the impacts of the programs economically and socially. The investigators used a descriptive-correlation research design among conveniently selected respondents in a small suburban community for the survey. This study also adapted and modified an instrument and used SPSS 23 for the statistical calculation of the study. The investigation revealed that all of the community extension program outputs by the institution got "very satisfactory" remarks from the respondents. As for the economic and social impact of the programs of the community extension services, it also obtained a "very satisfactory" response. Statistical inferences also revealed a moderate positive correlation between program outputs' level with the program's economic and social impact and the community extension services. The investigators provided relevant recommendations for sustainability and support based on the study results.

Keywords: Community Extension Services, Impact Assessment, Program Outputs, Suburban Community, Sustainable Extension Programs.



1. Introduction

Every higher education institution commits itself to the community. In addition, in order to manifest its good will, the community extension services provides such avenue. Community extension is one of the trifocal functions in the higher education institution where faculty and staff provide individualized work beyond their usual work. A community extension has many forms, and one can avail of it in any case or means possible. At the institutional level, community extension is significant, serving several benefits. However, to determine whether a community extension work or activity is practical or not, it has to be evaluated from time to time. Based on this premise, respondents in the institution or the community can provide sound feedback. For example, the team of researchers revealed that the respondent showed high levels of self-reported knowledge increase, wellness, behavioral change, and personal economic value [1]. It can be deciphered from this revelation that the community benefitted from the extension service provided by the active group. Another study also showed that individuals perceived university extension services as a form of strategy in health and a feasible tool for professional development [2]. This idea comes from the institution's perspective, where faculty and staff share their concepts and standpoints. In addition, the same authors also stated that extension is necessary and a great encouragement for the strengthening and social fulfillment of the community.

Based on these revelations from previous and recent literature, the researchers gathered enough motivation to pursue evaluating the community extension programs of a local higher education institution to assess whether the existing extension programs were effective and had a significant impact on the lives of the people living in the adopted community of the institution.

The general objectives of this study are to examine the level of program outputs of the community extension services of Gordon College and the impact of the programs in the adopted community of the institution. The researchers also intend to identify any underlying connection or association between the level of program outputs and the impact of programs of the community extension services of the institution on the community.

The result of this study will benefit the institution by either sustaining the community extension programs or providing a new and more appropriate extension program and activities in the adopted community. It also strengthens the ties between the local college with the community and promotes professional development and advancement among the faculty and staff of the institution

2. Literature Review

Evaluating community extension has been a practice in higher education institutions, especially since they have to see that the project has met its objectives or purposes. In the Philippines, several studies provided some interesting findings and results regarding their community extension evaluation. For instance, a study stated that the community extension programs of their institution were deliberately aligned between the college's curricular program offerings and, at the same time, the needs of the adopted communities [3]. It is a practice among colleges and universities since it is easier for them to craft a program or activity in their area of expertise. They can quickly draw up the necessary workforce, logistics, funding, and other necessities for the program. In another study on livelihood and entrepreneurship, the researchers boasted an effective community extension program [4] and another stated that the livelihood projects by the college were effective since they revealed a positive impact on the beneficiaries [5]. However, not all extension projects and programs in the community have a positive effect or impact. Sometimes it is also ineffective due to varied reasons and circumstances. As Magnaye and Ylagan [4] found in their study, environmental clean-up/ tree planting/ waste management, computer literacy, health services, and crime and drug prevention were ineffective.

In another area of extension work, an investigation revealed that parents and social workers were responsive, especially to the needs of the daycare workers [6]. In the case of information and communication services, another research disclosed that the majority of the beneficiaries think that the level of awareness for ICT was moderate, participation was slight, and satisfaction was moderate [7]. Again, from these results, one can deduce that the effectiveness or impact is relatively low.

Nevertheless, studies in education, health, livelihood, and ecological programs were very evident and high among the respondents [8]. This report is somehow related to the findings of Gabatin et al. [9] investigation, where most of their beneficiaries reported a strong agreement in the case of project implementation of extension programs.

Another literature also found that the heart of community engagement in research and extension is in state universities and colleges (SUC), where there are four functions, namely instruction,

production, and internationalization [10]. However, two researchers revealed that despite the shortcomings and issues of the operational setup of a project, their evaluation results found that the project had been responsive to the needs of its target beneficiaries [11].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study used a descriptive correlation study with the survey as the primary data source. The research design involved tries to determine whether there is an underlying relationship between the level of program outputs and the impact of the programs of the community extension services of the institution. Thus, the descriptive-correlational design fits the intended outcome of the study.

3.2. Population and Sampling

The study population was a small suburban community located on the outskirts of Olongapo City, Philippines. This place is a remote area from the city's periphery where a community of Indigenous People (IP) also thrives. The investigators used the convenience sampling technique to obtain the necessary number of individuals to evaluate the community extension programs of the institution. A total of 62 individuals participated in the said survey voluntarily. The data gathering took two weeks to accomplish due to geographical and logistics difficulties as well as the availability of the respondents.

3.3. Instrument of the Study

The researchers adopted and modified an instrument from the previous study by Salazar [12], entitled "An Impact Study of the Community Extension Programs in a State College in the Philippines," which directly measured and evaluated the extent of their extension services in their institution. Before the actual data gathering, the investigators did pilot testing on random students who were not part of the survey. This test is to verify its validity. For the instrument's reliability, a simple Cronbach Alpha test yielded an overall coefficient of 0.935, which surpasses the .70 benchmark score.

3.4. Statistical Analysis

This study used software like MS Excel and SPSS 23 to tabulate and examine the data collected. In order to attain the main objective of the study, the data analyst used the following statistical tools: mean and Pearson-r Moment of correlation. In addition, the study also utilized a five-point Likert scale to pattern the respondents' answers.

4. Finding and Discussion

4.1. Finding

The general aim of this study is for the investigators to determine the level of program outputs of the community extension services of Gordon College and the impact of the programs in the adopted community of the institution. At the same time, to analyze if there is an underlying relationship between the level of program outputs and the impact of the programs of the community extension services. The succeeding tables present the result and analysis of the researchers.

Table 1. Level of Program Outputs in terms of Skills Training

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The skills learned are influential in my profession or my work.	3.24	Satisfactory
The skills taught helped me increase my income.	3.52	Very Satisfactory
The skills I learned improved my self-esteem.	3.58	Very Satisfactory
I have taught other people the skills I learned.	3.58	Very Satisfactory
I became gainfully employed after the training.	3.79	Very Satisfactory
I adopted the technology I learned.	3.40	Satisfactory
I started my own business after the training.	3.47	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.51	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;
 3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 1 shows the program outputs of the Community Extension Services of Gordon College in terms of skills training. As seen from the table, most of the items mentioned generated a "very satisfactory" response from the respondents. However, it is also notable that two items have a "satisfactory" remark. From the respondents' overall perception, the skills training provided by the Community Extension Service Unit was "very satisfactory" as well. It is safe to conclude that the study respondents have benefited from the skills training that the institution implements in the community.

Table 2. Level of Program Outputs in terms of Health Education Services

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The knowledge and attitude I learned are relevant and practical.	3.40	Satisfactory
The concepts and skills taught me are timely.	3.44	Very Satisfactory
The knowledge I learned improved my self-esteem.	3.68	Very Satisfactory
I have taught other people the knowledge I learned.	3.55	Very Satisfactory
I disseminated the knowledge and information to other communities.	3.40	Satisfactory
I applied the knowledge I learned.	3.56	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.51	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;
 3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 2 shows the program outputs of the Community Extension Services of Gordon College in terms of health education services. As gleaned from the presentation, most of the items that pertain to the health education services of the Community Extension Services obtained a "very satisfactory" remark from the respondents. Nevertheless, two items in the instrument yielded a "satisfactory" remark as well. Overall, the study obtained a "very satisfactory" response from the community, which means that they appreciate and acknowledge the health education services being provided to them.

Table 3. Level of Program Outputs in terms of Academic Literacy

Items	Mean	Interpretation
From the topics being discussed, I gained new knowledge and information.	3.39	Satisfactory
It considerably developed my reading, writing, and numeracy skills.	3.68	Very Satisfactory
It improved the skills required for my formal education.	3.46	Very Satisfactory
The concepts and skills I learned contributed to my better academic/school performance.	3.61	Very Satisfactory
It boosts my self-esteem.	3.97	Very Satisfactory
It allows me to express myself while participating in the activities that the facilitators provide.	3.81	Very Satisfactory
It improves my academic behavior for the better.	3.77	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.67	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;
 3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 3 indicates the program outputs of the Community Extension Services of Gordon College in terms of academic literacy. Based on the presentation, most of the items displayed "very satisfactory" remarks from the respondents. However, there was one item that produced a "satisfactory" answer for the study. However, all in all, the evaluation for the academic literacy program of the Community Extension Services Unit displayed a "very satisfactory" remark from the respondents. It is safe to assume that the community residents well-appreciated the academic literacy program.

Table 4. Level of Program Outputs in terms of Advocacy Programs

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The advocacy program benefitted us to learn new knowledge and information.	3.60	Very Satisfactory
It contributed to the improvement of our way of living.	3.73	Very Satisfactory
I disseminated the knowledge I learned to the community.	3.60	Very Satisfactory
It has improved the quality of our lives.	3.68	Very Satisfactory
It helped me develop my self-esteem.	3.56	Very Satisfactory
I applied the knowledge I learned.	3.69	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.64	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;

3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 4 exhibits the program outputs of the Community Extension Services of Gordon College in terms of advocacy programs. As presented in the table, all of the items involved in the survey produced a “very satisfactory” interpretation from the mean computation of the study. This result means that the respondents appreciate and recognize the different advocacy programs of the Community Extension Services Unit of the institution.

Table 5. Level of Program Outputs in terms of Livelihood Programs

Items	Mean	Interpretation
The livelihood program enhanced our entrepreneurial skills.	3.37	Satisfactory
It helped us augment our income.	3.61	Very Satisfactory
It has improved the quality of our lives.	3.53	Very Satisfactory
It has made us more cohesive as a community.	3.68	Very Satisfactory
It helped us develop our self-esteem.	3.66	Very Satisfactory
I applied the knowledge I learned in my entrepreneurial engagement.	3.74	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.60	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;

3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 5 displays the program outputs of the Community Extension Services of Gordon College in terms of livelihood programs. Based on the table, one can deduce that majority of the items for the livelihood programs obtained a "very satisfactory" response from the community residents. Although, there was one item that produced a "satisfactory" answer coming from the respondents. To sum it all up, the overall result for the evaluation of the livelihood programs of the Community Extension Services was "very satisfactory." This result means that the livelihood programs implemented by the institution are generally acceptable to the respondents.

Table 6 indicates the economic impact of the programs of the community extension services of Gordon College. One can deduct from the table that four out of the six items of the instrument got a "very satisfactory" response. On the other hand, two remaining items obtained "satisfactory" remarks from the respondents. Nevertheless, to sum it all up, the consensus of the respondents gave the economic impact of the programs of the Community Extension Services a “very satisfactory” mark. This result means that the community appreciates the economic impact of the different programs that the Community Extension Services Unit provides.

Table 7 shows the social impact of the programs of the community extension services of Gordon College. From the exhibit, one can determine that when it comes to the social impact of the community extension services provided by Gordon College, the general perspective of the respondents was “very satisfactory” in all of the elements or items mentioned. This result only means that the community extension programs of the institution have impacted the respondents in terms of social aspects.

Table 6. Economic Impact of the Programs of Community Extension Services

Items	Mean	Interpretation
Enabled me to find a job and become employed due to the skills learned.	3.27	Satisfactory
Enabled me to augment my income as a result of the employment gained.	3.52	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to improve my house due to the income generated from such employment.	3.69	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to buy appliances due to the income generated from my employment through the skills I learned.	3.23	Satisfactory
Enabled me to gain properties/ownership due to the income generated from employment.	3.48	Very Satisfactory
Improved my economic status being a self-employed individual.	3.60	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.47	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;

3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 7. Social Impact of the Programs of Community Extension Services

Items	Mean	Interpretation
Enabled me to find a job and become employed due to the skills learned.	3.47	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to augment my income as a result of the employment gained.	3.50	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to improve my house due to the income generated from such employment.	3.58	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to buy appliances due to the income generated from my employment through the skills I learned.	3.55	Very Satisfactory
Enabled me to gain properties/ownership due to the income generated from employment.	3.55	Very Satisfactory
Improved my economic status being a self-employed individual.	3.77	Very Satisfactory
Average Mean	3.57	Very Satisfactory

Legend:

1.00-1.80=Not Satisfactory; 1.81-2.60=Fair; 2.61-3.40=Satisfactory;

3.41-4.20=Very Satisfactory; 4.21-5.00=Outstanding

Table 8. Correlation Matrix between the Level of Program Output and Social Impact of the Programs of Community Extension Services

Program Output		Social Impact	Economic Impact
Skills Training	Pearson Correlation	.590*	.544*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	62	62
Health Education Services	Pearson Correlation	.681*	.690*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	62	62
Academic Literacy	Pearson Correlation	.719*	.694*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	62	62
Advocacy Programs	Pearson Correlation	.635*	.496*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	62	62
Livelihood Programs	Pearson Correlation	.762*	.560*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	62	62

Note: * $p < .05$

The study performed a Pearson-r moment of correlation to determine the relationship between the level of program output and the economic impact of the programs of the community extension services. Based on Table 8, the computation results show that, in general, there was a relationship between the two mentioned variables in the study. This assumption was made due to the following results: for skills training, .544; for health education services, .690; for academic literacy, .694; for advocacy programs, .496; and livelihood programs, .560. All of the results have a moderate positive relationship to the economic impact of the programs of the community extension services. At the same time, all of the probability values obtained from the calculations were significant at a .05 alpha level of significance.

Therefore, it is safe to assume that there exists a moderate positive relationship between the level of program output and the economic impact of the programs of the community extension services.

In order to examine the relationship between the level of program output and the social impact of the programs of the community extension services, the investigators also performed a Pearson-r moment of correlation. As presented in the table, there was a significant relationship between the two variables of the study. The study obtained the following Pearson Correlation coefficients, for skills training, .590; for health education services, .681; for academic literacy, .719; for advocacy programs, .635; and livelihood programs, .762. The results have probability values lower than the .05 alpha significance level. At the same time, the results were interpreted with a moderate positive relationship. It is therefore concluded that there is a moderate positive relationship between the level of program output and the economic impact of the programs of the community extension services of the institution.

4.2. Discussion

The primary aim of this study is to analyze the level of program output and impact of the different programs of the Community Extension Service Unit of a local college in a small suburban community. This study also intends to verify the relationship between the level of program output and the social and economic impact of the Community Extension Service Unit programs.

Based on the study results, the investigators found that, in general, all of the programs outputs that the Community Extension Service Unit garnered a "very satisfactory" comment from the respondents. These programs include skills training, health education services, academic literacy, advocacy programs, and livelihood programs. They all have a positive and high level of appreciation from the community individuals that participated in the survey. The study of Salazar [12] also supports the result of the current study and the research of Garay et al. [13]. In addition, another article also evaluated the impact of their own academic community extension programs [14]. They found a moderate improvement in the community knowledge, attitude, and lifestyle of the community. In another research paper, the researcher showed that their institution's extension programs improved the community's knowledge and skills and their health and well-being [15]. From the perspective of Sibal and Elizaga [16], their impact assessment of their institution's extension program equipped the respondents with adequate knowledge and skills to help them improve in performing their tasks in their community. However, a different investigation done by Olavides [17] group revealed that, although the respondents learned the skills from training/ activities conducted, the beneficiaries did not appreciate them due to a lack of capital and opportunities. A research article divulged that their respondents in their study confirmed the utilization of their acquired knowledge, skills, and attitude [18]. The community extension services of a particular college in the Philippines also revealed the effectiveness and relevance of its programs [19]. More or less, the comparison of the proceeding articles and research points to one direction: the success of a program of the community extension to different institutions.

In the case of the impact of the community extension programs in the community, the respondents answered on the affirmative side. The study obtained a very satisfactory evaluation from the group of the respondents both on the economic and social impact of the community extension program of the institution. This result means that the community individuals appreciate the impact of the programs. To compare the current result with the existing studies, Guiron et al. [8] observed that the level of participation of the respondents in the community extension was highly evident. The research of Chua et al. [20] also showed that the community extension of their institution was known by the community at the same time well implemented. From a different perspective, Abrea [21] disclosed in her study that not all of the respondents were able to develop their social skills. Moreover, in the paper by

Quezada [22] the author stated that all of the community extension programs of the university were very effective and able to meet the set objectives.

For the final objective of the study, which is the relationship between the level of program outputs and the impact of the community extension programs of the institution, the investigators found evidence to prove a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. The study of Salazar [12] also confirmed the same idea. Overall, the study proved that the different community extension programs implemented by the institution in the adopted suburban community were acceptable to the community, as reflected in the satisfied remarks on their social and economic aspects.

5. Conclusion

From the results mentioned above of the study, the researchers formulated the following conclusions:

- 1) For the level of program output of the community extension services of the institution, in general, the respondents gave "very satisfactory" remarks in all of the six sub-categories, namely skills training, health education services, academic literacy, and advocacy and livelihood programs.
- 2) In terms of the impact of the programs of the community extension services of the institution, the respondents also gave a "very satisfactory" response for both the economic and social impacts of the programs.
- 3) A moderate positive relationship was observed between the level of program output and the economic impact of the programs of the community and extension services of the institution.
- 4) There was also a moderate positive relationship between the level of program output and the social impact of the programs of the community and extension services of the institution.

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