



IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT VOLUNTEERS ON THE COMMUNITY EXTENSION SERVICES OF THE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The University of Cebu established a community extension office where employees, instructors, and students could pool their knowledge and resources and participate in a social involvement program. Initiated by the Basic Education Department of the University of Cebu's Community Awareness Relations and Extension Services (CARES) is the Greening Program, where students will care for ornamental plants, grow them, and give them to the neighborhood for upkeep and development. The idea of this initiative is to encourage individuals to cultivate and establish plants that can be utilized for a variety of things. This study is a descriptive, qualitative research design that was conducted on Junior High School students who participated and volunteered in the different activities offered by the department to the partner community. The survey was done through google forms to identify the impact in relation to knowledge, skills and development, and values and attitude upon participating in the community extension programs offered by the Junior High School Department. The result showed that student volunteers are relatively confident that they have gained knowledge and developed their skills with their participation in various community extension services of the university. Through community extension services, student volunteers could develop positive attitudes toward others and uphold moral principles in life.

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Introduction

A person can participate in a community extension program to learn in a different method (Rubio et al., 2016). It teaches how to apply the information rather than just explaining what is in the book. (Chua et al., 2014). Additionally, each person's interpretation of the "Community Extension Program" differs. It involves showing compassion and kindness to others or lending a hand to those who are less fortunate (Strauss et al., 2016).

Some students need help to collaborate with others and express their views. The Community Extension Program aids in developing a person's underlying personality, such as their capacity for leadership, public speaking, and confidence (Denhardt et al., 2018).

Some community service projects have an environmental component (Porter et al., 2015; Mendoza et al., 2013). Typically, these programs involve planting. Along with the initiatives to reduce, reuse, and recycle, cleaning up after ourselves is a component of environmental programs (B. Valenzuela et al., 2020; Le et al., 2014). Helping individuals in need is a significant component of community services (Wakita et al., 2022) and environmental initiatives. It includes charitable giving and feeding initiatives (Gatan et al., 2021; Rosen, 2016).

The University of Cebu established a community extension office where employees, instructors, and students could pool their knowledge and resources and participate in a social involvement program. For community extension efforts, this office served as the institutional home for all the various colleges. The goal of helping others is to raise not only the living standards of the poor but also the character and values of the students and staff who take part in this admirable endeavor. One way to accomplish this goal is to develop a community with a greater need for assistance from various organizations, such as academic institutions (Laguador & Chaves, 2013).

Initiated by the University of Cebu's Community Awareness Relations and Extension Services (CARES) office, the Greening Program asks the students to bring various plants, particularly ornamental ones. They will care for it, grow it, and then give it to the neighborhood for upkeep and development. The idea of this initiative is to encourage individuals to cultivate and establish plants that can be utilized for a variety of things. The initiative shows how the university has heeded the call for everyone to work together to protect the environment by planting plants.

In connection with this, the University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue Campus's community awareness, relations, and extension program established the flagship greening program while adhering to the organization's principles and being directed by its vision, mission, goals, and objectives. It has also served as the basis for community service in the partner community.

This study's primary goal is determining the impact in relation to knowledge, skills and development, and values and attitude upon participating in the community extension programs offered by the Junior High School Department. Also, to propose a recommendation based on the result of the study.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive, quantitative research design that was conducted on Junior High School students who participated and volunteered in the different activities offered by the department to the partner community.

There are a total of two hundred twenty-four (224) respondents in this study. Respondents came from various year levels in junior high school. The survey was done through google forms to identify the impact concerning knowledge, skills, development, values, and attitude upon participating in the community extension programs offered by the Junior High School Department at the University of Cebu- Lapu Lapu and Mandaue Campus. Thus, this is a convenience sampling in which the google form was cascaded by sending a google form link through Facebook messenger and E-mail.

The data was collected only based on the number of informants' responses. After this, the researcher collated and analyzed the data collected from the google form. Ethical considerations are an utmost priority in the duration of this study; thus, the identity of the informants was considered confidential. Ensuring data privacy and confidentiality is another consideration as part of the ethical standard, ensuring that all data collected are exclusively for the purposes of this study only.

Discussions and Findings

Table 1 reflects the profile of the respondents regarding their age, gender, and community extension activities they joined. Regarding age, respondents ranging from 13-15 got a percentage of 71.90 or 161 students, while respondents aged 12 years old and below have a percentage of 22.30, with some 50 respondents. Regarding gender, most respondents are female, with a percentage of 50.90 or 114 students, while male respondents got 44.60 or 100 students. The 4.50 percent or ten respondents are from the LGBTQ group.

The Community Projects and Activities joined by the respondents have been assessed to get the highest ranking, "Greening Program (Planting fruit/vegetable)," with 136 respondents, or 60.70 percent. Second is the Coastal Clean up, which got a percentage of 31.70 percent and a frequency of 71. Then next is the "Breakfast Club," which is 39 in frequency and 17.40 in percentage.

"Greening Program (Planting fruit/vegetable)" got the highest ranking because this activity is the priority project for Junior High students to address environmental issues and concerns. This project aims to plant as many fruit trees as possible to help mitigate global warming. Moreover, this project will also provide income opportunities to the community by selling the harvested fruits or the fruit tree itself.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile

	Profile Variables	f	%
Age	12 years old below	50	22.30
	13 – 15 years old	161	71.90
	16 – 18 years old	13	5.8

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Gender	Total	224	100
	Male	100	44.60
	Female	114	50.90
	LGBTQ	10	4.50
*Community Extension Projects and Activities Joined	Total	224	100
	Greening Program (Planting fruit/vegetable)	136	60.70
	Coastal Clean up	71	31.70
	Breakfast Club	39	17.40
	Total	224	100

**Multiple Responses*

Table 2 shows the overall assessment of the respondents on the impact of community extension activities on junior high student volunteers in terms of knowledge was rated as Fairly Confident with a composite mean of 3.24. The items enumerated, "I comprehend that the true purpose of participating in community development initiatives is to address issues related to the environment, spirituality, education, livelihood, and peace and order," ranked the highest weighted mean score of 3.42, rated as Fairly Confident. However, "I fully understand the community's needs" placed second with a weighted mean score of 3.36, which is also classified as Fairly Confident. It was followed by "I discover the genuine significance and benefit of volunteering" and "Enhances managerial knowledge and skills," with a weighted mean score of 3.56 and classified as Moderately Agree.

The findings imply that junior high students have fully understood the true meaning of volunteerism and that they also learned new knowledge about the other side of life in the community, particularly the life of marginalized groups. Moreover, these findings also indicate that junior high students are highly aware of the community's needs and how their role significantly impacts the community. Finally, these findings suggest that junior high students, in terms of knowledge, have benefited from participating in various community extension services of the university.

According to the study by Rose (2020), students who engaged in volunteer work as a form of genuine and reciprocal learning concentrated on the components of the experience that would benefit their future careers and broaden their knowledge in study-related interests.

Volunteering is advantageous since it allows students to show off their knowledge while learning by doing and from others (Bauer, 2017; Mesurado et al., 2016).

Table 2. Impact of Community Extension Activities to Junior High students as to Knowledge

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
• I have a deeper understanding of what community extension really means.	3.14	FC	9
• I fully understand of the community's needs.	3.36	FC	2
• I discover the genuine significance and	3.30	FC	3

benefit of volunteering.

• I gained knowledge of the various tactics for enhancing communal life.	3.25	FC	4
• I comprehend that the true purpose of participating in community development initiatives is to address issues related to the environment, spirituality, education, livelihood, and peace and order.	3.42	FC	1
• I can suggest and help make better community extension projects a reality.	3.17	FC	8
• I also learn additional knowledge in the new enterprises.	3.22	FC	6
• I now fully comprehend the information that must be shared with the beneficiaries.	3.18	FC	7
• I can comprehend solid work ethics.	3.12	FC	10
• I am increasingly conscious of service providers' and beneficiaries' growing empowerment and cooperation.	3.23	FC	5
Composite Mean	3.24	FC	

*Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very Confident; 2.50 – 3.49 = Fairly Confident;
1.50 – 2.49 = Fairly Unconfident; 1.00 – 1.49 = Very Unconfident*

Table 3 shows the impact of community extension activities on junior high student volunteers in terms of skills development was rated as Frequent with a composite mean of 3.20. The items "Develop practical skills shared among beneficiaries" and "I improve my communication skills used in dealing with beneficiaries and co-service providers," with a weighted mean of 3.30 or classified as the highest, are verbally interpreted as Frequent. However, an indicator saying "I develop the skills in reaching out to the needy" is classified as second with a weighted mean of 3.29 and is verbally interpreted as Frequent. The third item, "I am able to develop teamwork among beneficiaries and other service provider" with a weighted mean of 3.26 and is verbally interpreted as Frequently.

The results positively impact the students' skills development because their involvement in the various community extension activities enables them to develop their practical skills. Moreover, it also indicates that junior high students exposed to the community are more likely to develop their communication and leadership skills when communicating with the beneficiaries and co-volunteers. Finally, this study's findings imply that one must exercise the skills through community service to develop their maximum potential.

Students can advance academically through volunteering (Cuyugan et al., 2017). Students learn practical skills and put crucial virtues like leadership, problem-solving, and time management into practice through community service (Toquero, 2021; Llenares & Deocar, 2015). Students can

apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-world situations through volunteering (Singh, 2017; Marttinen et al., 2020). With the extra goal of enhancing the lives of others, service-learning activities can provide the same chances for developing skills as student internships (Fernandez & Shaw, 2015).

While students were gaining new knowledge and developing their practical skills through volunteer work, they also enhanced their learning possibilities through interaction with other volunteers (Yu et al., 2021; Cleofas, 2021).

Table 3. Impact of Community Extension Activities to Junior High students as to skills development

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
• I am able to develop teamwork among beneficiaries and other service provider.	3.26	F	3
• I develop the skills in reaching out to the needy.	3.29	F	2
• I engage in participatory approaches to ensure Effective Community participation.	3.10	F	7
• Develop practical skills shared among beneficiaries.	3.30	F	1
• I practice new skills different from my field of specialization/expertise.	3.25	F	4
• I improve my communication skills used in dealing with beneficiaries and co-service providers.	3.30	F	1
• I develop quick decision-making and we judgment in product and program implementation.	3.16	F	5
• I acquire good networking / linking skills.	3.05	F	
• I also practice leadership skills as in communication critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, etc.	3.14	F	6
• I am able to join expanded connection among people groups and organization	3.10	F	7
Average Weighted Mean	3.20	F	

*Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Always; 2.50 – 3.49 = Frequently;
1.50 – 2.49 = Seldom; 1.00 – 1.49 = Never*

Table 4 shows the impact of community extension activities on junior high student volunteers in terms of values and attitudes were rated as Frequently with a composite mean of 3.29.

The item "I develop a positive attitude towards helping others" with a weighted mean of 3.56 or classified as the highest and is verbally interpreted as Always.

However, an indicator saying "I uphold moral principles like kindness, generosity, patience, respect, tolerance, and cooperation" is classified as second with a weighted mean of 3.50 and is verbally interpreted as Always. The third item, "I understand better real-life situations" and "I learn more about myself and how to live a long life by helping others, especially those in need," with a weighted mean of 3.48 and is verbally interpreted as Frequently.

These findings imply that junior high students' involvement in various community extension services has driven strong values formation and a positive attitude. A positive attitude is important in the success of a student's life, and community extension services will aid in the development of a more positive outlook in life. Moreover, the findings also indicate that student participation in community extension services has allowed them to uphold moral principles when dealing with different people, especially the marginalized group of society.

The community outreach programs frequently affected the students' attitudes and values (Malata-Silva, 2017; Zahra & McGehee, 2013). Students will be able to comprehend the community's real-life circumstances through community engagement, which will eventually help them build moral standards for a living (Gemar, 2022; Chao & Mantero, 2014).

Volunteering in the community emphasizes the intensification of civic consciousness-related values and principles, particularly those that improve individuals' intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social well-being (Clifford, 2022; Naughton & Santos, 2016).

Table 4. Impact of Community Extension Activities to Junior High students as to values and attitude.

Indicators	WM	Interpretation	Rank
• I develop positive attitude towards helping others.	3.56	A	1
• I am able to internalize more spirit of Volunteerism.	3.19	F	9
• I uphold moral principles like kindness, generosity, patience, respect, tolerance, and cooperation.	3.50	A	2
• I am more conscious of issues related to business, religion, education, and law and order that can aid the community.	3.26	F	8
• The significance of perseverance and hard work has become clearer to me.	3.40	F	4
• I am able to apply/ realize UC Core Values, ICARE (Innovation, Camaraderie, Alignment, Respect, Excellence) while doing this community extension services.	3.33	F	7

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• I take on more responsibility for looking out for others and sharing communal resources.	3.36	F	6
• I understand better real-life situations.	3.48	F	3
• I value the opportunity to collaborate with other volunteers to achieve a common objective.	3.38		5
• I learn more about myself and how to live a long life by helping others, especially those in need	3.48	F	3
Average Weighted Mean	3.39	MA	

*Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Always; 2.50 – 3.49 = Frequently;
1.50 – 2.49 = Seldom; 1.00 – 1.49 = Never*

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following are the conclusions of the study.

- Most student volunteers involved in various community extension activities were 13 to 15 years old and female.
- Most student volunteers were involved voluntarily in " Greening Program (Planting fruit/vegetables)
- The result showed that junior high student volunteers are fairly confident that they have gained knowledge and developed their skills with their participation in various community extension services of the university.
- Through community extension services, student volunteers could develop positive attitudes toward others and uphold moral principles in life.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following are recommended:

- Develop a culture of volunteering among students by encouraging them to participate more actively in all activities.
- Reiterate to students the importance of participation and the possible impacts on their knowledge and capacity to become leaders in the business.
- Provides comprehensive community outreach services by incorporating philosophical and value change into all university-sponsored community outreach programs.

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