

Bringing Education to the Communities: Its Conceptualization, Implementation & Evaluation

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Abstract

Schools create progressive communities through outreach programs. Jose Rizal University Graduate School students under Dr. Maria Renita F. Fabic's Advanced Research Statistics and Problem Solving and Decision Making classes, conducted three community outreach projects among the Senior High School students of Culiati High School, Alternative Learning System students of Addition Hills Integrated School and prisoners of the Tagaytay City Jail with the theme "Bringing Education to the Communities" on March and April 2019. The graduate students made this study from planning to implementation to evaluation. In the evaluation, the study determined to know the following: 1) knowledge of the respondents toward JRU outreach projects 2) satisfaction rating on the projects 3) feedbacks about these projects and 4) proposed interventions on future projects. Findings showed that the respondents were not able to identify their role as beneficiaries in the program. Respondents assessed the projects with a weighted mean of 3.54 interpreted as high assessment level with regard to venue, topic, speaker and materials used. Females assessed differently the projects than compared to males. When grouped according to age group, venue, and speaker, assessment varies significantly. Respondents' comments emphasized the importance of the Research lecture to their studies. Recommended intervention methods are the modification of the training evaluation questionnaire for easy accomplishment by the respondents and youth camp for the students and listening brigade for the prisoners.

Keywords: Community development, Outreach projects, Assessment.

Background of The Study

Graduate school students are expected to learn, find ways and means and share their knowledge to solve society's problems. They are expected agents of change to transform communities. They are expected to share and apply what they have learned in school to effect positive change directly in their respective communities or institutions that may indirectly effect change to identified communities. In line with this expectation, Jose Rizal University (JRU) envisioned "to produce graduates of social importance". It is in this context that the students of Graduate School Division of JRU are involved in community outreach programs. In particular, the students enrolled in Advanced Research Statistics and Problem Solving and Decision Making of the Education Graduate Studies Area for the third trimester 2018-2019 planned and implemented three community outreach projects with the theme "Bringing Education to the Communities".

JRU is not the only school doing interventions on community development as revealed by related literature and studies. There are other persons (individuals or in groups), schools and other agencies are into any aspects of community development (advocacy, organizing, empowerment, research, and the like as revealed by related literature and studies. As explained by Türkahraman (cited by Nidea et al., 2018), community development is human development, He said that the pattern of human qualifications was attributed firmly in action plans and programs of developed and developing countries in the world. Furthermore, he said that from a sociological perspective, it is assumed that there is a great relationship between educational policies and social expectations and ideals. Perkins, et al. (cited in Witt & Caldwell, 2018, p. 173) said that the youth were "resources to be nourished and engaged in community life". This is the reason why there should be community youth development that provide youth critical elements needed for successful development and engagement in the community" (p. 186). However, the study of De Leon, et al. (2016) found out that Canadian youth cannot identify their role

in the community. They felt excluded from society. The study recommended that there should be more intervention programs for the street youth. On the other hand, it unveiled that prisoners need access to the same health services given to those in the outside community (Brown et al., 2012, p. 509). It was the World Health Organization (2007) that described the living conditions of prisoners as unhealthy. “Overcrowding, violence, lack of light, fresh air and clean water, poor food and infection-spreading activities such as tattooing are common. Rates of infection with tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis are much higher than in the general population” (p.17).

As an institution that cares for the needy communities, JRU developed a model called the Sustainable Integrated Community Advancement Program (SICAP). According to Agus (2016), the SICAP components are Literacy, Health and Sanitation, Environment, Good Governance, and Livelihood. She further said that the core goals developed by JRU Community Development Office (CDO) (Agus, 2016) were Engagement, Empowerment and Enrichment. Engagement was defined as “it pursues all stakeholders to get involved and reach out for others” (p. 69) while Empowerment was meant as “all participants may contribute to the success of the project” (p. 69). Enrichment was referred to “all collaborative efforts will result to expansion and there will be a sharing of expertise and experiences” (p. 69); and Sustainability was mentioned as “programs that the community and stakeholders are capable of maintaining” (p. 69). This model is shown below.

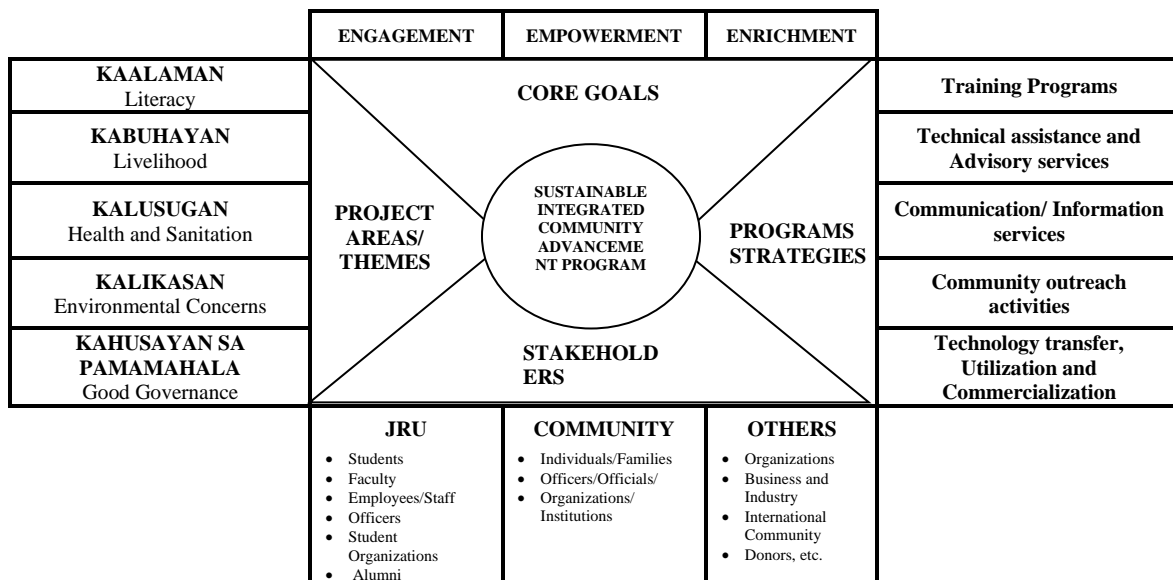


Figure 1: JRU’s SICAP Framework.

This framework is presently used in all the barangays in which JRU’s community outreach program is being implemented. Consequently, within the JRU’s SICAP Framework, graduate students under the tutelage of Dr. Maria Renita F. Fabic conducted a community outreach project study with the following paradigm.

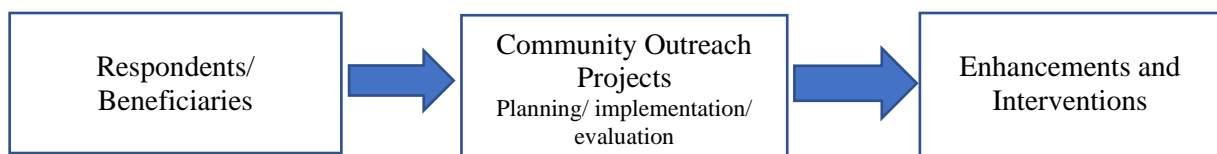


Figure 2: Input-Process- Output of Community Outreach Projects

Figure 2 shows that the needs of the stakeholders should be appropriately known by survey, interviews or observation to be able to formulate outreach projects along the JRU CDO SICAP Framework. From planning, implementation and evaluation of the said projects, it is expected that enhancement or intervention projects or activities will be recommended to enrich or improve future community outreach projects of the graduate school division.

Hence, the main objective of the outreach project study was to plan and implement community outreach projects that may bring and impart knowledge they learned in the classroom to the identified communities, namely: Senior High School Students of Culiat High School in Quezon City, and students of Alternative Learning System (ALS) in Addition Hills Integrated School (AHIS) in Mandaluyong City. Furthermore, it also aimed to provide personal hygiene kits to prison inmates of Tagaytay City Jail.

Specifically, the community outreach project study answered the following questions:

1. What community outreach projects be implemented by the graduate students based on the needs of the respondents?
2. How do the respondents assess the projects as to venue, topic, speaker, and materials used?
3. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the project when the respondents are grouped according to profile variables?
4. What comments/ suggestions the respondents give in the improvement of similar projects in the future?
5. What interventions can be proposed toward relevant and significant community outreach programs?

Methodology

The study used mixed mode: qualitative and quantitative method. For qualitative method, observation and unstructured interviews were conducted. For quantitative method, Training/Seminar Evaluation questionnaire developed by the JRU CDO was used. The subject-respondents of the study were selected purposively with the following criterion: they were participants during the conduct of the respective projects. They were the Senior High School students of Culiat High School and ALS students of Addition Hills Integrated School (AHIS), totaling 154. The prison inmates in the Tagaytay City Jail were not asked to answer questionnaires due to security reasons but they were interviewed to solicit comments and suggestions.

A 5-point Likert scale was used where weighted mean was computed to get the overall picture of the evaluation. Statistical tools like t-test and ANOVA were computed using SPSS for the analysis and interpretation of data.

Results and Discussion

Action Plan: Upon Dr. Fabic’s directive, her two classes used the steps on problem solving and decision making in determining the appropriate outreach projects to identified participants. In the context of the SICAP framework, this community outreach project of the graduate students used Engagement as the core goals with Literacy as the project area since it focused on sharing the significance of research to the senior high students of Culiat High School and ALS students of Addition Hills Integrated School. Moreover, another project area was on Health and Sanitation in engaging the Tagaytay City Jail inmates.

The following table shows the plan in schema format.

Table 1: Plan of Action of the the Community Outreach Projects.

Activities	Timeline	Venue	Resources	Expected Outcome
Two-hour Seminar-Workshop: Writing Research Paper	March 14, 2019	Culiat High School, QC	Human: Graduate Students Material: -Meals for the participants -Transportation -Hygiene Kits -Tarpaulin -Projector -Evaluation Tool -Camera for Documentation -Certificates of Recognition	80% of the attendees were able to realize the importance of doing research
	March 23, 2019	Addition Hills Integrated School, Mandaluyong City		
Distribution of Personal Hygiene Kits	April 13, 2019	Tagaytay City Jail		100% of the prison inmates got personal hygiene kits

Mr. Jonathan Chiong, one of the ten (10) students who works with the JRU CDO, liaised with his contacts in schools and prisons. On March 14, Culiat High School’s Senior High School students were

the first batch of respondents whom Mr. Peilong Li lectured about Research. On March 23, the ALS students were the second batch of respondents whom Mrs. Stella May Cabeliza lectured on the uses of Research in the courses that they are taking up, such as Animation, Electrical Installation and Maintenance, Technical Drafting and Computer System Servicing. On April 13, the graduate students visited Tagaytay City Jail and gave away 210 boxes with 288 personal hygiene kits in each box to more than 600 male inmates and more than 100 female inmates. This was the Health and Sanitation component of the SICAP.

Profile of the Respondents: With regard to age, 63% of the respondents were aged 17-19, followed by 23% aged 14-16; then 7% aged 20-22 and 7% aged 23 years old and above. As regards to gender, there were 57% Females and 43% Males. When asked about their participation in the outreach project, 63% did not have any answer; 30 % said that they were beneficiaries of the program; 3% said they were government officials and another 3% specified other answers. Most of the students were indifferent to filling in the questionnaire. Many questions were left blank and they did not want to answer the questions. But on the plus side, at least 30% of the respondents identified themselves as beneficiaries of the projects. It was noted that the findings of 63% who did not give any answer reiterated the findings of Davidson, et al. (1999)'s study. They found out that Portland State University's faculty members resisted the feedback form given to the faculty for pre- and post-assessment of their university's community outreach programs with the following reason:

because the assessment of their project results did not fairly represent the complexity and idiosyncrasy of their capstones". (p. 65).

Moreover, Green & Skumatz (2000) found out that evaluating education especially on energy was difficult. They said that energy education can be measured but evaluation methods were expensive. They further said that control groups were difficult to establish.

When asked if the respondents have ever joined other projects of JRU, 71% said they have not joined any project, while 24% did not answer. Only 4% said that they have joined previous projects of JRU, but they did not specify which project. The 71% who did not join any other JRU community outreach projects when asked through interviews as to their reasons, they were unanimous in mentioning time constraints due to work and family activities hindering them to attend such projects. However, they did not miss participating in the preparation as well as in the financial support to the projects.

Project Assessment Level: The overall weighted mean score of 3.54 shows that the respondents rated the projects as high assessment level. This was supported by their assessment on venue, topic, speaker and materials. The respondents rated the venue as high assessment level (HAL) with an overall weighted mean of 3.49. This was supported by the following statements made by the respondents: "Please continue conducting these kinds of activities because these are beneficial to students". Furthermore, the respondents evaluated the topic as high assessment level (HAL) with a weighted mean of 3.65. They commented that "the topic (research) was timely for us because we are working on our research study thus making it beneficial to us". Other respondents said, "The topic and activities were well crafted" and "helpful for our subject Practical Research 1 and 2". Additionally, the respondents assessed the speakers as high assessment level (HAL) with an overall weighted mean of 3.49. They gave feedback about "being well versed about the topic and being professional". Lastly, the respondents evaluated the materials used, such as sound system, technological equipment like multimedia projector and chairs, as high assessment level with a weighted mean of 3.50. They gave feedback that "the seminar was well coordinated" and "please continue conducting these kinds of seminar". This assessment on community outreach projects of students can be compared to the assessment on the community outreach program implemented by student leaders of Iowa State University (Erickson (2010). Below is a qualitative feedback from the beneficiary:

The most significant community impact was the beautification, the computer modeling, the enthusiasm of the students, those three things. And maybe I should reverse that a little. When you get a lot of young people –young leaders-- that really helps a community think about the future rather than about the past. And I think that's one of the key issues, to get people to think about the future. (p. 87).

Differences in the Assessments. There is a significant difference in the assessments when the respondents were grouped according gender. The p-value of 0.040 on the computed t-value of 2.066 as shown in Table 2 was less than the 0.05 level of significance. This means that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was to be rejected. Hence, the difference in the assessments of the respondents when grouped according to gender is significant. This implies that gender is a significant factor in determining the differences in their assessment. Based on the interviews conducted to selected respondents, the females were more satisfied especially when they said: “please continue conducting this activity or seminar because it is beneficial to the students”.

Table 2: Assessment by Gender

Gender		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Assessment Level	Equal variances assumed	3.605	0.060	2.066	151	0.040	0.4447	0.2152	0.0195	0.8698
	Equal variances not assumed			2.033	130.658	0.044	0.4447	0.2187	0.0119	0.8774

The computed F-value on the finding the significance in the difference on the assessment as shown in Table 3 was 6.304 with a p-value of 0.00. It was less than the level of significance of 0.05 level. It means that the hypothesis of no significant difference in the assessment when the respondents were grouped according to age, was rejected. Hence, the difference in the assessment of the respondents when grouped by age is significant. This implies that age is a significant factor in determining the difference in their assessment. This confirms the comments given by the younger participants that they were more satisfied since they can see the significance of the activity/seminar to their subjects like research to mention one of them.

Table 3: Assessment by Age

AGE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	30.224	3	10.075	6.304	0.000
Within Groups	239.730	150	1.598		
Total	269.954	153			

As to assessment by venue (school), the p-value for the computed t-value of -26.138 as presented in Table 4 was 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. This means that the hypothesis of no significant difference should be rejected. Hence, the assessment of the respondents when grouped according to school is significant. This implies that the type of school of the respondents is a significant factor in determining the difference of their assessment. This finding reiterates the observation on ALS students. They less likely to be satisfied on the project since they were more of the technical.

Table 4: Assessment by School

School		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Assessment Level	Equal variances assumed	1.249	0.265	-26.138	152	0.000	-2.7309	0.1045	-2.9373	-2.5245
	Equal variances not assumed			-29.154	85.215	0.000	-2.7309	0.0937	-2.9171	-2.5446

Respondents' Comments About the Projects: The respondents have varying responses about the project. Culiati High School students appreciated the project because they have gained additional knowledge in Research since they are “working on a research study”. They said that they “learned how to conduct Research”. The project was also perceived as “learning how to be productive citizens in the

community”. In contrast, only two respondents from the older age group who study in AHIS, said that they have learned to become more observant and they thought that this is excellent teaching for those who will continue their studies in college (“*Magandang pagtuturo sa mga magkokolehiyo*”).

Proposed Interventions Toward Relevant and Significant Community Outreach Projects: The following are being proposed based on the recommendations of the respondents:

1. To organize Youth Camp during summer months like April and May to have longer engagement learning experiences that cater to their academic/personal needs.
2. To formulate evaluation questionnaire using the language nearest to their heart: Filipino
3. To organize a Listening Brigade wherein graduate school students just to listen to the problems of the prisoners, and to give a basic counselling and some suggestions.

Conclusion

To conclude, the community projects with the theme: Bringing Education to the Communities got High Assessment Level. The differences in the assessments were significant when they were grouped according to age, gender and location. The respondents appreciated the Research lessons based on the common comments about the outreach programs. Recommendations include the revision of the training/seminar evaluation questionnaire for easy accomplishment. More intervention programs among the youth and prisoners should be conducted in the future.

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