

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2023, Vol. 4, No. 7, 2636 – 2646

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.07.39>

Research Article

The Perceived Impact of the LGU-Funded Extension Programs in Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College – Santiago Campus

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Article history:

Submission May 2023

Revised July 2023

Accepted July 2023

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ABSTRACT

Empowering people through the implementation of sustainable community development programs is one of the prime concerns of Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Through responsive extension programs and services of HEIs and strong partnerships with LGUs, the people are empowered, socioeconomic status is uplifted and the cultural heritage is conserved. This study aimed to assess the impact of the LGU-Funded extension programs of a State Higher Institution in the Philippines. This descriptive research study used a questionnaire and interview with 180 beneficiaries and utilized mean and rank. The results revealed that extension program implementers are highly capable in terms of leadership, personnel, and financial capability. The participation of LGUs and community people is high. In addition, the level of program outputs of the extension services is satisfactory and the impact of the extension programs is rated satisfactory. Hence, the partnership between the LGU and the academe and funding of the extension programs and activities by LGUs shall be sustained. The adoption and implementation of the extension improvement plan is proposed.

Keywords: *Extension Programs, Higher Education, Impact, Philippines*

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play a vital role in developing communities, especially the underserved and depressed. They serve as prime movers of inclusive growth and empower communities and other vulnerable sectors. This is done through research- and rights-based extension Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs) in collaboration with government and non-government agencies, and private

partners towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals.

In both quantity and quality, the current global challenges of ensuring food availability and access require deliberate and far-reaching solutions. Historically, the product of researchers and extension services has been a strong driving force for meeting food supply around the world.

How to cite:

Dela Cruz, J. L., Estrañero, A. G., & Rante, J. A. (2023). The Perceived Impact of the LGU-Funded Extension Programs in Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College – Santiago Campus. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 4(7), 2636 – 2646. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.04.07.39

Republic Act 7722, otherwise known as the Commission on Higher Education, mandates institutions of higher learning like State Colleges and Universities to respond to the call for societal transformation. The aim is to serve the poorest of the poor, the less privileged, the deprived, and the oppressed.

The Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College is one of the chartered higher education institutions in the country and is mandated to perform and provide the best services and education in the region in terms of instruction, research, extension, and production as it is envisioned as an institution for total human development. In addition, it is directed to engage its third critical mission – extension. The extension means providing the necessary services in the community that would uplift the peoples' lives but not limited to training, information drives, and capability enhancement.

Education, as a societal service, extends its experience to individuals, groups, and communities. As a result, universities offer what is known as extension services or reaching programs. Universities extend their experiences; new knowledge generates and transfers new technologies as a result of their research.

The Extension Unit has been offering and implementing different services in the different barangays of Santiago. Since its conversion into a state college, the LGU has been very supportive in the provision of assistance to the College, especially in the provision of financial assistance in the implementation of community-based extension activities. Several extension activities like food processing, dressmaking, house wiring, consumer electronics, driving, automotive servicing, and others have been implemented by the academe with the assistance of the LGU to cater to the needs of the people in the community.

For more than two decades, hundreds of residents have been served, trained, and capacitated. However, no study has been conducted to assess the extent to which these extension activities have improved the lives of the people and the community as a whole.

Since its establishment in 1998, the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College established a strong partnership with the Local Government Units, especially in the implementation of

extension activities. The LGU provides funding and assistance to the institution for the implementation of community-based extension activities.

The strong collaboration of the academe and the Local Government Unit would be strengthened when the programs, projects, and activities funded by the latter are implemented well. The result of this study would serve as the basis for decision-making and further action to improve the provision of services to the people and the community. Further, it will serve as the basis to adjust to the needs of the community people and improve them if found out to be poor and need improvement.

With these premises, this study is conceived.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The present study is anchored on the theory of change of Weiss (1995). This theory describes a set of assumptions that explain the mini-steps that lead to the long-term goal and the connections between program activities and outcomes that occur each step of the way. This explains that when activities are undertaken by an intervention, it will contribute to a chain of results. This leads to the intended or observed impacts.

Higher education institutions conduct extension activities as interventions to educate the community and emphasize community services. Extension activities are geared towards the development and improvement of communities. The academe implements extension activities to strengthen community relations and connections.

SeEVERS, Graham, Gamon, and Conklin (1997) in Arnold's (2015) study presented a model highlighting the critical connections between the program plan, design, implementation, and evaluation. The model presents that extension programs are implemented based on the needs of the community and the interest of the local extension professional.

Several factors affect the implementation of extension programs. Durlak and Dupre (2008) emphasized that organizational characteristics and community characteristics influenced the quality of program implementation. However, Little et al (2013) have shown that program

characteristics contribute to implementation. Facilitator characteristics according to Berkel et al (2011) affect the implementation of the extension programs.

The quality of program outcomes is the ultimate goal of extension activities in the community. Sloboda et al. (2014) postulated that the quality of program outcomes is influenced and associated with how extension activities are effectively implemented.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the perceived impact of the LGU-Funded Extension Programs of the Institute of Technology.

Specifically, it sought to determine the implementer's administrative capability of the LGU-Funded Extension programs; the extent of participation of the development partners in the extension programs; the level of program outputs in the implementation of the extension programs; and the degree of impact of the extension programs.

Review of Related Studies

Studies related to the research work were the researcher's guidepost in undertaking this investigation, a program that addresses the needs identified by the people themselves tends to be more effective in eliciting the people's participation. Any program must recognize the value of people's participation starting from the conceptualization phase. This is done by undertaking a community study that would explore the actual concerns of the people. These, in turn, must be translated into a workable program or project responsive to the needs or concerns.

Studies have been conducted as a preliminary assessment of the extension activities of the College. Dela Cruz (2022) conducted a study on the extension programs and activities of the College. The study revealed that the extension programs are well-implemented and the beneficiaries are well-involved. Problems were encountered in the implementation of the extension programs and services. Gannapao (2020) on the other hand revealed a very poor participation in the implementation of Extension Programs in one state college in the Cordillera Administrative Region. Rutto (2016) in

addition found out that the majority of farmer-beneficiaries were not involved in the training program development. The study recommended the capability enhancement among extension personnel and facilitators and the conduct of a continuous need assessment for the delivery of timely training programs in the community.

Sermona, Talili, Enguito, and Salvador (2020) assessed the implementation of extension services in select universities and colleges in the Philippines. The study revealed that extension services were effectively delivered to a great extent.

In terms of the satisfaction of the extension activities conducted, Dumot (2016) surveyed the level of satisfaction of clientele in implementing extension programs and activities of one campus of a state college in the Philippines. Findings revealed that clienteles are satisfied. However, clientele suggested that a more sustainable program shall be implemented. In the study of Dusaran (2002), the extension satisfaction of the beneficiaries is at a moderate level. Improvement in the organizational capability of Local Government Units would be very crucial in improving the beneficiary's need satisfaction.

Quezada (2014) pointed out that Extension programs and projects of the University improved the quality of life of beneficiaries. To finance the capitalization of livelihood initiatives, the procurement of funds for extension projects is recommended. Figueroa (2017) stressed that the community extension program and services should be continued in as much as they greatly benefited communities and families.

From these studies, with their many shade and tone primarily about the implementation and satisfaction of beneficiaries in the extension services, the present study is shaped into its final form.

Methods

Research Design. The study utilized the descriptive research design. The descriptive method seeks "what is" of data and not "why it so" one can only be described what is prevailing and develop inferences but cannot explain the "why" of the dynamics of the variables. It

involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the present nature. The objective of the study is to describe the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of study and explore the cause of a particular phenomenon (Adanza, Bermudo, Rasonabe, 2009).

Population. The study was conducted in the twenty-four barangays of Santiago, Ilocos Sur with 180 respondents who participated in the different extension activities funded by the Local Government Unit.

Instrument and Procedure. A questionnaire was the primary instrument used in gathering the required data. It is adapted from the study of Tacbas et al (2010) and Salazar (2020) with slight modifications to fit with the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was personally

distributed and an interview was also conducted to validate and elicit more responses on the level of output and impact of the extension programs of the Institute.

Data Analysis. The mean was used to determine the level of administrative capability of the implementers, the level of involvement of the beneficiaries, and the level of program output of the extension programs. The ranking scale was used for the most and least responses of the beneficiaries.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 revealed the level of administrative capability of the extension implementers in terms of leadership capability.

Table 1. Level of Administrative Capability of the Implementers along with Leadership Capability

Leadership Capability	Mean	DR	Rank
1. ISPSC has a remarkable agenda along with the extension.	4.01	HE	3
2. The goals and objectives of the extension are clearly stated and understood.	3.99	HE	4
3. The Extension Office supervises the implementation of plans and programs.	3.88	HE	5
4. The Extension Office monitors and evaluates the implementation of the extension programs to the clientele.	4.05	HE	2
5. The Extension Office can implement its plans and programs.	4.10	HE	1
6. The Extension Office initiates the organization of the graduates into functional associations.	3.22	ME	6
7. The Extension Office helps graduates look for ways to secure seed capital for the associations.	3.10	C	7
OVERALL	3.76	High	

It can be gleaned from the table that there is a high administrative capability of extension implementers in terms of leadership capability as seen from the computed mean of 3.76. This implies that extension implementers have the capability to design and implement extension activities, conduct monitoring of activities conducted, achieve and perform their duties and responsibilities as contained in the memorandum of understanding, deliver quality services, and keep and update appropriate and auditable records.

Among the items cited, the item the extension office can implement its plans and programs obtained the highest mean of 4.10

described as highly evident. This indicates that extension administrators, implementers, and staff are capable of implementing extension activities as planned. They are capable of providing responsive sustainable solutions for social development through community partnerships.

It can be noted from the table that there is a high capability in the implementation of extension programs in terms of personnel capability. This is supported by the computed mean of 4.32 with a description of High. In general, the extensionists are equipped with the necessary competencies, skills, values and ideas required to implement extension activities. The academe

has trained personnel ready to implement extension activities in the community.

The item the extensionists possess the required educational attainment and training for the job obtained the highest mean of 4.55 described as Very Highly Evident. This result indicates that extension implementers and

trainers possess the necessary educational qualification. These implementers and trainers completed Master's degrees and NC II Certificates as required in the higher education institutions and Technical Education Skills and Development Authority.

Table 2. Level of Administrative Capability of the Implementers along with Personnel Capability

Personnel Capability	Mean	DR	Rank
1 The extensionists possess the required educational attainment and training for the job.	4.55	VHE	1
2. The extensionist establishes a good rapport with the clientele.	4.16	VE	6
3. The extensionists initiate new ideas for the development of the clientele.	4.21	VE	5
4. The extensionists have good facilitation skills.	4.30	VE	4
5. The extensionists meet their classes regularly.	4.32	VE	3
6. The extensionist monitor and evaluate their classes.	4.35	VE	2
OVERALL	4.32	High	

On the other hand, the extensionists develop a good rapport with the clientele and obtained the lowest mean of 4.16 described as Highly Evident. This means that extension implementers maintain a good relationship with people as manifested in their dealing with their clientele, trainees, and other beneficiaries.

Every employee, staff, and personnel of the institution embodies the core values of productivity, resiliency, accountability, ingenuity, and synergy.

Table 3 shows the level of administrative capability of the implementers in terms of financial capability.

Table 3. Level of Administrative Capability of the Implementers along with Financial Capability

Financial Capability	Mean	DR	Rank
1. The budget for the extension program is adequate.	3.59	VE	3
2. Training funds for the clientele are sufficient.	3.67	VE	2
3. The funds are appropriately utilized.	4.01	VE	1
OVERALL	3.76	High	

The overall mean of 3.76 shows that there is a high capability of the institute in terms of financial capability. This signifies the sufficiency of funding by the LGU in implementing extension programs. Among the items cited, it revealed that the item the funds are appropriately utilized obtained the highest mean of 4.01 described as Very Evident. This is an indication that there is proper utilization of funds allotted in extension programs.

On the other hand, the item, the budget for the extension program is adequate and obtained the lowest mean of 3.59 described as

Very Evident. This is an indication that LGU provides sufficient funds for the conduct of extension activities. This requires a continuous provision of funding to the different extension activities of the academe. It is the vision of the LGU to empower and improve the lives of the people and develop communities. Thus, LGU shall institutionalize the provision of funds and additional extension activities may be provided for more beneficiaries.

Table 4 shows the summary of the level of administrative capability of extension program implementers.

Table 4. Summary of the Level of Administrative Capability of the Extension Implementers

Indicators	Mean	DR	Rank
1. Leadership Capability	3.76	High	2.5
2. Personnel Capability	4.32	High	1
3. Financial Capability	3.76	High	2.5
Overall	3.95	High	

It can be noted that there is a high capability of the extension implementers as evidenced by the computed mean of 3.95. Among the indicators cited, personnel capability obtained the highest mean of 4.32 described as High. This implies that the Extension Office is manned by capable employees to man and implement

extension activities. They are capable of taking a proactive role in advancing sustainable development strategies and educating the public on emerging and pressing social concerns.

Table 5 presents the level of participation of the LGU in the implementation of the extension programs.

Table 5. Level of Participation of the LGU in the Implementation of the Extension Program

Indicators	Mean	DR	Rank
1. LGU enter into an agreement with ISPSC Extension Office.	4.30	VE	1
2. They help the extension office by providing manpower when needed to discharge extension services.	3.85	VE	3
3. They help the extension office by providing pertinent documents needed to discharge extension services.	4.05	VE	2
Overall	4.07	High	

It can be noted from the result that there is a high level of participation of the Local Government Unit in the implementation of extension programs. This is supported by the computed overall mean of 4.07. This suggests that there is a high commitment and participation of barangay and municipal officials in the implementation of the LGU-funded extension programs of the academe. This is a manifestation of an impressive partnership and collaboration of the LGU and the academe in transforming the lives of the communities through livelihood training, capability and enhancement, and other training programs.

Among the cited items, the item LGU enter into an agreement with ISPSC Extension Office obtained the highest mean of 4.30 described as Very Evident. This is an indication that the LGU and the academe enter into an agreement through a written formal understanding. The cooperative relationships between the two parties working together are well discussed in the MOU to guide the activities and responsibilities of both parties.

The result further shows the high participation of the LGU in the provision of necessary documents to discharge extension activities. This is supported by the computed mean of 4.05 described as Highly Evident. This implies that documents are readily available and can be provided when needed by one of the parties.

In addition, the results also revealed highly evident participation of the LGU in terms provision of manpower when needed to discharge extension activities. This is supported by the computed item mean of 3.85. This data manifests that the LGU provides the required manpower, especially in community-based extension activities. LGU require some of their employees, especially in the transport of the needed materials and the beneficiaries.

Local government units can promote economic and social development of the community by keeping them informed and involving them in the decision-making of activities affecting them (Bush, 2020).

Table 6 shows the level of participation of the community people in the implementation

of the extension program of the Institute of Technology.

Overall, there is moderate participation of the community people in the implementation of the extension programs are evidenced in the computed overall mean of 3.18. This finding suggests the need to strengthen the dissemination of information relevant to the implementation of activities to increase the

participation of community people. Among the items cited community people help in the dissemination of extension-related activities got the highest of 3.85 described as High. This indicates that community people are committed to the dissemination of information to the community whenever there are extension activities conducted.

Table 6. Level of Participation of the Community People in the Implementation of the Extension Program

Indicators	Mean	DR	Rank
1. Community people help in the dissemination of extension-related activities.	3.52	VE	1
2. Community people actively participate in seminars, programs, and activities conducted.	3.44	ME	2
3. Community people provide an amount or any materials for extension services.	2.59	ME	3
Overall	3.18	Moderate	

They help the institution in keeping the community informed and updated with activities implemented by the higher education institution. This leads to the smooth operation and implementation of the extension activities because of good communication and collaboration between implementing agency and LGU where the beneficiaries are situated.

According to Guiron et al (2019), positive changes are affected the community because of the continuing education and other related

extension programs that are implemented and help people with their decision-making skills. The College of the Scholastica (2016) stated that when activities are done in groups, critical changes and improvements are made in the communities and lives of people.

Table 7 provides a summary of the level of participation of the clientele and beneficiaries in the implementation of the extension programs of the academe.

Table 7. Summary of the Level of Participation of the Clientele and Beneficiaries in the Implementation of the Extension Program

Indicators	Mean	DR	Rank
1. LGU	4.07	High	1
2. Community People	3.18	Moderate	2
Overall	3.63	High	

It can be noted from the table that there is high participation of the clientele and beneficiaries of the extension programs. This is supported by the computed mean of 3.63. This data revealed that there is a satisfactory involvement of the officials of barangays and LGU and the community people in the implementation of the extension programs.

These results further revealed that they recognized and acknowledge their potent role in intensifying and empowering communities. Through LGU funding of extension activities, and helping the academe to identify the needs of the communities, the needs and concerns of the communities and the people are addressed.

The level of program outputs of the extension programs is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Level of Program Outputs of the Extension Programs

Outputs	Mean	DR	Rank
1. The skills learned from the extension program are functional.	3.78	HE	1
2. The skills learned from the extension program helped increase income.	3.21	ME	4
3. The skills learned from the extension program improved self-esteem.	3.45	ME	2
4. The skills learned from the extension activities were shared and improved the skills of others.	3.22	ME	3
Overall	3.42	Moderate	

As seen from the table, the output of the extension programs is moderate as supported by the computed mean of 3.42. As cited in the items, the item the skills learned from the extension program are functional and obtained the highest mean of Highly Evident with a computed mean of 3.78. This implies that the knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired by the beneficiaries in the extension programs are effective and functional. The skills they learned have helped them improve themselves and make them better citizens in the community.

However, the result further revealed that the skills they learned from the extension program helped increase income and was rated

moderately evident with a computed mean of 3.21. This indicates that the beneficiaries were not certain if the livelihood training conducted helped them to increase their monthly income and improved their living condition.

Olavides et al. (2019) pointed out that the beneficiaries of extension activities were undecided as to whether the training they attended has significantly effective in transforming the standards of their families. This finding contradicts the study of Salazar (2020) showing a satisfactory outcome of the extension programs in a state college in the Philippines.

Table 8 presents the degree of the social impact of the extension programs of the Institute of Technology.

Table 8. Degree of Social Impact of the Extension Programs

Social Impact	Mean	DR	Rank
1. Improves decision-making skills	4.15	VE	6
2. Boosts self-esteem and self-confidence	4.51	VHE	1
3. Establishes camaraderie	4.42	VE	2
4. Develops good relationship with others	4.33	VE	3
5. Develops volunteerism	4.24	VE	5
6. Helps me mingle with other people	4.30	VE	4
Overall	4.33	High	

It can be noted from the table that there is a high impact of the extension programs in terms of social impact as evidenced by the computed overall mean of 4.33. Among the items cited, boosts self-esteem and self-confidence obtained the highest mean of 4.51 described as Very Highly Evident. This is an indication that the involvement of the community in the extension programs enhanced their self-esteem and self-confidence. The extension program provides them with positive energy to act to achieve their personal and professional goals

and dreams. Hewitson (2015) pointed out that capacitating the community would help the community build and develop self-confidence.

On the other hand, the item improves decision-making skills and obtained the lowest mean of 4.15 described as Very Evident. This implies that the community's participation in extension programs of higher education institutions improves the decision-making skills of the beneficiaries.

Table 9 presents the degree of the economic impact of the extension program

Table 9. Degree of Economic Impact of the Extension Program

Economic Impact	Mean	DR	Rank
1. Become employed as a result of the skills learned.	2.98	ME	3.5
2. Augments family income as a result of employment	3.15	ME	1
3. Improves house as a result of the income generated from employment.	3.00	ME	2
4. Buys appliances as a result of the income generated from employment	2.98	ME	3.5
5. Gains properties as a result of the income generated from employment	2.15	SE	5
Overall	2.85	Moderate	

It can be noted from the table that the extension programs have a moderate impact as seen from the computed mean of 2.85. As cited in the items, augments family income as a result of employment obtained the highest computed mean of 3.15 described as moderately evident. This implies that the income derived from the livelihood activities as a result of the training in the extension programs does not significantly increase the income of the family.

On the other hand, the item gains properties as a result of the income generated from employment obtained the lowest mean of 2.15 described as slightly moderate. This means that they were not able to acquire additional properties as a result of the income they derived from their training in the extension activities.

The summary of the degree of impact of the extension programs is presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Summary of the Degree of Impact of the Extension Programs

Impact	Mean	DR	Rank
1. Social	4.33	High	1
2. Economic	2.85	Moderate	2
Overall	3.59	High	

It can be noted that there is a high impact of the extension programs in terms of social impact. This indicates that the extension activities contribute to the total well-being of the beneficiaries. It provides significant and positive changes that will help them address social issues and problems. On the other hand, the extension programs have a moderate impact as supported by the computed mean of 2.85. This means that the extension activities do not have a high contribution to the increase of the income of the family. This implies the need to strengthen the extension program and provide additional training programs that would help the beneficiaries turn the skills they learned into an income-generating project.

Conclusion

Based on the result presented, the implementers of the extension programs are highly

capable in terms of leadership, personnel, and financial capability. The LGU and the community highly participate in the implementation of the LGU-funded extension programs of the academe. The study further revealed a moderate impact of the extension programs on the lives of the communities in terms of economic and social impact.

Extension implementers shall undergo training on current trends and practices in adapting new Community Extension programs to suit the needs of the beneficiaries in the adopted communities. Good rapport among implementers and beneficiaries shall be maintained and the formation of functional associations or organizations shall be established to increase collaboration, innovation, and creativity among the members.

The LGU and higher education institutions shall monitor the needs of the people of the

community and can be addressed them properly and promptly. The LGU and the school shall design, craft, and implement a functional extension program package through the allotment of funds as initial capital for the beneficiaries to improve the impact of the extension program. Financial literacy program shall be included in the extension program to educate and increase awareness of the beneficiaries on the concept of money and on how they gain practical money knowledge.

Further studies may be conducted to determine the best extension program for the institution. This will serve as the basis for the institution in crafting the sustainability plan for the extension unit. Further impact assessment may be conducted and analysis of the data like correlation and regression may be done to look into the influence of the administrative capability on the output and impact of the extension programs.

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