



**LIVELIHOOD SKILLS PROGRAM: MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES,
BENEFICIARIES' INVOLVEMENT AND OUTCOMES**

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-evaluative research assessed The Livelihood Skills Program of Iloilo Science and Technology University- Miagao Campus designed for indigeneous people residing at a barangay in the Municipality of Guimbal, Iloilo. Twenty program implementers and 25 program beneficiares were given a research-made questionnaire to gather primary data. Secondary to gather primary from the files of University. Data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, and mean. Findings revealed that the objectives, structure, and services of the program were well defined. As a whole, management capability was "very high". Beneficiaries were "very highly involved" in the program. The programs had not much tangibles results among the beneficiaries mainly due to lack of financial support. However, beneficiaries' sense of well-being along the personal/spiritual and social dimension was "very positive" but along the economic dimensions, it was negative. Problems in program implementation were identified. Measures to address the problems were recommended.

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Keywords: *livelihood skills program, beneficiaries' involvement, management capabilities, outcomes*

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing recognition of the significance of the extension services provided by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). They function as an intermediary between the academic institution and the community. In recent times, there has been a notable surge in interest surrounding the assessment of the necessity of extension programs by policymakers, with the aim of gaining a deeper comprehension of the academic sector's involvement in the process of community development.

The demand for extension services has experienced significant growth in both the Philippines and other nations. Also, it has been shown that communities actively involve residents and institutions in creating sustainable principles and a shared vision for the future while using an integrated strategy to reach environmental, economic, and social objectives which tend to be more effective (Garcia, 2017).

The Community Extension Program is an educational initiative that provides individuals with the opportunity to engage in a unique learning experience. It is important to exhibit kindness and compassion towards others as well as extend assistance to those who are less fortunate.

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume V, Issue III

February 2024

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Collaborating within a group setting and effectively exchanging ideas can provide challenges for certain students. According to Rubio (2016), the design of this particular intervention is to facilitate personal and societal enhancement.

According to Montalbo (2016), the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997 in the Philippines stipulates that higher education institutions are required to engage in community extension initiatives.

The Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISAT U), Miagao Campus, has been engaging in community extension initiatives within specific areas. One of the communities under consideration is the indigenous people residing in Sitio Igtuba, Barangay Camanggahan, Guimbal, Iloilo. This initiative aims to equip people with contemporary knowledge and skills that are relevant to their present-day lifestyle. The acquisition of these talents is a significant possibility for individuals to enhance their revenue generation and improve their standard of living.

The Industrial Technology Program of the University has played a significant role in leading various extension initiatives, such as livelihood skills training programs, as part of its commitment to contribute to community development through outreach programs. However, for several years that ISAT University Miagao Campus has been delivering its Livelihood Skills Program, no formal assessment, evaluation, or report has been made to determine the effects of the program on the beneficiaries. In addition, no studies have been conducted on any aspect or area of the program that needs improvement for a much better delivery of the said program.

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Despite the fact that ISAT University Miagao Campus has been implementing its Livelihood Skills Program for a number of years, there has been a lack of rigorous assessment, evaluation, and report to ascertain the program's impact on the beneficiaries. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research undertaken on several facets and domains of the program that necessitate enhancements for a more effective implementation of the aforementioned program.

The study was done with the aim of addressing this information gap.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

The chapter presents the research design, research method, respondents of the study, data gathering instrument, research instrument, data analysis, and statistical tools used.

Research Method

The study used the survey method using a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent expert validation and reliability testing. To strengthen and validate the findings of the survey, a focus group discussion was also conducted.

For the statement of problem number one, secondary data was used through documentary analysis of the literature found in the files of ISAT University, including the working papers on the extension program, memorandum reports, and other relevant data. Secondary data is an excellent starting point for exploratory research or generating hypotheses. By examining

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existing data sets or literature, the researcher identified patterns, relationships, or gaps in knowledge, particularly on management components of the ISAT U Miagao Campus Livelihood Skills Program in terms of its objectives, structure, and services.

A Focus Group Discussion was used to enrich the data gathered through the questionnaires and related documents.

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-evaluative research approach to describe and analyze the Livelihood Skills Program of the ISAT-U Miagao Campus. This kind of study design, according to Paler-Calmorin (2010), thoroughly evaluates the value of a project or program.

Descriptive-evaluative research entails gathering information and testing presumptions or providing answers to questions that characterize the participants' existing conditions and their responses to study-relevant questions. It examines and reports the state of affairs in the neighborhood or industry.

The purpose of the study was to fully identify the management capabilities of ISAT U Miagao Campus in implementing its Livelihood Skills Program in terms of its objectives, structure, and services; describe the program's resource capabilities in terms of personnel, finances, and physical facilities; evaluate the program's tangible results and how they affect the beneficiaries' well-being; highlight issues that arose during the program's delivery; and suggest potential solutions.

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Participants of the Study

The study was a census of the respondents, hereafter referred to as Set A respondents and Set B respondents, respectively. A census is the process of obtaining information about every member of the population. Set A respondents comprised twenty (20) Livelihood Skills Program Implementers from ISAT U Miagao Campus who were directly involved in the delivery of the university's Livelihood Skills Program. They provided direct and first-hand information on the said program. Set B respondents were the thirty-five (35) beneficiaries of the Livelihood Skills Program.

Sampling Design

The study used a purposive and random sampling design. This was used to select respondents and samples from the population according to the purpose of the study.

According to Campbell et al. (2020), purposive sampling is used to select respondents who are most likely to return appropriate and useful information. Random sampling is the process of selecting a sample in a way that all respondents in the defined population have an equal chance (Gay,2012). The researcher used purposive sampling among the twenty (20) program implementers and twenty-five (25) program beneficiaries and 5 (five) program beneficiaries in random sampling for the focus group discussion.

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Research Instrument

To obtain the data needed for the study, a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent content and pre-validation and reliability testing was used.

Meanwhile, the statement of problem number one, which is focused on the ISAT U Miagao Campus Livelihood Skills Program in terms of its objectives, structure, and services, was answered through secondary data using the relevant documents on the extension program, memorandum reports, and other important data.

There were two sets of questionnaires. One is for the management components of the ISAT U Miagao Campus Livelihood Skills Program in terms of its objectives, structure, and services. The other is for the implementers and another for the program beneficiaries.

Questions for the management components were answered by the secondary data.

A Questionnaire for the implementers is composed of three (3) parts: Part I gathered the necessary information on the Management Capabilities of the implementers; Part II sought information on the problem encountered by the implementers in delivering the livelihood skills program; and Part III gathered data on the recommendations for the improvement of the implementation of the livelihood skills program.

The questionnaire for the beneficiaries, on the other hand, is composed of five (5) parts. Part I determined the extent of beneficiaries' involvement in the program.

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Part II determined the tangible or quantifiable results of the program, such as the number of livelihood projects undertaken or set up, the average daily income, savings, and investments of the beneficiaries; Part III determined the effects of the program on the well-being of the beneficiaries, particularly in terms of personal/spiritual, social, and economic dimensions

Part IV determined the problems encountered in the implementation of the Livelihood Skills Program, and Part V contained the recommendations for improving the implementation of the Livelihood Skills Program for beneficiaries and the effects or results of the program in their lives.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The drafts of the questionnaires were submitted by the researcher to her thesis adviser. The suggestions of the adviser were incorporated in the second draft, which was submitted to a jury of three (3) validators composed of panelists who determined the content validity of the instruments.

Data Gathering Procedures

The formal request to conduct the study was submitted to the Campus Administrator of ISAT U Miagao Campus, Brgy. Chairman of Brgy. Camanggahan, Guimbal, Iloilo and Chieftain of IPs at Sitio Igtuba, Brgy. Camanggahan Guimbal, Iloilo.

The respondents at ISAT U Miagao Campus were given enough time to complete the survey questionnaires within five (5) days.

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For the respondents at Sitio Igtuba, Brgy. Camanggahan Guimbal, Iloilo, the researcher personally went to administer the survey questionnaires to the IPs. However, out of the 35 beneficiaries, only 25 beneficiaries were there.

For the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), five of the respondents were selected to represent the sample. The FGD was held in the daycare center of Brgy. Camanggahan, Guimbal, Iloilo, a place that was free from noise and distractions. Participants were prepared by explaining to them the purpose of the activity, which was simply to obtain their honest perspective about the livelihood skills program. After obtaining their informed consent, the researcher explained to them that their responses were being recorded for the purpose of documentation and that the same would be deleted after the transcription of the record.

Participants freely consented to the process.

Participants were then asked to give their views on the first questions one after the other, with the assurance that they could talk as they would in relation to the question.

After the FGD, the researcher expressed her thanks to the participants while they were sharing light snacks of fruit juice and biscuits.

Right after the FGD, the researcher transcribed the recording, and the responses were subjected to thematic analysis.

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Data Analyses

After the questionnaires were retrieved, the researcher analyzed the data, organized them, and sought the assistance of a statistician for the computation.

For the management components of the Livelihood Skills Program of ISAT U Miagao Campus, they were analyzed using the pertinent documents, files, and necessary data found at the Extension Services of the University.

For the data gathered using Questionnaires A and B, Guilford's Table Frequency Distribution was used. The lowest weight of one (1) was subtracted from the highest weight, which is five (5). The difference of four (4), called the range, was divided by five (5) since there were five (5) categories of responses. The quotient of 0.80 became the step interval, which was used to come up with the class intervals or scale of means that interpreted the mean. Below are the measuring techniques.

The results of the focus group discussions were analyzed by ways of thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This was a descriptive-evaluative study, that aimed to fully identify the management components of the Livelihood Skills Program of ISAT U Miagao Campus in terms of objectives, structures, and services. It also sought to describe the program's capabilities in terms of personnel, financial, and physical facilities.

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Another problem area explored in this paper was the extent of the beneficiaries' involvement in the delivery of the program as well as the tangible results of the said program in terms of livelihood projects set up, average income, savings, and investment.

This research endeavor was also designed to determine how the Livelihood Skills Program has shaped the beneficiaries' well-being in terms of the personal/spiritual, social, and economic dimensions. The different problems encountered by implementers and beneficiaries in the delivery of the program were given equal importance.

Finally, both the implementers and beneficiaries were given opportunity to suggest strategies on how to improve the program implementation.

The research design employed in this study was descriptive-evaluative research, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Two sets of researcher-made questionnaires were used to gather quantitative and qualitative data. To answer the query on management components of the Livelihood Skills Program in terms of objectives, structures, and services, the researcher utilized secondary data through documentary analysis of the literature found in the files of ISAT University, including the working papers on the extension program, memoranda, reports, and other relevant data.

For the statistical tool, the researcher used mean to give the numerical figures its verbal interpretation.

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This study was a census of two groups of respondents. Group one was composed of twenty (20) Livelihood Skills Program Implementers from Iloilo Science and Technology University- Miagao Campus. On the other hand, group two was composed of twenty-five (25) program beneficiaries.

To obtain the data needed for the study, a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent expert validation and reliability testing was used. To ensure a valid result of the study, the researcher submitted the questionnaire for face-to-face and content validation. The researcher conducted a pilot test of the questionnaire, and the result was computed to determine the reliability of the questionnaire by means of Cronbach's Alpha.

Results of the study revealed that the Livelihood Skills Program of ISAT U Miagao Campus has well-established management components in terms of objectives, structure, and services.

There was also clear evidence, as manifested by the data gathered, that ISAT U Miagao Campus is highly capable of implementing its Livelihood skills Program in terms of personnel, financial, and physical facilities. The findings of the study also revealed that beneficiaries were very highly involved in the program.

When the beneficiaries were asked about the tangible results of the program in terms of livelihood projects set up, average income, savings, and investment, unfortunately, they claimed that they were not able to establish any projects related to the training. Also, they said that nothing has changed in terms of the income generated from the training. In like manner,

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respondents uttered that they failed to develop their financial management skills, such as having savings for the future of their children.

On a positive note, the beneficiaries agreed that the Livelihood Skills Program has shaped their well-being very positively in terms of personal/spiritual and social dimensions.

Meanwhile, data revealed that both the program implementers and beneficiaries have encountered several problems, including a lack of linkages for fund assistance, the absence of the training need assessment, and knowledge and skills to be learned that do not meet the interests of the beneficiaries.

Establishing linkages for fund assistance, sufficient supply and materials, equipment and facilities, support system for the beneficiaries after training, and a proper assessment of the beneficiaries' training needs were among the recommendations to address problems in the process of implementing the program.

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations were recommended:

Since the program objectives give priority to producing competent, skilled, and productive citizens as reflecting community development needs, the Office of Extension Services Department should submit a periodic activity report concerning the changes observed in the lives of the beneficiaries after availing of the program for appropriate assessment, evaluation, and intervention.

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ISSN: 2704-3010

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The Office of Extension Services Department should schedule regular consultations and assembly meetings between implementers and beneficiaries. It should allow more discussion for the purpose of specifying points of concern and discussing matters that need clarification.

The same office should report the results of the needs assessment in concrete terms. It should highlight significant findings and on the basis thereof, propose doable recommendations for a much better delivery of the program.

The selection of services should be based on the prevailing needs of the beneficiaries. The most needed services should be identified so that the knowledge and skills to be learned by the beneficiaries will be those that will give them the necessary competencies.

The university should seriously consider increasing the number of personnel involved in the program. It should establish a clear and well-defined qualification for hiring personnel. If possible, personnel should be sent for training, and should be provided with scholarship grants to further enhance their knowledge and skills, and provide duly recognized and reward incentives for their excellent performance.

The welfare of the faculty members who are involved in the program's implementation should be equally attended to by the college. They should be given an appropriate honorarium and commendation to motivate them to pursue their extension activities.

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The university needs to expand its partnerships with the business sector, governmental organizations (GOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to increase its degree of financial resourcing capability.

The requisition of updated and sufficient learning materials, facilities, and equipment should be taken into consideration. It should maximize the full utilization of these for the advancement and upliftment of the lives of the program beneficiaries.

Continued follow-up should be done by the Office of Extension Services Department to ensure that the program beneficiaries are still benefiting from the different projects and services that they availed of or learned about for the enhancement of their skills.

A follow-up study should be made to validate the outcomes of the changes in the lives of the beneficiaries as a result of the Livelihood Skills Program implemented by ISAT U Miagao Campus.

Further research studies should be conducted in this field. The results of such studies can be used to validate the findings of the present study.

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