



THE IMPACT OF SJIT GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMUNITY EXTENSION PROGRAM TO THE PUPIL- BENEFICIARIES OF BARANGAY BIT-OS, BUTUAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aimed to assess the impact of the community extension program of the Graduate School of Saint Joseph Institute of Technology on the pupil - beneficiaries of Bit – os Elementary School, Butuan City. The qualitative approach was used in the study that involved 19 pupils - beneficiaries of Barangay Bit-os. An interview guide was designed to determine the responses of the recipients who believed that the extension program has helped them financially and has contributed on augmenting the income of their parents. The recipients perceived the necessity of improving the community extension program of the Graduate School. Monitoring and evaluation must be planned, organized and systematically be implemented in order to have a great impact to the clientele and to the community.

INTRODUCTION

Community extension program is one of the tri – focal functions of educational institutions (instruction, research and extension) where they have to be interwoven harmoniously to make learning more meaningful. Colleges and universities have been mandated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to extend educational and civic services to the community. In relation to this, Republic Act 9163, otherwise known as the “National Service Training Program (NSTP) Act of 2001” was promulgated to highlight the commitment of HEIs to provide, promote and sustain community service. This is similar to the United States’ community service-learning programs under the US National and Community Service Act of 1990 (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993 as cited by Llenares &

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Deocarís, 2018)) that initiated the Commission on Higher Education to re – direct the community extension programs of HEIs under CHED Memorandum Order 32, series of 2016 that became the response to the call of the community to address social issues.

Moreover, the Commission on Higher Education initiated efforts to re-direct extension programs under the CHED Memorandum Order 52, series of 2016. The policy provides guidelines on HEI community extension programs for the “provision of space to discover practical, evidence- and science-based answers that can address real-world social, economic, and environmental challenges of partner citizens and communities. According to Llenares and Deocarís (2018), as producers of knowledge or hubs of innovations, the new extension policy posits that HEIs are in a strategic position to work in partnership with communities, business, and industry in facilitating the transfer of knowledge or technology on specific developmental areas. University and college extensions or the extensions of the universities and colleges are considered as an educational innovation done outside the university or college. The innovations may focus on literary, agricultural and social topics.

Furthermore, partnerships between HEIs and the community should be mutually beneficial. Research and technology - transfer activities by the academe should have the potential to improve curriculum and pedagogy. For students, extension programs help to instill the value of citizenship in a manner that traditional classroom teaching is unable to provide. Such engagements can also add new ideas and insights to the intellectual process and give broader meaning to the work and world of academics (Soska & Butterfield, 2013). Community stakeholders at the same time gain more understanding of relevant issues and are empowered to make decisions to alleviate the present conditions in the community.

Based on CHED Memorandum Order 52, series of 2016, community extension programs are designed to address community issues in order to enhance the capacity of the faculty and students by extending its expertise to the partner community. Issues in the community cannot be solely addressed by the local government officials nor by the residents, and the academe as one of the main actors in the society can possibly effect change by

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empowering the people in the community. Thus, the Graduate School of Saint Joseph Institute of Technology as an academic institution, is socially responsible in bringing its expertise to the community.

The Graduate School of SJIT has been extending community extension work for quite a time and it is about time to assess the kind of extension activities done in the adopted community. When schools and community organizations work together to support learning, everyone benefits. Partnerships strengthen, support, and even transform individual partners which will likely result in improved program quality, more efficient use of resources, and better alignment of goals and curricula (Harvard Family Research Project, 2010).

In relation to this, a memorandum of agreement was entered into between the Graduate School of Saint Joseph Institute of Technology which was represented by the Dean and Bito-s Elementary School represented by its principal based on Republic Act 8525, otherwise known as an ACT ESTABLISHING THE "ADOPT – A – SCHOOL PROGRAM" and providing Incentives Therefore and for Other Purposes, to encourage private companies to assist in the delivery of better quality education to public schools in the country, particularly in the poverty stricken provinces. The Graduate School of SJIT responded to the call of the Department of Education to serve as a major partner in the nation's development and in the improvement of the public education system through the provision of adopt – a – school program. The DepEd believes that one way of achieving an enhanced learning environment and addressing the shortage of resources in the public schools is through the provision of adopt -a-school program hence, the partnership between the Graduate School and Bit-os Elementary School. This paper determined the impact of the program to ensure its proper implementation on the pupil beneficiaries.

Review of Literature

Higher education institutions are mandated to render extension service hand in hand with instruction, research and production. This is in recognition of the vital role colleges and

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universities play in the development of communities, especially the underserved and the depressed. However, the modalities of extension program delivery by higher education institutions vary. There are delivery methods that focus on involving students to assist local organizations and other methods that involve faculty and staff programs to address community development in the form of educational cohorts, social service, public health, and livelihood and technical training, consultations and direct application of research and development output. Common examples of extension activities are livelihood (Daquis, Flores, & Plandez, 2016; Felicen, Mendoza, & Buted, 2014; Peprah, Kyiyaga, Afful, Abalo & Agyemang-Duah, 2017), health promotion (Daquis, Flores & Plandez, 2016; Rocha & Soares, 2010) and computer literacy programs (Daquis, Flores & Plandez, 2016).

Despite the availability of higher education community extension practices in the Philippines, there is still an inadequate literature on the evaluation of its impact or outcome. There is no single assessment that gauges social impact of community programs (Felicien, Mendoza & Buted, 2014; Peprah, Kyiyaga, Afful, Abalo & Agyemang-Duah, 2017; Rocha & Soares, 2010) but the most published studies focused on determining the impact of community extension program on student development (Llenares & Deocarís, 2015; Llenares & Espanola, 2015). Moreover, there are also publications that investigated the long-term gains and social impact of extension programs (Felicien, Mendoza & Buted, 2014; Soska & Butterfield, 2013). With the dearth of information on the broader social impact of higher education extension on communities and residents served, monitoring behavioral data can provide a useful guide for extension workers in preparing cost-effective programs that have the highest societal value.

Llenares and Deocarís (2018) designed a study to create platforms to train students in higher education to be caring and responsible citizens. This was the third academe extension mission that aimed to tap into the expertise and its knowledge to help the community. Based on the framework of community empowerment, the researchers measured the long-term impact of a 44-month community extension program in the Philippines. The extension program

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described in the study was implemented between March 2009 and December 2015 to address the capacity-building needs of a low-income community. The paper highlighted some key development activities which included partnership with local government, training needs assessment through grassroot-level participation and design of practical education-training programs.

In addition, the Technological Institute of the Philippines (T.I.P.), Quezon City, Philippines after consultation with the local government, came up with the projects designed to address the identified needs of the community and to provide support to community empowerment. Various academic departments and offices collaborated to implement the identified education-training projects such as livelihood and skills training project, health-related education project, and computer literacy training project.

On the other hand, Batangas State University, as a leading institution of higher learning, committed to carry out its extension service function with the creation of the Office for Community Development Services, Office for Institutional and Industry Development Services and Office for Gender and Development, all under the Office for Extension Services, with the primary goal of achieving sustainable partnership with the government and private organizations in poverty alleviation. The University responded adequately to the training needs of the communities, industries, public and private agencies/ organizations and to the members of the academe through capability building training program, institutional and industry development program and gender development program.

Moreover, the Office of the Community Extension Service of the Philippine Women's College of Davao envisions to be a responsive educational institution that is sensitive to the needs and problems of the disadvantaged sectors of society. It committed to direct its collective energies and talents in developing self-reliant and empowered communities. The values of generosity, volunteerism, service, civic consciousness, gender sensitivity, love for cultural heritage, concern for the environment, responsibility, accountability and stewardship among the PWC family were channeled to the different units and programs of the institution.

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The basic education students took part in activities on waste management, marine biodiversity, reforestation, and waste conservation. Forums, tree planting and clean up sessions were also part of the efforts toward establishing a culture of protecting and sustaining the environment. PWC – Davao also partnered with elementary schools within the city as beneficiaries of its services including workshops, brigada eskwela and fundraising activities.

Furthermore, La Salle University as an educational system has been actively involved in the extension work since 1995, the adopted barangay was Manabay, Ozamiz City, where catechetical work, pre-school literacy program, and hog raising, cooking, and sewing livelihood projects were administered (Gonzales & Maghamil, 2009)). Five years after, the school decided to adopt Barangay De La Paz, Carmen Annex, Ozamiz City and provided the same opportunities given to partner barangay in 2000. In 2006, the University has been working with the people of Catadman-Manabay, Ozamiz City.

Meanwhile, the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management of the Lyceum of the Philippines University – Batangas conducted a study to present the social involvement and sensitivity of the IHM students through community extension service (Ano, 2015). The study emphasized the importance of joining in community extension activities organized by the university as a basis of the different problems' students encountered when conducting community extension activities.

Rubio, Pentinio, Ascan, Mendoza, Vito, and Encio (2016) conducted a study to assess the community extension program of the College of Business Administration in one private higher education institution in the Philippines. The descriptive method of research utilizing the normative survey technique was employed in the study. The results of the study revealed that the community extension program of the college was well implemented and the students were well involved in the community activities. However, there were expected problems in the implementation of the program like funds, location and the logistics. The extension programs may continue to move on and reach out for the sustainable development of the students and community.

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Moreover, Far Eastern University focused on biodiversity and sustainability, urban renewal, and cultural preservation and dissemination. The four CES Key Program Areas were people empowerment, socio-economic upliftment, environmental education, and cultural heritage conservation. People empowerment covered the health-related services, as well as the psycho-educational, media, and literacy programs. Socio-economic upliftment was achieved through small scale business seminars, entrepreneurship trainings, and livelihood programs. Environmental concern included programs on urban renewal, food hygiene, and sanitation trainings, and cultural heritage conservation consisted of activities on preservation of cultural heritage sites and promotion of Filipino customs.

partnered with elementary schools within the city as beneficiaries of its

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored on the functional motivation theory which has two tenets – individuals engage in purposeful activities to fulfill a certain goal and individuals perform the same activities to serve different psychological functions (Clary et al., 1998). In other words, volunteers engage in volunteer service to fulfill distinct psychological functions, or the same volunteers engage in volunteer service to fulfill distinct psychological functions at different times in their lives. However, all volunteers engage in volunteerism because it fulfills certain psychological functions. The functional approach seeks to determine the reasons and goals that motivate volunteers, thus conceptualizing the volunteer decision in terms of personal motivations (Snyder, 1993).

On the other hand, Thoits and Hewitt (2001) in their volunteer motivations model emphasized the role of individual motivations in volunteering, the range being an extremely extended one to learn new skills, develop personality, increase self-esteem, career preparation, expressing personal values and commitment to community or even reducing intrapersonal conflicts or threats to their identity. They further added that volunteering serves different motivations both from one person to another and for the same person, which leads

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to concluding that "the selection of volunteers cannot be systematic or patented at a general level " due to motivational platformism.

Community extension is an expression of a deep sense of commitment of the people involved in the academe. Academic people are more aware and more socially skilled than the other sectors in the community. The Community Extension Service (CES) is a component of Saint Joseph Institute of Technology framework which conveys its commitment to service, and is driven by its vision and mission. It provides service to people, groups, and communities inside and outside the college (Gonzales & Maghamil, 2009).

According to Llenares and Deocarís (2018), the academic people are in the position to recognize social problems and take effective steps to solve social issues. As a group, they are trained and experienced in social issues and are granted academic freedom which will enable them to do creative thinking and experimentation towards the solution of social problems. The academics are supposed to be self-reflective, to critically examine their own ideas and actions.

Figure 1 shows the research flow of the study.

Researchers	Dean, Graduate School	Principal, Bit-os Elementary School	Pupil Beneficiaries
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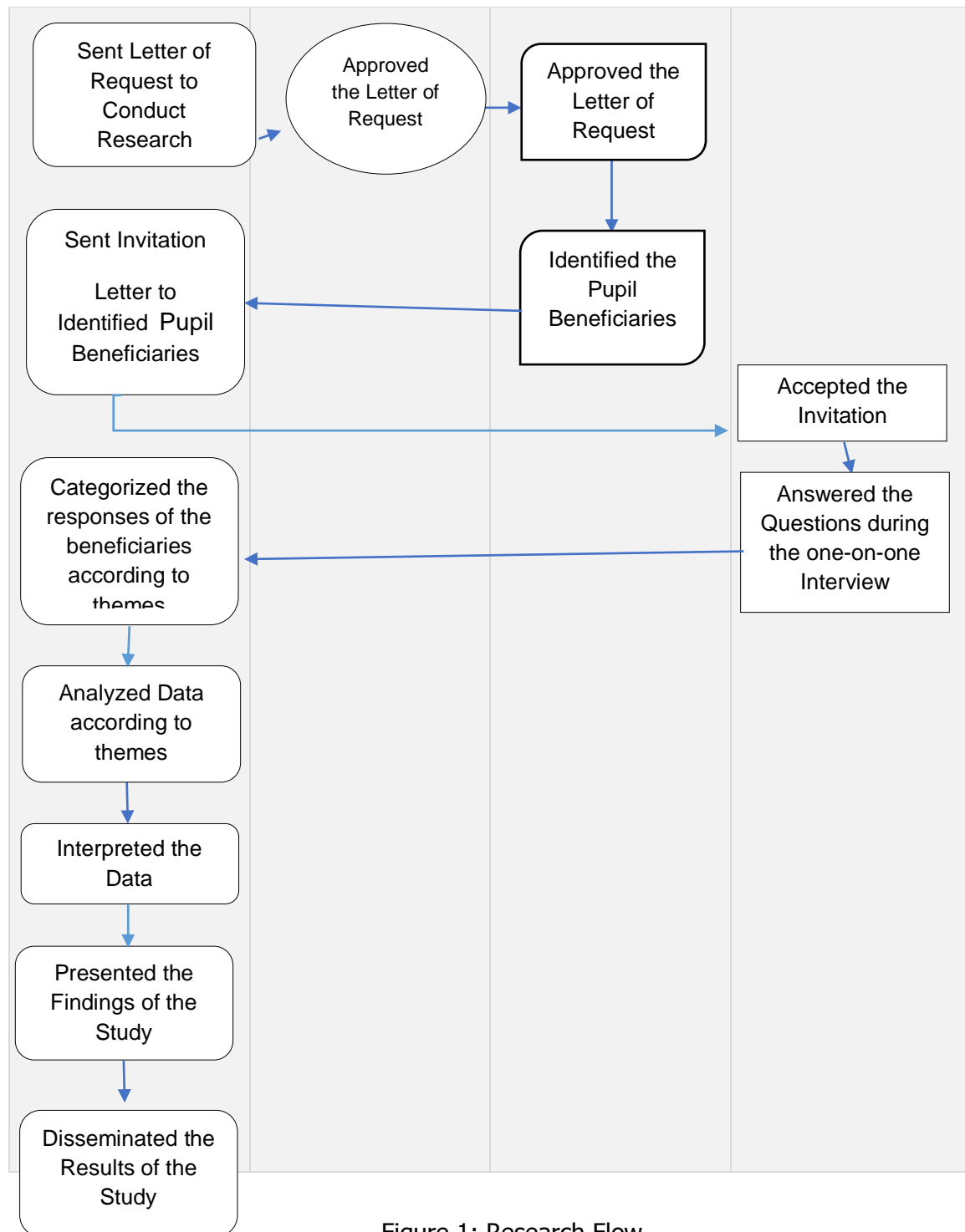


Figure 1: Research Flow

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The research flow as shown in Figure 1 served as a guide to undertake the study, After conceptualizing the research project, the researchers sent a letter of request to the Dean of the Graduate School to undertake the study. Upon its approval, the researchers sent a letter of request to the principal of the identified adopted school to conduct the study who then identified the pupil beneficiaries. A letter of invitation was then sent to the identified pupil beneficiaries and upon its acceptance, the one – on – one interview was scheduled. After conducting the interview, the responses of the beneficiaries were then categorized according to themes, analyzed and interpreted the gathered data. The data was then finalized which was then presented to the Dean of the Graduate School and finally disseminated the findings of the study to the principal and stakeholders of the adopted school.

Statement of the Problem

This paper aimed to assess the impact of the community extension program to the pupil beneficiaries of Bit-os Elementary School, Butuan City.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions.

1. How do you feel being chosen as one of the recipients in the three hundred pesos (P300.00) assistance that was paid to your school fees?
2. Did you make a backyard vegetable garden as part of the agreement?
3. How do you describe your vegetable garden?
4. What are the benefits of your vegetable garden to you and the family?
5. Did somebody check you on your garden?
6. What are your suggestions to improve the program for SJIT Graduate School, Bit-os Elementary School, and for you as the recipient?

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METHODOLOGY

The study used the qualitative approach that involved the 19 recipients of the program. An interview guide was designed to gather the data containing five questions. The impact of the community extension program of the Graduate School was evaluated and sought suggestions on how to sustain the program and be improved. Content analysis was used to determine the themes derived from the responses. The responses of recipients are presented in matrix form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the findings of the study based on the statement of the problems.

1: How do you feel being chosen as one of the recipients in the three hundred pesos (P300.00) assistance that was paid to your school fees?

Table 1 shows the thematic responses of the recipients for being chosen as one of the recipients of the community extension program.

Table 1

Thematic Responses for Being Chosen as a Recipient of CES Program

Theme	Verbatim Responses
Feeling of gratefulness	Mapasalamaton kaayo ko ma'am nga apil akong anak sa isa sa mga beneficiaries sa SJIT program.

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	<p>Nalipay kaayo og nagpasalamat sa Ginoo nga isa ko sa napili sa SJIT nga adunay P300.00 assistance nga ibayad sa akong school fees.</p> <p>Dako kayo akong kalipay nga apil akong anak sa programa sa SJIT kay daku na kaayo nag ikatabang sa mga galastuhon sap ag - eskwela sa akong anak.</p> <p>Nagpasalamat kaayu ko nga isa sa mga beneficiaries akong anak.</p> <p>Nalipay kaayo ko nga napili nga isa sa SJIT Graduate School Beneficiaries.</p> <p>Dako kaayo ang akong kalipay nga isa ko sa napili sa SJIT Graduate School nga ilang beneficiaries.</p> <p>Daghang Salamat og dako akong kalipay nga isa ko sa napili.</p> <p>Nalipay ko nga napili nga beneficiaries sa SJIT Graduate School.</p>
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As shown in Table 1, majority of the recipients express the feeling of contentment, being fortunate and lucky to be a beneficiary of the program. Eleven (11) out of the 19 recipients are grateful to be a recipient of the program. When a community and the school work collaboratively, a successful outcome is likely expected. Community – school partnership involves the practice of engaging the residents of the community in taking collaborative action in programs and activities.

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The findings of the study imply that the participation of the residents in the extension program is critical in bringing the benefits to the families in the community. Debord (2007) cited that participation in a community service can be an indicator of life-long learning and the aspiration to improve their quality of life. According to studies, residents' participation in community projects brings positive improvements on community awareness (Green and Haine (2008), and community contentment (Soska & Butterfield (2013); Llenares & Espanola (2015).

2: Did you make a backyard vegetable garden as part of the agreement?

The recipients justify their responses and enumerate the vegetables planted in their garden. Others give information that they need to repair and plant again since some of the vegetables dried out due to the weather. The majority responded of making a vegetable garden because it is a part of the community school partnership agreement.

P1, 8 and 10: yes naa mi garden sa among balay ug kinahanglan lang otrohon kay nangamatay and uban sa kainit sa panahon ug sa baha. Amo pod gitamnan ug lagutmon.

3: How do you describe your vegetable garden?

Table 2 reveals the thematic responses of the recipients in terms of the description of their vegetable garden.

Table 2

Description of Recipients' Vegetable Garden

Theme	Verbatim Responses
Beautiful	beautiful and kadaghan na me nakagulay

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	<p>guapa, nindot, daghan na</p> <p>my garden is beautiful, lots of fruits.</p>
Small	<p>gamay ang lote pero daghay tanom.</p>
Variety of vegetables	<p>naa mi talong, ampalaya, alugbati, malunggay.</p> <p>kamote, balanghoy, tanglad, kapayas, ganas</p> <p>naa mi kamunggay, tangad, tinangkong, alugbati</p> <p>naa mi alugbati, malunggay, ganas, sili, kapayas</p> <p>ang tanom sa akong garden sama sat along, ganas, kamunggay, batong.</p> <p>ang akong vegetable garden adunay tanom sama sa ampalaya, ganas, kamatis, luy-a. apan karon nag-utro na pod ug tanom sa mga pot kay gibuldos ang luyo nga lote sa among balay.</p>

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	<p>ang akong vegetable garden adunay kamunggay, kapayas, okra, ganas. Pero karon nadaot kay nabahaan. Magtanom ko utro og nga gulay sa among pot og lata.</p> <p>ang akong mga tanom sa garden sama sa alugbati, okra, tanglad, kamunggay.</p> <p>ang akong mga tanom sa garden sama sa kamote, okra, kamunggay, talong.</p> <p>ang akong vegetable garden adunay kamunggay, alugbati, tanglad, saluyot, ganas, okra.</p> <p>more fruits and vegetables</p> <p>ang uban natanom sa mga container then ang uban say utan</p>
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Table 2 shows that most of the receipts describe their vegetable gardens to have been planted with not less than four (4) varieties of vegetables. However, aside from vegetables, some recipients planted papaya and other fruits. The responses of the recipients imply that their vegetable garden is indeed beautiful even though it is small but planted with a variety of vegetables.

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As an agreement of the school – community partnership, the recipients are required to make a vegetable garden that does not only have a stunning visual appeal, but also a great deal of usefulness. It has a lot to offer by growing fresh vegetables and fruits to supplement the meals of the family with what is being produced.

4: What are the benefits of your vegetable garden to you and the family?

Table 3 presents the responses of the recipients in terms of the benefits of their vegetable garden to them and to the family.

Table 3

Benefits of the Vegetable Garden to the Recipients and the Family

Theme	Verbatim Responses
Health	nahimong baskug ang akong lawas kay makakaon nako og masustansiyang gulay gikan sa akong tanom nga gulay
Nutrition	nahimo kong baskog og layo sa mga sakit kay duna man koy mga preskong gulay nga makuha sa garden. makabaskog sa akong lawas, layo sa sakit tungod sa masustansya ug preskong gulay; maka exercise pa jud

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Support	sa akong pamilya, dako kayo ug tabang ang pagtanom namo og mga gulay kay libre name ug sud-a; presko ug masustansiya pa gayud; dili name mopalit ug mga gulay; naa pud kwarta kay makabaligya man pod mi sa uban gulay namo
Savings	naka save mi gamay kay dili naman magpalit ug gulay; gawas sa makakaon ug presko, makakwarta pa jud para mabaon sa mga bata sa school.

Table 3 reveals that most of the recipients respond that the vegetable garden has given them benefits not only to themselves but to their family as well. According to Sullivan (2020), gardening is an excellent stress reliever for a combination of fascinating reasons: exposure to fresh air and sunlight, relaxing and repetitive tasks, and even contact with harmless bacteria in the soil that helps release serotonin in the brain. Similarly, Darnton and McGuire (2014) cited the report of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that gardening is an exercise. Activities like raking and cutting grass might fall under the category of light to moderate exercise, while shoveling, digging, and chopping wood might be considered vigorous exercise.

5: Did somebody check you on your garden?

Most of the participants manifest that their vegetable garden is checked by either a teacher, a representative from the Department of Agriculture, and purok officials. However, five (5) participants say that nobody checked on their gardens.

6: What are your suggestions to improve the program for SJIT Graduate School, for Bit-os Elementary School, and for you as a recipient?

Table 4 shows the suggestions given by the recipients to improve the program.

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Table 4

Recipients' Suggestions to Improve the CES Program

Theme	Verbatim Responses
Cooperation	Una, ang mga estudyante magtarung gyod ug eskwela para malipay pod ang SJIT. Ikaduha, kinahanglan ug kooperasyon sa mga ginikanan ug mga maestra.
Compliance	Kinahanglan kung unsay mga balaod sa SJIT, tumanon gyud namu para magpadayon ang programa.
Contentment	<p>Ok na para sa ako ang gihimong tabang sa SJIT Graduate school program diri sa Bit-os E/S. Daghang Salamat.</p> <p>Wala na koy ikadugang nga ika – suggest. Daghang Salamat kaayo sa nag initiate sa maong programna diri sa Bit-os Elementary School.</p> <p>Daghang Salamat sa SJIT Graduate School sa suportya ng ilang gihatag sa Bit-os Elementary School.</p>

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	<p>Kinahanglan magtarung ug eskwela ang mga bata ug magpadayon ang programa sa SJIT kay daku</p> <p>kaayong tabang.</p> <p>Salamat sa walay pag undang nga suporta sa mga estudyante diri sa Bit-os E/S. God bless po sa inyong tanan.</p>
Continuation of the Program	<p>Unta magpadayon ang inyong suporta (SJIT Graduate School) dire sa Bit-os E/S. daghang Salamat.</p> <p>Ipadayon ang vegetable gardening</p> <p>Magapadayon ug in ani</p> <p>Hinaut na mudugay pa inyong programa. Daghang Salamat.</p> <p>Continue for this program po para daghan pay matabangan na bata tulad nako.</p>

As shown in Table 4, most of the recipients suggest continuing the program. However, others suggest the cooperation of both students, parents, and school officials. The responses of the recipients clearly suggest that they are contented with the program and to continue

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with the program to be able to serve more students and families. The positive views from the program recipients imply that the program have provided benefits to pupils, families, and the community thus, it is suggested that the program be continuously implemented every school year and an increase in the subsidy or financial aid to the beneficiaries be increased to include payments for miscellaneous and other fees.

The responses of the beneficiaries which were categorized into themes generated the 4 Cs – cooperation, compliance, contentment and continuation which can be important aspects to enhance the program to better serve the adopted community.

Conclusions

The findings generated in the study affirm the positive impact of the Graduate School adopt – a – school program to improve the quality of life of the pupil - beneficiaries. The assessment of the implementation of the program was clearly contributory to the following: health; nutrition; support and savings for the family. The recipients recognized the importance of preparing healthy food for the family, learn the importance of saving money, that they can earn extra income while making a vegetable garden in the backyard.

The community extension program is of twofold. First is the vegetables and fruits that the recipients grow for better health of the members of the family and second, is the physical effort the recipients are putting in while tending to the garden which can be considered as a form of an exercise. The assessment of the impact of the program generated the 4 Cs – cooperation, compliance, contentment and continuation of the program which are considered important aspects to better serve the adopted community.

Figure 2 shows the generated themes of the community extension program classified according superordinate themes and subthemes.

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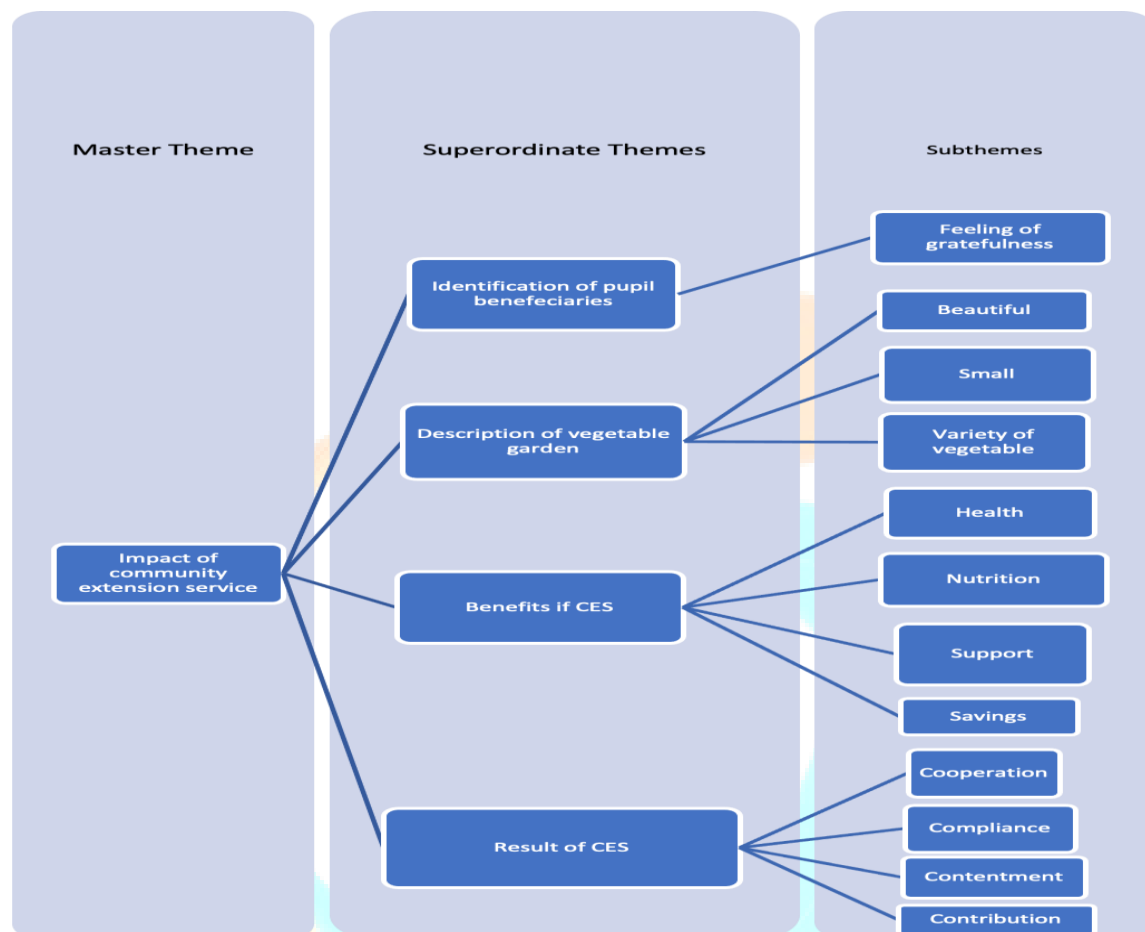
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As revealed in Figure 2, the community extension program of the Graduate School has generated four (4) superordinate themes classified into the identification of pupil beneficiaries, description of the vegetable garden, benefits of the program and on the improvement of the program. The superordinate themes of the program generated its subthemes. For the identification of pupil beneficiaries, the recipients expressed their feeling of gratefulness that they were selected for the program. The vegetable garden which is a requirement of the partnership was described to be beautiful, small and planted with a variety of vegetables. The vegetable garden was found to be beneficial not only to the recipients but also to their families

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in terms of health, nutrition, support and savings. The last superordinate theme of the program which is the suggestion for the improvement of the program generated the 4 Cs – cooperation, compliance, contentment and continuation of the program which are considered important aspects to enhance the program to better serve the adopted community.

Recommendations

As a higher education institution, Saint Joseph Institute of Technology is concerned with delivering extension programs to achieve development goals. It is paramount that as an academic institution, it should monitor and evaluate the outcome of the community program.

The research undertaking provides insights to future inquiries on developing tools to measure community outcomes or impact. It is noteworthy that sustainability of community extension programs does not depend entirely on the sponsoring institution but mainly on the responsiveness of the community and stakeholders towards community empowerment through the initiative of the delivering institution. Given the positive attitudes of Filipinos despite poverty, future studies may also explore the characteristics of a resilient community.

It is recommended that graduate faculty and students may get involved to help sustain the program and devise an evaluation tool to properly assess the program. Similar studies may be conducted to further validate the results of the study.

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