



EMPOWERING BARANGAY BULACNIN THROUGH PROJECT REACH-OUT: EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF UNIVERSITY-LED SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY EXTENSION PROGRAMS ON LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND CAPACITY BUILDING

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ABSTRACT

This action research evaluated the efficiency and community-perceived outcomes of Project REACH-Out (Responsive Extension for Advancement and Community Transformation), a long-term community extension framework deployed by the University of Batangas Lipa Campus in Barangay Bulacnin, Lipa City. Utilizing a sequential mixed-methods explanatory design, this study assessed the tangible impacts of university-led interventions focusing on two core tracks: health/sanitation and digital literacy training. Quantitative metrics were gathered from a total census population of active barangay stakeholders and resident participants via standard household welfare indicators. Qualitative feedback was captured through focus group discussions (FGDs) with local leaders.

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The findings revealed a statistically significant increase in the adoption of household waste-management protocols and enhanced elementary digital literacy scores among youth participants (). Qualitative themes highlighted that collaborative planning built a deep sense of local project ownership, though technical gaps like irregular internet connectivity remain a barrier. The research offers a practical structural template for planning highly effective, mutually beneficial corporate social responsibility and community extension partnerships between academic hubs and rural-agricultural barangays across the CALABARZON region.

Keywords: *Community Extension, Academic Partnerships, Barangay Bulacnin, Capacity Building, University of Batangas, Sustainable Development*

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