COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT AS BASIS FOR A COMMUNITY EXTENSION PROGRAM IN A STATE-FUNDED COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT- *As State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) grow, they need to offer more services to the community. This is termed as community extension program, and colleges are required by law to have one. The community's needs must be met, and they must also be looked at. This assessment aims to figure out what the communities around J.H. Cerilles State College (JHCSC) need. Through the Peace and Order, Security, and Ability to Serve Enrichment (POSASE) framework, this assessment also set up the framework for extending community services in SUCs. The study's results showed that the communities close to JHCSC needed more governance extension initiatives in the areas of public safety and security, as well as disaster planning and response.*

Keywords: Community extension, outreach, community empowerment, project implementation

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) are primarily concerned with their four-fold role as higher education institutions (HEIs). Instruction, research, community service, and production are among these functions. The essential function of instruction is to impart knowledge and skills to students. Research involves developing new theories and methods for use for the improvement of an institution and society. Service to the community is another function of a university committed to the community's entire development. Finally, production services are being bolstered to supplement State College and University (SUC's) resources and income.

Furthermore, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) established a ranking system for SUC's based on four Key Result Areas (KRAs), which include (1) Instructional Quality and Relevance; (2) Research Capability and Outputs in the last three years; (3) Relationships and Services to the Community and Management of Resources; and (4) Management of resources, in the joint Circulars No. 1 and No. 1-B issued on May 29, 2003, and June 21, 2007, respectively. The SUCs' development and institutional performance can be gauged by assessing the above factors.

As one of the four-fold responsibilities of HEIs, community extension creates an environment that fosters compassion and collaboration. Students, instructors, and staff from the participating HEIs have worked together to provide extension services to the adapted community in partnership with their respective academic departments [1]. The purpose of an institution's extension efforts aim to promote the well-being and growth of the community it serves [2].

If the university does not consider the needs and welfare of the people who live within its bounds, it will never be recognized as globally competitive. One of the most significant successes of a university would be distributing resources to those in need and the assistance they receive in improving their quality of life. The core values should be visible in all community projects undertaken by each college, exemplified in all community projects undertaken by each college[3].

SUCs' community extension initiatives tend to be motivated by demand and accreditation. It is a community-based approach that focuses on the needs and desires of people in rural and urban areas to improve their quality of life. In most cases, this request is made by the local government unit concerned after determining the specific needs of their population. When an accrediting authority mandates an extension program, it is implemented by those mandates. Although they came about in diverse ways, implementing the institution's curricular offers is enhanced. Both types of programs provide possibilities for the target clientele to enhance their living level while raising the clients' overall quality of life [4].

In order for an HEI to perform its mandated duties and deliver the community services, a partnership is a necessity. A community extension office was established at the school so students, faculty members, and administrative staff could contribute to the school's community involvement program by sharing their resources and skills. As a result, the community extension service is based on self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Well-thought-out programs should consider the input of the individuals who will use them [1].

SUCs offer a wide range of services and activities to improve the quality of life in their communities. A sustainable government aims to encourage human growth while preserving and protecting the environment. Mental, physical, and financial empowerment must be provided for the impoverished. Participation is necessary to enhance their voice and make the government more responsive to their needs and desires. A well-managed society encourages debate, new institutions, and a more vibrant social life.

State Universities and Colleges in the Philippines were expected to provide services to the communities in which they are situated. In order to fulfill this purpose, J.H. Cerilles State College (JHCSC) strives to implement extension programs by consulting with stakeholders and completing a needs assessment of the local community. Community beneficiaries will be able to voice and identify the areas that require improvement, and the institution will be able to determine how best to assist the community in addressing these concerns. The JHCSC Community and Extension

Services Office aimed to be a change agent in an identified community whose main thrust is to institute community and extension projects and outreach services. Thus, the concept of Peace and Order, Security, and Ability to Serve Enrichment (POSASE) was developed. The POSASE concept was
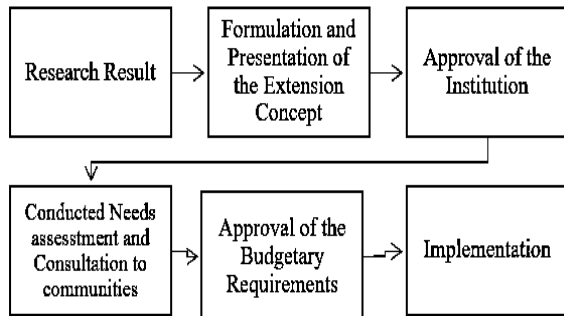

Figure 1. POSASE Extension Framework

derived from the local dialect which means to apprehend, capture, and restrain.

The goal of the Peace and Order, Security, and Ability to Serve Enrichment (POSASE) concept is to empower local communities in areas where JHCSC Campuses were located. The research in these communities shows that Barangay's Empowerment in terms of peacekeeping has contributed to maintaining peace and lesser crimes in the locality [5]. The main focus is to assess the excellent governance needs of community officials in terms of capability to serve the community on crime prevention and the constituents' safety. Thus, this research was conducted to establish a framework for implementing the POSASE concept. Beneficiaries will be able to share their ideas on the needs of the community. As a result of this study, the community extension program of the college is community and demand-based, upholding the principles of consultative and collaborative effort.

2.　MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive type of research utilizing a questionnaire checklist and focus group discussion of the targeted local communities in Dumingag Zamboanga del Sur. As to institutional policy prior to the approval of the extension project, a presentation to the extension committee was done on December 13, 2018. Thus researchers comply with this procedure and secure approval from JHCSC Officials.

The areas assessed in this survey are the community's good governance needs to prevent crime, respond to the emergency, and maintain a peaceful community. Respondents of the study were 10 barangay officials, 50 Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team (BPAT), and 10 community members which was chosen using random sampling from Barangay Caridad, San Pedro, and San Pablo, Dumingag Zamboanga del Sur. Data gathering was done by allowing the respondents to answer the formulated questions. After the retrieval of the questionnaires, it was tabulated. Data analysis

was done using frequency count, percentage, and weighted mean. After which, the consultation was done on Barangay San Pablo, Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur last January 21, 2019, in which the researcher presented the output to the community officials for their confirmation and suggestions. The assessment process framework and program formulation were followed as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.
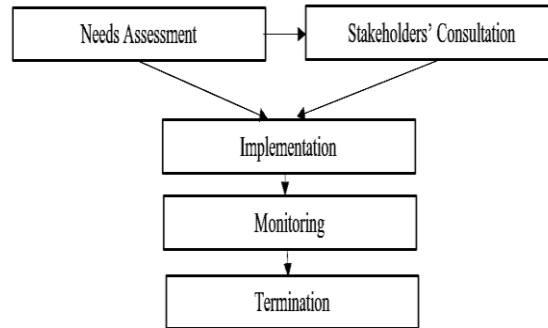
POSASE Implementation Framework

Figure 2. POSASE Implementation Framework

3.　RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the assessment was presented from two perspectives. First is the result of the needs assessment on barangay empowerment. Second, is the result of consultation with the community officials.

Governance and service delivery needs assessment

Table 1 shows the areas identified by the respondents that need improvement in their services in terms of their primary functions. As shown in the table, the community expressed their responses that community safety and protection is the primary area in the governance at a barangay level. This was followed by public safety, ecological security, disaster preparedness, and management. Nevertheless, all the areas identified are rated highly needed in the community.

Table 1. Governance and service delivery needs assessment

Area	$\bar{x}$	Rank	I
Community Safety and Protection	4.65	1	HN
Investigation	3.61	10	HN
Traffic Management	4.15	7	HN
Anti Crime Measure	4.17	6	HN
Fire Prevention and suppression	4.38	4	HN
Prevention of the use of illegal Drugs	4.36	5	HN
Disaster Preparedness and Management	4.39	3	HN
Human Rights Protection	3.98	8	HN
Public Safety and Ecological Security	4.62	2	HN
Moral Recovery Program	3.79	9	HN
Grand weighted mean and overall interpretation	**4.21**	**Highly Needed**	

Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not Needed
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree	Least Needed
2.61 - 3.40	Neutral	Neutral
3.41 - 4.20	Agree	Needed
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree	Highly Needed

Consultation of Community Officials

Figure 3. Community leaders' in consultation

Images from the consultation with community leaders and the presentation of the assessment results are shown below. During the presentation of the ten key areas as components of the POSASE Extension Program, the community leaders approved and accepted them. The community leaders shared their thoughts on the proposed community extension program. In the discussion process, the following suggestions and thoughts have been shared:

"As the in-charge of the peace and order, this activity would greatly help the community. The BPAT would be able to learn the principles of patrol and other things, such as in disaster, and fires." (Community Leader 1)

"There is a need for the community to learn how to fight the fire, as my personal experience, a fire occurred in our place and I don't have a background on how to suppress it. Later, I learned that fire is dangerous, especially if it involves electrical equipment that you don't need water to extinguish."(Community Leader 4).

" There is a need for the implementers to learn how to arrest, and the laws surrounding it" (Community Leader 5).

"Disaster Preparedness is needed, as we are experiencing floods in our community and training will be helpful for us." (Community Leader 3).

Figure 4. Presentation of the objectives of the program to theconstituents.

In this photograph, taken on May 30, 2019, Dr. Glenn G. Tangalin, Research Director of J.H. Cerilles State College, described the main objectives of the proposed program to community leaders and implementers during the finalization of the POSASE extension program held at the KALAHI Function Hall in San Pedro, Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur.

CONCLUSION

This conclusion is based on the findings of the study, which show that JHCSC's neighboring community needs the institution's help to adopt the POSASE Extension Framework. With regard to governance, the community places a high priority on the safety, security and disaster preparedness of the community. Consequently, it is essential to interact with various stakeholders before beginning the process of putting services for community extension into reality. This will guarantee that the program will be successful in addressing the needs of the community and that it will fulfill the requirements that the community has outlined.

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