

BUILDING COMMUNITIES, SHAPING FUTURES: A STUDY ON SCHOOL EXTENSION IMPACT

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the long-term impact of the community extension programs implemented by Central Mindanao Colleges through the Center for Social Action (CSA) on its adopted communities within Kidapawan City. Anchored on the framework of community empowerment, the research evaluated how a five-year set of extension activities—covering skills training, health education, literacy and numeracy programs, advocacy initiatives, and livelihood projects—contributed to the socio-economic development of Barangay Sudapin, Kidapawan City, Philippines and other partner communities. A descriptive research design was employed to gather data from 100 beneficiaries via a standardized questionnaire and interviews. Weighted mean, standard deviation, and Spearman correlation were utilized to determine program outcomes and their relationship with economic and social impact. Results revealed that program outputs across all components were rated satisfactory, while both economic and social impacts were likewise satisfactory. Significant relationships were found between program outputs and both economic and social impact indicators, indicating that the extension programs positively contributed to livelihood enhancement, self-esteem, health awareness, entrepreneurial capability, and strengthened community cohesion. Recommendations for sustaining and improving the extension initiatives were proposed.

Keywords: Community, Empowerment, Community Extension Programs, Economic Impact, Literacy and Literacy, Livelihood Development, Program Evaluation, Skills Training, Social impact, Kidapawan City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a crucial role not only in instruction and research but also in community extension, which links academic resources to societal needs. In many developing contexts, persistent social inequalities restrict access to essential skills, training, and opportunities, making HEIs strategic contributors in improving the socio-economic welfare of marginalized sectors. Central Mindanao Colleges (CMC), through its Center for Social Action (CSA), implements programs aimed at uplifting the quality of life of low-income households, promoting empowerment, and extending institutional expertise to the grassroots. The CMC-CARES (Collaborative Action and Responsive Extension Services) initiative integrates literacy and numeracy programs, livelihood training, environmental management, advocacy campaigns, health education, and external linkages to ensure holistic community development. Barangay Sudapin, the adopted community, faces issues of unemployment, low income, and limited access to training; thus, the College established

structured and sustainable extension programs through MOAs with barangay and LGU officials. Given the scope and diversity of activities implemented from 2019 to 2024, assessing the effectiveness and long-term impact of these programs is crucial. This study evaluates program outputs, economic impact, and social impact, and determines their relationships to inform strengthened strategies for extension service delivery.

METHOD

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to determine the effectiveness and long-term impact of CMC's extension programs. One hundred (100) community beneficiaries served as respondents, identified from the College's records of participants in skills training, health education, literacy and numeracy activities, advocacy programs, and livelihood projects. Data were gathered using a standardized questionnaire adapted from Salazar (2020), complemented by interviews to validate responses and enrich qualitative insights. Weighted mean and standard deviation measured the level of program outputs and perceived impacts, while Spearman Rank Order Correlation determined significant relationships between program outputs and economic/social impact indicators. A 5-point Likert scale (5 = Outstanding; 1 = Not Satisfactory) guided the assessment. This methodology enabled systematic evaluation of program implementation outcomes over the five-year period.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented narratively, with each table integrated into paragraph form to support interpretation and analysis.

Program Outputs in Terms of Skills Training

Results show that skills training produced satisfactory outcomes across all indicators, with an overall mean of 3.48 (SD = .812). Respondents rated "The skills I learned improved my self-esteem" highest at 3.52, indicating personal growth and confidence-building, while "I started my own business after the training" obtained the lowest rating at 3.44, though still satisfactory. These outcomes imply that while many participants gained employable skills and shared their knowledge with others, fewer transitioned into entrepreneurial ventures due to capital constraints or business readiness.

Table 1. Program Outputs in Skills Training

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Skills learned are effective in my profession	3.55	0.804	Satisfactory
Skills helped increase my income	3.48	0.815	Satisfactory
Skills learned improved my self-esteem	3.52	0.802	Very Satisfactory
I have taught others the skills I learned	3.51	0.801	Very Satisfactory
I became gainfully employed after training	3.41	0.808	Satisfactory
I adopted the technology I learned	3.49	0.802	Satisfactory
I started my own business after training	3.44	0.792	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.48	0.812	Satisfactory

Program Outputs in Health Education

Health education programs were also rated satisfactory with an overall mean of 3.48 (SD = .790). The highest mean (3.50) corresponded to “I have taught other people the knowledge I learned,” demonstrating strong dissemination of health-related information within the community. The lowest mean (3.45) pertained to improved self-esteem, suggesting that while health knowledge increased, personal empowerment developed more moderately. These findings align with studies showing that community-based health initiatives foster household-level behavior change and awareness.

Table 2. Program Outputs in Health Education

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Knowledge learned is relevant and effective	3.49	0.709	Satisfactory
Concepts and skills taught were timely	3.47	0.920	Satisfactory
Knowledge learned improved my self-esteem	3.45	0.911	Satisfactory
I have taught others the knowledge learned	3.50	0.807	Very Satisfactory
I disseminated health information to the community	3.47	0.918	Satisfactory
I applied the knowledge learned	3.49	0.803	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.48	0.790	Satisfactory

Program Outputs in Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy programs obtained an overall mean of 3.36 (SD = .663), still within satisfactory levels. Respondents affirmed that they learned new knowledge (mean = 3.38), and developed reading/writing skills (mean = 3.37). The lowest rating (mean = 3.31) involved improved work performance, implying that while foundational literacy improved, translation to workplace competence was gradual. The data confirm the relevance of basic literacy interventions for diverse beneficiaries, especially young learners and out-of-school individuals.

Table 3. Program Outputs in Literacy and Numeracy

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Learned new knowledge in reading and writing	3.38	0.902	Satisfactory
Developed reading and writing skills	3.37	0.620	Satisfactory
Improved competencies required in my job	3.35	0.653	Satisfactory
Developed self-esteem	3.36	0.601	Satisfactory
Adopted the technology learned	3.36	0.615	Satisfactory
Contributed to better work performance	3.31	0.645	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.36	0.662	Satisfactory

Program Outputs in Advocacy Programs

Advocacy initiatives—covering environmental awareness, gender development, and community safety—were rated satisfactory with overall mean = 3.45 (SD = .951). The highest indicators (“It helped me develop self-esteem” and “I applied the knowledge I learned”) garnered 3.47, highlighting program relevance. The lowest rating (3.42) on disseminating advocacy knowledge reflects the need for continuous post-activity reinforcement. These results underscore the value of advocacy projects in influencing social behavior and awareness.

Table 4. Program Outputs in Advocacy Programs

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Advocacy program provided new knowledge	3.44	0.925	Satisfactory
Improved way of living	3.46	0.927	Satisfactory
Disseminated knowledge to the community	3.42	0.903	Satisfactory
Improved quality of life	3.45	0.944	Satisfactory
Helped develop self-esteem	3.47	0.946	Satisfactory
Applied knowledge learned	3.47	0.948	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.45	0.951	Satisfactory

Program Outputs in Livelihood Programs

Livelihood programs achieved a satisfactory overall mean of 3.45 (SD = .809). Respondents indicated enhanced entrepreneurial skills (mean = 3.44) and increased income (mean = 3.46). The strongest indicators—self-esteem development and application of entrepreneurial knowledge—both rated 3.47. These results signify that livelihood trainings effectively supported income-generating capability among beneficiaries, consistent with findings in similar extension studies.

Table 5. Program Outputs in Livelihood Programs

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Enhanced entrepreneurial skills	3.44	0.998	Satisfactory
Helped augment income	3.46	0.967	Satisfactory
Improved quality of life	3.42	0.980	Satisfactory
Increased community cohesiveness	3.45	0.960	Satisfactory
Helped develop self-esteem	3.47	0.911	Satisfactory
Applied entrepreneurial knowledge	3.47	0.915	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.45	0.809	Satisfactory

Economic Impact of Extension Programs

Economic impact was rated satisfactory (overall mean = 3.37, SD = .813). Beneficiaries affirmed improved housing (mean = 3.42) and enhanced economic status (mean = 3.39). The lowest rating (mean = 3.32) pertained to buying appliances, suggesting gradual economic progression rather than immediate financial gains. The data confirm that extension programs contributed to income augmentation, employability, and economic stability.

Table 6. Economic Impact of Extension Programs

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Helped me find a job using learned skills	3.36	0.988	Satisfactory
Augmented income through employment	3.36	0.987	Satisfactory
Improved housing due to increased income	3.42	0.811	Satisfactory
Enabled purchase of appliances	3.32	0.996	Satisfactory
Enabled acquisition of property/assets	3.37	0.968	Satisfactory
Improved economic status	3.39	0.977	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.37	0.813	Satisfactory

Social Impact of Extension Programs

Social impact indicators were also satisfactory (overall mean = 3.43, SD = .781). Respondents acknowledged improved decision-making (mean = 3.44), enhanced productivity, greater confidence, and stronger camaraderie (mean = 3.43). The lowest indicator (mean = 3.41) involved social engagement and mingling, possibly influenced by constraints during the pandemic years. Findings affirm that extension programs foster community solidarity, empowerment, and psychosocial well-being.

Table 7. Social Impact of Extension Programs

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Helped me become productive and decisive	3.44	0.845	Satisfactory
Awakened spirit of volunteerism	3.42	0.871	Satisfactory
Boosted self-esteem and confidence	3.41	0.866	Satisfactory
Helped me socialize and enjoy life	3.43	0.805	Satisfactory
Improved health and nutrition	3.42	0.813	Satisfactory
Built camaraderie with others	3.43	0.797	Satisfactory
Overall Mean	3.43	0.781	Satisfactory

Relationship Between Program Outputs and Economic/Social Impact

Spearman correlation results revealed significant relationships between program outputs and both economic and social impacts across all indicators (tabular value = 0.900 at 0.05 significance level). This means that improvements in skills training, health education, literacy and numeracy, advocacy, and livelihood programs directly predicted better economic outcomes and enhanced social well-being. These results support the premise that well-designed extension programs contribute holistically to community development.

Table 9. Relationship Between Social Impact and Program Outputs

Program Output Area	Tabular Value ($\alpha = .05$)	Decision	Interpretation
Skills Training	0.900	Reject Ho	Significant
Health Education	0.900	Reject Ho	Significant
Literacy & Numeracy	0.900	Reject Ho	Significant
Advocacy Programs	0.900	Reject Ho	Significant
Livelihood Programs	0.900	Reject Ho	Significant

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Central Mindanao Colleges, through its Center for Social Action, has effectively delivered a comprehensive and community-responsive extension program over the five-year implementation period. Program outputs in skills training, health education, literacy and numeracy, advocacy, and livelihood development were consistently satisfactory, and these outcomes significantly contributed to both the economic advancement and social empowerment of beneficiaries. The strong partnership between CMC, barangay officials, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders proved vital in ensuring successful and sustained implementation. The extension initiatives helped improve income, employment opportunities, self-esteem, community cohesion, health awareness, and overall quality of life. As evidenced by significant correlations between program outputs and economic/social impact, the interventions effectively addressed community needs and aligned with the institution's mission of promoting societal welfare and development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To further enhance the reach and impact of CMC's extension programs, it is recommended that the CSA Office sustain and improve existing initiatives while exploring new means of addressing evolving community needs. Programs should expand post-training support such as mentoring for livelihood sustainability, monitoring mechanisms for long-term skills application, and strengthened follow-up literacy interventions. Stronger collaboration with LGUs, NGOs, and private partners must be maintained to secure stable funding and technical support. Additionally, integrating community participation in the planning, design, and implementation phases will deepen local ownership and ensure cultural and contextual alignment. The College should also institutionalize periodic impact assessments to continuously refine program strategies and reinforce its commitment to sustainable community development.

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