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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### TRAINING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY RESIDENTS OF BANTAY, ILOCOS SUR: AN ASSESSMENT

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#### Abstract

Extension as one of the core functions of state universities and colleges in the country aimed to support communities who needs help and to sustain linkages locally and internationally. This study aimed to assess the needs and problems of the residents of Bantay, an adopted municipality of the university. This study utilized the quantitative method of research coupled with one-to-one interview with the barangay captains and focus group discussions with the residents. The needs assessment form from the University Extension Office and an interview guide were used to collect the data needed in the study. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the conduct of the study. Frequency counts and percentages, and ranking were used to treat the gathered data. The results of the study show that most of the residents are farming lands which they do not own. It was found out that the residents wanted trainings on livelihood programs such as silk screen processing and t-shirt printing, and cosmetology. Moreover, it was identified that the main problems in the community are unemployment and malnutrition. Thus, a community development plan was proposed to address the needs and problems in the community.

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#### Introduction:-

Extension, being one of the core functions of an institution helps stakeholders to be more aware of the needs of communities outside the institution and helps maintain linkages. As the University of Northern Philippines envisions itself as a global university anchored on excellence, it never forgets to extend help to local communities through extension services which includes provision of skills training, technology transfer, livelihood training, and information drive and advocacy program; seminars, consultancy services, capability building programs and community outreach program, and the like.

Through collaborative effort manifested by the Memorandum of Agreement for the Adopt-a-community and School Program, the university together with the local government units provide extension services to bring unified direction to improve the quality of life in the underprivileged and underserved communities.

Rubio, Pentinio, Ascan, Mendoza, Vito and Encio (2016) said that conducting community service is about relationship on building communities designed for personal and social development. Grumbach and Mold (2009) mentioned that too successfully redesign practices requires knowledge transfer, performance feedback, facilitation and support provided by individuals with whom practices have established relationships over time.

Regarding community extension, Wellard, Rafanomezana, Nyirenda, Okotel and Subbey (2013) found out that models of good practice include community selection of extensionists, a twin technical and community development focus, and mutual learning. Impact of community-based extension on uptake of technologies, food security and livelihood of poor groups was found to be broadly positive. They added that in order to achieve sustainable pro-poor impacts, support will be needed for continued technical and community development training and back-stopping for community extensionists, and evaluation of different approaches.

Bantay, Ilocos Sur is an adopted municipality of the University of Northern Philippines based on a Memorandum of Agreement. There was a request letter from the principal of Quimmarayan-Cabusligan Elementary School to help their school on the pupils' performance which is suspected to be caused by malnutrition in some of the pupils.

The main source of living of the residents of Cabusligan and Quimmarayan is farming. Based on a 2017 survey of the Department of Agriculture, the average age of farmers in the Philippines is 60 years old. According to the latest Family Income and Expenditure Survey, the average monthly income of the farmers is around P100, 000.00 a year or just over P8, 000 a month, which is well below the poverty line ([bussinessmirror.com.ph](http://businessmirror.com.ph), 2020). This monthly income of farmers does not meet both the basic food and non-food needs of a family of five in a month. With the high prices of basic commodities, they can only afford to eat less nutritious foods resulting to malnourishment especially to children. Poverty is the most fundamental cause of malnutrition particularly to families of destitute seasonal workers like the farmers.

Malnutrition refers to a person's diet does not provide enough nutrients or the right balance of nutrients for optimal health. Every year, there are about 13 to 15 malnourished pupils in Quimmarayan – Cabusligan Elementary School. The school caters pupils from three barangays namely: Quimmarayan, Cabusligan and Sagneb. Alindogan (2017) said that there is an estimated of seven million children in the Philippines who suffer from serious malnutrition. This problem is largely driven by inadequate access to nutritious food, lack of nutrition, as well as poor health and sanitation. This severely hinders children's concentration and performance at school. Malnourishment affects the academic performance of the pupils. According to Rashmi, Sweta, Fathima, Agrawal, Shah, & Sequeira (2015), the nutritional status of the children is strongly associated with their academic performance. Similarly, DepEd Naga (2020) found out that malnourished children are 20% less to be literate than children who received proper nutrition. Additionally, malnourished children are 7% more likely to make mistakes in basic arithmetic. Furthermore, those children were 79% less likely to score high in academic as compared to the healthy ones.

Albulescu and Albulescu (2014) mentioned that universities perform three basic functions: research, teaching and learning, and providing services to the community. The university has its role in contributing to local and regional development. The University Extension Office provides community development assistance program through the "Adopt-A-Community and School Program". The extension services adhere to a sustainable development program that uplift the lives of the clientele in the different service areas as well as package commercialize research outputs for adaption and utilization.

As such, a need assessment survey was conducted to assess the problems and needs of the residents of Bantay, Ilocos Sur in the year 2018. The results would serve as a basis on making a community development plan for the residents of Bantay.

### **Objectives of the Study:-**

This study aimed to assess the problems and needs of the residents of Bantay, Ilocos Sur in the year 2018. Specifically, it sought to determine the 1) profile of the respondents in terms of a) age, b) sex, c) civil status, d) educational attainment, e) occupation, f) monthly income, g) membership in organization, h) years of stay in the community, and i) natural resources of barangay ; 2) training needs of the respondents along a) skills training and technology transfer, and b) livelihood training; 3) needs of the respondents on information drive, training/seminar, consultancy services, capability program and community outreach program which includes a) sustainable development goals, b) education, c) cooperative management and entrepreneurship, d) barangay administrative capability building, e) engineering and surveying services, f) promotion and preservation of cultural heritage, g) health education program and services, h) security and public safety program, i) advocacy campaign on current issues and concerns, and j) agribusiness technology; 4) support of respondents to extension programs/services of the university; 5) problems of the School/Community as perceived by the respondents and suggested solutions to address the perceived problems; and 6) proposed development plan of the study.

### Methodology:-

This study made use of the mixed-methods of research. The quantitative part described the profile of the respondents, skills training and technology transfer, livelihood training programs, information drive/advocacy programs, training-seminars, consultancy services, capability programs and community outreach programs needed by the community. The qualitative part of the study was a one-to-one interview with the barangay captain and a focus group discussion with the residents. There were only 29 residents of Cabusligan and Quimmarayan, Bantay, Ilocos Sur who were willing to participate and served as the participants of the study after proper coordination.

The instrument used in gathering the needed data were a survey form which is a questionnaire-checklist on community needs assessment from the University Extension Office, and the interview guide. Ethical considerations such as privacy and confidentiality, conflict of interest and informed consent were observed throughout the conduct of the study. Frequency and percentage, and ranking were used to treat the data gathered.

### Results and Discussion:-

#### On the Profile of Respondents:

A greater number of the respondents (14 or 48.28%) are aged 31-40 years old; ten (34.48%) are aged 20-30 years old; and the rest are aged 41-50 years and 51-60 years old respectively. Almost all the respondents are female (28 or 96.55%), and only one (3.45%) is a male. Almost all the respondents are married (27 or 93.10%), while there is only one (3.45%) single and widow.

Most of the respondents (12 or 41.38%) are high school graduate and some (9 or 31.03%) are college graduate. Majority of the respondents (26 or 89.66%) are not employees, teachers or laborers. The remaining three are employee (1 or 3.45%), teacher (1 or 3.45%) and laborer (1 or 3.45%). Thirteen (44.83%) of the respondents have a monthly salary of 1,000-2,000 pesos; and four (13.79%) have monthly salary of 3,001.00-4,000.00 pesos and others have greater than 4,000 pesos salaries.

Most of the respondents (8 or 27.59%) are RIC members and few (3 or 10.34%) are members of farmers association. Others are Barangay Health workers (2 or 6.90%). Most of the respondents (25 or 86.21%) have resided in the barangay/community for 10 years or more, as they are permanent residents of the place. Rice is the foremost product in the barangay/community as 28 (96.55%) respondents agreed. Ten (34.48%) of the respondents ranked vegetables as second main crop followed by fruit trees (3 or 10.34%).

#### On Training Needs:

##### On Skills Training and Technology Transfer:

The training needs of the respondents on skills training and technology transfer is presented in Table 2.

The table shows that most of the respondents (25 or 86.21%) rank first "silk processing and t-shirt printing" as the priority need on skills training of the community/school; "massage therapy" was rank second by the respondents (10 or 34.48%); "food processing, cooking and baking" and "garment sewing" were ranked equally by the respondents (8 or 27.59%).

**Table 2:-** Training Needs of the Respondents along Skills Training and Technology Transfer.

A. Skills Training and Technology Transfer	Frequency	Rank
Silk Screen Processing and T-Shirt Printing	25	1
Massage Therapy	10	2
Food Processing, Cooking and Baking	8	3.5
Garment Sewing	8	3.5
Cosmetology	6	5
Driving	4	6
Housekeeping	3	7
Computer Encoding	1	8
Masonry/Carpentry	1	9
Floristry	1	10

Silk screen printing is the most preferred training need of the residents. Silkscreen printing is a fun and easy process of transforming an image to a chosen surface such as t-shirts. The resident-respondents were interested on this

training because they saw that it is currently in demand. They claimed that there are a lot of t-shirt printing done especially during basketball tournaments, and opening of classes for the students' uniform. This can be a source of income for the residents.

The second on the rank training need of the residents is massage therapy. According to Chillemi (2017), around 35 percent of all people who received massages experiences less pain associated with stiffness, soreness injuries and chronic health conditions. Knowing how to do therapeutic massage can help their husbands reduce pain or soreness from the whole day work at the farm. This would avoid them from buying and taking pain relievers yet they would still be able to have a good night sleep.

The third on the rank is food processing, cooking and baking. Food processing refers to the activities which convert raw food materials to final consumable products. It includes cooking, preserving, packaging, storage and distribution. The resident-respondents were parents who are mostly unemployed perceived that cooking and baking ken help them financially. They can either sell the food that they cook or bake or as one of them said, "Kesa gatangen mi koma kas kadigiti longganisa, tocino wennu tinapay ket agaramid kami laengen. Mas makalaka kami".

#### **On Livelihood Training:**

The training needs of the respondents on livelihood training is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:-** Training Needs of the Respondents along Livelihood Training.

B. Livelihood Training	Frequency	Rank
Cosmetology	5	1
Catering Services	3	2
Soap Making	2	3
Food Processing (Fruits/Vegetables)	1	4

It can be seen from the table that five respondents (17.24%) have listed and ranked first "cosmetology" as a priority training needs along livelihood training; "catering services" was ranked second by the respondents (3 or 10.34%); "soap making" was ranked third (2 or 6.90%) and "food processing" was ranked fourth (1 or 3.45%).

Cosmetology is the top most priority of the residents. Cosmetology is the study of application of beauty treatments including hair styling, skin care, cosmetics, manicure/pedicure and permanent or non-permanent hair removal. The resident-respondents were almost females. They recognized this need because it does not require big amount of money to start the business as the starting kit is affordable, it can be done within and nearby barangays, anytime. A resident affirmed, "Ti mayat nan gamin nu ammu mi agpedicure ken agmanicure ket uray nu ditoy la ayan mi ket mabalin mi isapul ta adu met ti agkasapulan ti kastoy a serbisyo." Similarly, the chairman of Quimmarayan mentioned during the interview that there are only two from their barangay who provide cosmetology services. However, during farming seasons, the two cosmetologist prefer to go to the farm instead of doing such services.

#### **On Information Drive, Training, Consultation Services, Capability Program and Community Outreach Program:**

Clean and Green Program was the main activity to be undertaken to promote sustainable development goals. Computer Literacy was identified as the main training need for quality education; financial management needs to be done as training need on cooperative management and entrepreneurship training; barangay governance and development program on administrative capability building; and infrastructure project development under engineering and surveying services.

Meanwhile, hotel and restaurant management, local history and culture and ancestral house conservation were activities to be done under promotion and preservation of cultural heritage; disaster and risk reduction management and responsible parenthood nutrition was recognized as the activity to be undertaken on health program and services.

Moreover, violence against women seminar was perceived to be the main activity under security and public safety program; basic legal counselling and peace education was a need under advocacy campaign on current issues and concerns; and seminar on organic farming was pinpointed as the foremost activity under agribusiness technology

**On Support to Extension Program:**

During the interview, all respondents manifested their willingness to support financially the extension services of the university to be conducted in their community.

The barangay chairman said, *“Sisasagana kami nga makitinnulong iti anya man a kasapulan kasla kuma ti pangngaldaw ken ti meryenda ken mangipabulod ti pasilidad nga masapol, kadagitoy umay yu iyeg nga aktibidades ditoy nanumo a baranggay mi.”* Translation: *“We are willing to support by providing free lunches and snacks to the participants, and provide facilities for the activities that you are going to execute in our barangay.”*

The barangay chairman extend its support to the different activities to be done in their barangay for the benefits of his constituents.

**On Problems Met by Recipients and Suggested Solutions to Address the Problems:**

The respondents mentioned unemployment as the foremost pressing problem in the barangay that needs to be addressed immediately. Farmers become unemployed when farming season is over. Due to unemployment of residents, problem on malnutrition arises since residents do not have jobs to do for living. Problems on peace and order were also found due to hearsays and small conflicts between and among family members and neighbors.

This conforms the claim of Jakimovski (2010) that unemployment is first and foremost an economic and social problem since it brings about costs for the unemployed as well as the society as a whole.

Inter-Agency Regional Analysts Network (2016) concluded that malnutrition as one of the biggest challenges the country faces.

Personality development and In-service trainings were perceived as immediate activities to be conducted to address the pressing problem of the community.

**On the Proposed Development Plan:**

One of the 12 Governance Initiatives of the University President is a responsive and adaptive extension program which was cascaded from the Philippine Higher Education Reform (PHER), and the regional development thrust. The long-term goal of the university is to sustain its active role in the realization of a socio-economic development that enhances the quality of life of the people in the province of Ilocos Sur, in particular, and the Ilocos Region, in general. To sustain this role, the University Extension Services shall package and disseminate appropriate technologies generated through research to increase productivity and income geared towards the improvement of the quality of life of partner communities.

Based on the result of the survey conducted, the UNP through the initiative of University Extension Office and CTE-MAME (MALIGAYA program) promotes the Quimmarayan-Cabusligan Elementary School (QCES) as Best Managed School by 2022 and a self-reliant community and empowered community.

A SWOT Analysis was undertaken to provide an overview of the potential of the school as an institution and as a facility. This served as the backbone of the three-year development plan of the school and the community through the CTE-MAME MaLiGAYA Program.

The Three-Year Development Plan for Quimmarayan-Cabusligan Elementary School includes (1) Livelihood Skills Training: SAGUT nayon PAGESAPULAN; (2) Numeracy-Literacy Program: Adal ko Iburay ko and Mentoring the Mentor Program; (3) Gender and Development trainings, seminar and workshop; (4) Community Outreach Program: Gimong Ko, Gimong Mo.

**Conclusions:-**

Based from the results of the study, the residents of Bantay needs a livelihood skills trainings to uplift their present economic status and academic performance of their children. Amidst to the needs and problems of the community, a proposed development plan was crafted.

**Recommendations:-**

In order address the needs of the community, the residents should be willing to participate in the skills trainings to be conducted and practice the skills to be learned.

It is therefore recommended that the Development Plan will be reviewed by authorities in the university and will be presented to the beneficiaries. Also, a close coordination and collaboration of the concerned agencies are needed for the success of the activities.

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