

Experiential Learnings & Challenges: Community Extension Program of BSBA Human Resources Management

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Abstract

This study examined the experiential learning of BSBA Human Resource Management students through community extension programs and its relationship with sustainability outcomes in Barangay 635 and Barangay 420. Anchored on David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, the study emphasized learning through experience and reflection in real-life community settings. A cross-sectional analytical survey design was used, with purposive sampling involving individuals directly engaged in the Community Extension Program, including BSBA-HRM students and participating community residents. The study employed a researcher-developed survey instrument adapted from existing tools on experiential learning, skills development, and community engagement, and validated through adviser, faculty, expert review, and pilot testing. Findings showed that experiential learning was highly positive in terms of knowledge and skills development, with an overall weighted mean of 4.36, and values formation and social responsibility, with an overall weighted mean of 4.21. The application of Human Resource Management concepts was assessed as positive, with an overall weighted mean of 4.14. The results further revealed that the program supported sustainability outcomes by promoting capacity building, leadership development, livelihood initiatives, student competencies, social awareness, and community empowerment. A moderate positive relationship was found between experiential learning and sustainability outcomes, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.65$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The study aligns with SDG 4, Quality Education; SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth; and SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals. Its sustainability impact is reflected in educational, socio-economic, and community sustainability by strengthening student learning while supporting long-term community development.

Keywords: BSBA-HRM Students, Community Empowerment, Community Extension Programs, Educational Sustainability, Experiential Learning, Human Resource Management, Social Responsibility, Socio-Economic Sustainability, Sustainability Outcomes

1. Introduction

Community extension programs serve as a link between academic learning and community development by allowing BSBA-HRM students to apply classroom knowledge in real-life community settings. These programs provide practical experiences that strengthen student learning while contributing to community improvement through education, training, and livelihood-related initiatives. This study focuses on the experiences, learning outcomes, and contributions of BSBA-HRM students in community extension programs, particularly in relation to student development and community engagement.

1.1 Community Extension Programs as Experiential Learning Opportunities for BSBA-HRM Students

Community extension programs connect academic learning with community development. For BSBA-HRM students, these programs provide opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in real-life settings, allowing them to gain practical experience while serving communities. Through these engagements, students participate in activities that support both personal learning and community development. Previous studies have shown that community extension and service-learning programs strengthen student engagement, experiential learning, and community-based professional development (Fernando, 2020; White, 2025; Dayao et al., 2023; Salazar et al., 2020).

1.2 Student Skill Development and HRM Learning through Community Engagement

The main themes reflected in the literature include experiential learning, skills development, and community empowerment. Community extension programs allow students to develop communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills while enhancing their understanding of human resource management. These experiences show how

community-based activities can support learning beyond the classroom. Similar studies emphasized that community immersion and HRM-related extension activities help students improve problem-solving, communication, leadership, and applied workplace competencies (Mendoza, 2020; Ramos & Villarin, 2020; Cruz & Dela Vega, 2021).

1.3 Community Empowerment through Education, Training, and Livelihood Initiatives

Community extension programs respond to local needs by providing education, training, and livelihood initiatives. Students work with community members to promote empowerment and address community concerns. In this context, community extension becomes a shared process where both students and community members benefit from meaningful engagement. Community extension initiatives have also been associated with empowerment, community participation, and sustainable local development, especially when programs respond to actual community needs (Garay et al., 2021; Reyes & Bautista, 2022; Marzo et al., 2023; Bloom, 2020).

1.4 Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory in BSBA-HRM Community Extension Programs

This study is anchored on David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which explains that learning occurs through experience and reflection. Community extension activities allow BSBA-HRM students to learn by participating in real-life situations, reflecting on their experiences, and applying their knowledge in human resource management-related contexts.

1.5 Rationale for Examining BSBA-HRM Students' Experiences, Learning Outcomes, and Contributions

This study explores the experiences, learning outcomes, and contributions of BSBA-HRM students in community extension programs. It examines how participation in these programs supports student development and community improvement. The study is important because it highlights the value of community engagement in strengthening HRM education. Studies on university–community partnerships and business education extension programs further support the need to examine how extension activities contribute to both student learning and community improvement (Cruz & Medina, 2022; Lopez & Garcia, 2021; Galorio, 2025).

1.6 Alignment of BSBA-HRM Community Extension Programs with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals

The study aligns with SDG 4, Quality Education, because it emphasizes learning through practical and community-based experiences. Experiential and sustainability-oriented education has been recognized as a meaningful approach for promoting awareness, practical learning, and student participation in sustainable development (Babich, 2022; Chaudhry et al., 2025; Pratama, 2025). This also relates to SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, because the content refers to training and livelihood initiatives that support community growth. The study may also connect with SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals, since community extension involves collaboration between students and community members.

1.7 Contribution of BSBA-HRM Community Extension Programs to Educational, Socio-Economic, and Community Sustainability

The study contributes to educational sustainability by showing how community extension programs enhance student learning beyond the classroom. It also supports socio-economic and community sustainability by emphasizing education, training, livelihood initiatives, and empowerment. Through the participation of BSBA-HRM students, the study highlights how academic programs can contribute to both student development and community improvement. Evaluation-based studies of community extension programs also highlight the importance of assessing sustainability, program effectiveness, and long-term community benefits (Esteban et al., 2025; Dayao et al., 2023; Garay et al., 2021).

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study used a cross-sectional analytical survey to examine how experiential learning gained by BSBA-HRM students through community extension programs in Barangay 635 and Barangay 420 related to sustainability outcomes in partner communities.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Barangay 635 and Barangay 420, which served as the partner communities for the Community Extension Program.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were individuals directly involved in the Community Extension Program, including BSBA-HRM students and participating community residents.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used to include only individuals directly involved in the Community Extension Program. Since the qualified population was manageable, the researchers included the entire identified population as the sample.

2.5 Research Instrument

The study used a researcher-developed survey instrument adapted from existing tools on experiential learning, skills development, and community engagement. The instrument was contextualized to measure students' competencies, including training needs assessment, leadership, diversity management, and participatory engagement, as well as challenges encountered and program sustainability indicators. Instrument development followed a systematic validation process in which a draft questionnaire was prepared after a literature review, reviewed by the adviser, faculty members, and subject-matter experts, revised, and pilot-tested with three respondents. Feedback and corrections from the experts and pilot testing were used to finalize the instrument.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Formal permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school administration and local barangay officials. The researchers coordinated with community leaders and program coordinators to facilitate fieldwork. They personally administered the questionnaires to BSBA-HRM students and participating community residents, explained the purpose of the study, and remained available to clarify items during completion.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Completed questionnaires were collected, checked for completeness, tallied, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis. Data processing focused on describing experiential learnings and challenges and testing the relationship between student-developed competencies through the extension program and sustainability outcomes in partner communities.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical procedures included informing participants of the study purpose and securing permission from relevant authorities. Participation was voluntary, and responses were handled securely during data processing.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Experiential Learning of BSBA-HRM Students in Community Extension Programs

3.1.1 Knowledge and Skills Development

The assessment of experiential learning in terms of knowledge and skills development was Highly Positive, with an overall weighted mean of 4.36. The highest-rated indicator was gaining practical community engagement skills, with a weighted mean of 4.57, followed by improved communication skills at 4.38. Learning how to plan and organize activities effectively received 4.37, while leadership and teamwork skills obtained 4.31. Problem-solving abilities ranked lowest among the indicators but still received a positive weighted mean of 4.19. These findings indicate that participation in community extension programs contributed to the development of students' practical skills and competencies. Through community activities, students strengthened their communication, leadership, planning, problem-solving, teamwork, and engagement skills. The highly positive assessment suggests that experiential learning served as an effective way of translating classroom knowledge into real-world experiences. This is supported by studies showing that community extension programs provide students with meaningful opportunities to apply HRM theories in real-life settings and enhance communication, leadership, planning, teamwork, and problem-solving skills (Ramos & Villarin, 2020; Cruz & Dela Vega, 2021). Foreign studies also affirm that service-learning and community-based experiential approaches improve applied knowledge, collaboration, and professional readiness through authentic problem-solving contexts (Kaliappen, 2024; Apostolou et al., 2023). Mendoza (2020) and White (2025) likewise emphasized that real-world community engagement fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and professional readiness.

3.1.2 Values Formation and Social Responsibility

The assessment of experiential learning in terms of values formation and social responsibility was Highly Positive, with an overall weighted mean of 4.21. The highest-rated indicator was learning to respect diversity within the community, with a weighted mean of 4.32. This was followed by practicing ethical behavior during activities at 4.25 and increased sense of social responsibility at 4.19. Strengthened volunteerism received 4.16, while becoming more empathetic toward community members obtained 4.15. The findings show that experiential learning positively influenced students' personal values and social awareness. Participation in community extension activities encouraged respect for diversity, ethical behavior, volunteerism, empathy, and social responsibility. These experiences helped students understand community needs more deeply and strengthened their commitment to serving others, contributing to their growth as socially responsible individuals and future professionals.

3.1.3 Application of Human Resource Management Concepts

The assessment of experiential learning in terms of the application of Human Resource Management concepts was Positive, with an overall weighted mean of 4.14. The highest-rated indicator was using motivation and leadership theories in community work, with a weighted mean of 4.35. This was followed by practicing training and development at 4.21,

applying recruitment and selection concepts during activities at 4.19, applying performance management concepts in tasks at 4.13, and applying basic labor relations concepts during extension activities at 4.11. The results suggest that community extension programs provided students with meaningful opportunities to apply Human Resource Management concepts in actual community settings. Students showed greater confidence in using leadership, motivation, recruitment, and training concepts, while more technical areas such as performance management and labor relations were applied to a lesser extent. Overall, the positive assessment indicates that experiential learning strengthened students' ability to connect theoretical HRM principles with practical community-based experiences.

3.2 Impact of the Community Extension Program on Sustainability

The Community Extension Program of BSBA–Human Resource Management supported sustainability at both the community and student levels. At the community level, the program promoted long-term development by building skills in leadership, organization, and livelihood, helping communities become more self-reliant and economically stable rather than dependent on short-term assistance. At the student level, it provided experiential learning by allowing students to apply HR concepts in real-life situations, which developed their practical skills, social awareness, and sense of responsibility. These findings show that the program created mutual benefits for both students and partner communities. Communities gained lasting capabilities, while students gained meaningful learning experiences. Together, these outcomes contributed to sustainable development by linking academic learning with community empowerment and practical capacity-building.

3.3 Relationship Between Experiential Learning and Sustainability Outcomes

The relationship between experiential learning and sustainability outcomes showed a computed Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.65$, indicating a moderate positive relationship. This means that as students gained more knowledge, skills, values, and practical HRM experience through community extension programs, the sustainability outcomes of the program also improved. Based on this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding indicates that experiential learning was significantly related to the sustainability outcomes of the Community Extension Program. The result suggests that student participation in community extension programs not only supports their academic and professional development but also contributes to stronger and more sustainable community outcomes.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that the community extension program had a highly positive impact on the experiential learning of BSBA Human Resource Management students, particularly in knowledge and skills development, values formation, social responsibility, and the application of Human Resource Management concepts. Through participation in extension activities, students improved their communication, planning, leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, community engagement, ethical behavior, empathy, volunteerism, respect for diversity, and social responsibility. The program also enabled students to apply HRM principles such as motivation and leadership, recruitment and selection, and training and development in actual community settings, although technical areas such as performance management and labor relations were applied to a lesser extent. The findings further showed that the program contributed to sustainability outcomes in Barangay 635 and Barangay 420 by supporting capacity building, leadership development, and livelihood initiatives. The moderate positive relationship between experiential learning and sustainability outcomes indicated that stronger student learning was associated with improved program sustainability and effectiveness.

Based on the findings, the study recommends the continued integration of experiential learning through community extension programs in BSBA Human Resource Management education, as these programs strengthen student competencies while supporting sustainable community development. Community extension activities should continue to provide students with opportunities to apply HRM concepts in real-life settings, develop professional and social values, and contribute to capacity building, leadership development, and livelihood-related initiatives in partner communities.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study followed ethical procedures by informing participants of the purpose of the research, securing permission from the relevant authorities, ensuring voluntary participation, and handling responses securely during data processing.

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