



RESEARCH ARTICLE

**The Impact of the Extension Project: Personality Development and Character Building for Resident of Ifugao District Jail**

Jordan L. Mariano\*

Ifugao State University, Philippines

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Sep 12, 2024	The study explores the impact of personality development and character building for residents in Ifugao District Jail. Based on the framework of empowerment the extension activities were conducted from 2016 - 2021. The study employed a qualitative method to determine the impact of extension activities conducted at Ifugao District Jail. These extension activities offer access to spiritual growth, a positive outlook, improved social skills, and increased financial gain crucial for personality development and character building. It is recommended that extension activities may be sustained for the benefit of the Person Deprived of Liberty and also for the Jail Officers.
Accepted: Nov 1, 2024	
<p><b>Keywords</b></p> District Jail Access Person deprived of Liberty Framework of empowerment Jail officer	
<p><b>*Corresponding Authors:</b>                      jordanmariano@gmail.com</p>	

**INTRODUCTION**

Well-developed social protection, skills development, affordable healthcare, and amenities provide a strong foundation for reducing rural economic inequality. However, offering top-notch shared extension services can significantly accelerate this progress. If general frameworks for social protection, development of skills, affordable healthcare, and amenities are well-developed, rural economic inequality is most likely to decrease. Offering top-notch shared extension services is one significant tactic to deal with this specific problem (Agholor et al., 2013).

Evaluation of extension services is necessary given the present social trend toward responsibility. An extension program's effectiveness depends on the development of precise objectives, which form the basis for outlining work procedures and determining whether implementation complies (Warburton et al., 2011). A significant challenge for extension services is meeting the constantly shifting needs of several rural communities around the world, since this calls for equipping extension workers with the knowledge, skills, and aptitude to support communities in dealing with these changes and challenges (Rossi et al., 2004). It is the responsibility of extension service providers to make sure that extension recipients are always satisfied with the outcomes they receive. Extension feedback has gotten increasingly helpful in assessing their regard and dedication (Agholor et al., 2013).

To meet various societal demands and problems, community extension was developed. Government, non-government, nonprofit, and private sector organizations worked together under a contract to assist towns in becoming self-sufficient and financially stable. Extension programs are based on community needs and are aimed at helping residents develop their moral character, independence,

and skills. People can continue their education well beyond the scope of typical state education to boost the economics of rural villages in a fast-paced society (Israel et al., 2011). Extension service is a thorough description of actions taken to accomplish several goals among certain beneficiaries. The following characteristics of extension programs make them stand out: a) a focus on the beneficiaries' needs; b) a goal to enhance their key behavioral patterns; c) a wide range of activities; and d) the inclusion of a systematic appraisal (Rubio et al., 2016).

Extension services often include components created by a higher education institution in response to formal or informal collaboration with various public, nonprofit, and social organizations. It seeks to improve the level of living for locals or to solve particular problems involving their basic needs (Laguador et al., 2013). The achievement of the objective of helping people to improve not only the living situations of the underprivileged but also the integrity and ideals of all those who contribute to this important work is expressed in the cultivation of a society with a compelling need for support from several organizations (Laguador & Chavez, 2013).

Few studies on the impact of extension services have been conducted, and several serious issues have been found that call for an immediate and suitable response (Agholor et al., 2013). Since almost all research initiatives are directed at agricultural producers, these precarious issues include inadequate extension assistance to beneficiaries, an insufficiently acceptable linkage with extension and research, outdated extension methods that make it impossible to compare different extension strategies, and farm workers who were persuaded to consume agricultural products to an extremely high degree in contrast to their performance (Baladjay et al., 2020; Bidad & Campiseño, 2010; Chua et al., 2014).

### **Description of the Extension Project**

Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) have a lot of experience inside jails that may not be given much attention by correctional institutions but it is important to the PDLs. These include boredom which affects their psychological aspect and leads them to suffer depression and psychological problems. Therefore, it is very important to teach them to develop their management strategies in their boredom by conducting training to equip them with knowledge and skills relevant to such.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Community development is used both as a tool and process to address the challenges faced by the respective communities. The community development paradigm in the early 1970s focused on helping the poor at the community level within the context of existing social and economic structures. This model means that decisions and programs are defined by "outsiders" rather than by the local community members themselves. Being top-down and bureaucratic, many viewed this process as an efficient way of achieving specific national socio-economic goals (Morgan, 1965).

More recently, the bottom-up approach to community development has gained popularity. Unlike the top-down model which is mainly defined by "outsiders," the bottom-up paradigm invokes the role of the local people in determining the type of intervention, priority setting, and implementation of the community programs. Also, this development paradigm concentrates on community empowerment (Flora & Flora, 1993) and operates at the grassroots and not on the policy level (Brocklesby & Fisher, 2003).

Community development is a process where government, non-government organizations, the volunteer sector, and even private corporations work together to empower communities economically, socially, and even politically (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005). Some scholars view this as a

means of mobilizing positive societal change by alleviating poverty, strengthening families and values, addressing specific social problems (e.g., increasing crime rate, etc.), and promoting democracy and inclusive development (Campfens, 1997). The community development efforts benefit the most marginalized people by overcoming imposed societal barriers. Overall, community development practice is often described as being distributive, participative, and focused on human development (Perkins, Brown, & Taylor, 1996) and perceives community development as a collective problem-solving, self-directed, and empowerment pursuit. Issues of drug addiction, for example, are handled not only by the community leaders and local government but also by the community members and families themselves in developing solutions. This model makes the public better to further appreciate the process of community development.

Thus, the involvement of civic members represents an active component in community development. This as a driving force accrued from the collective interest among individuals and groups provides a platform for cooperation among different players, e.g., community workers, government officials, educational leaders, non-government organization leaders, and community people. The concept of empowerment is also an essential aspect of community development. Empowerment is the development of individuals' potential to gain control over their lives (Rappaport, 1981). This concept of self-determination allows an individual or groups of people to exercise their choices and propel decisions toward a desired set of actions or outcomes (Pandey, 1981). Within a community development viewpoint, residents are regarded as empowered when they are mobilized and given opportunities to participate and decide on the nature of the public activities that they will be involved in for their good.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopted a qualitative approach, specifically through a case study design. Qualitative research delves into a research question or topic by capturing the perspectives of the local population directly involved. In this case study, we aim to understand the intricacies of a particular setting and the lived experiences of the people within it

### **Participants**

Participants of the study were the persons deprived of liberty who participated during the conduct of extension activities and jail officers.

### **Data Gathering Tool**

The necessary data needed in the study were gathered through the use of a self-structured guide questionnaire through in-depth interviews.

### **Data Gathering**

A request letter was forwarded to the Warden of Ifugao District Jail to interview the participants of the extension activities. After the warden grants the said request the researcher informed the participants with regards to the nature of the interview and solicited for their consent to participate.

### **Data Analysis**

To interpret the data, the researcher employed thematic analysis. This method, excels at uncovering patterns and themes within qualitative data. These themes can include factors or variables that influence the issues raised by participants. By analyzing their narratives, the researcher can gain

valuable insights directly from the participants themselves, allowing for the most fitting explanations for their behaviors, actions, and thoughts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

One of the dominating factors that contribute to the change of behavior of a person relies on the experiences that the individual encounters.

### Spiritual Growth

About boredom management, PDL A states that *“mundasal ya makisimba ya adi ta maboring”* (pray and worship so that we will not be bored).

Similarly, PDL B states that he overcame boredom inside the jail through prayer while PDL C states that *“Munbalbaliw mun nomnom hi kiphodan”* (change for the better future). *“Ongal d impact na teh nu kuma d kapigpigsaan mi ya dingol karkaru nan hapit maknongan aggeh ta kuma nakulong, immali da paman an nuntudu hi makatulong eh dahmi ta addi ami maboring”* (The extension activity conducted to us has a big impact because if we only heard the word of God when we are still in the community, we might never have been imprisoned. They came to share practices that would help us recover from boredom). It implies that the PDLs enhance emotional resilience, helping individuals cope with stress, challenges, and difficult emotions. Spiritual practice encourages the PDL's self-reflection and mindfulness, which contribute to greater emotional awareness and regulation.

The concept of spirituality is increasingly recognized as a crucial element in designing treatment plans for those facing social and economic challenges, including offenders. Integrating a spiritual dimension goes beyond simply rejoining families and communities. It fosters a sense of wholeness by promoting reconnection with a higher power.

This focus on the spiritual can cultivate deeper remorse and self-awareness in offenders. The belief that material possessions are insufficient resonates with the need to address the well-being of the spirit alongside physical needs. As a result, rehabilitation programs now incorporate spiritual programs, offered both within institutions and in community settings. These programs aim to guide offenders towards moral uprightness and a healthy lifestyle, aligning their actions with a higher purpose.

The individuals higher in Spiritual Orientation are also more likely to be more interpersonally oriented and outgoing, compassionate, open to new ideas and activities, and demonstrate greater diligence in their daily lives.

### Positive Outlook

PDL A state that *“Haan nga mapanunut t kaso, maawan ngay nu agtratrabaho ka t livelihood program, ken surwam t kakadwam, ibagak nan kakadwa nga nu kitan u jay kadwa tau nga basta etatalna nah ket katungtungen u ta haan nga agpanpanunut t sabali. Papigsaen na ketdi ti nakem na ken panunuten na nga umay tu ti aldaw ket rumwar kami dituy”* (We do not think about our case, especially if we our busy making handicraft/ livelihood program, also we tend to teach our co-PDLs, I also informed the other PDLs that if someone is quiet then we should talk to him and tell him that he should not overthink things and strengthen his mind and think that one day we will be released). It implies that PDLs have a balanced perspective, acknowledging difficulties, and choosing to focus on solutions and opportunities.

According to the Association for Experiential Education, experiential learning can be summed up in the phrase challenge and experience followed by reflection and application leading to learning and growth.

Positive thinking is a powerful tool for personal growth. It shapes your character and helps you become the best version of yourself. One key benefit is its impact on your outlook. Positive thinkers see challenges as opportunities for learning and growth, even during difficult times. This optimistic mindset fosters both mental and emotional well-being. It allows you to start each day with a sense of hope and purpose, and experience greater joy and fulfillment.

Positive thinking also influences your behavior. Just as we gravitate towards those with good character, we naturally project positivity ourselves. By choosing a positive attitude, you inspire others and create a more positive environment. While it's impossible to please everyone, positive thinking allows you to focus on self-improvement and build genuine connections.

### **Improved Social Skill**

“Nasurwanak nga maki kadwa dituy uneg idi ada jay activities ket nagka gropu kami, nagrugi idi ket kanayun kami ag istorya dagijay ka grupok ken dagijay kakadwa met dituy”. (I learned how to socialize inside the institution when there was an activity and we were in one group. That is the time we constantly communicate and socialize with other PDLs, especially with the participants of the said activities). It implies that PDLs can communicate effectively and clearly to others which is crucial for building and maintaining positive relationships.

The result corroborates the statement of Herryty (n.d.), which states that social skills are important because they can help you communicate more effectively and efficiently and, as a result, help you build, maintain, and grow relationships with colleagues, clients, and new contacts. These skills are important to maintain and improve no matter your position, industry, or experience level.

The result of the study also supports the study of McGhee (2010), which indicates that delinquent adults with a lack of social skills can gain increased knowledge of prosocial behavior, show less social avoidance, and experience less anxiety in social situations after participation in a social skills training program. The effects were confirmed by independent staff observations of the participants' behavior. Thus, the training was found to improve their social behavior by enhancing discussion skills, the showing of anger, and the expression of opinions.

### **Increased Financial Gain**

“Dakkel met nga banag ken pagyamanan mi jay ininmayan yu karu jay gimatangan yu ken panaglako yu jay product mi. Salamat ta inmay kayo ta uray kaskasanu ket dakkel nga tulong pinansyal para kadakami jay paglakwan ti productko mi”. (We are grateful and thankful for your efforts in coming especially when you bought and sell our products because it is really a very big help to us financially). It implies that the skills of the PDLs in making handicraft items is beneficial for them.

Increased financial gain through the livelihood program presents income-generating activities to PDL during their confinement where they can earn for their upkeep and financial support to their families. The capital for the livelihood project is either from BJMP for BJMP-funded projects or from the common fund of a group of PDL for non-BJMP-funded projects. Examples of continuing and most popular livelihood projects of PDL are bags and purses, bonsai made of beads, pastries, rugs, paper crafts, and wood crafts.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data gathered, the participants experienced economic impact as a result of the increased income because the faculty advocated and facilitated the commercialization of products made by the PDLs. The participants experienced the Social Impact as a result of the improved social skills for the reason that participants greatly improved how they communicate with their peers. Spiritual growth, the participants learned how to pray while inside the institution. Positive outlook, the impact of the activities made the participants realize that better things are waiting for them and it changes the way they think. It is recommended to sustain the extension activities in the Ifugao District Jail for it results in a positive change of behavior of the PDLs.

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