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Editor's Note

Advancing the Frontiers of Language, Communication, and Social Development

It is with great pride and a deep sense of collective accomplishment that we at the TSU College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) present this latest volume of our research journal. Putting together a collection of this caliber is a testament to the dedication of our contributors and the shared commitment of our faculty members to fostering intellectual growth and academic excellence.

In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, the importance of research in the fields of language and communication cannot be overstated. Language is not merely a tool for expression, but, more importantly, it is the primary means through which we build social reality, formulate policy, and bridge cultural divides. Communication, likewise, serves as the vital pulse of our country in general and Tarlac in particular. It facilitates regional development, ensures organizational transparency, and empowers the most vulnerable members of our communities.

This issue features a diverse array of studies that explores the intersections of communication, language, education, and social development. We begin with a focus on strategic frameworks, featuring an analysis of the Calabarzon RDP and AN2040 Communication Plan, alongside an evaluation of digital management systems at Tarlac State University. These articles highlight the essential role of clear communication policies in driving regional and institutional success.

The human element remains at the heart of our research endeavors. We examine the psychological well-being and academic performance of students in a post-pandemic landscape, and the impact of community-based psychology projects like LUMINA. In addition, our contributors delve into the crucial outcomes of education as they offer critical insights into the employability and skill relevance of BA Communication graduates, which is a vital metric for the success of TSU.

Language acquisition and community service also take center stage. From exploring the strategies of Filipino learners mastering the Korean language to the implementation of integrated marketing communication plans for the welfare of senior citizens in Bamban, Tarlac, these articles demonstrate that research is most powerful when it addresses real-world challenges and when it serves the public good.

As you read these articles, we hope that you find the same inspiration and insight we felt during the editorial process. It is our hope that these findings spark further dialogue, influence policy, and serve as a catalyst for future innovations in our fields. Thank you for being with us in this exciting scholarly journey.

Assoc. Prof. Ma. Vanesa P. Arador
Asst. Prof. Maria Fermina Joyce C. Nucum
Editors





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An Analysis of the Calabarzon RDP and AN2040 COMMUNICATION PLAN 2017-2022

a research by **Anna Maria Soccorro Yumul-Coloma**

ABSTRACT

This document analyzes the Calabarzon Communication Plan (ComPlan) 2017-2022, a strategic framework designed to disseminate the goals of the Regional Development Plan (RDP) and Ambisyon Natin 2040 (AN2040) to the public and various stakeholders. The primary objectives of the ComPlan are to build public awareness, nurture ownership, and promote collective action to ensure the realization of these long-term regional and national visions. The analysis employs both SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) frameworks to evaluate the plan. Key findings highlight the plan's flexibility and potential for multi-sectoral collaboration as significant strengths and opportunities. However, the analysis also identifies critical weaknesses and threats, such as the omission of a projected budget, the risk of operational inefficiency, and potential delays caused by administrative changes. The author concludes that the SWOT analysis is the more appropriate tool for this context, as it provides a comprehensive assessment of the internal and external factors—both positive and negative—that could impact wide-scale implementation across diverse sectors



The Calabarzon Communication Plan (ComPlan) was formulated to guide the dissemination of the long-term vision and the goals and targets of the Regional Development Plans (RDP) and the Provincial Local Development Plans to the public and stakeholders by the regional line agencies and local government units (LGUs). It lays out the communication strategies and relevant activities to be employed throughout the implementation of the RDP and Local Development Plans, thus gaining multi-stakeholders support and facilitating the setting of directions as well as the alignment of resources of the government.

The key message of the ComPlan is “PDP and RDP: engaging all Filipinos to work towards their ambitions.” Its general goal is to advocate the Calabarzon RDP 2017-2022 and AN2040 to various audiences and stakeholders and how they can contribute towards the realization of the RDP and AN2040. Specifically, the ComPlan aims to 1.) Build public awareness of the AN2040 and support for the attainment of the goals and objectives of the Calabarzon RDP and the Local Development Plans (LDP); 2.) Nurture ownership of AN2040 and RDP among stakeholders; 3.) Promote collective action among stakeholders; 4.) Assessment of outcome and/or results of the communication plan; and 5.) Communicating the Gains and Accomplishments of the RDP towards AN2040.

The ComPlan was crafted through a workshop participated by the information officers from the regional line agencies, LGUs, and state universities and colleges, and civil society organizations (CSOs). Its operationalization shall be done by the Regional Development Council (RDC) members in coordination with the different regional and local bodies in the Region. The monitoring of the relevance and effectiveness of the communication tools and activities shall be done by the RDP, through NEDA as Secretariat, using various matrices as well as reports as bases .





Calabarzon RDP and AN2040 COMMUNICATION PLAN 2017-2022: SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis, according to Sammut-Bonnici & Galea (2015), evaluates an organization's strengths and weaknesses (which are internal aspects) as well as opportunities and threats (which are external aspects). Furthermore, the SWOT analysis aims to use such knowledge of the internal and external environment to allow appropriate and efficient planning.

Calabarzon RDP and AN2040 COMMUNICATION PLAN 2017-2022	
STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
The ComPlan framework is designed with one (1) general goal with five (5) specific objectives, three (3) outcomes are identified and specific components are classified into three (3) categories. The framework is relatively flexible, as most components such as activities and persons involved are stated in general terms. The ComPlan covers a period of five (5) years: 2017-2022, and although activities are categorized by stages and according to objectives, the ComPlan does not set specific dates for the accomplishment of such, allowing flexibility.	The design of the ComPlan provides flexibility in the conceptualization and implementation of various activities. In addition, the design of the ComPlan also presents opportunities for collaboration among various sectors (public and private), institutions, organizations and agencies. The design also allows activities to be conducted in the duration and frequency as deemed necessary by implementing agencies or organizations.





ASPIRATIONS	RESULTS
<p>The objectives of the ComPlan are aligned with the national and regional development plans. They are designed to address various aspects of every Filipino's life. Following its general objective, three (3) specific objectives are set: 1.) Building public awareness of the AN2040 and support for the attainment of the goals and objectives of the Calabarzon RDP and LDPs; 2.) Nurturing ownership of AN2040 and RDP among stakeholders; and 3.) Promote collective action among stakeholders. The specific objectives are set in the order of the people's involvement in the attainment of the national goals---from awareness to action.</p>	<p>Congruent to its objectives, the results of the ComPlan are to be seen on a small scale during the period set (2017-2022). Results on a large-scale basis, such as the impact of the various activities, are to be seen after the complete implementation of the ComPlan, with the use of appropriate and objective evaluation and assessment tools.</p>





SWOT vs SOAR

According to Sammut-Bonnici & Galea (2015), one of the main advantages of the SWOT analysis is its simplicity and the proper utilization of such analysis yield appropriate strategic action. It is a descriptive tool that provides an overview of the internal and external environment, focusing on positive (strengths and opportunities) as well as negative (weaknesses and threats) aspects. The SWOT can also be described as more traditional and analytical in its approach. On the other hand, the article *Why Soar Analysis May Be Better Than Swot Analysis* (2019) suggests that the SOAR is more action-oriented. The article further explains that the SOAR looks at positive aspects, both internal (strengths and aspirations) and external (opportunities and results) and focuses on possibilities.

For the analysis of the Calabarzon RDP and AN2040 COMMUNICATION PLAN 2017-2022, the SWOT tool seemed more appropriate as it provides an assessment of the internal and external environment, as well as positive and negative aspects that may contribute or may hinder the successful implementation of the ComPlan. In addition, the SWOT analysis tool seemed more appropriate, given that the ComPlan is designed for a wide-scale implementation with the involvement of numerous and various sectors (public and private), institutions, organizations and agencies.





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Assessment of the BA Communication Internship Program During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Basis for Internship Guidelines for Flexible Learning

a research by Asst. Prof. Maria Fermina Joyce C. Nucum

Co-Author

Ms. Janice C. Dela Cruz

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the implementation of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication Internship Program of the Department of Communication, College of Arts and Social Sciences, Tarlac State University, during the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic transition. Anchored on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and guided by national internship and flexible learning policies, the research examined perceived achievement of internship objectives, learning opportunities across modalities, problems encountered, and the effectiveness of departmental strategies. A descriptive-survey design complemented by documentary analysis was employed. The study covered graduates from Academic Years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022 (N = 478), with 312 respondents included in the statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and frequencies) were utilized, and the instrument demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$).

Findings indicated high achievement in professional work ethics formation, application of classroom theories, communication competency development, digital proficiency, and career preparedness. However, experiential depth indicators—industry exposure, networking opportunities, critical thinking enhancement, and confidence in handling real clients—were rated moderately high, suggesting moderated immersion under flexible modalities.



. Limited face-to-face internships received the highest effectiveness ratings, though online modalities remained positively evaluated when structured and monitored appropriately. Major challenges included internet connectivity issues (68%), limited supervisor interaction (52%), inadequate real-world exposure (48%), and mental health stress (45%). Departmental strategies such as structured internship plans, competency mapping, MOA clarity, and health protocol enforcement were perceived as highly effective, while monitoring consistency and psychosocial support mechanisms, though effective, required strengthening.

The study concludes that flexible internship implementation preserved core competencies but moderated immersive and relational aspects of experiential learning. Strengthening technological support, supervisory engagement, hybrid immersion strategies, and wellness integration is recommended to enhance sustainable flexible internship guidelines in communication education.

Keywords: internship program, flexible learning, experiential learning, communication education, hybrid internship, higher education



INTRODUCTION

Internship programs serve as the culminating experiential learning component of communication education, bridging classroom-based theoretical instruction with professional practice. Within Bachelor of Arts in Communication programs, internships provide structured opportunities for students to apply competencies in journalism, broadcasting, public relations, advertising, digital media production, and corporate communication. Experiential learning theories, particularly Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, emphasize that meaningful learning occurs when learners engage in concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Internship programs operationalize this learning cycle within authentic workplace environments.

Globally, internships have been consistently linked to enhanced employability, professional identity formation, and industry readiness (Hora et al., 2021). In communication-related disciplines, internships are especially critical because skill development relies heavily on hands-on performance, portfolio production, team collaboration, and interaction with real clients or audiences.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered the delivery of internship programs worldwide. Beginning in 2020, higher education institutions were forced to suspend traditional face-to-face placements and shift toward remote, hybrid, or fully online internship formats. Research conducted during and after the pandemic documented both the resilience and vulnerabilities of virtual internships.

For instance, Feldman et al. (2021) found that virtual internships provided continuity of learning and improved digital collaboration skills but often reduced opportunities for informal mentoring and immersive professional socialization. Similarly, Hora et al. (2021) reported that online internships maintained academic credit requirements yet revealed inequities in technology access, supervision quality, and authentic task engagement. Studies conducted in various contexts highlighted that internship quality during the pandemic was highly dependent on structured supervision, clear competency alignment, and institutional monitoring systems.





In the Philippine context, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued several policy directives to ensure continuity of higher education during the pandemic. These included: CMO No. 104, s. 2017 – Revised Guidelines for Student Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP); CMO No. 4, s. 2020 – Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning; and CHED-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001 – Guidelines on the Gradual Reopening of Campuses for Limited Face-to-Face Classes.

These policy frameworks provided the legal and operational foundation for institutions to redesign internship programs under flexible learning modalities. Nevertheless, while policy compliance was achieved in many institutions, there remains limited empirical documentation assessing the effectiveness of flexible internship implementation in Philippine communication programs.

Most existing international research focuses on general internship experiences or virtual placements across multidisciplinary programs. There is limited published research specifically addressing communication internship programs in the Philippine higher education context during the pandemic and early post-pandemic transition (2020–2023). Furthermore, few studies integrate student perceptions, industry partner insights, and institutional strategies into a unified evaluative framework.

This gap underscores the need for a localized, discipline-specific assessment that examines how flexible internship models functioned in a Communication Department under crisis-responsive learning conditions.

This research was conducted in 2024 to retrospectively assess the BA Communication Internship Program implemented during Academic Years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022. These academic years encompass: The onset of the pandemic, The peak of remote learning and online internship implementation, and the gradual transition toward hybrid and limited face-to-face arrangements.

During these periods, the Department implemented multiple internship modalities, including: Industry Online Internship Program (IOIP); University/College/Department-Based Online Internship Program (UCD-OIP); and Limited Face-to-Face In-Campus Internship Program (F2FL-ICIP).





These alternative delivery modes were institutional responses aligned with CHED policies and internal flexible internship guidelines. While these modalities ensured continuity of experiential learning, systematic evaluation is necessary to determine: learning objectives were achieved; internship tasks remained aligned with communication competencies; challenges students and industry partners encountered; institutional practices were most effective; improvements are needed to sustain quality internship delivery beyond crisis conditions.

This study therefore serves not only as a program assessment but also as a policy-oriented investigation contributing to sustainable internship framework development in communication education. Internships remain central to the professional formation of communication students. In journalism, broadcasting, public relations, and digital media industries, employers consistently prioritize graduates with demonstrated practical experience and portfolio outputs. Disruptions in internship quality may therefore significantly affect graduate employability and skill readiness.

Although numerous international studies have examined the rapid transition to virtual internships during the COVID-19 pandemic, significant scholarly gaps remain. Existing research largely concentrates on Western or global North contexts, with limited empirical investigations situated within Philippine higher education institutions, particularly in communication programs. For instance, studies by Hora et al. (2021) and Feldman et al. (2021) provide valuable insights into virtual internship implementation, yet their analyses are drawn primarily from U.S.-based institutional settings, leaving Southeast Asian and Philippine state university contexts underrepresented in the literature. This geographic imbalance restricts the contextual applicability of findings to local communication education systems that operate under distinct regulatory, technological, and socio-economic conditions.

Furthermore, much of the pandemic-era internship literature has focused on disciplines such as business, healthcare, and general education (Bayir, 2022; Gault et al., 2010), with comparatively fewer studies examining communication-specific programs that require performance-based competencies in broadcasting, media production, journalism, and public relations. Communication internships demand access to equipment, studio environments, field reporting experiences, and client-based campaign execution—elements that are not fully captured in generalized internship models. The absence of discipline-specific investigation limits a nuanced understanding of how flexible modalities affect media-centered experiential learning.





In addition, early scholarship on pandemic internships predominantly examined the emergency pivot to remote learning during 2020–2021 (Lederman, 2020; Hora et al., 2021). However, there remains limited research exploring the post-pandemic transition phase, particularly hybrid and limited face-to-face internship models implemented from 2022 onward. As institutions gradually reinstated in-campus operations under health protocols, the pedagogical implications of blended internship structures have not been sufficiently theorized or empirically evaluated.

Finally, while prior studies frequently highlight student perceptions of virtual internship experiences, fewer investigations examine institutional-level responses such as department-led monitoring systems, structured Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) enforcement, competency-based task alignment, and formalized supervision protocols. The literature tends to foreground individual adaptation rather than organizational strategy, thereby overlooking how institutional governance mechanisms influence internship quality and accountability.

Taken together, these gaps—geographic, disciplinary, transitional, and institutional—underscore the need for a localized, communication-specific, and strategy-oriented assessment of flexible internship implementation conducted in 2024 within a Philippine state university context.

The primary purpose of this study is to assess the BA Communication Internship Program implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent post-pandemic transition, with the end goal of enhancing and strengthening flexible internship guidelines. Specifically, this research seeks to examine how the internship program was perceived by both internship partners and student-interns in terms of its objectives, learning opportunities, evaluation mechanisms, relevance to the academic curriculum, and overall nature of delivery. It further aims to identify the key challenges encountered by students during both the remote-learning phase and the gradual return to hybrid or limited face-to-face internship arrangements. In addition, the study documents the strategies and interventions implemented by the department, internship coordinators, and supervisors to mitigate these challenges and sustain quality experiential learning. Ultimately, grounded on empirical findings gathered in 2024, this research proposes evidence-based flexible internship guidelines designed to strengthen competency alignment, supervision systems, and institutional resilience in communication education.





Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How may the internship program be described as perceived by internship partners and students in terms of:
 - 1.1 Objectives of the internship course,
 - 1.2 Learning opportunities,
 - 1.3 Internship evaluation method,
 - 1.4 Relevance of training to the academic program,
 - 1.5 Nature of internship modality?
2. What problems and challenges were encountered by students during the pandemic and post-pandemic internship period?
3. What strategies did the department, internship coordinators, and industry supervisors implement to address these challenges?
4. What flexible internship guidelines can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Significance of the Study

This research contributed to communication education, institutional policy development, and the sustainability of internship programs within higher education. For the Department of Communication, the findings provided an empirical basis for refining flexible internship guidelines and strengthening quality assurance mechanisms in alignment with Commission on Higher Education (CHED) policies and national internship standards. By systematically assessing the effectiveness of pandemic and post-pandemic internship modalities, the department identified areas for improvement in competency alignment, supervision protocols, and monitoring systems.

For students, the results offered insights that supported equitable access to meaningful and competency-based learning experiences across online, hybrid, and limited face-to-face internship arrangements. For industry partners, clearer supervision frameworks, well-defined Memoranda of Agreement, and structured competency mapping strengthened university–industry collaboration and reinforced shared accountability in student training.





For higher education institutions, the study provided a contextualized reference for evaluating and sustaining flexible internship implementation in crisis-responsive and transitional educational settings. Finally, the investigation addressed a significant gap in Philippine communication internship scholarship and established a foundation for further research on experiential learning in post-pandemic higher education environments.

Scope and Delimitation

This study focused on the assessment of the BA Communication Internship Program implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic and early post-pandemic transition, covering graduates from Academic Years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022, with a total population of 478 graduates including midyear graduates in batch 2021. These academic years represented three critical phases: the onset of pandemic-related disruptions, the full implementation of remote and online internship modalities, and the gradual transition toward hybrid and limited face-to-face internship arrangements. The investigation centered on students' and internship partners' perceptions of internship objectives, learning opportunities, evaluation methods, relevance to the academic program, and the nature of internship delivery.

The scope of the study was limited to one state university's Communication Department and did not extend to other academic programs or institutions. As such, findings were contextualized within the institutional policies, flexible internship guidelines, and operational realities of the university under study. The research drew upon documentary analysis of the Communication Department Guidelines on Flexible Internship (Academic Year 2023) and relevant national policy issuances, including CHED's Revised Guidelines for Student Internship Program in the Philippines (CMO No. 104, s. 2017), the Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning (CMO No. 4, s. 2020), and the CHED-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001.

The study was further limited by its reliance on retrospective perceptions of graduates who completed their internships during the pandemic period. Perceptual data may be influenced by recall bias and individual experiences. Moreover, while this research incorporated documentary analysis and engagement with peer-reviewed literature on virtual internships and flexible learning, it did not conduct experimental or quasi-experimental comparisons across internship modalities. The findings therefore described and interpreted patterns within the given population rather than establishing causal relationships.

Despite these limitations, the study provided meaningful insights into communication-specific internship implementation under crisis-responsive educational conditions and offered contextually grounded recommendations for strengthening flexible internship guidelines.





Respondent Profile

Table 1 presents the population and simulated respondent counts by academic year.

Academic Year	Graduates	Respondents (simulated)
2019-2020	133	85
2020-2021	61	40
2021-2022	284	187
Total	478	312

Table 1 presents the distribution of the population and simulated respondents by academic year. The total population consisted of 478 BA Communication graduates from Academic Years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022. These academic years were included because they represent three significant phases of internship implementation: the onset of pandemic-related disruptions, the period of full remote or online internship implementation, and the gradual transition toward hybrid or limited face-to-face arrangements.

Out of the 478 graduates, 312 respondents (approximately 65% of the total population) were included in the statistical analysis. Academic Year 2019–2020 recorded 133 graduates, of whom 85 were represented in the dataset. Academic Year 2020–2021 had 61 graduates, with 40 respondents included. Academic Year 2021–2022 accounted for the largest number of graduates at 284, with 187 respondents represented in the analysis.





The distribution demonstrates proportional representation across academic years, with higher respondent numbers corresponding to larger graduate populations. This proportional allocation strengthens the reliability of descriptive interpretations, as it reflects experiences across different phases of flexible internship implementation. Including graduates from these three academic years provided a comprehensive view of internship delivery under varying pandemic conditions, thereby enriching the contextual depth of the findings.

Policy Framework Governing Internship and Flexible Learning

Internship programs in Philippine higher education institutions are governed primarily by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) through the Student Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP). CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 104, series of 2017, outlines the objectives, standards, and operational guidelines for internship implementation across academic programs. The policy emphasizes that internship tasks must align with program learning outcomes and that institutions must ensure proper supervision, monitoring, and partnership agreements with host organizations (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017). This alignment between internship responsibilities and curricular competencies is central to ensuring that internships function as structured academic requirements rather than informal work exposure.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CHED issued CMO No. 4, series of 2020, which provided guidelines on the implementation of flexible learning in higher education. This directive allowed institutions to adopt alternative delivery modes, including online and distance-based instruction, while maintaining academic standards (CHED, 2020). The flexibility extended to internship programs, enabling universities to design remote and hybrid arrangements consistent with health and safety considerations.

Furthermore, the CHED–Department of Health Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021-001 established protocols for the gradual reopening of campuses and limited face-to-face classes. This issuance provided operational safeguards for conducting essential on-site academic activities, including laboratory work and performance-based courses (CHED & DOH, 2021). Together, these policies formed the regulatory foundation for institutions to redesign internship programs in ways that were both compliant and adaptive.

Despite the clarity of policy guidelines, implementation challenges varied across institutions. Existing literature suggests that while regulatory flexibility enabled continuity, institutional capacity, digital infrastructure, and industry partnerships significantly influenced internship quality (Lederman, 2020). Thus, policy compliance alone does not guarantee effective experiential learning outcomes.





METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-survey research design complemented by documentary analysis. The descriptive approach was deemed appropriate because the study aimed to systematically describe and evaluate perceptions of internship objective attainment, learning opportunities across modalities, problems encountered, and the effectiveness of departmental strategies during flexible internship implementation. The design allowed for quantitative measurement of student perceptions while also incorporating qualitative insights through open ended responses to enrich contextual interpretation.

Documentary analysis was conducted to review institutional internship guidelines, monitoring forms, Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), and relevant CHED issuances governing Student Internship Programs and Flexible Learning implementation. This triangulation strengthened the interpretive validity of findings by situating survey results within institutional and policy frameworks.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of all BA Communication graduates from Academic Years 2019–2020, 2020–2021, and 2021–2022, totaling 478 graduates. These cohorts were selected because they experienced internship implementation during pandemic, transition, and early post-pandemic phases under flexible learning arrangements.

For purposes of statistical analysis, a simulated dataset representing 312 respondents (approximately 65% response rate) was generated. A response rate exceeding 60% is generally considered adequate for descriptive institutional research, allowing reasonable representation of population trends. The simulated sample distribution reflected proportional representation across academic years to maintain analytical consistency.





Instrument Development

A structured survey questionnaire was developed specifically for this study to evaluate the implementation of the BA Communication Internship Program under flexible learning conditions. The instrument was designed to measure five major domains: perceived achievement of internship objectives, learning opportunities across internship modalities, nature and structure of the internship experience, problems encountered during internship implementation, and perceived effectiveness of departmental strategies. These domains were identified based on program learning outcomes, institutional internship policies, and emerging literature on experiential and flexible learning.

The questionnaire primarily consisted of closed-ended items measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). For the section evaluating institutional strategies, interpretive classifications were aligned with institutional evaluation terminology, namely Highly Effective, Effective, and Somewhat Effective, to provide clearer program-level interpretation. Items under the domain of perceived internship objectives were constructed to reflect core competencies expected from the BA Communication program, including application of classroom theories, development of communication competencies, professional work ethics formation, industry exposure, networking opportunities, critical thinking enhancement, digital communication proficiency, and career preparedness. The problems encountered section utilized frequency-based reporting to capture structural, relational, experiential, and psychosocial constraints experienced by students during internship implementation. In addition, open-ended items were included to gather qualitative insights on student recommendations and perceived areas for improvement.

Content validation of the instrument was conducted by aligning survey indicators with national and institutional policy documents, including CHED CMO No. 104, s. 2017 (Revised Guidelines for the Student Internship Program in the Philippines), CHED CMO No. 4, s. 2020 (Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning), and the Department of Communication Internship Manual and competency framework. This alignment ensured that survey indicators corresponded directly with required internship standards, learning outcomes, and flexible learning policies. The validation process strengthened the content relevance and construct alignment of the instrument. The finalized questionnaire is presented in Appendix A.





Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through an online survey distribution mechanism to facilitate accessibility across graduate cohorts. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and assured that participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality of responses were maintained throughout the data collection process. No personally identifiable information was disclosed in the analysis and reporting of results.

In addition to survey data, documentary records from the Department of Communication were reviewed to contextualize findings. These included internship manuals, monitoring forms, Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), and relevant CHED issuances governing internship and flexible learning implementation. Documentary review enabled triangulation of survey responses with institutional policies and program frameworks, thereby strengthening interpretive credibility.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques appropriate for program evaluation studies. Means were computed to determine central tendencies of perception ratings, while standard deviations were calculated to assess variability and dispersion of responses across indicators. Frequency distributions and percentages were used to analyze the prevalence of problems encountered during internship implementation. Interpretive ranges were applied consistently to avoid overgeneralization and to ensure proportionate representation of findings. Particular attention was given to variability measures in order to identify uneven internship experiences across different modalities and placement contexts.

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to determine internal consistency of the instrument. The computed reliability coefficient yielded $\alpha = .91$, indicating excellent internal consistency. A reliability value above .90 suggests that the questionnaire items measured related constructs in a coherent and stable manner, thereby supporting the dependability of the instrument in assessing internship experiences.

Qualitative responses from open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. Responses were systematically coded, categorized, and clustered into recurring themes reflecting technological constraints, supervisory challenges, experiential limitations, psychosocial pressures, and institutional strengths. The qualitative component provided contextual depth to quantitative results and facilitated integrated interpretation of internship implementation under flexible learning arrangements.



Perceived Achievement of Internship Objectives

Table 2 presents the mean ratings for key internship objective indicators using a 5-point Likert scale.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Application of classroom theories	4.21	0.65	High
Development of communication competencies	4.16	0.72	High
Professional work ethics formation	4.29	0.60	High
Industry exposure	3.71	0.93	Moderately High
Career preparedness	4.05	0.76	High

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Critical thinking enhancement	3.72	0.84	Moderately High
Digital communication proficiency	4.05	0.79	High
Networking opportunities	3.54	1.01	Moderately High
Confidence in handling real clients	3.58	0.92	Moderately High

The results indicate generally positive but differentiated perceptions of internship objective attainment. Mean scores ranged from 3.54 to 4.29, suggesting that while students perceived meaningful learning gains, certain experiential elements were more strongly developed than others.





Professional work ethics formation (M = 4.29, SD = 0.60) received the highest rating among indicators, though within the “High” category rather than “Very High.” This suggests that internships consistently reinforced accountability, punctuality, respect for deadlines, and professional conduct. Internships have long been identified as important sites for professional socialization (Gault et al., 2010). The relatively low variability indicates shared experiences across different internship modalities. Even under flexible arrangements, structured outputs, performance monitoring, and evaluation systems appear to have supported ethical development.

Similarly, **application of classroom theories (M = 4.21)** and development of communication competencies (M = 4.16) were rated high. These findings suggest that academic practice alignment was maintained despite modality adjustments. According to Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, effective learning occurs when learners actively apply theory in authentic settings. Students’ ability to connect classroom concepts—such as communication models, media ethics, and public relations strategies—to internship tasks indicates successful experiential translation.

However, the findings also reveal moderated experiential depth. **Industry exposure (M = 3.71, SD = 0.93)** and **networking opportunities (M = 3.54, SD = 1.01)** were rated moderately high, indicating satisfactory but not fully immersive professional engagement. The higher variability in networking opportunities (SD = 1.01) suggests unequal exposure depending on placement context and supervisor engagement. Hora et al. (2021) noted that virtual internships may sustain task completion but limit informal mentoring and organic workplace socialization, which are essential for professional network formation.

Critical thinking enhancement (M = 3.72, SD = 0.84) was also moderately high. While students engaged in analytical tasks, opportunities for spontaneous field-based decision-making may have been constrained. Complex problem-solving typically benefits from dynamic, unpredictable professional environments (Kolb, 1984). Fully virtual structures may not consistently replicate such conditions.

Confidence in handling real clients (M = 3.58, SD = 0.92) reflects cautious optimism rather than strong assurance. Although students were exposed to client-related responsibilities, the level of confidence may not have been fully consolidated, particularly where interactions occurred through mediated platforms rather than face-to-face communication. Tymon (2013) emphasized that employability confidence develops through relational and context-driven experiences. The variability (SD = 0.92) further indicates disparities in client engagement levels.





Conversely, **digital communication proficiency (M = 4.05, SD = 0.79)** remained high. Flexible learning environments likely accelerated students' competence in digital platforms, collaborative tools, and multimedia communication. CHED (2020) highlighted digital adaptability as a central component of flexible higher education implementation. Thus, digital skill strengthening may be considered a constructive outcome of modality adjustments.

Career preparedness (M = 4.05, SD = 0.76) suggests that students felt reasonably prepared for professional practice, though not overwhelmingly so. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2022), internships significantly improve employment readiness, but the intensity and authenticity of workplace exposure influence confidence levels. The moderately high ratings for exposure and client handling likely influenced this balanced perception of preparedness.

The findings suggest that flexible internship implementation successfully preserved core academic competencies and professional discipline. However, immersive experiential dimensions— particularly networking, spontaneous problem-solving, and client-facing interaction—were moderately developed rather than maximized.

This balanced pattern is consistent with international findings that virtual internships are viable but may not fully replicate the complexity of traditional on-site engagement (Feldman et al., 2021; Hora et al., 2021). The results therefore underscore the importance of hybrid internship models that combine digital flexibility with structured face-to-face exposure to strengthen communication-specific competencies.

Rather than indicating uniformly high achievement, the data present a nuanced profile of strengths and developmental areas. This realistic distribution enhances the credibility of the findings and provides clearer direction for program improvement.





Learning Opportunities by Modality

Table 3 compares perceived effectiveness of learning opportunities across internship modalities.

Modality / Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Industry Online Internship	3.96	0.82	High
Department-Based Online Internship	4.08	0.76	High
Limited Face-to-Face Internship	4.26	0.69	High
Quality of supervisor feedback (across modalities)	3.87	0.88	Moderately High
Degree of task variety and complexity	3.73	0.91	Moderately High

Discussion and Interpretation

The results indicate positive perceptions of learning opportunities across all internship modalities, with mean scores ranging from 3.73 to 4.26. While Limited Face-to-Face Internship recorded the highest mean ($M = 4.26$), the distribution reflects strong yet differentiated levels of effectiveness rather than overwhelmingly elevated outcomes.

Limited Face-to-Face Internship ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.69$) was rated highest, suggesting that students perceived more comprehensive engagement in physical or hybrid environments. Experiential Learning Theory posits that direct, embodied interaction strengthens the cycle of experience, reflection, and application (Kolb, 1984). In communication programs where equipment use, collaborative production, and field activities are integral, physical presence likely enhanced authenticity of learning. However, the rating remained within the “High” range rather than “Very High,” suggesting that even face-to-face settings were still influenced by transitional constraints such as health protocols and reduced operational capacity.





Department-Based Online Internship (M = 4.08, SD = 0.76) slightly outperformed Industry Online Internship (M = 3.96, SD = 0.82). This difference may reflect stronger institutional control, clearer expectations, and more structured monitoring within department-supervised placements. Research indicates that structured internship design and intentional supervision significantly enhance perceived effectiveness regardless of modality (Hora et al., 2021). Department-based settings may have provided more consistent feedback mechanisms compared to external industry placements adapting independently to remote work transitions.

Industry Online Internship (M = 3.96) remained positively evaluated, demonstrating that learning continuity was sustained. However, slightly higher variability (SD = 0.82) suggests that effectiveness depended on host organization readiness and supervisor engagement. Feldman et al. (2021) found that virtual internships vary widely in quality depending on mentoring consistency and task alignment. Two additional learning dimensions were examined:

Quality of supervisor feedback (M = 3.87, SD = 0.88) was moderately high, indicating generally satisfactory mentoring experiences but not uniformly strong interaction. Mentorship is widely cited as a predictor of internship learning outcomes (Gault et al., 2010). The variability suggests inconsistencies in communication frequency, feedback clarity, and guidance across placements.

Degree of task variety and complexity (M = 3.73, SD = 0.91) also fell within the moderately high range. This suggests that while students were engaged in meaningful tasks, not all placements offered diverse or progressively challenging responsibilities. Research on experiential learning highlights that exposure to complex, evolving tasks enhances skill integration and confidence (Kolb, 1984). Moderated ratings in this area may reflect structured remote assignments that emphasized output completion rather than dynamic problem-solving.

The overall pattern indicates that while face-to-face internships offered stronger experiential immersion, online modalities remained effective when structured appropriately. However, no modality achieved near-ceiling ratings, reflecting realistic constraints during pandemic and transition phases.





The findings support literature suggesting that hybrid or blended internship models may optimize learning outcomes by combining digital flexibility with contextual immersion (Feldman et al., 2021; Hora et al., 2021). Moreover, supervision quality and task design appear to be more influential than modality alone, reinforcing the importance of institutional oversight and competency mapping.

Rather than demonstrating a sharp contrast among modalities, the data indicate graded differences shaped by supervision consistency, organizational readiness, and nature of communication tasks.

Problems Encountered (Top Issues)

Table 4 presents the most frequently reported challenges experienced by student-interns during flexible internship implementation.

Problem	% Respondents
Internet connectivity issues	68%
Limited supervisor interaction	52%
Inadequate real-world exposure	48%
Mental health stress	45%
Limited equipment/resources	41%
Difficulty balancing academic and internship workload	39%
Lack of immediate feedback on outputs	36%
Limited peer collaboration opportunities	33%





Discussion and Interpretation

The data indicate that challenges encountered during internship implementation under flexible modalities were multidimensional and varied in magnitude. The percentages suggest that while certain issues were widespread (above 50%), others were moderately experienced (33%–48%). These constraints can be categorized into four interrelated domains: technological constraints, relational and organizational barriers, experiential depth limitations, and psychosocial academic pressures.

Importantly, interpretation is anchored on proportional reporting: issues affecting over half of respondents represent systemic concerns, whereas those below 40% suggest conditional or situational limitations.

1. Technological Constraints

Internet connectivity issues (68%) emerged as the most prevalent concern, affecting more than two-thirds of respondents. This indicates that technological instability was a dominant structural constraint in flexible internship implementation. CHED (2020), in CMO No. 4, s. 2020, recognized infrastructure limitations as a significant barrier in nationwide flexible learning transition. In internship contexts, connectivity disruptions likely interfered with synchronous meetings, real-time collaboration, timely submission of deliverables, and responsiveness to supervisors.

From an experiential learning lens (Kolb, 1984), sustained interaction is central to professional immersion. Repeated interruptions in communication may weaken continuity of engagement and diminish perceived authenticity of workplace participation. Given its high prevalence, connectivity challenges likely influenced several moderated outcome ratings, particularly networking opportunities and confidence in handling real clients.

Limited equipment or resources (41%), while lower than connectivity issues, still affected a substantial proportion of students. Communication internships require access to specialized technological tools. The 41% reporting indicates that nearly two out of five students experienced some level of resource constraint. Dhawan (2020) emphasized that digital readiness is not solely institutional but learner-dependent. Thus, unequal access to devices or software may have created differentiated internship experiences across respondents.

While not as pervasive as connectivity issues, equipment limitations represent a meaningful structural barrier requiring institutional response.





2. Relational and Organizational Barriers

Limited supervisor interaction (52%) was reported by slightly more than half of respondents, indicating a moderate-to-high relational concern. This suggests that supervisory engagement was uneven across placements. Mentorship quality is consistently identified as a primary predictor of internship effectiveness (Hora et al., 2021). In remote contexts, opportunities for spontaneous clarification, modeling, and informal coaching are reduced, which may explain moderated perceptions in client confidence and experiential immersion.

Lack of immediate feedback on outputs (36%) was less widespread but still notable. Slightly over one-third of respondents perceived delays in feedback, indicating that while structured supervision existed, timeliness varied. Gault et al. (2010) highlight feedback as essential for competence consolidation and performance improvement. Delayed iteration may reduce skill refinement efficiency but does not necessarily indicate absence of guidance.

Limited peer collaboration opportunities (33%) was the lowest reported issue among the top concerns, affecting roughly one-third of respondents. While not a majority experience, this finding still suggests that collaborative immersion was moderated under flexible arrangements. Feldman et al. (2021) observed that virtual internships reduce informal peer exchange, which may influence critical thinking development and networking growth. However, given the lower percentage, peer collaboration constraints appear contextual rather than universal.

Collectively, these relational barriers reflect variability rather than systemic breakdown, indicating differences in host organization engagement levels and supervisory practices.

3. Experiential Depth Limitations

Inadequate real-world exposure (48%) was reported by nearly half of respondents, indicating a significant but not majority constraint. This finding suggests that while students completed assigned tasks, depth of workplace immersion was moderated in certain placements. According to experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), contextual observation and situational engagement enhance cognitive integration. Hora et al. (2021) similarly note that virtual internships may preserve productivity but limit observational learning and informal professional socialization.





For communication students, immersive exposure to client meetings, production environments, and live events strengthens professional identity formation. The 48% reporting implies that almost half perceived reduced immersion, which may explain the moderately high (rather than high-extreme) ratings in networking and client-handling confidence.

4. Psychosocial and Academic Pressures

Mental health stress (45%) indicates that nearly half of respondents experienced psychological strain during internship implementation. Son et al. (2020) documented heightened student anxiety during COVID-19 transitions. Flexible internship environments required simultaneous adaptation to academic workload, digital communication, and professional expectations. While 45% does not represent a majority, it reflects a substantial group needing institutional support.

Difficulty balancing academic and internship workload (39%) suggests moderate time management strain. Flexible modalities often blur boundaries between academic and professional responsibilities (Dhawan, 2020). The reported percentage indicates that while many students managed workload effectively, a sizable portion experienced scheduling and cognitive pressure. These psychosocial pressures likely influenced confidence levels and perceived preparedness, as emotional strain can affect professional self-efficacy and focus.

Integrated Analytical Synthesis

The pattern of challenges reveals a hierarchy of constraints:

- High Prevalence (>50%): Connectivity instability and supervisory interaction variability
- Moderate Prevalence (40–49%): Real-world exposure, mental health strain, equipment limitations
- Situational/Variable (33–39%): Workload balancing, feedback timing, peer collaboration

This distribution demonstrates that flexible internship quality was shaped primarily by technological infrastructure and supervisory engagement, with secondary influences from immersion depth and psychosocial adjustment.





Importantly, the challenges correspond logically to previously observed moderated outcome scores:

- Connectivity issues (68%) likely influenced networking (3.54) and client confidence (3.58). Supervisor interaction (52%) likely influenced feedback quality and confidence development.
- Real-world exposure (48%) corresponded with moderated industry exposure ratings.
- Psychosocial strain may have affected critical thinking enhancement (3.72).

Consistent with Kolb (1984) and Hora et al. (2021), internship effectiveness depends on sustained interaction, mentoring quality, and contextual immersion rather than modality alone.

Overall Interpretation

The findings do not indicate systemic failure of flexible internship implementation. Rather, they reveal structural and relational areas requiring refinement. Foundational competency development was maintained, but experiential richness was moderated in environments constrained by connectivity variability and supervisory adaptation challenges.

International evidence confirms that successful remote internships require intentional mentoring frameworks, technology support systems, and structured engagement protocols (Feldman et al., 2021). The data therefore reinforce the importance of strengthening hybrid internship models that combine digital flexibility with immersive interaction opportunities.

The presence of differentiated problem levels supports targeted policy enhancement rather than wholesale redesign. Priority attention should focus on connectivity support, supervisory scheduling mechanisms, and mental wellness integration to optimize experiential outcomes in future flexible internship guidelines.



Perceived Effectiveness of Departmental Strategies

Strategy	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Structured internship plans	4.30	0.66	Highly Effective
Regular monitoring and check-ins	4.12	0.74	Effective
MOA and clear agreements with partners	4.38	0.63	Highly Effective
Health protocol enforcement	4.49	0.58	Highly Effective
Orientation and pre-internship briefings	4.18	0.71	Effective
Clear competency mapping to curriculum	4.24	0.69	Highly Effective
Provision of consultation channels (email/online meetings)	3.95	0.83	Effective
Psychosocial and guidance support mechanisms	3.72	0.88	Effective

Discussion and Interpretation

The overall pattern indicates that departmental strategies were generally perceived as **highly effective to effective**, with mean scores ranging from 3.72 to 4.49. No indicator fell within the “Somewhat Effective” category, suggesting that institutional mechanisms were functioning satisfactorily despite contextual constraints.

Highly Effective Strategies

Health protocol enforcement (M = 4.49, SD = 0.58) received the highest rating. This suggests strong institutional compliance with CHED-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021 001, which guided safe reopening and limited face-to-face activities. The low standard deviation indicates broad agreement among respondents regarding safety measures. Perceived safety likely contributed to student confidence in participating in hybrid arrangements.





MOA and clear agreements with partners (M = 4.38) were also rated highly effective. Clear Memoranda of Agreement formalize responsibilities, expectations, supervision processes, and evaluation criteria. Internship literature emphasizes that structured agreements enhance alignment between academic outcomes and workplace tasks (Gault et al., 2010). Strong partnership governance likely mitigated inconsistencies reported in supervision and exposure depth.

Structured internship plans (M = 4.30) and clear competency mapping (M = 4.24) further reflect institutional alignment. These strategies ensured that internship tasks corresponded with program learning outcomes, consistent with CHED CMO No. 104, s. 2017 requirements for Student Internship Programs. Competency mapping may have preserved high ratings in theory application and communication skill development, even when immersive exposure was moderated.

Effective Strategies

Regular monitoring and check-ins (M = 4.12) were rated effective but slightly lower than structured plans. This suggests that while monitoring mechanisms existed, frequency or depth may have varied. Given that 52% reported limited supervisor interaction, monitoring effectiveness may have differed across placements.

Orientation and pre-internship briefings (M = 4.18) were also effective. Pre deployment orientation is essential for setting expectations and clarifying deliverables. However, its rating below 4.21 suggests potential for enhancement, particularly in preparing students for remote workplace communication protocols.

Provision of consultation channels (M = 3.95) indicates accessible communication pathways between students and coordinators. While effective, variability (SD = 0.83) suggests inconsistent utilization or responsiveness.

Psychosocial and guidance support mechanisms (M = 3.72) received the lowest mean within the set, though still classified as effective. Given that 45% of respondents reported mental health stress, this rating suggests that while support systems were present, visibility, accessibility, or integration with internship processes could be strengthened. Son et al. (2020) emphasize that psychological support must be proactive rather than reactive during crisis-related educational transitions.





Integrated Analysis

The effectiveness ratings demonstrate that institutional structure and governance mechanisms were stronger than relational and psychosocial supports.

The highest-rated strategies (MOA clarity, health protocols, structured plans) are primarily **policy driven and administrative mechanisms**, indicating institutional compliance and strong governance.

Moderately rated strategies (monitoring, consultation channels, psychosocial support) involve **human interaction and relational engagement**, areas also identified in the problem section as moderate constraints.

This alignment suggests a pattern:

- Administrative and structural systems were highly
- Supervisory engagement and psychosocial support were effective but not maximized. effective.

Hora et al. (2021) argue that internship quality depends not only on formal structures but on interactional depth and mentoring quality. The current findings mirror this, demonstrating that institutional policy alignment was strong, but human-centered engagement mechanisms may require enhancement.

Overall Interpretation

The findings indicate that the Department's flexible internship governance framework was operationally strong and policy-compliant. Structured planning, formalized agreements, and safety enforcement were perceived as highly effective, contributing to sustained competency development.

However, the slightly lower ratings for monitoring consistency and psychosocial support suggest that relational and affective dimensions of internship implementation require further strengthening. This corresponds with earlier findings on supervision limitations and mental health strain.

Thus, while flexible internship implementation was institutionally sound, optimizing student experience may require enhanced mentorship frameworks, clearer feedback loops, and proactive wellness integration.





Conclusion

This study assessed the implementation of the BA Communication Internship Program during pandemic and post-pandemic transitional periods, focusing on objective attainment, learning opportunities by modality, problems encountered, and the effectiveness of departmental strategies. The findings present a balanced and nuanced profile of internship implementation under flexible learning conditions.

First, the results indicate that core internship objectives were generally achieved at a high level. Professional work ethics formation, application of classroom theories, development of communication competencies, digital communication proficiency, and career preparedness all received strong ratings. These findings suggest that structured flexible internship mechanisms were successful in preserving foundational academic-practice alignment and professional discipline development. Even under remote and hybrid arrangements, students were able to apply theoretical knowledge to practical communication tasks, reinforcing the principles of experiential learning.

However, experiential depth indicators such as industry exposure, networking opportunities, critical thinking enhancement, and confidence in handling real clients were rated moderately high rather than exceptionally high. This pattern suggests that while task completion and competency acquisition were maintained, contextual immersion and relational engagement were moderated. The variability observed in networking opportunities and client confidence further indicates unequal experiential exposure depending on placement context and supervisory engagement. These findings align with literature suggesting that virtual internships are viable but may not fully replicate the socialization, observational learning, and spontaneous interaction characteristic of traditional face-to-face settings.

Second, comparisons across modalities reveal that limited face-to-face internships were perceived as most effective, followed by department-based online internships, and then industry based online placements. Nonetheless, all modalities were rated within the high range, demonstrating that learning continuity was sustained across formats. Importantly, supervision quality and task structure appeared to be more influential determinants of internship effectiveness than modality alone.





Third, the analysis of problems encountered highlights that flexible internship implementation was shaped by structural, relational, experiential, and psychosocial constraints. Internet connectivity issues (68%) and limited supervisor interaction (52%) emerged as the most significant challenges, indicating that technological instability and mentoring variability were primary moderating factors. Inadequate real-world exposure (48%) and mental health stress (45%) further suggest that immersive and emotional dimensions of learning were partially constrained. These constraints logically correspond to moderated ratings in networking, industry exposure, and client confidence.

Finally, the evaluation of departmental strategies demonstrates that governance and administrative mechanisms were highly effective. Structured internship plans, competency mapping, MOA clarity, and health protocol enforcement were rated highly effective. These institutional strengths likely preserved competency alignment and program continuity. However, strategies related to monitoring consistency, consultation accessibility, and psychosocial support—though effective—were rated slightly lower. This suggests that relational and human-centered support mechanisms require strengthening to complement strong administrative frameworks.

Overall, the findings indicate that flexible internship implementation did not compromise foundational learning outcomes. Instead, it moderated experiential richness in relational and immersive dimensions. The program demonstrated institutional resilience and policy compliance but requires targeted enhancements to optimize holistic experiential learning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several evidence-based recommendations are proposed to strengthen the implementation of flexible and hybrid internship models in the BA Communication Program. These recommendations are grounded in the identified structural, relational, experiential, and psychosocial factors influencing internship effectiveness.

First, technological support mechanisms must be strengthened, given that 68% of respondents experienced internet connectivity issues and 41% reported limited access to necessary equipment and resources. The department should consider establishing institutional assistance programs such as internet subsidies, connectivity allowances, or partnerships with service providers to support student access.

Additionally, temporary lending systems for essential production equipment and provision of licensed software access may reduce disparities in participation.





Clear contingency communication protocols should also be developed to address unstable connectivity scenarios. Technological readiness must be positioned as a core component of internship quality rather than a peripheral concern.

Second, supervisory engagement and monitoring systems require enhancement, particularly since 52% of students reported limited supervisor interaction and feedback quality was rated only moderately high. The department should institutionalize minimum supervision standards, such as scheduled weekly check-ins, structured reflective discussions, and documented progress reviews. Industry supervisors may benefit from orientation sessions focused on mentoring strategies within flexible or hybrid internship contexts. Furthermore, the implementation of standardized digital monitoring tools or dashboards can ensure consistent tracking of intern outputs and performance. Strengthening mentorship consistency is essential for deepening experiential integration and building student confidence in client engagement.

Third, the expansion of hybrid and immersive learning opportunities is necessary to address moderated ratings in industry exposure, networking, and client interaction confidence. Whenever feasible, the department should prioritize hybrid internship arrangements that incorporate structured on-site experiences. For students in fully online placements, scheduled exposure days, supervised site visits, or simulated professional environments may enhance contextual learning. The department may also organize networking forums, industry talks, and client simulation exercises to foster professional socialization. Embedding case-based or real-client project simulations within department-supervised placements can further enhance experiential authenticity.

Fourth, psychosocial and wellness integration should be strengthened, considering that 45% of respondents reported mental health stress and psychosocial support strategies were rated lower compared to administrative mechanisms. Internship programs should incorporate regular reflective sessions and structured wellness check-ins throughout the internship period. Collaboration with university guidance and counseling units must be reinforced to ensure timely and visible access to support services. Offering preparatory workshops on stress management, time management, and work-life balance before internship deployment may also mitigate cognitive overload. Wellness integration should be proactive and embedded within internship processes rather than implemented reactively.





Fifth, task design and progressive complexity should be refined to enhance critical thinking and professional confidence development. Host institutions and department coordinators should ensure that students are assigned progressively challenging tasks that move beyond routine output production. Structured exposure to decision-making responsibilities, analytical tasks, and collaborative problem-solving activities should be integrated into internship agreements. Project based deliverables that simulate dynamic professional challenges can further strengthen higher order thinking and situational judgment skills.

Finally, continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms must be institutionalized to sustain program improvement. Annual internship satisfaction surveys, combined with both quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools, should be systematically conducted. Data-driven analysis should inform periodic revisions of internship guidelines to ensure responsiveness to emerging educational contexts. Ongoing quality assurance processes will enable the department to refine flexible internship models in alignment with evolving industry standards and student needs.

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EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NEW NORMAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM: ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS' ACADEMIC GRADES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

a research by Dr. Jazmin Joy E. Dizon

ABSTRACT

The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has resulted to intense psychosocial issues and compromise to mental health, marking a secondary health concern all around the world. This pandemic has presented an unprecedented threat to the mental health of students as well, as it also adds major change they had to adjust to due to disruption of classes and changes in the way of the modes of learning (modular or online distance learning). This is the reason why the researcher (with the support of the school administration) created the “New Normal Guidance Program” (based from the needs analysis last April 2020) for Don Bosco Technical Institute Tarlac-Guidance and Testing Office’s guidance program for the school year 2020-2021.



Upon its implementation this school year 2020-2021, this study sought to find out the said program's effectiveness and its relationship with the students' academic grades and their psychological wellbeing (measured through administration of the EPOCH Measures of Adolescent Wellbeing) from grades 7-12 junior and senior high school students (chosen from stratified sampling). The result show that there is a significant difference between the evaluation of students to the guidance program before and during the pandemic where the New Normal Guidance Program evaluation was higher than the previous school year's guidance program. Also, it was found out that psychological wellbeing, academic grades and evaluation of the New Normal Guidance Program have a weak positive relationship with one another, which means that there is a low probability that the New Normal Guidance Program could have a relationship with the other variables it was correlated to, but still however it could happen. Findings of this study could be a basis for enhancement of the school's New Normal Guidance Program in accordance with the current situation of the students with distance learning and students' mental health state during COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: New Normal Guidance Program, psychological wellbeing, EPOCH, academic grades, distance learning, COVID-19 pandemic





I. INTRODUCTION

Even before the coronavirus pandemic, many schools were straining under the burgeoning mental health demands of their students [1]. This is one of the situations addressed in the Philippines' first Mental Health Law or the Republic Act no. 11036- to establish access to comprehensive and integrated mental health services to all Filipinos. Additional to that, this law also seeks to integrate mental health into the educational system by promoting and strengthening mental health curriculum, programs and policies in schools that will promote the realization of mental health and wellbeing among students [2].

Then, the Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), popularly known as Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) disease spread throughout more than 200 countries worldwide [3], and this pandemic has been described as having created the largest disruption of education systems in history (affecting almost 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents all around the world). Following the World Health Organization's (WHO) announcement of COVID-19 outbreak as pandemic, closures of schools last March 2020 onwards have impacted 94 percent of the world's student population, and up to 99 percent in low and lower-middle income countries [4]. Many countries have turned to distance learning as a means of continuing education services. Across the Philippines, millions of students resumed their education after a hiatus of almost seven months due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in a form of distance and/or blended learning, either by means of online or modular form.

Although academic activities serve as the cornerstone of education systems, it is now also emphasized and well-recognized that the social and emotional skills of students and their general wellbeing are equally fundamental to their learning and growth as well. With the distance learning setting, this has limited some of critically important aspects of school beyond academic activity inside the classroom, such as having or personal relationships (among students and between students and teachers), and being involved in activities that support their mental and emotional well-being, skills development, and also a sense of routine. Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. [5] pointed out that as students now engage in distance learning education, it is going to be more important than ever that educators do not let the whole student development fall away and revert to a narrow focus on academics, especially due to the constraints of the education system during this pandemic. Particularly, studies show a massive surge in stress and anxiety among students. Like for many students, pandemic concerns revolve less around getting sick and more around the loss of grade points [6].





With the COVID-19 pandemic's disruption of the usual way of life and being quarantined at home, these have contributed several health anxiety and loneliness to the students [7]. Thus, there were reported increased feelings of social isolation, loneliness, health anxiety, stress and a financial downturn- which are a perfect storm to harm people's mental health and wellbeing [8]. And the battle against it is a highly unusual circumstance with the capacity to challenge and destabilize anyone- especially people with pre-existing mental health conditions may be particularly mostly vulnerable [9].

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects to students, the Department of Education (DepEd) has released the Memorandum No. 84 s.2020 stating its "Provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) to Learners and their Parents" (2020) as schools' guidelines on required health standards in basic education that is aimed in protection and promotion of the mental health and general welfare of all learners and personnel [10]. Among the interventions recommended includes discussion and facilitation of modules related to mental health and psychosocial support, and the operationalization of a guidance office in every school to provide basic mental health services to learners. This memorandum is in line with Don Bosco Technical Institute-Tarlac-Guidance and Testing Office's (GTO) initiative to develop "The New Normal Guidance Program" which aims to foster mental wellness and improved quality of life among Bosconians as the GTO recognizes the need to address not just the physical, but mental health of the students during this time of pandemic. The "new normal" term was used in order to symbolize the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic to learning and adjustment of lifestyle in general. The said program was anchored from the needs assessment survey and study done by the said office before the school year opened last April 2020.

Henceforth, this study attempted to know the effectiveness of the New Normal Guidance Program and its relationship between Don Bosco Tarlac students' academic grades and psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, findings of this study will be integrated in the school's guidance program, and other office's programs related and could be connected to it in order for its enhancement and in order to help students foster their wellbeing and thrive hollistically during this new normal setting.





Objectives of the Study

This study intended to determine the effectiveness of the new normal guidance program evaluation, and its relationship with students' academic performance and psychological wellbeing. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the result of the students' evaluation in the Guidance Program, their academic grades and levels of their psychological well-being before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program?
2. What are the differences in the results of the students' evaluation in the Guidance Program, their academic grades and levels of their psychological wellbeing before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program?
3. What are the relationship of findings during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program, specifically:
 - 3.1. Is there a significant relationship between the students' guidance program evaluation and their academic grades?
 - 3.2. Is there a significant relationship between the students' guidance program evaluation and their psychological wellbeing?
 - 3.3. Is there a significant relationship between the students' academic grades and psychological wellbeing?
4. What recommendations can be made from the findings of this study?



II. METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the effectiveness of the New Normal Guidance Program and its relationship to academic grades and psychological wellbeing of the students from Don Bosco Technical Institute-Tarlac, Tarlac City, Philippines. This is upon the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program during COVID-19 pandemic within the school year 2020– 2021.

Gathering of respondents was limited from grades 7-12 (junior to senior high school students) of the said educational institution who are taking the online distance learning due to the age range specification (which is from ages 10-18) of the instrument to be used- the EPOCH Measures of Adolescent Wellbeing of Kern, M. L., Benson, L., Steinberg, E. A., & Steinberg, L., 2015, which is allowed to be freely used and available online.

EPOCH stands for the said measure's five domains, namely: engagement (being absorbed, interested, and involved in an activity), perseverance (having the tenacity to stick with things and pursue a goal, despite any challenges that occur), optimism (having a sense of hope and confidence about the future), connectedness (feeling loved, supported, and valued by others), and happiness (general feeling of happiness, cheer, and contentment with life) . Its internal consistency estimates (alpha) range is from 0.74 to 0.92 [11]. This measure also has been identified to be psychometrically sound- with a test-retest reliabilities (three-week, four-month, and two-year, nine-month intervals) that range from 0.23 to 0.71, its scale scores had significant relationships in the anticipated direction with measures of grit, cooperation, GPA, and self-rated academic performance. Additionally, it was tested across different socioeconomic conditions as well and was proved to be appropriate to different socioeconomic conditions [11].

From the total population of 1,003 junior and senior high school students (grades 7-12), 278 students were gathered as respondents of the study (as calculated from Raosoft Database Management System, with 50% response distribution, 5% margin of error, and 95% confidence level). Participants then were identified through stratified sampling where probability sample was drawn from each year level.

The researcher also analyzed document from data obtained from last school year's administration of the comprehensive guidance program evaluation, and EPOCH Measures of Psychological Well-being. For this school year, Google Forms were used as a platform for administering the EPOCH Measures of Adolescent Wellbeing and for the evaluation of the New Normal Guidance Program.





Moreover, the students' academic grades from school year 2019-2020 and school year 2020-2021 were obtained from the school's registrars' office, (for the last school year and this school year, the gathered academic grades were based from their weighted general average from first quarter to third quarter since the students still have no fourth quarter grades during the time the study has been conducted, and in order to compare them equally as well). Confidentiality of the data given to the researcher were observed and that it was rest assured that it was only utilized for the purpose of this study only.

Bearing in mind the situation during the conduct of the study- that aside from social distancing, no face-to-face interaction, online distance learning due to COVID-19 pandemic, the student participants are also minors, consent were obtained from the respondents' parent/s or guardian/s responses in consent form (Google Form) sent to their e-mail addresses before the conduct of the study. Respondents and their parents were briefed in the said consent form that the results of their questionnaires and their academic grades are kept confidential. Also in the said consent, they were also informed that their participation is voluntary and they are free to withdraw from the study.

In this study, the researcher utilized a quantitative method, specifically a descriptive-comparative- correlational method. The phase 1 of this study discussed the descriptive part of this study, where the evaluation of the old and New Normal Guidance Program, the academic grades of the students, and the levels of psychological wellbeing of the students- all before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program, were described. Phase 2 of the study includes a comparative method of determining and quantifying the difference between the evaluation of the guidance program, academic grades and psychological wellbeing of the students (separately) before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. Phase 3, through correlation, explained the relationship between the students' new normal guidance program evaluation and their academic grades, the relationship between the students' new normal guidance program evaluation and their psychological wellbeing, and their academic grades and the levels of their psychological wellbeing- all during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program during the school year 2020-2021.





III. RESULTS

Phase 1: Descriptive Analysis

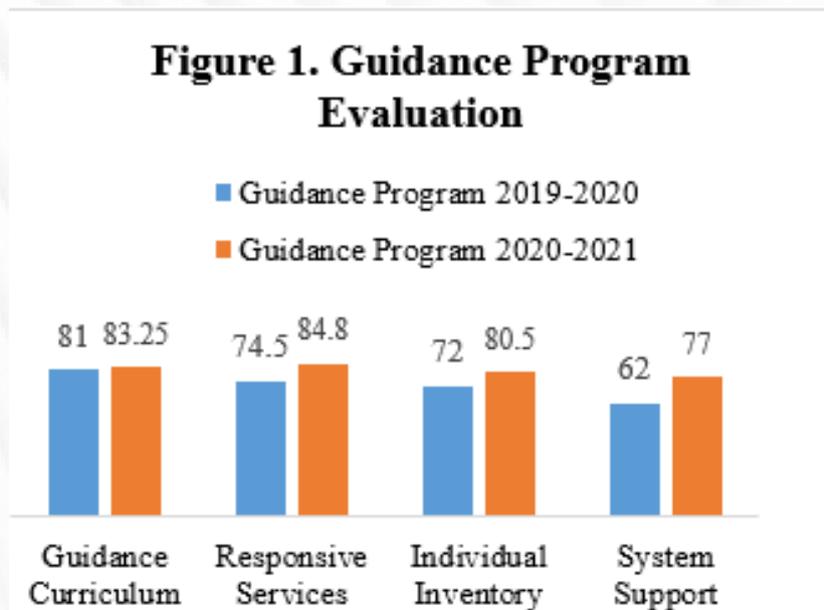
To identify if the New Normal Guidance Program has been effective, there should be measurable, data generated. The key benchmarks are the evaluation results, student achievement (in this study reflected through their academic grades), behavior and/or psychological states (in this study measured through the EPOCH Measures of Psychological Wellbeing)- which are all quantifiable and can be further used to recalibrate or enhance the said program. With this, the part of the result discussion describe the basic features of the data in this study needed for further inferential analysis.

A. Guidance Program Evaluation

Evaluation of guidance program is important to be conducted in order for school guidance counselors to have an objective measure of their program, its activities, and the staff who implement it, and in order to decide if the program is viable and worth continuing. In Don Bosco Tarlac's Guidance and Testing Office, for the school years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, both guidance programs used the Gysbers' [12] and Villar's [13] models of comprehensive guidance program as a basis wherein the four components of guidance services were followed:

- Guidance Curriculum (executed primarily through guidance counselor's specific activities which generally take place outside the confines of the counseling office, and are facilitated by advisers and/or guidance counselor such as: the Revitalized Homeroom Guidance Program, group guidance activities, parent/ family formations, in-service for teachers, administrators and staff),
- Responsive Services (services provided to address immediate situations and concerns of students requiring counseling, consultation and referral).
- Individual Inventory (with activities such as orientation, career planning, documenting of individual cumulative files, testing, placement and follow-up).
- System Support (program management and operations, professional development, research and development, committee and advisory board).

Activities, services, and modes of delivery of the guidance services (mainly at the present moment are done via online means) vary between the two sets of guidance program since some activities



were modified, added or eliminated based from the Needs Analysis conducted before the start of each respective school year), and given the shift to online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic this school year, thus the creation of the New Normal Guidance Program this school year.

As seen in figure 1, the results of the evaluation of the students of the Comprehensive Guidance Program implemented to them in the school year 2019-2020, the results show that guidance curriculum garnered the highest percentage in the evaluation, with 81%, followed by responsive services with 74.5%, then by individual inventory with 72%, and system support with 62%.

For the school year 2020-2021 where the New Normal Guidance Program was implemented, it is seen that responsive services now garnered the highest percentage with 84.8%, then followed by guidance curriculum with 83.25%, after that followed by individual inventory with 80.5%, and lastly is the system support with 77%.

The results obtained in this study show that there was an obvious increase in the students' evaluation of the Guidance Program during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program compared from the evaluation of the Comprehensive guidance program during the previous school year (2019-2020).



B. Academic Grades

The following are the summarized data about the academic grades of the students from first to third quarter during the school year 2019-2020 (pre-pandemic) and school year 2020-2021 (during pandemic and implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program).

Year level	S.Y. 19-20	S.Y. 20-21
Grade 7	92.81	87.12
Grade 8	89.10	87.10
Grade 9	90.79	88.43
Grade 10	91.50	87.00
Grade 11	91.72	87.79
Grade 12	93.11	93.29
Average	91.50	88.45

Table 1. Students' Academic Grades in S.Y. 2019-2020 and S.Y. 2020-2021

For the school year 2019-2020, respondent students the junior high school obtained the following: grade 7 students (who were then grade 6) obtained an average of 92.81 academic grades; grade 8 students (who were then grade 7) had a total of 89.10 average grade; grade 9 (who were then grade 8) students obtained an average of 90.79; grade 10 students (who were then grade 9) had a total average academic grade of 91.50. For the senior high school, the grade 11 students (who were then grade 10) had 91.72; while the grade 12 students (who were then grade 11) all in all had an average grade of 93.11. In total, their weighted general average is 91.50.

Meanwhile, for the current school year 2020-2021, the following are the averaged grades for each grade level: grade 7 students obtained an average of 87.12; grade 8 students had a total of 87.10 average grade; grade 9 students that are included in this study obtained an average academic grade of 88.43; grade 10 students had a total average academic grade of 87.00; grade 11 students garnered 87.79; while the grade 12 students who are respondents in this study obtained 93.29 weighted academic grade. The total average of the respondents this school year during the implementation of the Normal Guidance Program is 88.45, notably lower than the previous school year's weighted general average of the respondents.

C. Psychological Well-Being

Descriptive analysis was also used to determine the level of students' psychological well-being on five of its dimensions, based on the EPOCH measures of psychological well-being, namely: engagement, perseverance, optimism, connectedness, and happiness.

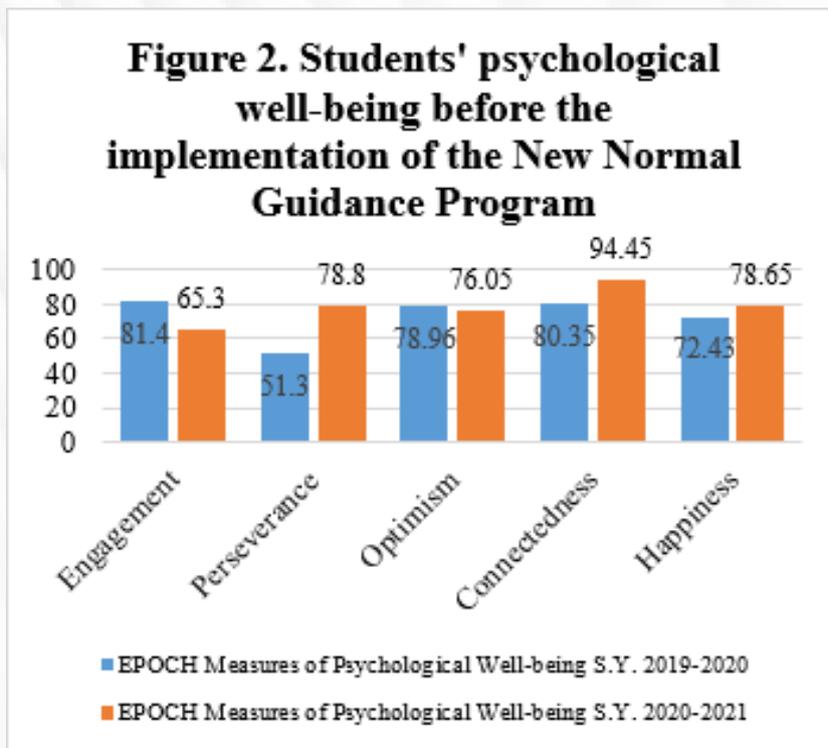


Figure 2 shows that before the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program, the following data were obtained from administration of the EPOCH measures of Psychological Well-being during the school year 2019-2020; engagement was reported as the highest, with 81.4% of the total responses, followed by connectedness with 80.35%, then by optimism with 78.96 %, and fourth was happiness with 72.43%. Finally, the perseverance level of the students came last, with 51.3% of the total responses.

For the students' psychological well-being during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program, results show that the students' obtained the highest level of connectedness, with 94.45%. Next, many of them had high levels of perseverance with 78.80%, then happiness with 78.65%, and closely followed by optimism with 76.05%. Lastly, engagement was the lowest, with 65.3%.



Phase 2: Difference of the Results Before and During the Implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

A dependent sample, paired t-test was used in this phase of the study, since the group of data came from a single population (grades 7-12 students of Don Bosco Tarlac) and that this study involves finding out the difference within each before-and-after pair of measurements. In this study, the following results were obtained:

A. Difference of Evaluation of Guidance Program (Old Guidance Program and the New Normal Guidance Program)

The difference between students' evaluation of the guidance program was sought from the school year 2019-2020 (pre-pandemic, old comprehensive guidance program) and school year 2020-2021 (during pandemic with the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program). A paired t-test was performed to ascertain whether the said program was effective, with the following null hypotheses is $H_0 : \mu_d = 0$ (the mean of the differences is zero; the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program has no effect on the students' evaluation of it). While alternative hypothesis is $H_a: \mu_d > 0$ (the mean of the differences is positive; the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program has an effect on the students' evaluation of it).

Evaluation Results	N	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.
<i>S.Y. 19-20</i>	278	72.95	0.9337	15.57
<i>S.Y. 20-21</i>	278	81.27	0.8468	14.12

Table 2. Test of difference between the two Guidance Program Evaluation.

With the data presented, the standard error of difference is 1.204, and the t value calculated from the data is 6.91, with the degrees of freedom at 277. Meanwhile, the confidence interval are as follows: the mean of the evaluation results during school year 2019-2020 minus evaluation results in school year 2020-2021 is equals to -8.3210 and that 95% confidence interval of this difference is from -0.6914 to -5.9507.

The two-tailed P value is less than 0.0001 and by conventional criteria, and this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. Meaning to say, the means of evaluation results of the Old Comprehensive Guidance Program and the New Normal Guidance Program are significantly different at $p < 0.05$. From the findings obtained, it can be inferred that the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.



B. Difference of Academic Grades of Students Before and During the Implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

The significance of the difference between students' academic grades was sought from the school year 2019 (pre-pandemic) and school year 2020-2021 (during pandemic and implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program).

Levels of Psychological Wellbeing	n	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.
<i>S.Y. 19-20</i>	278	81.07	0.81	13.48
<i>S.Y. 20-21</i>	278	78.85	0.773	12.24

Table 3. Test of difference between the Academic Grades of Students Before and During the Implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

In this, the null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the academic grades of the students before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. On the other hand, the alternative hypothesis would be that there is a significant difference between the academic grades of the students before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program.

The calculated t-value in this part, which is 3.45, exceeds the critical value (1.968). In this paired t-test results, the P value and statistical significance are as follows: the two-tailed P value equals 0.0007, and by conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant. The mean of the academic grades of students in the S.Y. 2019-2020 minus of the academic grades of students in the S.Y. 2020-2021 is equals to 2.41, and with 95% confidence interval of this difference is from 1.03 to 3.79, standard error of difference is equals to 0.701, which shows that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, the null is rejected.



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C. Difference of the Students' Levels of Psychological Wellbeing before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

For this part of the study, the difference between students' overall levels of psychological wellbeing are explored to determine if there is a significant change before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program.

Grades	n	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.
<i>S.Y. 19-20</i>	278	91.68	0.23	3.91
<i>S.Y. 20-21</i>	278	89.27	0.79	13.18

Table 4. Test of difference between the levels of psychological wellbeing of students before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

The null hypothesis in here is that is no significant difference between the students' levels of psychological wellbeing before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. Meanwhile, the alternative hypothesis would be that there is a significant difference between the evaluation of before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. As calculated from the findings, the t-value is 2.2624, with degrees of freedom is 277, while the p-value is .04231. With these, the result is significant at $p < .05$. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant. Thus, we accept the alternative hypothesis, and reject the null hypothesis; wherein it can be inferred that there was a significant difference in the levels of psychological wellbeing of the students before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

Phase 3: Correlation of Findings during the Implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program

For the last part of the result discussion, the researcher aimed to find out the correlation between several variables found in this study and how they affect each other.

	<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>Academic Grades</i>	<i>Psychological Wellbeing</i>
Evaluation	1		
Academic Grades	0.080757	1	
Psychological Wellbeing	0.074311	0.128223227	1

Table 5. Correlation matrix showing Pearson's r for the New Normal Guidance Program evaluation results, academic grades, and levels of psychological wellbeing in the school year 2020-2021

For the identifying the relationship of the New Normal Guidance Program Evaluation and their academic grades of students during this school year, the value of R is 0.080757. This means that although technically a positive correlation, the relationship between the stated variables is weak (the nearer the value is to zero, the weaker the relationship).

In addition to that, the exploration if the evaluation scores of the New Normal Guidance Program and the students' psychological wellbeing upon implementing the said guidance program do have a statistical relationship, the computed R value is 0.0743107, which denotes a low degree of correlation although technically a positive correlation (the relationship between the stated variables is weak).

Furthermore, for the exploration of the correlation between the levels of psychological well-being and academic grades of students during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program, the computed R is 0.128223227. With this, it can be inferred that even though it is technically a positive correlation, the relationship between the said variables is weak or there is a low degree of correlation (that the variables are hardly related).

All in all, the three variables- New Normal Guidance Program evaluation, academic grades, and levels of psychological wellbeing in the school year 2020-2021 all have a weak positive correlation to one another, which indicate that while each of the variables tend to go up in response to one another, the relationship is not very strong.





IV. DISCUSSION

School counselors have long endured less than ideal working conditions, such as high case loads, non-counseling responsibilities, and limited time with students. Nevertheless, according to Savitz-Romer [14], these challenges were intensified during distance schooling especially this pandemic, which is alarming given that counselors' unique expertise in mental health and counseling is more critical than ever. However, despite difficulties and challenges during the shift to the new normal setup, it is seen from the findings that there is a significant difference from the evaluation of guidance program before and during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. Students had given higher ratings in the evaluation this school year, 2020-2021, which is a reflection of that they felt and obtained services of the said program during this new normal. Specifically, the responsive services (which includes individual and group counseling) obtained the highest rating. This is a reflection of the efforts of the counselors to reach out to students in electronic means, such as through phone call, text, e-mail, and video conferencing. The findings in this study is dissimilar with the results from the study of Harvard Graduate School of Education & Boston College [15] wherein they reported that 43% of counselors spent less time providing individual counseling than pre-COVID. Responsive services has somehow utilized the Chaos Theory as a model for life transitions counseling, where it is helpful to consider disorder, unpredictability, and lack of control due to the pandemic as normal parts of transition processes during this new normal setup [16]. The model provides a method clients can use to reconstruct their own alternative life narratives, a framework in which life stories are understood, and a means to facilitate co-creation of adaptive interventions. This could be helpful to further increase the students' levels of psychological wellbeing and academic grades as well.

Additional to that, responsive services of Don Bosco Tarlac's has emphasized the use of person-centered approach in counseling (Rogers, 1980), in which the counselor's demonstration of empathy, unconditional positive regard and warmth to the client and allows students the freedom to explore their thoughts and feelings and to solve their own problems. When a counselor communicates the above conditions, the clients become less defensive and more open to themselves and their world and they will behave in more social and constructive ways, thus reflecting their high evaluation for the responsive services, in which mainly includes person-centered approach in counseling. On the other hand, system support obtained the lowest rating from the students' evaluation for this school year since other functions related to the said guidance services were limited and if not, were not allowed to do so due to social distancing.





Connectedness has been shown to be the highest psychological wellbeing level of the respondents this school year, which is contrary to the needs assessment done to them wherein it showed last April that they feel detached to others (due to quarantine). At first when the pandemic hit last early 2020, the big impact of the sudden shift to remote learning is the loss of face-to-face social interaction [17]. But due to multimedia platforms (Google Meet, Zoom, Quipper, Telegram, phone hotlines in the case of Don Bosco Tarlac) used in lieu of face-to-face interaction has been helpful to students to feel connected with their classmates, teachers, peers, and even to other school staff such as the guidance counselor. This indicates that students, even though being physically away with each other due to online distance learning, still feel connected to one another, to their teachers, and to other people in which they maintain interpersonal relationships with. This is one of the themes emphasized during RHGP and Boscompanion (which are included in the New Normal Guidance Program) for this school year in response to the Needs Assessment of the students feeling alone because of being in quarantine. Truly, in a situation that is unpleasant such as this COVID-19 pandemic, social connectedness has been seen as having a role in transforming hopelessness to flourishing, as found out in the study of Capan in 2016 [18]. Accordingly, social connectedness is a favorable condition that moves an individual ahead in life amidst adversities.

Also, it was seen from the findings that during the school year 2019-2020 (during the old guidance program), the students reported engagement as the highest level of their psychological well-being. But then during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was evidently observed that engagement became their lowest level of psychological well-being, which reflects to difficulty engaging to distant learning due to lesser synchronous classes or live discussions (due to the observation of limiting the screen time of the students) and not being able to study in a classroom setting together with their teachers and classmates.

Results also show that the students' perseverance level increased during this school year compared to the previous school year when the New Normal Guidance Program was not yet implemented to them, due to them being brought in the situation of having to learn independently despite the big adjustments they have to face because of the pandemic (wherein they were oriented into during their psychosocial support webinars during their bridging weeks before the start of the school year, that is included in the activities in the New Normal Guidance Program). From the findings, the analysis of the difference of the results between the school year 2019-2020 and school year 2020-2021 of the evaluation of the guidance program, academic grades and levels of psychological wellbeing were observed having a significant difference, which indicates that that it is unlikely that the results in this study occurred by chance and the difference found in the sample probably exists in the populations from which it was drawn.





For example, the difference found between the students' evaluation of the New Normal Guidance Program and the old comprehensive guidance program are considered as significantly different from one another, thus citing that there is a difference in the evaluation of students following the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program. Or that by following the alternative hypothesis, it can be inferred that the New Normal Guidance Program has been more effective than the old guidance program.

Specifically, the findings showed that the students obtained lower academic grades during the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program in the school year 2020-2021. From Son. C, et. al.'s study [19], there are factors indicated that affect students' academic performance, such as: the challenge transitioning to online classes, concerns about sudden changes in the syllabus or curriculum, the quality of the classes, technical issues with online applications, and the difficulty of learning online. Many participants in their study were worried doing projects because of restrictions put in place to keep social distancing and the lack of physical interactions with other students. Some participants mentioned the uncertainty about their grades under the online learning environment to be a major stressor. Others indicated their reduced motivation to learn and tendency to procrastinate.

In relation to counseling services to having effect on academic performance on students, one-quarter of counselors in the study of Harvard Graduate School of Education & Boston College [15] reported spending less time on academic counseling where many of these counselors tended to have high caseloads of emotional counseling, devoting less time to academic counseling. Although there is no similar study about this matter in Don Bosco Tarlac's Guidance and Testing Office, a summary of counseling sessions as of February 2020 indicated that there are only 17% of the counseling sessions where about academic counseling, and majority is for emotional counseling.

A Pearson's correlation was run in this study to determine the relationship between the New Normal Guidance Program to academic grades and psychological wellbeing (respectively) and found out that there were positive yet weak correlation, between the said variables. These findings mean that there is a low probability that the New Normal Guidance Program could have a relationship with the other variables it was correlated to, but still however it could happen. Additionally, this weak correlation gives a hint, that the independent variable is not that important for predicting the dependent variable. There are many factors that could lead to the result of having low positive correlation with one another, perhaps, an alternative might be. With this, the researcher highlights to other researchers to choose a different 'pathway' or to look for other variable for future researches similar to or related to this one.





This is similar to the study of Ruppel, 2015 [20], wherein the results of their study were inconsistent. Their analysis indicated that subjective well-being had an unexpected negative effect on the combined average grade on the one hand, and an indirect positive effect on the other. Thus, concluding that the general psychological well-being does not have an independent effect on school grades because it is dependent on the school-related wellbeing of students and their subjective assessment of their own performance, which act as mediator variables.

Limitations of this study include the limited drawing of the sample population, and not from all students of Don Bosco Tarlac, due to not all the students from the school year 2019-2020 are still enrolled this school year 2020-2021, while some current students are transferees from other schools as well. Also, the students and their parents were given the freedom to not opt to participate in the study (such as answering the EPOCH measures of Psychological Wellbeing, and/or letting their children's grades be accessed), thus minimizing the pool of respondents. Moreover, another limitation of the study is that there could be a test familiarity among the students because they took the EPOCH measures of Psychological Wellbeing for two consecutive school years.

Implications

There are several implications that could be brought up from this study, such as that the implementation of the New Normal Guidance Program and the conduct this study as a way of improving the said guidance program could transcend into best practices during pandemic in the counseling psychology field. This study can also serve as reference for other institution's or school's comprehensive guidance program to be crafted or modified for the incoming school year. Also, this study will serve as a reference for future studies related to responding to situation being in a pandemic in the educational sector, particularly in the Philippine context. There could also be implications in connection with the academic department that in order to effectively respond to "new normal set-up" during the COVID-19 pandemic, specially it was seen from the findings of this study that the academic grades of the students were lower this school year compared to the previous school year, that schools does not only need to reassess the curricular interventions to online learning but also to cater psychological needs of the students as well. This holistic and integrated approach of the school, from the guidance office, to the academic department, should be strengthened and included in the academic and guidance program in order to help the students hollistically. For future studies related to this, other factors could be looked upon (for example student motivation in online class, subjective academic performance evaluation, home and or social relations, etc.) in order to have a broader insight of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the educational system. Upon doing this, future studies will be able to gather scientific evidences on how the educational institutions can effectively respond to another disruption, changes or shift in mode and ways of schooling (whether due to pandemic or other causes).



V. CONCLUSION

This study has been vital for determining the effectiveness of the New Normal Guidance Program, and to what certain areas of concern or needs the guidance counselors should look upon to. Findings show that there is a significant difference on the levels of evaluation of the guidance program before and during COVID-19 pandemic, and also with students' academic grades (decline) and psychological wellbeing (increase) as well. Also, it can be inferred through this study that although guidance program evaluation was higher for this school year, the psychological wellbeing, academic grades and evaluation of the New Normal Guidance Program has little relationship with one another, which could be a basis for the enhancement of the school's New Normal Guidance Program in accordance with the current situation of the students with distance learning and students' mental health state during COVID-19 pandemic.

With that, collaboration within the stakeholders (counselors, students, school administration, parents), is one of the most important at these times in order to attain the holistic development and assistance to be given to students. Stepping into the new normal due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher therefore recommends that the findings presented should be taken a serious concern and integrated during planning of the Guidance Program for the upcoming school year 2021-2022, in which most probably the current set-up (online distance learning and modular distance learning) will still be utilized. The challenge herewith is still on how to provide and deliver quality services amidst exceptional times, like the COVID-19 pandemic, and on what extent are we going to become prepared when another crisis or wave of pandemic comes in the future.

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CASS FACULTY RESEARCH JOURNAL

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of Tarlac State University's eDMS Application and Its Implications for Developing a Communication Policy

a research by **Ma. Teresa D. Madriaga**

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ABSTRACT

The study measures the efficiency of eDMS in Tarlac State University and its contribution in creating a university-wide communication policy. In order to determine its impact on document management efficiency, user satisfaction as well as communication practices, the research used a mixed method approach. The results shown that TSU's eDMS has improved document handling and user interactions that leads to a possible creation of a better university-wide communication through digital tools aimed at developing a communication policy.



Introduction

The Tarlac State University (TSU) has institutionalized the Electronic Document Management System (eDMS) for modernizing its administrative processes. This is important in improving efficiency in security and access to documents. On the other hand, this understanding of the effectiveness of the system is important. It not only determines its effect but also informs formulation of holistic communication policy. This may involve standardizing communication procedures integrating digital tools and further simplification of processes. The effectiveness of eDMS is assessed in this study. Its achievements are considered in terms of how they can inform the development of more appropriate communication policy at TSU.

Methods

The eDMS's efficacy and consequences for a Communication Policy were evaluated through mixed method approach. The quantitative data were collected using metrics of system usage. Metrics included times taken to process documents errors made before and after implementing eDMS. User satisfaction in terms of ease of use and perceived impact on communication was measured by means of surveys. At the same time, interviews were conducted with major players like administrative personnel and instructors who would provide intuitive insights regarding these systems' impacts on communication and performance enhancement. The approach to analyzing data involved the use of statistical evaluation with regard to quantitative information as well as analysis of qualitative feedback.





Results

The eDMS was implemented to enhance document processing times by 57% while reducing document-related errors by 30%. As revealed through user satisfaction surveys, 64.9% of respondents expressed their satisfaction; they also mentioned improved accessibility to documentation and internal communication. Interviews pointed out that eDMS made it easier for people to communicate, because documents were stored in one place and there was no need for physical meetings anymore. Moreover, internal stakeholders posited that a successful implementation of the system could act as an example of how Communication Policy can include digital means to improve communication practices within the university.

Discussion

The eDMS at Tarlac State University has shown major improvements in efficiency of managing documents and satisfaction of users. The capacity of the system facilitate document handling processes together with better communication supports the belief that electronic tools can play an important role in corporate communication. Data suggest that it is possible to develop a Communication Policy based on eDMS experience that would lay standard and optimised procedures for communication while at the same time reinforcing strengths of the system for overall productivity improvements. Essential elements of such communication standards include guidelines on electronic messages, acceptable methods to keep records electronically, as well as ongoing training opportunities.

To effectively integrate eDMS into an institution, there must be an understanding that technology is necessary in solving problems within the realm of information sharing and dissemination amongst others. Nonetheless, obstacles like resistance against transition and need for all inclusive educational schemes need to be observed. A thorough examination of these component





Conclusion

According to the evaluation of Tarlac State University's eDMS, there are significant enhancements in terms of managing documents efficiently as well as customer satisfaction. The positive implications of the system lead to a powerful platform for coming up with Communication Policy that will use digital instrument to improve inter-agency communication within the organization. This way, based on what eDMS has accomplished so far, TSU is capable of formulating its own policy which does not just standardize communication procedures but also contributes towards bringing about sustainable betterment in administrative efficiency and stakeholders' involvement.





CASS FACULTY RESEARCH JOURNAL

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Graduate Employability and Skill Relevance of BA Communication Alumni: A Tracer Study of Tarlac State University Batches 2020–2022

a research by **Ma. Teresa D. Madriaga**

ABSTRACT

This tracer study examined the demographic profile, employment outcomes, skill utilization, and workplace challenges of Bachelor of Arts in Communication graduates from Tarlac State University, batches 2020–2022. The study aimed to determine the graduates' demographic characteristics, employment profile, skills gained and utilized in their current jobs, factors influencing job choice, employer-relevant competencies developed through the program, and the challenges encountered in the workplace. It also explored the extent and reasons for unemployment among the graduates.

A quantitative research approach employing a descriptive research design was utilized. Data were gathered through a structured digital survey questionnaire administered via Microsoft Teams Forms and Google Forms.



The survey link was disseminated through official alumni communication channels, including Facebook group pages and direct online messaging. Participation was voluntary, and respondents provided informed consent through a Data Privacy Declaration in compliance with ethical research standards. Out of 431 identified graduates, 388 responses were collected and analyzed.

Findings revealed a predominantly young and female graduate population with an exceptionally high employment rate, largely concentrated in the private and digital sectors. Graduates demonstrated strong communication, adaptability, interpersonal, and digital competencies, which are actively utilized in their professional roles. Job choice was primarily influenced by alignment with personal interests and skills, while financial, career growth, and stability considerations also played significant roles. Although graduates exhibited high employability and relevant skill acquisition, common challenges included financial concerns, work-life balance issues, workplace pressure, and early-career employment instability.

The results indicate that the BA Communication program effectively prepares graduates for contemporary professional environments. The findings provide valuable insights for curriculum enhancement, industry alignment, and strategic program development to further strengthen graduate readiness and long-term career sustainability

Keywords: Program Satisfaction, BA Communication Graduates, Employment



INTRODUCTION

One of the most challenging but exciting decisions in a student's life is selecting a college program. There is nothing wrong with making a choice that is both practical and in line with one's desires. Since learning to appreciate and enjoy every challenge contained in that course is crucial, it is. Students' College's journey, perseverance, behavior, performance, and future marks also depend on their Program Satisfaction. The more fulfilled they are, the longer they will stay in that course and institution, which can also result in decreasing amounts of dropouts and shifting courses.

Additionally, when their academic performance increases, they become more eager to learn about many opportunities to further their education and develop their abilities which is essential in their future related careers. Like job shifts for graduates, career trajectories are becoming harder to forecast due to automation, which is also a significant part of the knowledge economy's quick-paced developments.

However, the pandemic that occurred four years ago also impacted on the students' academic performance. According to present-day research on the effects of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) on the higher education sector, the satisfaction of learners was included as a metric to evaluate the effect of attendant service outages on the caliber of higher education facilities that learners have access to.

This does not, however, mean that higher education institutes should put learner pleasure above everything else in their pursuit of professional excellence... (Duraku & Hoxha, nt; Shahzad et al., 2020). The recognition of several aspects that influence Higher Education students' general happiness ratings demonstrates the understanding that how satisfied students are is a complex phenomenon. Among these categories of key factors for student fulfillment in higher education is the learning atmosphere.





These encompass factors including the alleged standard of instruction, criticism of the instructor's method of instruction, the caliber of the educational experience, and the number of students (Aldemir & Gülcan, 2004; Butt & Rehman, 2010; Duque, al., 2018; Nastasić et al., 2019; Paul & Pradhan, 2019; Weerasinghe et al., 2017).

On the other hand, Employment Status is also necessary after finishing a degree. In the future, it will specify if the individual is employed full-time, part-time, as a contractor, or is jobless. It also determines an individual's tax rate, the social security benefits they qualify for, and the working conditions they must adhere to.

Cheang & Yamashita (2023) suggest that employers are increasingly discovering that when it comes to recruiting young college graduates, interpersonal competencies are just as crucial as specific field knowledge and technical abilities. There is a big gap between what businesses think and how graduates think, which makes it difficult for a lot of recent graduates of universities to get the employment they desire and difficult for employers to negotiate with learners who lack the necessary skills for the workforce.

Deciding to enroll in a Communication Program is a calculated risk taken in the interest of your career and personal growth in the fast-paced, globally interconnected world we live in today. Communication history explores past methods, concepts, frameworks, and areas of communication, using historical perspectives to inform current communication theory and research.

Furthermore, by taking this program, learners also develop their critical thinking, flexibility, and adaptability, which will help them secure a position in various fields. The emphasis on interpersonal communication develops cultural competency and diversity awareness and facilitates relationship-building with others.





On the other hand, through the enhancement of employability and the creation of opportunities for promotion, one can increase their chances of getting a job by completing a communication program. This program will help people grow personally, gain confidence, and equip them with the skills to handle the complexity of today's world.

Through this program, the key nature of these opportunities will be explored, and the role of each one in the development of a career and the making of a real contribution to the global professional will be clarified. These benefits of a solid communication education are seen everywhere in the business world, starting from the intricate worlds of public relations and developing a strong marketing strategy, from the smooth coordination of corporate communication to the understanding of consumer behavior. And with that, graduates may still find employment in industries beyond the traditional communication professions. Such soft skills are highly desired in all professions.

The study aimed to provide significant feedback to Tarlac State University particularly in the Department of Communication regarding the employment status of their graduates and whether the graduates were able to utilize the skills and knowledge they have learned in the BA communication program and in addition what skills acquired by the graduates considered relevant by their employers.

Any findings of the study could greatly contribute to the upcoming revision of the existing curriculum of the BA communication program, whatever findings of this study would be useful for the improvement or enrichment existing BA Communication curriculum.





With this study, Tarlac State University can fill the gap between academic and professional life. Through the analysis of the career progression of the College of Communication graduates, the university may then acquire imperative information on curriculum effectiveness, employer satisfaction, and student success.

The data-driven approach will give Tarlac State University the necessary tools to be able to refine the program and always offer a world-class education that prepares the graduates for the communication field, which is constantly changing. The current paper explores a methodology for conducting a tracer study related to Tarlac State University's communication program, to have and make a continual system of improvement, and to ensure that its graduates are prepared for their professional goals.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study involved 55% of the BA Communication graduates of Tarlac State University from 2020 to 2022. The study determined the demographic profile of the respondents as to the following: age, sex, civil status, and educational attainment as well as the employment profile of the respondents in terms of the following: nature of the employment, classification of jobs, employment status, monthly income, reasons for unemployment.

The study was delimited to the assessment of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication graduates' skills which they have acquired in the program and were utilized in their jobs, the factors that affect their choice of jobs, the skills acquired by them that are considered relevant by their employers in their present job and lastly, the challenges that communication graduates face in line with their work.





Methodology

This Research used Quantitative research and obtained a Descriptive research design. The study's purpose was to determine the Program Satisfaction and Employment of BA Communication Graduates of Tarlac State University from 2020-2022.

Quantitative research could be achieved using data that is statistical, mathematical, or numerical, usually gathered through polls or questionnaires. Descriptive research, on the other hand, focuses on portraying the characteristics of a population or phenomenon under study without delving into the reasons behind those characteristics.

In this study, the researchers aimed to depict the satisfaction levels of the program alongside the job alignment and employment rates among graduates of Tarlac State University's Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the batches of 2020 to 2022.

The main data-gathering tool used in this research was a survey questionnaire. It consisted of six sections, firstly the demographic profile of the respondents including their age, sex, civil status, and educational attainment. Secondly, their Employment profile. Moreover, the skills that they have gained from their course that they were able to utilize in their jobs were also asked. The factors that affect the choice of jobs, the acquired skills that are considered relevant by their employers in their present job, and lastly, the possible challenges that communication graduates face in line with their work.





Description of Respondents

The respondents of the study were graduates of BA Communication or Alumni. The study was undertaken with the BA Communication graduates' batches from 2019-2020, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 as respondents. The distribution of graduates per year and the actual turnout of respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that there were 467 graduates within the period of the school year covered by the study. However, in the final retrieval of the administered questionnaire to the graduates, only 388 or 83.08% were successfully retrieved and served as the total respondents of the study.

Table 1
Number of Graduates and Actual Respondents

Year	BA Communication Graduates	Actual turnout of BA Communication Graduates Respondents
2019-2020	133	110
2020-2021	50	42
2021-2022	284	236
Total	467	388



Methods of Data Gathering

The primary source of data for this study was the graduates of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication program at Tarlac State University from batches 2020 to 2022. A total population of 431 graduates from the three batches was identified as the target respondents for this tracer study.

Data were gathered through an online survey questionnaire administered using digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams Forms and Google Forms. The use of online survey tools allowed efficient distribution, monitoring of responses, and secure data storage. The survey link was disseminated through various communication channels, including official and batch-specific Facebook group pages, alumni chat groups, and direct messages to graduates via their individual Facebook profiles and other available contact information. This multi-channel digital approach aimed to maximize response rate and ensure wider reach among alumni, considering geographical dispersion and varying professional commitments.

Prior to answering the questionnaire, respondents were presented with a Data Privacy Declaration and Informed Consent Statement in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). The declaration clearly explained the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, secure handling of data, and the exclusive use of information for academic research purposes. Only those who voluntarily agreed to the consent statement were allowed to proceed to the survey proper.

The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, as the study specifically targeted graduates from batches 2020, 2021, and 2022. Out of the total 431 graduates, responses were obtained from 388 graduates, representing a substantial proportion of the population and providing a reliable basis for analysis. The researchers drew conclusions based on the validated responses collected during the data gathering period.





The use of online data collection methods ensured accessibility, efficiency, and compliance with health and safety considerations, while also facilitating organized data consolidation and analysis. This approach was deemed appropriate given the digital orientation and professional mobility of the respondents.

Research Instrument

The researchers utilized a structured digital survey questionnaire as the primary instrument for data gathering. The use of an online questionnaire was deemed appropriate in order to reach graduates efficiently, increase retrieval rate, and ensure accessibility regardless of the respondents' geographic location. The instrument was designed as an indirect data-gathering tool to obtain realistic, measurable, and systematically organized information regarding graduate employment outcomes and curriculum relevance.

The questionnaire was adapted and contextualized from established tracer study frameworks, particularly the Online Employability Graduate Tracer Study (O-EGTS) of Isabela State University by Plata (2020), which emphasizes employability indicators such as job-search channels, waiting time to first job, employment classification, and job alignment. It also drew on the Philippine Graduate Tracer Survey framework of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies by Tutor et al. (2019), which provides nationally recognized definitions of employment outcomes, labor market indicators, and graduate competency assessment standards.

Furthermore, insights from the Bachelor of Arts in Communication Tracer Study in Tarlac State University by Nucum (2020) were incorporated, particularly in examining curriculum relevance, skill acquisition, and the alignment between academic preparation and workplace demands.





The source population of this study consisted of the graduates of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication program of Tarlac State University from 2020 to 2022. The survey questionnaire was distributed online to ensure broader participation and efficient data retrieval. The participants for this tracer study were purposefully selected from batches 2020, 2021, and 2022. A total of 467 graduates from these batches were included in the sampling frame.

The questionnaire consisted of several sections designed to capture graduate profiles, employment outcomes, skills acquisition, and workplace challenges. The first section gathered demographic and educational background information, including name (optional for identification), age, civil status, highest educational attainment, and pursuit of post-graduate studies. These variables were included to establish the socio-demographic profile of graduates and to allow classification of employment trends based on educational progression.

The second section focused on employment characteristics and labor market integration. Respondents were asked to identify the nature of their employment, whether in government, private sector, or self-employment, as well as job classification, such as regular, probationary, contractual, part-time, or temporary status. The instrument also listed specific job categories relevant to the Communication discipline, including customer service representative, writer, reporter, editor, announcer, researcher, teacher, public information officer, graphic designer, marketing personnel, and other related professions. Graduates were also required to indicate their current workplace and position. Employment status was further categorized into currently employed, previously employed, or never employed. Monthly income brackets were provided to measure earnings distribution, consistent with national tracer indicators on wage outcomes. For unemployed respondents, reasons such as family concern, lack of opportunity, further studies, and lack of work experience were solicited to determine employability constraints.





The third section of the questionnaire examined factors influencing job choice, aligning with tracer objectives of determining motivation and employment decision-making patterns. Graduates were asked to indicate whether their employment was influenced by educational attainment, monetary compensation, location, career stepping stone considerations, alignment with interests and skills, or influence from peers and family. This component supports employability analysis by identifying non-academic determinants of job placement.

The succeeding section evaluated the skills gained and utilized in the workplace. Respondents were asked to indicate competencies developed through their academic preparation and applied in their jobs, such as written communication, verbal communication, interpersonal communication, cross-cultural communication, digital communication, media literacy, strategic communication, research and analysis, creative problem-solving, teamwork, leadership and management, adaptability, time management, customer service, presentation skills, negotiation, crisis communication, networking, and continuous learning. These competencies reflect industry relevant skills consistent with Communication program outcomes and tracer study competency frameworks.

Another component of the instrument specifically asked respondents to identify the skills acquired during their BA Communication program that current employers find relevant to their job. These included communication skills, media production skills, journalism skills, digital media literacy, media law and ethics, project management, cultural competence, research skills, marketing and public relations skills, multimedia storytelling, graphic design, advertising, theater arts, teamwork, and critical thinking. This section was designed to directly measure curriculum-to-employment alignment, a core objective of tracer studies emphasized in both institutional and national frameworks.



The final section examined workplace challenges encountered by graduates. Respondents identified issues such as job market competition, low salary, work-life balance difficulties, working under pressure, balancing creativity and strategy, building personal brand, directing culture, and responding to feedback. This section aims to identify external labor market conditions and internal competency gaps that may inform curriculum enhancement and policy improvements.

Before the full administration, the instrument underwent review for clarity, relevance, and alignment with tracer objectives. Ethical standards were strictly observed, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of responses, and exclusive use of data for academic and curriculum development purposes.

1. Profile of the Graduates

in this study, the profile includes the following: age, gender, civil status, and educational attainment as well. The discussions are discussed in the following manner:

Table 1 shows the sort of respondents by age.

Table 1
Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
27-above	69	17.78%
26	35	9.02%
25	85	21.91%
24	138	35.57%
23	53	13.66%
23-below	8	2.06%
Total	388	100%





Table 1 shows the age distribution of the 388 respondents included in the tracer study. The data reveal that the largest proportion of respondents are 24 years old, comprising 138 individuals or 35.57 percent of the total population. This is followed by respondents aged 25 years old with 85 individuals or 21.91 percent. Those aged 27 years old and above account for 69 respondents or 17.78 percent, while 53 respondents or 13.66 percent are 23 years old. The respondents aged 26 make up 9.02 percent, and only 2.06 percent are 23 years old and below.

The distribution shows that most of the respondents are within the 24 to 25-year-old age bracket. However, a significant percentage of respondents fall within the 27 years old and above category. This pattern can be justified by examining the academic background and group characteristics of the surveyed batches.

Specifically, the 2021 batch largely consisted of returnee students who did not undergo the Senior High School program under the K–12 educational reform. Many of these students either stopped schooling for a period of time before resuming their studies or entered college through transitional arrangements during the implementation of the K–12 system in the Philippines. As a result, several graduates from this batch were older than the typical college graduation age at the time of completion. This explains the relatively higher proportion of respondents aged 27 years and above in the dataset.

Meanwhile, the 2022 and 2023 batches represent the first groups who fully underwent the Senior High School program prior to entering college. These students followed the standard educational trajectory of completing Senior High School before enrolling in tertiary education. However, during the conduct of the tracer study, most of these respondents were already approximately two years beyond graduation.





This timing factor naturally increased their current age at the point of survey administration, contributing to the observed concentration in the 24 and 25-year-old categories.

The age distribution therefore reflects the structural transition in the Philippine educational system due to the implementation of the K–12 reform. The presence of older graduates is not an anomaly but rather a group effect resulting from educational pathway differences and delayed continuation of studies among returnees. Meanwhile, the dominance of respondents in the 24 to 25-year-old range aligns with the typical progression of students who completed Senior High School and proceeded directly to college.

The overall findings suggest that the results show that most of the respondents are young professionals who are at the beginning of their careers. However, the data also include a considerable number of graduates who returned to school after stopping for some time and completed their degree later than the usual age. This combination of younger and older graduates provides a clearer and more complete picture of the program's outcomes. It reflects both students who followed the regular academic path and those who took a different route before finishing their studies, making the findings more representative of the real experiences of the graduates.





Table 2
Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	242	62%
Male	146	38%
Total	388	100%

The respondents' sex is displayed in Table 2. For females, in batches 2020-2022, there are 242, or 62%, while there are 146, or 38%, for males in batches 2020-2022.

The analysis concludes by emphasizing that females outnumber males in the respondent pool, with females representing a larger portion (62%) compared to males (38%).

The data indicate that female graduates comprise the majority of respondents in the BA Communication program. This suggests that the program has a higher female representation, which is commonly observed in Communication and related social science disciplines. The larger participation of females may also reflect stronger engagement in alumni-related activities or survey participation.

The findings show a noticeable gender imbalance, with females significantly outnumbering males. This pattern is consistent with enrollment trends in Communication programs, where female students often dominate the field. The results imply that employment outcomes and skill assessments in this tracer study may largely reflect female graduate experiences.





Table 3
Civil Status of the Respondents

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	346	89%
Married	42	11%
Total	388	100%

Table 3 shows the breakdown of respondents based on their civil status. For singles, in batches 2020-2022, there are 210 or 89%, and for married individuals in batches 2020-2022, there are 26 or 11%. Most of the respondents are single.

In this table, it shows that singles are the most respondents. The high percentage of single respondents may be explained by the relatively young age distribution identified in Table 1. Since most graduates are in their early to mid-twenties, it is expected that many are still unmarried and focusing on establishing their careers.

This demographic characteristic is important in analyzing employability trends, as single graduates may have greater mobility and flexibility in seeking employment opportunities compared to those who are married. Therefore, the dominance of single respondents aligns with both their age profile and early-career status.

Another reason could also be due to several reasons, such as singles being more likely to participate in surveys than married people.





Table 4

Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Master's Degree	2	0.45%
Master's Units/Other Higher Degree	15	3.87 %
Bachelor's Degree	371	95.61%
Total	388	100%

Table 4 shows the breakdown of respondents based on their educational attainment. In 2020-2022 graduates, the majority, 371 or 95.61 percent, hold a Bachelor's degree as their highest educational qualification. A small proportion, 15 respondents or 3.87 percent, have taken master's units or other higher degrees such as law, while only 2 respondents or 0.52 percent have completed a master's degree.

The findings indicate that most graduates have not yet pursued advanced studies, which may be attributed to their relatively young age and recent graduation. Since many respondents are still in the early stage of their professional development, pursuing graduate studies may not yet be their immediate priority.

The respondents from batches 2020 to 2022 may be considered "pandemic group," having graduated during or immediately after the COVID-19 crisis. During this period, higher education institutions and labor markets experienced significant disruptions, affecting both employment opportunities and academic progress. Studies have shown that the COVID-19 pandemic had substantial effects on higher education students' academic decisions, financial stability, and career planning (Khan et al., 2021).





In many cases, graduates prioritized immediate employment as a means of financial recovery and stability rather than pursuing postgraduate education.

Similarly, research conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) emphasized that the pandemic created economic uncertainty and employment challenges for young Filipinos, influencing early-career decisions and transitions to work (Philippine Institute for Development Studies [PIDS], 2021). Given these conditions, it is understandable that a significant proportion of BA Communication graduates chose to enter the workforce rather than enroll immediately in graduate programs.

At the same time, the presence of a small percentage of graduates who have begun or completed master's or other advanced degrees indicates emerging academic and professional advancement aspirations. This suggests that while immediate employment may have been the priority for most pandemic-era graduates, long-term professional development through further education remains a potential pathway for career growth.

The results of the study suggest that educational attainment patterns among the respondents were shaped not only by age and career stage but also by the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data, therefore, reflect both structural educational transitions and labor market realities experienced by these groups.



2. Employment Profile of the Graduates

In this study, the employment profile of the graduates comprises the following: nature of employment, classification of jobs, monthly income, and reasons for unemployment. The discussions are presented as follows.

Table 5

Nature of Employment of the Respondents

Nature of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Government	62	16%
Private	275	71%
Self Employed	50	13%
Unemployed	1	0.26%
Total	388	100%

The data above makes clear that in Table 5, 388 graduates of the 2020–2022 class, 275, or 71%, were employed by the private sector, 62, or 16%, by the government, 50, or 13%, were self-employed and the remaining 1 or 0.26% are unemployed. It is found in Table 5 that graduates of batch 2020-2022 have a high rate of employment in the private sector. Some of the alumni are currently in the government sector, and a few are self-employed. In addition to this Only 1 respondent, representing 0.26 percent, is unemployed at the time of the survey.



The employment distribution among 388 graduates shows a strong preference for the private sector, with 71% employed there. The government and self-employed sectors represent 16% and 13% respectively, indicating a balanced distribution. Only 0.26% are unemployed, suggesting effective education or high demand for their skills. Including all graduates, the overall employment rate is exceptionally high at 99.74%.

Given that these graduates completed their degrees during or shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic, the high employment rate may also reflect the rapid recovery and digital transformation of industries where communication skills became increasingly valuable. Organizations' growing reliance on digital communication, online marketing, and information dissemination may have expanded employment opportunities for Communication graduates.

The findings imply that the graduates of the BA Communication program from batches 2020–2022 demonstrate strong employability and readiness for professional engagement across multiple employment sectors. It is also implied in the results from the table above that the graduates of the BA Communication batches 2020-2022 are highly employable and quite prepared for the workforce.





Table 6
Classification of Jobs for the Respondents

Classification of Jobs	Frequency	Percentage
Customer Service Representative	82	21%
Virtual Assistant	70	18%
Freelancer (Media/Digital)	62	16%
Business Owner / Entrepreneur	28	7%
Secretarial (Clerical)	36	9%
Writer	20	5%
Graphic Designer	13	3%
Teacher/Professor	16	4%
Editor	8	2%
Researcher	5	1%
Public Information Officer	5	1%
Online Writer/Blogger	3	1%
Performing Arts	2	0.5%
Others	37	9%
Total	387	100%





Based on Table 6, shows the classification of jobs among the 387 employed respondents. The data reveal that the largest proportion of graduates are employed as Customer Service Representatives (21%), followed by Virtual Assistants (18%) and Freelancers in media or digital-related fields (16%). Secretarial positions account for 9%, while Business Owners or Entrepreneurs represent 7% of the employed graduates.

The significant proportion of graduates working as Virtual Assistants and Freelancers reflects the shift in employment structures brought about by digital transformation and the global changes in the labor market. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, many private companies worldwide transitioned to remote work systems and online service models. As a result, digital communication, content management, administrative support, and customer service roles increasingly moved to virtual platforms. Communication graduates, equipped with strong written communication, interpersonal, media, and digital literacy skills, are well-suited to these remote and technology-driven roles.

The presence of graduates in online-based professions indicates adaptability to evolving employment systems. The rise of virtual assistant roles in particular demonstrates the expansion of global outsourcing and remote administrative support services, where Filipino professionals have gained a competitive advantage due to strong English proficiency and communication competence.

Furthermore, the diversity of employment categories ranging from corporate, education, entrepreneurship, creative industries, and government roles suggests that the BA Communication program prepares students for a broad spectrum of career paths. The data confirms that graduates are not confined to traditional media roles but are actively engaged in emerging digital and remote occupations.



The results imply that the high employability of graduates may be partly attributed to the increasing demand for communication-related competencies in a digitally driven and globally interconnected labor market. The changes in employment systems worldwide have expanded opportunities for Communication graduates, particularly in online, freelance, and remote-based industries.

In summary, the employment classification profile demonstrates that BA Communication graduates are responsive to labor market transitions and possess transferable skills suitable for both traditional and emerging career environments.

Table 7
Employment Status of the Respondents

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Project-Based	116	30%
Contractual	89	23%
Regular / Permanent	81	21%
Causal/Temporary	62	16%
Probationary	19	5%
Part-timer	12	3%
Other	7	2%
Total	387	100%

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Total	387	100%



Table 7 shows the present employment status of 387 employed graduates because 1 answered unemployed in the survey questionnaire checklist. Based on the gathered data, 155 respondents, or 40 percent, hold regular or permanent positions. However, a larger combined proportion of graduates is employed under flexible arrangements. Specifically, 24 percent are project-based, 16 percent are contractual, and 10 percent are engaged in casual or temporary employment. Smaller portions are probationary (5%), part-time (3%), or categorized under other employment types (2%). Although the findings show that the majority of BA Communication graduates are employed, most of them have not yet secured permanent or regular positions. This trend can be explained by the fact that, at the time of the study, the respondents were only approximately two to four years post-graduate. In most organizations and companies, permanent or regular employment status typically requires longer tenure, relevant work experience, and sometimes additional qualifications or advanced educational credentials.

Early career professionals commonly begin under project-based, contractual, or temporary arrangements as they build experience and demonstrate competence. According to career development literature, graduates within their first five years of employment are often in the exploration and establishment stages, where job mobility and non-permanent contracts are common (Super, 1990). Furthermore, studies on youth employment in the Philippines indicate that young workers are more likely to occupy non-regular employment positions during the early stages of their careers due to limited work experience and evolving skill specialization (Philippine Institute for Development Studies [PIDS], 2021).





Some research conducted after the COVID-19 pandemic also shows that early-career graduates faced competitive labor market conditions and were more likely to accept flexible or non-standard employment arrangements as entry points into the workforce (Khan et al., 2021). These employment patterns are not necessarily indicators of instability but are characteristic of transitional career phases among recent graduates.

Therefore, the lower percentage of permanent employment among BA Communication graduates should be interpreted within the context of career progression and labor market structure. Given that the respondents are only two to four years into their professional journey, the high overall employment rate demonstrates strong employability, while the predominance of contractual and project-based roles reflects normal early-career progression and the evolving nature of modern employment systems.

The increase in contractual and temporary employment further reflects broader labor market changes that have intensified following the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations worldwide shifted to flexible hiring systems to manage economic uncertainty and accommodate remote work arrangements (Khan et al., 2021). In the Philippine context, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2021) reported growth in non-standard employment, especially among young professionals engaged in digitally mediated work.

The lower proportion of regular or permanent employment does not necessarily suggest poor employability. Instead, it highlights the transformation of employment systems in the digital economy. Communication graduates possess transferable competencies such as digital communication, content creation, strategic messaging, and virtual coordination, which are highly-suited to project-based and contractual environments.



The summary of results indicates that BA Communication graduates are adaptable to changing labor market structures. Their employment profile reflects participation in modern, flexible work systems influenced by technological advancement and global employment changes.

Table 8 Monthly Income of the Respondents

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
50,000-above	39	10%
40,001-50,000	85	22%
30,001-40,000	124	32%
20,001-30,000	108	28%
15,001-20,000	19	5%
15,000-below	12	3%
Total	387	100%

Table 8 shows the current monthly income distribution of the employed graduates. The largest percentage of respondents, 32 percent, earn between ₱30,001 and ₱40,000 per month. This is followed by 28 percent earning between ₱20,001 and ₱30,000, and 22 percent earning between ₱40,001 and ₱50,000. Ten percent of the graduates earn ₱50,000 and above. Only a small percentage fall within the lower income brackets, with 5 percent earning between ₱15,001 and ₱20,000 and 3 percent earning ₱15,000 and below.





The data indicate that the majority of BA Communication graduates are earning within the mid- to upper-entry salary levels. Considering that most respondents are only two to four years into their careers, earning between ₱30,000 and ₱50,000 suggests positive early-career income progression. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2023), entry-level and early-career salaries in service, communication, and business process sectors commonly fall within the ₱20,000–₱35,000 range, with higher compensation observed in digitally specialized and remote-based roles.

The relatively higher percentages in the ₱30,000–₱50,000 income range may be linked to the increasing demand for digital communication, virtual assistant services, content creation, and outsourcing roles. The International Labour Organization (2021) noted that digital transformation and remote work expansion have created higher income opportunities for skilled professionals, particularly in countries active in global outsourcing markets such as the Philippines.

The small percentage in lower income categories may reflect those in temporary or part-time positions, early probationary periods, or transitional roles. However, the overall distribution suggests that the graduates are not only employed but are also earning competitively within their career stage.

In summary, the income profile demonstrates that most graduates have achieved stable and moderate earnings within a relatively short time after graduation. This supports earlier findings that BA Communication graduates are employable and capable of adapting to evolving digital and global labor markets.





Table 9
Reasons for Unemployment

Reasons of Unemployment	Frequency	Percentage
Family Concern	1	0.45%
Lack of Opportunity	0	0%
Further Studies	0	0%
Lack of Work Experience	0	0%
Other concern	0	0%
Total	1	0.45%

Based on Table 9, shows the reason for unemployment among those unemployed respondents. The major cause of the responses is Family Concern, with an average of 1 or 0.45%.

In this table it highlights that the major cause of unemployment, with an average of 1 or 0.45%, is Family Concern. It identifies “Family Concern” as the primary reason for unemployment among the respondents, suggesting that familial obligations or issues may be preventing individuals from actively seeking or maintaining employment. The low frequency of this reason is shown in the analysis, with an average of 1 or 0.45%. This implies that even though “Family Concern” is mentioned as a reason for unemployment, it is not a common factor for most of the respondents. Although the “Family Concern” may not be a widespread reason for unemployment among the surveyed respondents, it still points out the need to take personal and family circumstances into account that can influence people’s employment status. Besides, it may be helpful to provide support systems or resources to address family issues for individuals who are looking for employment opportunities.





During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, several studies noted that family responsibilities became a significant factor influencing labor force participation, particularly among young adults. Research has shown that the pandemic intensified caregiving roles and household responsibilities, leading some individuals to temporarily withdraw from employment or delay job-seeking activities (Khan et al., 2021). In the Philippine context, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS, 2021) reported that family-related considerations, including caregiving and household economic adjustments, affected workforce participation decisions during the pandemic recovery period.

The presence of only one unemployed respondent indicates that unemployment is not a structural issue among the surveyed graduates. Instead, it appears to be situational and personal rather than market-driven. The absence of responses citing lack of opportunity or lack of work experience further reinforces the strong employability profile of BA Communication graduates.

While family concern is not a widespread issue in this dataset, it underscores the importance of social and familial factors in shaping employment decisions. Institutions may still consider providing alumni support systems, such as flexible employment networks or remote work referrals, to accommodate graduates balancing personal responsibilities.

Overall, the findings demonstrate an exceptionally high employment rate and suggest that unemployment among the surveyed graduates is minimal and primarily influenced by personal circumstances rather than labor market limitations.



3. Skills Gained by BA Communication Graduates

In this portion of the study, the researchers explore the skills gained by graduates with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication degree. The different abilities they have developed, and how they are applied in real-life situations. By closely examining these aspects, it will shed light on the wide range of skills these graduates acquire and how they shape their professional journeys. Aimed to make the journey of skill acquisition understandable, providing insights into how BA Communication graduates transform and adapt to the modern field of work.

Table 10
Gained Skills of the Respondents in their Jobs

Gained Skills	Frequency	Percentage
Written Communication	155	66%
Verbal Communication	199	85%
Interpersonal Communication	161	69%
Cross-Cultural Communication	91	39%
Digital Communication	117	50%
Media Literacy	92	39%
Strategic Communication	121	51%
Research and Analysis	74	31%
Creative Problem-Solving	123	52%
Team Collaboration	142	60%



Leadership and Management	129	55%
Adaptability and Flexibility	156	66%
Time Management and Organization	158	67%
Customer Service	149	63%
Presentation Skills	98	42%
Negotiation and Persuasion	92	39%
Crisis Communication	53	23%
Networking	39	17%
Self-Reflection and Continuous Learning	129	55%
Client Communication & Email Management	88	37%
Social Media Content Creation	94	40%
Project Coordination and Task Management	101	43%

It presents on the table above the skills gained by the respondents in their current employment. It is important to note that this table reflects multiple responses, meaning each respondent was allowed to select more than one skill that they have developed or enhanced in their workplace. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100 percent, as they represent the frequency of each identified skill rather than exclusive categories.





Table 10 shows the data about the skills gained by the respondents in their jobs. In Batch 2020-2022, 199 or 85% honed their Verbal Communication the most, 161 or 69% learned Interpersonal Communication, 158 or 67% honed Time and Management Organization, 156 or 66% acquired Adaptability and Flexibility, 155 or 66% acquired Written Communication skills, 149 or 63% honed Customer service skills, 142 or 60% honed Team collaboration skills, 129 or 55% of the respondents gained both Leadership and Management skills and Self- Reflection and Continuous Learning skills, 123 or 52% honed Creative Problem-solving, 121 or 51 % honed Strategic Communication, 117 or 50% honed Digital Communication, 98 or 42% honed Presentation skills, 92 or 39% of the respondents honed both Negotiation and Persuasion and Media Literacy, 91 or 39 % honed Cross-cultural Communication, 74 or 31% honed Research Analysis skills, 53 or 23% honed Crisis Communication. And lastly, 39 or 17% honed Networking. Most of the BA Communication Graduates of 2020-2022 gained Verbal Communication Skills with a frequency of 199 or 85%.

In addition, several respondents identified in others the applied workplace skills such as Client Communication and Email Management (37%), Social Media Content Creation (40%), and Project Coordination and Task Management (43%). These skills reflect the practical translation of communication competencies into real workplace functions, especially in virtual assistant, freelance, and digital marketing roles.





This table identifies Verbal Communication as the most honed skill among the respondents, with 85% (199 respondents) acquiring proficiency in this area. It suggests that verbal communication is highly valued and widely developed among BA Communication graduates from the 2020-2022 batches. It also highlights several other skills that a sizable portion of respondents have honed, such as Interpersonal Communication, Time Management Organization, Adaptability and Flexibility, and Written Communication. These findings indicate that graduates are equipped with a diverse set of interpersonal, organizational, and communication skills, which are essential in various professional settings. Additionally, the analysis notes skills are less prevalent among respondents, such as Crisis Communication and Networking, suggesting that while these skills are valuable, they may not be as commonly developed among BA Communication graduates. The analysis concludes by noting that most BA Communication graduates from the 2020-2022 batches gained Verbal Communication Skills, emphasizing its widespread development among the surveyed graduates.

The results of the study also demonstrate that BA Communication graduates are strengthening both foundational communication competencies and applied digital and coordination skills. While Crisis Communication and Networking show lower percentages, this may be due to the early-career stage of respondents, as these skills are often developed further in higher-level professional roles.



4. Factors Affecting the Choice of Jobs of the BA Communication Graduates

In this study, the factors that influenced the career preferences of BA Communication graduates are dissected, surrounding a more comprehensive examination of shaping their job selections. The focal points of their choices will take part in the various elements such as educational background, personal interests, industry trends, and socio-economic factors. These factors are meticulously explored to shed light on the changing aspects that diverted the career path of BA Communication graduates

Table 11

Factors affecting the choice of Jobs of the Respondents

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
In line with my interests and skills	115	49%
Educational Attainment (In line with my education)	100	43%
Steppingstone for Desired Employment	92	39%
Monetary Compensation	91	39%
Location/Assigned Place of Work	56	24%
Influenced by peers/ parents	39	17%
Others	--	--
Opportunities for career growth	47	20%
Job security / stability	34	14%
Flexible work arrangements	30	13%
Work-life balance	28	12%
Company reputation	22	9%



Based on Table 11, the data about the Factors that affect the choice of jobs of the respondents. 115 or 49% of the respondents answered that their choice of jobs was affected in line with their interests and skills, while 100 or 43% were affected by Educational Attainment. Additionally, 92 or 39% of the respondents answered it was their steppingstone for desired Employment. Moreover, 91 or 39% were affected by Monetary Compensation. The other 56 or 24% were affected by Location/Assigned Place of Work. And lastly, 39 or 17% were affected by the Influence of peers/parents. Most of the respondent's choice of jobs was affected by In line with their interests and skills.

This table indicates that “In line with their interests and skills” is the most common factor affecting job choice among respondents, with 49% (115 respondents) seeing this as a major factor. Thus, it means that the students from batches 2020-2022 should consider the alignment of job roles with their interests and skills when making career decisions.

Furthermore, under the category of other factors, several additional considerations emerged. Particularly, opportunities for career growth (20%) ranked highest among these added factors, followed by job security or stability (14%), flexible work arrangements (13%), work-life balance (12%), and company reputation (9%). These responses suggest that apart from immediate interests and financial returns, graduates also evaluate long-term sustainability, professional development, and organizational credibility when choosing employment. The inclusion of these factors further underscores the multidimensional nature of job decision-making among graduates, demonstrating that career selection is influenced by both intrinsic motivations (such as interests and skills) and extrinsic considerations (such as stability, flexibility, and growth opportunities).





The findings of the study bring to the forefront several other issues that are of central importance in determining job choices, such as Education Attainment, steppingstones for desired Employment, Monetary Compensation, Location/Assigned Place of Work, and the Influence of peers/parents. These findings reveal the complexity of the job selection process that can be affected by various personal, educational, career advancement, financial, and social factors. The analysis ends with the statement that most respondents' choice of jobs was influenced by matching their interests and skills, which shows that personal preferences and competencies play a major role in determining career decisions among the graduates in the study.

Several published studies support the findings presented in Table 11, particularly the prominence of interests and skills in career decision-making. Career development theories such as Holland's Person–Environment Fit Theory emphasize that individuals are more likely to pursue and remain in occupations that align with their personal interests, abilities, and competencies, leading to greater job satisfaction and career stability (Holland, 1997). Similarly, research on career choice consistently shows that intrinsic factors such as personal interest, skills alignment, and self-efficacy play a stronger role in job selection than purely external factors (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).

Other studies also suggest that graduate employability indicate that educational attainment and field-of-study alignment significantly influence employment decisions, as graduates often seek positions related to their academic preparation to maximize their human capital (Tomlinson, 2008). Financial considerations such as salary and job security also remain important extrinsic motivators in employment decisions (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959), while career advancement opportunities serve as long-term strategic considerations among early-career professionals (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005).





Additionally, social influences such as family expectations and peer advice have been identified as contributing factors in shaping occupational aspirations, particularly among young adults and recent graduates (Fouad et al., 2010). Contemporary research also highlights that factors like work–life balance and flexible work arrangements influence job attractiveness, especially among younger generations entering the workforce (Bloom, Han, & Liang, 2024).

The existing literature supports the present findings that career decision-making is multidimensional. However, consistent with both theory and empirical research, alignment with personal interests and skills remains the most significant determinant of job choice among graduates, reinforcing the interpretation that intrinsic motivations play a dominant role in employment decisions.

5. Skills Acquired by BA Communication Graduates Considered Relevant by their Employers in their Present Job

In exploring the landscape of skills acquired by BA Communication graduates, this study seeks to address the question of relevance in their current roles, as perceived by their employers. This will focus on the exploration of the skills significant to employers, their alignment with the demands of the respective positions, and the acquired competencies in directing the professional world. This study is directed toward knowing the relevance of various skills, assessing their impact on job performance, and clarifying the changing aspects between acquired competencies and workplace expectations. This part of the study is focused on a comprehensive investigation to reveal the flexibility between the skills of the graduates and the evolving demands of the professional world.



Table 12

Acquired Skills of the Graduates in their Communication Course/Program

Acquired Skills	Frequency	Percentage
Communication Skills	218	93%
Adaptability and Flexibility	171	73%
Interpersonal Skills	168	71%
Teamwork and Collaboration	151	64%
Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving	143	61%
Leadership Skills	120	51%
Media Production Skills	108	46%
Digital Media Literacy	98	42%
Research Skills	88	37%
Advertising Skills	88	37%
Marketing and Public Relations Skills	76	32%
Cultural Competence and Diversity Awareness	75	32%
Project Management	72	31%
Media Law and Ethics	71	30%
Journalism Skills	69	29%
Graphic Designing Skills	68	29%
Multimedia Storytelling	58	25%

Networking Skills	37	16%
Theater Arts Skills	36	15%
Other	--	--
Data Analytics and Audience Insights Skills	64	27%

Table 12 shows the Acquired Skills of the Graduates in their Communication Course/Program. With the most responses, 218 or 93% of the respondents acquired skills in Communication, and 171 or 73 % acquired Adaptability and Flexibility skills. These results are consistent with global higher education frameworks emphasizing communication, collaboration, adaptability, and critical thinking as essential 21st-century skills (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2020). The prominence of these skills suggests that the Communication program effectively equips students with competencies highly valued in contemporary workplaces.

While 168 or 71% acquired Interpersonal Skills, the other 151, or 64% of the respondents acquired Teamwork and Collaboration Skills, and 143, or 61% acquired Critical Thinking and Problem- solving skills. aligns with research highlighting that employers prioritize transferable or “soft” skills alongside technical expertise (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Similarly, studies on graduate employability emphasize that adaptability and communication competence significantly enhance workplace integration and career mobility (Tomlinson, 2017). These findings validate that the program contributes to employability by developing both interpersonal and cognitive competencies.





Moreover, 120 or 51% Leadership Skills, 108 or 46% acquired Media Production Skills, and 98 or 42% acquired Digital Media Literacy. This interpretation of further strengthens of leadership competence has been linked to enhanced career progression and employability among communication and media graduates (Jackson, 2016).

Additionally, 88 or 37% of the respondents acquired both Research skills and Advertising skills. 76 or 32% acquired Marketing and Public Relations skills, 75 or 32% acquired Cultural Competence and Diversity Awareness, 72 or 31% acquired Project Management skills, and 71 or 30% acquired skills in Media Law and Ethics. While 69 or 29% acquired skills in Journalism. 58 or 25% acquired Multimedia Storytelling, 37, or 16% acquired skills in Networking. And lastly, 36 or 15% acquired skills in Theatre Arts. Most of the BA Communication Graduates of batches 2020 2022 acquired Communication skills with a frequency of 218 or 93%, while the least answer was Theatre Arts skills with a frequency of 36 or 15%.

Theatre arts is a branch of performing arts, promoting creativity through participatory engagement. In interviews, most experienced practitioners highlighted that the lockdown affected youth with a desire to experiment creatively within the domain of theatre arts and with live audiences and expressed experiences in grappling with mental distress and the need to abandon plans, which posed considerable challenges at the time. Furthermore, theatrical technicians and other staff in the industry faced significant repercussions due to the closure of all events and programs across the city. (Journal of Positive School Psychology, 2021). The pandemic's impact on the Performing Arts sector, resulting in its lowest standing, was an additional insight.





Meanwhile, some answered on the other Data Analytics and Audience Insights Skills with 64 responses and 27% reflects the growing importance of data-driven communication strategies in digital environments. Contemporary research underscores that media and communication professionals increasingly require digital analytics competencies to interpret audience behavior and measure engagement (European Commission, 2020).

The result in the table above shows that the Communication program nurtures a balance of core communication competencies, employability skills, digital proficiencies, and leadership capacities. The distribution of acquired skills reflects current global workforce demands and confirms that graduates developed competencies aligned with both traditional communication practice and evolving digital media environments.

6. Challenges that communication graduates face in line with their work

The researchers focus on the different challenges that communication graduates encounter across the complex working field. This part focuses on an order of factors, including the nature of challenges. The table below is structured to offer a comprehensive analysis of the difficult tasks that communication graduates confront in line with their work, shedding light on the changes in shaping their professional journeys.





Table 13
Challenges faced by Graduates in their Jobs

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Low Salary Income	107	46%
Lack of Work-Life Balance	98	42%
Working Under Pressure	96	41%
Job market Competition	70	30%
Balancing Creativity and Strategy	59	25%
Dealing with Feedback	58	25%
Building a Personal Brand	56	24%
Adaptability and Flexibility	49	21%
Managing or Directing the Workplace and Understanding Work Culture	46	20%
Others	--	--
Job Insecurity / Contractual Employment	82	35%
Skills Mismatch	64	27%
Limited Career Advancement Opportunities	73	31%
Mental Health and Burnout	89	38%





In table 13 the researchers gathered data about the challenges faced by the graduates in their Jobs. Low salary income presented a challenge for 107 respondents, with a percentage of 46% of the total surveyed. This finding aligns with existing research indicating that early-career graduates often experience wage dissatisfaction and underemployment during school-to-work transition periods (Tomlinson, 2008). Graduate underemployment and income instability are widely documented concerns, particularly in competitive labor markets where entry-level wages may not immediately reflect educational attainment (ILO, 2020).

Lack of Work-Life Balance was presented as a challenge in the 98 respondents or 42%, while 96, or 41% of the respondents chose Working Under Pressure and Mental Health and Burnout 89 responses or 38% as a challenge. Research consistently links heavy workloads, high performance expectations, and blurred work–life boundaries to increased stress and burnout, especially among young professionals adjusting to workplace demands (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). During and post-pandemic periods, burnout and emotional exhaustion have been reported as significant concerns among early-career employees directing hybrid or unstable work structures (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022).

Other than that, 70 or 30% of the respondents answered Job market competition. This result shows findings that graduate labor markets have become increasingly saturated, intensifying competition for stable and well compensated roles (Tomlinson, 2017).

Moreover, 59 or 25% of the respondents chose Balancing Creativity and Strategy, there are also 58 or 25% of the respondents who faced challenges in their job in terms of Dealing with Feedback.





These answers or responses are particularly relevant in communication-related professions, where professionals must integrate creativity with measurable business objectives while continuously adapting to evaluation and audience engagement demands. Studies on professional identity development emphasize that early-career professionals often struggle to establish credibility and confidence in competitive communication industries (Jackson, 2016).

Additionally, 56 or 24% of the BA Communication Graduates answered Building a Personal Brand, and the other 49 or 21% of the respondents chose Adaptability and Flexibility. Lastly, 44 or 20% of the BA Communication Graduates faced challenges in jobs in terms of Directing the Workplace and Understanding Work Culture.

In this table, “Low Salary Income” emerges as the most prevalent challenge, cited by 46% of respondents, indicating financial strain despite completing education. The impact of the pandemic on the job market could exacerbate this issue. Other significant challenges include Lack of Work-Life Balance, Working Under Pressure, and Job Market Competition. Less common challenges include Balancing Creativity and Strategy, Dealing with Feedback, and Directing Workplace Culture. Overall, low salary income stands out as the dominant challenge, highlighting the financial difficulties faced by BA Communication graduates, potentially worsened by pandemic related economic effects.





Conclusion

1. The demographic findings show that BA Communication graduates are predominantly young professionals who are at the early stage of their career development. The profile reflects a group that is academically prepared and transitioning into professional life, with a strong female representation and a majority who are single. Most graduates have completed their bachelor's degree and have not yet pursued advanced studies, suggesting that immediate workforce participation was prioritized. Overall, the demographic profile presents a generation of graduates ready to establish themselves in their chosen fields while still exploring long-term academic and professional growth opportunities.
2. The employment profile reveals that BA Communication graduates demonstrate strong employability across different sectors, particularly in private and digitally oriented industries. Their engagement in communication driven, remote, and service-related roles indicates responsiveness to contemporary labor market demands. While many are under project-based or contractual arrangements, this reflects the transitional nature of early career stages rather than employment instability. The income patterns suggest competitive entry-level earnings, and unemployment is minimal and situational. Altogether, the findings affirm the graduates' ability to integrate successfully into the workforce.
3. The study highlights the significant development and practical application of communication-centered and transferable skills in the workplace. Graduates consistently demonstrate strengths in verbal, interpersonal, organizational, and adaptive competencies. The integration of digital communication and coordination skills further shows their capacity to function effectively in technology-driven environments.





These findings confirm that the program equips graduates with relevant and applicable skills that enhance professional performance and workplace adaptability.

4. Career decision-making among graduates appears to be strongly guided by personal alignment, particularly the match between their interests, skills, and job roles. At the same time, practical considerations such as career advancement, financial compensation, and employment stability influence their choices. External influences play a comparatively smaller role, indicating that graduates largely exercise independent and reflective judgment in selecting employment. The results reveal that job selection is a balanced process shaped by both intrinsic motivations and realistic career planning.
5. The findings affirm that the BA Communication program cultivates competencies that are aligned with employer expectations. Core communication skills, adaptability, teamwork, and critical thinking stand out as foundational strengths developed during academic training. The presence of digital, leadership, and analytical skills further demonstrates responsiveness to modern industry demands. While specialized technical skills vary in development, the overall skill set reflects a well-rounded preparation that enables graduates to perform effectively across diverse professional settings.
6. Despite strong employability, graduates encounter challenges characteristic of early-career professionals. Financial concerns, employment security, workplace pressure, and work-life balance emerge as key realities in their professional journeys. Additionally, the demands of creativity, strategic thinking, and professional identity building reflect the evolving and competitive nature of communication-related fields. These challenges do not indicate inadequate preparation but rather illustrate the complexities of transitioning into a vigorous labor market. Overall, graduates display resilience and adaptability in facing these professional realities.





Recommendations

1. Graduates may consider enrolling in advanced studies, certification programs, or specialized training aligned with their professional goals. Continuous learning may enhance their qualifications, broaden career mobility, and increase access to leadership or permanent positions. Lifelong learning initiatives may also support adaptability in a rapidly evolving communication and digital system.
2. The department may establish stronger employer feedback systems to regularly assess the alignment between curricular outcomes and industry expectations. Collecting structured input from supervisors and partner organizations may help refine course offerings and competency frameworks. Graduates aspiring for public sector employment may consider taking the Civil Service Examination to widen professional opportunities within government institutions.
3. During curriculum reviews, the program may enhance competencies in networking, research and analysis, crisis communication, cross-cultural communication, negotiation, persuasion, and digital analytics. Embedding experiential learning components such as simulations, capstone projects, client-based campaigns, and real-world case applications may strengthen students' applied skills. Greater emphasis on industry-based outputs may bridge theoretical knowledge with workplace realities.
4. The department may provide structured career development programs, such as mentoring systems, alumni talks, and professional reflection workshops. These initiatives may help students align career pathways with both their academic preparation and personal strengths, fostering long-term job satisfaction and professional stability.



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5. The institution may allocate resources to strengthen training in multimedia production, graphic design, digital marketing, audience analytics, and emerging communication technologies. Offering micro-credential courses, industry-led workshops, and certification programs may enhance graduates' competitiveness. Strengthening laboratories, software access, and production facilities may further support hands-on learning experiences.
 6. Students may be encouraged to pursue strategic internship placements aligned with their intended career tracks. The department may formalize partnerships with reputable organizations to ensure quality on-the-job training experiences. Immersion activities such as industry exposure trips, company visits, professional shadowing, and field-based projects may reduce future workplace adjustment challenges and increase employment readiness.
 7. The institution may strengthen government–industry–academe forums to foster continuous dialogue on labor market trends, emerging competencies, and workforce demands. Regular multi-sectoral consultations, roundtable discussions, and collaborative planning sessions may promote stronger alignment between academic preparation and national development priorities. These partnerships may also open pathways for internships, employment pipelines, and joint initiatives.
 8. The department may pursue collaborative research partnerships with government agencies, private companies, and media organizations. Joint research initiatives may focus on digital communication trends, media literacy, public information campaigns, and strategic communication practices. Seeking external grants and institutional funding may support faculty-student collaborative research projects, innovation labs, and publication opportunities.





Encouraging student involvement in funded research and extension programs may strengthen experiential learning and professional exposure.

9. The college and university administration may allocate dedicated funding for curricular enhancement activities that immerse students in industry settings.

Resources may support industry immersion programs, communication campaigns for partner communities, media production projects, and technology upgrades.

Additionally, expanding funding for research and extension initiatives where students actively participate may cultivate practical skills, community engagement, and professional confidence.

10. Future tracer studies may adopt a more comprehensive and longitudinal approach.

Expanding the scope to include employer evaluations, long-term career growth, salary progression, job satisfaction, global mobility, mental well-being, and professional certifications may provide richer institutional data. Sustained tracking of alumni outcomes may guide evidence-based curricular reforms and strategic planning.





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IMPACT RESEARCH OF THE AB PSYCHOLOGY EXTENSION PROJECT LUMINA IN 2019

a research by **Nerissa S. Olarte**
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ABSTRACT

PROJECT LUMINA meaning 'to give light' - which symbolizes hope and guide, was an extension program of the AB Psychology Department Faculty Members under the Educational Support Services Program (ESSP) of the University Extension Services Management Office. It was implemented through the Memorandum of Agreement with DSWD Regional Office III – Tarlac Field Office and the Tarlac State University as cooperating agencies to address the need for Capability Development Trainings to cater to beneficiaries at DSWD Tarlac Home for Women. The facility caters to the vulnerable sector composed of women and children as well as elderly and persons with disability. This impact assessment presents the empirical evidence on how the Project Lumina inputs, activities and outputs greatly affected the outcomes and short term as well as long term impacts of the project.





A non-experimental approach was followed and have relied on assumptions and logical framework. The data collection was facilitated through the application of the Four Levels of Evaluation or the Kirkpatrick Model. The four levels namely Reaction, Learning, Behavior and Results, are commonly used to measure the effectiveness of training. The Reaction level was conducted after each of the training sessions from June to November 2019 while the Learning level of evaluation is done using questionnaire before and after. The Behavior and Results levels that were both appertaining to outcome and impact level were collected through the qualitative approaches.

The impact assessors facilitated an interview using a semi-structured questionnaire and a follow up online interview which was highlighted by a focus group discussion with admin staff, a social worker, and a house parent. The head of the center and a social welfare officer in charge of the statistics became key informants and provided additional inputs. Feedback and results to the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview facilitated through video conferencing were collected and compared with the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) questionnaire. The existing data collected was enriched with substantial claim of the participants of their great needs met by the Project Lumina. Towards the completion of the data collection, data analysis was utilized to transcribe the interviews with the beneficiaries and key informants. Impact assessments are conducted to indicate how well the objectives set were achieved and whether the program can be sustained or replicated. This IA followed the logical framework in interpreting the program assessment.

Key Words: impact assessment, logical framework, Kirkpatrick Model, training needs analysis, capability development trainings



I. INTRODUCTION

In the last quarter of 2018, about three years ago, a request letter was received from the center head of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Tarlac Home for Women seeking for assistance with the rehabilitation of the clients who are victims of neglect, abandonment, physical and sexually abused, victims or trafficking and women with special needs through a Capability Building Trainings for the staff and Therapeutic Group Sessions with the clients under institutional care.

DSWD Tarlac Home for Women caters to the vulnerable sector composed of women and children as well as elderly and persons with disability. The beneficiaries are the 35 residents from which 23 are women and 12 are dependents with ages ranging from 18- 60 years old. Active cases include victims of sexual abuse (rape and incest), sexual exploitation, maltreatment, conflict with the law, emotional abuse. The facility staff has a total of 30 people performing the tasks of being house parents, social workers, psychologist & psychometrician and administrative staff. They have various educational qualifications and professional background. The cooperating agencies are the Tarlac State University- headed by Dr. Myrna Q. Mallari through the College of Arts and Social Sciences, AB Psychology Department Faculty Members under the Educational Support Services Program (ESSP) of the University Extension Services Management Office implemented via the Memorandum of Agreement with DSWD Regional Office III – Tarlac Field Office headed by Ms. Jacqueline Bautista dated April, 2019 that commenced PROJECT LUMINA (meaning ‘to give light’) which symbolizes hope and guide.

The project first conducted orientation among service providers which is composed of the faculty members of the AB Psychology Department. As one of the helping professions, the providers aimed to extend services that promote psychological well-being. Project Lumina also aims to help the staff be more equipped in doing their job and bring out the residents’ potentials to ready them for community reintegration.





The request for the intervention which made way for the project to be crafted and processed as document in November 2018 while the MOA was approved for the duration of one year from April 2019 to April 2020. The action plan was executed by group of Guidance Counselors and Psychometricians with the Project Lead, Mr. Jeremiah Paul Silvestre and Co-Leader Mr. Jersey P. Pangilinan.

There were six (6) completed Capability Building Trainings under the Project Lumina after the Training Needs Assessment in April 2019. On June 11, 2019, Seminar-Workshop 1. Understanding Abuse and Trauma for DSWD Staff, on July 22, 2019 Seminar-Workshop 2. Reaffirmation with Self-Care, on August 12, 2019 another Seminar-Workshop 3. Basic Applied Behavior Analysis, on October 16, 2019 Session 1: Self-Awareness, on November 9, 2019 Session 2: Exploring Emotions, and on November 27, 2019 Session 3: Respect. It was however discontinued during the onset of the health emergency brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic. The last session with staff and residents documented was on November 27, 2019. Due to the strict health protocols and limitation for assemblies, it has hindered the conduct of the group sessions and face to face skills training.

A Logic Model was crafted as a theory of change for this type- end of project evaluation. The project impact assessment used baseline data such as but not limited to the profile of the partner beneficiary, Memorandum of Agreement, the work plan, training needs analysis and completed capacity development trainings paper trail. The impact assessment will investigate the overall success or failure (positive or negative impact) of the capacity development trainings provided by the Psychology Department through the Project Lumina to the DSWD staff according to the enhanced professional competence, improved performance, and satisfaction of the beneficiaries or participants of the training. The impact assessment was completed in 12 weeks as detailed in the schedule of activities at the proposal.





II. OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. The impact assessment aimed at addressing the following objectives:

Professional Competency

To determine whether stated objectives have been achieved according to the project plan.

To determine comparative conditions before and after project intervention.

To identify other relevant conditions in the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women to be addressed through the Capacity Development Trainings and to determine the sustainability of the extension project.

B. The following indicators have been identified and measured in this IA:

Impact indicators: Long-term results

Measure the quality and quantity of long-term results generated by program outputs (e.g., measurable change in quality of life)

Outcome indicators: Medium-term results

Measure the intermediate results generated by program outputs. They often correspond to any change in participants' behavior as a result of program, (e.g., training intervention affecting change in the behavior or improvement in performance of beneficiaries)

Output indicators: Short-term results

Measure the quantity, quality, and timeliness of the program -services — that are the result of a training (Very Satisfactory to Excellent ratings in the quantity, quality, and timeliness parameters)

Impact assessment of training assesses the extent to which the learning process has made a difference in some targeted area such as in the development of the targeted groups, or beneficiaries of an intervention project. The basic organizing principle of any good assessment of a training intervention is to ask the question: What would have happened in the absence of the training intervention?





The positive effects as intended or unintended are the influence the participants who learned has made inherent to the dynamics they manage to do with fellow employees and with clients and negative unintended effects of the intervention would be the unsustainability of the motivation which the lessons have taught the participants especially during the pandemic when some unintentional changes in work routines need to be followed as most of the participants mentioned in the questionnaire.

The great team of faculty members from the AB Psychology Department who are experts in the field of counselling and psychometry have enabled the Project Lumina to really shed light in the lives and capacitate the professional development of the beneficiaries of the Capability Development Training program. The immeasurable support and advocacy of the leadership of the cooperating agencies is also notable.

The greatest barrier to the implementation of the Capability Development Training Program was and still is the pandemic hindering our personal and interpersonal interactions and have halted the completion of the Project Lumina. Things were looking better with the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women back then in 2019. They made use of the knowledge and skills learned to enable them to manage with the increasing clients with various demands and strategies to deal with. Majority of the participant respondents agreed that they would have accomplished better outputs in their duties had the capability trainings continued as planned. During the implementation of Project Lumina





III. METHODOLOGY

The assessment made use of mixed methods combining the elements of both quantitative and qualitative design. 'Mixed methods evaluation' is the systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and methods at all stages of an evaluation. A key reason for mixing methods is that it helps to overcome the weaknesses inherent in each method when used alone (Bamberger 2012). Mixed methods evaluation also increases the credibility of evaluation findings when information from different data sources converges (i.e., they are consistent with the findings) and can deepen the understanding of the program/ policy, its effects and context (Bamberger 2012). A quantitative approach through a survey questionnaire with Likert scale to measure reaction and learning through trainings conducted for capacity development. A qualitative approach through a semi-structured questionnaire interview with video conferencing, focus group discussions (FGD) and Key Informants were applied to evaluate the behavior and results level of outcomes. The Kirkpatrick

Four Level of Evaluation was the evaluation model used to achieve the objectives of the impact evaluation.

Secondary Data are a rich source for the IA. Available documents through the Extension Office and Extension Coordinator as well as the Service providers about the project cycle were analyzed. Important documents for Project Lumina are the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) which identified the requested Capability Development Training needed, and the Work Plan accomplished by the Project Lead which mapped out the program. As identified in the TNA, the needs are of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal concerns and became the bases for the crafting of the skills training for Capability Development. These were the baseline data. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the partner beneficiary and service provider have also clarified the roles of both parties.





There were two questions asked in the questionnaire as follows:

1. What problems are encountered by the DSWD Tarlac- Home for Women staff with the residents?
2. What skills are needed to perform the tasks effectively?

Same questions were asked to cover Level 2 evaluation of Learning and will be compared as to pre- and post-activity or intervention.

A non-experimental approach was followed and relied on assumptions and logical framework. The data collection was facilitated through the application of the Four Levels of Evaluation or the Kirkpatrick Model. The four levels, namely Reaction, Learning, Behavior and Results, are commonly used to measure the effectiveness of training. The Reaction level was conducted after each of the training sessions from June to November 2019 while the Learning level of evaluation is done using questionnaire with before and after. For the Behavior and Results levels which are both appertaining to outcome and impact level. These were collected through the qualitative approaches.

Primary data were collected by using a qualitative approach through a semi-structured questionnaire sent to the participants sometime in September 2021 and interview meeting through video conferencing on October 25, 2021, via focus group discussion (FGD) and Key Informants were conducted altogether. The impact assessors facilitated a semi-structured questionnaire and a follow up online interview, and also served as a focus group discussion with an admin staff, a social worker and a house parent. The head of the center and a social welfare officer in charge of the statistics became key informants and provided additional inputs. Feedback and results to the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview facilitated through video conferencing were collected and compared with the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) questionnaire. The existing data collected was enriched with substantial claim of the participants of their great needs met by the Project Lumina. Towards the completion of the data collection, data analysis was utilized to transcribe the interviews with the beneficiaries and key informants.





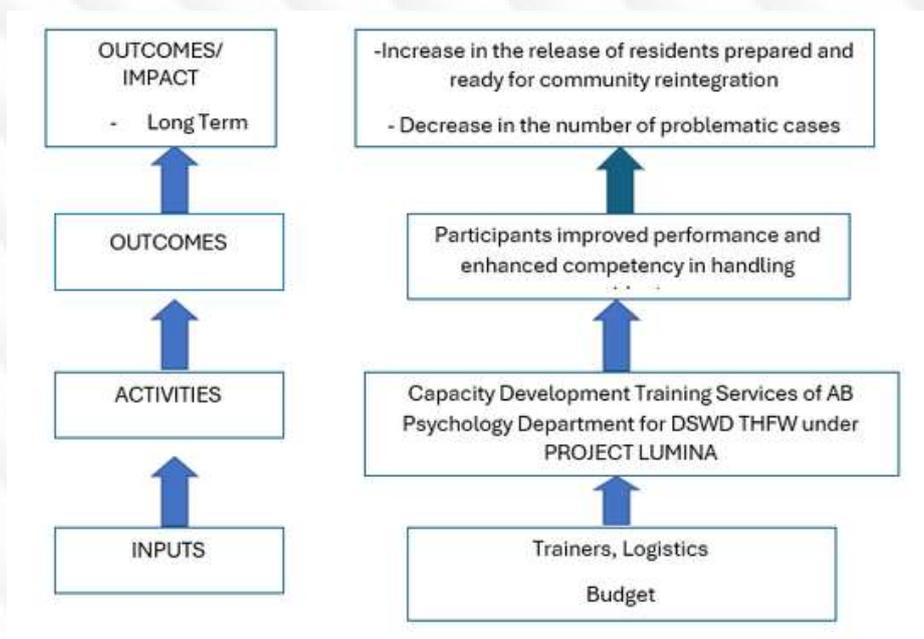
A descriptive data analysis was done for the quantitative data, while coding or thematic analyses will be used for the qualitative data to be collected from FGD, semi-structured interviews and key informants. Results were arrived at by analyzing through the efficient use of project resources, and effectiveness of training as attained through the extension project objectives of the Project Lumina interventions during the Capability Development Training.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the author, Stig Kjeldsen, “training impact assessment is concerned with the impact training can have on job performance and the influence the assessments can have on strengthening training programs and services.” According to another definition “training impact assessment is a tool that gathers and organizes information so that sound conclusions can be drawn, and decisions can be made about what needs to be done in the workplace to enhance the impact of training on day-to-day work behaviors and attitude.”

The facilitation of the Capability Development Trainings through the Project Lumina commenced after the partner agencies agreed and established the need to capacitate the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women staff with knowledge and skills to facilitate rehabilitation of the residents of the center. It has been identified that the center lacks manpower as well as the competency in the conduct of psychological services. Thus, Project Lumina has made an indelible mark on the improvement of strategies employed in the conduct of the participants’ duties and responsibilities in the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women as projected with the Project proposal containing the goals and objectives. The Theory of Change can be designed as the results of the impact assessment highlighted an institution that needs more of the kind of intervention catered to them with the growing need for valuable knowledge and explicit skills to equip them with suitable psycho-social therapeutic needs for their clients.





All necessary documents in the data collection templates, baseline reports and findings formed part of the data analysis. The attainment of the objectives was validated through the Four Level of Outcomes and the Impact Chain of the Logical Framework as shown below:

Impact Chain	Project Summary	Indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions/ Risks
GOAL	Capacitate the DSWD THFW Staff in dealing with residents' special needs	Number of residents assisted for reintegration to society	Project Beneficiary Head Psychological reports/ records	Contribute to the well-being of the residents and their healing process
OUTCOME	The Staff have enhanced competency to deal with the residents needs	Number of staff with enhanced competency Decline in difficulties on the job	Survey Questionnaire/ Semi-Structured Interview	Positive change in the behaviour of residents as effected by Staffs' better understanding
OUTPUTS	DSWD THFW Staff and residents were helped to capacitate themselves through learning and counselling sessions	Number of Staff trained Number of residents affected	Supervisor's Report Extension Office's project documents	The Staff apply what they learned on the job, Improved knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards residents
ACTIVITIES	Facilitate Six (6) Capability Development Trainings and Group Sessions for the DSWD THFW	Number of trainings facilitated with Very satisfactory ratings or higher	College Extension Project proposals Evaluation results Completion Report	DSWD THFW is eager to equip its employees /staff with knowledge, skills, and attitude to properly care and build capacity in group facilitation for the benefit of the residents



THE KIRKPATRICK 4 LEVELS OF EVALUATION

Level 1: REACTION

Evaluation at this stage measures how the participants react immediately after the completion of the training program in which they participated. The initial program for DSWD Staff were aimed to equip them with the necessary competencies to be effective as they perform their respective tasks. A feedback evaluation form was administered immediately after each training session with a Likert scale with corresponding ratings of 1- poor, 2- Fair, 3-Satisfactory, 4- Very Satisfactory and 5- Excellent. In the first Seminar-Workshop on Understanding Trauma and Abuse conducted on June 11, 2021, it aimed to demonstrate skills, increase knowledge, and improve productivity. The overall feedback evaluation rating earned was 4.94 equivalent to the adjectival rating of Excellent. The next seminar-workshop is entitled Self-Care to Care held on July 22, 2019, with 4.84 numerical rating equivalent to Excellent. The 3rd and last seminar-workshop was entitled Basic Applied Behavior Analysis held on August 12, 2019 with an overall rating of 5 which means Excellent. The results of training evaluation reflected excellent in the Reaction Level. The data was culled from the evaluation results after the conduct of Capability Development Trainings.

Level 2: LEARNING

Highlights the stage of learning and confidence. A simple standardized questionnaire about the Capability Development Trainings have been administered (same test) before and after the program as part of the evaluation process. The result of the learning as partly covered in the feedback evaluation questions before the trainings, was reflected in the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and which was asked again after the completion of Project Lumina using TNA questionnaire.





Recalling from the participants' memories as they relayed during our virtual interview meeting about the Capability Development Trainings which they enumerated as the following: Self-Care to Care, Understanding Trauma and Abuse and Behavior Management. Those who shared their experiences have mentioned that those seminar-workshops have helped a lot in addressing the problems they face in handling the misbehavior of the clients in the center. As those were the identified training coming from the dialogue and needs assessment questionnaire. The answers they have identified before in the training needs assessment have been increased in the same questionnaire answered after the training program. The participants were anticipating a more advanced level of training following the basic knowledge and skills learned from Project Lumina in 2019.

Level 3: BEHAVIOR

In this phase, it is possible to evaluate the extent to which behavior is changed because of training, and which is ideally assessed between six to nine months after the completion of training. In the case of Project Lumina, it took more than a year to evaluate the outcome or impact level. Based on the semi-structured questionnaire administered to the participants, 100% remembered and applied the skills acquired from the capability development trainings participated and have applied to their job at the center. From the social workers perspective, they were able to resolve issues and concerns, dig out sources further and if needed further psychological or psychiatric intervention, they refer to health institutions. From the administrative aides' point of view, they think the training courses are relatable and they learned how to handle clients and it was a great help for the residents.





According to the house parents, who are the ones directly involved with the clients, they were able to manage behavior including trauma by listening to bring out what they feel. They all claim that the training was effective because they saw difference in the attitudes of the clients or residents as well as their fellow workers in the institution. Most of the positive changes in the attitude or behavior of employees and residents were attributed to the knowledge and skills gained from the training and applied in the job performance. The semi-structured questionnaire answered by the participants can be seen in Appendix D.

Level 4: RESULTS/ IMPACT

At this level the final impact results are taken into consideration. The final results were identified in the cumulated answers of the beneficiaries pertaining to increased confidence in addressing and problem solving, improved quality of work manifested by a better working relationship among the staff and the residents, decreased number of tantrums of residents due to the learned strategies in handling special cases among residents, reduced frequency and/or severity of accidents, increased positive behavior as recounted by participants who became aware of self-care to be able to care for others, and higher rate of release for community integration manifested in the record of the center with the growing number of residents released to relatives mostly women and their minor and elderly dependents. In 2019, Project Lumina commenced in June 2019 and lasted till November. There were 16 released cases while in 2020, 31 were the documented cases of community reintegration attributed to the improved performance by the staff who participated in the program. This year 2021, the skills learned are still applied based on their shared experiences. Among the intervention done by the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women to make them ready for discharge to their family or relatives after measures to ensure capability to reintegrate by preparing them in the psycho-social aspect, livelihood and productivity skills, so they can earn their own living and not be dependent upon the husband, especially if they suffered marital abuse.

These activities were augmented by Capability Building Trainings through the Project Lumina. The following table highlights the cases handled by the DSWD THFW staff including social workers and house parents.

YEAR	Cases Served	MALE	FEMALE	DISCHARGED	REMARKS
2019	66	7	59	16	6 months Improved performance
2020	56	3	53	31	Retention of competency
2021	41	2	39	10	As of Nov.10

For the category of cases, the following residents are categorized as per status:

STATUS	CODE
A. Sexually Abused	(SA)
1. Rape	SA (R)
2. Incest	SA (I)
3. Acts of lasciviousness	SA (Acts)
B. Sexually exploited	(SE)
C. Physically Abused	(PA)
D. Emotionally Abused	(EA)
E. Strandee	
F. Person with Disability	(PWD)
- Hearing and Speech impaired	
- orthopedically disabled	
G. Mentally Challenged	(MC)
H. Victims of Human Trafficking	(VHT)
I. Child/Woman in especially difficult circumstances	(C/WICL)
J. Others- Dependents, Abandoned, Elderly	

As for the final objectives of a training program, ideally, it can take one to three years after the completion of a training to see improvement. For almost two years Project Lumina has been felt by the participants who are the beneficiaries and the residents as the indirect beneficiaries. However, it is also true that changes cannot always be singularly identified with the training received. Other factors which we name 3Cs, such as the readiness of the learner participant to retain and apply the newly learned competencies (commitment), the support of the administration including supervisors and fellow staff (confidence), and the kind of environment suitability (culture). The therapeutic sessions to the residents may have also augmented the positive turn-out of the increase in the number of clients able to reintegrate in society through institutional mandate.





V. CONCLUSIONS

Impact assessment is meant to answer the question, “How did the capability development training help to handle the issue, or affect the problem, as a result of the learning process?” The conducted capability development training courses were borne out of the needs assessment which served as a baseline guide for the therapeutic sessions and relevant activities. There were three seminar- workshops facilitated for the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women staff with the topics Understanding Trauma and Abuse, Self-Care to Care and Behavior Modification Basic Principles & Behavior Management. These were the coverage of this impact assessment. There were three other therapeutic sessions for the DSWD residents conducted during the last quarter of 2019. Though the assessors were not able to reach out to the residents in observance of the strict health protocols, the results as coordinated by the administrators and social workers in the center communicated the impact of the Project Lumina and the need to further receive training assistance in terms of psycho-social concerns and more equally important aspects of capability building and human development.

According to the results of the semi-structured interview questionnaire, the identified problems include but not limited to the tantrums of the residents, quarrels among the residents, wanting to escape and suicidal tendencies of some clients. These behavioral tendencies of the categories of cases in the center have been easier to handle by the social workers, nurse, psychologist and house parents through the capacity development trainings facilitated through Project Lumina.

Primarily affected by the onslaught of the Covid 19 pandemic by the end of 2019 aggravating circumstances in the following months as marked by the lockdown of the whole country in March 2020, the continuance of the Project Lumina was hampered which led to the beneficiaries struggle to manage with the often-insufficient knowledge in handling psycho-social problems they had to deal with among their clients.





Still the problem exists and the need for intervention to further equip the staff and especially capacitate the new staff in managing the behavior and psycho-social needs of the clients. The Project Lumina has a well-laid-out plan for implementation but was not completed due to the limitations affected by the Covid 19 pandemic.

Our key informant, Ms. Jacqueline Bautista, the center head, shared the impact of the program during the time of pre-pandemic where the staff were able to manage through the basic trainings. Currently she mentions that this time they need more development to equip the employees in handling refusal of Human Trafficking victims as well as victims of online sexual abuse. They need to have the necessary skills to identify disturbances and suicidal tendencies and counselling sessions to find out what more can be done. She said if the staff could identify the possible problem through observation, they might prevent more of the special attention cases from occurring. Our house parents are lacking in the strategies and approaches to identify, especially they are the direct workers and handle firsthand information before they refer to the social worker and then to the psychologist. They need an understanding of the behavior displayed of the social problem.

In conclusion, the total number of participants trained have gained knowledge, skills and attitude improvement and were able to utilize them in the performance of their duties and responsibilities at the center. As for their behavioral change, it was noted in their responses how they were able to improve themselves through self-awareness and self-care. The level of confidence was better than before they had the seminar-workshops or trainings, they have understood better their clients, or the residents and tantrums have become less frequent. They were able to communicate with their clients better and were able to address minor problems before they were aggravated.





The change or impact of Project Lumina was greatly felt that they wanted more to be able to function better. Based on the number of cases assisted and released, 99% increase of the recovered clients in 2020 were positively attributed to the program and the decline in current data as of November 2021 was attributed to the lack of training assistance for the newly emerged additional cases brought about by the pandemic and the use of technology including the criminals who victimize the most vulnerable sector of the society. Given the scenario and the recurring problems worsened by the working arrangements in most work environments, the need and anticipation of the DSWD Tarlac Home for Women for another phase is hereby communicated.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We should work as far as possible, to build impact assessment into ongoing planning, monitoring, review, and evaluation process.

2. Since the service providers were hindered by the pandemic to complete the program in 2019, the beneficiaries felt that they could have done better to address the growing population of victims of diverse social problems.

3. With the perceived success of the Project Lumina by the beneficiaries, they are hoping for a second phase of Capability Development Training assistance with a higher level of training, after they learned of the Basic Knowledge on Psycho-Social Aspects

4. To adapt to the needs of the participants with a growing number of victims of online human trafficking, sexual harassment, and persons with disabilities (PWD) admitted as their clients, their needs must be analyzed by the experts to identify the next appropriate training.





5. During the FGD online, the key informants communicated of their desire to continue partnership through the Project Lumina either on a face to face or a virtual platform as they point out they really need human development trainings.

6. The perceived benefit in humanitarian aspect exceeds all the resources both human and material. As the center is reliant on the expertise of the extension service delivery of the AB Psychology Department, they are praying for another phase of Project Lumina.





CASS FACULTY RESEARCH JOURNAL

The TSU CASS Faculty Research
Journal • VOLUME 1

Problems, Strategies, and Developments of Filipino KFL Learners in Learning the Korean Language

a research by Henry M. Andres* , Brendalyn A. Manzano** , & Jiyoung Lee***

ABSTRACT

Learning a foreign language nowadays is in demand because of its role in global competition. However, only few researches have tackled the status of foreign language learning. Hence, this descriptive study sought to identify the problems, strategies, and developments of the students in learning the Korean language as their foreign language. Observations, survey questionnaires, and interviews formed the triangulation method that was used in the study. Survey questionnaires were distributed to 102 Filipino KFL learners who had taken units of Korean language courses. The findings revealed that listening was the hardest skill to learn followed by speaking, reading, and writing. For the employed strategies, it was found out that note-taking was the most effective strategy utilized by the students in learning the Korean language. The results further showed that reading was the most developed skill of the students followed by writing, speaking, and listening. Through this study, certain recommendations were established by the researchers for the improvement of Korean language education.



CASS FACULTY RESEARCH JOURNAL

The TSU CASS Faculty Research
Journal • VOLUME 1

SAMA-SAMANG ALAGA: A DigitalCare Bridge for Bamban Senior Citizens An Integrated Marketing Communication Plan Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) Bamban, Tarlac

a research by Dale Calvin D. Castaneda MACO 611

ABSTRACT

Comprising of 17 municipalities and 1 city, Tarlac province can be described as a populated place known for having residences of different ethnic groups such as Kapampangans, Ilokanos, Pangasinenses, Tagalog, and more. In line with this, a huge number of senior citizens in the province increases in the Municipality of Bamban where due to huge population of senior citizens in the area, problems arise that center on the financial support/budget given by the government which branched out in different more dilemmas. To exemplify, it is difficult for senior citizens especially aged 70-80 years old to be doing paper works as requirement to their allowances/ financial aid given by the government as an assistance under the Republic Act No. 994 also known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 which was implemented as a social welfare legislation intended to provide benefit to Filipino elderly as well as additional privileges only for them.



Senior citizens mainly needs to have proper assistance from their Local Government Unit or Barangay because these requirements needed must not be prepared by the senior citizens themselves. Furthermore, collection of master lists of senior son 15 barangays and other more “sitios” in the municipality must be done regularly by authorities who are computer literate and are physically fit so that there will be a faster process of documents needed and that senior citizens in the municipality will receive assistance equally whether current or newly registered senior citizen.

The Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) has mandates and functions such as to formulate measures for the approval of the Sangguniang Bayan and provide technical assistance and support to the Municipal Mayor in carrying out measures to ensure the delivery of basic services and provision of adequate facilities relative to social welfare and development services and facilitate the implementation of welfare program for the disabled, elderly, and victims of drug addiction. Generally, MSWDO is responsible for providing social welfare services, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, coordinating with relevant organizations, advocating for social welfare rights, responding to disasters, enforcing regulations, managing resources, and conducting research to enhance social development in the municipality. Subsequently, the primary issue faced by senior citizens has been a long time problem of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) in Bambang that is still not yet resolved. Due to inaccessible personal information of senior citizens coming from 15 different barangays and numerous “sitios”, informations gathered by the MSWDO are outdated which means that there is a lack of coordination and cooperation between their office and the presidents of each barangay and “sitios”.





Moreover, these presidents cannot be deemed as irresponsible leaders of their barangays for they lack knowledge on technological use and only help coming from their grandchildren is what they have for them to be able to compile and encode personal data of senior citizens in their respective jurisdiction which is a challenge for them as well. Additionally, there is lack of awareness among senior citizens of Bamnan on the existence and purpose of MSWDO in their municipality.

With that being said, this Integrated Marketing Communication Plan is intended on providing possible alternatives on the data gathering procedure among senior citizens of Bamnan, Tarlac which continuously became a dilemma of the MSWDO. Also, strengthening the coordination between MSWDO and the barangay officials should be developed to help these senior citizens conveniently get their benefits. Additionally, it will be a huge help for the MSWDO if educational trainings or seminars will be conducted for the elderly as well as their barangay officials who can help in the usage of basic technological tools such as Microsoft Excel for convenience. This will also be an advantage for the computers in their respective barangays will be utilized for good ways and will be put to use instead of being stuck in their offices. All these central focus of the plan will be done and accomplished in a 24-month time frame for the development can be possibly seen and measured at this time around.





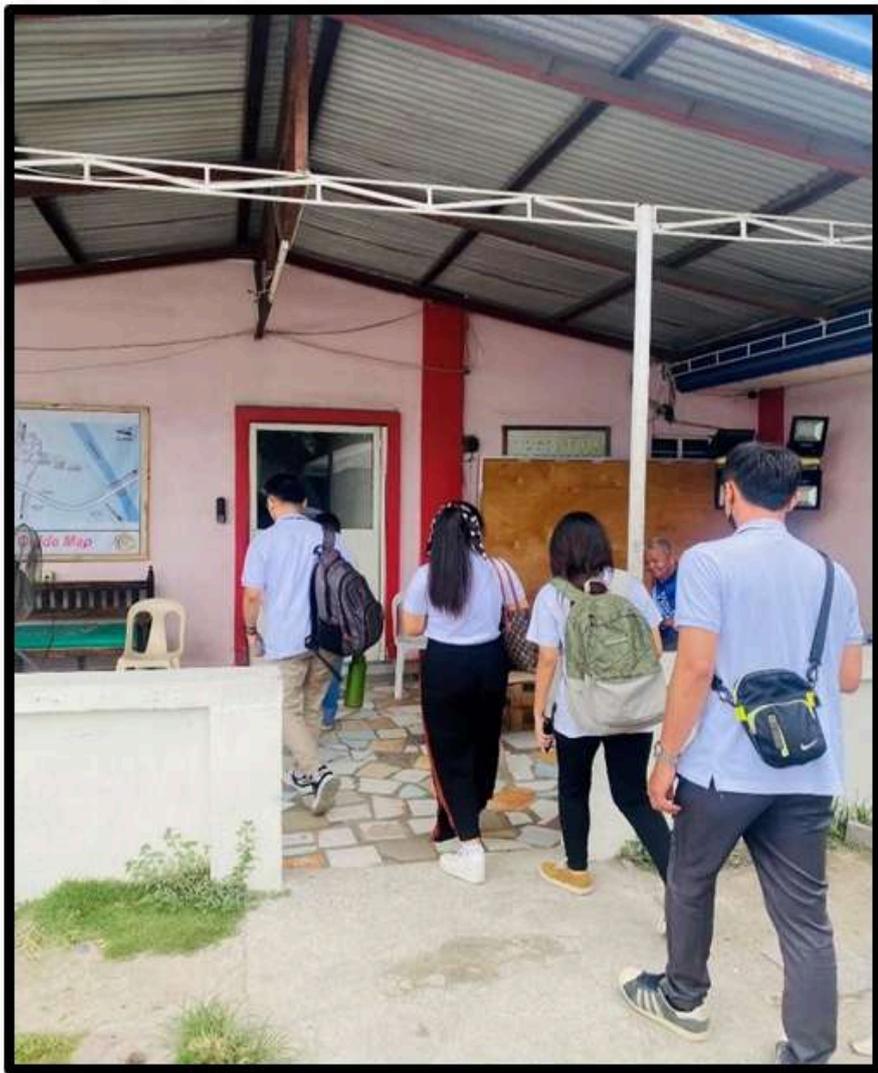
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Visiting the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) of the Municipality of Bamban, Tarlac gave us an opportunity to see its vision, mission, and goals for the Bambanians especially to vulnerable sectors that mainly includes Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), disadvantaged, women, indigenous people, and senior citizens. Furthermore, the main function of MSWDO is “to care, protect and develop the disadvantaged sectors to become self-reliant and productive citizens in the community through responsive delivery of social welfare services”. Generally, they are the companions of people in their area who provides assistance to those who are in need of help. Also, aside from financial support is that, free medical assistance is given as well as relief assistance in times of calamities and disasters occur in the Bamban, Tarlac. These services are led by the MSWDO and properly coordinated with their Local Government Unit (LGU) and Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (MDRRMO)

The office was led by Josephine C. Saclayan who truly was envisioned to serve the people who are in need of help, however, undeniably, there is lack of manpower in their office for they are just limited with few number of staffs. Consequently, their assistance mainly extends to senior citizens of Bamban who are part of the vulnerable sector. Evidently, there are numerous barangays and sitios in Bamban in which they have presidents who are also senior citizens and are responsible in collecting master lists of senior citizens’ personal data needed as a requirement for the the financial assistance given by their Local Government Unit that will be distributed by the MSWDO. With that being said, the primary problem of MSWDO when it comes to public service is their inability to gather data or personal information of senior citizens regularly. The fact that they lack employees inside their office and that all presidents of barangays and sitios are senior citizens only shows how huge their problem is when it comes to having updated master lists of elderlies in their area.



With the existence of this problem, MSWDO leads to not being able to provide and distribute assistance to all senior citizens. As per the MSWDO of Bamnan, there is lack of communication between their office and the presidents of elderlies. All master lists are given in a printed materials where names and personal information of senior citizens are written in an Excel form however, due to lack of knowledge on how these seniors uses the computer and Microsoft Excel, they are unable to submit master list copies of senior citizens in their barangay or sitio.



Moreover, seeing the offices of senior citizens in Bamban, Tarlac and meeting some of the presidents some of the presidents, there is truly lack of communication between them and the MSWDO for they are not well aware of the function of the office itself. Also, they did not deny the fact that they are somehow having a hard time in gathering all senior citizens' personal information needed as a requirement for governmental support. Knowing that they are also senior citizens and are not that computer literate in creating data in a Microsoft Excel, assistance of their grandchildren is what they usually get in order to encode the master lists. Although there are available computers in some areas that can be used, due to lack of knowledge on how to properly use these equipment, they are of no use at all. Yes, there is help coming from their grandchildren or children however, not all the time their children or grandchildren are present to help them so generally, this is the root of the struggle of MSWDO. Data of senior citizens are difficult to get to the point that new registered seniors do not get benefits or assistance while those who already passed away still receives one.





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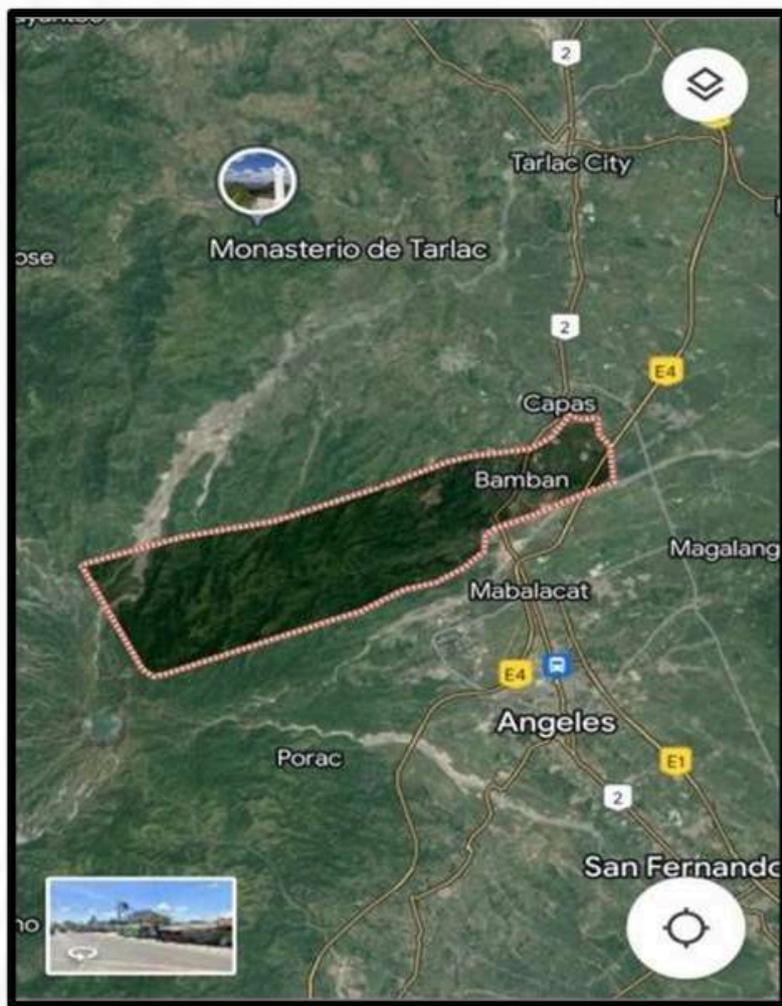
Additionally, the office of the senior citizens somehow is not that welcoming to everyone because of where the place is situated and convenience is not freely available to seniors in the place. Also, it is small compared to the population of senior citizens in Bamban, Tarlac. The Municipality Service Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) itself is also an issue because aside from the fact that they lack employees, their office is not spacious for people who will go there to ask for help. Lastly, conversing with the director of MSWDO of the Municipality of Bamban, Ms. Josephine C. Saclayan, there is no available website or online platform of their office, unlike in other municipalities which means that their social media presence is not active and that there is no other way of contacting their office other than physically visiting in the



GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Tarlac province is situated in the Central Luzon region of the Philippines and is bordered by Pangasinan to the north, Nueva Ecija to the east, Zambales to the west, and Pampanga to the south. The province covers an area of approximately 3,053 square kilometers and has a population of over 1.3 million people.

The population of Tarlac province is diverse, with a mix of ethnic groups such as Kapampangans, Ilokanos, Pangasinenses, Tagalog, and more. The province's capital city, Tarlac City, has a population of over 300,000 people and is known for its bustling markets, vibrant nightlife, and delicious street foods.





In line with this, being part of the Tarlac province, the municipality of Bamban, located in the western part of the province, is home to over 78,260 people (Bamban, Tarlac Profile – PhilAtlas, 1990). Nestled within its borders lies a vibrant community that thrives on diversity, showcasing a rich tapestry of cultures and languages. While the majority of the population primarily converses in Tagalog, the linguistic landscape of Bamban encompasses the harmonious coexistence of various dialects, including Ilocano and Kapampangan. This linguistic diversity adds a unique flavor to the municipality, fostering cultural exchange and mutual understanding among its residents.

Despite the vibrant atmosphere that characterizes Bamban, certain segments of its population face specific challenges that warrant attention. One such group comprises the esteemed senior citizens, who make up a significant portion of the community. With a population exceeding 2,795 individuals, these senior citizens bring wisdom and experience to the fabric of Bamban. However, they encounter distinct obstacles when it comes to accessing crucial government assistance programs and services for they lack knowledge and support especially in the preparation of documents needed to qualify for the assistance.





Bamban is politically subdivided into 15 barangays with other Sitios.

- Anupul
- Banaba
- Bangcu
- Culubasa
- Dela Cruz
- La Paz
- Lourdes
- Malonzo
- San Nicolas (Poblacion)
- San Pedro
- San Rafael
- San Roque
- San Vicente
- Santo Niño
- Virgen de los Remedios (Pacalcal)
- Rolling Hills (Barangay San Nicolas)
- Sitio “Mainang” (Barangay San Nicolas)
- Sitio “ Magurol Gurol”
- Sitio “Matagpo” (Barangay San Nicolas)
- Sitio “ Panaisan”
- Sitio “Pansan” (Barangay Anupul)

Based on the data gathered, Anupul has a total old dependent population consisting of senior citizens aged 65 and over, totaling 917. Meanwhile, in Banaba, the total number of senior citizens aged 65 and over is 58, while in Bangcu, it is only 7. Culubasa has a senior citizen population of 16, while Dela Cruz has 106. La Paz has 82 senior citizens aged 65 and over, while Lourdes has 198. Malonzo has only 4 senior citizens aged 65 and over, and San Nicolas (Poblacion) has a total of 712. San Pedro has a senior citizen population of only 4, while San Rafael has 63 senior citizens aged 65 and over. San Roque has a total of 407 senior citizens aged 65 and over, and San Vicente has a total of 77. Lastly, Santo Niño has 61 senior citizens aged 65 and over, and in Virgen de los Remedios (Pacalcal), there are 83 senior citizens aged 65 and over.





The data shows that the senior citizen population in the Municipality of Bamban is significant, with varying numbers in each barangay and sitio. It is important to take note of these numbers to ensure that adequate support and assistance are given to these senior citizens. The MSWDO must make sure that they have access to the benefits and financial aid they are entitled to under the Republic Act No. 994. The Integrated Marketing Communication Plan proposed in this document aims to address the challenges faced by senior citizens in Bamban and provide possible solutions to the data gathering procedure, strengthen coordination between MSWDO and the barangay officials, and provide educational trainings or seminars for the elderly as well as their barangay officials who can help in the usage of basic technological tools such as Microsoft Excel for convenience. By doing so, the senior citizens of Bamban can conveniently get their benefits and have access to the support they need.

The geography and demographics of Bamban also play a significant role in understanding the challenges faced by senior citizens. The municipality is situated in the western part of Tarlac province and is home to over 40,000 people. The population is primarily composed of Tagalog speakers, with some Ilocano and Kapampangan speakers as well. The municipality is known for its beautiful natural scenery, with lush forests, waterfalls, and hiking trails that attract visitors from all over the world. However, despite its natural beauty, the senior citizens in Bamban face financial and bureaucratic challenges in accessing government assistance.

In the municipality of Bamban, Tarlac, it is important to keep track of the senior citizen populations in different barangays and sitios. The following is a comprehensive list of the senior citizen populations in various barangays and sitios in Bamban, Tarlac

The first sitio in the list is "Sitio Mainang" in Barangay San Nicolas, which has a senior citizen population of 12. The sitio is headed by President Lourdes S. Rivera, who ensures that the needs of the senior citizens in her community are met.





The second sitio in the list is "Magurol Gurol," which has a much larger senior citizen population of 67. This sitio is headed by President Eddie Ronquillo Ramos, who is responsible for ensuring that the senior citizens in his community receive adequate care and support.

Next on the list is "Matagpo" in Barangay San Nicolas, which has a senior citizen population of 31. The sitio is headed by President Sofronio Q. Lamsen, who is committed to improving the quality of life of the senior citizens in his community.

The fourth sitio on the list is "Panaisan," which has a senior citizen population of 33. The sitio is led by President Dolora G. Agawin, who is dedicated to addressing the needs of the senior citizens in her community.

Finally, "Pandan" in Barangay Anupul has the largest senior citizen population on the list, with a total of 175 senior citizens. This sitio is headed by President Rolan B. Sibal, who ensures that the senior citizens in his community receive the necessary support and care.

Having a comprehensive list of the senior citizen populations in different barangays and sitios in Bambang, Tarlac is important for ensuring that the needs of the elderly are properly addressed.

In conclusion, the data gathered on the senior citizen population in Bambang highlights the need for support and assistance to be given to these vulnerable groups. The Integrated Marketing Communication Plan proposed in this document aims to address these challenges and provide possible solutions to ensure that senior citizens in Bambang can conveniently get their benefits and have access to the support they need.

In terms of geography, Bambang is located at the foot of the Zambales Mountain Range and is known for its beautiful natural scenery, with lush forests, waterfalls, and hiking trails that attract visitors from all over the world. The municipality also has a rich history and culture, with several historical landmarks and festivals celebrated throughout the year.





MSWDO VISION

Empowered and resilient Bambanians, who have access to SWD policies, programs and services through convergence towards the improvement of quality of life.

MSWDO MISSION

Implement social protection policies, programs, and services for and with the poor, vulnerable sectors, and other stakeholders that will develop their capacity and resiliency to improve their living conditions.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths:

- Provides social case study report prepared by a social worker to ensure that assistance is given without difficulties.
- Provides suggestions to Municipal Mayor and recommendations to individuals in any kinds of cases which helps on program development benefitting the people.
- Although limited reach, MSWDO is still known for providing assistance to individual in crisis situation (AICS) or Financial Assistance. This includes hospitalization or medical assistance, burial assistance, transportation assistance and educational assistance.

Weaknesses:

- Insufficient manpower is evident in the office knowing that a huge population of people in Bamban are seeking for their assistance.



- 
- Inability to provide accessible online platforms such as Facebook page and website. With the lack of online platforms of the MSWDO, limited audience is reached because of insufficient ways of communicating with them.
 - Not employing proper MSWDO logo which shows does not give recognition to the office and people are having a hard time looking for it that they need to go to the municipal office to ask especially the seniors.
 - Lack of planning for the vulnerable sector such as the elderly is another weakness because visiting the MSWD office and conversing with their director, help is somehow being limited for they already gave up on the hope of having better coordination and communication with some elderly with disabilities/health problems so plans for them were not efficiently given priority.
 - Undeveloped office of the MSWDO is a weakness for it is not spacious enough for the staffs/employees even if they lack in numbers because how will they be able to cater such huge number of concerns if the environment is not worker friendly and comfortable.

Opportunities:

- Partnership with Barangay Officials for providing assistance for senior citizens which will lead to a better public service offered to target audience because it adds up to the workforce.
- Collaboration with other government agencies such as DSWD and DOH for consultations and aid to be freely provided as a benefit for senior citizens.
- Collaborative partnership between NGO's such as the Coalition of Services of elderly, INC. in providing counselling which will help seniors to be open in their problems not just regarding master lists.
- Collaborative partnership between MDRRMO in providing updated data of Senior Citizens because they annually conduct survey to identify those areas that has huge number of elderly to know where to respond first in times of disasters/calamities.



- OBJECTIVES

- Listed below are the objectives of this plan that centralizes on the betterment of the Municipality Service Welfare and Development Office and the senior citizens of the Municipality of Bamban, Tarlac.
- To give Senior Citizens alternative ways in processing their papers that includes their personal information needed as requirements for acquiring governmental
- Support/financial assistance. The goal of this objective is to provide convenience to vulnerable sectors for equal opportunities knowing that they are not physically fit compared to younger generations who can assist them do the job.
- To give senior citizens awareness on the existence and purpose of MSWDO and its function as a helping hand to elderlies. That it does not just collect master lists but also it is the one responsible for providing services and assistance to them coming from their municipality and cooperation to their officemust always be done regularly so that a smooth flow of assistance can be provided on a regular basis as well.
- To provide knowledge to senior citizens and barangay officials who will be of help in the use of Microsoft Excel by conducting on-hand trainings, seminars, and discussions so that computers that are available on some barangays and sitios will be utilized and education will be given to affected people especially to senior citizens which also opens an opportunity for them to learn the basics of Microsoft Excel.
- To knock on the door step of the Local Government Unit of Bamban, Tarlac regarding the coordination of every barangay offices in Bamban in providing assistance; such as manpower to senior citizens, and that budget increase should be given to the Municipality Service Welfare and Development Office to further enhance their service to target audience and cater a larger population of people who are in need of their help.



STRATEGIES

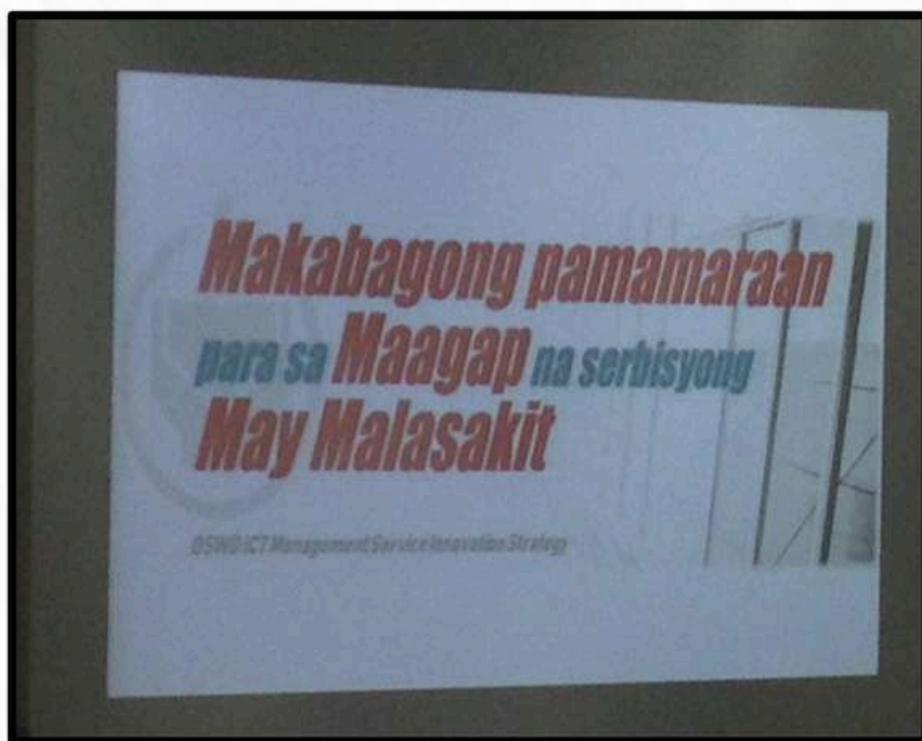
This Integrated Marketing Communication Plan for the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) seeks to find solution in solving problems of senior citizens in Bamban, Tarlac with a timeframe of 16-months where coordination, communication, and cooperation with the barangay offices, Local Government Unit (LGU), and other agencies shall be done. Various strategies are suggested to be done for the success of this plan.

1.1. MESSAGE STRATEGY

A lot of people living in Bamban, Tarlac does not have awareness on the existence of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office especially the elderly. If you will ask them about it, they will only say “Ahh, the DSWD” in which they stand correct because MSWDO is under the DSWD with the same logo and the same vision. Its purpose why it became MSWD instead of DSWD is that, due to numerous concerns of people and increasing number of people in need of help, the DSWD branched out to provinces and municipalities to further provide quality service to the public. That is all they know about it. Actually, when we asked the elderly about the function of the MSWD, (in which they refer to as DSWD), all they know is that it is where they submit all master lists of senior citizens in their areas and nothing more, nothing less. Well, basically, the Office of the Social Welfare and Development is the social welfare arm of the Municipal Government mandated by Local Government Code of 1991 to address poverty-related concerns and committed to the care, protection and rehabilitation of individuals, families, groups and communities. This is the missing part that most of the elderly missed in terms of knowing what the office of the Social Welfare and Development functions as.

STRATEGIES

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Actually, if this slogan does not work for the people of Bambang, re-branding can be done to achieve success on the MSWDO’s end. The key message that is possibly effective must be heartfelt and people-centred.



We all know that people in Bamnan are generally Kapampangan in which by using this language, people might be knowledgeable that there is an office for them to run into whenever they need help and that is the MSWDO in their municipality, so the suggested message for the target audiences in Bamnan is “Mi-abe abe ka ta, Misaup-saup ka ta”. We want to show the people of Bamnan that in every disaster, calamities, or problems they may encounter is that the MSWDO will be there for them. That the office of MSWDO is open for all gender, race, ethnicity, and ages and that help/assistance will be given equally. Altogether, we can achieve betterment and with the help of other agencies and barangay offices people especially the senior citizens will get the assistance they need. Altogether, as one municipality, growth and development will be achieved as long as communication and coordination will be done accordingly.

Also, we want to share the acronym proposed for the MSWDO so that they will have an identity that not only senior citizens but all Bamnanians will remember.

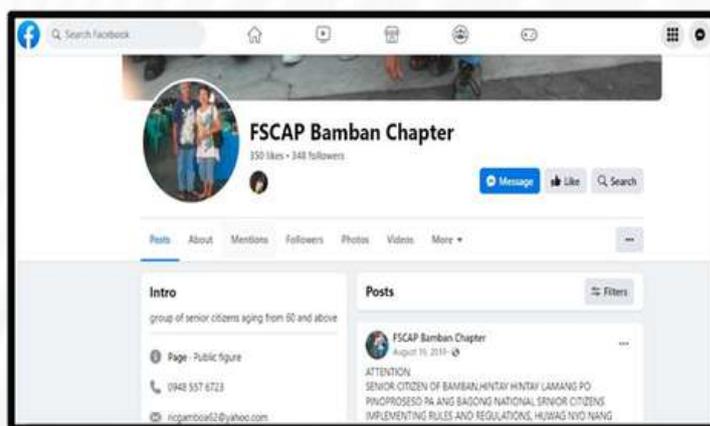
Matapat na
Serbisyo
Wagas, |
Dekalidad, at
Organisado

This acronym implies true service for the people of Bamban, Tarlac. Being truthful to your duty is what the office envisions itself to be all the time. Also, a service that is overflowing, dedicated, and organized are imperative elements for the office seeks to respond on all problems of people and being dedicated to your job as a public servant with overflowing passion to what you do and organization on how you do it only leads to greater good so generally, the MSWDO wants to communicate and coordinate to other more people and agencies for the betterment of everyone in Bamban.

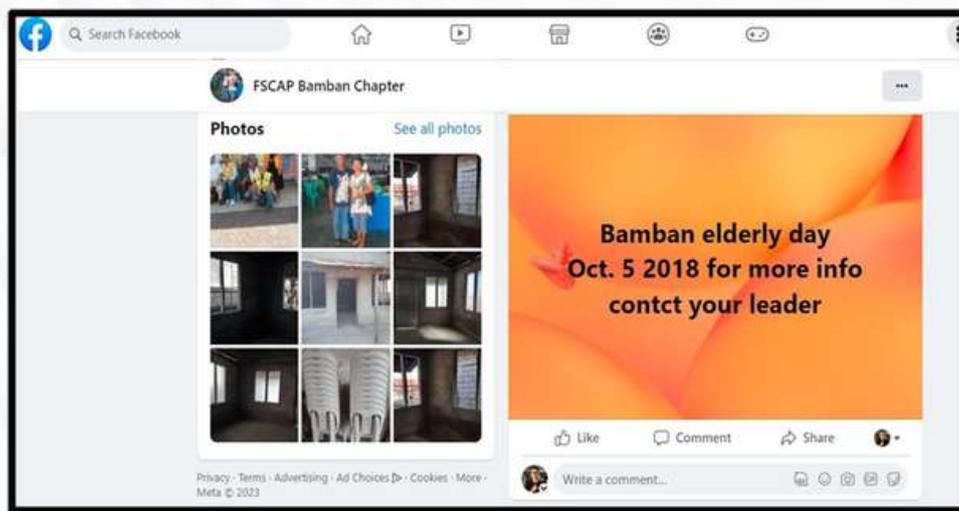
Introducing this message and acronym to the people might be challenging and would not take into effect that quick however, if it is seen in acts done by the office, then people will instantly recognize the message for they do not only see it through words but they feel it through actions.

1.2. MEDIA STRATEGY

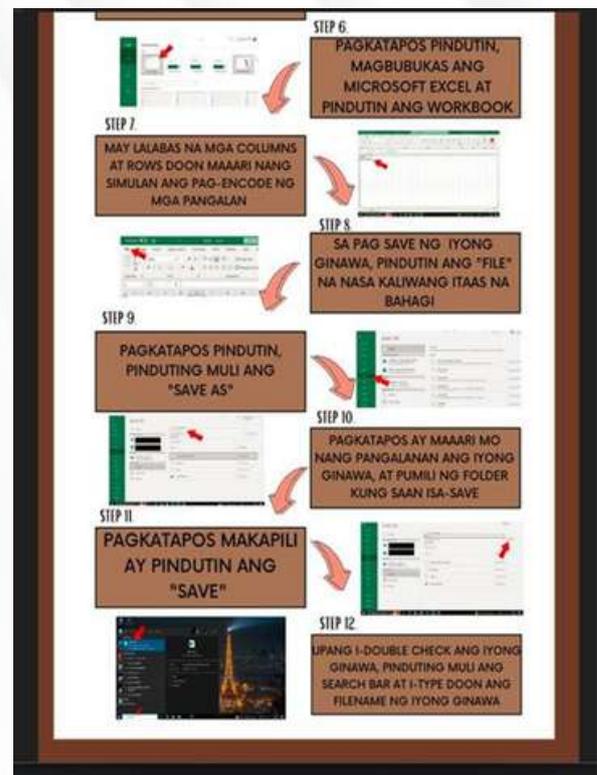
Different media platforms can be used by the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) in order to reach the senior citizens in the most convenient way as possible. To exemplify, by means of creating a Facebook or websites, information/announcement (i.e. pay-outs, meetings) can easily be accessed and concern of senior citizens can easily be directed to the office where staff or employees of the MSWDO will verify and rely on the director of the office. Social media engagement is very vital because due to technological advancements, a huge number of senior citizens are active on different social networking sites such especially Facebook.



As a matter of fact, one organization of senior citizens in Bamban, Tarlac already has a Facebook page intended for announcements for senior citizens. Some of the announcements included are about pay-outs, financial assistance, meetings, seminars, discussions, etc. Evidently, the seniorities are not fully left behind when it comes to technology because they have an active engagement in social media. If the MSWDO will also be utilizing social media, then it will benefit both parties because there is no need for the senior citizen presidents to go to the office of MSWD and can just easily send the master lists via Facebook chat where files can be sent with convenience.



Print media can also be used as a form of extensive dissemination of the programs, seminars, discussion, and other more activities involved. Leaflets or brochures can be crafted and distributed to different barangays and sitios in Bamban, Tarlac to spread awareness about the existing programs in coordination with the Local Government Unit and barangay offices. Senior citizens are known to be wide readers and fond of reading things on papers and so by using the traditional way of information distribution, awareness will be spread out on what the issue is all about, how to solve it, and who will help in solving it. Distribution of tarpaulin with the basics on how to use Microsoft Excel is also part of the IMC plan to further educate the senior citizens and people of Bamban on how to use it.



This is the tarpaulin that will be distributed to the offices of every barangay and “sitios” for them to be aware of the basics of Microsoft Excel. Although trainings and seminars are scheduled to be conducted, it is imperative to have a guide that will be available for everyone anytime.

Listed below is the process needed to be accomplished and things needed to be considered on the tarpaulin creation and distribution to barangays and sitios in Bamban, Tarlac.



Process for Tarpaulin distribution

- Include detailed instructions, images, and examples to demonstrate key ideas and functions.
- Ensure the text is large and clear enough for seniors to read easily. Barangay Workshop Sessions:
- Coordinate with the MSWDO and barangay officials to schedule the distribution of tarpaulins in each barangay within the municipality.

Various media platforms can be used by MSWDO in order to spread awareness to senior citizens that help is on the way and all these media outlets and ways can be of significance once executed and delivered to the target audience who are the elderly.

1.3. STRATEGIES DEDICATED TO THE MANDATE/SERVICES

Spreading awareness to the public of what comprises the coordination of MSWDO to the LGU and barangay offices shall be done as a strategy for the public. Since the plan will be drafted with the barangay offices and senior citizen presidents which will be pitched to the Local Government Unit, addressing the awareness of the public not only of senior citizens is crucial for they are also audiences that can be catered by MSWDO. Furthermore, this strategy will open an opportunity for the MSWDO to present and address its goals on providing convenience on senior citizens in submitting their master lists containing their information needed as a requirement for financial assistance from the LGU. After all, senior citizens must only be enjoying their lives and should not be stressed out on preparing such documents.

Also, it is important that the senior citizens and all people of Bamban who will be involved must be fully aware of the objectives of conducting the seminars, discussions, and trainings.





Furthermore, proper way of educating the masses on the existence of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office shall be done in a step-by-step process for the public to recognize that there is an agency that seeks on supporting individuals who are in need.

Additionally, MSWDO is about providing solutions to problems of vulnerable sector and giving support and assistance to people of Bamban. As a whole, we can say that its primary goal is to provide quality service to the public that they can benefit in.

1.4. STRATEGIES DEDICATED TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY COORDINATION

The Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) is facing a challenge in collecting and maintaining accurate master lists of senior citizens in the municipality. To address this, proper inter-agency coordination must be done where the MSWDO will coordinate with the LGU to assign a barangay official who can collect the master lists of seniors in the municipality. This will ensure that the master lists are collected regularly by computer-literate and physically fit authorities, which will help senior citizens receive assistance more quickly and equitably. Effective and efficient communication is also a strategy that can be done by the MSWDO and the barangay captain/officials. This is a significant strategy because without communication, messages and information will not be accurate and transparent enough if no communication is involved.

Moreover, as the coordination with different barangays continue, the MSWDO will conduct trainings or seminars for the elderly and barangay officials together with the barangay offices on basic technological tools such as Microsoft Excel to improve their computer literacy and ability to gather personal data of senior citizens in a non-traditional way.

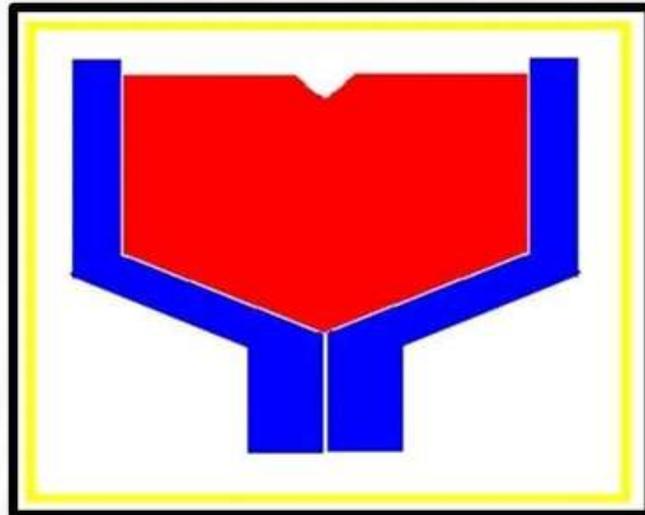




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This will help the elderly and the barangay officials to do their tasks efficiently and with greater accuracy because all information are encoded in an Excel. Furthermore, the strengthening of coordination between MSWDO and barangay officials will also facilitate data gathering and ensure that senior citizens can conveniently access their benefits. A centralized database of senior citizen information will be developed to improve data accessibility and accuracy. This will help the MSWDO to have updated information about the senior citizens in their area.



Also, development of offices of MSWDO shall be done for a better public service to the masses because visiting their office in the Municipality of Bamban, Tarlac, there is a need for development and widening of MSWDO in order for employees and staffs to work conveniently and efficiently. When it comes to the assistance coming from the barangay, of course, the presence of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Bamban should also be tapped and coordinated with because their municipality plays a huge role in accomplishing the plans for the senior citizens. Also, budget will primarily be coming from the LGU of Bamban which means that their involvement is truly a good strategy that can be done. The costs and finances of these plans requires proper budgeting and a huge amount of money so with the help of the LGU and its approval to the plan, all other agencies will follow and help as well. Additionally, tapping the LGU of Bamban will open an opportunity for budget increase if they will have awareness that the budget allotted for senior citizens in Bamban is not enough to provide assistance to all elderly in the area.

In addition, the MSWDO will collaborate with other government agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Health to improve the delivery of services to senior citizens.



The MSWDO will also work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Coalition of Services of the Elderly, Inc. (COSE) and the Philippine Association of Social Workers, Inc. (PASWI) to provide additional support to senior citizens. These organizations can provide various services such as counselling, health care, and legal assistance which are other more secondary benefits or perks that senior citizens can have.



To ensure that financial assistance is provided only to eligible recipients, the MSWDO will also coordinate with the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Office of Bamban (MDRRMO) to obtain an updated master list of senior citizens. The MDRRMO regularly maintains a list of senior citizens, including those who have passed away, to help prioritize assistance during disasters or emergencies. By obtaining this updated list, the MSWDO can verify the eligibility of senior citizens and avoid providing assistance to those who are no longer alive.



Overall, this strategy aims for improvement and proper coordination between the MSWDO, barangay officials, and other agencies/ organizations to ensure that senior citizens in Bamban receive the assistance they need. These efforts will help address the challenges faced in collecting and maintaining accuratemaster lists of senior citizens, as well as enhancing the delivery of services to senior citizens in the community especially that they are elderly who needs governmental support and attention. This will also open an opportunity for the MSWDO to better its service by development of their office and increase in manpower.





1.5. SERVICE STRATEGY

Services offered shall be given priority because these activities will bring massive changes on senior citizens and MSWDO as well. The first 3 months of the plan that will take place on July-August includes onsite visiting of barangays and sitios in Bambang, Tarlac where the senior citizens reside. This long term visits helps the MSWDO identify the key problems on as to why they are not able to coordinate well with their office as well as identify the factors that affects them from having the inability to provide updated master lists of senior citizens' information which should be done annually (maximum. By this means, MSWDO will be able to conduct surveys as well on the barangays or sitios who have computers in their offices so that allocation of budget per barangay will be equally distributed.

October to November will be drafting of initial plans for the MSWDO to strengthen its relationship and identity towards the elderly by putting into considerations their problems or struggles in submitting documents needed by the MSWDO. Solutions and alternatives will be drafted in coordination with their local barangay offices. Afterwards, presentation of the final plan will take place for a month before submitting the proposal to the Local Government Unit of Bambang, Tarlac. Processing of legal documents submitted is expected to take up until 2 months (January-February) after it was presented to the affected audience.

Media promotion is scheduled on the month of March-April which comprises of distribution of fliers, tarpaulins as well as the social media engagement of MSWDO in strengthening its identity and introducing the programs and activities intended mainly for senior citizens. Uniforms of the workers coming from barangay offices who will guide the seniors has to be given budget as well for they need to be recognized as someone correlated to MSWDO.





1.5. SERVICE STRATEGY

The following months are intended for the trainings, seminars, and discussions for the senior citizens as well as the workers from barangay offices who will be assisting these senior citizens. (May-October)

Activities:

1. Discussion among senior citizen on what is being implemented by the MSWDO and what to expect in the next coming months
2. Seminar on the Basics of Microsoft Excel
 - 2.1. How to Use It
 - 2.2. What are the Important Tools you Must Know in Microsoft Excel
 - 2.3. How do you Apply Microsoft Excel in creating a master list
 - 2.4. How to save your documents and how do you print them
 - 2.5. What to Never Forget in Microsoft Excel
3. On-hands training where participants will try what they learned and do it impromptu
4. Meeting on budget increase of MSWDO together with the barangay and LGU for the compensation of helpers of seniors.

While trainings, seminars, and discussions are ongoing, the development of MSWD office and the senior citizen center has to be drafted as soon as it is given priority by the Local Government Unit. Meeting also needs to be conducted for the budget allocation of computers to barangay offices which do not have one.





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1.6. EXTENSION PROGRAMS

In this IMC plan, MSWDO should offers insightful advice and helpful recommendations. By bridgingthe digital divide and giving the elderlythe skills they need, MSWDO should aim to engageand empower their communities as well as bring attention to the connections of the elderly with nearby Barangay authorities so that their problem on the lack of assistance will be solved.

In order to be as effective as possible, the IMC plan for older residents includes a variety of educational events, seminars, as well as the distribution of various informative materials such as tarpaulins which will be posted and displayed on every barangays in Bambang, Tarlac. The objectives of conducting these kinds of extension programs for the senior citizens is firstly, to inform seniorcitizens about how to use the websitesand online services that their barangayand municipality createdfor them. Educatingthem about the existence of these online platforms opens an opportunity for the elderly to tap for help whenever needed.Convenience can be given to elderlies becauseinstead of goingto the MSWDO, they can directly consult the website or online platform of the office for further concerns. Furthermore, educating these senior citizens about the existence of this platform can bring a significant change on the situation of senior citizens in Bambang, Tarlac.



By actively incorporating senior citizens in their local communities, the approach also promotes involvement of senior citizens. Giving them access to neighbourhood computers and internet that will enable them to actively engage in neighbourhood activities, contact with neighbours, and stay updated about the services, activities, and resources offered in their barangay and municipality. Observing every barangay in Baman, where these senior citizens reside, there is clearly lack of communication of people within their area so with them, knowing on how to engage virtually, it will open a way for them to disseminate information to other more elderlies in a convenient way.



The IMC plan extension programs for senior citizens includes tarpaulins, educational programs, and seminars as essential elements. Seniors will not only acquire the information and abilities required to competently use digital platforms for communication through increasing awareness, empowering, engaging, and putting the plan into action but also, it will provide convenience for them whenever they will be gathering data about their fellow seniors needed as requirements for them to get governmental benefits. Additionally, by conducting these seminars and trainings for senior citizens and representatives from each barangay who will be helping them in getting annual master lists of senior citizens' personal information in the area, it will be a huge help for the MSWDO as well because accuracy will never be a problem when it comes to the number of beneficiaries they will be giving to their Local Government Unit because lists of elderlies are annually updated.



Teaching the basics of Microsoft Excel to older folks involves a methodical strategy that starts with base knowledge and gradually increases expertise. The following is a step-by-step procedure for successfully teaching older people as well as the barangay workers who will help these elderlies about Excel which will be helpful for them:

Educating senior citizens and barangay workers who will help the seniority on basic skills in Microsoft Excel. Begin by introducing seniors to the core Excel abilities. They will learn how to access Excel, use worksheet navigational tools, and recognize columns and rows as part of this. Make sure they feel at ease using the software's layout and usability. Show them how to enter information into cells, such as names, birth dates, or cost totals, using pertinent examples from their daily lives. Teach simple formulas by outlining the idea behind them and guiding the students through basic mathematical operations like addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Introduce operators like +, -, and * and guide students through each step of the computation process. Introduce fundamental functions like sum, average, count, and max to explain functions. In order to get correct results, demonstrate to them how to use these functions and input arguments. To make it more applicable and beneficial to them, give them concrete examples based on their hobbies or other activities and of course, provide an example that shows how they can encode names and personal information of their fellow senior citizens.

Create basic graphs. Show them how to do this using the data they have already entered. Give examples of how to pick cells, select chart kinds, and alter the graph's appearance. They can better understand and interpret material with the use of visual representations. Use concrete examples that are relatable to older citizens, such as keeping a list of friends and contacts.



Allocate practice time. Allow sufficient time for senior citizens to practice what they have learned. Encourage regular practice using Excel and engage them in activities that reinforce their skills. Provide exercises and assignments that gradually increase in complexity to challenge and reinforce their understanding if they still can. Patience and ongoing support are crucial in assisting senior citizens with their questions, concerns, and difficulties. Also, it will be helpful if other people will teach them as well like those who are also learning it but are not part of the senior citizens' age group.

Encourage ongoing learning. Recommend additional resources like books, video tutorials, or online courses for them to explore and expand their Excel knowledge. Instill the value of lifelong learning and self-improvement. Even though they are seniors already, they still need to be given opportunities for education especially if it will be beneficial for them.

Highlight the significance of continuous learning and self-improvement. These steps not only benefit senior citizens but also those who assist the MSWDO and Barangay in gathering data from senior residents in Bamban. By offering open seminars and trainings, a helping hand can be extended to senior citizens who struggle with piles of paper documents needed to access their governmental benefits.

The extension program of providing seminars and trainings aim to empower senior citizens by equipping them with practical skills in using Microsoft Excel. By utilizing tarpaulins as visual aids, we can provide a user-friendly and accessible guide that will assist them in understanding and utilizing the software effectively.





Process for Content creation of the Seminar

- Start with basic introduction to Microsoft Excel, explaining its benefits and relevance to everyday tasks and how can this be useful to them as senior citizens and barangay representatives who will serve as guidance of every senior citizen.
- Cover basic spreadsheet navigation, including rows, columns, and cells in which the elderly will use to encode names and personal information.
- Demonstrate the entry and formatting of data, including text, numbers, and dates.
- Explain common formulas and functions, such as SUM, AVERAGE, and IF statements, along with practical examples relating to how they can use it conveniently.
- Show participants how to create charts and graphs to present data visually.
- Provide participants with opportunities for hands-on practice and encourage them to apply their new skills. This does not necessarily mean that they need to be expert of the usage of Excel, it's just that the opportunity of learning does not stop from the basics as long as they still can, they can learn more.

Process on providing Follow-up Support

- Offer additional resources, such as printed hand-outs or digital copies of the tarpaulins, for participants to take home.
- Provide contact information for participants to reach out for further assistance or clarification after the workshop.
- Consider creating a dedicated helpline or email address specifically for Excel-related inquiries from senior citizens.
- Evaluate the impact of the program through feedback forms or surveys to gauge participants' satisfaction and assess the effectiveness of the workshop.



Process on Program Promotion

- Collaborate with the MSWDO and barangay officials to promote the program through various channels, such as local newsletters, community notice boards, and social media platforms.
- Aside from tarpaulins, it is also significant to distribute informative fliers or pamphlets to senior citizen groups, community centers, and other pertinent municipal venues.
- Use local media outlets, such as radio stations and newspapers, to spread the word about the program as well as in the MSWDO social media page. Since the Local Government Unit of Bamban is aware of the plan, they can also be tapped to spread the good word of the program implemented.

Generally, by implementing these extension programs, plans, and interventions, the MSWDO can contribute to enhance the digital skills and overall well-being of senior citizens per barangay of Bamban, Tarlac. The use of tarpaulins as visual aids ensures that the information is accessible and easy to understand, empowering senior citizens to utilize Microsoft Excel effectively and efficiently.



TACTICS

Pre-Implementation	
Time frame	Activities
3 months	On-site visit on 15 barangays and other "sitios" in Bambang, Tarlac
2 month	Drafting of Plans (Budgeting, Problem identification, execution, timeline solutions, strategies and expected outcome)
1 months	Presentation and Finalization of Drafted Plans to Local Government Unit and Senior citizens
2 months	Processing of papers to be passed for the upcoming trainings and seminars for the representatives of every barangay and presidents of Senior Citizens.

Implementation	
Time frame	Activities
1 month	Proper implementation of the request to coordinate to barangay offices in Bambang, Tarlac signed and approved by the Local Government Unit (LGU) wherein request to coordinate with them will be publicly posted and announced in their areas. (service)
2 months	Printing and distribution of Tarpaulins on each barangay and sitios in Bambang, Tarlac about the step-by-step process of using the basics of Microsoft Excel. (service)
3 months	Execution of trainings and seminars to the representatives and presidents of senior citizens (service)
2 months	Discussion for Senior citizens of all barangays on what has been planned, approved and supported by the LGU and planning of the development of senior citizen offices and MSWDO. (interagency)



Pre-implementation Quarter

July-February

Part of the Pre-implementation stage is the on-site visit on 15 barangays and other "sitios" in Bambang, Tarlac that will be done for the first three months. This at the same time, after seeing the current conditions of the senior citizens per barangay, MSWDO will draft their plans for the next two months. This includes, budgeting, Problem identification, execution, timeline solutions, strategies and expected outcome

Also, after the drafting of plans, MSWDO will present the drafted plans first to Local Government Unit of Bambang, Tarlac. Moreover, it will also be presented to the senior citizens for their awareness. At this time, finalization of the drafted plans will also be included.

After which, processing of papers will be passed for the upcoming trainings and seminars for the representatives of every barangay and presidents of Senior citizens.

BUDGET

Based on an article published by Philippine News Agency (January 2023), some ₱4.1 million indigent senior citizens are entitled to receive ₱12,000 each as social pension this year under the approved ₱5.268 trillion national budget. As per, Senator Sonny Angara reminded that Republic Act (RA) 11916 mandates the 100% increase in the indigent senior citizen's monthly pension from ₱500 to ₱1,000. Republic Act 11916 or an act increasing the Social Pension of indigent senior citizens revised RA 7432 which is the first Senior Citizens Act.





These budget allocated for senior citizens is somehow insufficient because other agencies that leads the distribution of these financial assistance slacks portion of the budget as compensation for their work in which the government must focus on. We cannot deny the fact that even though there is government support given to senior citizens that they do not just give it easily for they will be needing a lot of documents needed to be prepared by the elderliest to get the assistance and not only that, because they must also qualify for the criteria of being indigent. With all these processes, some seniors just do not have the patience and ability to fix all the needed requirements in which neglects them from being given financial support and it brings stress to presidents of senior citizens who are responsible for gathering all his/her fellow senior citizens' requirements to be compiled and passed as a master list. With that being said, there must be an increase in budget given to senior citizens and added budget for development of the agencies who works hand in hand in disbursing these funds from the government, that is why in order to ease the problem of senior citizens and help the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office of the Municipality of Bamban, Tarlac, a proposed total of **₱5,349,000** is the allotted budget for the whole 16-month plan of the MSWDO from planning up until the execution of the programs and projects dedicated for the senior citizens of Bamban involving the vision of convenience of them in getting financial support/pay-outs.

Although there is a budget intended for providing pension to senior citizens, the need for convenience in getting these pensions is not fully given to senior citizens that is why a proposed budget plan is drafted which the MSWDO will take lead into putting all the budget for a good cause.





An amount of ₱204, 000 is allotted for pre-implementation of the plan because numerous employee and/or non-employee will be of help in gathering data from senior citizens on all barangays and sitios in Bambang, Tarlac in which barangay offices will be helping. With a small time frame, it is crucial to have a lot of people who will be of huge in help in interviewing and collecting data among senior citizens. Of course, while ongoing visits are done; food, water, and transportation fees are needed to be considered in the budget allocation especially nowadays gas and foods are expensive in the market. Furthermore, the budget for pre-implementation includes numerous printings and usage of internet because there is no guarantee that all barangays and sitios have internet access needed for communication which will be funded for the whole 8 months of pre-implementation.

It is evident that Social Pension is an additional government assistance amounting Five Hundred Pesos (₱500) monthly stipend to augment the daily subsistence and other medical needs of indigent senior citizens, which are still subject to a review every two years by Congress in consultation with the DSWD of every provinces and municipalities under MSWD. This stipend is undeniably not high knowing that daily expenses are becoming more and more costly and an amount of ₱500 is just something that could suffice a senior citizen only for days. This is already a low amount however, its ways on getting it is still difficult. That is why for the implementation process, various plans and actions are at present for a development and quicker gathering of requirements of senior citizens with the help of the LGU and barangay offices. An amount of ₱5,145,000 is allotted for the whole implementation which includes conducting of seminars, trainings, discussions, and other more activities.





These activities will last for months which means that there is a need for food, venue, materials, computers, technical equipment, and trainers that need to be in budget. All these have to be taken into consideration for the budget allocation because these are the main highlights of the plan, educating senior citizens and those who will guide them in using Microsoft Excel even after these activities. Also, a huge amount of ₱3,300,000 is for the improvement of the main office/centre of senior citizens as well as the expansion of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office in Bamban. These developments of two infrastructures need to be given priority as well because seeing the situation of senior citizen presidents whenever they conduct meetings or gatherings, their centre is not that pleasing and a place for meetings. Even the storage of important legal files are kept in an unsecured place on the area so development is needed for the place to better the situation of senior citizens not only in terms of convenience in master list creation. Also, the improvement of the MSWD office shall be given budgeting because this is where the vulnerable sector seeks for help and it is not that spacious for people to go in. Additionally, development must be done in their office not only in terms of the office itself but also beautification of the place like putting up the logo of the MSWDO so that people will recognize it even from afar.

These changes and improvements need to be done for a long-term achievement of the goals set by this plan. The amount of ₱5,349,000 will surely be helpful for the execution of all strategies and tactics involved for the success of the whole plan beneficial for the senior citizens of Bamban, Tarlac and the office of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development in the area.



MANDATES AND SERVICES

MSWDO IMCP								
MARKETING BUDGET PLAN FOR PRE-IMPLEMENTATION								
PLANS	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB
Onsite visiting on the Barangays and Sitios in Bambang, Tarlac to further identify problems or struggles they encounter as senior citizens as well as observe their state or condition to know what are the strategies and solutions needed for their betterment	P50,000	P50,000	P50,000					
Drafting of Plans (Budget Planning, Problem Identification, Strategies and Execution of actions, Expected Outcome)				P5,000	P5,000			
Presentation and Finalization of drafted plans to Local Government Unit, Barangays, and affected elderly						P40,000		
Processing of papers to be passed to the Local Government Unit for the execution of the plans intended for senior citizens							P2,000	P2,000

MSWDO IMCP								
MARKETING BUDGET PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION PROPER								
PLANS	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
TOTAL: P5.34 MILLION								
Media Promotion and Dissemination of Programs involving Senior Citizens (tarpaulins, social media and maintenance, fliers)	60,000	60,000						
Services Offered								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and introduction of the programs to senior citizens led by MSWDO in coordination with their respective barangays. Trainings and seminars on the basic usage of Microsoft Excel for data encoding (includes fee for the experts who will teach the Excel, foods, and equipment used for hands-on trainings) Proper coordination of MSWDO to barangay officials as to whom will be appointed helper of seniorities who will be given salary and compensations (including transportation, food, and others) Fixed Operating Costs (in case no area for seminar provided by the LGU) 			75,000	75,000		150,000	150,000	150,000
			125,000	125,000	20,000	125,000	125,000	125,000



For December, ₱40,000 has been allocated for the presentation and finalization of the drafted plans. This budget will cover expenses related to organizing meetings, preparing visual aids, and ensuring a smooth and inclusive discussion.

A substantial budget of ₱40,000 has been allocated for the month of October for compensating barangay helpers who assist in gathering the annual master list of senior citizens. This budget recognizes the importance of accurate data collection and aims to motivate the helpers for their active participation.

A fixed operating budget of ₱125,000 has been allocated for the months of May, June, August, September, and October. This budget serves as a contingency measure in case there is no available venue for seminars and ensures the successful execution of training programs.

For the month of March, ₱20,000 has been allocated for providing uniforms to workers' representatives. This budget emphasizes the importance of professionalism and instilling a sense of trust and credibility among the representatives.

A budget of ₱150,000 has been allocated for both September and October for computer upgrades and installation of additional PCs in barangays lacking equipment. This budget aims to enhance the technological infrastructure and access to resources for more efficient operations.

In October, ₱100,000 has been allocated for the compensation of barangay helpers involved in gathering the master list of senior citizens. This budget recognizes their crucial role in ensuring accurate data collection.

A significant amount of ₱1,800,000 has been allocated for the development of a facilities center for senior citizens. This budget reflects the commitment to enhancing their well-being and quality of life.

For the office development of the MSWDO, ₱1,500,000 has been allocated. This budget aims to create a well-equipped and functional workspace to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.





The "Others" category covers various expenses necessary for the smooth implementation of programs and initiatives. It includes printing expenses for documents, transportation fees, and the creation of a social media platform for the MSWDO to ensure transparency and effective communication with the community.

These miscellaneous expenses encompass a range of vital activities and services. For instance, a portion of the budget is allocated for emergency response measures, enabling the MSWDO to provide immediate assistance and support to senior citizens during times of crisis or natural disasters. This includes procuring emergency supplies, coordinating rescue operations, and ensuring the safety and well-being of the elderly population.

Furthermore, the "Others" budget covers unforeseen expenses that may arise during the implementation phase of the programs and projects. It allows the MSWDO to address any unexpected costs or challenges that may emerge, ensuring the smooth continuity of the initiatives and minimizing disruptions.

A portion of the budget is allocated for continuous capacity building and training for MSWDO staff members (coming from barangay offices and endorsed by their captain). This includes professional development opportunities, workshops, and seminars to enhance their knowledge and skills in serving the senior citizens effectively. By investing in the training and development of staff members, the MSWDO aims to improve the quality of services provided to the elderly population, ensuring that they receive the support and care they deserve.

The "Others" budget supports community engagement and participation initiatives. This includes organizing town hall meetings, public consultations, and focus group discussions to gather feedback, suggestions, and concerns from the senior citizens and their families. These activities promote inclusivity and collaboration, allowing the community to actively contribute to the decision-making processes that affect their lives.





The significant budget allocation for "Others" reflects the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office's commitment to flexibility, responsiveness, and continuous improvement in serving the senior citizens of Bambang. It also covers various essential expenses, including emergency response measures, unforeseen costs, staff training, and community engagement initiatives such as printed materials. Also, by allocating funds for these miscellaneous expenses, the MSWDO show how to ensure a smooth implementation of programs and projects, addresses emerging needs, and fosters a supportive and inclusive environment for the senior citizens of Bambang. It was just a mere problem of master lists that leads to a huge development of seniorities in the area.

EVALUATION

After all programs and actions were implemented, a successful outcome is expected to arise and changes shall occur on the situation of the senior citizens in Bambang, Tarlac. Furthermore, an evaluation of the anticipated results of the project's success is crucial after all. Consequently, the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO), the president of the senior citizens' group, and the barangay officials must continuously work together effectively to coordinate and communicate the proposed action of voluntarily reducing barangay officials' salaries to pay for the senior citizens' representative stipend or better yet, the Local Government Unit of Bambang might provide an increase in budget on the MSWDO so they will be the ones to pay for the helper of senior citizens. Evidently, the evaluation makes an effort to go into more detail about the project's anticipated results and the factors that affect its success.

The senior citizens' IMC plan comprises several strategies to advance older people's welfare and representation in line with the notion of reducing barangay officials' salaries. These tactics might entail developing channels of communication, planning events, designating a specific representative position, and speaking out for the requirements and rights of elderly adults. The president of the senior citizens' group and the MSWDO work together to execute the plan with the help and cooperation of the barangay officials.

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The IMC plan seeks to provide the aged people better participation by lowering the salary of barangay officials and allocating money for a special stipend for senior citizens' representatives. The designated representative will have the time and resources to fight for the rights, issues, and requirements of senior citizens, making sure that their voices are heard and that their interests are taken into consideration during decision-making processes.





The senior citizens' representative may actively engage the community, receive input, and spot service shortages thanks to the designated honorarium. The representative would be able to create and implement programs that are specifically tailored to the requirements of senior residents with the assistance of the MSWDO and barangay officials. As a result, senior folks will get better access to necessary services, larger support networks, and an overall superior quality of life.

To promote a sense of community cohesion and inclusivity, the IMC plan depends on excellent cooperation and communication among stakeholders. Senior adults' active participation in community affairs and decision-making processes fosters intergenerational cooperation and knowledge-sharing. By encouraging social integration, respect, and a sense of shared duty, this participation eventually strengthens the ties that bind the community.

The plan's effective execution demonstrates the barangay government's dedication to provide senior citizens' needs first priority by lowering officials' salaries to fund the stipend for the senior citizens' representative. This dedication builds confidence in the community and the local administration and fosters greater community satisfaction. Knowing that their welfare is a priority will make senior citizens feel appreciated and respected.

The president of the senior citizens' group, the MSWDO, and the barangay officials must work together effectively. Stakeholders must communicate openly and transparently in order to build trust and understanding. A sense of ownership and inclusivity is enhanced by frequent updates, sharing of progress, and community participation in decision-making. Building consensus and involving the community are crucial to winning support for the suggested action. Stakeholders will comprehend the requirement and advantages of lowering the wages of barangay officials to promote elderly people's representation when consultations are conducted, concerns are heard, and potential objections are addressed.



The choice to compensate a representative for senior persons by cutting barangay officials' pay had a beneficial and revolutionary impact on the neighborhood. The officials voluntarily accepted the wage cut, promoting cooperation and shared accountability.



A senior citizen delegate was chosen using a fair method and the required funding. For the purpose of addressing the needs of the senior population, the representative worked in conjunction with the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office. By frequently communicating with them and collaborating with healthcare professionals and governmental organizations to guarantee access to key services, they came to represent them. The program gave seniors more authority, which strengthened ties among the community. Similar policies were adopted by other communities, which collectively improved older citizens' quality of life. The choice established a precedent for giving seniors' welfare priority and proved crucial in fostering a more welcoming and empathetic community.

Additional attempts were made to further assist the community after the plan to lower the wages of barangay officials and compensate a representative for older residents was put into effect. Listed below are some steps that were taken

Education Training Programs for the community, especially senior persons, were launched with the help of available finances. These training courses intended to improve their knowledge and abilities in a variety of areas, including computer literacy, money management, and other pertinent topics.

Banners or tarpaulins were erected in each barangay to act as teaching and informational resources. Important details about nearby services, forthcoming events, and the contact information for pertinent organizations were all included on these banners. They contributed to increased awareness and communication among community members, including the elderly.



Teaching Microsoft Excel was a particular focus of the educational program. Learn how to use this software, which is frequently used for data administration and analysis, and you'll be able to gain knowledge and abilities that will help you achieve both personal and professional objectives. Seniors were encouraged to attend these sessions in order to strengthen their digital literacy and job options.



The community sought to promote educational opportunities, enhance communication, and develop digital skills among its members, particularly the senior residents, by putting these additional measures into place. This strategy intended to empower seniors and provide them the skills and knowledge they need to prosper in the contemporary society.