

¹Rosalinda B.
Guiyab

²Ma. Theresa R.
Aggabao

Assessing Initiatives to Alleviate Living Conditions in Communities: The Case of Computer Literacy Training Conducted



Abstract: - The study rigorously assesses the effectiveness of a capacity-building program focused on computer literacy. It employed the Input-Activities-Output-Outcome-Impact (IAOOI) framework, in which the constituent elements and processes were scrutinized, discerning their contributions towards generating tangible outcomes and eventual impacts on project participants. The study also highlights the accrued advantages, encountered challenges, and invaluable insights gained, thereby affirming the training's efficacy in enhancing the lives of its beneficiaries. The findings underscore a predominance of young adult, female participants, many of whom are married. The results demonstrate pronounced positivity across all stages of the IAOOI model, attesting to the program's remarkable relevance, responsiveness, and invaluable support in bolstering participants' professional pursuits.

Keywords: capability building program, computer literacy, assessing effectiveness

I. Introduction

The Isabela State University is a premier institution of higher learning which is grounded by its four-fold mission of instruction, research, extension, and production. Relative to extension, the institution through its Extension Unit has been conducting several extension projects in collaboration with different colleges and agencies or industries. However, there has never been a willful effort to document the impact of these projects and present it in tangible forms as evidence to prove its effectiveness in the lives of the people that it has served. It is in this direction that this research was conducted to address this concern.

In the case of the College of Computing Studies, Information and Communication Technology (CCSICT), formerly the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), one of the major extension programs of the college is the conduct of computer literacy training as part of the University's Extension thrust on Local Government Unit (LGU) Strengthening and Capability Building. Capability building has long been recognized as an important component of extension programs as it contributes to the realization of the goal of LGU and the Department of Education (DepEd) towards efficient delivery of public service. Anent to this, the CCSICT has conducted a number of computer literacy training for the DepEd teachers of Cabagan District as well as the LGU personnel of Cabagan. These endeavors are supported both by the LGU of Cabagan and DepEd Cabagan District through the forged Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between them and the Isabela State University (ISU) at Cabagan.

In tandem with the Extension Unit of the Campus, the college Extension Unit addresses the said concern stated above by undertaking an assessment to determine whether or not those involved in the training benefited in all aspects of the activities undertaken and have undergone changes that resulted from these activities in order to prove its effectiveness in the lives of the people that it had served thus, alleviating the living/workplace conditions in the community or their respective workplaces.

II. Objectives

General Objectives

The study generally focused on assessing the computer literacy training conducted by the DICT among the respondents.

Specifically, it aimed to:

¹ Associate Professor, Isabela State University, Cabagan, Philippines

² Associate Professor, Isabela State University, Cabagan, Philippines

1. Draw a profile of the respondents on the computer literacy training conducted.
2. Assess the computer literacy training conducted in terms of:
 - a. Inputs that are extended to the intended respondents;
 - b. Activities conducted;
 - c. Outputs as a result of the development intervention undertaken;
 - d. Outcomes about the effects of the intervention; and
 - e. Impact about the effects of the intervention.
3. Identify and describe best practices in the conduct of the computer literacy trainings to the respondents.
4. Identify and describe problems/loopholes that were experienced by the respondents during the implementation of the computer literacy training conducted.
5. Determine lessons learned from the experiences of respondents.

The study was guided by the framework presented in Figure 1 which was the basis for assessing the project conducted. The inputs are resources or support extended to the respondents or used to implement the project like material resources. The activities are the actions taken or work performed through which inputs are used to produce a specific output. The outputs are the services as a result of the activities undertaken. The outcomes are short-term or medium-term effects of output or simply the result of the application of outputs. The impacts are positive and negative effects of the project on respondents. The assessment is anchored on identifying and measuring the outputs, outcomes, and impact of the various activities conducted in the project (Simister, Nigel in 2017).

The study was guided by the given framework below:

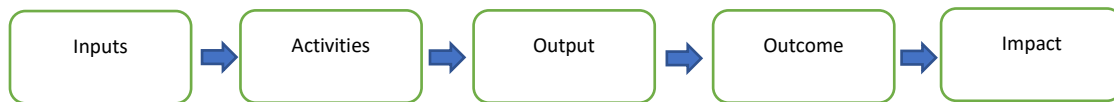


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Assessment has been an integral part of an activity in order to determine the success or effectiveness of the activity. Part of the assessment is the gathering of feedback that is used to determine the effects of the conducted activity which resulted in an impact among respondents. Thus, an impact is part of an assessment to determine the effectiveness of the conducted activity. Relative to assessment as an impact, Fitz-Gibbon (1996) defines impact as any effect of the service or an event or initiative on an individual or group. This definition acknowledges that the impact is about identifying and evaluating change. This was supported by the Global Libraries Initiative (2008) stating that the essential element of impact change, particularly the results of the project. Thus, this study hopes to realize the change brought about by the extension services conducted to prove its effectiveness in the lives of the people that it has served.

III. Methodology

The study utilized a simple descriptive research methodology where an impact assessment survey form was developed and employed content analysis. Data gathering started after the survey questionnaire was pretested and improved accordingly, and after all of the respondents were identified.

The training participants served as respondents to this study. The respondents were ISU faculty members, LGU personnel, and DepEd teachers. The Google survey forms were sent to the respondents' email or messenger accounts in coordination with the LGU and DepEd at Cabagan. In total, there were 40 surveyed respondents, consisting of 4 LGU staff, 22 DepEd teachers, and 24 HEI faculty members.

Frequency Count, Weighted Mean, and Percentage were used to analyze the responses of the participants.

III. Result and Discussion

Profile of Respondents

The majority of the respondents are young adults, married females, and with a permanent item.

Profile of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
25 – 39	21	52.5
40 – 50	14	35.0
51 – 64	5	12.5
Civil Status		
Single	6	15.0
Married	34	85.0
Sex		
Male	14	35.0
Female	26	65.0
Status of Appointment		
Permanent	37	92.5
Job Order	3	7.5

Assessment of Extension Projects

a. Inputs

In terms of inputs, all the extension projects were generously funded by the DETS and carefully planned by the project implementers. This was confirmed by the high percentage of respondents as shown in Table 3 who said that the extension projects provided sufficient food and snacks, suitable and comfortable training venue, complete training resources, and well-prepared speakers or lecturers. Likewise, the respondents added that the scheduled time of activities were also observed by the facilitators.

Table 3. Assessment of Inputs to Extension Projects

Inputs	Percentage
Sufficient food and snacks were provided	92.5
The training venue was suitable and comfortable for learning	97.5
Training resources like PC were completely provided during the training	95.0
The speakers/lecturers during the training were well prepared	90.0
Mean Percentage	93.75

b. Activities / Topics

The respondents were also asked about the activities or topics that positively affect their job or personal life. It could be gleaned from Table 4 that majority of the respondents selected the activities or topics under Office Productivity including Technical operations. This could be attributed to the significance of these activities to the general needs of the clientele when it comes to reports or document preparation at work.

Table 4. Assessment of Activities/ Topics of the Extension Projects

Activity/ Topic	Percentage
Technical operations	95.0
Formatting texts and paragraphs	97.5
Create, edit, save and collaborate on documents	97.5
Working with tables, columns, and other formatting features	97.5
Creating graphics, WordArt, charts and text flow	97.5
Advanced features including mail merge and proofing tools	95.0
Mean Percentage	96.67

c. Outputs

Table 5 clearly reveals that the respondents gained knowledge in all the topics delivered during the extension projects. Gaining knowledge on the advanced features of MS word topped the immediate impact of the extension projects conducted.

Table 5. Assessment of Outputs of the Extension Projects

Output	Percentage
Gained knowledge on the technical operations	95.0
Gained knowledge on the advanced features of MS Word	97.5
Improved knowledge in MS Word	95.0
Mean Percentage	95.83

d. Outcomes

On the other hand, outcomes or the medium term effect of the extension projects was also determined. Interestingly, all of the respondents acquired certificate and passed the standard exam after having attended the trainings conducted while 97.5% of them were able to lead a group because of the skills possessed from the trainings. About 55% of them said that they received awards or recognition because of their attendance to the trainings conducted by DICT.

Table 6. Assessment of Outcomes of the Extension Projects

Outcome	Percentage
Generated more interest to learn and develop new computer skills	95.0
Was able to lead a group because of the new possessed skills	97.5
Got work done in a more organized, efficient, and timely manner	95.0
Gained more confidence in the workplace	85.0
Received awards/recognition	55.0
Acquired certificate	100.0
Passed standard exam	100.0
Mean Percentage	89.64

e. Impact

The extension projects contributed to the success of the respondents. Particularly, 72.5% of them got hired in a job after attending the training while 52.5% believed that they got promoted to a higher position after having attended the trainings as shown in Table 7. About half of the respondents acquired profits from the skills gained from the extension projects. Around 42.5% were able to have an increase of salary while 5% believed that additional points for their promotion were attributed to their attendance to the trainings conducted by DICT.

Table 7. Assessment of Impact of the Extension Projects

Impact	Percentage
Got hired in a job	72.5
Got promoted to a higher position	52.5
Acquired profits from the skills gained	50.0
Increase of salary	42.5
Others: gained additional points for my promotion	5.0
Mean Percentage	44.5%

Best Practices

Table 8 presents the best practices shared by the respondents. They believed that trainings conducted for the extension projects were responsive and supportive to their computer literacy skills development. Likewise, 95% of them recognized the importance of the training for the enhancement of their skills in computer application. Majority also realized that the trainings conducted address the need to validate the knowledge and skills gained through Certification exam.

Table 8. Best Practices of the Extension Project

Best Practices	Percentage
The training is responsive and supportive to become a computer literate	95.0
The training addresses the need to validate the knowledge and skills gained from the training through Certification Exam	92.5
The training provides the need to enhance skills in computer application	95.0
Mean Percentage	94.17%

Problems/Loopholes and Constraints Encountered

Though the extension projects were generally successful, very few of the respondents experienced problems/loopholes and constraints during its implementation. The top problem encountered is the limited training duration followed by the lack of transportation in going to and from the training site. The least problem encountered is the lack of Internet access.

Table 9. Problems/Loopholes and Constraints Encountered by the Respondents

Problems/Loopholes	Percentage
Late dissemination of project information	5.0
Limited training resources	5.0
Lack of transportation in going to and from the training site	25.0
Limited training duration	35.0
Lack of support from the office	7.5
Others: Internet access	2.5
Mean Percentage	15.5%

Lessons Learned

When asked about the lessons learned, 90% of the respondents agreed that they learned and developed new computer skills while 87.5% said that they learned how to organize files in efficient and timely manner. Some also revealed that they learned how to use shortcut menus.

Table 10. Lessons Learned by the Respondents

Lessons Learned	Percentage
Learned and develop new computer skills	90.0
Learned how to organize files in efficient and timely manner	87.5
Learned how to use short cut menus	67.5
Mean Percentage	81.67%

Summary and Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Majority of the respondents are young adults, female, married with a permanent item.

2. In terms of inputs, all the extension projects were generously funded by the DETS and carefully planned by the project implementers as shown by the high rating in terms of food, training resources, venue, and preparation of the resource speakers. As to the activities, respondents selected the activities or topics under Office Productivity and Technical Operations. In terms of the output, the respondents gained knowledge in all the topics delivered during the extension projects, and gaining knowledge on the advanced features of MS Word topped the immediate impact of the extension projects conducted. In terms of outcomes, all of the respondents acquired certificates and passed the standard exam after having attended the training conducted while others were able to lead a group because of the skills possessed from the training. As to the outcome, all of the respondents acquired certificates and passed the standard exam after having attended the training conducted and they were able to lead a group because of the skills possessed from the training while others said that they received awards or recognition because of their attendance to the training conducted by DICT. As to the impact, the projects contributed to the success of the respondents particularly they got hired in a job after attending the training and believed that they got promoted to a higher position after having attended the trainings and others acquired profits from the skills gained from the extension projects and were able to have an increase of salary while others obtained additional points for their promotion.

3. The respondents believed that trainings conducted for the extension projects were responsive and supportive to their computer literacy skills development. Likewise, they recognized the importance of the training for the enhancement of their skills in computer application and majority also realized that the trainings conducted address the need to validate the knowledge and skills gained through Certification exam.

4. Though the extension projects were generally successful, very few of the respondents experienced problems/loopholes and constraints during its implementation. The top problem encountered is the limited training duration followed by the lack of transportation in going to and from the training site. The least problem encountered is the lack of Internet access.

5. As to the lessons learned, some of the respondents agreed that they learned and developed new computer skills while others said that they learned how to organize files in an efficient and timely manner. Some also revealed that they learned how to use shortcut menus.

References

- [1] Simister, Niguel (2017) Outputs, Outcomes and Impact. INTRAC for Civil Society. Retrieved at <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Outputs-outcomes-and-impact.pdf>
- [2] Fitz-Gibbon, C.T. (1996), *Monitoring Education: Indicators, Quality and Effectiveness*, Cassell, London. , Google Scholar
- [3] Global Libraries Initiative (GL) (2008), *IPA Road Map*, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA. Google Scholar