



Describing Social Work Students' Experiences in Outreach Program in a Subanen Community

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Abstract

Social workers are essential in society. They help the community by assisting in conducting plans and providing resources to the community. As social work students, community services like outreach programs are recognized as one of the significant components of social work education and a major determinant of its quality. A community outreach program may enhance the understanding and responsibilities of a social work student. This study describes the experiences of third-year social work students who engaged in community outreach programs within the Subanen community. The study employed a qualitative research design with a case study methodology, and through analysis of participant narratives, the researchers concluded that the students perceived their experiences as both challenging and fulfilling, often accompanied by a sense of culture shock. The research participants also employed resilience and teamwork to cope with different challenges and successfully carry out their planned activities.

Keywords: Social Workers, Social Work Students, Community, Outreach Program

Introduction

Community is a process of how it emerges and dissolves, the different forms it takes, how its members understand the elements of a larger society, and how outsiders interact with those who live there (Brown, 2002). With the help of a community outreach program, people from the other community can interact and learn more about the lifestyle of the other community and how this helps them improve and become a larger community. It has become evident that society must contribute to the betterment of all Filipinos' lives. It was shown in the historical account of the Philippines how our Indigenous People (IPs) brothers and sisters have been suffering from discrimination and lack access to education in the country (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). However, in any case, social workers are required to resolve issues of oppression, including the affecting race especially in the lives

of IPs groups (Dominelli, 2009). As a society, we allocate the responsibility for caring for people that are difficult and unlikeable to specific groups of professionals (Foster, 2001). Through participating with government services and community participants' structures, Social Workers can overcome barriers to care with the help of significant investment in resources, training, and support (Nxumalo et al., 2013).

Subanen people are known for farming and are called nomadic people, who always leave their place and find another area to live in. However, as time passed, being called nomadic people, the subanen learned to stay in one place and live peacefully; in addition, some subanen people would rather have to live on top of the mountain. Indigenous groups view themselves as having a historical existence and identity resolution to preserve and recreate their ancestral lands and systems as separate communities, as well as their culture (Balilla et al., 2013). They typically reside in distant places with little access to essential social services, political engagement, or education (Balilla et al., 2013).

In this case, Social Work students are aware of these issues and willing to help and resolve some problems that our Indigenous communities are facing right now. Social worker students help the community in assisting to conduct plans or administer programs and provide resources to the community (What Do Community Social Workers Do? 2022). Fieldwork activities are recognized as one of the major components of social work education and a major determinant of its quality (Lam et al., 2005). Scholars of group work have noted a gap between opportunities for group work in field practicums and professional practice and how well students are prepared for it (Goodman et al., 2014). Given the significance of the process of reflection or reflective learning, a qualitative study based on the reflective logs of social work students was conducted to explore the meaning of social work field education and the learning experiences of social work students during their outreach activities (Lam et al., 2005). This community outreach may help social work students in having additional opportunities to develop their skills in the field (Volunteering Enhances the Social Work Student Experience, 2017). Social workers play important roles in encouraging collective parent involvement in economically disadvantaged school settings (Alameda et al., 2010). A one-of-a-kind community outreach program aimed to fulfill the needs of the local community and serve as a teaching ground for social work students (Cook et al., 2002). A relationship between a community center and a school led to an outreach program that provides a dynamic experience to social work students and helps connect vulnerable populations to care (Doran & Doede, 2020).

Higher education institutions are recognized as essential community stakeholders and contributors, and they play an important role in this regard (Mey et al., 2018; Naparan, & Balimbingan, 2020). Service Learning is the generation of knowledge that benefits the entire community (Kenny et al., 2002). A community that was once welcoming can turn reactionary and xenophobic, and social workers are on the front lines of helping refugees while also managing the fears and needs of the resident (Dubus, 2022). School outreach

programs have focused on different aspects to give quality services and help to the community (Corporate, 2022). School outreach programs taught students to be liberal and mindful of how they act and their different roles in society (Wibowo, 2018). A community outreach program serves as part of the educational experience for students (Conrad, n.d.). It helps students be innovative when it comes to solving problems and building skills to have a positive behavior change not just within themselves but also in the community (Corporate, 2022). Students improve as collaborative learners, which has an impact on both their academic and social skill development as well as their inner personal growth (Wibowo, 2018).

Schools are institutions that help support the idea of preparing students to be socially aware and responsive global citizens are aware of the need to develop student attributes outside of the traditional academic framework (Mey et al., 2018). The gap between those with sufficient financial resources and those without has widened in the 21st century, and in many cases, social workers and community outreach programs are the only sources of assistance for struggling individuals and families (Author, 2021). A community outreach program, which is one of the responsibilities of social workers, helps communities' function better. The importance of this kind of program may help improve the health and economic system of beneficiary communities, including the Subanen community and other indigenous communities.

The outreach program for social work students helps them to reflect on their main responsibilities as future social workers; this is to make sure that their clients are aware and available to them, to improve their clients' access to those services to clients (Psychology School guide-accredited campus and online school, 2023). Social work students participated in a local community assessment to better understand their perspective on environmental and community issues (Al-Makhamreh et al., 2015). It enables the students to consider their individual and group experiences, particularly the difficulties and fruitful outcomes encountered (Mey et al., 2018). Youth service literature serves as the evaluation of the procedures and results of a community service program that was incorporated into the academic curriculum for enrolled students. Given the substantial requirements of the surrounding community, the School's human capital commitment to assisting local revitalization was important (Lakin & Mahanoy, 2006). Furthermore, the prospective learning opportunities for students were potentially enormous (Poulin et al. n.d).

A community outreach program may enhance the understanding and responsibilities of social work students (Bell & Anscombe, 2013). This has significant positive effects on student learning, group cohesion, and professional commitment. Students can be motivated to take this course because it also expresses a historical context of globalization concerning global inequalities and the varying impact of globalization around the world (Barner & Okech, 2013). Social work students' participation in a community can affect their lives and community issues and may help improve them (Finn

& Checkoway, 1998). One of the missions of the social work students in this course is to be knowledgeable about how they can help with their basic needs and enhance their clients' well-being (J, n.d.). To ensure that indigenous youth and families receive informed and culturally sensitive care, social work students are advocating for more indigenous people to be represented in the field (Balintec, 2021). Through outreach programs in the community, social work students can use their knowledge of social policies to evaluate social issues and programs that impact communities (J, n.d.).

Social work as a profession is expanding in indigenous community groups because of social justice issues and historical marginalization due to colonial practices. Social workers working with indigenous community groups constantly experience and witness the challenges faced by these communities, including isolation within educational institutions (Abur, 2021). Social workers are also to implement collective parental involvement in programs. This facilitative bridging role depends on how social workers support parents' efforts to meet their social, economic, and developmental needs and can be particularly effective when social workers are implementing collective parent involvement programs (Alameda-Lawson et al., 2010). Social professors enrich social work courses at universities by sharing their knowledge and personal experiences as they walk alongside students and their families (Abur, 2021). This emphasizes the value of fieldwork training for social work students because it places them in the context of their workplace and allows them to hone skills that will be useful throughout their professional careers (Al-Makhamre et al., 2016).

A community outreach program is a crucial element that unifies the curriculum and gives academics the chance to apply theories and concepts to real-world situations (Tubo, 2017). This was an extension mission that aimed to tap into the expertise of the academe and its knowledge to help the community (Omandam et al., 2023). Based on the framework of academic community empowerment, the researchers measured the long-term impact of a 44-month community extension program in the Philippines. The goal was to train students in higher education to be caring and responsible citizens (Llenares & Deocaris, 2018).

The purpose of this research is to describe social work students' experiences in conducting outreach programs in a Subanen community. It also explains the challenges they encountered and how they conducted and dealt with these challenges. This section also explains the strategies used to address these challenges. This study discusses the different programs that social work students offer to the subanen community and how they conduct these activities to make this possible. The results and findings of this study may help to enlighten readers' minds, especially the upcoming college students who will take up a Bachelor of Science in social work to give them ideas to cope with different problems they encounter and the strategy they may apply. This can also be a significant help for future researchers in distinguishing between topics. Make use of this study as their baseline

for conducting research with similar disciplines.

Research Objectives

This study aims to describe social work students' experiences in conducting outreach programs in a Subanen community. It also explains the challenges they encountered and how they conducted and dealt with these challenges. This section also explains the strategies used to address these challenges. This study discusses the different programs that social work students offer to the subanen community and how they conduct these activities to make this possible. The results and findings of this study may help to enlighten readers' minds, especially the upcoming college students who will take up a Bachelor of Science in social work to give them ideas to cope with different problems they encounter and the strategy they may apply. This can also be a significant help for future researchers in distinguishing between topics. Make use of this study as their baseline for conducting research with similar disciplines.

Method Research Design

The study utilizes a Qualitative Research Design, with a case study methodology in particular. Since the study aims to describe the Social Work Students' experiences in outreach programs in a Subanen Community, the study explains how they conducted, their strategies, and the challenges encountered during the outreach program in the two Indigenous communities they visited. The researchers also used the Merriam Method to aggregate categories, allowing researchers to look for patterns, assign meaning to the participation data, and even identify themes for this case study. According to the Researcher, the Merriam technique is an excellent tool for thoroughly investigating this topic through face-to-face interviews, observations, and record analysis (Merriam, 1998).

Research Environment and Participants

The study was conducted at one of the higher-education institutions offering Bachelor of Science in Social Work in Pagadian City. The institution that offers Bachelor of Science in Social Work trains its students to apply their learnings in a field education experience, including an outreach program in Subanen communities. The participants of this study are Third-year social work students who participated in Sitio Glab, Cogonan, Labangan, Zamboanga Del Sur and Brgy. Nanga-Nangan, Tigbao, Zambonaga Del Sur, Philippines outreach activities, including their adviser. They are coded as "SWS" or Social Work Students, and for their adviser, the researchers coded it "SWA" or Social Work Adviser.

Research Instrument

The researchers were the primary instruments that helped gather the data with an interview guide or self-made questions. The interview guide focused on soliciting reactions and personal experiences from the participants regarding their experience in conducting outreach programs in a Subanen community. In addition, with the help of a voice recorder, the review process became more manageable for the researchers. It provided an accurate, detailed account of the interview process and captured essential points without jotting everything down. The answers solicited, or responses gathered from the participants, were subjected to analysis and interpretation.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with the research participants. During the interview, the participants scheduled a time that was convenient for them. Probing questions were asked to the participants to clarify and provide a more detailed response. The researchers explained to the participants the importance of their response to the study and requested that they answer wholly and honestly about their responsibility. The researchers made clear that the answers remained confidential.

Data Analysis

The researchers gathered all possible descriptive data from the responses of the research participants. The results could be directed to the central question that tackles social work students' experiences during their community outreach program in the Subanen community. Since the utilized case study model is that of Sharan B. Merriam, the researchers then provide a holistic description, interpretation, and analysis of the results, such as the experiences of a group of people belonging to a social unit. The summary content described the study's primary features, as the case study model involved interpreting what the researchers had written.

Results And Discussions

Activities Offered by Social Work Students to the Subanen Community

Three categories emerged from the responses about the activities offered by social work students to the Subanen community: livelihood program, reading and writing tutorial program, and an orientation on the IPRA (Indigenous Peoples' Right Act) law for the two Subanen communities.

Livelihood Program

Livelihood program. the research participants answered that they offered livelihood programs in the Subanen community. This will help the Subanen to promote their own economical products and improve their community and their lives through introducing them livelihood program that is crucial for them.

“We offer livelihood programs to adults.”-SWS1

“We offer livelihood programs to adults.”-SWS2

“*Maka offer sa barangay ba like skills para maka trabaho sila*” [offers them a program on how to improve their skills so they can get a job.]-SWS4

“*About sa ilaha business og sa ila product na gi buhat ug ang purpose namo didto is to promote their livelihood*” [About their business and their product, our purpose there is to promote their livelihood]-SWS5

“*Amung activities na amo gi hatag kay livelihood program*” [The activities that we provided was livelihood program]-SWS8

“*Most common kay seminar/orientation on their rights and nag propose pod for livelihood programs and union pag utilized sa resources.*” [The most common is seminars and proposals for livelihood and how to utilize their resources]-SWS10

“We offer livelihood program in Glab” SWA13

Indigenous peoples, as participants in the training, received scientific advice on how to produce high-quality products that will improve their competitiveness in both domestic and international markets. It enhances their inherited livelihood and converts it into sustainable agriculture (TVIRD, Abaca Livelihood Program Gives Host Subanen Tribe a Head Start | TVI: Resource Development, 2021).

Reading and Writing Tutorial Program

The participants found out that not only children in both Subanen communities are in need in terms of tutoring to read and write, but most of the parents don't have enough knowledge in terms of writing and reading comprehension. They shared.

“*Nag hatag mi sa mga kids ug tutorial program like ge tudloan namo silage basa ug sulat*” [We offered a tutorial program to the kids, and we taught them how to read and write]-SWS1

“*Reading comprehension kay kasagaran sa ilaha man gud kay no read, no write. Na hibaw-an sab namo na ang ginikanan kay dili kabalo mo spelling ug sulat sa ila pangalan. Kato amo ge himo na pagconduct sama*

ato reading comprehension” [Reading comprehension is a common problem in their community they aren't able to read and write. We find out that their parents do not know how to spell their names. This is the reason why we conduct reading comprehension in their community.]-SWS6

“Educational program like ng-conduct mi tutorial mi didto sa mga bata mo basa ug sulat” [Educational programs we tutor kids to read and write.]-SWS7

“Nag hatag mi nilag educational program like tutorial para makabalo sila mo sulat ug basa, aron ma tudlu-an sila mo basa” [We give them an educational program so that they can know how to read and write]-SWS9

The research participants mentioned that they offer an educational program to the subanen people, most especially in reading comprehension, as a common problem in their community because they aren't able to read and also to write. They find out that the Subanen parents do not know how to spell their names. It was shown in the historical account of the Philippines how our Indigenous People (IPs) brothers and sisters have been suffering from discrimination and lack of access to Education in the country (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021).

Orientation of the IPRA (Indigenous Peoples' Right Act) Law

The research participants answered that they conducted an IPRA law seminar for the Subanen community, Glab, and Nanga-Nangan in order for them to know what their rights are in society. This orientation may assist them in knowing how they can protect their properties within their community. It may help them to fight against discrimination and to preserve their culture. They shared.

“We give them orientation on their rights like IPRA law for the IPs group. To strengthen the community's knowledge as well their right as an indigenous people.”-SWS2

“Para ma-aware sila kung unsa man gali ang nahitabo, labi na issue kaayu sa ilaha tong land rights ug land ownership sa mga indigenous people” [They will be aware of what is happening, especially the issue of land rights and land ownership.]-SWS6

“Sa glab, nag conduct mi ug orientation about sa IPRA law aron ma educate sila sa ilang rights” [In glab, we conducted a seminar about the IPRA law to educate them on their rights and also on the nanga-nangan.]-SWS10

“Ang mga activities nga gina-offer namo kay orientation labi na ang IPRA law aron makabalo sila sa ilang rights labi na sa ilang land.” [The activities that we offer are all about seminars, especially in knowing IPRA

law so that they know what their rights are, especially in land.]-SWS11

"Nag conduct mi ug orientation didto about IPRA law, aron ma educates sila about sa ilang rights." [We conducted an orientation about IPRA law so that they will be educated on their rights according to IPRA law.]-SWS12

Most of the research participants mentioned that they offer seminars about IPRA law to strengthen the community's knowledge about their rights, and it is important for them because they are the target and the beneficiary of these rights. The Indigenous Peoples' Right Act (IPRA) is hailed as landmark legislation because it is supposed to respect and uphold the rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral land and domain that was also ratified in 1997 (Rovillos and Tauli-Corpuz, 2012). Awareness opens the door to development and creates an oath for addressing issues and concerns that may be affecting indigenous people. The Indigenous people's rights entail respect for human rights and an indication of enlightenment (Eduardo, 2018).

Social Work Student's Ways of Conducting Outreach Activities in the Subanen Communities

Conducting outreach activities in a far-flung area most especially in Indigenous group is an important role of a social worker job. With this, four categories come into view regarding the ways of social worker students in conducting these activities. These involve: planning and preparation, collaborating with barangay officials, applying strategies & methods in community organizing, and interviewing clients.

Planning and Preparation

Research participants mentioned that the first thing to do in conducting an outreach program is having the initiative to have a better preparation and a successful plan in order to achieve the goals. The participants disclosed:

"Dapat before conducting an activity kay han-ay gyud bitaw, dayun dapat involved na dira ang planning og flow sa program labaw na sa mga papel before siya e-implement. Og dapat napermahan na tanan communication/ letter usa e-conduct sa community." [Before conducting the activity, there must be an order, then the planning and flow of the program should be indicated, and the papers will also be implemented. And the major must be signed the letter before conducting a community outreach program.]-SWS4

"Sa pag-conduct namog activity didto, nag-set mig plan,ge-follow namu unsa ang angay buhaton as community organizer. Of course, we prepare everything, naa pami mga back-up plan if deli realize amo mga plano didto." [When we conducted an activity there, we set a plan, and we

followed the things we needed to do as a community organizer. We also prepare everything and have a backup plan.]-SWS5

“Gi conduct namo siya through sa amo community organizing nga subject included mi ato sa mga 4th year before. Dapat jud familiar ka sa basic methods & strategies in organizing. [We conducted an outreach program through our community organizing course, which was included in the 4th year before.]-SWS3

“Usa mi nangadto kay gi-remind mi sa mga dos and don'ts. Dayun ang mga basic nga method in organizing the community.” [Before we go there, we remember first the dos and don'ts. We also discuss the methods of organizing the community.]-SWS12

The research participants mentioned that it is very important to have a plan and preparation before conducting an outreach program for it to be successful and that their goals and targets will be achieved. Presenting case study and strategies to program evaluation within the Subanen community help to examine direct practice, policy, community issues, and implementations (Secret et al., 1999).

Collaboration with Other Organizations

They said that collaboration and tapping other organization, will be a big help in doing the activities. The participants mentioned:

“Tapping of agency para ma buhat ang amo activity, need jud mag plan. First namo gibuhat kay gilantaw ang community unsa klase nga mga clients amo ma-encounter & unsa pod ang environment ila gepuy-an aron maka-tap mig organizations nga pwede namu duolan during implementation.” [In conducting an outreach program, we do tap the agency to make our activities successful. The first thing we do is look at the community and look at the possible activities that can be conducted there.]-SWS6

“Before conducting the activities kay nag tap giyud mig mga organizations like diri sa school ang CIP & medics, dayun outside sa school ng-tap pod mi sa DTI and ang Barangay Council sa labangan kato didto mi sa Glab, and also nag siminar mi daan para sa among kaugalingon aron mas ma implement namo ug sakto among goals didto.” [Before conducting an activity, we tap some organizations like the school CIP, medics, and outside school we also tap the DTI, and Barangay Council in labangan for Glab.]-SWS11

Most of the research participants responded that collaboration is a good help in conducting outreach community programs. Collaboration with other organization that is related to the outreach activity being conducted may become a helpful tool to target goals

in achieving beneficiary and successful outreach community programs. It is initiative and very helpful to social work students to build meaningful relationships with other organizations (Finn & Checkoway, 1998). A collaboration between social workers and other organizations aims to create common objectives, financing, management technique, and structures for accountability (Fleming et al., 2023).

Applying Strategies and Methods in Community Organizing

The Social Work students mentioned that in order to have a successful outreach program, applying strategies and methods in organizing is very crucial in terms of conducting activities, most especially in a far-flung area. They said:

“The rules and policies of the community need to be followed. Activities should be fun and beneficial to them so that they are willing to participate.”
SWS1

Most research participants remember and apply the dos and don'ts before conducting outreach activities to an indigenous community for they to keep safe and respect the indigenous people living there. It provides effective services to understand different cultures and have a knowledge base and approach to other cultures. Social worker students should understand the cultural values of an indigenous community for the client to properly respond to the factors being involved (Graham et al., 2009).

Conducting Interviews

Research participants answered that in order to know the needs and how you may assist the client, interviewing is a great tool in knowing the client's background or history. This help also to know how can they conduct and prepare their activities. The participants revealed:

“First stage jud sa community organizing is ang assessment so diri nag-conduct mig interview after ato naka balo mi sa ila problema usa mi naka come up sa programs and activities nga amo e-implementar sailahang community.” [It was the first time when we went there that we did an assessment and conducted an interview.]-SWS7

“First nag interview mi then na-assess namo unsa ila problema.” [We first conducted an interview and assess their problems]-SWS9

The research participants mentioned that to know the problems and issues that were encountered in the community, they interviewed the people living in the Subanen community. An evaluation that helps them to better know what to do and how they solve the issues encountered in that community. Presenting case study and strategies to program evaluation within the Subanen community help to examine direct practice, policy, community issues, and implementations. Interviewing participants before conducting

activities is used to develop interventions that can measure and evaluate and transfer knowledge to the social workers. It also helps to overcome other obstacles in implementation (Secret et al., 1999).

Community's Response to the Outreach Activities

Based on the responses provided by the participants during the one-on-one interview conducted on the responses of the subanen community on the outreach activities, there is that subanen people emerged as being participative and grateful for the activities & programs implemented.

Participative

The research participants mentioned that the Subanen are very participative in terms of the joining the activities they conducted during the community outreach. The participants shared:

"Participative kaayu sila". [They are all participative.]-SWS1

"Ako observations sa subanen people kay participative sila in terms sa mga activities na ge hatag sa social work students." [For me observations, the Subanen people are participative in terms of the activities that the social work students have conducted.]-SWS2

"Participative sila. [They are participative.]-SWS3

"Participative sila." [They are participative.]-SWS4

"Participative kaayu sila mo cooperate sila every time mo adto mi didto mo welcome giyud sila makita namo during sa amo activity mo participate sila sa mga gipabuhat" [They were very participative, they cooperate every time we go there and they welcome us to our activities, and participate in the things that we made them do.]-SWS6

"Kuan sila kanang willing sila mo cooperate." [They are willing to cooperate.]-SWS7

"Sa ila behavior is fulfilling sa amo part kay participative kaayu" [Their behavior is fulfilling for us because they were participative.]-SWA13

"Even though sa sugod maulaw pero kadugayan na anad raman mao to cooperative na sila di na kaayu sila ma ulaw" [Even though at the start they are shy but they get used to it and after that they were cooperative.]-SWS4

"Una giyud sa amo activity giyud kay maulwon giyud sila shy type pero at the end mi cooperate man sila, sila tanan mi participate na." [At the start of our activity, they were very shy, but at the end, they cooperated,

and all of them participated.]-SWS5

“Kuan sila participative pero katong una palang mura silage maulaw pero katong nag sugod na didto nako Nakita na participative giyud sila”.
[They are participative but at first, they are shy but later on they were participative.] -SWS8

“Very participative kaayu sila sa amo mga activity even though at first maulaw sila pero kadugayan mi participate ra sila.” [They are very participative in our activity even though at first, they are shy but later on they still participated.]-SWS9

Additionally, Participation in outreach activities creates and strengthens connections between education and the outside world that they live in. Raises community awareness and works to effect change. It fosters learning and connections between the classroom curriculums and creates real-world impacts (Corporate, 2022). Most of the participants observed that both Subanen communities were participative in their outreach activities. The research participants mentioned that the subanen community was participative because of their exciting activities, and at the same time, subanen people were excited to learn. As the responses stated above, the collaboration of both social work students and the Subanen community establishes beneficial connections between people and organizations. The efforts that develop the outreach activities create opportunities that can be used to gain interest in the target population and prevent long-term problems (Chapter 23. Modifying Access, Barriers, and Opportunities | Section 6. Using Outreach to Increase Access | Main Section | Community Tool Box, n.d.)

Challenges Encountered by Social Work Students in Conducting Outreach Activities

Based on the responses provided by the participants during the one-on-one interview conducted on the responses of the subanen community on the outreach activities, several categories that emerged. These Categories are road problem and communication difficulty.

Road Problem

One of the challenges encountered of the research participants during their outreach activities is the transportation. They found out that some roads in the community are not totally complete and still under in construction which may take them too longer to travel in their area. The participants shared:

“Lisud ang pag pa dulong didto tungod sa dalan na wala pa na siminto”
[The way in going there was hard because of the road that has not been constructed yet.]-SWS1

"Mga challenges like sa transportation labaw na amo gi-agian kay wala pay projects ang local government para sailing dalan." [The challenge in the activities is the transportation it is because there are still no projects on the road that implemented by the local government unit or LGU.]-SWS2

"Challenges sa byahe kay lisud giyud kaayu padulong didto" [Challenges on the trip because it is very difficult.]-SWS3

"Challenges kay sugod sa dalan padulong sa barangay" [Challenge are the route when going to the barangay.]-SWS4

"Daghan kaayu mig challenges padulong palang daan lapok na kaayu" [We have a lot of challenges leading up to the muddy road.]-SWS5

"Lisud kaayu ila dalan didto kay lubak lubak." [It is very difficult to go there because there are potholes.]-SWS6

"Usa pod kay ang dalan lisod kayo kay lubak lubak and wala pa na siminto". [One thing is that the road is difficult because it was not constructed yet.]-SWS8

"First ang dalan kay di giyud lalim nya ang weather pod specially kanang mutabok ug suba perting lisura jud". [First is the road is very difficult and the bad weather especially when we cross the river.]-SWS9

"Ang dalan giyud kay lisod kaayo kay layo kaayo sya." [The road is very difficult and far.]-SWS10

Based on the answers of the participants it is very difficult for them to travel in a community with having a problem in the roads. Due to environmental restrictions, most rural roads are constructed from gravel and dirt, which are safety hazards in transportation. It is difficult to provide safe and reliable roads, as well as to provide and maintain any transportation systems (Barriers to Transportation in Rural Areas – RHHub Toolkit, n.d.). To the response of the research participants, the problems that they have experienced in conducting the outreach programs are traveling challenges. The research participants have mentioned that with difficult roads and bad weather conditions, their experience when it comes to traveling becomes challenging (Napan & Castañeda, 2021).

Communication Difficulty

Communication difficulty may affect the activities conducted by the social work students since all of them are not Subanen and didn't know how to talk in a Subanen word, it is not easy for them to communicate and interact. They shared:

"Challenges sa people sa community kay lisud kaayu makig-converse nila ky pure sabano jud cla halos dli kasabot ug bisaya." [Challenges with the people in the community because it's challenging to converse with them

because they are pure Sabanos and hardly understand Bisaya language.]-SWS3

“Daghan kaayu mig challenges tungod sa language barrier na amo na experience.” [We have a lot of challenges tungod sa language barrier that we experience.]-SWS5

“Kanang maglisod mig interview nila kay naa juy language barrier. Naa kase uban nga pure Subanen ra giyud ang nahibal-an nga dialect” [It was difficult for us to interview them because there is a language barrier. Others are pure Subanen, and we only knew Taglish or Bisaya because it would be difficult for us to explain.]-SWS10

“Pag abot sa community kay maglisod mig approach nila tungod kay dili sila kasabot bisaya. Dili mi magkasinabtnay” [When we reach the community it was difficult to approach them because of they don’t know how to speak Cebuano language.]-SWS11

“Mga tawo kay most of them d kasabot ug bisaya so mag lisd giyud mig communicate nila.” [Most of the people there do not understand Bisaya so it was difficult for us to communicate with them.]-SWS12

As the participants mentioned, they had trouble communicating with the Subanen people in both subanen communities due to the language barrier. The research respondents had a problem approaching them and making them participate in the outreach program due to misunderstandings. Language is a communication tool means to convey messages and information effectively to each individual. Due to the language barrier, the means to express their thoughts and ideas will be challenging (Sirbu, 2015).

Social Work Students’ Ways of Dealing with These Challenges

Based on the responses provided by the participants during the one-on-one interview conducted on the activities they offer in the Subanen community, several categories emerged. These categories are having positive mindset and the help of a translator.

Having Positive Mindset

The use of having positive mindset help the research participants to conquer all the challenges they faced during their outreach program. Based on the responses of the research participants, they conditioned their minds to a degree of optimism to be able for them to overcome any possible obstacles that may come ahead.

“Mindset lang then pasensya, mind set na malampasan ang problema/Challenges. [Only mindset, then patience, mindset to overcome

the problem/Challenges.]-SWS4

"Daghan gyud kaayu pagsulay basta mag- organize ug community, pinakauna ana ang dalan or location sa community nga e-organize, positive lng jd ka sa tanan (bawal negative thoughts) nga safe ra inyo pagpadulong og pagpauli from the community." [There are a lot of attempts to organize a community, the first thing to do is the road or location of the community to organize, be positive about everything (no negative thoughts) that it is safe for you to go to and from the community.]-SWA1

The respondents assert that setting the mind to a certain degree proves to be beneficial in facing future stresses and providing adequate tolerance in solving obstacles and challenges, thus resulting in a better process of achieving the goals of the activity. The term "mind control" is a more explicit extension of that process in which something is deliberately instilled in a victim to create an obedient slave. Obedience is the basis of most socializations—the family, school, religion, and work and, of course, is even more crucial within the armed services (Sinason, 2018). Thus, in the respondent's responses, mindset is closely identical to mind control.

The Use of Local Translator

Based on the responses of the respondents, one of the prevalent strategies that the respondents have been using in addressing or dealing with the challenges, especially problems in linguistics are the use of local translator.

"Big help kaayu ang translator kay natabangan giyud mi [A translator has helped us significantly]-SWS3

"Mangita lang giyud ug way para magkasinabot, usahay mangayo mig tabang anang translator para lang magkasinabot mi." [Just find a way to understand each other, sometimes we ask for the help of a translator just so we can understand each other.]-SWS11

"Ang pag deal nko sa challenges kay mangita kog paagi giyud like sa pag interview kung dili sila kasabot kay mangita kog translator aron magkasanbtanay lang giyud mi."[The way I deal with challenges is through finding a way to diminish the problem like if I interview if we can't understand each other then I will find a translator so that we can understand each other.] -SWS12

Due to the differences in linguistics, the respondents heavily relied on a translator to establish a communication line between themselves and the local tribes. The main job of a translator is to be able to function as a 'mediator' between two different cultures. Thus, in the case of the respondents, it has functioned perfectly (Dam & Zethsen, 2016).

The Insight They Gain in Conducting These Outreach Programs

The participants provided the following responses about the challenges they encountered while answering their self-learning modules, and two categories emerged. These categories are; importance of perseverance, importance of teamwork, and tapping of government organizations or non- government organizations.

Importance of Perseverance

It is one of the most prevalent answers of the research participants when asked about their insights in conducting outreach programs. They shared.

“Usa pod bisag unsa kalisod sa kinabuhi kay padayon lang giyud ug ayaw basta basta ug undang.” [No matter how hard life is, just keep trying and never give up.] SWS7

“Ako insight na learn is kanang ayaw gyud give up.” [My insight is that to never give up.]-SWS8

“Dapat giyud kung unsa ka lisud ang problem especially during sa pag-implement na sa programs never jud give up.” [No matter how hard the problem is especially during the implementation of programs, just never give up]-SWS10

“Nakarealize ko during sa implementation namu sa program dapat maningkamot giyud ta and dili giyud nato e consider ang pag give up as an option” [I realized that a person should strive for betterment and should not consider giving up as an option.]-SWS12

Perseverance is a personality trait characterized by sticking with things despite challenges (Kern, 2017). It is important for achievement and other socially valued outcomes. Persevering through challenges helps build one's character. Grit, which was originally conceptualized as passion and perseverance for long-term goals, has been associated with optimal performance (Datu, 2021). Thus, for the experienced research participants, never giving up is the most prevalent insight they have learned in conducting the outreach programs, mainly because of the inevitable challenges on the road that required not just positivity but also perseverance.

Importance of Teamwork

The participants also responded that one of the most substantial things they have learned in conducting the community outreach programs is the importance of teamwork.

“Teamwork dapat naa giyud pod pirme aron mabuhat giyud ug sako tanan plano” [Teamwork must also be emphasized so that all the plans can be carried out.]-SWS4

“Akong nakat-unan didto kay teamwork. In the near future maka tabang ni sa akoa maka dagdag sa ug idea para maka conduct ug activity.” [I

learned teamwork there. In the near future, this will help me to add ideas to conduct activities]-SWS6

“Naka learn ko nga dili lang ang client imong tabangan kay dapat pod tabangan sad nimo ang imong isig kauban kay aron mas mu successful pagiyud and mission bitaw tinabangay lang giyud.”. [I learned that you don't just help the client because you should, but also help your colleagues because in order to be more successful in the mission, it's all about working together.]-SWS11

Teamwork is the process through which team members collaborate to achieve task goals (Driskell et al., 2018). Teamwork refers to the activities through which team inputs translate into team outputs, such as team effectiveness and satisfaction. The same with the insights gained by the research participants in conducting the community outreach programs, teamwork is one of the most notable learnings in order to achieve the desired goals (Naparan et al., 2019).

Conclusion

The researchers concluded that the social work students perceived their experiences as both challenging and fulfilling, often accompanied by a sense of culture shock. The research participants in the study did not have sufficient knowledge about the culture of the Subanen people and how challenging they may encounter conducting activities in their place. However, all those difficulties faded off when they finally got there and showed the people of that community seeking help and support from them. This makes them realize that it is happy to serve other people, especially the neediest ones. They offered livelihood program, tutoring session in reading and writing, and introducing the IPRA law (Indigenous People's Rights Act). The way of interacting and communicating with the Subanen people in the community is quite challenging to the research participants. However, the responses of the Subanen people are very participative. And behind the success, there are two challenges emerged during the activities; road problem and communication difficulty. Despite the challenges, research participants able to manage and fix the problems encountered. Having a positive mindset become a helpful strategy in convincing one's own self to continue, in this way, they could have a better tolerance to stress. Second, despite the existing communication difficulty, the participants could cope with these problems by using a translator to communicate with them. Despite these challenges, strategies and coping mechanisms are great tools for achieving goals. The research participants mentioned two insights gained from conducting community outreach activities in a subanen community. They are the importance of perseverance. Not giving up on the fact that respondents simply set the value of perseverance as their foundation. In addition, importance of teamwork that makes these activities possible. According to them, “teamwork must also be emphasized so that all the plans can be carried out.” Such a phrase has concluded that without teamwork, plans cannot be executed well and may result in

negativity.

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