

Community engagement as a learning modality for an enhanced instruction

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to assist learners in meeting the challenge of relevant and meaningful learning outside the traditional classroom setting. Considering the complexity of their learning demands and the intricacies of community lives, the need for Community Engagement (CE) has become increasingly urgent. Additionally, there is no study on CE among senior high school learners initiated yet within the country. It prompted the researcher to investigate the effects of CE as a learning platform on the knowledge, skill, and attitude of learners. Descriptive survey research, using a validated self-made questionnaire was utilized in public and private schools in Maasin City, Southern Leyte, Philippines. After administering the questionnaire to the respondents, central tendency measures were used for statistical data analysis. It was found that learners acquired knowledge, skill, and attitude after their CE. A few statements for each aspect highlighted the needed enhancements to improve CE as a learning modality for learners. Several recommendations for further research on CE were provided. Ultimately, this will lead to development a more contextualized and holistic learning strategy using CE.

1. Introduction

Today's schools and communities face more complicated problems. Learners struggle to overcome these challenges because they use most of their knowledge and energy during classroom hours.

Experiencing community life can provide learners with a platform for addressing community challenges. Pieces of literature and several studies revealed the essence of Community Engagement (CE) to learners. CE comes in the forms of service or experiential learning, or civic engagement of learners. CE prepares the path for contextualized quality education by profiling communities, identifying issues, and needs, and contributing to infrequently publicized programs or projects. There is no perfect community, and no community is devoid of needs or issues (McLeod, 2017). McLeod (2017) stated that every community includes learners who are normally full of potential, positive energy, and idealism, but whose resources are frequently underutilized since they spend the majority of their waking hours in school or on homework.

However, traditional schools are still present in the Philippines, especially high schools. These schools focus on acknowledging, valuing, and rewarding learners' reading, writing, and computing skills. Thus, they provide limited opportunities for learners to employ their inherent

intelligence. It is crucial for the success of learners if they can make connections between their studies and the actual world. Except for schools that bridge the gap between education and life, the educational system becomes dysfunctional. This reality necessitates a literacy review. It involves utilizing one's Knowledge, Skill, and Attitude (KSA), in addition to reading, writing, and computing. Literacy involves more than schooling as a means of addressing particular circumstances, needs, and opportunities. CE can thus be viewed as a necessary contributor, intervenor, and determinant of the educational process and advancement of learners in local schools, particularly in developing countries. Despite the revised K-12 curriculum for Basic Education in the Philippines, no study on the CE has yet been published. CE is a modality that is not fully utilized by all senior high schools in the country.

Moreover, learners are usually inventive, energetic, and ambitious, making them a vital resource in their communities. They are viewed as community assets, forces, and change agents and create the dynamic basis for community transformation. With high hopes of improving learning among learners through CE, this study was initiated to ascertain the effects of CE on learners using the KSA approach at the local level, which can bare relevant learning for other high schools in the country.

Statement of the problem

This paper aimed to determine the effects of CE on learners using the KSA approach. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1.1. What are the effects of CE on learners in terms of:

1.1.1. knowledge;

1.1.2. skill;

1.1.3. attitude?

1.2. Based on the findings of the study, what enhancements can be done to learners in terms of:

1.2.1. knowledge;

1.2.2. skill;

1.2.3. attitude?

2. Literature review

Community engagement

Preparing learners for the multifaceted life beyond the school walls is a momentous task (Preston, 2013). But it becomes more manageable when shared with educators, community members, and local groups or associations (Preston, 2013).

Community Engagement (CE) is operationally defined as service or experiential learning where an educator facilitates interaction and collaboration between learners and community members to identify community challenges while learners formulate and implement plans for their understanding and the community's well-being. CE can also be referred to as civic engagement.

Learners become explorers and co-creators rather than ordinary acquirers of Knowledge, Skill, and Attitude (KSA). Educators act as facilitators, ensuring that learners' explanations and creations manifest opportunities to apply the content and skills that are mandated by the curriculum. CE often employs inquiry methods. Learners create and ask questions, make

predictions, and utilize summaries to provide different learning structures and frameworks. CE draws out the potential of learners. Learners can cultivate their talents, interpersonal skills, sense of space, and love of nature by exploring their communities and organizing and presenting to others the knowledge acquired in the classroom (Melaville, Berg, & Blank, 2006).

There are various reasons why curriculum developers, policymakers, scholars, and educators emphasize the need for CE in schools (Preston, 2013). Educating the learners through CE lets them experience other cultures and situations, which supplements their experiences (Howard & Butcher, 2007). Indeed, the content, context, and approach taken to learning about CE make learners engaged citizens. As engaged citizens, they are socially active and aware of their role in the broader community (Howard & Butcher, 2007).

According to Bandy (2011), learners benefit from CE. It helps their learning, personal and social outcomes, and career development. In the learning outcomes, it contributes to the learners' knowledge positively (Bandy, 2011). The learners' ability to practice their learning in real-world settings is enhanced. It improves the learners' academic outcomes in demonstrating skills in problem analysis and solving, critical thinking, and cognitive development (Bandy, 2011). CE helps to hone the learners' ability to understand complexity and ambiguity. Bandy (2011) added that its intended individual outcomes result from better self-efficacy, spiritual growth, moral and interpersonal developments, personal identity, and boosting communication and leadership skills.

Melaville et al. (2006) stated that several national surveys in the United States agreed that involving learners in more practical learning experiences would significantly improve learner outcomes. But the study that focuses on CE is entitled *Learning for the Twenty-First Century: A Report and Mile Guide for Twenty-First-Century Skills* for learners and educators. It revealed that learners ages 13 to 19 agreed that more real-world learning greatly improved their learning and school (Melaville et al., 2006). The adults, including educators, emphasized that real-world learning conducted by schools, which included work-study, community service, and vocational courses, affected the learners' understanding (Melaville et al., 2006).

The Spring 2010 Internship Outtake survey by Pitzer College (2012) stated that CE enhances learners' skills in putting theory into practice, understanding ethical challenges, and recognizing the community's resources and needs. CE increases learners' confidence in their ability to contribute to meaningful change. Upon completing their engagement and internship, 83% of learners reported growth in their ability to apply theories to real-life community challenges and put social responsibility into action.

In addition to the same college findings, before the study mentioned earlier, it was found in 2019 that nearly 77% of learners greatly enhanced their ability to apply critical theory to address community needs because of CE. Almost 89% of learners enhanced their awareness of their perceptions, biases, and assumptions greatly. CE also had 84% of learners greatly enhance their capacity to recognize and value communities' assets and strengths. Also, 74% of learners greatly enhanced their capability to use ethical practices in community-based research due to CE. Lastly, 90% of learners improved their capacity to express empathy significantly.

Celio, Durlak, and Dymnicki (2011) administered descriptive research entitled *A meta-analysis of the impact of service-learning on learners* that involved 11,837 learners. The meta-analysis of CE's impact on learners yielded statistically significant effects in all five areas: attitudes toward self and school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic achievement. These findings bolster educators' views at different educational levels in several ways, who posit that CE can benefit learners (Celio et al., 2011). More of its benefits include

enhanced self-efficacy and self-esteem, more positive attitudes toward school and education, positive attitudes and behaviors in terms of community involvement, and improved social skills in leadership and empathy (Celio et al., 2011).

In 2011, Ngee (2011) initiated a study entitled *Youth-Led Initiative in Community Service-Learning Projects and Their Learning Experience*. This study was participated by developing countries in South-East Asia, China, and India. It was found that CE resulted in positive outcomes in civic engagement, competence skills, and the development of a sense of self among learners.

Carlisle, Gourd, Rajkhan, and Nitta (2017) conducted a survey entitled *Assessing CE's impact on learners: The CE impact scale*, to a sample of 195 graduate and undergraduate learners registered in CE courses. Carlisle et al. (2017) discovered that most learners strongly agreed that CE was beneficial to both their organization and the community. Most learners strongly agreed that CE was helpful to them, their university, and their community partners. Furthermore, most learners indicated that they opted to volunteer (49.2%), encourage others (55.8%), and participate in organizations and public affairs (48.3%). These findings showed that CE proved the potential of CE as a learning modality in the future. It also revealed that personal growth emerged from the CE experience since learners indicated that they understand themselves better after their participation and collaboration (41.6%).

Moreover, Bradley, Lizzul, Di Giorgio, Äikäs, Murolo, and Zinger (2015) administered research named *The Impact of Service-Learning on Academic Knowledge, Personal Growth, and Civic Engagement in Community Colleges Students*. This study was done at Queensborough Community College. Through the CE project, learners who participated acquired more understanding of academic content. They also expressed increased critical thinking skills, reflected in their personal growth and civic engagement. Importantly, learners earned high grades and assured retention in school.

In 2019, Manning-Ouelette and Hemer (2019) found that CE helps learners cultivate interpersonal skills, build leadership capacity, and develop social justice perspectives.

Despite these studies, some schools have still not pushed through commendable efforts to narrow the gap between living and learning through CE in the country. Most literature and studies are from abroad and are primarily focused on tertiary levels. CE needs to be acknowledged to foster a learning environment that extends far beyond the classroom walls (Melaville et al., 2006) for high school learners.

Learners can nurture their natural engagement to learn and solve their problems, developing this ability in the communities. Because of the intimate connection between schools and communities, the curriculum is modified, which removes the artificial separation of the classroom and the real world. CE is envisioned that all learners engage in learning, achieve the best of their ability, and become productive citizens and participants in the country. Preston (2013) believed that all schools have myriad resources amassed within their local communities irrespective of location, infrastructure, funding, or socio-economic status. Rich and relevant education features become possible when educator welcome communities to co-create supportive learning environments dedicated to the learners' holistic growth and success (Preston, 2013).

CE releases flexibility and creativity, as learners can fit into any academic area (Prentice & Garcia, 2000) within a basic education institution, so much more to open spaces such as their communities. It can be an enriching learning tool that enables them to recognize the interrelated aspects of learning and life experiences. Hence, determining the effects of CE on the KSA of high school learners in the local community is the impetus for this study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study design

Quantitative research methods emphasize objective measurements, and are concentrated on the collection of statistical data to provide specifics about a particular phenomenon (Babbie, 2010). Various approaches, including polls and questionnaires, are used to collect data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The researcher employed a descriptive survey research methodology to determine the effects of CE on learners KSA.

3.2. Locale of the study

The study was carried out in Maasin City, Southern Leyte, Philippines.

3.3. Respondents

The responders were grade 12 learners. They were enrolled in the HUMSS strand. They had completed and passed the prerequisite courses for Community Engagement, Solidarity, and Citizenship (CESC), namely Disciplines and Ideas in the Applied Social Sciences and Philippine Politics and Governance. CESC is a course that requires 12th-grade Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) learners to immerse in their communities. These learners have to collaborate with their partner communities, agencies, and/or organizations to identify issues and concerns.

3.4. Sampling technique

The researcher employed both stratified and systematic sampling techniques. Kenton (2017) described stratified sampling as a sampling technique that includes dividing a population into strata. According to Kenton (2017), strata are constructed on the basis of members' shared features or characteristics.

The population consisted of learners from the schools in Maasin City. Due to the diversity of schools in terms of interaction and collaboration with the community, it was necessary to categorize them according to their CE activities, projects, or programs' implementation. The stratification procedure began by identifying the high schools that offered the HUMSS strand since the school year 2018 - 2019. Six schools were recognized in 2020. Then, among these institutions, four met the community exposure and action-initiative requirements. Finally, the researcher determined which schools planned, proposed, and implemented programs or projects that address or ease the challenges of the communities. Moreover, only two schools were identified as the sample. This included Ibarra National High School (INHS) and The College of Maasin, Inc. (TCMI).

After the stratification phase was completed, respondents were selected using a systematic sampling method. A specified pattern was observed from the first random number to the remaining units, with three (3) intervals in identifying the sample for each school. There were 51 respondents from TCMI and 14 from INHS, for a total of 65.

3.5. Instrument

The researcher employed a self-made questionnaire to determine the effects of CE on learners, with the KSA approach as the assessment tool developed for this study.

Since the tool is self-made, it was examined by five experts for content and face validity. Thirty-six items (84%) had an I-CVI = 1.00, which according to Lynn's (1986) criteria were judged as having excellent content validity for five experts or fewer. Seven items (16%) had an I-CVI = 0.80, which had good content validity and was retained. However, the S-CVI/UA = 0.97 showed high content validity for the overall scale measuring CE's effects on the learner. Moreover, these

experts qualitatively evaluated that the tool's appearance, presentation, and relevance were ready for use.

The results of the validity tests were followed by a reliability analysis, which was carried out on the scale measuring the effects of CE on the learner to 30 respondents, with three subscales, i.e., *knowledge*, *skills*, and *attitude*; comprising of 12 items for *knowledge*, 15 for *skills*, and 16 for *attitude*. Cronbach's alpha showed that both questionnaires on the subscales of *skills* and *attitude* had reached acceptable reliability of $\alpha = 0.87$. Most items in the said subscales appeared to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted. However, the subscales on *knowledge* initially produced an alpha value of $\alpha = 0.68$, which is considered questionable based on George and Mallery (2003). The *Item-Total Correlation* also revealed that refinement and revision of items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 11 were advised to increase the alpha if administered to a new set of respondents but with the same number as the previous ones. The three subscales' alpha value then resulted in $\alpha = 0.90$, after a second pilot testing was conducted. Subsequently, the instrument was bound for use.

The questionnaire comprises the respondent's profile and a Likert scale assessment tool on CE's effects on learners. The researcher used the Likert scale to determine CE's effects on the learners where 1 means strongly disagree; 2 - disagree; 3 - agree; 4 - strongly agree.

3.6. Data gathering procedure

A letter was submitted to the Department of Education - Maasin City Division office. After being authorized by the superintendent to pursue the conduct of the study, a schedule of visitation was sent to school principals to notify them about the study. After a series of visitations and evaluations in the stratification process, the surveys were then distributed to INHS and CM respondents. The respondents were oriented on the study's objectives. They had given their consent. They had up to fifteen (15) minutes to complete the tool. The survey responses were processed with strict confidentiality and utilized exclusively for the study.

3.7. Statistical treatment

Using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the effects of CE on learners' KSA were calculated using central tendency measures.

The *mode* of a data collection is the value of x that occurs most frequently (Almeida, Faria, & Queirós, 2017). In the context of the study, the effects of CE on learners' KSA were analyzed based on the Likert scale responses with the highest frequency of occurrence. The *mean*, on the other hand, was used to identify which statements in each category need enhancements. The three statements with the lowest average served as the foundation for interventions.

In addition, descriptive and inferential statistics are also used. Descriptive statistics are utilized to examine obtained data to summarize and describe it (Coakes, 2013). Almeida et al. (2017) state that inferential statistics use the sample data's information to validate the researcher's knowledge of the sampled population.

4. Result and discussion

In this paper's realization, the self-made questionnaire was deployed to 26 (40%) male and 39 (60%) female respondents from public and private schools. This study determined the effects of Community Engagement (CE) on learners.

Table 1

Effects of CE on learners in terms of knowledge

Statement	MODE
I have understood the meaning of community engagement	4
I have learned the meaning and purpose of volunteerism	4
I am able to translate my learnings properly to the community	3
I am able to acquire better grades in school	3
I am able to implement my learnings through undertaking community action initiatives	3
I am able to promote awareness of human rights among the community of learners	3
I am able to recognize community strengths in addressing issues or challenges	3
I am able to describe the community and its dynamics	3
I am able to identify various strategies for improved community life	3
I am able to relate the significance of community engagement to my learning	3
I am able to understand the concepts of social equity and gender equality in community building	3
I have acquired a deeper understanding of the necessary knowledge to be shared with the community people	3

As can be observed in the table, most of the respondents have agreed that CE affects their knowledge, with an overall mode of 3, which also means *Agree*.

Statements from the Knowledge aspect, from three to twelve, resulted in a mode of 3. The results indicated that CE plays an essential role in the acquisition of knowledge among learners. Billig, Root, and Jesse (2005) revealed that CE helps learners to gain understanding. They showed increased knowledge of the academic content and critical thinking skills, and learners receive high grades (Bradley et al., 2015) after CE. Because they applied their learnings from school to their CE activities or projects, or programs, Bradley et al. (2015) claimed that it is possible that this practical experience enhanced the learners' critical thinking.

According to Leonardo (2004), quality education centers on cultivating learners' ability to think critically by questioning or deconstructing, or reconstructing knowledge actively. Hence, CE is acknowledged as a significant contributor of knowledge to learners.

On the other hand, as shown in the graph, statements one and two in this aspect, the respondents strongly agreed that they had understood CE's meaning and learned the meaning and purpose of volunteerism because of their CE experience.

Table 2

Effects of CE on learners in terms of skill

Statement	MODE
I am able to enhance my communication skills	3
I am able to help others grow and mature in community engagement	3
I am able to acquire more skills in community organization	3
I am able to build a partnership in the community, identify opportunities for community development	3
I am able to increase my social skills and interpersonal relationships	3
I am able to solve community-related concerns	4
I am able to build teamwork among beneficiaries and other service providers	4
I am able to use my interpersonal skills to reach out and help other	3
I am able to employ appropriate approaches, thus ensuring greater community participation	3
I have developed a community action plan shared with the beneficiaries	3
I have developed quick decision-making and we judgment in product and program implementation	4
I have acquired good networking or linking skills	3
I have practiced leadership skills using critical thinking, etc.	3
I have learned new skills different from my field of specialization or expertise	3
I have known how to help suggest, and actualize better community engagement activities or projects	3

Table 2, with an overall mode of 3, which also means *Agree*, shows that most respondents have agreed that the effects on the learners' skill dimension were experienced after CE.

From the Skill aspect, statements from two, three, four, six, and nine to fifteen resulted in a mode of 3. The study results showed the influence of CE on learners' academic lives in terms of learning to use or acquiring necessary skills. Ngee (2011) proved that learners need CE for the development of competence skills. In terms of communication, leadership, and problem-solving skills, learners have improved (Billig et al., 2005) because of CE. In putting theory into practice (Pitzer College, 2012), they can utilize and enhance their skills. Celio et al. (2011) and Carlisle et al. (2017) noted that CE improves learners' social skills and their skills to volunteer, participate, and encourage. When these happen, their critical thinking skills are increased (Bradley et al., 2015). Eventually, these skills may persist and improve until adulthood.

Furthermore, as shown in the graph, statements one, five, seven, and eight in this aspect, the respondents strongly agreed that CE enhanced their communication skills; increased their social skills and interpersonal relationships; enabled them to build teamwork among beneficiaries and other service providers; and enabled them to use their interpersonal skills to reach out and help others.

Table 3

Effects of CE on learners in terms of attitude

Statement	MODE
I have acquired confidence in my ability to contribute to a meaningful change	4
I have understood myself better and become more sensitive	3
I have acknowledged the interrelationship of self and community in undertaking community action	3
I have become proactive in promoting camaraderie by helping others	3
I have connected myself to community norms and values	4
I have developed a greater 'can-do' attitude	3
I have developed a positive attitude toward helping others	4
I have developed an increased responsibility for caring and sharing community resources	4
I have realized clear goals and life's purpose leading to the enhancement of my spirituality	3
I have appreciated better chances to work with other volunteers toward a common goal	3
I am able to internalize more spirit of volunteerism	3
I have gained more insights and lifelong learning through giving services to others, particularly the needy	3
I have developed a sense of responsibility to contribute to community welfare.	3
I have become more engaged in school	3
I have gained confidence in managing my own life	3
I have become more aware of empowerment and collaboration or cooperation with community members	3

Table 3 indicates that most of the respondents have agreed that the effects on learners' skills dimension were experienced after CE, with an overall mode of 3, which also means *Agree*.

From one to five, statements from the Attitude aspect, eight to ten, and twelve to sixteen resulted in a mode of 3. The results implied that attitude could be gained or enhanced through CE. Nanda and Scott (2011) stated that learners' CE could engender a sense of civic responsibility to cultivate learners' attitudes. Learners' participation in CE affected their attitudes toward the importance of socio-political involvement and personal responsibility for improving people's well-being and communities in need (Fenzel & Peyrot, 2005). Billig et al. (2005) and Celio et al. (2011) expressed those learners have demonstrated improved self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-concept, internalized moral standards, and positive attitudes and behaviors toward school and education.

Moreover, as shown in the graph, statements six, seven, and eleven in this aspect, the respondents strongly agreed that CE developed their greater 'can-do' attitude, developed their positive attitude towards helping others, and made them internalize more the spirit of volunteerism.

Table 4

Mean of each statement in the Knowledge aspect

Statement	MEAN
I have understood the meaning of community engagement	3.74
I have learned the meaning and purpose of volunteerism	3.60
I am able to translate my learnings properly to the community	3.25
I am able to acquire better grades in school	3.15
I am able to implement my learnings through undertaking community action initiatives	3.26
I am able to promote awareness of human rights among the community of learners	3.31
I am able to recognize community strengths in addressing issues or challenges	3.34
I am able to describe the community and its dynamics	3.11
I am able to identify various strategies for improved community life	3.35
I am able to relate the significance of community engagement to my learning	3.49
I am able to understand the concepts of social equity and gender equality in community building	3.42
I have acquired a deeper understanding of the necessary knowledge to be shared with the community people	3.43

The table above showed a relevant response since learners generally agreed that CE affects their knowledge.

Despite that fact, it is considered to find out which needs to be enhanced as some statements received the least response scores. These were: “I am able to describe the community and its dynamics,” with 3.11 as the mean; “I am able to acquire better grades in school,” with a mean of 3.15; and the statement that resulted in a mean of 3.25, which stated, “I am able to translate my learnings properly to the community.”

Hence, it implied the need to describe the community and its dynamics better, acquire fair but reasonable grades in school, and translate learners’ learnings to the community.

Table 5

Mean of each statement in the Skill aspect

Statement	MEAN
I am able to enhance my communication skills	3.60
I am able to help others grow and mature in community engagement	3.40
I am able to acquire more skills in community organization	3.46
I am able to build a partnership in the community, identify opportunities for community development	3.38
I am able to increase my social skills and interpersonal relationships	3.48
I am able to solve community-related concerns	3.12

Statement	MEAN
I am able to build teamwork among beneficiaries and other service providers	3.40
I am able to use my interpersonal skills to reach out and help others	3.52
I am able to employ appropriate approaches, thus ensuring greater community participation	3.20
I have developed a community action plan shared with the beneficiaries	3.17
I have developed quick decision-making and judgment in product and program implementation	3.03
I have acquired good networking or linking skills	2.91
I have practiced leadership skills using critical thinking, etc.	3.35
I have learned new skills different from my field of specialization or expertise	3.25
I have known how to help suggest, actualize better community engagement activities or projects	3.29

It is evident, as shown in the table, that CE affects the skill of the learners.

However, it is necessary to determine which needs to be enhanced as some statements received the least response scores. These were: “I have acquired good networking or linking skills,” resulted in a mean of 2.91; “I have developed quick decision-making and we judgment in product and program implementation,” with 3.03 as mean; and a mean of 3.12 for the statement, “I am able to solve community-related concerns.”

The implications for enhancements in these areas expressed a need to focus on acquiring better networking or linking skills, a quicker sense of judgment and decision-making in product and program implementation, and more initiatives in resolving community-based issues or concerns.

Table 6

Mean of each statement in the Attitude aspect

Statement	MEAN
I have acquired confidence in my ability to contribute to a meaningful change	3.38
I have understood myself better and become more sensitive	3.38
I have acknowledged the interrelationship of self and community in undertaking community action	3.25
I have become proactive in promoting camaraderie by helping others	3.29
I have connected myself to community norms and values	3.25
I have developed a greater ‘can-do’ attitude	3.40
I have developed a positive attitude toward helping others	3.55
I have developed an increased responsibility for caring for and sharing community resources	3.32
I have realized clear goals and life’s purpose leading to the enhancement of my spirituality	3.37

Statement	MEAN
I have appreciated better chances to work with other volunteers toward a common goal	3.40
I am able to internalize more spirit of volunteerism	3.32
I have gained more insights and lifelong learning through giving services to others, particularly the needy	3.35
I have developed a sense of responsibility to contribute to community welfare	3.35
I have become more engaged in school	3.25
I have gained confidence in managing my own life	3.38
I have become more aware of empowerment and collaboration or cooperation with community members	3.37

As projected in the table, learners agreed that CE had affected their attitude. But some areas need to be improved in this aspect. The statements that received the most negligible response were: “I have acknowledged the interrelationship of self and community in undertaking community action,” with 3.25 as the mean; “I have connected myself to community norms and values,” with a mean of 3.25; and, the statement that resulted in a mean of 3.25 which stated, “I have become more engaged in school.”

Consequently, enhancing learners’ ways to acknowledge themselves and community interrelationships in undertaking community action, connecting themselves to community norms and values, and becoming more engaged in school are essential points that need attention and action.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Effects of Community Engagement (CE) on the learners

This study aimed to determine CE’s effects on the learners using the Knowledge, Skill and Attitude (KSA) approach. The primary research question is: What are the effects of CE on the respondents regarding knowledge, skill, and attitude?

5.1.1. Knowledge

According to the data, respondents agreed that CE affected their knowledge. The findings indicate that information is an important aspect that should be prioritized in the learning process. Challenges of contemporary community life; community action and community-action Initiatives; core values; participatory and community development; and ideas and methods of the social sciences and applied social sciences are required topics for the Community Engagement, Solidarity, and Citizenship (CESC) course. Due to the fact that the majority of their knowledge and energy is expended in the classroom, it was anticipated that students would have trouble dealing with complicated challenges such as establishing alliances and links with the local community on their own. Thus, the respondents concur that knowledge, as a component of education, should be founded on the practical learnings they can obtain in order to comprehend oneself and be socially aware of the many parts of their particular communities.

5.1.2. Skill

This study revealed that learners concurred that CE affected their skills. In this study, the effects of CE on respondents’ skills were investigated. It was discovered that learners can acquire skills through exposure to and participation in community affairs. This experience demonstrated the importance of educators thoroughly analyzing the necessary abilities that should be addressed

in instruction and delivery. It was believed that connecting learning to the real world was crucial to the success of learners. Notably, the CESC course requires students to apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences; comprehend, investigate, and analyze the challenges of contemporary community life; contribute to the common good of the community; and integrate applied social sciences lessons into community-action initiatives.

5.1.3. Attitude

This study revealed that learners agreed that CE affected their skills. In this study, the effects of CE on respondents' skills were investigated. It was discovered that learners can acquire skills through exposure to and participation in community affairs. This experience demonstrated the importance of educators thoroughly analyzing the necessary abilities that should be addressed in instruction and delivery. It was believed that connecting learning to the real world was crucial to the success of learners. Notably, the CESC course requires students to apply the concepts and methods of the social sciences; comprehend, investigate, and analyze the challenges of contemporary community life; contribute to the common good of the community; and integrate applied social sciences lessons into community-action initiatives.

5.2. Enhancements that can be done based on the findings, in terms of

5.2.1. Knowledge

It was determined that students must define the community and its dynamics in greater detail, get not simply higher but more acceptable marks in school, and apply their knowledge to the community in an appropriate manner. It may be stated that, despite the fact that CE had a substantial impact on the students, there is still room for improvement in their ability to explain the community and its dynamics. The respondent's grades improved, but they did not get more reasonable. Lastly, they must successfully and sufficiently communicate their knowledge to the community.

5.2.2. Skill

According to the findings of this study, students need to improve their networking and linking abilities, build speedier and more rational decision-making and "we" judgment in product and program implementation, and address community-related issues and concerns. The findings indicated that, for their activities or projects, students still needed to develop strong networking and linking skills. In product and program execution, they had to instill a greater sense of "we" and promote quicker decision-making. Respondents were required to effectively and efficiently address community issues.

5.2.3. Attitude

It was shown that students must focus more on themselves and the community when engaging in community service, connect themselves to community norms and values, and become more interested in school. Although the respondents acknowledged that CE had improved their attitudes, they still needed to recognize their interdependence with the community when engaging in community service. They required a stronger connection to communal norms and values. Consequently, they had to be the most involved in school.

Based from the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher finds these recommendations essential:

1. Educators should facilitate community exposures and require their learners to initiate programs, projects, or activities for the communities, particularly those in Maasin City, Southern Leyte, in light of the learners' agreement that CE, through this study, affected their KSA.

2. The exposure and requirement for the learners must ensure KSA acquisition and/or enhancement. Initiatives must be carefully designed, assessed, and tested before being institutionalized as instruction.

3. To improve learners' understanding of the community and its dynamics, their academic performance, and their ability to transmit their knowledge to the community, a calendar of activities must be designed to increase instruction and delivery in measuring their knowledge. Therefore, they must implement their ideas in real-world circumstances.

4. A forum can be held regularly for learners to share their observations, comments, and thoughts, as well as give teachers feedback and recommendations. Educators are thereby able to mediate the learning exchange and aid learners in establishing meaningful, viable, and executable action initiatives in which schools and communities can collaborate to bridge the gap between learning and living. Therefore, once the action initiative has been executed and completed, educators can promote the reporting of outcomes and the exchange of experiences.

5. Learners must hone their networking or linking abilities, foster swift yet substantial decision-making and a collective judgment in the project or program's implementation, and address community-related concerns or obstacles. Educators can accomplish this by requiring learners to conduct a community visitation individually, in pairs, or as a group within a week or weeks to observe lives and situations beginning in their own communities and extending to that of their neighbors. They should conduct follow-ups and make adjustments as necessary to confirm the community-sourced information. Each student, pair, or group should be able to generate ideas and evaluate the outcomes. They should evaluate which of the problems must be addressed and which neighborhood requires support or action.

6. Both knowledge-based and skill-based projects or programs can be used to assess and cultivate learners' attitudes toward themselves, their peers, instructors, and the community. This can be a difficulty for educators, who must manage the conditions before supporting their learners with attitude improvement. Understanding themselves and recognizing their failures or mistakes is becoming a huge difficulty for learners of Generation Z, who are multifaceted and diverse.

7. In addition, based on the study's stratification process to select eligible schools, just two of six public and private schools engaged their learners in community service. This might be construed to mean that schools lack community partnerships and links. Educators, parents, and community leaders and members shall create partnerships and schools shall establish linkages with local government units, civil society, non-governmental, and people's organizations, in order to enhance the teaching-learning processes and outcomes.

8. Lastly, school administrators or principals must assign CESC courses to educators who have attended relevant seminars, conferences, and trainings on CE. They may invite program directors of community extension and development from other colleges or universities. They can include a budget for the project to enhance the learning experience of educators and prepare them for instruction and delivery. They can organize a week- or month-long seminar or workshop for CESC educators. This can ensure that CE teaching is delivered and evaluated effectively, efficiently, and appropriately.

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