Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website (ReCOP – ComEx)

A Capstone Project

Presented to the faculty of

Computer Studies Department

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project Context**

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

This quotation coined by Winston Churchill, the former prime minister of Great Britain, clearly reflects the spirit of sharing and giving back one’s blessings to those people who are in need. Taking an inspiration from this, it can be easily said that all members of the community shall take their respective roles for the betterment of the society.

Moreover, these ideas became the inspiration and mechanism for successful individuals, institutions and businesses to create activities from where they can share their resources or services to others who lacked it. These activities were called outreach activities.

Through the years, San Sebastian College Recoletos – de Cavite (SSCRdC) has been continually promoting its philosophy, *‘Caritas et Scientia,’* which means charity and knowledge. In connection to this, the institution has been doing various outreach activities in benefit of its nearby communities and barangays.

The growing demand and need in creating, implementing and evaluating outreach activities has been the reason why SSCRdC established a department that will focus solely on these concerns – the Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program (ReCOP) Office.

However, it is undeniable that the ReCOP Office had become not only the institution’s center for outreach activities but also the school’s connecting body to various companies, communities, organizations and individuals who wished to take part or to propose activities. These parties who are lending a hand to the institution are called partners and linkages.

It must also be taken into account that college organizations and clubs are required to do at least two outreach activities per academic year in order for them to satisfy the mandates under Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order (CMO) No.46 Series of 2012 also known as “Policy-Standard to Enhance Quality Assurance (QA) In Philippine Higher Education Through an Outcomes-based and Typology-Based QA.”

According to CMO 46 S. 2012, Section 23.2, colleges must have outreach programs involving students in social-development oriented experiences that allow them to contextualize their knowledge within actual social and human experiences. This clearly states what role students plays in increasing their respective school’s quality assurance.

As of today, the process of proposal of outreach activities in the ReCOP Office were still done through papers. The requestor must write a letter and prepare documentary requirements which always takes days to weeks of processing inside the school’s premises. Not to mention that sometimes, the requestor’s documents get lost in the process. This halt and slows down the supposedly beneficial effects of the outreach activities.

Another problem that was encountered by outreach requestors, especially by college organizations, is the lack of visibility on prospect beneficiaries. Oftentimes, those communities near the school are the ones who are receiving the outreach proceeds although they do not necessarily need it.

This capstone project proposal entitled, “Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website” (ReCOP – ComEx) aims to address the issue on current procedures done in conducting outreach activities as well as extending the schools connection outside.

**1.2 Research Locale**

The Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program Office is the Institution’s center for all community outreach related activities. The office was established in response to the demand of the Trilogy of Functions of every academic institution (Instruction, Research and Extension) and the Recollect Philosophy, which is “*Caritas et Scientia*”.

In 2003 Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program (RC-COP) being the office’s first name was established for the purpose of planning, implementing and evaluating the community outreach activities of the school within its walls and with its partner communities. The name RC-COP was replaced with Recoletos Community Outreach Program (Re-COP) Office of SSC-R de Cavite in 2012. The Re-COP office is under the Vice President for Religious Affairs and is supervised by the Re-COP Director.

The SSC-R de Cavite community likewise conducted different outreach activities in some other neighboring communities like school, foundations and orphanages to serve better those who are in need. The SSC-R de Cavite is likewise known for its Recoletos Educational Assistance for Deserving Students (READS), which helps deserving students to avail college education for free.

Since 2003, SSC-R de Cavite community has been rendering humanitarian projects and activities in terms of Christian formation, Education, socio-political concerns, medical and dental services and other activities that benefited the people in the community.

Until the present, the institution through its Outreach Office continuously strives to deliver its extension and outreach services to the neighboring communities guided by the Institution’s vision, mission, values and goals.

**1.3 Statement of the Problem**

This project proponents aim to address the following issues that are encountered in the current procedures of ReCOP Office:

1. The manual process of outreach activity requisition and approval from which sometimes the requests were not being tracked and was lost;
2. The lack of visibility on the list of bonafide partners, communities, beneficiaries, outreach events and schedules;
3. The poor advertisement of outreach programs which results to low participation rate;
4. The non-unified format for the outreach programs and reports which are vital in assessing the viability of the event;
5. The absence of notifying mechanisms for event directors and participants about event cancellations or rescheduling; and
6. The limited number of partners and linkages as well as event sponsors and participants.

**1.4 Scope and Limitation**

This capstone project proposal entitled, “Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website” (ReCOP – ComEx) focuses around the creation of a mobile-responsive web application that will centralize the transactions between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages

Specifically, this study will only revolve and center on the ReCOP Office. In addition, the proponents only investigated on the processes dealing with outreach activities and partners and linkages and disregarded any other activities occurring in the said department.

The website will also encourage outside companies and communities to participate and be part of SSCRdC’s partners and linkages. In addition, geographical distance will be disregarded in selecting them.

The deployment of this project will possibly resolve the issues that the ReCOP Office is currently facing with regards to its outreach programs and will further extend its connection outside.

Lastly, the study was estimated to be completed at around six months of continuous analysis and development.

**1.5 Objectives**

***General Objective***

This study aims to create a mobile-responsive web application that will centralize the transactions between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages

***Specific Objectives***

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To automate list of bonafide and available partner communities and companies, beneficiaries and outreach events as well as participants affiliated to SSCRdC;
2. To create a website wherein users can view, join and even endorse a prospect partner or activity;
3. To provide a medium for beneficiaries to submit their help needed and concerns and to have the partners and linkages view these requests for them to be encouraged to propose an outreach activity;
4. To have a website from which users can create their profile which will enable them to stay updated about their donations, requisitions and participations to all the outreach programs;
5. To advertise in-house outreach activities of school outside through its visibility on the website;
6. To provide a system for the almost instantaneous endorsement and tracking of outreach activities; and
7. To extend the connection of the institution by giving a recruit or referral function for all users.

**1.6 Importance of the Study**

The completion of the project will impact and benefit the ReCOP Office in a way that it will help in increasing the success rates of its outreach activities as well extend its conglomerates outside.

Moreover, this study will also make the SSCRdC community more approachable and reachable to members and non-members who wished to help and participate in its endeavors

Overall, the study will provide better transactions between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages.

**1.7 Review of Related Literature and Studies**

**Technical Background**

For the fulfillment of this capstone project proposal, several development tools and frameworks were utilized:

**JavaScript**

JavaScript is a programming language commonly used in web development (“JavaScript Definition”, 2014). This is client-side scripting language which the source code is processed by the client’s web browser rather than the web server. Its code can be inserted anywhere within the HTML of a webpage and can be reference in a separate .JS file.

**Bulma**

Bulma is an open source Flexbox based CSS framework. It is a simple, elegant, and modern CSS framework that a lot of developers prefer over Bootstrap (Borgen, 2018). This is used as designing tool for the entire user interface of the website and it is linked in an HTML document file.

**Flask**

Flask is a small and powerful web framework for Python. Easy to learn and simple to use, enabling you to build your web app in a short amount of time according to [Polepeddi](https://tutsplus.com/authors/lalith-polepeddi) (2013). Flask allows you to build web application by providing tools, libraries and technologies (“Introduction to Flask,” n.d.).

**Jinja 2**

Jinja2 is a modern-day templating language for Python developers. Used to create an HTML, XML or other markup format and return to the user via an HTPP request (“Jinja2 Explained in 5 Minutes! – codeburst,” 2018). Jinja templates are files with .html which is placed in the /templates directory in flask. This was used by the team in frontend which embedded in a HTML file to call a python function.

**Python**

According to Python.org (n.d), python is an object-oriented and high-level programming language that is easy to learn syntax and reduces the cost of program maintenance. It supports modules and packages which encourages program modularity and code reuse. The team used this as their programming language for their web based and mobile responsive application.

**SQLAlchemy**

As stated by Krebs (2017), SQLAlchemy is a library that facilitates the communication between Python programs and databases. He says that it translates Python classes to tables on relational databases and automatically converts function calls to SQL statements by using an [Object Relational Mapper (ORM)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object-relational_mapping) tool.

**Review of Related Literature**

**Introduction**

The Community Extension Service Unit aims to organize and implement opportunities for the Associates and students through community outreach activities to demonstrates their commitment in their respective professional fields to communities and organizations. With students and events increasing, the difficulty in managing and organizing events also increased, the used of traditional system such as spreadsheets and papers do exist but through the use of modern software technologies such as web-based and application software available, the liability of traditional system can overcome.

This review will focus on the management of event activities particularly in the Community Extension Program Services including the requesting and approval of forms in particular programs and activities, through the use of software technologies available.

**Local**

One of the core functions of the academic institutions is to effect change by empowering the people in the community by way of extension programs and services. This research study determined the impact of community extension programs of the Ifugao State University (IFSU) on the residents of the 6 adopted barangays in the province of Ifugao, Philippines.

According to Gonzales (2009), an integrated extension approach is needed to address community issues effectively. Dilao (nd a) in her study on the impact of community extension program on the residents of Barangay Catadman-Manabay averred that issues in the community will not be solely addressed by the local government officials nor by the residents, but these need a knowledge based sector and the academe for it to come up with scientific diagnosis with the regard to the occurrences of problems in the community. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) by virtue of Republic Act 7722, mandates higher education institutions to respond to the call for societal transformation. Extensions services respond the needs of the communities and the goal of universities and colleges IFSU. This evaluation type of research intends to gain an understanding of the successes and challenges that the extension implementers of IFSU face so as to guide future activities in a positive way. A total of 111 recipients of IFSU’s extension programs and services were utilized as respondents. Results showed that IFSU’s extension programs have contributed to the communities especially in enhancing the knowledge and skills of the residents, as well as, in promoting health and wellness among the residents, and in preventing the youth and the mothers not to be indulged in vices. While respondents believed that they have gained and learned many skills through the extension programs and projects, almost all of the respondents perceived the necessity of further improving and enhancing the community extension programs of IFSU.

An integrated extension project package should be developed and carried out based on the assessed community needs in order to have greater impact.

Surigao del Sur State University, a government academic institution stressed the commitment and involvement of higher education regarding the extension services and programs in the university.

Extension programs and services as an enhancement of curricular program of each campus and based on the approved Extension Manual Board of Trustees Resolution No. 185 series of 2002 and Extension and Services per Board Resolution No. 34 series of 2004 which aims to improve the quality and addressed the issues of community.

The income augmentation of target communities and implementation of extension programs in the regional, national and international level are the objectives of SDSSU-MTDP (2010).

According to Alcher (2007), outstanding extension projects are recognized through measures such as importance, innovation, capacity of replication, sustainability, focus, scope, relevance and results. Furthermore, the extension programs/projects conducted by the faculty strengthen through policy formulation and literacy has convertible exchange values as form of capital and as catalyst for social transformation and literacy development.

The results of the study are of great bearing to the beneficiaries as well as its community of the Province of Surigao del Sur in general which can serve as basis for policy formulation and enhancement of the extension programs and services of SDSSU.

**Review of Related Studies**

**Foreign**

Based on the website of Outreach Systems - Neoserra CRM Software (2014), Neoserra is the latest customer relationship management (CRM) system offered by OutreachSystems. This is designed specifically for non-profit economic development programs. It also stated under the data access that it includes comprehensive data entry modules which each specific aspect of program’s activities like counseling sessions, training events, capital infusion, etc.

According to ProcessDonation (2018) website, it was originally started of payments technology devoted to helping non-profits and charitable organizations in their communities and develop a solution to help fundraisers beyond their cities. This website has features such as branding, member and donor management, peer to peer fundraising, events and registration and mobile fundraising. Branding of non-profit fundraising helps public gain awareness of non-profit’s mission and confidence in organization. This also explain about the “Donate” button when clicked, it leads directly to fundraising page and a confirmation sent when donation has successfully received by the donor. It may send automated confirmation emails with ticket, event and transaction details. In terms of multi-device support, it provides intuitive experience for users on mobiles, tablets, laptops and desktops.

This research study investigated the community impacts of Partnering Landscape and Community Enhancement (PLaCE) program of Iowa State University’s College of Design (Erickson, 2010). It involves interviews and includes physical improvements to the community, increased project legitimacy, expanded community capacity and stimulation of local dialogue. The focus of the program through student academic projects is to address community development needs and to investigate community impacts of the university involving communities through PLaCE program. This research study had concluded that by talking and listening to the voices of community partners that would encourage them to focused on positive changes between the residents in the community and less focused on the physical improvements.

**Local**

According to Rubio et al., (2016), community extension program is an activity where an individual can experience a different way of learning and may cultivate personality of an individual such as leadership skills, public speaking, self-confidence, etc. This study focused on the assessment of the community extension program of the College of Business Administration (CBA). Specifically, determined the benefits of participating community extensions of the programs of the department, identified problems encountered by the students, benefits and problems encountered by the department grouped according to profile variable. The Community Extension Program of the Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas still continues to its mission to help the needy and being part of the mission to make a change in their lives as a volunteer. They added that the CBA through Community Extension Office and with the efforts of the students, administration and students, conducts different kinds of activities such as community-based bookkeeping tutorial, coastal and environmental clean-up and pamumuhunang pangkabuhayang / micro financing to elevate the economic status of the beneficiaries. The results of their study identified that the main problem encountered by students of joining community extension program were funds. Spirit of volunteerism as the personality of the CBA students where enhanced during the participation.

The Center for Social Concern and Action (COSCA) is the social development arm of De La Salle University (De La Salle University, 2012). COSCA’s work are all essentially revolves around formation, instruction and social engagement. Formation means of ensuring all the processes, programs and activities of the Lasallian Guiding Principles-Lasallian Social Development. Instruction means sharing knowledge about Social Teachings of the Church. Center creates and develops opportunities and partnerships where the community can be part of work for social change. COSCA has four components of implementing community engage projects. The Lasallian Accessible, Relevant and Alternative Learning (L-ARAL), Lasallian Health Education, Accessible Resources and Training Services (L-HEARTS), Lasallian Social Enterprise and Economic Development (LSEED) and Lasallian Environmental Sustainability and Governance (L-EnviSage).

Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) Cavite office of the Community Outreach and Service Learning (COSeL) sustains responsibility, social consciousness and promotes collaborative efforts of LPU community (LPU Cavite Campus, 2014). Through community-based activities, it brings out core values such as Love of God, Professional Integrity, Unity, Nationalism, Justice, Perseverance and Leadership). COSeL also conduct programs such as livelihood seminars, nutrition programs, computer/technology trainings, blood-letting activities, Alternative Learning System (ALS), Christmas outreach, donation drive and tree-growing activities.

**Synthesis**

**Related Literature**

The literature and studies included in this chapter helps us in familiarizing the concept and understanding that are relevant similar to the present study including:

The research study of the Ifugao State University (IFSU) that determined the impact of community extension programs on the residents in the province of Ifugao, Philippines.

The study of SDSSU that assessed the effectiveness of extension programs and services of by determining the relevance, planning, implementation, resources, monitoring and evaluation.

**Related Studies**

**Foreign**

Outreach Sytems – Neoserra CRM Software (2014), the website shows the idea, design and the information must have in an outreach system. This design of the system was appropriate for a non-profit economic development program. It shows the overview of some modules that might include or must have in a community outreach system.

ProcessDonation (2018), this website features most of the process in terms of events and registration process, branding, managing members and donors, peer-to-peer and mobile fundraising. Present study will adapt the functions discussed in the previous existing website. Especially for automated notifications and confirmations for joining, donate and transactions and the design that supports mobile-responsive.

Erickson (2010), study focused on the impact of Partnering Landscape and Community Enhancement (PLaCE) program in terms of physical improvements of the communities and impact of the university involving communities. For the present study, this may a guide for conducting community outreach program and for community partners that would help to focus on the positive changes of the residents in the community.

**Local**

Rubio et al., (2016), research determined how students of College of Business Administration (CBA) of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas benefit of joining and participating community extension program in terms of personality, social awareness, unity and recognition and appreciation. The research also shows the possible problems that may affect joining community extension program in terms of location, logistics and funds. In the present study, Rubio et al., study was considered as same benefits for students who will participate and join community extension program. While the problems discussed in the previous study will serve as information and guidelines in conducting community outreach program in the present study.

De La Salle University (2012), shows how does the Center for Social Concern and Action (COSCA) of De La Salle University promotes leadership, responsible citizenship and social formation values in terms of community projects. Where the Lasallian Sustainable Development (LSD) implements Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in communities such as Barangay in District V- Manila (Urban) and Coastal Community of Lian, Batangas (Rural). The said website contributes to the present study in terms of qualities and programs that will help the residents of the community to improve their lives.

LPU Cavite Campus (2014), through community-based activities, the Community Outreach and Service Learning (COSeL) promotes core values and responsibilities as they conduct community programs such as livelihood and nutrition programs, seminars, outreach, and environmental activities such as tree planting. Those community programs discussed in the existing website will serve as additional information especially for the present study which is the Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website” (ReCOP – ComEx). Those programs will be suggestion in events in the website as part of programs conducting by the RECOP office of the school.