

## Community Extension Profiling of Student-Volunteers of the University

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**ABSTRACT:** Serving the community through volunteerism demonstrates a learning experience that helps students acquire knowledge that improves their academic performance, develop their critical thinking abilities, develop their leadership potential, and increase their self-confidence. With relevant provisions of Republic Act No. 7722, and the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 48 Series of 1996, higher education institutions are required to have a reliable community extension program. In responding to this provision, the University opened a community extension office where student, faculty, and staff members could pool their knowledge and resources and take part in the social engagement program. Different flagship programs were crafted for the students to be exposed in the community related on their chosen field. This study is a descriptive, quantitative research design that was conducted at the University of Cebu – Lapu Lapu and Mandaue Campus. A total of seven hundred eighty-eight (788) students responded to this undertaking comprising different departments in the university from grade school to college. The survey was done through google forms with three parts; first is to identify the profile of the respondents, second is to identify the preferred community extension activities, and the third is to know the reasons for volunteering in the community extension activities. The main thrust of this study is to determine the profile of volunteers, know the different programs and activities that students want to be involved in, and determine the reasons for participating in the program. Also, to propose a recommendation based on the result of the study.

**Keywords:** *Community extension, profiling, volunteerism, community services, Cebu, Philippines*

### I. Introduction

Serving the community through volunteerism demonstrates a learning experience that helps students acquire knowledge that improves their academic performance, develop their critical thinking abilities, develop their leadership potential, and increase their self-confidence. With the Higher education's main aim is to prepare students to be responsible and compassionate citizens in which volunteering is one of the most effective transformative practices because of its well-established benefits for student growth. According to Wearing & McGehee (2013), international volunteerism has arisen in the context of more general concern to drive progress toward sustainable development attempts, with individuals seeking to contribute and serve communities in need through volunteering for humanitarian and environmental projects.

Volunteerism is a phenomenon where a person or group of people works to share resources with others in need without anticipating financial or other material gains (Llenares & Deocaris, 2015). Additionally, it is a personal choice made out of "free will," not as a requirement set forth by a contract, law, or academic standard (Hockenos, 2011). Volunteerism offers one promising pathway whereby students can appreciate societal problems and learn diverse skills in community organizations or spaces that are relevant to the profession. Building a community which needs help from various organizations, like academic institutions, is a way to adhere to the mission of improving not

only the living conditions of the underprivileged, but also to have a greater impact on the morals and principles of the faculty and staff who participated in community extension-related activities (Montebon et al., 2022).

With relevant provisions of Republic Act No. 7722, also known as the Higher Education Act of 1994, and the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 48 Series of 1996, higher education institutions are required to have a reliable community extension program. This program may take the form of continuing education, application of research results, and community service ([www.ched.gov.ph](http://www.ched.gov.ph)). In responding to this provision, the University of Cebu- Lapu Lapu and Mandaue Campus opened a community extension office where staff, faculty, and staff members could pool their knowledge and resources and take part in the social engagement program.

For community extension efforts, the Community Awareness, Relations, and Extension Service (CARES) office served as the institutional home for all the various colleges in the university. With the vision of the University of Cebu, which is to democratize quality education, be a missionary and industry leader and give hope and transform lives, the community extension program will serve as the link to the community by providing services to their needs. Through community-based research, the CARES program of the University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue Campus continued to uphold the spirit of service to the community. As guided by the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives and following the philosophies of the organization, the CARES program was able to create the flagship of every department, and it has been the primary foundation for community service in the partner community. The programs were crafted for the students to be trained and exposed in the community to the relevance of their chosen field. With its different flagship programs and activities offered, student volunteerism also increases and is sometimes idle. In response to this, it is prevalently important to have profiling to determine the preferences of volunteers as to what activity they prefer and the reasons for being involved in the community extension programs. The main thrust of this study is to determine the profile of volunteers, know the different programs and activities that students want to be involved in, and determine the reasons for participating in the program. Also, to propose a recommendation based on the result of the study.

## **II. Methodology**

This study is a descriptive, quantitative research design that was conducted on the students at the University of Cebu – Lapu Lapu and Mandaue Campus. UC is a learning institution duly organized under the Laws of the Philippines with a principal office address at A.C Cortes Avenue, Barangay Looc, Mandaue City, Philippines. A total of seven hundred eighty-eight (788) students responded to this undertaken comprising different departments in the university from grade school to college.

The survey was done through google forms that have three parts; first is to identify the profile of the respondents, second is to identify the preferred community extension activities of the student volunteers, and the third is to know the reasons for volunteering in the community extension programs/activities of the university. Frequency, percentage, and ranking were used to determine the results of the study. Thus, this is a convenience sampling in which the google form was cascaded by sending a google form link through Facebook messenger and E-mail.

The data was collected only based on the number of informants' responses. After this, the researcher collated and analyzed the data collected from the google form. Ethical considerations are an utmost priority in the duration of this study; thus, the identity of the informants was considered confidential. Ensuring data privacy and confidentiality is another consideration as part of the ethical standard, ensuring that all data collected are exclusively for the purposes of this study only.

## **III. Results and Discussion**

The results of the data are shown in this section. The respondent's profile is included in the first section, followed by student volunteers' preferred community extension services and the reasons for volunteering for community extension activities.

As reflected in table 1, the college of nursing has the highest number of student volunteers in the university, with 300 students comprising 38.10% of the total population of student volunteers in the university. The senior high school department is the second-highest number of student volunteers, with 122 students comprising 15.50% of the total population. Ranked third is the college of marine transportation, with 82 student volunteers comprising 10.40% of the total population.

**Table 1. Number of volunteers per college/department**

<b>College/Department</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
College of Nursing	300	38.10
College of Customs Administration	49	6.20
College of Criminology	51	6.50
College of Marine Transportation	82	10.40
College of Marine Engineering	43	5.50
College of Computer Studies	19	2.40
College of Teacher Education	6	0.80
College of Business and Accountancy	11	1.40
Senior High School Department	122	15.50
Basic Education (Junior High School Department)	13	1.60
Basic Education (Grade School Department)	4	0.5
College of Engineering	26	3.30
College of Hospitality and Tourism Management	62	7.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in Table 2, most student volunteers are 18-20 years old, with a total of 419 comprising 53.17% of the total population. Most student volunteers are female, with a total of 486 students comprising 61.70% of the population. Most of the respondents are single, with a total of 776 comprising 98.50% of the total population of student volunteers in the university. The results suggest that students at least 18 years old are more receptive to the urge to assist others through community extension activities. The findings also suggest that students who are still unmarried are more engaged with the university's community outreach programs.

**Table 2. Profile of the respondents**

	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
• 17 years old below	125	15.86
• 18-20 years old	419	53.17
• 21-23 years old	208	26.40
• 24 years old and above	36	4.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
• Male	289	36.70
• Female	486	61.70
• Prefer not to say	13	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Civil Status</b>		
• Single	776	98.50
• Married	12	1.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>100</b>

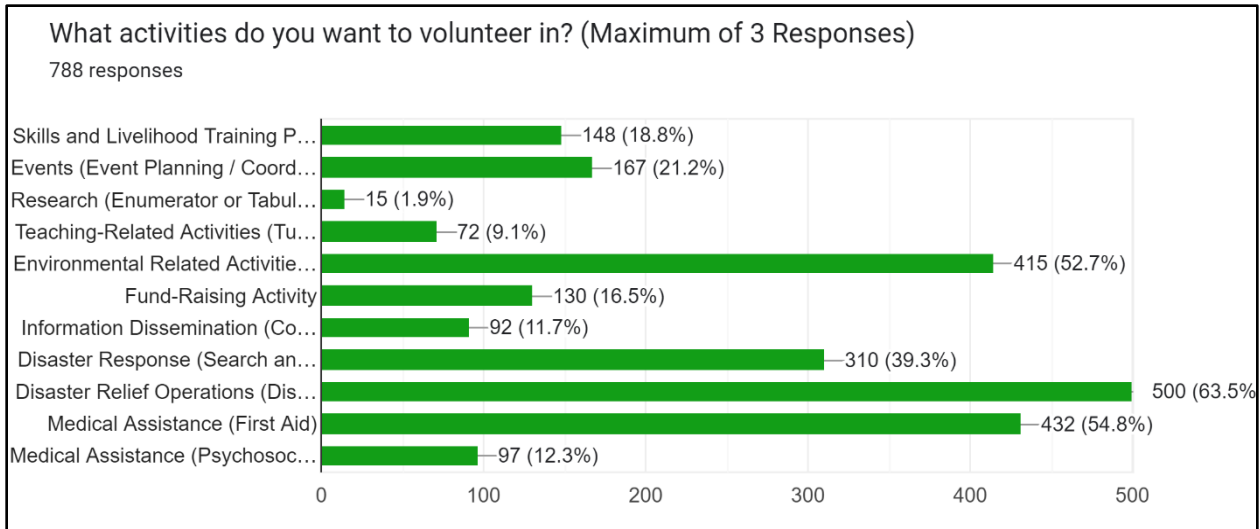
**Preferred Community Extension Activities of the Student-Volunteers**

As presented in Figure 1, the student volunteers' most preferred community extension service is Disaster Relief Operations (Distribution and Packaging). The results show that students are particularly keen to help with the distribution and packaging of supplies for the impacted areas in the event of disasters.

The second most preferred activity of the student volunteers is Medical Assistance (First Aid). The finding suggests that since most student volunteers are nursing students, they participate in medical aid aligned with their expertise and applicable to their future work as medical nurses.

The student volunteers' third most preferred community extension activity is the Environmental Related Activities (Clean-up drive, Solid waste management program, and the like). The results indicate that students are very conscious of environmental problems and concerns and desire to help preserve and safeguard the environment.

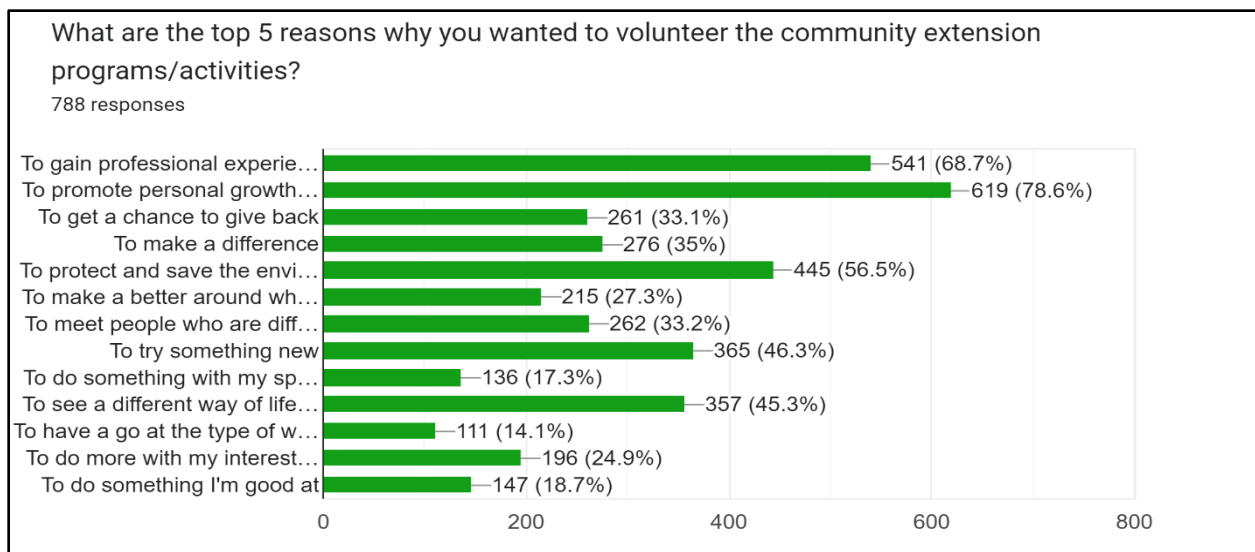
These findings are crucial to consider when starting a university-wide community extension service. These research findings will significantly impact how much participation the students choose to engage in. Additionally, this will operate as a guide for locating the communities most in need of the community extension initiatives that student volunteers like. Finally, the university's community extension programs will center on and use these findings as their primary point of reference.



**Figure 1**  
**Preferred community extension activities of the student-volunteers**  
**Reasons for volunteering in the community extension programs/activities of the university**

Figure 2 is the list of reasons why students want to be part of volunteer in community extension programs/activities. It was revealed that the number one reason why students want to volunteer is to promote personal growth and self-esteem. It shows that students want to advance their personal growth and encourage the creation of their distinct identities.

**Figure 2**  
**Reasons for volunteering in the community extension programs/activities**



Giving back to the community builds self-confidence, and the individual will experience a sense of accomplishment because they assist others and the community (Cassady, 2021). One could feel proud of and connected to themselves after volunteering. Additionally, it is more likely that he will have a positive attitude toward life and hopes for the future the more confident he feels about himself. Volunteering does improve one's self-esteem, which can be carried over into "regular" activities and, ideally, leads to a more upbeat attitude toward life and future goals (Fairley et al., 2016; Gaber et al., 2020).

The second reason nursing students want to volunteer is to gain professional experience. The finding suggests that their involvement in university community extension programs will help them improve their careers and make their experience more valuable in their future careers and fields.

Volunteering may help someone's career (Rodell, 2013). If a person is considering changing careers, volunteering could be an excellent way to network with professionals and get experience in their field of interest (Pring & Roco, 2012). Even if he has not decided to change careers, volunteering enables the individual to practice essential workplace abilities, including teamwork, communication, problem-solving, project planning, task management, and organization. He might feel more at ease using these skills professionally after honing them in a volunteer capacity (Sánchez, 2022; Millora, 2020).

The third reason students want to volunteer is to protect and save the environment. According to the results, students have shown a tremendous willingness to preserve the environment. Additionally, this shows that students thoroughly understand environmental issues and how global warming affects the environment. Finally, this study shows that students might collaborate in developing and implementing mitigating actions to safeguard the environment.

Environmental volunteering includes tasks like observing the environment, restoring the environment, and educating others about the environment (Merenlender et al., 2016). Environmental volunteers engage in community-based projects to benefit the local community and tourists (Dresner et al., 2015).

A tropical rainforest or an endangered species may benefit from the student's environmental volunteer work in the long run (Le et al., 2014). It is so that students can take an active role in preserving that region or species (Misni et al., 2017; Maschinski et al., 2012).

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The following are the conclusions of the study:

- The college of nursing, the senior high school department, and the college of marine transportation are the three colleges in the university that have many student volunteers.
- Most student volunteers are 18-20 years old, single, and female.
- The most preferred community extension services of the student volunteers are Disaster Relief Operations (Distribution and Packaging), Medical Assistance (First Aid), and Environmental Related Activities (Clean-up drive, Solid waste management program, and the like).
- The top three reasons nursing students volunteer in community extension programs/activities are to promote personal growth and self-esteem, gain professional experience, and protect and save the environment.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were drawn;

- Initiate an information drive to create awareness among other students about the community extension services of the university.
- Start community outreach initiatives based on what student volunteers like doing the most.
- Implement community outreach initiatives that relate to and complement the motivations behind students' volunteerism.

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