



Community Extension Engagement of Home Economics Teachers in Public Secondary Schools: A Qualitative Study

Fiamor M. Masinadiong^{a++} and Josephine B. Baguio^{a#*}

^a Graduate School, The Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., Davao City, Philippines.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9734/acri/2025/v25i61337>

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://pr.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/138734>

Original Research Article

Received: 16/04/2025

Accepted: 18/06/2025

Published: 26/06/2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores the personal and professional experiences of public secondary school teachers engaged in community extension programs within the context of Philippine public education. Rooted in the growing emphasis on teacher involvement beyond the classroom, this research aimed to examine the lived experiences, perceived meanings, and perceived impacts of community engagement among Home Economics teachers. A qualitative phenomenological design was employed, involving twelve participants from the Tarragona District, Division of Davao Oriental. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and analyzed thematically. Three major themes emerged from their experiences: enhanced professional skills, personal fulfillment, and time

⁺⁺ Student;

[#] Faculty;

^{*}Corresponding author: Email: josephinebbaguio@outlook.com;

Cite as: Masinadiong, Fiamor M., and Josephine B. Baguio. 2025. "Community Extension Engagement of Home Economics Teachers in Public Secondary Schools: A Qualitative Study". Archives of Current Research International 25 (6):638-53. <https://doi.org/10.9734/acri/2025/v25i61337>.

management challenges. The meanings teachers assigned to their involvement included professional identity enhancement, practical application of knowledge, and expanded teaching perspectives. As for the perceived impact, teachers identified enhanced educator empathy, strengthened community connection, and heightened social accountability. These findings offer practical implications for educational leaders and policymakers in supporting teacher-led community initiatives and integrating community engagement into professional development strategies.

Keywords: *Community extension engagement; home economics teachers; public secondary schools; education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Community extension programs have increasingly become valuable components of teacher professional development, offering opportunities for collaboration, heightened social awareness, and the real-world application of pedagogical practices. These initiatives can bridge the gap between theory and practice, enriching the educational experience for both teachers and learners (Okada & Matta, 2022). However, despite their recognized potential, many teachers struggle to fully engage with these programs due to various systemic and institutional challenges. Common issues include a lack of clear objectives, insufficient institutional support, and the marginalization of extension work in formal professional development structures (Rowan et al., 2021). As a result, community extension activities are often treated as supplementary rather than integral to a teacher's growth, leading to underutilized opportunities for experiential learning, critical reflection, and holistic development (Yusuf, 2021). Additionally, the challenge of balancing outreach work with regular teaching duties further complicates participation, reducing the effectiveness and sustainability of such initiatives (Menon & Suresh, 2020).

In a global context, research underscores both the benefits and constraints of community engagement in education and sustainable development. Kisambira et al. (2024), in their study of university-community partnerships in Uganda, noted significant gains in academic learning, skills development, and institutional reputation. However, they also highlighted implementation challenges, including high costs and the need for improved documentation and communication of program outcomes. Similarly, Thapphet (2025) examined Thailand's social action internship programs and found them effective in providing students with hands-on experience and contributing to community welfare, but limited in scalability and

sustainability. In India, Singh et al. (2024) reported that strategic communication and structured community involvement in healthcare education contributed meaningfully to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet there remains a lack of rigorous, evidence-based evaluations to assess long-term program impact.

The Philippine experience echoes similar dynamics. Moreno and Sulasula (2024) found that while livelihood training programs helped equip residents with useful skills, the absence of capital and limited economic opportunities hindered long-term benefits. Maliao et al. (2023) emphasized the positive impact of extension programs on community well-being but acknowledged that irregular program implementation and disruptions due to the pandemic affected continuity and impact. In another study, Garay et al. (2021) observed that wellness, and environmental initiatives were well-established, whereas programs focused on legal awareness and cultural history required further enhancement. Collectively, these studies highlight that while community extension programs in the Philippines are generally effective in imparting knowledge and fostering skills, their long-term success is often compromised by structural issues such as funding gaps, irregular implementation, and external disruptions. Strengthening institutional commitment, securing sustainable funding, and ensuring consistent program delivery are critical to enhancing the effectiveness of these initiatives.

Focusing on the Tarragona District in the Division of Davao Oriental, recent local studies shed light on similar concerns. Algonos et al. (2024) reported that teachers in geographically isolated areas of the district face persistent challenges related to the implementation of community extension programs. These include inadequate training, limited access to instructional materials, and logistical difficulties that complicate outreach efforts. In parallel, Sulistyowati et al. (2024)

examined the development of market economics teaching modules for Indonesian schools in the area, noting a lack of institutional support for educators teaching specialized subjects, further constraining their capacity to provide quality instruction. These studies underscore the need for a more responsive and structured approach to extension programs in remote contexts. Addressing these issues requires a shift toward needs-based professional development strategies, where community extension initiatives are designed with practicality, accessibility, and sustainability in mind. Such an approach can ensure that these programs truly serve as tools for teacher development and not merely as peripheral obligations.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of community extension programs in enhancing the professional development of teachers. Community extension programs, which typically involve outreach, service-learning, and community engagement initiatives, provide educators with opportunities to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts, foster collaboration with diverse stakeholders, and develop critical soft skills such as leadership, communication, and empathy. This study aimed to investigate how participation in these programs contributes to the growth of teachers' professional competencies, including their pedagogical strategies, reflective practices, and commitment to social responsibility.

Moreover, the study sought to examine the reciprocal benefits of community extension programs, not only in terms of teacher development but also in improving educational outcomes within the communities served. These initiatives align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes inclusive and equitable education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all, and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), which highlights the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in achieving sustainable development. By evaluating the experiences and perceptions of teachers involved in such programs, the research provided insights into how these initiatives were strategically integrated into professional development frameworks. Ultimately, the study aspired to offer evidence-based recommendations for educational institutions and

policymakers to harness community engagement as a meaningful avenue for teacher development and lifelong learning, while also contributing to broader sustainable development objectives.

1.2 Research Questions

The main objective of this research was to examine how community extension programs contributed to the professional development of teachers. Specifically, it aimed to identify the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that teachers gained through participation in these programs. The study specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers describe their personal and professional experiences while participating in community extension programs?
2. What meanings do teachers assign to their involvement in community extension activities in relation to their professional growth and teaching practices?
3. How do teachers perceive the impact of community engagement on their development as educators and their sense of social responsibility?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

This research adopted a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences and challenges, meanings and motivations, and perceived impact encountered by teachers relative to their community extension involvement in advancing their professional development. The study sought to understand the "lived experiences" of these individuals as they navigate their shift from support staff to educators. It was grounded in the belief that people's experiences shape their perceptions of reality, and through this perspective, the study aimed to provide insights that inform the development of effective interventions to support these individuals in their transition to professional development.

Creswell (2019) suggests that a researcher in qualitative studies brings their own worldview to the study, which, in turn, shapes the research

process. In this study, I acknowledge my role in understanding and interpreting the experiences of the participants. The philosophical assumptions guiding this research were as follows: ontological assumption, epistemological assumption, axiological assumption, and rhetorical assumption.

The first assumption was ontological assumption in which reality was constructed from individual experiences, and the research acknowledges multiple perspectives of reality, with each participant's experience of the transition offering unique insights into their This research adopted a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences and challenges, meanings and motivations, and perceived impact encountered by teachers relative to their community extension involvement in advancing their professional development. The researcher's argument on the ontological assumption emphasizes that reality is shaped through individual experiences. This perspective acknowledges that multiple realities exist, as each participant's transition into teaching offers unique insights into their experiences and challenges. Recognizing these diverse perspectives allows the research to capture the complexity of their experiences, so no single narrative dominates the understanding of their journey.

The second assumption was epistemological assumption where my understanding of the research topic stems from closely interacting with the participants. I had engaged with them on a personal level, offering a space where they shared their experiences and challenges openly. This approach allows me to learn directly from them about their experiences and challenges, avoiding assumptions or biases that distort the true nature of their lived realities. The researcher's argument on the epistemological assumption highlighted the importance of direct engagement with participants to develop a deeper understanding of their experiences. Through personal interactions, the study provided a space for participants to openly share their insights, allowing the researcher to learn directly from them. This approach minimizes potential biases or preconceived notions, so the findings reflect the participants' lived realities rather than assumptions imposed from an external perspective.

The third assumption was axiological assumption in which the values of respect, sincerity, and confidentiality have guided the interactions with

participants. It was important for me to create a trusting environment, where participants felt valued and heard. Their stories were shared with respect for their privacy and dignity, ensuring that the research process was ethical and empathetic. The researcher's argument on the axiological assumption emphasizes the importance of ethical considerations in the research process. Values such as respect, sincerity, and confidentiality played a central role in creating a trusting environment for participants. Protecting their privacy and dignity allows for honest and meaningful discussions, reinforcing the ethical responsibility of presenting their experiences with care and integrity.

The last assumption is a rhetorical assumption in which, as a researcher, I used a narrative and descriptive style of writing to convey the participants' experiences. It is my purpose to persuade the reader of the validity and importance of the insights shared by these individuals. Through focusing on the participants' own voices, I endeavor to present their stories in a way that resonates with the reader and brings to light the complexities of their transition into teaching. The researcher's argument on the rhetorical assumption relates to the way the research is communicated. A narrative and descriptive writing style were used to convey the participants' experiences, aiming to engage the reader and highlight the significance of their transition into teaching. Focusing on the participants' voices allows their stories to be presented in an authentic and meaningful way, capturing the depth and complexity of their journey.

Through these philosophical assumptions, the study sought to deeply understand the experiences of secondary public school teachers and provide valuable recommendations to improve their community extension involvement in advancing their professional development.

2.2 Qualitative Assumptions

The purpose of this research was to clarify and explore the assumptions underlying the experiences and challenges, meanings and motivations, and perceived impact encountered by public secondary school teachers in the Tarragona District, Division of Davao Oriental, relative to their community extension involvement in advancing their professional development. The goal was to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges, motivations, and impacts of these

individuals as they became involved in community extension programs toward their professional development. Highlighting these assumptions aimed to increase awareness of the complexities involved in this transition and provide a foundation for developing better support mechanisms for public school teachers.

Qualitative research, as emphasized by Lim (2025), requires the study to take place in a natural setting, where the researcher can understand the participants' perspectives in the context of their lived experiences. In this study, the participants' views were considered crucial to understanding their transition toward professional development. The researcher engaged with these teacher participants empathetically, ensuring the research reflected the true nature of their experiences. The focus was on uncovering the personal community extension involvement that influenced them in advancing their professional development. This study assumed that knowledge was deeply rooted in the personal experiences of individuals. The perspectives of public secondary school teachers provided valuable insights into the challenges they faced and the support they required as they became involved in community extension programs in advancing their professional development. The researcher's role was to create a space where participants felt comfortable sharing their stories, allowing for a more accurate representation of their experiences. This approach recognized the subjective nature of the transition and aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved.

2.3 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and understand the lived experiences of public school teachers who have participated in community extension programs as part of their professional development. Phenomenology, as a research approach, seeks to uncover how individuals make meaning of their experiences with a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2019). Grounded in interpretivism, this design highlights personal narratives, subjective interpretations, and the emotional and intellectual reflections of participants. In the context of this study, phenomenology was particularly appropriate as it enabled the researcher to delve into the inner world of teachers as they engaged in various community extension activities. These include

outreach initiatives, service-learning projects, and community-based collaborations that extend beyond the traditional classroom. Through in-depth conversations with the participants, the study captured their perceptions, motivations, challenges, and the professional growth they experienced as a result of their involvement in these programs. This approach allowed for a rich and nuanced understanding of how community engagement fosters pedagogical improvement, strengthens teachers' sense of social responsibility, and supports their continuous learning and professional development.

2.4 Research Participants

The participants of this study were twelve public school teachers within the Tarragona District, Division of Davao Oriental, utilizing purposive sampling technique. These participants were selected for the study because they had recently advanced professionally through their active involvement in the community extension programs of their respective schools. They were purposefully identified based on the set inclusion criteria. A total of twelve participants were carefully chosen to reflect diverse experiences and challenges related to their involvement in community extension programs that advanced them professionally. As for the inclusion criteria of the study, the researcher used the following: (a) a public school teacher within the Tarragona District, Division of Davao Oriental with at least five to ten years of teaching experience in DepEd; and (b) at least 35 years old at the time the interview for data gathering was conducted. As for the exclusion criteria, any public secondary school teachers from other school districts or other divisions were not included.

2.5 Role of the Researcher

My role as the researcher in this qualitative study was essential to the success of the investigation. The study aimed to explore the experiences of public secondary school teachers, focusing on their experiences and challenges, meanings and motivations, and the perceived impact they encountered during this process. I took responsibility for gathering rich and meaningful data that provided valuable insights into the participants' experiences.

In conducting the research, I adhered to the principles of qualitative inquiry, which emphasized dedicating time to data collection, analysis, and self-reflection (Creswell, 2019). I

assumed multiple roles, including interviewer, transcriber, encoder, and analyst. As the interviewer, I worked to establish a comfortable rapport with participants, encouraging openness and trust. Using techniques like asking follow-up questions and engaging in active listening, I strove to capture detailed insights and explore participants' thoughts more deeply.

In addition to conducting interviews, I handled the transcription and encoding of the data. I ensured the interviews were transcribed accurately and that the responses were well-organized while maintaining the authenticity of the participants' words. As an analyst, I closely examined the data to identify patterns and recurring themes across participants' experiences. This process enabled a meaningful interpretation of their responses.

Corbin and Strauss (2019) emphasized that the researcher is integral in interpreting the meaning behind collected data. In this study, I served as the primary instrument for both gathering and analyzing information. My focus was on understanding the depth and significance of participants' experiences, ensuring that the insights reflected their realities and contributed to the study's objectives.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

In any research, structured procedures were essential to ensure accurate and reliable results (Creswell, 2019). Being aware of the steps in data collection, I took deliberate actions to ensure the study's success. The following procedures guided the research process to achieve productive outcomes:

First, participants were identified using purposive sampling, focusing on their suitability for the study based on their performance and experiences. Assistance from the Schools Division Superintendent was sought after submitting a letter of approval. Purposive sampling was employed because it aligned participants' characteristics with the study's objectives, making it particularly effective in qualitative research with limited resources. Consent and assent forms were provided to participants, emphasizing that participation was voluntary and withdrawal could occur at any time without explanation (Edwards, 2020).

Second, participants underwent an orientation about the study and were invited to participate in

in-depth interviews for data collection. During the introductory phase, participants were welcomed, and the purpose, confidentiality, and parameters of the interview were explained, including the rationale for recording the discussion. Potential technical issues were addressed, and it was emphasized that the discussion focused on personal views, with no right or wrong answers.

The actual interviews followed an interview guide featuring broad, open-ended questions complemented by a few closed-ended ones. According to Schaefer and Wertheimer (2020), this format encouraged in-depth discussions on broad topics. During the concluding phase, participants were asked if any concerns or issues needed further exploration. Positive feedback was given to ensure participants left the session feeling valued. After transcribing the interviews, I sought participants' approval of the transcriptions to validate and verify the results, enhancing the credibility of the findings.

To categorize the data, participants' responses were grouped to identify common answers and clustered themes. Key phrases from the transcripts were highlighted as thematic statements and analyzed to form clusters. The data was organized around general concepts expressed by participants, with regrouping to reduce clustered themes into fewer essential ones. This thematic analysis generated findings aligned with the research questions, presented in figures to clearly illustrate the results. Thematic statements were carefully refined to derive the essential themes, ensuring the findings were well-structured and meaningful.

2.7 Data Analysis

Primarily, data were organized and prepared for data analysis. This involved transcribing interviews, typing up field notes, and sorting and arranging the data into different types depending on the sources of information. Afterwards, the data were read thoroughly. The researcher gained a general sense from the information and reflected on the overall meaning of the participants' responses. Next, the researcher conducted analysis based on the specific theoretical approach and method. This involved coding or organizing related segments of data into categories.

According to Creswell (2019), coding is a process of identifying a passage in the text or other data items, searching and identifying

concepts, and finding relations between them. In the context of my study, I defined what I analyzed. I approached the data with a developed system of codes and looked for concepts or ideas in the text. I performed initial and thorough readings of the data and wrote down the patterns or themes I noticed, along with expressions for shared concepts.

After coding, the researcher proceeded to thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data and is applied to sets of texts such as interview scripts. In my study, I closely examined the data to identify common themes—topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that repeatedly appeared in the interview scripts and verbatim accounts of my participants—and identified themes based on their experiences, strategies, and insights.

Following thematic analysis was the formulation of major themes. The formulation of major themes is one of the most basic tasks in qualitative research after thematic analysis is applied. In my study, I formulated major themes from verbatim transcripts and interview scripts by writing them in a table alongside the text. I conducted a laborious, in-depth, line-by-line scrutiny of the verbatim transcripts until major themes were obtained.

Finally, I interpreted the larger meaning of the data to formulate the core ideas. To address these, after thorough analysis, I classified, clustered, and categorized the data carefully, from which the clustered ideas led to core ideas. Furthermore, results were documented and analyzed based on the theory used by the researcher. Major themes were extracted, explained, and written under each topic with relevant citations supporting these themes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Personal and Professional Experiences of Teachers Participating in Community Extension Programs

Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, this study explored the personal and professional experiences of public secondary school teachers who participated in community extension programs. The analysis revealed three distinct themes that capture these experiences: enhanced professional skills, personal fulfillment, and time management challenges.

Enhanced Professional Skills

Teachers reported that involvement in community extension programs allowed them to develop new skills and apply their professional knowledge in practical contexts. This engagement helped them improve their teaching strategies and broaden their competencies beyond the classroom.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Through the community programs, I learned how to better communicate and organize activities, which I also use in my teaching." (P3)

"These programs pushed me to develop leadership and planning skills that I didn't use before." (P8)

"I have learned many new skills that can help with my teaching and serve the community." (P10)

It can be observed that Participant 3 highlighted the development of communication and organizational skills that also benefited their classroom teaching. Participant 8 emphasized the growth in leadership and planning abilities, while Participant 10 noted the acquisition of new skills valuable both in teaching and community service.

This theme supports the study of Riera et al. (2023), which emphasized that participation in community extension programs enhances teachers' professional competencies by providing opportunities to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts, thus improving their instructional techniques. Similarly, Nwuke and Nwanguma (2024) noted that involvement in such activities develops leadership abilities and promotes a sense of initiative, as teachers often take on organizational roles that require planning, coordination, and communication with various stakeholders. In line with this, Eden et al. (2024) argued that community engagement fosters adaptability and reflective practice, encouraging teachers to continuously assess and refine their teaching strategies based on the diverse needs they encounter during their outreach experiences.

Personal Fulfillment

Participation in community extension work gave teachers a sense of personal satisfaction and

accomplishment. They expressed pride in contributing to their communities and described these activities as meaningful extensions of their professional roles.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews.

"Helping the community makes me feel like I'm making a real difference beyond just teaching." (P1)

"Being part of these programs gave me a sense of purpose and motivation." (P6)

"There is a sense of joy that I feel when helping the community, not just in the classroom." (P11)

It can be observed that Participant 1 felt a strong sense of making a difference beyond classroom teaching. Participant 6 reported that involvement increased their sense of purpose, and Participant 11 described the joy derived from helping the community as an extension of their professional identity.

This theme echoes the findings of Erickson and Anderson (2023), who emphasized that community extension work provides teachers with a profound sense of purpose and emotional reward, as it allows them to serve in ways that go beyond instructional duties. Similarly, Russell et al. (2021) observed that community activities foster a stronger sense of identity and belonging among educators, reinforcing their value not only within the school but also in the community at large. Likewise, Long et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers gain a deep sense of pride and intrinsic motivation from making a difference in others' lives, which enhances both their personal fulfillment and long-term dedication to their profession.

Time Management Challenges

Despite the benefits, teachers also described challenges related to balancing community extension responsibilities with their primary teaching duties. Managing time effectively was a common concern due to the added workload.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Sometimes it's hard to juggle teaching and community activities, especially when schedules overlap." (P4)

"The added responsibilities require a lot of my time, making it difficult to rest." (P9)

"It's very difficult to manage time because there are so many things to do." (P12)

It can be observed that Participant 4 expressed difficulty managing overlapping schedules between teaching and community work. Participant 9 emphasized the strain on personal time due to additional duties, while Participant 12 pointed out the general difficulty of managing numerous tasks within limited time.

This theme aligns with the study of Javed and Akhter (2024), who highlighted that teachers frequently encounter difficulties balancing community extension activities with their core teaching responsibilities, leading to significant time management challenges. Similarly, Chiu et al. (2021) noted that community engagement added commitments often reduce the time available for lesson planning and student engagement, causing stress and fatigue. In addition, Diego-Medrano and Salazar (2021) found that teachers struggle to allocate sufficient time for both professional duties and community involvement, which may affect their overall effectiveness and work-life balance.

3.2 Meanings of Teachers Assign to Their Involvement in Community Extension Activities in Relation to Their Professional Growth and Teaching Practices

Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, this study explored the meanings that teachers attach to their involvement in community extension programs, particularly how these activities relate to their professional growth and teaching practices. Three major themes emerged: professional identity enhancement, practical application of knowledge, and expanded teaching perspectives.

Professional Identity Enhancement

Teachers expressed that community extension activities reinforced and enriched their professional identities. They viewed their participation as a way to affirm their roles as educators committed not only to teaching but also to community development.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Being part of community projects makes me feel more like a true educator who cares beyond the classroom." (P2)

"It strengthens my identity as a teacher who is also a community leader." (P7)

"My involvement in the community proves that I am not just a teacher, but also a contributor to the development of my locality." (P10)

It can be observed that Participant 2 emphasized feeling validated as an educator extending care beyond the classroom. Participant 7 highlighted the dual role of teacher and community leader, while Participant 10 reflected that involvement affirmed their commitment to local development alongside teaching.

This theme corresponds with the findings of Weinberg et al. (2021), who emphasized that involvement in community extension activities strengthens teachers' sense of professional identity by allowing them to apply their skills beyond the classroom. Similarly, Yamamura and Koth (2023) observed that community engagement fosters a deeper connection to their role as educators, enhancing their confidence and commitment. In addition, Sanders et al. (2021) highlighted that participating in community programs contributes to teachers' professional

growth by broadening their perspectives and enriching their teaching practices.

Practical Application of Knowledge

Teachers described community extension work as an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life contexts, bridging the gap between academic learning and practical community needs.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"The community programs let me use what I teach in ways that really help people." (P5)

"I see how theories from class become alive when applied during community activities." (P9)

"I can see that what I teach is not just from the book—I am truly able to apply it in real life." (P11)

It can be observed that Participant 5 noted the practical utility of teaching content through community service. Participant 9 described how academic theories become tangible in fieldwork, and Participant 11 pointed out the real-life application of classroom lessons.

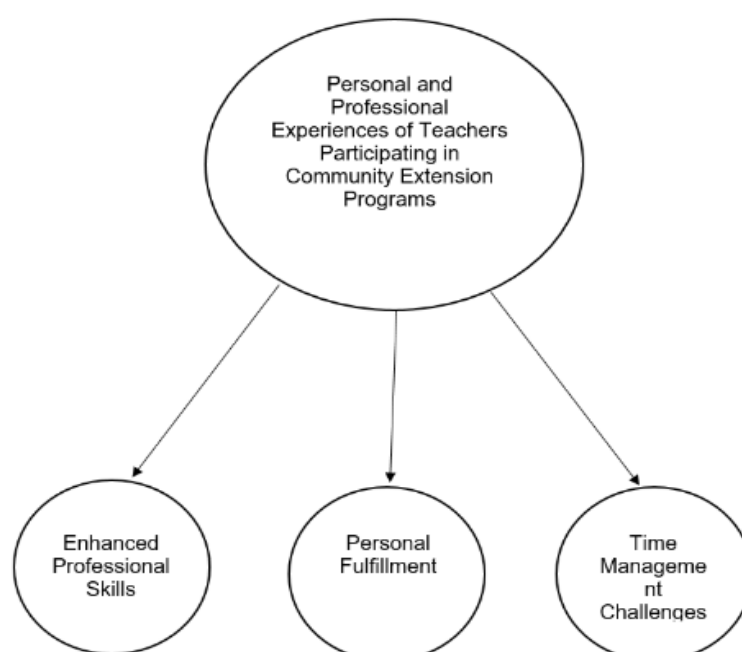


Fig. 1. Personal and professional experiences of teachers participating in community extension programs

This theme aligns with the research of Boss and Krauss (2022), who found that community extension activities provide teachers with opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, thereby deepening their understanding. Likewise, Itow (2020) emphasized that practical experiences enable teachers to develop relevant skills that improve their instructional methods. Similarly, Resch and Schrittester (2023) noted that engaging in community programs helps teachers bridge the gap between academic concepts and practical implementation, enhancing the overall learning experience for their students.

Expanded Teaching Perspectives

Involvement in community extension activities broadened teachers' perspectives on education, making them more responsive and adaptable in their teaching practices.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Community work made me more aware of students' realities outside school, which influences how I teach." (P1)

"I learned to adjust my lessons to be more relevant after seeing the needs of the community." (P6)

"My way of teaching has changed because I've seen what my students truly need based on what I observed in the community." (P8)

It can be observed that Participant 1 recognized the importance of understanding students' backgrounds through community engagement, influencing their teaching style. Participant 6 mentioned adapting lessons for relevance, while Participant 8 noted changes in teaching approaches based on community insights.

This theme corresponds with the findings of Tripon (2024), who highlighted that involvement in community extension broadens teachers' understanding of diverse learner backgrounds and social contexts, enabling them to appreciate the complexities their students face outside the classroom. Similarly, O'Leary et al. (2020) emphasized that community involvement encourages educators to adopt more inclusive and culturally responsive teaching approaches, which are essential for meeting the varied needs of their students. In the same vein, Chhatlani (2023) argued that exposure to community issues helps teachers develop a holistic perspective that enriches their curriculum planning and classroom interactions by integrating real-world experiences and fostering empathy among learners.

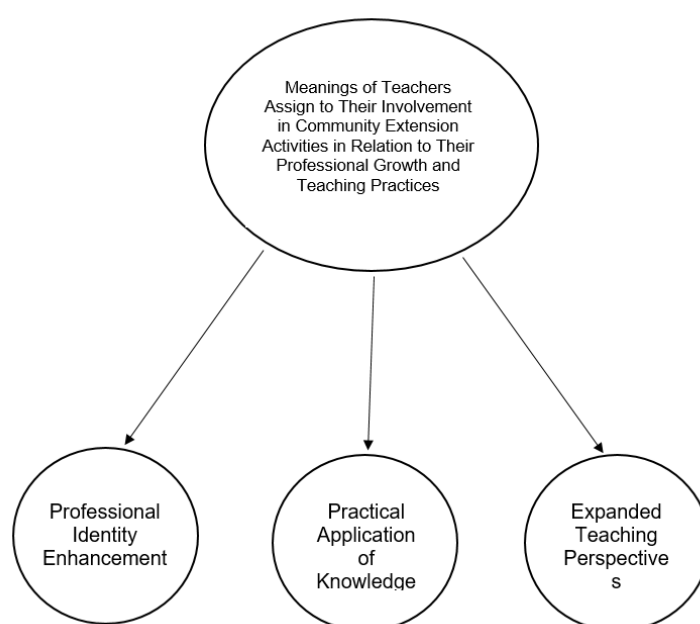


Fig. 2. Meanings of teachers assign to their involvement in community extension activities in Relation to Their Professional Growth and Teaching Practices

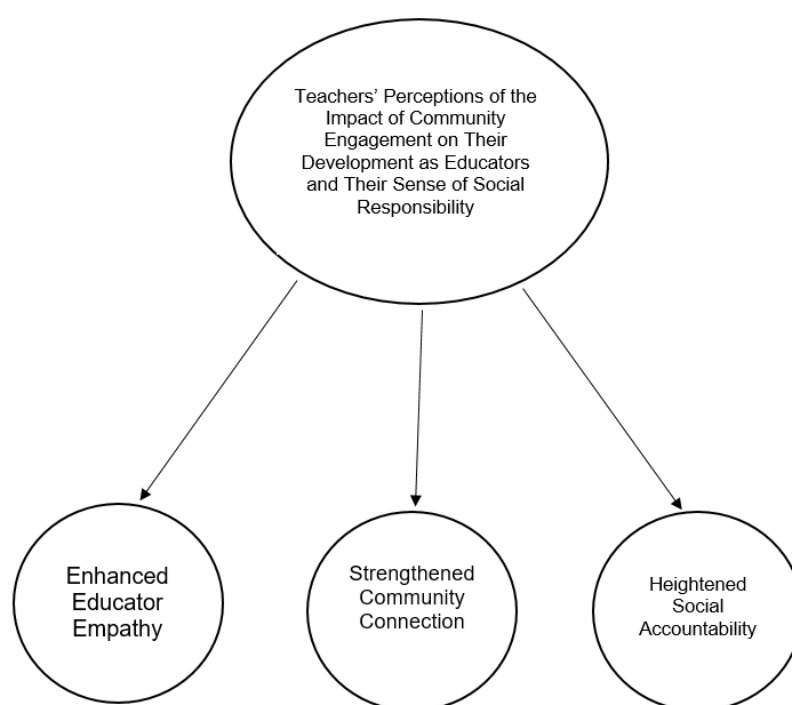


Fig. 3. Teachers' perceptions of the impact of community engagement on their development as educators and their sense of social responsibility

3.3 Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Community Engagement on Their Development as Educators and Their Sense of Social Responsibility

Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, this study examined how teachers perceive the influence of their community engagement on their growth as educators and their sense of social responsibility. Three significant themes emerged: enhanced educator empathy, strengthened community connection, and heightened social accountability.

Enhanced Educator Empathy

Teachers reported that their community involvement deepened their empathy toward students and community members, allowing them to better understand diverse life situations and challenges.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Working with the community opened my eyes to the struggles my students face, which makes me more patient and understanding." (P3)

"I now see my students as whole individuals shaped by their environment, not just learners in a classroom." (P7)

"I have experienced the hardships in the community, which helped me better understand the students and their problems." (P12)

It can be observed that Participant 3 emphasized how community work fostered patience and understanding toward students' challenges. Participant 7 viewed students more holistically, while Participant 12 connected firsthand community hardship to greater empathy.

This theme aligns with the study of Zekan et al. (2024), who found that community engagement deepens teachers' empathy by exposing them to the real-life challenges faced by their students and families. Similarly, Romanovska and Novak (2024) highlighted that community involvement fosters greater emotional understanding and patience, which positively influences teacher-student relationships. In addition, Van Pham (2024) emphasized that increased empathy gained through community activities helps educators create more supportive and nurturing learning environments that promote student well-being and academic success.

Strengthened Community Connection

Teachers felt that engaging in community extension programs fostered a stronger bond with the local community, encouraging collaboration and mutual support between educators and residents.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"I feel more connected and responsible for the welfare of the community now." (P1)

"Our partnership with the community makes teaching more meaningful and grounded." (P9)

"Joining the programs has helped me build a strong relationship with the community." (P11)

It can be observed that Participant 1 expressed a deepened sense of responsibility toward the community. Participant 9 highlighted how community partnerships enhanced the relevance of teaching, while Participant 11 noted stronger relational ties fostered by their involvement.

This theme corresponds with the findings of Hlalele and Mosia (2020), who emphasized that teachers' active participation in community programs strengthens their ties with local residents, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support. Similarly, Harris (2024) noted that community connections enhance teachers' understanding of the community's cultural and social dynamics, which informs their teaching practices. Likewise, Alkaher and Gan (2020) argued that strong community bonds empower teachers to become advocates for local needs, promoting collaboration between schools and community members for shared development.

Heightened Social Accountability

Teachers perceived that community engagement increased their sense of social responsibility, inspiring them to act as advocates and change agents beyond the classroom.

Here are some of the responses given by the participants during their interviews:

"Being involved in community work made me realize my role in helping improve society." (P4)

"I now see myself as someone who can contribute to positive change, not just an educator." (P8)

"I have come to understand that my responsibility goes beyond teaching—it also includes helping the community." (P10)

It can be observed that Participant 4 acknowledged a broadened role in societal improvement. Participant 8 recognized themselves as a change agent, while Participant 10 articulated the dual responsibility of teaching and community service.

This theme aligns with the study of Cress et al. (2023), who highlighted that teachers develop a stronger sense of responsibility toward addressing societal issues through their community engagement. Similarly, Brant et al. (2023) emphasized that community involvement fosters a commitment to ethical practices and accountability in their professional roles. Likewise, Rashov (2024) argued that heightened social accountability motivates educators to advocate for equitable access to quality education and actively contribute to social change beyond the classroom.

4. CONCLUSION

The participation of teachers in community extension programs offers several valuable opportunities but also presents challenges. One significant implication is the enhancement of professional skills. Through involvement in community activities, teachers develop new competencies that enrich their teaching practice, including leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills. This skill enhancement can contribute to improved instructional strategies and a more dynamic classroom environment. However, personal fulfillment is another important outcome of community engagement. Teachers often experience a deep sense of satisfaction and motivation when they see the positive impact of their work beyond the classroom. This fulfillment can boost their overall morale and commitment to their profession, encouraging them to sustain their involvement in community activities. On the other hand, time management challenges remain a considerable issue. Balancing teaching responsibilities with community extension programs demands careful planning and prioritization. Without adequate support, teachers may struggle to allocate sufficient time to both areas, which can affect

their performance and well-being. Addressing these time constraints through effective scheduling and administrative support is essential to maximize the benefits of community engagement.

Regarding the meanings teachers assign to their community involvement, the development of a stronger professional identity stands out. Engaging in extension activities allows teachers to view themselves not only as educators but also as community leaders and change agents, fostering a more holistic professional self-concept. Practical application of knowledge gained from these programs reinforces learning by bridging theory and practice, which benefits both teachers and students. Additionally, exposure to diverse experiences broadens teaching perspectives, enabling educators to incorporate new insights and approaches into their curriculum.

Finally, teachers perceive their community engagement as deeply impactful on their growth as educators and social agents. Enhanced empathy helps teachers better understand and respond to students' diverse needs. Strengthened community connections foster collaboration and mutual support, enriching both school and community life. Heightened social accountability motivates teachers to contribute actively to societal development, reinforcing their role as responsible citizens and role models.

The findings of this study validate the theories of Wenger (1998) and Freire (2014), providing a conceptual basis for understanding teachers' engagement in community extension programs. Wenger's concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) emphasizes the importance of social participation in learning, where individuals engage in collective learning within a shared domain. This framework is particularly useful for interpreting teachers' community extension activities, as it highlights collaboration, shared practices, and mutual support among educators and community members. Through participation in CoPs, teachers develop a deeper understanding of their community's needs, exchange knowledge, and collaboratively address challenges, thereby fostering their professional growth and effectiveness.

5. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations may be considered to

enhance the positive impacts and address challenges associated with teachers' participation in community extension programs.

The Department of Education (DepEd) and school administrators may develop policies that formally recognize and support teachers' involvement in these activities, ensuring that community engagement is valued as part of professional development.

School leaders may also provide dedicated time and resources for teachers to participate in extension programs without compromising their instructional duties, helping to alleviate time management challenges. Offering targeted training on balancing multiple responsibilities and integrating community-based learning into the curriculum could further empower teachers to maximize the benefits of their involvement.

Teachers themselves are encouraged to continue reflecting on their experiences in community engagement, leveraging the professional growth and personal fulfillment gained to enrich their teaching practice. Building stronger partnerships between schools and local communities may also enhance support networks for educators, fostering sustainable collaboration.

For future research, studies may expand to include teachers from different regions or educational levels to explore variations in experiences and perceptions of community extension involvement. Longitudinal studies may examine the lasting effects of community engagement on teacher development, job satisfaction, and student outcomes. Additionally, future investigations might assess specific support mechanisms, such as mentorship programs or workload management tools, that facilitate effective participation in community activities while maintaining teaching quality.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

The author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies have been used during the writing and editing of this manuscript. The details of the AI usage are as follows:

1. Grammarly: Used for grammar and spellchecking, as well as suggestions for improving sentence structure and overall clarity.
2. Quillbot: Employed for paraphrasing and

refining sentence flow to enhance readability and coherence.

CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL

This study was conducted in full compliance with recognized ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants. Each participant provided informed consent after being thoroughly informed about the study's objectives, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. To preserve anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms were used and all collected data were securely stored. The ethical framework adopted in this research was based on the principles outlined by Pregoner et al. (2025), which underscore the importance of respect, honesty, and transparency in educational research. Before any data were gathered, the study received ethical approval from the institution's ethics review committee, confirming adherence to all protocols for responsible research involving human subjects.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

- Algonos, C. J., Calizo, E. V., & Bauyot, M. M. (2024). Experiences of teachers teaching in far-flung areas of Division of Davao Oriental: A phenomenological study. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(6), 2790–2802. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2024.806212>
- Alkaher, I., & Gan, D. (2020). The role of school partnerships in promoting education for sustainability and social capital. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 51(6), 416–433.
- Boss, S., & Krauss, J. (2022). *Reinventing project-based learning: Your field guide to real-world projects in the digital age*. International Society for Technology in Education.
- Brant, J., Peterson, S. S., & Friedrich, N. (2023). Partnership research with Indigenous communities: Fostering community engagement and relational accountability. *Brock Education Journal*, 32(1), 99–118.
- Chhatlani, C. K. (2023). Review the role of holistic learning in cultivating global citizenship skills. *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods*, 1(2).
- Chiu, K. A., Craig, B. G., & Rabago, N. L. (2021). Sustainability of community engagement at institutions of higher education: A look at compassion fatigue and the college student mental health crisis. *VA Engage Journal*, 9(1), 1.
- Cress, C. M., Collier, P. J., & Reitenauer, V. L. (2023). *Learning through serving: A student guidebook for service-learning and civic engagement across academic disciplines and cultural communities*. Taylor & Francis.
- Creswell, J. W., & Hirose, M. (2019). Mixed methods and survey research in family medicine and community health. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2018-000086>
- Diego-Medrano, E., & Salazar, L. R. (2021). Examining the work-life balance of faculty in higher education. *International Journal of Social Policy and Education*, 3(3), 27–36.
- Eden, C. A., Chisom, O. N., & Adeniyi, I. S. (2024). Online learning and community engagement: Strategies for promoting inclusivity and collaboration in education. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 21(3), 232–239.
- Erickson, J., & Anderson, J. B. (Eds.). (2023). *Learning with the community: Concepts and models for service-learning in teacher education*.
- Garay, G. A., Verano, C. L. A., & Magistrado, I. B. (2021). Sustainability of the College of Arts and Sciences community extension programs in Brgy. Masalipit, Bulacan: Basis for proposed enhancement program. *Journal of Human Resource and Sustainability Studies*, 9(1), 106–121. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jhrss.2021.91008>
- Harris, O. (2024). *Bridging the gap: Strengthening school-community partnerships through cultural brokers*. Oscar Harris.
- Hlalele, D., & Mosia, M. (2020). Teachers' sense of community in rural learning ecologies. *Alternation*, 27(2).
- Itow, R. C. (2020). Fostering valuable learning experiences by transforming current teaching practices: Practical pedagogical approaches from online practitioners. *Information and Learning Sciences*, 121(5/6), 443–452.
- Javed, I., & Akhter, N. (2024). Exploring the opportunities and challenges of additional

- academic duties on the performance of teachers in schools. *Journal of Excellence in Social Sciences*, 3(2), 203–220.
- Kisambira, A., Khadijah, B., & MM, A. A. (2024). The role of university community engagement programs in influencing higher education outcomes and community development: An insight from Uganda. *Extensive Reviews*, 4(1), 15–28.
- Lim, W. M. (2025). What is qualitative research? An overview and guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 33(2), 199–229.
- Long, C., Li, C., Huang, G., & Fu, J. (2024). How to better promote teaching? Unveiling the links between professional learning communities and intrinsic motivation among foreign language teachers. *Heliyon*, 10(16).
- Maliao, R. J., Fernandez, P. R., & Subade, R. F. (2023). Well-being of artisanal fishing communities and children's engagement in fisheries amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: A case in Aklan, Philippines. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 1–12.
- Menon, S., & Suresh, M. (2020). Synergizing education, research, campus operations, and community engagements towards sustainability in higher education: A literature review. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 21(5), 1015–1051.
- Moreno, F., & Sulasula, J. (2024). Administration of local economic development: Case study of the Zamboanga Peninsula Region, Philippines. *ScienceOpen Preprints*.
- Nwuke, T. J., & Nwanguma, T. K. (2024). Managing school-community relationships in the 21st century for effective administration of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Studies*, 3(1), 43.
- O'Leary, E. S., Shapiro, C., Toma, S., Sayson, H. W., Levis-Fitzgerald, M., Johnson, T., & Sork, V. L. (2020). Creating inclusive classrooms by engaging STEM faculty in culturally responsive teaching workshops. *International Journal of STEM Education*, 7, 1–15.
- Okada, A., & Matta, C. E. D. (2021). Teacher training for professional education through a course of extension on emerging technologies with open schooling. *Revista Diálogo Educacional*, 21(71), 1794–1819.
- Rashov, O. (2024, August). Modern methods of teaching foreign languages. In *International Scientific and Current Research Conferences* (pp. 158–164).
- Resch, K., & Schritteser, I. (2023). Using the service-learning approach to bridge the gap between theory and practice in teacher education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 27(10), 1118–1132.
- Riera, F., Estrada, D., Guerrero, S. E., Pacheco, E., Guevara, S., & Arreaga, R. (2023). Enhancing teacher preparation: A case study on the impact of integrating real-world teaching experience in English higher education programs. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 12(6), 197.
- Romanovska, L., & Novak, M. (2024). The role of teacher-student relationships in providing social and psychological support to participants of the educational process. *Social Work and Education*, 11(2), 308–319.
- Rowan, L., Bourke, T., L'Estrange, L., Lunn Brownlee, J., Ryan, M., Walker, S., & Churchward, P. (2021). How does initial teacher education research frame the challenge of preparing future teachers for student diversity in schools? A systematic review of literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 91(1), 112–158.
- Russell, S. G., Persaud, A., Mantilla Blanco, P. L., Webster, K., & Elliott, M. (2021). *Fostering belonging and civic identity: Perspectives from newcomer and refugee students in Arizona and New York*.
- Sanders, M., Galindo, C., & Allen, K. M. (2021). Professional capital and responses to student diversity: A qualitative exploration of the role of teachers in full-service community schools. *Urban Education*, 56(10), 1782–1814.
- Singh, S., Miller, E., & Closser, S. (2024). Nurturing transformative local structures of multisectoral collaboration for primary health care: Qualitative insights from select states in India. *BMC Health Services Research*, 24(1), 634. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12913-024-11002-2>
- Sulistyowati, R., Nuswantara, D. A., Indriastuti, H., Setyawati, A., & Banu, S. (2024). Assistance in developing market economics teaching modules for teachers at the Indonesian School Davao, Philippines. *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Madani (JPMM)*, 8(1), 95–114. <https://doi.org/10.21009/JPMM.008.1.08>

- Thapphet, S. (2025, May). Outdoor learning strategies for tourism students. In *The 15th Benjamit National and International Conference* (pp. 122–131). <https://benjamit.thonburi-u.ac.th/ojs/bmv15/article/view/37>
- Tripon, C. (2024). Bridging horizons: Exploring STEM students' perspectives on service-learning and storytelling activities for community engagement and gender equality. *Trends in Higher Education*, 3(2), 324–341.
- Van Pham, S. (2024). The influence of social and emotional learning on academic performance, emotional well-being, and implementation strategies: A literature review. *Saudi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9(12), 381–391.
- Weinberg, A. E., Balgopal, M. M., & Sample McMeeking, L. B. (2021). Professional growth and identity development of STEM teacher educators in a community of practice. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 19, 99–120.
- Yamamura, E. K., & Koth, K. (2023). *Place-based community engagement in higher education: A strategy to transform universities and communities*. Routledge.
- Yusuf, S. F. G., Popoola, O. O., Gwala, L., & Nesengani, T. (2021). Promoting university–community alliances in the experiential learning activities of agricultural extension postgraduate students at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. *Sustainability*, 13(18), 10411. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/18/10411>
- Zekan, S. B., Cvrtak, K. R., & Križanović, S. (2024). Pathways to empathy: Enhancing student engagement in humanitarian events towards community-engaged education. In *Higher Education in the Service of Society*.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of the publisher and/or the editor(s). This publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

© Copyright (2025): Author(s). The licensee is the journal publisher. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<https://pr.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/138734>