Gratitude: Students' Encounter with Engaging in International Community Service

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Abstract. Street children are one of the problems faced in various countries, including in the Philippines, especially in Cebu City. They have the same right to get health and welfare education. This community service aims to provide health education to them. This was carried out with UMY Master of Nursing Students and Cebu Normal University Lecturers at Balai Ang Samaritano Sa Sugbo, Cebu City with the title A Collaboration of Universities On Kids (AKU OK). Students provide material about personal hygiene and hand washing with media: games and songs. Student experience was asked with a portfolio form. As a result, several themes were raised from this portfolio. The themes are: student experience: social, organizational and spiritual experiences; Challenges faced: short preparation, implementation improvisation and communication; interesting things: the support system, the enthusiasm of the participants and music as a universal language; Things that are less interesting: facilities and pre-facilities, participants are not homogeneous. While the things that are already good: Associate lecturers and partners; Things that need to be improved: Coordination with target, time, place and event..

1 Introduction

The issue of homelessness is prevalent in numerous countries. As per the World Health Organization (WHO), homelessness refers to the state of being unable to attain a secure and pleasant place of residence. This condition results in their deprivation of the rights they are entitled to. Limitations imposed on fundamental rights, such as health, economic, and political rights, result in various issues, including early pregnancies, preterm deliveries, and fatalities due to preventable causes. 

This issue of homelessness is also linked to the criminalization of homelessness, instances of violence, the implementation of forceful laws, and other related factors. The importance of everyone's safety and rights is often undervalued. Under such circumstances, it typically leads to discrimination against individuals (Homelessness and Human Rights | OHCHR, n.d.) Due to the absence of a definitive address, they are unable to obtain social, political, ecological, and employment rights. Homelessness refers to individuals residing in public spaces, vehicles, or on the streets. It also includes those staying in temporary emergency shelters, women's refuges, camps, or other provisional accommodations provided for internally displaced persons, refugees, or migrants. Additionally, it encompasses individuals living in extremely substandard and unstable housing, such as residents of informal settlements. (Morton et al., 2010)

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Their deprivation of food, housing, and clothes contradicts the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which affirms the entitlement of all individuals to a satisfactory level of living, encompassing enough food, clothing, and housing, as well as the ongoing enhancement of living conditions. It is the responsibility of states to ensure the protection of economic, social, and cultural rights. (*Homelessness and Human Rights | OHCHR*, n.d.)

The issue of homelessness was equally prevalent in Cebu City, Philippines. The prevalence of poverty and homelessness has led to a significant population of children and parents experiencing displacement and residing on the streets. The Rugby youths are a group of homeless youths who have developed an addiction to the aroma of the RUGBY brand of adhesive, leading to their nickname. It is similar with a research held in Semarang, Central Java. The findings indicate that street youth engage in daily NAPZA usage in various locations such as roadside areas, under bridges, in their residences, and at their workplaces, often in groups. The NAPZAs utilized include dextro tablets, BI pills, cigarettes, glue, and alcohol.

The Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo aims to relieve the situation. Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo has been in operation since September 8, 2009. The House is collaborating with the Aboitiz Foundation to contribute land and houses to JPIC-IDC, a non-profit religious organization associated with the Missionary Congregation Society of the Divine Word (SVD).

Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo (BSS) was founded with the purpose of offering a "homelike" environment for both orphaned children and elderly individuals who have been relocated. BSS is a community where older individuals on the streets demonstrate care for children, and in turn, street children exhibit affection for the elderly, fostering a familial bond.

Samaritano Sa Sugbo: A community that is completely free from all form of addictions, ensuring that every child and parent has a secure and nurturing home environment. The objective is to value each individual as distinct and to cultivate a sense of punctuality and orderliness that will enhance social adjustment.

At present, Balay Samaritano sa Sugbu (BSS) provides assistance to approximately 150 homeless children and elderly individuals living on the streets. The BSS supports individuals by offering daily hot meals from Monday to Saturday, delivering complimentary medical consultations and examinations, and supplying free medication when necessary. Additionally, the organization extends financial aid for laboratory tests and specialized pharmaceuticals in cases where alternative access is unavailable. A total of forty (40) pupils receive assistance in the form of school uniforms, equipment, subsidies for school donations, and projects. BSS offers specific aid to eight (8) families with children requiring special protection, including a few kilograms of rice and a temporary rental stipend provided monthly.

The objective of this exercise is to augment children's engagement with unfamiliar individuals, so fostering an anticipated boost in their self-assurance. In addition, you can acquaint them with Indonesia.

This activity aims to provide students, who are the participants in this case, with practical experience in the process of creating, conducting, and assessing community service programs. The focus of this activity is on programs that are conducted outside the country. Engaging with at-risk people during community clinical practice allows students to acquire valuable insights and knowledge that will inform their future practices in order to uphold the public health of the communities they will serve (Chandra et al., 2021).
To mitigate the risks associated with inhalant abuse, several preventive measures are implemented. Furthermore, adolescents can engage in conversations regarding addictive substances, deliberate on potential hazards, and opt for water-based apparatus whenever feasible.

Children and elderly individuals who are moved require essential necessities that must be fulfilled, without depending on the aforementioned. Due to this rationale, Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo provides several services, including the supply of sustenance for children and the elderly. In addition, there is also a designated area for them to relax and cleanse themselves, although it does not provide accommodations. BSS expands its reach to a greater number of children and their families by offering easily accessible basic needs services, which are integrated with regular developmental activities. Balay Samaritano sa Sugbu receives assistance from both local and international benefactors, including private individuals who wish to contribute their resources in unity with the impoverished. Considering the intricate circumstances faced by families currently residing on the streets due to pandemics, disasters, and other adverse conditions, KPKC-IDC is contemplating ways to assist a greater number of children and families in overcoming their impoverished state.

In order to enhance the child's self-assurance, it is necessary to adopt an approach that involves actively involving them in the tasks undertaken. Foreigners are also introduced to them in order to facilitate their interaction with individuals from other countries.

As per BSS, one can contribute by becoming a sponsor for certain BSS events including BSS Foundation Day, Children's Day in International Street Situations (CiSS), International Day of Older Persons (IDOP), and Christmas Gifts. Assisting the underprivileged is considered an obligation by many Christians.

Hence, Christmas presents the optimal opportunity to motivate prospective benefactors to dispense their generosity towards the less fortunate. BSS awards are often presented during the third week of December, prior to the departure of project staff for their Christmas holidays. This timing allows them to engage with the community and gain a deeper understanding of the life situations of the individuals they serve.

In addition, attention can be provided by visiting the Samaritano Hall and engaging with individuals experiencing homelessness, acknowledging the benefits, comprehending the constraints, and acknowledging their inherent human worth.

2 Methodology

This community service initiative is being conducted in partnership with Cebu Normal University, located in Cebu City, Philippines, as a means of implementing the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the two entities. This exercise targets the street children who reside in the premises of Balay Samaritano Sa Sugbo, a collaborative partner of CNU. This activity was carried out creatively. So that children can understand the message conveyed. (Putra & Yasa, 2020; Widiantoro et al., 2013)

The implementer have taken the following actions to carry out this activity: 1. They have initiated contact with the lecturer from Cebu Normal University (CNU) to execute the Maysarakat devotion. 2. A lecturer at CNU is actively seeking the whereabouts and
objectives of community commitment. 3. Once acquired, students are instructed to gather data on the challenges encountered and collaborate on finding solutions. 4. Lecturers from CNU and UMY, along with their respective students, convene for collaborative discussions to analyze the findings of their data collecting. 5. Faculty members from CNU, UMy, students, and BSS engage in discussions regarding potential solutions and the corresponding implementation strategy. 6. During the implementation phase, the BSS assembles the specific group of children to be targeted. Subsequently, the students carry out the pre-established plans for the activities. 7. Performance assessment is conducted orally for the objective, whilst written evaluation is used for assessing the pupil.

During Step 5, it was mutually decided that the aid offered would encompass provisions for sustenance, as well as implements for sketching. Regarding its implementation, the organized events are as follows: 1. Opening 2. Performing the national anthems of the Philippines and Indonesia 3. Salutations from the delegates of BSS and UMY 4. Actions and Melodies 5. Promotion of health 6. Spontaneity exhibited by children. 7. Movement and musical compositions. A group of UMY professors and UMY nursing master students, who were serving as a team, engaged with the children at BSS. They connected with the children through games, incorporated basic health instructions, and encouraged them to sing and dance together. It is also performed to acquaint them with Indonesia.

English is the primary language used for communication. Due to the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the children, the executive employs non-verbal communication methods such as gestures and visual aids to facilitate understanding. The executive is additionally supported by the manager of the Samaritano Sa Sugbo Hall.

The Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta Ners Professional Program has developed a portfolio approach to analyze the student experience. The form consists of five specific inquiries regarding the community service "I AM OK" at Balay Samaritano sa Sugbu. These questions pertain to the experience and skills gained, encountered challenges, noteworthy aspects, less engaging aspects, positive aspects, and areas for improvement in the community service.

3 Results and Discussion

The entire network of community service activities has been executed proficiently and seamlessly. The participants exhibited a strong sense of enthusiasm for engaging in the activity. Additionally, they have the ability to showcase a demonstration of the material that has been taught. Enthusiasts who are eager and passionate about an activity actively participate in it.

Various supplementary elements are employed, such as the delivery aspect, utilization of video media by students, motion dissertations, and music, to facilitate participants in comprehending and retaining the taught material. In addition, due to the diverse nationalities of the executives, the communication is conducted in English and Tagalog during the delivery process. It enhances the participants' level of engagement.

Another factor that provides assistance is the endorsement of the Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo. The volunteers of Bala Samaritano Sa Sugbo also accompany the community devotion team. Upon encountering an impediment, the executor. They will assist in tasks such as facilitating communication with the children and organizing various locations.
Furthermore, I would like to discuss the student's experience following the completion of data collection through the utilization of the portfolio form. The passion of this community has led to the identification of six themes and sub-themes. The graphic below illustrates:

![Diagram](image)

**Fig. 1.** The theme and sub-theme of experience of the students doing community service in other country.

The UMY Master of Nursing students' experience in conducting international community service can be categorized into numerous topics, including their overall experience, encountered problems, areas for improvement, positive aspects, less captivating aspects, and intriguing aspects. Students gain both organizational and spiritual experiences. Experience engaging with children who are specifically being focused on, despite having limitations in their linguistic abilities. Consequently, in order to address this issue, individuals employ non-verbal communication techniques, including utilizing media platforms that communicate in the Tagalog language. This is done to enhance the children's comprehension of the implementer's communication.

From an organizational perspective, students possess expertise in coordinating community service initiatives that involve individuals from other countries. Regarding the spiritual experience, pupils expressed a heightened sense of gratitude due to their significantly more favorable circumstances compared to the homeless youngsters in Cebu.

Now, let's move on to the task. The challenges encompass limited time for preparation, the need for spontaneous adaptation, and effective communication. Students face a challenging task of gathering information on partners and preparing for activities within a two-week timeframe. The coordination between the professors of CNU and UMY has been crucial in providing assistance. In addition, linguistic disparities provide a significant obstacle to effective communication. While pupils lack proficiency in Tagalog, the targeted youngsters are unable to communicate verbally speaking English fluently. The assistance was provided by partners who presented in the Tagalog language, while students utilized body movements and media, such as videos, in Tagalog. Ensuring the reception and comprehension of the message by the audience is of utmost importance (Mandaru et al., 2021; Putra & Yasa, 2020).

The sub-themes that have been derived from the main theme include the support system, the participants' passion, and the universality of music as a language. The teachers from CNU and UMY, along with the assistance of Balay Samaritano Sa Sugbo, form a strong support
network for the execution of this community's religious practice. However, despite the presence of linguistic restriction, the children from the BSS exhibit great enthusiasm in participating in the activity. They observed the entire event and during the competitors' performance, a few children stood out and showcased their skills in dancing and singing. By demonstrating unwavering commitment, this community strengthens the notion that music transcends cultural and linguistic barriers. Music serves as a universal form of communication that is accessible to all individuals. During the community event, a child performed the popular song "Ojo Dibanding-bandangke" that was trending at the time. The other children appear to derive pleasure from it. Even if individuals lack comprehension of the song's significance, they can nevertheless derive pleasure from the delivered music.

Students find Shells, as well as the background of a new aim, uninteresting. The contents of the BSS do not align with the events organized by the students. This might likely be attributed to insufficient collaboration with the BSS regarding specific specifics, such as the event's venue. The focus of the community service is on children who are designated as beneficiaries of social support. However, both children and their caregivers are present, indicating the presence of adults. Both of these factors compel students to modify the event's strategy in order to ensure its acceptance by all attendees, including both children and adults, who are the intended recipients of the community service. Assisting those in need can stem from an individual's inherent inclination to consistently promote benevolence, resulting in a sense of fulfillment thereafter. (Laila & Asmarany, 2015)

4 Conclusions

The community service initiative, named I'm OK, was implemented at Balay Samaritano Sa Sugbo with the objective of benefiting the children of BSS. This activity is designed to enhance the child's self-assurance by engaging them in the planned activities. The events were collaboratively conducted by professors from Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta and Cebu Normal University, in association with Balay Samaritano sa Sugbo. Some individuals actively engage in this activity by observing the examples demonstrated by the pupils and seeking opportunities to showcase their own skills. Students also acquire practical knowledge in carrying out international community service initiatives. Students endure experiences that are neither pleasant nor terrible. This type of community dedication can be further enhanced through improved planning and enhanced collaboration with associates and allies.

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References


