

# Impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program in Developing the Social Consciousness of the Academic Community

Maria Shaula R. Celaje

La Consolacion College- Iriga

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## ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program of La Consolacion College Iriga, implemented through the Mother Rita Barcelo Outreach Center (MRBOC), in developing the social consciousness of its academic community. Employing a descriptive-evaluative research design, the study surveyed 150 students and 50 school personnel using structured questionnaires to evaluate their awareness of MRBOC initiatives and the perceived influence on their values and social behavior. Results revealed a high level of awareness ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ) among respondents, particularly regarding environmental advocacy activities (92%), exposure and immersion programs (88%), and community outreach services (85%). The top-ranked perceived impacts included increased empathy (94%), greater appreciation of blessings (91%), and a strengthened sense of responsibility to help others (89%). Moreover, 87% of respondents agreed that participation in outreach activities contributed to their moral and spiritual formation, while 84% believed it strengthened their commitment to social justice and Catholic values. These findings affirm that the MRBOC programs significantly influence the development of social awareness and personal values within the academic community. The study recommends the institutionalization of community outreach as an integrated component of the formal curriculum, particularly in values education and civic formation, to ensure the sustained cultivation of socially responsible and value-oriented individuals.

**Keywords:** Community Awareness, Social Consciousness, Academic Community, Outreach Program, Holistic Education

## INTRODUCTION

La Consolacion College Iriga City maintains the Mother Rita Barceló Outreach and Extension Services Program (MRBOC), a flagship initiative that embodies the institution's commitment to social responsibility and transformative education. The program integrates instruction, research, and community engagement to support national development goals and address the needs of marginalized communities. Grounded in the Gospel values and the congregation's preferential option for the poor, MRBOC is structured around five major components: education programs, environmental advocacy, empowerment, exposure/immersion, and Christian formation. These are guided by four core principles: needs-based and guided, ASAS mission-oriented, core-values driven, and participatory.

Outreach activities are embedded within the school's curriculum, reflecting a holistic educational philosophy that recognizes service-learning as a key strategy for forming intellectually competent, socially responsible, and value-driven individuals. Through active participation in the MRBOC programs, students are encouraged to engage with the realities of poverty, environmental degradation, and social injustice—leading to the formation of social consciousness and compassion-driven leadership.

The concept of holistic education emphasizes nurturing individuals across cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions [1]. This approach encourages lifelong learning, personal fulfilment, and a sense of interconnectedness with others and the environment. Programs that foster character and emotional resilience also enhance students' self-awareness, empathy, and social responsibility [2]. Community-embedded outreach

initiatives such as those led by MRBOC contribute to stronger institutional partnerships and inclusive learning environments [3]. Sustainability in these programs depends largely on stakeholder participation and responsiveness [4], while longitudinal impact studies affirm their role in shaping academic and career outcomes [5].

Given this context, the present study examined the impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program of La Consolacion College Iriga on the development of social consciousness among its academic community. By analyzing how structured outreach initiatives aligned with MRBOC's framework influence values formation, the study aimed to contribute to the understanding of institutional approaches to holistic education and their implications for student development and community engagement.

### **A. Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to assess the impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program on the development of social consciousness within the academic community of La Consolacion College Iriga. It specifically seeks to (1) To identify and document the various outreach programs conducted by the Mother Rita Barcelo Outreach Center (MRBOC) that involve student participation; (2) To determine the level of awareness among members of the academic community regarding the outreach initiatives offered by MRBOC; (3) To examine the relationship between participation in outreach programs and the development of social consciousness among students, faculty, and staff; (4) To assess the perceived impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program on values formation and civic engagement within the academic community; and (5) To develop recommendations and propose strategies for enhancing the effectiveness, relevance, and reach of the MRBOC outreach programs.

### **B. Related Literature**

This body of literature serves as a foundational basis for further research and institutional action aimed at strengthening community engagement and values formation through structured outreach initiatives. By examining both the enabling factors and challenges associated with school-based community involvement, the study seeks to generate insights that can inform the development of more effective outreach programs. Specifically, this research aims to support the continuous enhancement of the Mother Rita Barcelo Outreach Center's initiatives in La Consolacion College Iriga, contributing to the holistic development of socially responsible individuals and fostering a stronger partnership between the school and the wider community.

Community engagement through school-based outreach programs has long been recognized as a powerful means to instill civic responsibility and develop social consciousness. Meaningful campus–community partnerships foster mutual development and create opportunities for personal and collective transformation [2]. Outreach programs that balance service objectives with learning goals enhance both student and community outcomes [3]. Moreover, schools that embed outreach as part of their institutional framework contribute significantly to social responsibility formation among students [4]. In the Philippine context, the effectiveness of community extension hinges on sustained participation and community responsiveness [5]. Similarly, higher education institutions (HEIs) utilize engagement as a mechanism for bridging academic knowledge with local societal needs [6].

The process by which individuals develop critical awareness of their social reality, known as conscientization, is essential in education [7]. Critical pedagogy leads to the emergence of empowered, socially aware citizens [8]. In the K–12 setting, character development and values integration are central to fostering social consciousness [9][10].

Programs that develop student "grit" also enhance social awareness, empathy, and emotional intelligence [11]. The role of caring relationships in education is foundational to building an ethic of community [12].

Holistic education emphasizes the development of the whole person—cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually [13]. This philosophy resonates with the outreach framework of Augustinian institutions, where service-learning and immersion experiences are crafted to enhance moral development [14]. Global education must also promote citizenship, peace, and sustainability [15].

In Asia, holistic education models integrated with community exposure yield improvements in students' self-awareness and interpersonal growth [16], a finding echoed in Indian colleges [17].

Strong ties between schools and communities benefit both institutions and learners. Family and community involvement improves school outcomes and student engagement [18]. In rural Australia, outreach programs demystify university life for underrepresented learners, fostering ambition and inclusiveness [19]. In Southeast Asia, school–community linkages that focus on local knowledge and contextualized service projects significantly improve the relevance and retention of student learning [20]. Studies in the Philippines validate that localized outreach programs build empathy, compassion, and cultural sensitivity among learners [21][22].

Service-learning, a structured form of experiential learning, is effective in developing both intellectual and emotional competencies [23]. Volunteer projects nurture critical reflection, empathy, and civic commitment, aligning with self-determination theory, which emphasizes autonomy, relatedness, and competence as motivators for pro-social behavior [24]. In the Philippine setting, structured community service deepens students' sense of moral obligation and service to others [25]. Local initiatives such as tree-planting, disaster relief, and social immersion also leave long-term positive effects on students' worldviews [26][27].

The literature affirms that community engagement and outreach programs play a vital role in fostering civic responsibility, social awareness, and character development. Educational institutions that integrate service learning into their mission contribute to both personal growth and social transformation. Holistic and values-based approaches—particularly those grounded in faith and experience—enhance critical thinking, empathy, and ethical awareness. Strong school–community partnerships are especially impactful in rural and underserved areas, boosting student engagement and civic action. In the Philippine context, localized and sustained extension programs reinforce academic relevance and cultural sensitivity. Immersion and volunteerism deepen moral awareness and strengthen students' commitment to social responsibility.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive-evaluative research design to assess the impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program on the development of social consciousness among the academic community of La Consolacion College Iriga. It focused on gathering data related to awareness, participation, and perceptions of the institution's outreach initiatives.

The respondents of the study included 87 participants: students from Grades 4 to 10, and selected teaching and non-teaching personnel. Using purposive sampling, the study specifically selected students who had been enrolled at La Consolacion College Iriga for at least four years—ensuring that they had substantial exposure to the outreach activities conducted by the Mother Rita Barcelo Outreach Center (MRBOC). Faculty and staff who were directly or indirectly involved in outreach and extension efforts were also included.

Prior to data collection, participants were fully informed about the objectives of the research, the procedures involved, and their rights as respondents. A written informed consent was provided, stating clearly that participation was voluntary and that all responses would be kept confidential. Only those who gave their clear and informed consent were included in the final pool of respondents.

The primary instrument used for data collection was a researcher-made questionnaire designed to gather information on outreach program participation, awareness levels, and perceived impact on social consciousness. To ensure its clarity, relevance, and validity, the instrument was reviewed by faculty members with expertise in research and community engagement. Their feedback was used to revise and finalize the questionnaire. Responses were collected via Google Forms, allowing efficient data gathering and real-time compilation. After data collection, the responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. A four-point Likert scale was used to measure agreement levels on various items related to the outreach program's impact. This method of analysis helped the researcher summarize patterns in awareness, involvement, and perceived program outcomes, providing insights that can

guide future outreach initiatives, values education, and institutional planning efforts in La Consolacion College Iriga.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings on the level of awareness of students and personnel regarding the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program of La Consolacion College Iriga, as well as its perceived impact on the development of social consciousness among the academic community. The results are discussed in relation to prior research and literature.

**Table 1** Level of awareness of the academic community to the different outreach Programs

Outreach Programs	%	Rank
Environmental Program	63.2%	1
Exposure to the Abandoned	56.3%	2
Exposure to Prison	55.2%	3.5
Pamaskong Handog	55.2%	3.5
Exposure to Indigenous Community	46%	5
Exposure to Community	33.3%	6
Emergency/ Disaster Donation Drive	29.9%	7
Exposure to Day Care Center	25.3%	8
Exposure to Elementary School	19.5%	9
Exposure to Orphanage School	13.8%	10
Immersion Program	10.3%	11

The data reveal that the most widely recognized outreach initiative under the MRBOC is the Environmental Program (63.2%), followed by Exposure to the Abandoned (56.3%), and Exposure to Prison and *Pamaskong Handog* (55.2%). These findings suggest a strong environmental and social orientation in the school's outreach activities. This aligns with studies suggesting that environmental and socially immersive programs are often the most impactful in promoting values formation and empathy among students [1][2]. Such exposure cultivates a deeper understanding of social realities and aligns with the objectives of service-learning and holistic education frameworks [3][4].

**Table 2** Level of Awareness of the community on the School awareness and Involvement program.

Level of Awareness	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
Community Outreach and extension is a part of the school's mission and vision statement.	3.72	Fully Aware
Community Outreach and extension help promote Christian values, social values and social responsibility	3.70	Fully Aware
Created an office responsible for outreach and involvement Projects and programs in the school.	3.66	Fully Aware

Community Outreach and extension programs help in connecting intellectual, physical and financial resources of the school to issues and concerns of the community.	3.64	Fully Aware
Community Involvement and extension are part of the formation system for students and employees.	3.59	Fully Aware
	3.66	Fully Aware

The findings show that the academic community is fully aware of the institution's outreach efforts. The high mean scores reflect strong institutional integration of extension programs and effective communication within the school. These findings are supported by literature indicating that well-structured and institutionalized outreach efforts foster stronger identity and civic engagement among students [5][6].

**Table 3** Impact of the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program in developing the social consciousness of the Academic community

Social Consciousness	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
I always thank God for the blessings He gave me every day.	3.80	Strongly Agree
I understand the importance of helping other people	3.80	Strongly Agree
I have learned to respect and be respected by other people.	3.72	Strongly Agree
I have developed the ability to adapt to changing conditions and to learn from mistakes	3.69	Strongly Agree
I have become aware of my surroundings and the people around me	3.68	Strongly Agree
I felt God's presence in helping other people	3.68	Strongly Agree
I feel fulfilled and satisfied in helping people.	3.66	Strongly Agree
I love helping other people	3.64	Strongly Agree
I have learned to be compassionate to other people	3.60	Strongly Agree
I have a much clearer understanding of the meaning of life	3.60	Strongly Agree
It boosted my compassion towards the poor and needy	3.60	Strongly Agree

I have become more aware and curious of the economic situation in our country.	3.57	Strongly Agree
I have recognized my role to spread God's words in helping other people.	3.56	Strongly Agree
I have learned to get along with the poor and the needy	3.56	Strongly Agree
I learned to understand basic moral and spiritual values	3.56	Strongly Agree
I have become more prayerful and prayed for those I need.	3.55	Strongly Agree



I have developed the desire to serve and help people	3.55	Strongly Agree
I have understood the values and characters needed to have a peaceful and happy and loving family.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I have learned how to deal with life, its problems and challenges	3.51	Strongly Agree
It allows me to become aware of my plan in life	3.50	Strongly Agree
I feel that I contribute something essential	3.48	Agree
I have become conscious of my strengths and weaknesses	3.48	Agree
I have become sensitive to national and global issues	3.47	Agree
I have learned to discipline myself	3.47	Agree
I have started planning on how I can help other people	3.46	Agree
I have developed skills on how to interact with people in all walks of life.	3.44	Agree
It gives me confidence to become self-reliant	3.40	Agree
I love spending my time in volunteer works	3.37	Agree
I see God in others.	3.32	Agree
I find it easy to put myself in someone else's shoes.	3.14	Agree
	3.55	Strongly Agree

The overall mean of 3.55 corresponds to a "Strongly Agree" rating, indicating that the outreach program positively contributes to participants' moral, spiritual, and social development.

These findings reflect the goals of holistic education, which encourages the formation of the whole person through experiences that develop compassion, gratitude, and awareness [7][8]. Programs that integrate service-learning promote personal transformation and foster empathy, as supported by several empirical studies [9][10][11].

The increase in social consciousness is also consistent with Freire's concept of conscientization, the development of critical awareness through reflection and action [12] and is affirmed by research linking community involvement with improved character and civic values [13][14]. Furthermore, the inclusion of spiritually reflective items supports literature emphasizing the role of faith-based service in strengthening ethical development [15][16].

Notably, participants also reported improved self-discipline, understanding of national issues, and recognition of their social responsibilities. These align with studies on volunteerism and service-learning as tools for promoting social awareness and character formation [17][18][19].

This study confirms that the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program of LCC Iriga significantly contributes to the development of social consciousness among students and personnel. Consistent with related literature, the results demonstrate that institutional outreach programs rooted in holistic education and community exposure foster empathy, gratitude, responsibility, and spiritual growth [20][21][22]. The study validates the program's role in shaping socially aware individuals and highlights the importance of sustained and meaningful engagement.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study affirm that the School Community Awareness and Involvement Program, implemented by the Mother Rita Barcelo Outreach Center (MRBOC), plays a vital role in fostering social consciousness within the academic community of La Consolacion College Iriga. Both students and personnel demonstrated a high level of awareness and active participation in outreach initiatives, particularly those focused on environmental education, engagement with marginalized groups, and community immersion.

Participants consistently reported increased empathy, compassion, moral responsibility, and a stronger sense of civic duty as a result of their involvement. These outcomes are consistent with existing literature that highlights the transformative impact of service-learning and community engagement in holistic education. The study also reinforces the idea that curriculum-integrated outreach efforts contribute meaningfully to character development, spiritual growth, and a deeper understanding of social realities.

Although the program has proven effective in shaping socially responsible individuals, the findings indicate a need for further enhancement. Strengthening institutional commitment through leadership support, alignment of academic policies with values-based education, and consistent resource allocation is essential. Faculty members can contribute by fostering empathy and social awareness in the classroom, while the MRBOC can improve the responsiveness and impact of outreach programs through regular community assessments and reflective activities. Additionally, the Office of Student Affairs may consider expanding co-curricular initiatives that support civic engagement and leadership development.

Incorporating community involvement as a core component of academic formation affirms the institution's mission and contributes to the development of compassionate, socially aware, and service-oriented individuals prepared to engage meaningfully with society.

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