

## Narratives on CAS Shares HEART Extension Program: University's Sustainable Community Response

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### Abstract

One of a University's four functions is to extend sustainable training programs that will help address any social issue in the community. This study evaluates the effectiveness of a University extension program. It focuses on the participants' skills acquired from the program and how they influence their job performance and quality of life. This study uses a qualitative approach and narrative inquiry design. Data collection methods included observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. Participants were selected through purposive sampling. By deriving significant themes from participants' narratives, the findings revealed that the participants acquired technological, artistic, emotional, and kinesthetic skills. These skills enhanced their job performance, empowered their connections, and nurtured their purpose and direction. These findings imply that university extension programs play a crucial role in improving attitudes, skills, and knowledge among beneficiaries, ultimately enhancing their sense of purpose and quality of service in the workplace. This study will give insights to the curriculum developers attempting to initiate a community-responsive curriculum. Furthermore, these findings can assist educators in devising effective learning strategies where desired learning outcomes serve as a tool for community extension projects.

**Keywords:** *Community-responsive curriculum, effectiveness, extension programs, quality of life, sustainability, university*

### Introduction

The Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in the Philippines provides 24-hour care, intensive treatment, and rehabilitation services for residents who are Children in Conflict with the Law (CICL). The center aims to enhance the residents' social functioning when they reintegrate into the community. To provide excellent quality of service, the center opens doors for linkages that will help them offer intervention programs to the residents.

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Thus, the CAS Shares HEART (Human Kinetics, Emotional Well-Being, Arts, Reading, Literature, Technology, and Scientific Processes) to RRCY, a university extension program, was extended to a rehabilitation center's staff and residents. In order to promote proper growth and development, this rehabilitation center offers adolescents from Region 7 provinces a home environment as well as child-appropriate processes, programs, and services for prevention, diversion, rehabilitation, reintegration, and after care program as stipulated in Republic Act No. 9344, or the “Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act” of the Philippines

Numerous studies conducted on rehabilitation treatment are focused on the improvements of CICL’s attitudes, emotional intelligence, and coping styles after interventions or those which evaluate staff’s improvement after trainings; however, there is no evidence of studies which concentrate simultaneously on evaluating both the staff’s quality of service and residents’ quality of life as they reunite with their respective families and reintegrate into their immediate communities after skills trainings or interventions. The research conducted by Corrigan et al. (cited in Simpatico, 2014) which discussed the staff training to improve implementation and impact of behavioral rehabilitation programs found out that there was significant improvement in the participants’ attitudes in behavioral intervention and collegial support. However, it did not give emphasis on specific skills that the staff had acquired from the training and how well they applied such skills in their services. Further study conducted by Zijlmans et al. (2014) which focused on the effectiveness of a staff training showed that emotional intelligence and coping styles of support staff improved after the training but researchers failed to give emphasis as well on the staff’s characteristics that may affect their organizational factors. Apart from studies focusing on staff training, there are also studies that attempt to determine the effectiveness of training for CICL. Another research by Arubia (2014), which focused on the approaches used to rehabilitate child-law breakers in relation to their ability to develop life mechanisms, found that rehabilitation approaches play a significant role in reforming CICL. However, the study did not mention the specific skills acquired by the children from these approaches that may have helped them improve their life mechanisms. Another study by Manuel (2019), aimed at determining the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs for CICL, asserted that diversion programs incorporating vocational training, livelihood skills training, and sports development were perceived to be effective. Nevertheless, researchers did not emphasize the significant skills acquired and applied that would support the claim of positive effects observed in children who

underwent these programs. Hence, more studies need to be conducted to evaluate and assess the impact of these training pieces on staff and residents concomitantly.

According to Risler and O'Rourke (2009), educational programs for young people include general and remedial curricula, special education programs, and vocational training (cited in Ignacio, n.d.). Hence, this study aimed to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the *CAS Shares HEART Extension Program to the staff and residents of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth*, and it specifically sought to answer the following objectives:

1. What skills are acquired by the staff and residents from the extension program?  
and
2. How do these skills influence the participants' job performance and quality of life?

The skills acquired and their applicability can be the most concrete evidence and visible proof that the program served its purpose. Researchers knew these participants acquired relevant knowledge and capabilities by looking at the skills gained. Moreover, knowing how the participants applied these skills led to a deeper understanding of the importance of these skills in real-world contexts. Focusing on the applicability of these skills enabled researchers to determine whether these skills acquired are suitable for addressing the specific challenges and the needs of the participants, and doing so enabled researchers to understand the program's practical relevance and potential in fostering positive outcomes in participant's job performance and residents' well-being. The contributions of this research include enhancing the participant's skills in dealing with offenders, transforming residents into valuable members of society, and emphasizing the importance of connecting center-based services with community programs for the intervention, diversion, and rehabilitation of residents.

### **Theoretical Background**

This study is anchored on the Social Support Theory by Drennon-Gala and Cullen (cited in Kort-Butler, 2017), which purported that instrumental, informational, and emotional supports reduce the likelihood of delinquency and crime. The theory emphasizes how supportive societies and relationships can lessen delinquency and crime rates. In this study, the university, guided by the needs assessment survey results answered by the clientele, carefully designed training needs for staff and youth residents in a particular rehabilitation center. Hence, the "CAS Shares

HEART” to RRCY was implemented to offer the staff and residents social, intellectual, social networking, and emotional wellness skills training to support the agency’s attainment of its mission, goals, and objectives.

This study supported the theory’s proposition as the participants gained improved job performance after being provided with adequate resources, training, and support networks. This study claimed the program contributed to the youth residents' successful rehabilitation and community reintegration. Participants acquired valuable skills from the training and applied them in their endeavors.

The participants acquired technological skills, artistic skills, emotional resilience, and kinesthetic skills. They also developed their artistic abilities like painting and songwriting. They also started to develop stress-coping mechanisms, enabling them to handle stressful situations effectively. They also acquire kinesthetic skills that enable them to engage in physical activities that affect their overall wellness.

The positive impact of providing such support and services enabled them to perform their jobs effectively. Specifically, they continuously apply these skills as they make monthly reports and during online hearings. It enabled the youth to be successfully reintegrated into their community, as they started to boost growth, connection, and confidence to nurture their sense of purpose and direction. With the mentorship seminars and workshops, these residents received the necessary support to develop essential skills, which are highly needed as they immersed themselves in their respective communities. Thus, these services significantly contributed to job performance and community reintegration, shedding light on the program's real impact.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### ***Impacts of Extension Programs conducted in Regional Rehabilitation Centers***

DSWD-Cordillera Administrative Region (2023) cited that the center connects its programs with community initiatives to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of residents into their families and communities. The involvement of immediate families and the broader community is essential; the center collaborates with various community resources to aid in the treatment and reintegration of offenders and strengthen their families. Citizens are encouraged to take responsibility for protecting children, with a recognition that it is not solely the duty of

government and nongovernmental organizations (Rehabilitation of Children in Conflict with the Law, 2000). Community and extension programs are essential to enhance the services at RRCY. These programs include staff training, mindfulness, and activities to support residents. Regular staff training is "*emotional resilience*," which benefits youth residents and the staff. Research has demonstrated that resilience, particularly its positive indicator, significantly predicts juvenile mental health. According to Konaszewski et al. (2021), the juveniles surveyed showed higher levels of mental well-being and life satisfaction, the more severe their resilience was.

Programs supporting juvenile delinquents have contributed to reformation and reconnection with families and the community, as exemplified by Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) certificates (Palaubsabon, 2022). The Saint John's Child and Family Center Youth Development program positively impacted at-risk youth in a community-based setting (cited in Sherman, 2011). Furthermore, Yaman and Arslan (2009) mentioned in their study that recreational activities done in the regions committing intense crime reduce the crime rates, and sports are used as a buffer for children to prevent these individuals from committing crimes. For instance, "*kinesthetic skills*" are beneficial because they promote physical activity, support cognitive, social, and emotional development, improve the brain's ability to retain information, and develop youth residents' strengths, capacities, and self-confidence. Other studies also found that art-based programs and art therapies uniquely help youths in their development period. They are perceived to be essential interventions for justice-involved, traumatized youths (Development Services Group Inc., 2016). Such a good example is "*artistic skills*." Youth with artistic abilities are more imaginative and creative, and they also help them develop their communication skills. They can better manage their emotional states and learn to deal with their feelings and fears by being creative. The "*artistic skills*" of social workers can be advantageous because they must be imaginative in finding ways to work that may not require many resources but still lead to more substantial and practical solutions to the problems they encounter with their clients. Lastly, a recognized literature-based program, Reading for Life (RFL), is designed to foster virtuous character development in Indiana for identified juveniles who have committed nonviolent offenses (Development Services Group Inc., 2016) and was said to have a positive impact.

Additional staff training is required to ensure they possess the necessary skills to meet clients' needs. For social workers, in particular, "*technological skills*" are essential. Technology has brought forth new avenues for client interaction and communication, posing fresh queries regarding the nature of the social worker-client relationship. Furthermore, social workers access, compile, and manage client information using a variety of technological platforms. Ramirez (2011) suggested improving employee training, extending the shadowing period, and providing a realistic understanding of their roles. When it comes to youth offenders, there is a demand for systematic and holistic programs, as highlighted by Docena (2022), to ensure that resources allocated to rehabilitation facilities fulfill their intended purposes. Implementing programs that equip juvenile offenders with the appropriate skills for successful reintegration into family and community life is vital, ultimately enhancing their quality of life.

### ***Job Performance***

Healthcare systems worldwide are committed to monitoring and improving the quality of care they offer (Cedefop, 2020b). In the rehabilitation industry, staff must have skills in human behavior, empathy, group management, public speaking, and resource navigation ("The Rehab Industry: The Must-Have Counselor Skills and Attributes"). Their knowledge and competence are vital for organizations providing critical services (Hilsen et al., 2021) since patients trust the staff to guide them on their path to recovery (Gill, 2021). A rehabilitation workforce with these essential skills is necessary for successful service delivery (WHO, 2023). For this reason, staff members must also consistently put the various tasks they have learned in training into practice. Doing so will eventually help them develop the skills required to advance into these leadership roles and succeed. Manuel (2019) cites the Resource Centre, highlighting that many children in conflict with the law are socioeconomic victims who lack access to education, health, shelter, care, and protection.

Thus, this study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of a University extension program to give insights to the curriculum developers attempting to initiate a community-responsive curriculum that intends to solve similar social issues.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative approach, particularly narrative inquiry, which looks at people's personal stories to understand their experiences and the knowledge they have gained. It focuses on the narratives or stories that individuals share to make sense of their lives (Connelly & Clandinin cited by Clarke (2023). Hence, participants constructed knowledge and meanings based on their experiences and perceptions of the extension project. This research also emphasized that the participants' cultural beliefs and social contexts influence their perspectives.

Specifically, Connelly and Clandinin's narrative inquiry, as described by Wang and Geale (2015), was used to gain novel perspectives and a deeper comprehension of the various narratives of the CICL and the staff. This approach enabled researchers to gather stories of the participants' experiences before, during, and after the program implementation, evidenced by the skills they have acquired and their applicability to improve their job performance and quality of life. Additionally, it facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the lives of the children and how they integrated their learning as they returned to their families and communities after the program. Looking at the skills acquired and their applicability led to a complete understanding of the program's effectiveness.

### **Population and Sample/ Study Group/Participants**

This study involved 10 participants—five staff and five center residents. Bryman (2012) and Mason (2010) emphasize the versatility of Narrative Inquiry as a qualitative research method, particularly for studies involving a small group of 10 participants (cited in Azuero et al., 2014). This approach focuses on collecting and analyzing narratives to gain insights into participants' lived experiences, following for a comprehensive understanding of their stories. The researchers used purposive sampling, thus ensuring the selection of participants who met the inclusion criteria and had in-depth experiences related to the study. Both sets of participants were selected based on these criteria: 1) they must have completed at least 80% of the training and workshops; 2) they have freely agreed to discuss their experiences in the program and 3) they have reintegrated with

their respective families and communities as an additional criterion for the residents. For more detailed data on this topic, please refer to Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Length of Community Reintegration (Youth Residents)</b>	<b>Length of Service (Staff)</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>% of Trainings Attended</b>
Resident 1	7 months			>80%
Resident 2	11 months			>80%
Resident 3	9 months			>80%
Resident 4	8 months			>80%
Resident 5	1 year			>80%
Staff 1		30 years	Supervisor	>80%
Staff 2		6 years	Social Worker	>80%
Staff 3		7 years	Admin Staff	>80%
Staff 4		2 years	Social Worker	>80%
Staff 5		5 years	Social Worker	>80%

**Data Collection Tools**

Researchers served as the study's key instruments, critical in decision-making. The researchers used validated observation guidelines which contain indicators to help identify positive changes and improvements to participants' lives. This includes guide questions for the Interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The observation was done by focusing on the study's objectives. The Interview and FGD guide questions explored participant experiences in the extension program. Importantly, all these data collection tools were initially reviewed and validated by three Research Professors who were selected based on their exposure to research, especially in the qualitative approach for the methods aspect and this can be verified through their research publications in prestigious journals.

The interview and FGD guide questions consisted of three parts: 7 preliminary questions, which aligned with participant inclusion criteria; 8 main questions, which explored participant experiences in the extension program; and two concluding sections for reflective and additional inquiries to elicit further relevant information. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide questions were used to validate participant responses, enabling researchers to assess CAS Shares HEART's effectiveness in the RRCY program.



## Data Collection

The study utilized the triangulation method. The researchers conducted *observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions* that explored participants' experiences in the extension program. This triangulated procedure led to a complete understanding of the program's effectiveness. Triangulation in qualitative research reduces biases and distortions of interpretation, ensuring accurate reconstructions of reality, as noted by Ajemba and Arene (2022) and Donkoh (2023). It makes supplementary analysis easier and offers a deeper comprehension of the research issue.

### *Observation*

The *observation* was done covertly while respondents uttered responses by focusing on the study's objectives: acquired skills and applicability and it is non-participant-based observation wherein researchers are considered as outside observers. The researchers observed the skills being showcased by the participants as they uttered their responses. For instance, their communication skills and their emotions were noted during the interview and focus group discussion.

### *In-depth interview*

During the day of the *In-depth interview*, the participants were gathered, and each participant was interviewed by researcher using the interview guide. The researchers have fulfilled the observation guidelines by observing the positive impact and current effects of the program while considering the study's objectives. The researchers also announced some essential information regarding the study, its objectives, and how it will be used. The conversation was spontaneous; with the participants' consent, responses were recorded through an audio recorder for easy transcribing.

### *Focus Group Discussion*

During the *Focus Group Discussion*, the participants were gathered and oriented about how the focus group discussion works. This was conducted to verify the participants' responses in the in-depth interview. Through this procedure, researchers can determine the strength of the participants' responses despite being influenced by their colleagues' responses. The conversation was spontaneous; responses were still recorded using an audio recorder for easy transcribing.

The interview and Focus Group Discussion guide questions consisted of three parts: 7 preliminary questions, which aligned with participant inclusion criteria; 8 main questions, which explored participant experiences in the extension program; and two concluding sections for reflective and additional inquiries to elicit further relevant information.

### **Data Analysis**

The study employed Inductive Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) which outlines six steps in the procedure for conducting thematic analysis of data. The steps include familiarizing oneself with the data, creating preliminary codes, looking for themes, evaluating themes, defining and labelling themes, and creating the final report. Following the steps ensured that the most important themes surfaced from the verbatim transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions to better understand the skills acquired by the participants and the applicability of these skills to their respective endeavors.

*Step 1: Familiarization of the Data.* To fully understand the material, the researchers read the transcripts repeatedly to understand the experiences and feelings of the participants regarding the program (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Recurrent themes, expressions, or thoughts that emerged as significant were then observed. It was essential to thoroughly grasp the data through this familiarization process, as it laid the groundwork for the next coding and theme-creation processes.

*Step 2: Generating initial codes.* As cited by Braun and Clarke (2006), this step involved marking the passages in each transcript that matched these codes as they were read through. This is where the researchers did the open coding as they divided the data into discrete parts and created “codes” to label them. For instance, establishing a code such as “technology and innovation skills” to record situations when the participants gained computer applications and video conferencing. Breaking down the data into smaller, more manageable units later facilitated grouping them into broader themes in the next analysis stage.

*Step 3: Searching for themes.* The next step was finding potential themes once all the data had been coded, where the researchers emphasized axial coding as they began to draw connections between codes. The data set's recurring patterns of meaning were labeled themes. This was

accomplished by putting comparable codes in groups and searching for links and relationships between them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The derived themes were also ensured to be relevant and well-aligned with the research questions.

*Step 4: Reviewing themes.* In this step, the themes found were examined to ensure they appropriately represent and better convey the substance of the data (Braun & Clark, 2006). There were opportunities to hone, split, or combine topics as necessary. Carefully, the connection of every theme with the complete dataset and research inquiries were taken into premium account.

*Step 5: Defining and naming themes.* Adhering to Braun and Clarke (2006), selective coding was done in this step, in which the theme was labeled and defined when it had been determined to make its significance apparent, followed by providing a concise description highlighting each theme's significance to the research questions.

*Step 6: Producing the final report.* After writing the analysis, it was imperative to provide the topics along with illustrative quotes from the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The report has therefore presented a lucid and cohesive story that exemplifies the principal discoveries and narrative concerning RRCY staff and CICL in the CAS Shares HEART extension program.

## **Findings**

This part shows the participants' skills acquired from the program and how they influence their job performance and quality of life.

### **1. What are the Skills Acquired by the Staff and Residents from the Extension Program?**

This part shows the results of the first research objective. The results revealed the multifaceted acquisition of skills among participants after they underwent the program. Table 1 presents the emergent themes of their acquired skills.

**Table 2**

*Skills Acquired by the Staff and CICAL Residents from the Extension Program*

<b>EMERGENT THEMES</b>	<b>CATEGORIES AND SAMPLE QUOTED STATEMENT</b>
<b>1. Technological Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ use online platforms for communication</li> <li>▪ apply software application</li> <li>▪ navigate technological tools</li> </ul>
<b>2. Artistic Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ foster self-expression and innovation skills</li> <li>▪ increase confidence in their artistic endeavors</li> <li>▪ discover abilities in painting and songwriting</li> <li>▪ provide innovative avenues for therapeutic interventions</li> </ul>
<b>3. Emotional Resilience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ able to manage stress</li> <li>▪ cope with challenging situations</li> <li>▪ maintain balance in high-pressure environments</li> <li>▪ increase self-awareness, empathy, and adaptability in their job</li> </ul>
<b>4. Kinesthetic Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ engage in activities and experiential learning</li> <li>▪ hone motor skills through sports</li> </ul>

### **Technological Skills**

From the participants' narratives, it is evident that they lacked the skills necessary to utilize technological tools in the workplace effectively. Participants admitted that they had not previously had enough knowledge of video conferencing. Other participants also stated that they are not into making encoded reports because they find it challenging. However, with the implementation of the extension project, which exposed them to training in Information and Communication Technology, they became technologically competitive. They could engage in various technological training sessions and learn to navigate digital tools effectively. Interviews and observations consistently emphasized proficiency using software applications and online communication platforms. It is transparent from their narratives that they learned *presentation-making, lay-outting, report-making, and video conferencing*. The abilities above were proof that the program's services, training, and seminars were effective, as evidenced by their responses, which were as follows:

(1) "CTU training helped me to acquire skills in making PPT." – S5

(2) *“I did not know how to utilize video conferencing, but the training helped me to familiarize the proper usage of this platform, which is useful during conferences and hearings.” -S4*

This technological upskilling has facilitated smoother interaction and coordination and streamlined administrative tasks in the center.

### **Artistic Skills**

Participants admitted they only have a limited way of expressing emotions. The extension project developed their artistic skills. They were exposed to various artistic activities such as coffee painting, appreciation of art education, musical skills development, practical application for artistic skills, songwriting, and rap. These were designed to foster artistic expression and exploration, as well as practical application of artistic skills, the participants were able to grasp creative techniques evident in the following statements:

(1) *“I did not know about them before, but those paintings were made with coffee. Yes, coffee painting.” -C2*

In addition, it was transparent from the narratives that some were not exposed to the arts, considering the demands and pressure at work. They could not seek meaningful recreation, explore their potential, or even learn new things. However, the program's execution benefits the job performance and their complete lives, as it shapes and equips them with relevant abilities and enhanced competencies that are applicable in all other ways. These include creative writing, where they were exposed to crafting original and imaginative songs and poems. Another activity is technical writing, which enables them to produce structured manner, clear, and concise write-ups. Aside from that, these participants learned to create visual artworks using coffee. The program also gave them training to enhance their communication skills. The following are sample statements gathered from their narratives:

(2) *“I can still remember how I appreciated the songwriting activity, in which we were tasked to compose a song and my composition was chosen to be presented during the culmination.” -S1*

As previously stated, skills or competencies that are new to them are being added, and these have been a great help to an individual who is learning and open to new opportunities to acquire. Finally, there is the communication skill, which is undeniably crucial in today's competitive world and is supported by the following claim:

(3) *“I cannot forget how the CAS training helped me to enhance my communication skills, specifically in delivering the speech.” -S4*

### **Emotional Resiliency**

As reflected in their narratives, the participants need proper strategies for coping with stressful situations. They claimed that they get easily angry, especially when the children misbehave. The program has significantly impacted their lives as they learned to cope with stress. One of those is the acquisition of stress management skills. They acquired these skills from the program's training and workshops. They claimed that they also improved their stress-coping skills, which is supported by the following data:

(1) *“I used to be quite short-tempered.”-S5*

(2) *“One thing I have learned is stress management.” – S2*

(3) *“The sessions for emotional well-being helped me to obtain more strategies and techniques in handling stressful situations.”-S2*

(4) *“One thing I learned in coping stressful events is to engage in physical activities to release the stress that I felt.”-S2*

Furthermore, as the youth residents recalled their past experiences, they admitted they lacked self-discipline. They often seek enjoyment from their friends, which leads them to engage in vices. Participants even mentioned that they made poor decisions way back then, which badly impacted their lives. The rehabilitation services from the center and the program's training sessions that emphasized emotional well-being helped these participants improve themselves. It can be inferred from this quoted statement:

(5) *"I do interact with people, but not like how I used to, forming close friendships or being part of a group anywhere else... it's different there, it's different here."*- C1

(6) *"I've shared them with others as part of youth education"*- C4

### **Kinesthetics Skills**

As reflected in their narratives, considering their limitations, the participants were used to feel loneliness and boredom inside the center. They were not allowed to use gadgets and rarely contact their loved ones. Most days, they felt the same, doing the usual things from morning to evening as part of the rehabilitation process. Until the extension program arrived at the center, which gave them something to look forward to every week, this project provided opportunities for the participants to engage in sports activities that brought them enjoyment and recreation. One of the sports activities that they enjoyed was badminton. Participants expressed positive experiences playing badminton:

(1) *"We used to play some sports, like badminton. It was enjoyable. Nothing quite like it on that day; it felt like time stood still."* –C2

The project also exposed the participants to activities that challenged them to try new things or improve their talents. Some of these activities involved dancing and life-saving strategies. They expressed how these activities helped them explore new skills and potential, stating:

(2) *"I did not dance before because there was not much else to do there. I discovered that I could dance."* –C2

This program provided the participants with enjoyment, recreation, and opportunities to learn sound knowledge and abilities to prepare them for community reintegration.

### **2. How are these skills applied to participants' job performance and quality of life?**

Through rigorous analysis of the narratives from the participants, it has been found that they continuously apply the skills they acquired from the program. Table 2 presents how the acquired skills influence job performance and quality of life.

**Table 3***How Skills are Applied to Participants' Job Performance and Quality of Life*

EMERGENT THEMES	Categories and Sample Quoted Statement
<b>1. Enhancing Job Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● integrate acquired skills in the performance of daily work routines in the center</li> <li>● incorporate skills into their respective professional roles</li> <li>● utilize the skills to facilitate group sessions</li> <li>● apply the skills to collaborate with colleagues, and handle the residents</li> </ul>
<b>2. Empowering Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● has improved relationships with others</li> <li>● has promoted personal growth</li> <li>● develop the willingness to share acquired skills with the community, especially those who need them</li> </ul>
<b>3. Nurturing Purpose and Direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● develop the feeling of motivation to create and accomplish personal objectives</li> <li>● acquire necessary life skills necessary in forming deep connections with staff and peers</li> <li>● help discover interests, passions, and abilities that are inspirations in reaching wise decisions in life</li> <li>● facilitate self-discovery (talents, and career paths) giving a more meaningful and rewarding life upon reintegration into the community</li> </ul>

### Enhancing their Job Performance

The staff participants answered that they continuously apply and improve their skills because it allows them to enhance the quality of their system and service. These skills include emotional resiliency, which plays a pivotal part in performing their job effectively. Specifically, they recognized the importance of applying stress management techniques, mainly when dealing with youth offenders, which enhanced their effectiveness and the quality of their service. They also emphasized the need for comprehensive stress management training.

(1) *"I used to be quite short-tempered, but because of the program, I learned Stress Management, and I can effectively handle the children."* -S5

The results show that participants have demonstrated the ability to apply the program's skills continuously. They have integrated these emotional resiliency and technological skills as they



perform their daily routines in the center. Participants are consistently apt to incorporate program-acquired skills into their respective professional roles. Furthermore, the results emphasized how the participants utilized these newly acquired skills to facilitate group sessions and collaborate with their colleagues stating:

(2) *“I have colleagues who need more knowledge in utilizing computers, so I was able to help them by sharing the things that I have learned.” -S1*

By thoroughly examining participant’s experiences, the study uncovered the intricacies of continuous skill utilization, shedding light on participants' personal and professional growth.

### **Empowering Connection**

The participants applied the emotional resiliency they acquired during the rehabilitation to foster positive connections and personal growth as they reintegrated with their family and community. Most of the results from the responses revealed that the skills they acquired empowered them to build solid foundations and connections as they reintegrated into their family and community. This is because they can effectively handle their emotions leading to healthier communication and strengthening relationships in the community. This is reflected in the following statements:

(1) *“I applied what I have learned in activities conducted in school or the community” -C2*

Participants emphasized how the program improved their relationships with others and promoted personal growth. They reported feeling motivated to create and accomplish personal objectives, acquire necessary life skills, and form deep connections with peers through various activities and interventions. They also emphasized the value of peer support and mentorship in their quest for personal development and self-discovery, highlighting how these relationships enhanced their overall experience. Furthermore, the participants expressed how the program helped them develop a sense of direction and purpose for their future. They also mentioned realizing their interests, passions, and abilities and how these realizations inspired them to make wise decisions in life. In addition, the participants articulated their appreciation for the program's ability to help them discover their interests, talents, and career paths, laying the groundwork for a more meaningful and rewarding life outside the center.

### ***Nurtured Purpose and Direction***

The participants develop a sense of purpose and direction as they reintegrate with their families and community. This emphasizes their empowerment to become more productive and responsible members of society. Based on the analyzed responses, the participants will likely ponder upon their encounters and reflect on them to create a meaningful goal now that they are reintegrated with their family and community. One of the ways was to nurture the skills, specifically the emotional resilience by using them in daily routine. These can be seen in the following responses:

- (1) *“I should learn how to weigh things, especially those valuable learnings that they have shared with me and these should be applied in myself.”-C4*

## **Discussion, Conclusion and Implications**

### **1. What are the Skills Acquired by the Staff and Residents from the Extension Program?**

Referring to Result 1, the researchers used Inductive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, cited in (Maguire 2017) to conduct an in-depth examination of the various participants' narratives, incorporating the results of observations. This data analysis contributed to understanding the participants' experiences by identifying themes from the narratives. These identified themes include *Technological Skills, Artistic Skills, Emotional Resilience, and Kinesthetic Skills*.

#### **Technological Skills**

The findings from the participants' narratives shed light on the noticeable gap in their technological skills within the center. Their accounts underscored a lack of proficiency in utilizing technological tools, particularly evident in challenges related to video conferencing and report encoding. However, the implementation of the CAS Shares Heart to RRCY extension project played a pivotal role in addressing this gap by providing comprehensive ICT training. This intervention led to a remarkable transformation in the participants' technological skills, as evidenced by interviews and

observations. Importantly, participants demonstrated newfound abilities in efficiently utilizing software applications and online communication platforms, including presentation-making, layouting, report-making, and video conferencing skills. Their progress can be directly attributed to the program's services, training, and seminars. Thus, these findings underscore the effectiveness of targeted goals of the extension project, which is bridging technological skill gaps among participants. Such offered services not only improve individual abilities but also contribute to overall organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

These insights aligned with the article by Simplilearn (2023) citing that computer skills may pave the way to better earning potential, enhanced efficiency, and improved cooperation with colleagues and clients, due to rising dependence on digital tools and platforms in various professions. Participants expressed tangible benefits from their newly acquired competencies, which they applied directly to their daily tasks in the facility. As a result, the program's implementation contributed to individual growth and improved operational efficiency within the rehabilitation center.

These findings have profound implications. It emphasizes the importance of providing continuous skills development programs to address the needs within the workforce. Organizations can achieve greater productivity, streamline administrative processes, and foster smoother interaction by equipping employees with the necessary technological skills. Moreover, the success of the CAS program emphasized the importance of hands-on training and practical learning experiences in fostering meaningful skill acquisition. Ultimately, the result implies that technology-related training of the *CAS Shares HEART to RRCY* program greatly appealed to the participants, given their relevance to contemporary demand.

### **Artistic Skills**

The study's results indicated the extension project's positive impact, specifically in fostering artistic expression among the participants. Before their involvement in the program, the participants admitted that they only had a limited repertoire for expressing their emotions but the arrival of this project significantly helped them. They discovered new avenues for self-expression through exposure to different artistic activities such as coffee painting, music development, songwriting, and rap. Thus, the participants expressed gratitude for the

opportunities provided by the extension program, which enhanced their artistic skills and positively affected their academic performance. Moreover, they recognized the practical application of these newly acquired skills, foreseeing their applicability in future endeavors, which include joining a band or pursuing music-related jobs. The extension project provided participants with opportunities for artistic expression and exploration, art education and skill development, and practical application of artistic skills that benefit their community reintegration and social inclusion. These findings corroborate with the previous study of Development Services Group Inc. (2016), which emphasized that art-based programs and art therapies uniquely help youths to develop as this program addressed the need for some participants to be exposed to the arts, providing them opportunities for meaningful recreation and personal growth despite their pressure. In the context of the current study, the participants' narratives revealed a sense of satisfaction, appreciation, and newfound capabilities, highlighting the program's effectiveness in promoting personal and professional development.

This result implies that the *CAS Shares HEART to RRCY* program, which fostered artistic expression and exploration, has given the participants therapeutic outlets for coping with difficult experiences and a constructive way to channel their untold emotions. Additionally, findings emphasized the importance of future interventions considering the integration of artistic elements to facilitate personal growth and emotional well-being. Results also suggested that similar programs can contribute to participants' preparedness for possible employment opportunities. The program enhanced their artistic abilities by providing creative skills such as songwriting and coffee painting and equipped them with useful skills relevant to various music and visual arts industries. Hence, the study suggested that integrating artistic activities and workshops into counseling, education, and community programs can greatly benefit one's emotional well-being, academic success, and readiness for future endeavors.

### **Emotional Resilience**

The study's results shed light on the significant impact of the *CAS Shares HEART* extension project on the participants' ability to deal with stress and improve their emotional well-being. The participants' narratives emphasized their struggles with anger and short temper, highlighting a need for effective coping strategies. This aligned with the results of the study of Devereux et al. (2009), cited in Zijlmans et al. (2015) where trained staff experienced more positive emotions

when working with their clients. The same study also revealed that staff training aimed at emotional intelligence and staff-client interactions improves emotional intelligence and coping styles. Through the project's training and seminars, participants acquired insights as to how they can effectively manage stressful situations. The ability to adapt coping strategies was also improved, as evidenced by participants engaging in various physical activities to release stress.

Moreover, the program plays a crucial role in fostering personal growth, encouraging the realization of personal discipline, and providing valuable activities for recreation. Participants were able to discover their potential, develop their skills, cultivate their discipline, and cope with challenges, which are significantly helpful in community reintegration. This result is relevant to the study of Konaszewski et al. (2021), which revealed that the stronger resilience, the greater satisfaction with the life of the juveniles surveyed. This result implies that engaging in the CAS Shares HEART program provides a venue for self-expression, leading to a sense of fulfillment. Hence, this study emphasizes the need to provide targeted training and support programs for individuals to effectively cope with stress, enhance their emotional well-being, and foster personal development. By equipping participants with stress management skills and promoting self-discipline, the program contributed to creating a supportive environment conducive to the growth of others, specifically the youth residents. These findings stressed the need for holistic initiatives in addressing emotional challenges and promoting positive outcomes in both personal and professional realms.

### **Kinesthetics Skills**

Findings highlighted the significant impact of the extension program on participants inside the center. Before the arrival of the program, participants frequently experienced feelings of loneliness and boredom because of restrictions on gadget usage and limited contact with their family. However, the CAS extension program made a noticeable impact, offering them something to expect each week. This initiative provided opportunities for engagement in sports activities, such as badminton, which participants found immensely enjoyable and engaging. The result aligns with previous research of Fraser-Thomas et al., (2005) indicating the positive effects of sports on youth development, including improvements in physical health, psychological well-being, social skills, and coping mechanisms for stress and loneliness. Moreover, this study supports the finding of Opiyo (n.d), which stated that engaging youth offenders with education

and life skills-based training is essential to successful rehabilitation and reintegration as the program's participants were exposed to various activities beyond sports, including dancing and life-saving strategies, encouraging them to discover new skills and talents.

These results insinuates that the *CAS Shares HEART to RRCY* program allowed the participants to try new things that improve their physical health. Hence, the findings implied the need to offer opportunities for engagement in diverse activities among youth residents and equip them with valuable skills for successful community reintegration. The results also emphasized the importance of implementing interventions that address the multiple needs of individuals in rehabilitation centers, intending to enhance their prospects for a positive transition back into society.

## **2. How are these skills applied to participants' job performance and quality of life?**

Referring to Result 2, Inductive Thematic Analysis was used to explore how the participants utilized their skills to enhance the quality of their system and service and overall quality of life. Doing a detailed analysis of various narratives while integrating what has been found during observations paved the way to the emergent themes: enhancing job performance, empowering connections, and nurturing purpose and direction.

### **Enhancing Job Performance**

The study's results aligned significantly with previous research, specifically the study of Haus et al. (2016), which highlighted the necessity of effective stress management strategies for successful job performance and advocated for comprehensive stress management training. The participants emphasized the critical role of skills including emotional resilience and stress management in improving the quality of their services, specifically when working with youth offenders.

Moreover, as reflected in their narratives, the study emphasized the value of knowledge sharing among staff members to enhance acquired skills and improve overall service quality. This substantiates the findings of Yang (2007), which emphasized that staff members strengthen the organization's capabilities through knowledge sharing of individual knowledge into organizational assets.

Continuous skill improvement ensures the participants stay updated with industry practices, technologies, and methodologies, enabling them to adapt to change, identify areas for improvement, and implement innovative solutions. Haapatalo et al. (2023) stated that integrating continuous improvement into the organization's culture and daily activities sustains its benefits and enhances performance. This result implies that the *CAS Shares HEART to RRCY* program promoted various skills that can improve productivity and engagement in the workplace. Hence, it implies the paramount role of continuous skill application, specifically in stress management and emotional resilience among staff working in service-oriented environments like rehabilitation centers. By acknowledging the importance of ongoing skill development and knowledge sharing, the workplace can foster a culture of personal and professional growth among staff, improving service quality. Implementing comprehensive stress management training and promoting a culture of knowledge exchange can improve staff effectiveness, team collaboration, and overall quality of service.

### **Empowered Connections**

The study's results shed light on the pivotal role of emotional resilience in attaining positive connections and personal growth among participants as they reintegrate with their families and community after rehabilitation. The findings elucidate how the acquired emotional skills helped individuals establish strong foundations and connections upon their return to society. These can be reflected in their narratives highlighting their ability to effectively manage their emotions, foster healthier communication, and establish smooth community relationships. Almansoori (n.d) corroborates these findings by claiming that individuals who feel connected to their community are more inclined to contribute to its success, aligning with participants' narratives of applying learned skills in various communal activities. Participants acknowledged the program's positive impact on their interpersonal relationships and personal development. They expressed enhanced motivation to set and achieve goals, acquire essential life skills, and create meaningful connections with peers. Thus, this study implies the need to foster emotional resiliency among youth offenders in facilitating successful reintegration into family and community post-rehabilitation. From the results, it can be suggested that emotional resilience training be incorporated into rehabilitation protocols to enhance long-term outcomes and promote holistic and successful societal integration.

### **Nurtured Purpose and Direction**

Through the analysis of participant responses, this study revealed that participants were likely to engage in reflection as they contemplated their past experiences to create meaningful goals as soon as they were reintegrated with the community. One noticeable strategy identified was cultivating emotional resilience through practical application in their daily routines. These reflections align with the research of Amabile and Kramer (2015), which asserted that the most motivating condition individuals experience is a sense of progress toward something personally meaningful. Through regular engagement in personal reflection, participants gain a deeper understanding of their thought processes and learning mechanisms (Amabile & Kramer, 2015). Thus, this study suggests comprehensive interventions and appropriate services that can significantly contribute to the long-term success of the rehabilitation process and the staff's quality of service. This result implies that the skills acquired from the CAS Shares HEART program increased the motivation of the participants to become productive and responsible members of the community.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study focused on the impact of the extension project on the beneficiaries' performance and community reintegration, and it can be concluded that the *CAS Shares HEART* program led to the acquisition of relevant skills: artistic, technological, emotional, and kinesthetic. These skills enhanced their job performance, empowered their connections, and nurtured in them a sense of purpose and direction. These findings imply that university extension programs play a crucial role in improving attitudes, skills, and knowledge among beneficiaries, ultimately enhancing their sense of purpose and quality of service in the workplace. This study will give insights to the curriculum developers attempting to initiate a community-responsive curriculum. Furthermore, these findings can assist educators in devising effective learning strategies where desired learning outcomes serve as a tool for community extension projects. Nonetheless, this research is constrained to the skills acquired, which represent just one of the factors influencing the success of extension programs. Further relevant studies that may delve on other determining factors of success of extension programs must be conducted.



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## Appendixes

### Appendix A

#### OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

Participants	Human Kinetics	Emotional Well being	Arts	Reading and Literature	TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC PROCESSES
<b>Staff</b>	Is able to participate actively in various physical activities conducted inside and outside the facility	Is able to efficiently deal with stress brought by frequent interaction with their client	Is able to communicate effectively with his/her clients and co-workers	Is able to effectively communicate, show empathy, collaborate, demonstrate cultural competence, and prioritize self-care to provide comprehensive and personalized support to clients in a rehabilitation center	Is able to develop new technologies, add to their scientific and technological knowledge, and make new observations about the world Is able to develop technical expertise which allow them to communicate more effectively, collaborate with colleagues, and be able to handle specific issues within an area
<b>Residents</b>	Is able to actively perform different physical activities inside and outside the RRCY	Is able to have social-awareness, emotional regulation, and relationship-building towards other people around them	Is able to deliver/express their ideas, thoughts, and opinion in an effective manner	Is able to increase their literacy levels and comprehension, writing skills, vocabulary, and general knowledge, as well as enhancing empathy, self-awareness, and well-being	Is able to practice their specialized knowledge and proficiency needed to carry out particular activities and make use of particular equipment and programs in practical settings

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**Appendix B**

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**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW AND FGD GUIDE (Staff)**

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**Introductory**

1. How long have you been working here?
2. Are you prepared to discuss your experiences at Phase 1 "CAS SHARES HEART TO RRCY" training, workshops, and seminars?
3. Kindly tell us about your job description as well as your duties, functions, and responsibilities.
4. What skills are necessary in the performance of your job?
5. How do you assess yourself as to the level of the necessary skills?
6. Do you think you possess all these necessary skills?
7. How do you describe your experiences during the CAS Shares HEART program?

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**Skills acquired**

1. Compared before, what are the competencies added to yourself after you participate the CAS Shares Heart program?
  2. What do you think is the significance of these competencies in your job?
  3. How do you assess yourself as to the level of these newly acquired competencies?
-

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**Content**

**Applicability**

1. In what way you can possibly use these competencies to improve your quality of service?
2. How can you effectively use these competencies in your daily service?

1. Do you have something to add up?
2. How do you feel at this moment?

**Conclusion**

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**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW AND FGD GUIDE (CICL)**

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**Introductory**

1. How long have you been released from the center?
2. Are you prepared to discuss their experiences at Phase 1 "CAS SHARES HEART TO RRCY" training, workshops, and seminars?
3. Are you prepared to discuss their experiences at Phase 1 "CAS SHARES HEART TO RRCY" training, workshops, and seminars?
4. What skills were you able to obtain from the center prior to the Phase 1 "CAS SHARES HEART TO RRCY"?
5. How do you assess yourself as to the level of your acquired skills?
6. How do you describe your experiences during the CAS Shares HEART program

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**Skills Acquired**

1. Compared before, what are the competencies added to yourself after you participate the CAS Shares Heart program?
  2. What do you think is the significance of these competencies in life outside the center?
  3. How do you assess yourself as to the level of these newly acquired competencies?
-



**Applicability**

**Content**

4. In what way you can possibly use these competencies to improve your quality of life especially that you are reintegrated now in the community?

5. How can you effectively use these competencies in your daily living?

**Conclusion**

1. Do you have any information that you wish to add?

2. How do you feel at this moment?

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