

Socio-Economic Desirability of Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges' Extension Campus in Balatan, Camarines Sur, Philippines

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Abstract –A government project to be worthy of financing should be geared towards generating not only income but also social and economic benefits to various stakeholders. This descriptive-survey assessed the socio-economic feasibility of the establishment of an extension campus of Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges in Balatan, Camarines Sur. It determined the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and their perceived benefits for the residents of Balatan, business sector, local government unit, and the prospective enrollees in Balatan. Convenience sampling was used for the 106 respondents chosen randomly. Data were gathered thru interview using 3-item guide. Follow-up questions were posed to elicit information that will support prior answers. Data were organized and quantified using percentage. Results revealed that the perceived benefits are opportunity for employment within Balatan, prospect to establish new business, and increase in tax collection. Additionally, other benefits identified are the increase in literacy rate, development of tourism industry, and opportunity for infrastructure development. The proposed project will significantly contribute to the social and economic development of Balatan.

Keywords –social development, socio-economic feasibility, descriptive survey design, Balatan, Camarines Sur, extension campus

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are key actors in generating relevant skills, knowledge and innovation and play a critical role in the growth of local and national economies [1]–[5], and determinants in the improvement of a nation's health, contribution to the reduction of population growth, enhancement of technology, and strengthen governance [6]. Clearly, higher education and economic development are inextricably linked to one another [2], [5].

A government project to be worthy of financing should be geared towards generating not only income but also social and economic benefits to various stakeholders [7] and is given first importance for government projects [8]. Socio-economic desirability addresses the influences that a proposed project may have on the social system in the project environment.

The planned extension campus will be established at the municipality of Balatan, a 4th class municipality subdivided into 17 barangays in the 5th district of the province of Camarines Sur in the Bicol Region which is in the southern part of the Luzon group of islands.

The municipality is situated about 280 km east-south-east of Manila, the Country's main capital.

The town is almost a 1-hour ride by jeepney, the only available public transportation, and about 24 km from Nabua, the location of the Main Campus. At present, the municipality does not have any higher education institution that shall cater to its secondary school graduates. If these graduates are to attend their class in Nabua, they have to travel for about one hour and pay a one-way fare of Php40.00. The time of travel and transportation fee significantly contribute to their daily expenses.

Balatan is mainly dependent on agriculture as source of income and livelihood for the people. Agriculture production in that area has its ample share of crops, livestock and fishery.

In Balatan, farming and fishing are the main occupation of its inhabitants. About 75.04% of the total municipal lands are devoted to crop production including corn, bananas, rice, vegetables, legumes, sweet potato, coffee, high value crops, fruits, sugar cane, coconut, abaca, root crops and other industrial crops. Livestock and other sources of livelihood

include water buffalo, cattle, swine and poultry. It is also the source of other products such as sweet candies, homemade products, shrimp paste and dried fish [9].

Implementation of the proposed project would largely contribute to the development of the area where there is no institution offering a tertiary education at present. The proposed project would benefit several sectors in the community including the government, business establishments, residents in the area and community. With the aid of the implementation of the proposed project, rate of employment, income of the residents in the area and government taxes will be affected.

According to the Development Academy of the Philippines [6], a project must contribute to improve the standard of living, enhance community development, increase foreign exchange savings and reserves, aid in the lowering of prices, and increase the demand for local materials.

The framework of DAP reveals that a project has two aspects: employment and production. Along employment, the social and economic factors affected are the individual and family income and taxes for local and national government. On the other hand, supply and demand of commodities are the effect of production.

The socio-economic contributions of income is improved standard of living, increased taxes for community development, supply of commodities increases foreign exchange savings, lowering of prices, and increased foreign exchange reserves, while demand for materials is the utilization of local materials.

Ditablan [8] espoused that socio-economic desirability is measured in terms of the number of workers that shall be employed, and the approximate annual amount of taxes to be paid to the government. Moreover, it is measured by the economic benefits that will accrue to the people living in the community and its vicinities.

Included in socio-economic analysis are qualitative impacts of the project to the community as a whole. The societal benefits must prove the project's societal acceptability (e.g. employment generation, poverty alleviation, environmental protection, increased living conditions, contribution to education, health and sanitation, peace and order, children's welfare, etc.).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study assessed the socio-economic feasibility of the establishment of an extension campus of Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges in Balatan, Camarines Sur, Philippines. Specifically, it aimed to describe the perceived benefits of having an extension campus in Balatan, Camarines Sur to the residents of Balatan, business sector, local government unit, prospective enrollees, and the municipality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Method. Descriptive-survey was the research method used. A survey was conducted to discern the insight of the residents in the urban barangays of Balatan on the socio economic benefit that implementation of the proposed project could provide them. Respondents of the study were selected randomly for the purpose of identifying and analysing the perceptions of the different groups of people on the socio-economic benefits that implementation of the proposed project could give them.

Respondents. A total of one hundred six (106) respondents that were conveniently selected willingly participated in the study with almost the same number declined to participate due to varying reasons. Among those who participated were professionals such as teachers, municipal accountant, COMELEC acting election officer, and other Local Government Unit (LGU) employees and there were also tricycle driver/Pedicab, vegetable vendors, eatery owners, fishermen, barber, store owners, mobile phone technician, housewife and others.

Data Gathering Tools. The study used a 3-item interview guide to elicit the needed data. The respondents were asked on what their perceived benefits of an extension campus are to the residents of Balatan, business sector, local government unit, prospective enrollees, and the municipality. Follow-up questions were also raised to thresh out response from the respondents.

Research Procedure. The research team sent a letter to the Municipal Mayor for approval to gather the needed data. The enumerators randomly selected the respondents. The respondents were asked about some personal information and their perception on the possible benefits that can be derived out of the extension for the residents of Balatan, business sector, local government unit, prospective enrollees and other benefits. The enumerators roamed the urban area of the municipality and conveniently asked respondents

of varied background. Then the group proceeded to the municipal hall to interview LGU personnel about the project.

The varied responses in English, Tagalog, and dialect were processed into thematic answer that captures the benefits.

Statistical Tools. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage was utilized in the analysis of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To the Residents of Balatan. Economic development of a community is determined by the rate of employment and income of the residence. Residents in the area are the first ones to be benefited on the implementation of the proposed project.

There are a lot of benefits that the implementation of the proposed project can contribute to the residence in the area such as the benefits it can bring to the parents, students and other residents of Balatan. These benefits include employment, increase in income and etc.

Table 1 presents the benefits that the residents of Balatan can derive from the implementation of the proposed project. All of the respondents said that the proposed project will lead to increase in income, employment and economic savings of the residents in the area. While 56 of the respondents said that there will also be an increase in the purchasing power of the residents in the area.

Table 1. Benefits to the Residents of Balatan

Benefits	Frequency (n=106)	Percentage
Opportunity for Employment	106	100
Increase in Income	106	100
Increase in Purchasing Power	56	53
Increase in Economic Savings	106	100

Opportunity for Employment. Employment is a fundamental component of quality of life. Employment indicates a lifestyle with value, choice and empowerment. Through employment, individuals can gain profit and earn money for a living, pay for their family's daily consumption and have the means to provide their children with quality education.

Unemployment is one of the major problems that the country is facing today. Unemployment is also one

of the reasons why many are suffering from poverty and hunger.

Implementation of the proposed project may address the unemployment problems in Balatan. There will be a lot of employment opportunities that can be created for the residents in the area. It can be on government, and private agency such as business sectors.

The proposed project will employ people who have knowledge about academic institution preferably those who are living within the adjacent area of the location of the proposed project. Also some of the respondents such as teachers and LGU employees said that it would also be an opportunity for them to apply as part time teachers on the said extension campus. Other business establishments may also need additional production force leading them to employ additional employees.

Creation of productive employment opportunities is essential in poverty reduction and achieving sustainable economic and social development. Through these employment opportunities, residence will gain income, uplift their standard of living, provide them with their basic needs and most importantly they can send their children to school. In generating employment, the government stands to benefit through more revenues from taxes [7].

Increase in Income. The proposed project will provide avenue for an increase in income of the residents in Balatan such as the tricycle drivers, Pedicabs, vendors, and others involve in businesses such as bakers, barbers, cellphone repair technician, and etc. Increase in income means that the residents can provide their family's basic needs and will be able to send their children to school. This only indicates that they will have an opportunity to uplift their standard of living.

The group of jeep/tricycle & pedicabdrivers said that the campus would provide them additional income in terms of increase in the number of passengers. This can be a great help to them to have an opportunity to increase their daily income, which in return will support their basic needs.

The vendors, storeowner, bakery & parlor shop workersopined that an increase in the number of people in Balatan would only mean an increase in the number of customers which increases demand for product and services. Increase in demand for products and services will lead to an increase in sales. The commonality of the answers led to an increase in

income if the campus exists.

The fisher folks/fish dealer/butcher pronounced that an increase in population in Balatan would only indicate that there will be an increase in the demand for fish and meat products. The number of customers of fisher folks, fish dealer and butcher will increase since more people will need it. This will result to an increase in their sales, which will result to an increase in income to be generated.

The restaurant/canteen owners manifested that an increase in the population in Balatan would also indicate an increase on the number of customers for restaurant and canteen owners. Increase in the number the customers will increase their sales that will result to an increase in income of restaurant and canteen owners. In generating income, the government stands to benefit through more revenues from taxes [7].

Increase in Purchasing Power. Likewise, it will also lead to the increase of the purchasing power of the employed people, which means that they will have a higher ability to purchase goods and services. Increase in purchasing power of consumer represents a proportionately larger increase in income of the residence. It will also fasten (or hasten?) the money circulation and develop the economic condition in Balatan. Also prices of the commodity will be lowered and supplies will be stabilized which gain customer satisfaction.

Increase in Economic Savings of the Households. A lot of parents in the area cannot afford to send their children for a college education, for they lack money. What they are earning at present is just enough for their daily consumption, so they could not support their children's tertiary education. They consider the proposed CSPC extension campus in Balatan as the answer to their problem.

When implemented as planned, the proposed project may solve the financial constraints of each household in terms of educational expenses. It will be accessible to the residents in the area, which will result to lower expenses for their children's education, such as there is no need any more for boarding house, less cost for transportation and allowances. Lower expenses of each household will increase economic savings. This will lower the poverty problems of the residents of Balatan. This indicates an opportunity to uplift the standard of living of the residents in the area.

To the Business Sector. Business industry is also one of the sectors that will be affected by the

implementation of the proposed project. Business establishment plays an integral role on the local economy since they create employment in the area, pay taxes to the government, etc.

Present business establishments in Balatan include restaurants, eateries, groceries, barber shops, beauty parlors, tailor shops, internet café, hardware stores, furniture stores, rice mills, gasoline station, fishing operators, karaoke bars, poultry farms, piggery farms, boutiques, photo studios, compradas and etc.. These business establishments were the major contributors of additional income to the government because of their payments in taxes, permits and licenses and etc. They were of great help to the residents in terms of creation of employment in the area.

Table 2 presents the benefits that can be derived by the business sectors on the implementation of the proposed project. It can be gleaned that most respondents said that it could be an opportunity to establish new business (78%). Twenty-three (23) of the respondents said that present businesses will boom due to possible increase in income and business expansion. All of these benefits will contribute to the development of the business industries in the area.

Opening of new Businesses. Establishing the proposed project will promote the growth of other business firms that will provide raw materials and services. Implementation of the project will also increase the demand for raw materials thus increasing the sales of classroom and office suppliers. Increase of the utilization of local materials will open new doors for local enterprises.

Respondents believe that it will also open an opportunity for businesses like sari-sari store, local eatery and boarding house near the proposed extension campus since it is expected that the extension campus will not only serve the municipality of Balatan but it will also be considered as the choice of the incoming college students from the coastal areas of Burias Island, Masbate, Pasacao, Pantao and other nearby towns.

Table 2. Benefits to the Business Sector(n=106)

Benefits	f	%
Establish new businesses	83	78
Increase in Income	23	22
Growth of present businesses	23	22
Expansion of present businesses	23	22

Increase in Income. When implemented as

planned, the proposed project could increase the present earnings of the business sectors. It is expected that population in that area is expected to increase which means that there will be an increase on the demand of products and services because of the increase in their number of customers. Increase in the demand of products and services would increase the income of the business establishments in that area. Thus increase in income of the business establishments will also lead to an increase on tax that they would be paying to the government. This will result to an increase in government revenues.

Growth of Present Businesses. Present business establishments will also grow. Demand for products and services will grow which will lead to the growth of business industries. The income of the business establishments will increase which means that business is growing. Growth also means that new employees will be hired which is an opportunity for employment to the residents in the area and additional income to the government.

Expansion of Present Business Establishments. It will also provide an avenue for businessmen to expand their present business establishments. It is estimated that demands of products will increase which means that some of the business enterprises may opt to expand their businesses. Expansion of the business could also mean employment for the residents in the area and additional revenue to the government as well.

To the Local Government Unit of Balatan. Implementation of the proposed project could greatly contribute to the government in terms of several factors. It can be in terms of revenues derived from taxes and legal aspect including permits and licenses. This could lead to increase in government revenues.

Reflected in Table 3 are the benefits that the government can get when the proposed project was implemented. Eighty-six (86) of the respondents said that the proposed project would increase the collection of taxes in the area. And twenty (20) of the respondents said that it would also contribute to the increase on the collection of payments for permits and licenses.

These two benefits can lead to an increase in the revenue of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Balatan. This only means that there will be a lot of funds that would be allocated for community development.

Table 3. Benefits to the Local Government of Balatan(n=106)

Benefits	f	%
Increase in collection of tax	86	82
Increase in collection of permits and licenses	20	18

Increase in Collection of Taxes. The proposed project is expected to have a great contribution to the government especially to the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Balatan in the form of taxes. Collection of taxes will increase because of taxes paid by the government and public employees as well as taxes from business establishments. Taxes collected from government and private sectors will be of great advantage to them. This will help support the needs of the public and can contribute to community development such it can be used as funds for multifarious activities such as schools, farm to market roads, bridges, infrastructures, hospitals, government related projects such as housing, education and health and other essential projects that will benefit the people in Balatan.

The project will impact on taxes since increased revenues can be used for the development of the community [7].

Increase Collection of Payments for Permits and Licenses (Legal Aspects). For the proposed project and business establishments to operate legally, they must comply with the government requirements such as Mayor's permit, and other municipal licenses, certificate of registration with Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and other government agencies. This permits and licenses will be paid during the pre-operating and operating period of the project and business operation. The proposed project and business establishments will also pay their permit and licenses in the government which means that collection of permits and licenses will also increase. Such payment could also contribute to the increase in government revenues. This will also help support the needs of the public and will contribute to the development of Balatan as well.

To the Prospective Enrollees. There are lots of benefits that the prospective enrollees as future graduates of the proposed extension campus will gain from the implementation of the proposed project. Residents in the area will be able to go to college with a lower cost of education. Table 4 presents the benefits that the proposed extension campus can provide to its future graduates. It shows that all the

respondents agree that the proposed extension campus could provide the future graduates an opportunity to be employed in a bigger company offering a higher salary outside Balatan and could land a job locally or even internationally.

Employment in Bigger Company. At present, one must attain a degree to be able to land a decent job which pays a higher wage rate. Larger companies have deeper pockets to pay out more in salary, compensation and benefits. That is why many graduates wanted to be employed in bigger and known companies.

After earning a diploma or degree, future graduates of the proposed extension campus will have a greater opportunity to be employed in a bigger company, which pays much higher salary. Through this employment they will have a decent living and they can also help their families uplift their standard of living.

Opportunity for Higher Income. Education is one of the factors that affects one's income status. Attaining a degree will give individuals the opportunity to land a decent job where they will have a higher income. Having a higher income will give them the capacity and capability to purchase goods and services and can support their family's basic needs. With higher income generated by a household member of a family, standard of living of their family will be uplifted.

Table 4. Benefits to the Prospective Enrollees

Benefits	f	%
Employment outside of Balatan	106	100
Opportunity for higher income	106	100
Local and international employment	106	100

Local or International Employment. There will also be a possibility that future graduates will be employed not just locally but internationally, since nowadays, graduates are not just locally competitive but globally competitive as well. With the changing world, graduates must cope up with the changing environment to be able to land a decent job to support their family.

After earning a degree, graduates can work locally or even internationally. Some may prefer to be employed within the area while some may choose to go abroad. With their employment locally or even internationally, they will have a greater opportunity to earn a salary. Graduates will have a greater opportunity to uplift their family's standard of living

through employment locally or even internationally.

To Balatan. Aside from the above mentioned benefits, there are also other benefits that the proposed project could contribute to the community. These include benefits on the literacy rate of the residents, popularity of the town and rate of crimes or insurgency in the area.

Reflected in Table 5 are the other benefits that the proposed project could contribute to the community. All of the respondents believe that the proposed project could increase the literacy rate of the residents in the area. Fifty-one (51) respondents said that it could lead to the popularity of the Balatan. And ten (10) respondents said that it could decrease the crimes rates/insurgency in the area.

Increase in Literacy Rate. Social and economic development of a community is a function of its quality of education. This means that the more and better-educated people are, the greater the chance of social and economic development is.

Literacy rate is one of the core indicators used to measure the social development of a community. Literacy is important in every individual because it places a person in a better position and improves his/her quality of life. Strong literacy skills could lead to the probability of having good jobs, decent earnings and access to training opportunities. Individuals with weak literacy skills are more likely to be unemployed or, if employed, to be in jobs that pay little or with minimum wages only.

Table 5. Benefits to the Municipality of Balatan

Benefits	f	%
Increase in literacy rate	106	100
Development of tourism	75	71
Popularity of Balatan	51	48
Opportunity for infrastructure development	19	18
Decrease in crime rates/ insurgency	10	10

Offering an extension campus in Balatan is a great help for the residents in the area in increasing the literacy rate of Balateños. This means that residence would be more educated and there will be a decrease on the number of Out of School Youth (OSY) in the area. Residents will have a much higher access to higher degree of education.

Thus higher literacy rate of the residence would mean that they would have a greater opportunity to have a better job such as be employed in bigger companies or even land a job abroad, higher income and other opportunities.

Also having a higher literacy rate indicates a higher chance to improve social relationship among the people in the community. It also indicates that they will have the ability to develop and enhance their social status in the community.

Development of tourism industry. One tourism destination that can be developed is the Animasola Island. Its exotic rock formations and crystal clear waters welcome visitors travelling off the coast (or coast?) of the town [10].

There are also beaches that have fine and almost white sand along the coastlines. These are another possible areas for development in the locality. Even the route going to the municipality is a possible area for tourism development. The mountain on both sides of the road can be developed as part of eco-tourism.

According to a Balatan Website [9], "the town is blessed by a bountiful sea and scenic landscape. Its people are very hospitable, fun loving and God fearing. With the urban congestions creeping into neighboring cities and municipalities, Balatan has the potentials of developing into a tourist destination and leisure stop. Moreover, its huge and untapped mineral deposit is a treasure lying deep within its landscape waiting to be harnessed and utilized by the Balateños. These, and a lot more opportunities and natural blessings can propel the sleazy laid back town into a bustling place of economic and tourist activity."

Popularity of Balatan. Establishment of an extension campus in the area draws a greater possibility that Balatan would be known in other places. Nearby towns or coastal areas will opt to choose the proposed CSPC Balatan extension campus as their choice of tertiary education. There is a greater possibility that tourism rate of Balatan would increase. Increase in tourism rate would only mean additional income to the government, business establishments and residents in the area. Thus Balatan will be famous not just locally but internationally as well.

Opportunity for infrastructure development. The national government can infuse significant funding in the improvement of the main thoroughfare in going to Balatan. Moreover, communication system can be developed for the municipality. The economic contribution of the campus is enough justification for the government to enhance infrastructure in the town including its road network.

A paper during the 2010 World Economic Forum identified infrastructure as the 2nd pillar of 12 determinants to measure competitiveness of 133

economies [11]. The paper emphasized that, "extensive and efficient infrastructure is critical for ensuring the effective functioning of the economy, as it is an important factor determining the location of economic activity and the kinds of activities or sectors that can develop in a particular economy. Well-developed infrastructure reduces the effect of distance between regions, integrating the national market and connecting it at low cost to markets in other countries and regions. In addition, the quality and extensiveness of infrastructure networks significantly impact economic growth and affect income inequalities and poverty in a variety of ways. A well-developed transport and communications infrastructure network is a prerequisite for the access of less-developed communities to core economic activities and services."

The paper concluded "investing in infrastructure constitutes one of the main mechanisms to increase income, employment, productivity and consequently, the competitiveness of an economy." (World Economic Forum)

Decrease in rate of crimes/insurgency. Unemployment and poverty is the mother of varieties of crimes and illegal activities in the community. Due to limited jobs opportunities, most of the youths are forced to reduce their family's economic crises and feed their family through illegal conducts such as robbery, burglary, drug trafficking and other illegal activities.

Through implementation of the proposed projects, rate of crimes in the area will decrease due to the opportunity for employment. Creation of employment in various sectors could help some residence to land a job and have a sustainable employment. Thus this will support their family and in turn, crimes rates in the area will be lessen.

Mitchell [12], in his blog, quoted the director of BOSCAR that "the best crime prevention tool is a strong and vibrant economy and the most effective path is to reduce poverty and unemployment and redistribute national income more evenly."

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed project will have much contribution to the different sectors in Balatan such as to the government, business establishments, and residents and to the community of Balatan as a whole. It will provide employment and business opportunities to the residents in the area. This imply that more and more

personnel and workers are needed, thus giving an avenue for people to get employed and earn money. If there is an increase in production, there are more products to sell as well as more service to be rendered which will lead to more income to be generated. If there are more people earning, and more business establishment in the area, the taxes to be returned to government would also increase. This means that business establishments and the college are contributing to the local economy.

Increase in income and employment could uplift the standard of living of the residents and reduce the poverty rates in the area. Increase in taxes and collection of payment for legal aspects will increase local government revenue which will be used as funds to support the needs of the public such as government projects including infrastructures, road improvements, education and health and other government projects that will lead to community development.

Most importantly, residents in the area will have access to higher degree of education. There will have a greater chance for an increase in literacy rate and others. Increased literacy of the residents improve social relationship among the people in the community. This will help develop and enhance their social status in the community. Cost of tertiary education will be lowered which result for the majority residents to afford pursuing college education.

It could also raise the position of Balatan in the community which will greatly influence its improvement and development. It also indicates that Balatan will have a greater opportunity to move to a higher class municipality. Likewise it will also have the capacity and capability to compete with other municipalities.

This mainly implies that implementation of the proposed project will directly benefit the residents of Balatan and indirectly affect the local economy. Therefore, it will definitely contribute to the social and economic development of Balatan.

It is recommended that an extension campus of the Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges in Balatan must be established. The existence of a higher educational institution will positively affect the social and economic status of all stakeholders.

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