

Describing environment, health and safety related activities among student organizations in Batstateu and its challenges

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the activities of student organizations, related to environment, health and safety was studied at 10 campuses of Batangas State University (BatStateU). Through interviews, documents and records, it was found that in AY 2018-2019, 40 student organizations conducted activities related to environment, health, safety and others. These organizations conducted 35 environment related and health related activities such as coastal clean-up, tree and mangrove planting, environment information drive on the ecological importance of Verde island passage, anti-illegal drug campaigns, nutrition and food, bloodletting in coordination with Red Cross, health literacy etc. Lastly, only 6 student organization activities focused on safety such as safety awareness seminar, occupational health and safety, earthquake and fire drill, safety awareness on roads, room laboratory and field works. Nine campuses out of 10 were able to target and conduct the said activities for the academic year. Student organizations were encouraged to focus on projects and activities on environment, health and safety. The proposed Environment, Health and Safety Activities which may be adapted by student organizations for AY 2018-2019 were conducted; however, the expected activities failed to reach the maximum target. Challenges include prioritizing academic related and socialization activities; failure to include the targeted activities in the organizations' plans and; perceived duplication of emergency preparedness and earthquake drills, spearheaded by the University.

Keywords: environment, health, safety related activities, student organizations

1. INTRODUCTION

Universities are mandated to have a safe and secure environment; it is indicated in the Commission on Higher Education Memorandum

Order Number 9, Series of 2013 on Enhanced Policies and Guidelines on Student Affairs and Services, Philippines. As part of the academic community the Student Organizations are encouraged to conduct environment, health and

safety related activities in the University yearly. The university holds an essential participation in education, a key place wherein societal change processes can be developed. It brings current challenges and social requirements that hold the responsibility to assure the creation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in the students to achieve an effective solution to environmental issues [1].

There is a need to educate students about environmental issues and the student organizations in universities act in battling many environmental issues affecting the environment. Studies claim that these issues arose from people's complacency, indifference and attitudes of people toward the environment [2-3]. Environmental degradation are mainly in the form of deforestation, soil erosion, disruption of environmental systems, over-exploitation of fisheries, destruction of coral reefs, and extinction of species are featured by the pressures of a large, fast-growing population [4]. These conditions eventually aggravated by climatic change or the greenhouse effect.

In terms of health, BatStateU has health programs for employees and students. Nevertheless, student councils and student organizations are still encouraged to promote wellness and health related activities. This is the same with other Universities like the University of the Philippines where there are initiatives on health and wellness that begin with answering the most basic need of a healthy and safe work environment [5].

For safety, on the other hand, in Region IVA, Philippines, there are Safety Management Plans

used by Higher Education Institutions, where applicable safety training for employees and students are most frequently used [6]. In BatStateU, there is a an Adaptive Capacity-building and Technology Innovation for Occupational Hazards and Natural Disasters (ACTION) Center which serve as the University's research and training arm for disaster response and training, and shall cater to stakeholders and communities both internal and external to the University.

The Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS) through the Student Organizations and Activities (SOA) Unit encouraged students to come up with activities to help save the environment, encourage healthy lifestyle and promote safety for AY 2018-2019. In this study, the activities related to environment, health and safety, conducted by student organizations from 10 campuses of the State University will be described. More so, the limitations and challenges encountered by these student organizations will also be discussed. The study aimed to observe the activities of student organizations, related to environment, health and safety was studied at 10 campuses of Batangas State University (BatStateU).

2. METHOD AND MATERIAL

2.1. Research design

This is descriptive research which describes the activities of student organizations from 10 campuses of a State university in Batangas. It focuses on identifying the environment, health and safety activities conducted during the previous academic year. It also describes the

limitations and challenges encountered by student organizations to serve as a basis for future activities.

2.2. Participants

Student organization officers from the college level from 10 campuses out of 11 campuses in AY 2018-2019 were interviewed as well as the organization advisers or SOA coordinators. They were the ones involved in the conduct of the planned activities. The newly established Campus was not included in this study because it has not established student organizations yet at the time of study.

2.3. Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were utilized. Documents and records were the source of quantitative data. Records from SOA, accomplishment reports of student organizations, and reports submitted by SOA Coordinators from the 10 campuses were collected. Interviews on the other hand were a source of qualitative data. Unstructured interviews were conducted to identify the limitations and challenges in the conduct of activities from a small group of student organization officers and faculty advisers.

2.4. Data analysis

Frequency distribution and percentage were used to analyse the data collected.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In coordination with the Gawad Kalinga Foundation; it is an activity that opens the minds of the participants about environmental

protection through recycling, reusing and reducing wastes. The activities such as Zero-waste lifestyle, Challenge E-Urban agriculture, Seminar on Cultural Farming Practices and Innovations, Bring a plant, Paint a pot (plastic bottles), Cultural Farming Practices and Innovations Seminar, Project: Water Bottle, I can Save Earth Brochure, were activities which advocate reducing waste materials, awareness of the situation of solid wastes in the country. The activities such as Sagip Baybayin Coastal Clean-up, National Clean-up Day: Clear Coastal areas are the answers to the call of the International Clean-up Organization to help clean coastal areas and other bodies of water. Activities that focus on environmental issues were done through the distribution of pamphlets and other IEC material to the community, seminar on climate change, and seminar on the importance of water and conservation measures. Student Organizations from Campus 9 failed to conduct environment related activity. Most organizations in this campus are in the field of technology

Table 2 presents the health related activities conducted by the student organizations in Batangas State University. The most common health activity is the Blood donation or Blood Letting. In coordination with the Philippine Red Cross, the students were given a talk on the benefits and advantages of donating blood. The activity on anti-drug awareness is conducted through a seminar, poster making and spoken word poetry. To focus on mental health, the seminars and fora conducted are stress management, mental health awareness, importance of self-care and understanding the

Table 1. Environment Related Activities of Student Organization			
Campus code	Student organization code	Activities conducted	
Campus 1	SORG 1	Beneath the Blue: Marvels of the Deep- Seminar, Exhibit Creation of Vertical Garden: A glance on Botanical Art Lobo Coastal Clean-up Mangrove Planting	
		Talksilog: Calumpang River Rehabilitation	
	SORG 2	Clean-up Drive of the CTE vicinity	
	SORG 3	Cultural Farming Practices and Innovations Seminar Tree and Seeds Planting Bring a plant, Paint a pot (plastic bottles)	
		SORG 4	Environmental Youth Camp Save Changes Project: Zero Waste Lifestyle Challenge E: Urban Agriculture
Campus 2	SORG 5	Plant Green-Mangrove	
		Production of Bio Gas from Food Waste	
		Tree Planting Activity	
	SORG 6	Sagip Baybayin Coastal Clean-up National Cleanup Day: Clear Coastal Areas Environmental Awareness Seminar	
		SORG 7	Tree Planting Activity
		SORG 8	Mangrove Tree Planting
			Tree Planting activity
	SORG 9	Oplan: Balik Eskwela Clean and Green	
	SORG 10	Brigada Eskwela	
	SORG 11	Brigada Eskwela	
Campus 3	SORG 12	Clean-up Drive Plant Growing	
		Project: Water Bottle	
Campus 4	SORG 13	Tree Planting I can Save Earth Brochure	
		Brigada Eskwela	
	SORG 14	Climate Change Information Drive	
Campus 5	SORG 15	Hawak Kamay, Tubig Kaagapay: Seminar on the Importance of Water and Conservation Measures	
		none	
Campus 6	SORG 19	none	
		none	
Campus 7	SORG 18	Tree Planting Clean and Green	
		Brigada SORG 22	
	SORG 20	Tree Planting	
Campus 8	SORG 21	Tree Planting Clean and Green	
		Brigada SORG 22	
Campus 9	SORG 22	Tree Planting	
		Brigada SORG 22	
Campus 10	SORG 23	Tree Planting	
		Tree Planting	

self. The Kwentong Pangkalusugan: promoting health literacy through storytelling and the Bigay Aral feeding program are extension

activities conducted to discuss to the children the importance of eating proper food; then the

food prepared by the students were given to the children.

Helping Hands Project: Proper hand washing lecture and demo is an extension activity done at Little Angels' Home Foundation in Cavite, on Global Hand washing Day. It increased the awareness and understanding about the importance of hand washing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives. A demonstration on the proper hand washing was done and discussed.

The activity on Building Zero Hunger Generation Seminar aims to raise awareness about the problems brought by hunger to the people and the different suggested ways to reduce its adverse impacts. Health Education and Advocacy campaign for Rabies prevention and Control measures is a seminar conducted to support the Rabies Awareness month. 40% of 10 campuses failed to conduct health organizations related activities which were spearheaded by student organizations. Health related activities were less prioritized as those campuses have limited program offerings; consequently, health related co-curricular activities were not stipulated in their plan of activities. Students from these campuses are into education, technology and business management.

Table 3 presents the safety related activities conducted by the student organizations in Batangas State University.

The activity on Safe check: Familiarizing the workplace seminar was a collaboration of two student organizations. The seminar promoted safety awareness and provided knowledge of all

the hazards and risks and keeping the workplace danger-free as a preparation in facing the corporate world. It also showcased disobedience on health protocols and the consequences of ignoring the signs of danger. The use of the laboratory gown when doing the experiment in the laboratory is a requirement for every student. To monitor the usage of the laboratory gown, the students of Chemical Society took turns in assisting the laboratory teacher to ensure the proper wearing of laboratory gown.

The seminars on Safety awareness on Roads, Campus laboratory and Field works provided information on the prevention of risks and accidents.

The Seminar on Occupational Health and Safety aims to provide important key insights and awareness to Petroleum Engineering students regarding occupational health and safety. The activity oriented the students on how and why they should prioritize safety and apply them in everyday life. This serves to develop and promote safety and risk prevention to the students, to prepare them for the real dangers and hazards in various workplaces in and out of the country. With this activity, the students would have an in-depth understanding and knowledge regarding the safety precautions and how to prevent, contain, or eliminate hazards in the industry. 40% of 10 campuses failed to conduct health organizations 40% of 10 campuses failed to conduct health organizations 60% of 10 campuses failed to conduct health organizations failed to conduct safety training or activities. Interviewees who were asked to participate claim that safety related activities

Table 2. Health Related Activities of Student Organization

Campus code	Student organizations	Activities conducted
Campus 1	SORG 24	Anti-Drug Awareness
	SORG 25	Anti-Drug Artwork
	SORG 26	Blood letting Activity
	SORG 27	Stress Management Seminar
	SORG 4	Cooking Indigenous Vegetables Workshop
		Free Consultation
		Lutong Pangkalusugan sa Almusalan
	SORG 28	Linking food, nutrition and health contest
		Nutrition Consultation
	SORG 29	Free Consultation (height and weight, blood pressure, body fat analysis)
Personality development-Goal setting Seminar		
Campus 2	SORG 30	Blood letting Activity
	SORG 5	Project Dugtong Buhay: Blood letting
	SORG 6	Helping Hands Project: Proper Hand washing Lecture and Demo
		Building Zero Hunger Generation Seminar
		Food Management & Food Security Forum
	SORG 31	Donate Blood
	SORG 38	Blood Donation
	SORG 11	Blood Donation
	SORG 10	Donate Red
	SORG 7	Bigay Aral Feeding Program
	SORG 9	Bigay Aral Feeding Program
	SORG 15	Blood donation
	SORG 16	Blood donation
Feeding Program		
Importance of self-care Seminar		
Campus 3	SORG 17	Mental Health Awareness
	SORG 18	Understanding the Self
	SORG 35	Kwentong Pangkalusugan: Promoting Health Literacy through Storytelling
Campus 4	None	N/A
Campus 5	None	N/A
Campus 6	None	N/A
Campus 7	SORG 36	Stress Management Caravan
		Suicide Phase 2
Campus 8	SORG 15	Health Education and Advocacy campaign for Rabies prevention and Control measures
Campus 9	None	N/A
Campus 10	SORG 37	Bloodletting

Table 3. Safety Related Activities of Student Organization

Campus code	Student organizations code	Activities conducted
PB Main I	SORG 33	Laboratory gown Usage
PB Main II	SORG 32	Safe check: Familiarizing the Workplace Seminar
	SORG 31	Seminar on Occupational Health and Safety
	SORG 30	Safe Check: Familiarizing Workplace
Malvar	None	None
Rosario	SORG 34	Earthquake & Fire Drill
Lemery	None	None
San Juan	None	None
Lipa	None	None
Lobo	SORG 15	Safety awareness on roads, room laboratory and field works
Balayan	None	None
Nasugbu	None	None

were seen as mere duplication of the university drills and earthquake drills spearheaded by the Action Center of the University.

Table 4 presents the summary of the activities of the student organizations related to environment, health and safety. As shown in the Table, Campus 2 has the most number of environment, health and safety activities. Campus 2 has 26 student organizations, and of these 26 organizations, 17 belong to the College of Engineering, Architecture and Fine Arts which have 5 year programs. The Programs in this Campus are technology-based, as the Colleges

Table 4. Environment, Health and Safety Related Activities Conducted in AY 2018-2019

Campus code	Environment	Health	Safety
Campus 1	8	11	1
Campus 2	12	16	3
Campus 3	1	0	1
Campus 4	2	4	0
Campus 5	2	0	0
Campus 6	1	0	0
Campus 7	3	2	0
Campus 8	2	1	1
Campus 9	0	0	0
Campus 10	4	1	0

have more linkages with other institutions and private companies; where requests for sponsorships and collaboration with the student organizations are easily accessed.

Campus 1 has the second most number of environment, health and safety activities. Campus 1 has 22 college student organizations and most of these organizations are academic and socio-academic in nature; most of the activities conducted focused on academic competitions, curricular-based seminars, and socialization activities.

Other extension campuses conducted a few environment, health and safety activities because of the less number of student organizations, the less number of organizational membership; insufficient manpower and linkages and lack of collaborative effort.

Table 5. Limitations and Challenges encountered by student organizations	
Limitations	Challenges
1. Most of the officers of student organizations are having their On-the Job Training (OJT) in the 2 nd semester; consequently, organizing the activities was compromised because of lack of manpower	1. Student leaders in the lower positions may be trained to handle tasks of the officers in the higher positions.
2. Most of the environment related activities are better conducted outside the University; it is difficult for the students to comply with the local off-campus requirements (CHED Memo No. 63, series 2017)	2. Environment related activities that could be conducted inside the University may be organized by the student organizations.
3. Most of the student organizations are academic in nature; so, the activities conducted are academic related and cocurricular in nature.	3. Limited knowledge of environment, health, and safety related activities that could be incorporated in their plan of activities.
4. Student organizations have a limited number of members because of the K-12; members are only 3 rd and 4 th year students.	4. Activities included in the plan of activities need to be organized ahead and carefully planned with the assistance of the adviser for a successful execution.
5. The University organizes and SORG 31 spearheads the earthquake and fire drill, so student organizations could not include this in their plan of activities	5. College Councils in collaboration with sub-organizations in their reSORG 31 active colleges can SORG 31 ahead the earthquake and fire drill in their own colleges/ buildings.

Table 5 shows the limitations and Challenges encountered by students and organizations while conducting these seminars and conferences in different institutes across the country. It is important to discuss these factors as it will help in creating a hustle free environment for these student organizations.

4. CONCLUSION

a) There were many environment related activities conducted by the student organizations in the university for AY 2018-2019. These activities were coastal clean-up, tree and mangrove planting, environment information drive on the

ecological importance of Verde island passage, clean up drive, coastal clean-up, creating vertical gardens, urban farming, climate change information drive, and importance of water and conservation measures seminar.

- b) Many health related activities were conducted in AY 2018-2019 such as anti-illegal drug campaigns, nutrition and food, bloodletting in coordination with the Red Cross, health literacy, mental health activities, and health advocate campaigns for rabies prevention and control measures.
- c) There were limited student organization activities which focused on safety such as

safety awareness seminar, occupational health and safety, earthquake and fire drill, safety awareness on roads, room laboratory and field works.

- d) Limitations and challenges encountered by student organizations in conducting the aforementioned activities were identified and may be used as input to help increase the number of activities of student organizations related to environment, health and safety.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Information dissemination on the importance of environment, health and safety awareness is intensified.
- b) The student organizations may collaborate with the concerned units of the University in conducting earthquake and fire drills, safety and other activities related to environment protection.
- c) The student organizations may intensify linkages with Higher Education Institutions (HEI), the Local Government Units(LGUs), and Private Institutions to come up with community service oriented activities on environment, health and safety.

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7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest.

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NA

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