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Navigating WURI: A Reflective Journey of Universidad de Manila

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Universidad de Manila (UDM) undertook a significant step toward internationalization by participating in the 2025 World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI). This study documents UDM's internal experience, strategies, and reflections throughout its preparation and submission process. Five entries were aligned under WURI's categories: Student Support and Engagement, Ethics and Integrity, Culture/Values, and Infrastructure/Technologies. Rather than designing new initiatives, UDM critically reviewed existing programs and identified those that demonstrated innovation, relevance, and social impact. The process revealed key insights into institutional identity, narrative framing, and the challenges of positioning local solutions within global frameworks. Notably, UDM's approach was rooted in reflective alignment— prioritizing authenticity and responsiveness over performative compliance. To visualize this process, a Reflective Pathway was developed, outlining the university's progression from internal review to external submission. While the WURI 2025 results are pending, this study does not aim to evaluate success but to offer a meaningful account of how innovation can emerge from context-driven practices. The experience presents valuable lessons for similarly situated universities seeking to engage in global innovation platforms without losing sight of their local mission.

Keywords: institutional reflection, innovation visibility, global rankings, WURI, internationalization

Introduction

In recent years, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has intensified its call for Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs) to pursue internationalization, aiming to enhance global competitiveness, foster cross-border collaborations, and align local academic practices with global standards. Initiatives such as *Study in the Philippines (StudyPH)* and *Fostering World-Class Philippine Universities* demonstrate CHED's intent to position Philippine HEIs on the international stage. In response,

universities are increasingly participating in global rankings and innovation-based competitions to benchmark their efforts, gain recognition, and attract strategic partnerships.

Among the emerging platforms for institutional benchmarking is the *World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI)*, which shifts focus from traditional academic metrics to real-world impact. Unlike conventional rankings, WURI emphasizes relevance, creativity, ethical value, and innovation in addressing societal challenges. For public institutions like Universidad de Manila (UDM), this approach presents a valuable opportunity to showcase local initiatives on a global platform—highlighting community-responsive programs that may not typically be captured in traditional rankings.

This study reflects on UDM's first-time participation in WURI 2025. With the results not yet released, the objective is not to evaluate success, but to document the internal processes, alignment strategies, and institutional reflections that shaped the university's engagement with WURI. By exploring this journey, the study aims to provide insight into how similarly situated universities can pursue innovation visibility while remaining grounded in their local mission.

Background Of The Study

As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve globally, universities are being challenged to demonstrate not only academic excellence but also practical innovation and social relevance. For emerging and resource-limited institutions, visibility in international platforms is often hindered by traditional metrics focused on research productivity and global reputation. Recognizing this, alternative frameworks like the *World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI)* have gained traction for offering a more inclusive view of what makes a university innovative.

WURI emphasizes the real-world contributions of universities—highlighting programs that address societal needs, ethical practices, technological integration, and student engagement. This approach allows institutions like Universidad de Manila (UDM), a city-funded public university, to explore how their community-based and equity-driven programs can be recognized on a global stage. Participation in such rankings is not solely about competition, but about gaining perspective on how local efforts align with international standards of innovation and impact.

For UDM, the decision to join WURI 2025 sparked a period of internal reflection. Rather than developing new initiatives for submission, the university

reviewed existing programs and analyzed how they might naturally fit into WURI's thematic categories. This reflective process became an opportunity for institutional learning—shaping not only how UDM framed its innovations externally, but also how it understood its mission and identity internally. This study was undertaken to document that journey—not as a claim to success, but as a contribution to the growing discourse on meaningful internationalization from the perspective of developing institutions.

Objectives Of The Study

The objective of this study is to examine Universidad de Manila's journey in participating in the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), highlighting the challenges, strategies, and insights gained to inform future efforts in achieving sustained internationalization and global recognition. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify how Universidad de Manila's existing programs and initiatives were aligned with the thematic categories of the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI).
2. To analyze the insights and lessons drawn from the process of matching institutional efforts with global innovation standards, as a basis for informing future strategies in internationalization.
3. To examine the novelty of Universidad de Manila's WURI participation and explore how its journey offers valuable lessons for other higher education institutions pursuing international innovation recognition.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative-descriptive research design to explore Universidad de Manila's (UDM) experiences in its participation in the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI). The approach was anchored in a reflective institutional analysis, drawing from internal documentation.

Data were gathered through a retrospective review of institutional documents, guided by WURI's thematic categories. Rather than developing new initiatives specifically for the ranking, the university examined its existing programs, systems, and community engagements to determine which could meaningfully align with WURI's evaluation criteria. This process involved matching available documentation to categories such as Ethical Value, Technology Development, Crisis Management, and

others. The goal was to identify how UDM's ongoing efforts already reflected the spirit of innovation and societal impact emphasized by WURI.

To make sense of the gathered materials, the study used a thematic mapping approach—carefully aligning the core content of each documented program with the appropriate WURI category. Rather than forcing a fit, the process involved a thoughtful examination of how each initiative naturally echoed WURI's themes, such as innovation, societal contribution, ethical value, or crisis response. This allowed the study to uncover not just technical matches, but also the deeper narratives behind why certain programs mattered. In doing so, the research captured how UDM framed its own identity through innovation—how it positioned what it was already doing within a global context. The process also revealed practical lessons: the value of documentation, the importance of strategic framing, and the possibilities that come from reflecting on one's own work through the lens of global standards. In the end, this methodology allowed for an honest and grounded reflection on what it truly means for a university to be innovative in a real-world, globally connected setting.

Results And Discussion

1. **To identify how Universidad de Manila's existing programs and initiatives were aligned with the thematic categories of the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI).**

The *World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI)* evaluates universities based on their ability to innovate and make tangible societal contributions, emphasizing relevance and real-world impact over conventional academic performance indicators. In this context, Universidad de Manila (UDM) aligned five of its existing programs with five key WURI categories: **A1 – Student Support and Engagement**, **A6 – Ethics and Integrity**, **B4 – Culture/Values**, and **B6 – Infrastructure/Technologies**. Rather than creating new initiatives to meet the competition's requirements, UDM looked inward—critically reviewing what it had already done—and identified programs that reflected the spirit of innovation, resilience, and institutional responsiveness. This strategic matching of existing efforts to WURI's criteria allowed UDM to present itself as a university that innovates not for recognition, but out of necessity and genuine commitment to its students and community.

Under **A1 – Student Support and Engagement**, UDM submitted two flagship initiatives: *Nourishing Minds: UDM C.A.R.E.S. for Student Well-being and Sustainable Development* and the *Social Amelioration Program (SAP)*. Both address the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the university's student population. The UDM C.A.R.E.S. program provides food support through a community-driven volunteer system, ensuring that no student has to choose between hunger and learning. Meanwhile, the SAP delivers regular financial assistance to qualified students, helping reduce dropout risks and promoting academic continuity. These initiatives show how UDM prioritizes holistic student development, aligning strongly with WURI's criteria for impactful, student-centered innovation.

For **A6 – Ethics and Integrity**, UDM featured the *Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program*, a certification course designed for elected barangay officials in the City of Manila. Recognizing that many local leaders lack formal education in public service and policy, the ABG program offers training in governance, budgeting, legislation, and ethical decision-making. This program reflects UDM's mission to extend education to the most fundamental levels of governance, enabling better leadership at the grassroots. By instilling values of accountability and ethical governance, this initiative speaks directly to WURI's vision of integrity-driven institutional engagement.

In the category of **B4 – Culture/Values**, UDM submitted its *Transformative Identity Courses*, a general education component rooted in the university's core values: Ethics, Quality, Unity, Achievement, and Leadership (EQUAL). These courses aim to shape students not just intellectually, but ethically—cultivating their identity as responsible, visionary citizens. By embedding value formation into the academic journey, UDM ensures that leadership and service are not just goals but personal commitments instilled in every student. This reflects WURI's emphasis on educational models that nurture cultural transformation and long-term character development.

For **B6 – Infrastructure/Technologies**, UDM highlighted its *ClinicCare Record Management System*, an internally developed digital platform that revolutionized the university's medical and dental clinic services. Replacing a cumbersome paper-based system, ClinicCare allows health professionals to securely store, retrieve, and manage student health records with efficiency. Operated via an intranet-based network, it ensures data confidentiality while improving access to healthcare services across the campus. Though simple in design, the system exemplifies how digital transformation

can be scaled to meet the specific needs of a public educational institution—aligning well with WURI's recognition of infrastructure that enhances institutional innovation.

Together, these entries reflect how UDM leveraged its own strengths and contextual realities to meet global innovation standards. Each submission was grounded in relevance and purpose, proving that with critical reflection and strategic framing, local initiatives can resonate in international conversations on educational innovation.

Summary of UDM WURI Entries and Their Category Alignment

WURI Category	Project Title	Brief Description	Alignment Focus
A1 – Student Support and Engagement	Nourishing Minds: UDM C.A.R.E.S. for Student Well-being and Sustainable Development	A volunteer-driven food support program addressing student hunger and promoting sustainability.	Addresses student well-being and retention through inclusive support systems.
	Social Amelioration Program (SAP)	A financial assistance initiative providing regular stipends to financially challenged students.	Promotes equitable access to education by addressing economic barriers.
A6 – Ethics and Integrity	Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program	A formal training program for elected barangay officials to develop skills in governance, legislation, budgeting, and ethics.	Fosters ethical leadership and accountable local governance.
B4 – Culture/Values	Transformative Identity Courses	Values-based general education courses promoting UDM's EQUAL core values: Ethics, Quality, Unity, Achievement, and Leadership.	Instills character, purpose, and social responsibility through curriculum design.
B6 – Infrastructure/ Technologies	ClinicCare Record Management System	An intranet-based digital platform for managing student health records, replacing manual systems in UDM's clinic.	Demonstrates technology-driven institutional improvement and service efficiency.

Findings Analysis

The analysis of UDM's entries reveals a deliberate and reflective process of aligning existing programs with WURI's innovation themes. The programs were not designed as competition entries, but rather emerged organically from institutional needs and priorities, then later positioned to meet global criteria. This approach highlighted UDM's ability to recognize the broader significance of its work and frame it within international benchmarks.

Under **Student Support and Engagement (A1)**, the C.A.R.E.S. program and the Social Amelioration Program both demonstrated UDM's responsiveness to student welfare beyond academic instruction. The dual focus on food and financial support illustrates a comprehensive model of engagement that prioritizes retention, well-being, and dignity—qualities highly valued in global education rankings. Their inclusion affirms that student-centered innovation can be both deeply local and globally relevant.

In **Ethics and Integrity (A6)**, the ABG Program was a standout example of how universities can serve as engines of ethical reform at the grassroots. By targeting elected barangay officials, UDM extended its institutional reach into the political and administrative fabric of the city. The program's alignment with WURI's values demonstrates how ethical education need not be abstract—it can directly shape communities and public governance.

For **Culture and Values (B4)**, the Transformative Identity Courses illustrate a forward-thinking model of general education. By embedding core institutional values into the curriculum, UDM affirms that academic success is incomplete without character formation. This alignment reinforces the idea that innovation includes not only tools and technologies, but also the cultivation of moral leadership.

Finally, in **Infrastructure/Technologies (B6)**, the ClinicCare Record Management System represented a highly practical application of digital innovation in a resource-conscious environment. While not complex in design, its implementation addressed real inefficiencies in healthcare services and highlighted how institutional systems can be reformed through accessible technology.

Overall, the alignment process revealed that UDM's programs—though modest and locally focused—carried strong innovation potential when viewed through WURI's lens. The institution's ability to frame its existing efforts within global criteria demonstrates strategic agility, reflective leadership, and a growing understanding of

how internationalization can emerge from what is already being done with purpose and impact.

2. **To analyze the insights and lessons drawn from the process of matching institutional efforts with global innovation standards, as a basis for informing future strategies in internationalization.**

The process of aligning UDM's existing programs with WURI categories surfaced key institutional insights that go beyond the competition itself. First, it revealed the university's latent capacity for innovation—efforts that were previously regarded as routine or locally confined gained new meaning when contextualized within global benchmarks. This shift in perspective underscored the importance of **strategic documentation and impact framing**. Programs like SAP and C.A.R.E.S., originally designed out of social necessity, proved to be globally competitive once their objectives, outcomes, and structures were articulated through the lens of innovation and student-centered engagement.

Second, the exercise highlighted the value of **institutional self-awareness and reflection**. UDM's approach was not to conform to WURI's categories by creating new projects but to look inward and assess which ongoing initiatives naturally aligned. This retrospective strategy fostered an honest appreciation of the university's real strengths—programs that were grounded in equity, ethics, service, and functionality. The experience affirmed that internationalization need not always require massive restructuring or external validation; it can begin with recognizing the global relevance of one's local mission.

Third, UDM's participation brought attention to the importance of **intentionality in program design** moving forward. While existing efforts were effective in addressing WURI criteria, the process revealed missed opportunities for capturing data, measuring outcomes, and narrating institutional impact in ways that align with international standards. Future strategies could therefore focus on embedding evaluation mechanisms, strengthening impact narratives, and building interdisciplinary documentation teams to prepare for global benchmarking.

Finally, the university recognized that **internationalization is not merely about visibility**, but about voice—sharing context-based solutions that respond to specific societal needs. UDM's entries demonstrated that innovation can emerge from resource-constrained environments, and that meaningful contributions to global

education discourse do not require elite status, but clarity of purpose, relevance of action, and integrity in execution.

3. To examine the novelty of Universidad de Manila's WURI participation and explore how its journey offers valuable lessons for other higher education institutions pursuing international innovation recognition.

Universidad de Manila's entry into the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI) presented a unique case of innovation-led internationalization coming from a public, city-funded university with limited resources but high community impact. The novelty lies not in technological complexity or international partnerships, but in UDM's decision to explore how deeply local initiatives could be framed for global relevance—a trait not often spotlighted in global ranking narratives. This experience illustrates that innovation, when rooted in community responsiveness and ethical leadership, can be just as globally significant as high-cost, research-heavy interventions.

What makes UDM's journey particularly instructive is its **"inside-out" strategy**: instead of creating programs for the sake of compliance, the university reflected on what it was already doing well and used that as the basis for international visibility. This reverses the usual trend where rankings dictate institutional priorities. Instead, UDM's priorities shaped how it approached the ranking. As argued by Knight and De Wit (2022), meaningful internationalization must emerge from institutional identity and values rather than external validation. UDM's experience validates this position by showing that even under constraints, innovation can be authentic, sustainable, and impactful.

Moreover, UDM's case serves as an empowering precedent for similarly situated universities—particularly public institutions in the Global South—that aspire to be recognized globally without compromising their mission of social responsibility. It reminds the academic community that the global conversation on innovation must include diverse institutional voices, especially those that reflect the realities of underrepresented communities. Through strategic reflection, careful framing, and purposeful documentation, UDM has shown that **innovation is not just about advancement—it is also about access, relevance, and meaning**.

In this way, the experience of Universidad de Manila illustrates that the path to global recognition begins not with prestige or scale, but with clarity of purpose, courage

in reflection, and a commitment to innovation that resonates beyond one's own context.

The reflective pathway taken by Universidad de Manila in participating in WURI 2025 can be described through five interconnected stages:
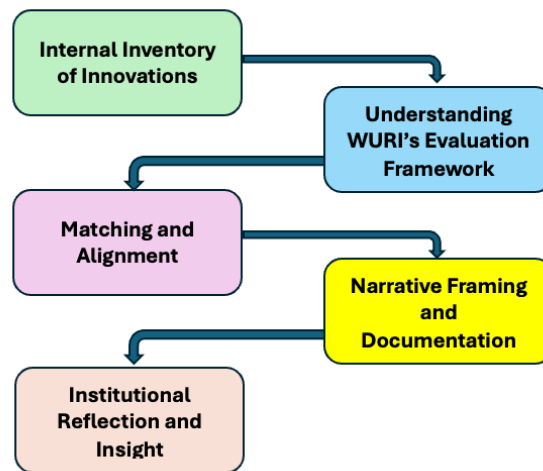

Figure 1. Reflective Pathway

Internal Inventory of Innovations. UDM began by reviewing its existing programs and institutional initiatives to identify which ones demonstrated innovation, responsiveness, and social impact.

Understanding WURI's Evaluation Framework. Rather than starting with a project idea, the team studied WURI's thematic categories to understand how global innovation was framed in terms of societal contribution, ethics, infrastructure, and engagement.

Matching and Alignment. A strategic matching process followed, where UDM aligned its programs to WURI categories based on natural fit—not forced compliance. This stage emphasized relevance over reinvention.

Narrative Framing and Documentation. The selected programs were then articulated in a format that clearly communicated purpose, outcomes, and innovative value, using the language and structure expected in international ranking submissions.

Institutional Reflection and Insight. Beyond submission, the process led to deep internal reflection about the university's identity, its role in global education discourse, and areas for capacity building in future international engagements.

This pathway is **not a prescriptive model**, but a **reflection of lived institutional experience**, potentially serving as a guide for similarly situated universities seeking to make their own impact visible in a global context.

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Toward Sustainable Extension Program: A Pillar-Based Framework for Long-Term Community Empowerment through Healthy Habitat

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Abstract

This study set out to design a Sustainability Framework for university-led extension programs, with the goal of building long-term, community-driven impact that goes beyond the typical short-term outreach efforts. Grounded in the actual needs of Barangay 790, Zone 86, Sta. Ana, Manila, the research focused on the development and implementation of the platform "Healthy Habitat: Sustainable Community Solutions for Vector and Domestic Animal Management." The urgency of this initiative became evident after a needs assessment revealed alarming concerns about pet waste management, stray animal presence, and the rise of vector-borne diseases in the area. Uncollected animal feces and improper sanitation practices had not only affected the barangay's cleanliness but had also created a breeding ground for pests like rats, mosquitoes, and flies—threatening the health and safety of residents. To address this, the research introduced a pillar-based sustainability framework built on four core foundations: community ownership, institutional partnerships, policy and governance, and financial and technological support. These pillars were further operationalized through a carefully structured 5-year implementation roadmap, gradually moving the community toward full ownership of the program. This research contributes significantly to Universidad de Manila's extension direction, offering a strategic, research-informed model for future programs. It merges academic insight with grassroots realities, showing that meaningful change can begin with local voices and shared leadership. Above all, it reaffirms that sustainable extension work is possible when communities are seen not as passive recipients, but as active partners. The model introduced in this study reflects UDM's ongoing commitment to empowering communities through education, collaboration, and practical solutions—laying the groundwork for long-term, community-owned transformation.

Introduction

At the Universidad de Manila, the Extension Program is more than just outreach—it's a heartfelt commitment to making education matter in real life. It's about stepping beyond the classroom and standing shoulder to shoulder with communities, using what we know to create change that truly lasts. In every project, UDM turns knowledge into action—showing that a university isn't just a place for learning, but a partner in building a better tomorrow.

Living up to this mission, UDM took a big step forward by partnering with Barangay 790, Zone 86 in Sta. Ana, Manila. The partnership was made official during a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing held on June 8, 2023—a moment that signified the beginning of a deeper connection between the university and the community it seeks to serve.

The MOA was signed by Dr. Ma. Felma Carlos-Tria, Dr. Herrera, Chairman Orendain, and two Barangay Kagawad, representing both institutions' shared vision. This agreement isn't just paperwork—it's a promise. A promise to work together, to share knowledge, and to build projects that will leave a lasting, positive mark on people's lives. For UDM, it's yet another reminder that real impact happens when hearts and hands work together.

Extension Platform

To ensure that community engagement efforts are focused, scalable, and sustainable, there must be a clearly defined platform that anchors all extension initiatives. This platform serves as a foundation for aligning academic expertise with real-world community needs, guiding the direction and coherence of all programs.

In the heart of Barangay 790, a silent but pressing concern has been quietly growing—one that affects not only the cleanliness of the streets but the health and safety of every resident. A recent needs assessment revealed a significant issue: the increasing number of domestic animals, both owned and stray, paired with poor pet waste management. At first glance, it may seem like a minor nuisance. But for the families who walk these streets every day, the reality is far more serious.

Pet feces left on roads (Figure 1) and pathways are not just unpleasant—they carry harmful bacteria and parasites like *E. coli*, *salmonella*, and roundworms, which can seep into soil and water sources. Worse, uncollected waste becomes a magnet for pests like flies, roaches, and rats—vectors known to spread diseases like

leptospirosis and dengue. In a barangay where stagnant water and unmanaged waste are already problems, these risks multiply fast.
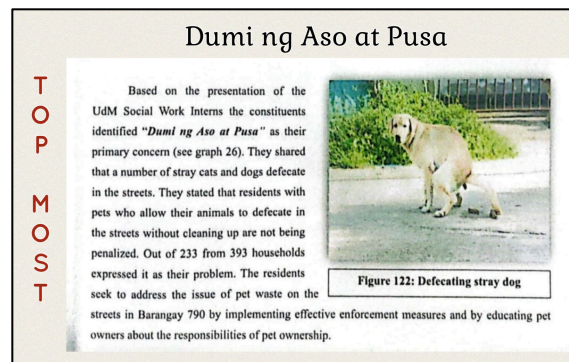

Figure 1. Defecating Stray Dog

Moreover, while chemical vector control methods—such as pesticides and fumigation—are often used to combat these problems, they also have environmental drawbacks, potentially harming other species and contaminating air and water.

Clearly, the solution to Barangay 790's sanitation challenge can't rely on quick fixes or harmful chemicals. What's needed is a sustainable, community-driven approach—one that gets to the root of the problem. And at the core of that problem is something as simple, yet serious, as uncollected pet waste.

In response to this urgent need, Universidad de Manila introduces **Healthy Habitat: Sustainable Community Solutions for Vector and Domestic Animal Management**—a platform built not just on data, but on the shared desire to create a cleaner, healthier place to live. Because every community deserves to feel safe, clean, and cared for.

The Healthy Habitat platform was designed to equip residents with the tools and knowledge they need. Through education, community collaboration, and practical support, UDM is helping build not just cleaner streets, but a healthier, more resilient community.

Stakeholders Collaboration

To ensure that the **Healthy Habitat** platform truly takes root and thrives, it cannot stand alone. Its success depends on the active support and shared responsibility of key stakeholders—each playing a vital role in turning this vision into a sustainable reality. From local government to NGOs and private partners, every hand joined makes the community stronger, cleaner, and healthier for all.

1. Non-Governmental Organizations (Education and Advocacy).

In the heart of Manila's advocacy landscape, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have long been trusted partners in empowering communities where government reach may fall short. Groups like PAWS have been actively promoting responsible pet ownership—offering spay and neuter services and educating residents about the health dangers of unmanaged pet waste. At the same time, local environmental NGOs continue to share practical solutions on eco-friendly waste practices, vector control, and community gardening—making sustainable living more accessible to ordinary citizens.

In Barangay 790, these NGOs can help turn knowledge into everyday action. With their support, residents can access free or affordable workshops, tools, and continued guidance, keeping the spirit of Healthy Habitat alive even after UDM steps back. Through their consistent advocacy and community-based work, NGOs become long-term allies in shaping a cleaner, safer, and more informed barangay—where health and sustainability are not just taught but lived.

2. Private Sector (Resources and Sustainability).

In Manila, private businesses can be powerful partners in building healthier communities. Local shops and animal care providers can offer **affordable, eco-friendly products** like repellents, waste bins, and hygiene supplies—giving residents practical tools to keep their surroundings clean and safe. With their support, Healthy Habitat becomes not just a program—but a sustainable way of life.

Private clinics can lend a big hand by offering health checkups, dengue awareness, and simple tips to keep families safe and informed right in their own barangay.

Local waste management companies—many of which operate across the city's barangays—can help design customized collection schedules, including proper

handling of pet waste and vector breeding site clean-ups. With their involvement, Barangay 790 won't have to rely solely on outside help—it will have accessible, long-term partners in its own backyard.

3. Government Agencies (Policy and Enforcement).

The role of government—both local and national—is essential in making Healthy Habitat a lasting part of Barangay 790's way of life. Barangay Health Workers, Sanitation Officers, and the City Veterinary Office of Manila can lead efforts in enforcing pet registration, vaccinations, and cleanliness ordinances that directly respond to the community's needs. At the national level, agencies like the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) can step in with technical support and advocacy, helping control stray animal populations and promote responsible pet care.

More importantly, when the Local Government Unit of Manila actively partners with residents, existing health and sanitation policies become more than just rules—they become shared practices, deeply woven into the daily routines of the barangay. With government enforcement and community participation working hand in hand, the impact of Healthy Habitat goes far beyond a campaign—it becomes part of the culture, ensuring cleaner spaces and healthier lives for years to come.

The key is collaboration—and once activated, these networks can ensure that the project continues to grow, long after the pilot phase.

Sustainability Framework

To make sure the impact of Healthy Habitat doesn't fade after just a few activities, there needs to be a strong structure that helps it grow and last. That's why this research introduced the **Healthy Habitat Sustainability Framework** (Figure 2) — a model that brings together community action, partnerships, and shared knowledge. At its core are four key pillars, all grounded in what's actually happening in the community, working together to build a future that's cleaner, safer, and truly sustainable.

Figure 2. Healthy Habitat Sustainability Framework

First, there is **Community Ownership**. Real change begins when the people themselves take the lead. In Barangay 790, residents, volunteers, and barangay personnel become the driving force—watching over sanitation, caring for pets, and making sure vector control isn't just a task, but a shared responsibility.

Next is **Institutional Partnerships**. No community stands alone. Support from NGOs, private businesses, and health agencies means there's always someone to turn to for tools, training, and advice. Local vet clinics and animal welfare groups help ensure that pet care doesn't end with awareness—it continues with action.

Then comes **Policy and Governance**. Lasting impact needs rules and structure. With the barangay and LGU stepping in to enforce ordinances and lead clean-up drives, healthy habits become part of everyday life, not just special projects.

Finally, **Financial and Technological Support** brings it all together. With low-cost eco-technologies and micro-funding opportunities, communities aren't just taught how to sustain the program—they're empowered to run it themselves, with pride and purpose.

On page 16 of **SADUNAYAN**, the official UDM magazine for Extension Linkages Unit of URELIA, a strategic table that outlines our **Platform Sustainability Framework** is presented. The table is organized into four key columns:

1st Column - Pillars of Sustainability. These are the core areas that hold the framework together, guiding how the community grows, takes action, and stays strong for the long run.

2nd Column - Key Components. These break down what each pillar is really about, like clear policies, strong partnerships, or essential tools the community needs to move forward.

3rd Column - Implementation Strategies. These are the practical steps we take on the ground, turning plans into action and making sure each initiative connects with the daily lives of the people.

4th Column - Sustainability Outcome. This highlights the long-term change we're working toward: cleaner spaces, healthier lives, and a community that can sustain these efforts on its own.

This table offers a simple yet powerful snapshot of how our extension efforts move from plans on paper to real, lasting change on the ground. The true goal is a **Self-Sustaining Healthy Habitat**—a community that no longer waits for help but leads its own way. It's about people taking pride in their spaces, caring for their environment and pets, and working together to protect their health every day. When that happens, extension work becomes a way of life—not just a project.

Five-Year Implementation Plan

The **signed 5-year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)** between **Universidad de Manila and Barangay 790** is more than just a document—it's a shared promise. It marks a meaningful commitment to roll out and sustain the **Healthy Habitat** platform hand in hand. With this agreement in place, every step—from training local volunteers to eventually passing the reins to the community—is laid out with purpose, support, and shared responsibility.

To bring this commitment to life, we follow a **5-Year Implementation Plan**, clearly mapped out in a guiding table. This plan ensures that our work isn't rushed or reactive—but steady, strategic, and community-driven.

This table presents the **5-Year Implementation Plan** of the Healthy Habitat platform, organized into three key columns:

Table 1. Five-Year Implementation Plan

Year	Focus Areas	Key Actions
Year 1	Capacity Building & Baseline Assessment	- Conduct baseline sanitation and health assessments. - Identify key stakeholders (NGOs, businesses, LGU). - Train local champions on sanitation and animal care.
Year 2	Policy and Community Engagement	- Establish barangay ordinances for pet ownership and waste disposal. - Implement initial waste management and vector control initiatives. - Organize sanitation awareness campaigns.
Year 3	Scaling Institutional Support	- Strengthen NGO and private sector collaborations. - Launch sustainable business models (waste-to-income projects). - Expand sanitation and waste collection programs.
Year 4	Economic Sustainability and Technological Integration	- Introduce smart waste management solutions (e.g., composting hubs). - Implement micro-financing schemes for pet control and sanitation projects. - Scale up health and wellness education.
Year 5 & Beyond	Full Community Ownership	- Transition program leadership to barangay and community task forces. - Strengthen local governance structures. - Expand partnerships for regional impact.

1st Column – Year. Outlines the timeline from Year 1 to Year 5 and beyond. It shows how the initiative grows over time—from awareness and training, to full community ownership—making sure each phase builds on the one before it, with clear direction and room for the community to lead.

2nd Column - Focus Areas. Highlights what matters most at each stage of the journey. It lays out the core priorities year by year—starting with capacity building, then moving into policy engagement, and finally anchoring in sustainability integration. These focus areas ensure that the plan grows with the community, addressing the right needs at the right time, and laying the foundation for a truly lasting impact.

3rd Column - Key Actions. Spells out what actually happens on the ground—real steps and activities that move the community forward, one meaningful action at a time.

This structure helps guide the platform's rollout in a way that is strategic, realistic, and sustainable over time.

Sustainability Roadmap

This image shows our **Sustainability Roadmap** as a clear, step-by-step journey—each colored marker representing a key focus area that brings the community closer to lasting change, year after year.

Figure 3. Sustainability Roadmap

Marker 1 (Yellow) represents **Capacity Building & Baseline Assessment**, the starting point where the community starts by learning, gathering data, and identifying key people who will help lead the way.

Marker 2 (Red) shows **Policy and Community Engagement**, the phase where the community starts turning learning into action, with local ordinances taking shape and awareness campaigns bringing everyone on board.

Marker 3 (Blue) highlights **Scaling Institutional Support**, where partnerships with NGOs, the private sector, and government are deepened.

Marker 4 (Pink) stands for **Economic Sustainability and Technological Integration**, focusing on smart waste solutions and income-generating projects.

Marker 5 (Orange) symbolizes the destination: **Full Community Ownership**, where residents and local leaders fully manage and sustain the initiatives.

Each step brings the community closer to owning a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient future—one milestone at a time. This roadmap visually captures not just the sequence, but the shared journey toward a sustainable habitat.

Though **Healthy Habitat** is still in its early stages, its true value lies in the strong foundation it has begun to build—a foundation shaped by real community voices, grounded in everyday needs, and guided by a roadmap toward lasting change. What makes it special is not just the framework, but how it was co-created with the people of Barangay 790, where issues of health, sanitation, and sustainability are deeply felt. This is not just a project—it's a promise.

For the Universidad de Manila, this effort goes beyond research. It reflects a deeper shift: from being solely a place of knowledge to becoming an active partner in community transformation. This initiative shows that when the university steps outside its walls—with structure, intention, and humility—it can plant the seeds of meaningful impact. Even if results take time, what has been started here is already full of purpose and potential.

Transforming Grassroots Leadership:
The Associate in Barangay Governance Program

Dr. Ma. Felma Carlos-Tria; Dr. Leila R. Gano; Laarnie Hernandez

Abstract

Transforming grassroots leadership begins with equipping local officials with the competencies and values necessary for ethical and effective governance. The Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program, implemented by the Universidad de Manila in collaboration with the City Government of Manila and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), serves as a pioneering model for professionalizing barangay leadership in the Philippines. Anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory, the research employed a qualitative descriptive design using interviews, document analysis, and online resources to explore the insights and experiences of ABG graduates and key stakeholders. Findings reveal significant improvements in leadership competencies, transparency, policy development, and digital governance among graduates. Institutional endorsements—from the Mayor of Manila, the DILG NCR Director, members of Congress and university leadership —affirmed the program's impact and credibility. Documented outputs such as ordinances, digital registration systems, and barangay websites further highlight the program's practical applications. Stakeholders recommended areas for enhancement, including curriculum enrichment, the addition of a capstone project, a comprehensive examination, and improved learning environments. The ABG Program demonstrates strong potential in strengthening local governance and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 by fostering peace, justice, and strong institutions through empowered community leaders.

Keywords: Grassroots Leadership, Ethical Governance, Integrity, Public Service

Introduction

      Barangays, as the smallest political units of government in the Philippines, serve as the foundation of democratic governance and public service delivery. Under Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991, barangays are mandated to promote the general welfare, ensure the delivery of basic services, and contribute to national development through genuine local autonomy. However, while their responsibilities are substantial, the capacity of many barangay officials remains limited due to a lack of formal education, technical training, and leadership development opportunities (Brillantes & Tiu-Santos, 2022). These limitations often result in difficulties in crafting local policies, managing finances, resolving conflicts, and fostering inclusive community engagement.

      The effectiveness of barangays in fulfilling their mandate is closely linked to the competence, integrity, and leadership of their officials. In recent years, scholars and governance experts have called for more structured capacity-building programs to empower local leaders, particularly in urban settings where governance challenges are more complex (Tusalem, 2022). Training and education are increasingly recognized as critical mechanisms for enhancing the quality of local governance, especially in achieving transparency, accountability, and sustainable community development (Tapales et al., 2023).

      In response to these needs, the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program of Universidad de Manila was established to provide barangay leaders with essential competencies, and ethical grounding. The program offers a formal educational pathway that professionalizes barangay governance by focusing on areas such as public administration, fiscal management, digital governance, and participatory planning. By doing so, the program aligns with calls for democratizing access to higher education and strengthening community leadership from the grassroots (Reyes et al., 2023).

      Moreover, the ABG program contributes meaningfully to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, which emphasizes the importance of building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2023). By equipping barangay officials with practical competencies and ethical foundations, the program not only addresses governance gaps but also fosters resilient communities capable of responding to current and future challenges.

Through its partnership with the City Government of Manila, the ABG Program also reflects a model of local-academic collaboration that enhances the responsiveness of public institutions. It affirms the role of higher education in driving social innovation and cultivating visionary leadership committed to public service and inclusive development.

Theoretical Basis

This study is anchored on Transformational Leadership Theory, originally introduced by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and further expanded by Bernard Bass (1985). The theory emphasizes leadership that goes beyond mere transactions and routine exchanges. Instead, transformational leaders inspire and motivate followers to reach higher levels of performance, engage in meaningful change, and commit to a shared vision grounded in ethical conduct and public service.

In the context of local governance, particularly within the barangay system in the Philippines, transformational leadership is not just desirable—it is essential. Barangay officials are more than just administrative figures; they are frontline leaders who directly impact the quality of life in their communities. However, as many enter public service with little formal training, their leadership often lacks strategic direction and ethical grounding. This gap is precisely what the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program seeks to address.

The program fosters transformational leadership by equipping barangay officials with the competencies and values needed to inspire trust, mobilize community participation, and implement responsive policies. Recent scholarship affirms the relevance of this leadership approach in public service. Kim and Kim (2022) found that transformational leadership significantly boosts public service motivation and encourages ethical decision-making among local government officials. Likewise, Zhang and Li (2023) emphasized that transformational leadership leads to stronger participatory governance, enabling community leaders to co-create solutions with their constituents.

By grounding the ABG program in transformational leadership theory and UDM's Core Values (Ethics and Integrity) and Vision, the study affirms that meaningful and lasting change in barangay governance must begin with empowered, ethical, and visionary leadership. This theory provides the lens through which the impact of leadership education on community transformation can be examined, understood, and replicated across other local government units in the Philippines.

Objectives Of The Study

Grounded in the preceding discussion, this study explored the impact of the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program on enhancing grassroots leadership and promoting ethical governance among barangay officials.

Specifically, it addressed the following specific objectives:

1. Explore the insights and experiences of ABG graduates regarding the program's influence on their leadership competencies and governance practices at the barangay level.

2. Examine the perspectives of ABG lecturers and government stakeholders on the effectiveness of the program in developing competent barangay leaders.

3. Identify the perceived areas for improvement of the ABG Program as highlighted by its key stakeholders: graduates, lecturers, and public officials.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design, which allows for a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and impacts associated with the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program. As defined by Sandelowski (2000), qualitative descriptive studies are particularly suitable when the aim is to capture participants' perspectives in a natural and minimally theorized manner. This approach was chosen to explore the program's effectiveness in transforming grassroots leadership, particularly in terms of governance capacity, ethical decision-making, and community responsiveness.

To gather rich and credible data, the study used semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and a review of relevant official websites. The interview protocol enabled participants to reflect on their lived experiences with the ABG Program and its practical relevance to barangay governance. Document analysis included reviewing ABG course modules, evaluation reports, and policy documents. Barangay website references provided supplementary context.

The respondents include a diverse group of stakeholders: ABG graduates, lecturers from DILG and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the DILG-NCR Regional Director, two members of Congress from the City of Manila, the Mayor of Manila, and the President of Universidad De Manila, ensuring multi-level insights into the program's influence.

Results And Discussion

Objective 1. Explore the insights and experiences of ABG graduates regarding the program's influence on their leadership competencies and governance practices at the barangay level.

The findings of this study reveal significant positive outcomes brought about by the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program, particularly in transforming barangay officials into ethical, competent, and proactive grassroots leaders. Through interviews and document analysis, the study highlights how the program has contributed to improvements in transparency, governance practices, and local legislative output.

Barangay Chairman Ariel Sierda testified that the ABG Program enhanced his capacity to implement ethical governance, specifically by developing transparent financial reports. This was validated by the documented minutes of the senior citizen pension payout for October to November 2024, which included a clear record of a Php 24,000.00 refund from 12 unclaimed pensions. Despite noting a clerical error, the presence of such documentation reflects a growing culture of transparency and accountability among ABG-trained officials.

The program also contributed to technological adaptation and data management. Chairman Sierda initiated the establishment of barangay databases through online registration, an innovative step toward digital governance—a key competency introduced in the ABG course on Barangay Informatics. This aligns with national goals of e-governance and improved public service delivery.

Moreover, the program strengthened policy literacy and legislative output. In Barangay 303, two ordinances were enacted by the said ABG graduate: Ordinance No. 23, which institutionalized a Drug-Free Workplace, and Ordinance No. 21, which regulated street vendors and established fees and penalties. These policies demonstrate the application of ABG coursework on local legislation and community-based planning.

Testimonies from other graduates underscore the program's transformative impact on self-perception and civic engagement. Hon. Josephine Chua, speaking during a formal session, expressed newfound confidence and empowerment, noting that the program broadened her understanding of her responsibilities as a barangay official. Similarly, Hon. Jerry Concha praised the program's comprehensive content

and its potential to improve the broader public sector, echoing the City of Manila's development thrust, "Asensong Maynila."

Lastly, Hon. Elton John Corpuz from Barangay 110 reported a tangible legislative outcome—having drafted seven resolutions and two barangay ordinances—clearly demonstrating the program's influence on policymaking capabilities.

These results confirm the ABG Program's effectiveness in cultivating ethical, skilled, and transformative barangay leaders, contributing directly to the realization of SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

Objective 2. Examine the perspectives of ABG lecturers and government stakeholders on the effectiveness of the program in developing competent barangay leaders.

The findings reveal that the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program has significantly influenced the leadership competencies, decision-making capabilities, and governance practices of its graduates. The program has elevated the professional and civic standards of barangay officials by equipping them with theoretical knowledge, practical tools, and ethical grounding necessary for transformational leadership at the community level.

During the State of the City Address (SOCA) on July 30, 2024, Mayor Honey Lacuna publicly acknowledged the ABG Program as a landmark initiative—pioneering in the Philippines and instrumental in improving service delivery and fostering sustainable development at the barangay level. Her praise during the ABG Graduation Ceremony on August 9, 2024, further emphasized that graduates are now seen as trailblazers of ethical and empowered grassroots leadership, embodying the values of accountability, inclusiveness, and innovation.

This sentiment was echoed by UDM President Ma. Felma Carlos-Tria, who presented the ABG Program as a "groundbreaking initiative" in her 2024 President's Report. The program's success was supported by formal partnerships with the DILG, Barangay Bureau, and Liga ng mga Barangay, ensuring institutional relevance and credibility.

DILG NCR Director John Visca attested that ABG graduates now serve as role models who share governance innovations and ethical practices with neighboring barangays. According to Visca, their ability to solve local issues through evidence-based, community-responsive approaches reflects the real-world application of their training.

Further insights were shared by DILG Lecturer Patricia Rovie Salamero, who noted that graduates have developed core competencies in vision and mission formulation, legislation, digital governance, and strategic planning. Her observations were supported by specific examples, such as the Outstanding Barangay Legislation Award received by Barangay 303 for their Tourism and Cultural Heritage Code, and the use of QR codes and online forms to streamline barangay operations, as seen in Barangay 287's Secure eClearance project.

Support from national leaders like Congressmen Joel Chua and Irwin Tieng validated the program's transformative impact. Both commended the graduates' commitment to personal growth and public service, reinforcing how the ABG Program cultivates competent leaders who not only understand their roles but actively lead with purpose, ethics, and innovation.

Objective 3. Identify the perceived areas for improvement of the ABG Program as highlighted by its key stakeholders, including graduates, lecturers, and public officials.

The evaluation of the Associate in Barangay Governance (ABG) Program revealed several key areas for improvement, as identified by stakeholders including graduates, lecturers, and public officials. These recommendations, grounded in practical experience and institutional observations, aim to enhance the relevance, delivery, and overall effectiveness of the program in cultivating competent and ethical barangay leaders.

Four (4) significant recommendations pertain to the curriculum content of specific modules:

AREA OF CONCERN	RECOMMENDATION
Module 1 Introduction to Barangay Governance	Include the discussion of the concept and benefit of the Seal of Good Local Governance for Barangays (SGLGB) and other performance evaluation tools
Module 2 Barangay Development Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring	Include context-based discussion of the SGLGB and other DILG performance evaluation tools as aid for planning, project/policy development
Module 6 Barangay Informatics	Include data analytics using SGLGB and other performance evaluation results
Module 5 Development of Applied Skills	Require students to develop and submit a capstone/ project proposal, which shall benefit their barangay or other barangay/s
On evaluation of students' learning	It is recommended that there be a Comprehensive Examination to be administered at the end of the course
Grading System	Recommended grading system: • Performance Tasks (attendance, behavior, recitation, group work, etc.) – 20% • Quizzes – 10% • Module Exam/Project – 30% • Comprehensive Exam – 40%
Other administrative concerns	• Please consider providing a permanent room for ABG students, preferably conducive, airconditioned, free from noise, and equipped with functional projector and screen and whiteboard • A manageable number of students, preferably thirty (30) students is recommended

For Module 1 (Introduction to Barangay Governance) and Module 2 (Barangay Development Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring), it was suggested that the program incorporate discussions on the Seal of Good Local Governance for Barangays (SGLGB) and other Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) performance evaluation tools. This addition is seen as crucial in contextualizing the importance of data-driven governance and providing barangay officials with frameworks for assessing and improving their own performance. Similarly, Module 6 (Barangay Informatics) could benefit from the inclusion of data analytics, allowing students to utilize real evaluation metrics such as SGLGB results to inform planning and decision-making.

Another focal area is Module 5 (Development of Applied Skills), where stakeholders proposed the integration of a capstone or project proposal requirement. This hands-on task would enable students to directly apply their learning by creating a proposal that addresses real barangay needs. Such practical application is expected

to strengthen the connection between academic learning and real-world governance challenges.

In terms of student assessment, stakeholders emphasized the importance of a Comprehensive Examination at the end of the course to holistically measure knowledge acquisition. A structured grading system was also recommended, comprising Performance Tasks (20%), Quizzes (10%), Module Exam or Project (30%), and the Comprehensive Exam (40%). This diversified approach is seen as better capturing students' active participation, comprehension, and practical application.

On administrative matters, the need for a permanent, well-equipped classroom for ABG students was highlighted. A conducive, air-conditioned space with necessary instructional tools such as projectors and whiteboards would significantly enhance the learning environment. Finally, maintaining a manageable class size of about 30 students was recommended to ensure quality instruction and individualized support.

Overall, these stakeholder-driven insights present valuable directions for the refinement of the ABG Program, ensuring it remains responsive to the evolving needs of barangay governance and capable of producing highly capable local leaders.

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Developing a Sustainable Operations Manual for University-Led Food Security Program: A Case Study of UDM C.A.R.E.S.

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Abstract

Developing an operations manual is essential for ensuring the sustainability and efficiency of institutional programs, particularly those addressing student food insecurity. This study focused on the development of the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Operations Manual, a standardized guide for implementing a community-driven, non-monetary food security program at Universidad de Manila. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research examined the existing operational framework of UDM C.A.R.E.S., identifying key challenges and best practices to inform the manual's development. Data were collected through document analysis, direct observations, and semi-structured interviews with faculty members, student volunteers, and beneficiaries. Findings revealed several operational inefficiencies, including inconsistent food donations, lack of storage and handling facilities, unstructured volunteer management, and lack of a formal tracking system. These challenges highlighted the need for a structured manual to standardize food collection, storage, preparation, distribution, and volunteer coordination. This research contributes to the institutionalization of sustainable food security initiatives in higher education by providing a replicable framework for other universities. The development of the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Operations Manual ensures that the program remains efficient, well-documented, and adaptable to institutional policies.

Keywords: Operations manual, food security, sustainability, process standardization

Introduction

Operational manuals play a critical role in guiding organizations, institutions, and industries by providing structured procedures, policies, and best practices that ensure efficiency, standardization, and sustainability. Across various sectors, manuals serve as indispensable tools for documenting operational workflows, maintaining consistency, and ensuring quality control in processes ranging from healthcare and manufacturing to education and public service (ISO, 2020). In a global context, well-documented operational guidelines contribute to the seamless execution of programs and initiatives, allowing for replicability, adaptability, and long-term success. Internationally recognized organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and World Health Organization (WHO) emphasize the importance of structured manuals in ensuring adherence to best practices, risk management, and compliance with global standards (WHO, 2021). Without these structured guidelines, inefficiencies, inconsistencies, and errors may compromise the effectiveness and sustainability of initiatives, particularly in sectors that require precision and adherence to policies.

At the national level, operational manuals play a significant role in Philippine industries, particularly in education, healthcare, and government services. In recent years, various government agencies, including the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd), have mandated the development of institutional manuals to standardize processes and improve service delivery (CHED, 2022). In response to the growing need for efficiency and sustainability, Philippine higher education institutions (HEIs) have developed institutional policies and procedural manuals for academic programs, administrative processes, and student welfare initiatives. The implementation of structured manuals allows for improved transparency, accountability, and continuity, especially in programs that cater to vulnerable sectors such as food security and student assistance programs (DepEd, 2022). The existence of clear and comprehensive operational manuals ensures that initiatives within the educational sector remain sustainable and effective, even in the face of transitions in leadership or shifting institutional priorities.

Locally, the need for structured operations manuals is evident in community-driven programs such as the **UDM C.A.R.E.S. (Crisis Aid, Relief, and Economic Security)** initiative, which aims to address food insecurity among students at Universidad de Manila (UDM). The initiative operates a **Soup Kitchen and Student**

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Community Pantry that provides free meals and essential food items to students in need. However, as with many volunteer-driven programs, sustainability and long-term efficiency can be challenging without clear operational guidelines. By developing a comprehensive operations manual, UDM C.A.R.E.S. can institutionalize its processes, ensuring that future administrators, volunteers, and stakeholders have a structured reference for running the initiative effectively. A well-documented manual allows the program to maintain consistency, transparency, and efficiency while also serving as a replicable model for other higher education institutions looking to implement similar food security initiatives.

In the academic setting, manuals serve as essential tools for both institutional governance and student success. Universities and colleges rely on procedural manuals for various aspects of their operations, including academic policies, faculty guidelines, student conduct codes, research ethics, and administrative workflows. Having clearly documented procedures helps streamline university services, ensuring that all stakeholders—from students to faculty members—understand their roles, responsibilities, and expectations. More importantly, operations manuals contribute to student welfare initiatives, such as food security programs, mental health services, and scholarship assistance. By establishing structured guidelines, HEIs can provide consistent and sustainable support services, mitigating risks and ensuring that programs remain accessible and effective over time.

In the case of UDM C.A.R.E.S., the development of a structured operations manual is essential to ensuring the program's long-term sustainability and effectiveness. Given that the initiative relies on volunteers, donors, and institutional partnerships, a well-defined manual will provide clear guidelines on food collection, storage, preparation, distribution, and safety procedures. Additionally, the manual will outline roles and responsibilities of volunteers, faculty members, and partner organizations, ensuring seamless program execution. With a structured framework, the initiative can maintain efficiency, quality control, and stakeholder accountability while also serving as a benchmark model for other universities seeking to implement similar student assistance programs.

As food insecurity continues to be a global, national, and local challenge, the role of operations manuals in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of food security programs in higher education institutions cannot be overstated. By developing a structured and standardized manual, universities can institutionalize best practices, minimize operational risks, and ensure the continuity of student welfare

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programs. This study aims to develop an evidence-based operations manual for UDM C.A.R.E.S. that can serve as a model for other HEIs looking to implement sustainable food security initiatives. The findings of this study will contribute to the growing discourse on student welfare, institutional sustainability, and the role of structured manuals in ensuring long-term impact within the academic sector.

Theoretical Basis

This study is grounded in **Business Process Standardization (BPS)**, a theoretical framework that emphasizes the development of structured and standardized operational procedures to enhance efficiency, consistency, and sustainability in organizations. BPS is widely used in industries and institutions to ensure that processes are well-documented, easily replicable, and adaptable to future improvements (Münstermann, 2014). It provides a structured methodology for documenting workflows, eliminating redundancies, and ensuring compliance with best practices. In the context of food security programs in higher education institutions (HEIs), BPS is particularly relevant in developing an operations manual that streamlines and formalizes food collection, storage, preparation, distribution, and volunteer management.

The application of BPS in university-led food security initiatives, such as UDM C.A.R.E.S., ensures that processes remain standardized, making it easier to train volunteers, manage resources efficiently, and sustain operations in the long term. Standardization also plays a critical role in quality control, ensuring that meals distributed through food assistance programs are prepared and handled in compliance with safety regulations (Tregear, 2013). Without a structured operational framework, inconsistencies in execution may arise, leading to inefficiencies or lapses in food distribution that could compromise the program's effectiveness.

Furthermore, BPS allows institutions to assess and refine their processes over time through continuous monitoring and improvement. A well-documented food security operations manual serves as a reference for program administrators, ensuring that all stakeholders follow clearly defined guidelines while also providing a basis for future modifications and scalability. The adaptability of standardized processes means that the manual can be replicated and implemented in other HEIs, further strengthening food security efforts within the higher education sector (Goel, Bandara, & Gable, 2023).

By integrating Business Process Standardization into the development of a sustainable food security manual, this study ensures that HEIs have a structured framework for implementing long-term, community-driven food assistance programs. This theoretical foundation aligns with the study's objective of creating an operations manual that is efficient, scalable, and capable of institutional integration, ensuring that student food security initiatives can function effectively across different academic settings.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to develop a sustainable **Operations Manual** for the UDM C.A.R.E.S. initiative to serve as a model for food security programs in higher education institutions (HEIs). Specifically, it sought to:

1. **Examine** how UDM C.A.R.E.S. operated in terms of:
    1.1. food collection,
    1.2. food preparation,
    1.3. food distribution, and
    1.4. volunteer management.
2. **Identify** the challenges encountered and best practices observed in the implementation of UDM C.A.R.E.S. in addressing student food insecurity.
3. **Develop** a proposed **Operations Manual** to institutionalize and enhance the sustainability of food security initiatives within HEIs.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research approach to analyze the existing operational framework of UDM C.A.R.E.S. and develop a sustainable food security manual for higher education institutions (HEIs). A case study design was utilized to analyze the processes, documentation, and sustainability mechanisms of the initiative within its real-world setting. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of how the program functions, how it can be improved, and how a structured operations manual can enhance its sustainability and replicability in other academic institutions (Yin, 2018).

Data collection focused on document analysis, observations, and qualitative interviews with key stakeholders. Document analysis was conducted to review existing program records, university policies, operational reports, and volunteer guidelines, providing insight into the established procedures of UDM C.A.R.E.S. This method helped identify gaps in existing documentation and areas that required

standardization (Bowen, 2009). Observations were carried out during the actual implementation of the Soup Kitchen and Student Community Pantry, allowing for a direct understanding of food collection, preparation, distribution, and volunteer management. Field notes were taken to document logistical processes, food safety practices, and workflow efficiency, ensuring that the proposed manual accurately reflects the realities of program operations.

To supplement document analysis and observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with university administrators, faculty members, student volunteers, and beneficiaries. These interviews focused on challenges, best practices, and the need for operational standardization within the program. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews allowed participants to share their perspectives and experiences, ensuring that the manual development was informed by those directly involved in the program's execution (Kallio et al., 2016).

A thematic analysis was employed to organize and interpret the collected data related to manual development, operational challenges, and sustainability strategies. This method was chosen because it allows for a structured yet adaptable approach to analyzing qualitative data, making it ideal for extracting meaningful insights to inform the manual's structure and content (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To enhance trustworthiness and reliability, triangulation was applied by cross-verifying data from document analysis, observations, and interviews. This process minimized bias and ensured that findings were grounded in multiple sources of evidence, reinforcing the validity and applicability of the proposed manual (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The insights gained through this study served as the foundation for developing a structured operations manual, which aims to standardize procedures, improve program efficiency, and facilitate the replication of UDM C.A.R.E.S. in other higher education institutions.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the study. Ethical approval was obtained through direct informed consent from interviewees. Participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing responses and securely storing collected data, in compliance with ethical research practices (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Results and Discussion

1. How UDM C.A.R.E.S. Operate In Terms Of Food Collection, Storage, Preparation, Distribution, And Volunteer Management

The UDM C.A.R.E.S. initiative functioned as a community-driven, non-monetary food security program that relied on volunteerism and in-kind donations to sustain its operations. Through document analysis, observations, and stakeholder interviews, the study identified the key operational components that enabled the program to provide consistent food assistance to students.

Food Collection

The program sourced food donations from administrative heads, faculty members,, students, and external partners, with contributions of ready-to-cook meals. Donation efforts were voluntary and unstructured, with individuals and organizations contributing as needed. However, the absence of a formalized food collection schedule sometimes resulted in fluctuating food availability, making meal planning a challenge. Observations revealed that most donations were received on an ad hoc basis, with some faculty members and departments organizing periodic drives to support the initiative.

Meal Preparation

Meal preparation for the Soup Kitchen was entirely managed by the donors themselves, including administrative heads, faculty members, student organizations, and external partners who provided both food and the labor required for cooking. Instead of preparing meals on campus, donors took the initiative to plan menus, cook meals off-site, and deliver them ready for distribution. This approach minimized the burden on university personnel and volunteers while ensuring that meals were prepared in compliance with the donors' own food safety standards.

Since meal preparation depended on the type of food donated, flexibility in recipes was necessary. Donors adjusted meal plans based on available ingredients, leading to variations in the types of meals provided. However, observations revealed that the absence of a standardized meal contribution system resulted in occasional imbalances in meal portions and food variety. On certain days, there was an abundance of a particular type of meal, while at other times, shortages of key food groups were observed.

Although food safety and hygiene were generally upheld, the lack of a formal meal preparation guideline for donors meant that cooking practices varied. While some donors followed stringent food handling procedures, others relied on informal food preparation methods, which could pose potential safety risks. To enhance consistency, a standardized set of meal preparation and donation guidelines should be introduced, ensuring that all food contributions meet nutritional, portioning, and safety standards before reaching student beneficiaries.

Food Distribution

Food distribution under UDM C.A.R.E.S. was conducted exclusively through the Soup Kitchen, where students lined up at designated distribution points within the university to receive hot meals. Unlike traditional food pantry models, where students could select food items, this initiative provided pre-prepared meals, ensuring that all recipients received equal portions based on available donations. The structured distribution process helped minimize food waste and streamline meal allocation, making it easier to serve a larger number of students efficiently.

The UDM Security Department was responsible for managing crowd control, and ensuring orderly queuing to maintain a smooth and safe process. Their presence helped prevent overcrowding and ensure that meal distribution proceeded in an organized manner. However, despite these measures, observations and interviews revealed occasional challenges in estimating food demand, leading to instances where meals were either insufficient or exceeded the number of students in line. The absence of a formal tracking system for beneficiaries made it difficult to anticipate the daily volume of students seeking meals, sometimes resulting in inconsistent availability.

To improve efficiency, the implementation of a simple meal distribution tracking system—such as headcounts or meal claim logs—would help assess demand patterns and improve donation planning. Additionally, clearer communication between donors and program organizers could facilitate better meal scheduling to ensure that food supply aligns with student needs on a daily basis.

Volunteer Management

The program relied on administrative heads, faculty members, and student volunteers to sustain its operations. Volunteers assisted in food collection, inventory management, meal preparation, and distribution. While volunteers were committed to

the program's mission, there was no formalized orientation/training process to ensure consistency in handling food, interacting with beneficiaries, and managing logistical tasks.

Key Findings and Areas for Improvement

The operational analysis of UDM C.A.R.E.S. revealed both strengths and areas needing enhancement. While the program successfully functioned on a **volunteer-driven model**, the absence of standardized procedures for food collection, storage, meal preparation, and volunteer coordination resulted in operational inconsistencies. To ensure efficiency, sustainability, and scalability, the development of a structured operations manual was necessary. The manual would provide clear guidelines on food safety, volunteer management, storage logistics, and equitable food distribution, helping to institutionalize best practices and improve program sustainability.

2. Challenges And Best Practices Emerged From The Implementation Of UDM C.A.R.E.S. In Ensuring Food Security Among Students

2.1. Challenges in Implementing UDM C.A.R.E.S.

1. Inconsistent Food Supply and Donations

One of the primary challenges faced by UDM C.A.R.E.S. was the unpredictability of food donations. Since the initiative relied solely on voluntary, in-kind contributions from administrative heads, faculty members,, students, and external donors, there were days when the supply was abundant and others when it was scarce. The absence of a structured food donation schedule led to fluctuations in meal availability, making it difficult to ensure that students consistently received adequate food assistance.

2. Lack of Storage and Food Handling Facilities

Observations revealed that storage facilities for food donations were non-existent. The lack of formal food safety guidelines also resulted in varied storage practices, increasing the risk of food spoilage.

3. Lack of a Standardized Volunteer Management System

Volunteer engagement was one of the program's greatest strengths, but the absence of a structured scheduling and orientation/training pr**ocess** led to occasional manpower shortages, particularly in meal preparation and distribution. Interviews with faculty revealed that some volunteers participated inconsistently. Without a formal recruitment, orientation, and shift rotation system, ensuring a consistent and equitable volunteer force remained a challenge.

4. No Formal Tracking System for Beneficiaries

There was no structured system for tracking the number of student beneficiaries. This sometimes led to imbalanced food distribution, where some students received more often than others. The lack of data on the frequency and number of students accessing the initiative made it difficult to assess demand and plan donations accordingly.

5. Limited Institutional Recognition and Support

While UDM C.A.R.E.S. was widely supported by administrative heads, faculty members, students, and external donors, interviews with program organizers revealed that the initiative was not yet fully institutionalized within university policies. This meant that operations were largely dependent on individual efforts rather than an officially recognized university-wide program **with** dedicated structural support. Without formal integration into UDM's student welfare framework, long-term sustainability remained uncertain.

2.2. Best Practices That Contributed to Program Success

1. Strong Community-Driven Model

Despite challenges, UDM C.A.R.E.S. thrived because of its strong sense of community involvement. Administrative heads, faculty members,, staff, and students actively participated in food donations, meal preparation, and distribution, demonstrating a shared commitment to addressing student food insecurity. The volunteer-led nature of the program fostered a culture of solidarity and collective responsibility, strengthening engagement and ensuring that the initiative remained active.

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2. Flexible and Adaptable Food Distribution System

UDM C.A.R.E.S. adopted a decentralized food distribution approach through the Soup Kitchen and Student Community Pantry**,** allowing students to access food through distribution points. The pantry model enabled students to select food items based on their needs**,** reducing waste and ensuring greater efficiency in resource utilization. The flexibility of this approach allowed the program to adjust to donation levels and ensure that food reached those who needed it the most.

3. High Student Engagement and Volunteerism

Students were not only beneficiaries but also active participants in the program. Many student volunteers dedicated their time to food sorting and meal distribution reinforcing a culture of peer support and community service. The hands-on involvement of students in running the initiative contributed to their personal growth, fostering leadership and teamwork skills.

4. Existing Partnerships with External Donors

Although donations were inconsistent, the program successfully engaged external donors. These informal partnerships, while not yet fully institutionalized, played a crucial role in supplementing food supply during periods of low donations.

Key Findings and Areas for Improvement

While UDM C.A.R.E.S. demonstrated resilience and impact through its volunteer-driven, flexible model, the study identified areas where improvements were needed to ensure long-term sustainability and efficiency**.** The primary areas for enhancement included:

1. Establishing a structured food collection and donation system to ensure consistent food availability.

2. Developing food safety guidelines to prevent spoilage and maintain quality.

3. Creating a volunteer recruitment, training, and scheduling framework to ensure consistent manpower support.

4. Implementing a beneficiary tracking system to better assess food demand and ensure fair distribution.

5. Securing official university recognition and integration to strengthen program sustainability and institutional support.

The findings from this study informed the development of the operations manual, ensuring that future program administrators and volunteers had clear, structured guidelines to sustain and improve the initiative over time.

3. Proposed Operations Manual Developed To Institutionalize And Enhance The Sustainability Of Food Security Initiatives In HEIs

The analysis of UDM C.A.R.E.S.' operational structure revealed key areas where standardization and process improvement were necessary to enhance the program's sustainability and efficiency. Findings from the study indicated that while the initiative successfully provided food assistance through a community-driven model, several operational challenges hindered its long-term effectiveness. Specifically, inconsistent food donations, no existing storage capacity, lack of structured volunteer management, and absence of a formal tracking system for beneficiaries resulted in inefficiencies in food distribution and logistical operations. Additionally, despite strong faculty and student engagement, the lack of institutional recognition and formalized guidelines posed a challenge to maintaining program continuity, particularly in leadership transitions. These challenges underscored the need for a structured operations manual that would standardize key processes such as food collection, storage, meal preparation, distribution protocols, and volunteer coordination. The manual, developed based on best practices observed within UDM C.A.R.E.S. and supported by principles of Business Process Standardization (BPS), provides clear guidelines to ensure that the initiative remains sustainable, scalable, and replicable in other higher education institutions. The following section presents the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Operations Manual, which serves as a comprehensive reference for future administrators, volunteers, and institutional stakeholders, ensuring the program's long-term impact in addressing student food insecurity:

1. Introduction. Outlines the initiative's purpose and scope

2. Program Framework and Guiding Principles. Details the operational model, core values, and alignment with UDM's institutional goals.

3. Organizational Structure and Roles. Defines responsibilities among stakeholders and lays out the volunteer management system to support smooth operations.

4. Crisis Aid and Relief Procedures. Presents structured protocols for emergency response, including rapid assessment and relief distribution.

5. Soup Kitchen Operational Procedures. Provide comprehensive guidance on food handling, safety, distribution logistics, and stakeholder engagement to ensure effective daily implementation.

6. Policy Compliance and Ethical Considerations. Uphold standards, fairness, and accountability.

7. Annexes. Provide essential tools such as forms, templates, tracking sheets, and a memorandum of agreement to support documentation, monitoring, and partnership formalization.

Conclusion

The findings of this study emphasize the importance of structured documentation and standardized processes in sustaining food security initiatives within higher education institutions. While UDM C.A.R.E.S. demonstrated the effectiveness of a community-driven model, its long-term success depended on addressing operational inefficiencies and securing stronger institutional backing. By integrating BPS principles, the developed operations manual provides a practical framework for ensuring efficiency, consistency, and program longevity.

The implications of this study extend beyond UDM, as the developed manual serves as a replicable model for other universities seeking to implement structured, sustainable food security programs. Given the growing issue of student food insecurity, HEIs must institutionalize community-driven food assistance programs, incorporating structured policies and long-term sustainability measures. Future research may explore the long-term impact of standardized food security initiatives on student academic performance, retention rates, and overall well-being. Additionally, further studies could investigate how university policies and national education frameworks can support non-monetary food security programs, ensuring that students receive the necessary assistance without financial barriers.

The development of the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Operations Manual marks a significant step toward institutionalizing food security efforts in higher education. By providing a structured, scalable, and adaptable framework, this research contributes

to enhancing student welfare, fostering institutional responsibility, and promoting sustainable, community-driven solutions to address food insecurity in academic settings.

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The UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model: A University-Led Approach to Sustainable Food Security

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Abstract

*Food insecurity remains a significant challenge in higher education, affecting students' academic performance, well-being, and overall university experience. While many food assistance programs rely on financial aid or institutional funding, the UDM C.A.R.E.S. (Crisis Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Model presents a sustainable, community-driven alternative. This study examines **how** a non-monetary, volunteer-led initiative can effectively address student hunger while promoting institutional responsibility and social engagement. By analyzing the operational structure, sustainability mechanisms, and comparative models of food security programs in higher education, this research highlights the strengths and adaptability of the UDM C.A.R.E.S. approach. A qualitative case study method was used, incorporating semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and direct observations of program implementation at Universidad de Manila. Thematic analysis of stakeholder perspectives, including university administrators, faculty, student volunteers, and beneficiaries, revealed key factors that contribute to the success of this model. Findings indicate that community involvement, flexible donor engagement, and institutional integration are crucial in sustaining food security programs without financial dependence. The study also identifies best practices from similar programs in the Philippines and internationally, providing insights into how universities can develop structured, long-term food security solutions. This research contributes to the growing discourse on non-monetary food security initiatives in higher education and presents a replicable model for other institutions seeking sustainable solutions. It also proposes policy recommendations for institutionalizing similar initiatives, fostering stronger partnerships between universities, local governments, and civic organizations. By demonstrating that food security programs can thrive through collective effort and structured volunteerism, this study reinforces the role of universities not just as centers for education but as pillars of social support and community development.*

Introduction

        Food insecurity among university students is an increasingly recognized issue worldwide, affecting not just academic performance but also mental health and overall well-being. Research from The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice (2023) indicates that nearly a quarter of undergraduate students in the United States struggle with food insecurity, affecting over four million individuals. Students facing food shortages often experience higher levels of stress, anxiety, and academic challenges compared to their peers with stable access to meals. The issue is not confined to the U.S.; in Australia, Hughes et al. (2022) report that between 38% and 48% of university students experience food insecurity, largely due to rising tuition fees, increased living costs, and inadequate financial support. International students often face even greater challenges, including limited work opportunities and higher expenses. A recent case at the University of Queensland saw 700 students deplete 10 tons of food relief within hours, underscoring the urgency of this crisis (Saint Lucia News.com, 2024).

        In the United Kingdom, the Student Eats Initiative encourages universities to integrate sustainable food production into campus food security programs by creating student-led urban farms and community gardens (Goddard et al., 2020). This approach promotes sustainability, student engagement, and skill-building while providing access to fresh produce. However, the model is limited by environmental constraints, land availability, and the need for continuous agricultural expertise, making it difficult to scale across different university contexts. While UDM C.A.R.E.S. does not involve food production, its community-driven structure aligns with Student Eats' principles of student engagement and volunteerism, proving that food security initiatives can thrive without large-scale financial backing or physical infrastructure.

        In the Philippines, food insecurity among university students follows global patterns, though national studies on the issue remain scarce. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2023), about 33.4% of Filipino households experience food insecurity, a figure that disproportionately affects students from low-income families. In many public and local universities, food insecurity contributes to increased dropout rates, lower academic performance, and heightened anxiety among students who struggle to afford meals. While the government has introduced financial assistance programs such as the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) under the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (RA 10931), these initiatives primarily cover

tuition and living expenses but do not specifically address food insecurity. Unlike the U.S. and Australia, where national policies support food security programs in higher education institutions (HEIs), the Philippines has yet to implement a similar framework. As a result, universities are left to devise independent solutions, often constrained by funding limitations.

At the local level, Universidad de Manila (UDM), a higher education institution catering primarily to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, has recognized food insecurity as a major barrier to student success. In response, UDM launched UDM C.A.R.E.S. (Crisis Aid, Relief, and Economic Security)—a community-driven, non-monetary initiative that provides free meals through a Soup Kitchen and Student Community Pantry (Universidad de Manila, 2024). Unlike traditional food assistance programs that rely on financial donations, UDM C.A.R.E.S. is entirely sustained through in-kind contributions and volunteer efforts. Faculty, staff, students, and external partners donate food items and actively participate in meal preparation, creating a collaborative support system for students in need. This innovative approach allows for food security without dependence on external funding, positioning it as a unique case study for institutional innovation and sustainability.

The need for sustainable and scalable food assistance programs in HEIs is becoming more urgent given the increasing economic challenges faced by students both globally and locally. Many universities provide temporary food relief, but few have successfully implemented long-term, community-led food security models like UDM C.A.R.E.S.. This study aims to examine how the program's volunteer-driven structure, logistics, and sustainability mechanisms contribute to its success and explore how it can serve as a model for replication in other HEIs. By analyzing its institutional innovation and long-term viability, this research will provide insights into how universities can mobilize internal resources, foster community partnerships, and ensure food security without financial dependency.

Given the limited research on non-monetary, university-led food security programs, this study is both timely and necessary. It contributes to the broader discourse on food security in HEIs by demonstrating how institutions can implement low-cost yet sustainable initiatives to support student welfare. The findings will not only benefit UDM but also provide a framework for policy recommendations that could inform national strategies for addressing food insecurity in Philippine higher education.

Theoretical Basis

The UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model is grounded in Social Capital Theory (Putnam, 2000), which emphasizes how networks, norms, and social trust facilitate collective action for mutual benefit. This theory suggests that strong community engagement and volunteer-driven initiatives can lead to sustainable social support structures. The program's reliance on volunteerism and in-kind donations aligns with Putnam's view that social capital can be harnessed to create self-sustaining solutions to societal issues, such as food insecurity in higher education.

Additionally, this study applies Resilience Theory (Holling, 1973), which highlights how systems adapt and thrive amid challenges. UDM C.A.R.E.S. demonstrates resilience by operating independently of financial aid and institutional budgets, instead relying on a flexible network of stakeholders who contribute food and labor as needed. This adaptability ensures the program's continuity, even in periods of resource scarcity.

Furthermore, the research is supported by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), which identifies food security as a basic physiological necessity that directly affects academic performance and well-being. By ensuring students have access to food, UDM C.A.R.E.S. contributes to their ability to focus on higher-level cognitive tasks, such as education and personal development.

Lastly, this study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger, which aims to end hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition. UDM C.A.R.E.S. directly supports this goal by providing consistent access to nutritious meals for students in need, ensuring that no student is left behind due to food insecurity. The initiative also demonstrates how higher education institutions can play a vital role in community-driven sustainability efforts, reinforcing the importance of collaborative action in addressing hunger and poverty at the university level.

Objectives of the Study

Addressing food insecurity in higher education requires innovative and sustainable approaches that go beyond traditional financial aid programs. This study seeks to explore how UDM C.A.R.E.S., a volunteer-driven, non-monetary initiative, functions as a model for institutional innovation and long-term food security in universities. By examining its structure and impact, this research aims to provide insights into how higher education institutions can develop self-sustaining food

security programs that rely on community engagement rather than financial dependency.

Specifically, this study aims to:

1. **Examine the institutional innovation behind UDM C.A.R.E.S.** This is to analyze the program's operational structure, volunteer engagement, and alignment with UDM's strategic goals (QSS, SCALE) to understand how it functions as a sustainable food security initiative.
2. **Analyze the sustainability mechanisms of UDM C.A.R.E.S.** This will identify the key factors that contribute to the program's long-term viability, such as community partnerships, resource mobilization, and its non-monetary model that ensures food support without financial transactions.
3. **Compare UDM C.A.R.E.S.** with similar university-led food security programs. By examining best practices and unique strategies from other HEIs, this analysis will highlight what makes UDM C.A.R.E.S. distinct and what aspects could be adapted in other institutional contexts.
4. **Develop a policy framework for improving and replicating the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model in other universities**. The model will establish evidence-based policy recommendations that enhance institutional adoption and scalability of the UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model while ensuring alignment with national and international food security strategies, particularly within higher education settings.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to explore the institutional innovation and sustainability mechanisms of UDM C.A.R.E.S. A qualitative case study is well-suited for this research as it allows for an **in-depth,** real-world examination of the program's structure, operations, and impact within its institutional context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Since UDM C.A.R.E.S. is a volunteer-driven, non-monetary initiative, a case study approach provides the flexibility needed to analyze its unique model while incorporating the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders involved. This method enables a rich, contextualized understanding of the program, making it ideal for assessing innovative institutional initiatives.

To gather data, this study employs semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observations, ensuring a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of the program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a

university administrator, faculty members, and beneficiaries to capture their experiences and perspectives on the program's effectiveness and sustainability. This method was chosen because it provides participants with the flexibility to share insights openly, while still maintaining a structured focus on key research objectives (Kallio et al., 2016). Document analysis was used to examine relevant materials, including operational guidelines, public reports, and university communications, offering additional context and validation for interview responses (Bowen, 2009). To further enrich the findings, direct observations of the Soup Kitchen and Student Community Pantry operations were conducted, allowing for firsthand insights into the program's implementation, volunteer participation, and logistical processes. Observational data serves to complement interview findings by capturing real-time interactions and operational practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

For data analysis, thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and recurring themes from interview transcripts, observations, and documents. Thematic analysis was selected because it offers a structured yet adaptable approach to analyzing qualitative data, helping to uncover underlying trends, perceptions, and challenges (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since this study aims to examine both institutional innovation and sustainability mechanisms, thematic analysis allows for the categorization of data into meaningful themes that directly support the study's objectives. This method strengthens the analytical rigor of the research, ensuring that findings go beyond simple descriptions and are interpreted within broader institutional and policy contexts.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed to protect participants' rights and privacy. The ethical approval for this study was secured through direct informed consent from interviewees. Participants were fully briefed on the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time. To maintain confidentiality, all participant identities were anonymized in the final report, and no personally identifiable information was disclosed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interviews were recorded only with prior consent, and data was securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

To enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings, triangulation was employed by cross-verifying data from multiple sources, including interviews, documents, and observations. Triangulation is a crucial strategy in qualitative research as it helps reduce bias, improve accuracy, and ensure that conclusions are not drawn from a single data source (Patton, 1999). By incorporating multiple

perspectives, this study provides a well-rounded, comprehensive analysis **of** UDM C.A.R.E.S., reinforcing its significance in discussions on food security, institutional responsibility, and sustainable community engagement in higher education.

Results and Discussion

Food insecurity in higher education continues to be a pressing issue worldwide, prompting universities to develop various support systems for students facing food scarcity. The UDM C.A.R.E.S. initiative stands out as a sustainable, community-driven model that addresses food insecurity without relying on financial aid. Instead, it leverages volunteerism and in-kind contributions, demonstrating how universities can create long-term solutions by fostering a culture of shared responsibility.

This section presents the study's findings based on its four key objectives, examining the institutional innovation, sustainability mechanisms, comparative analysis, and policy recommendations derived from the program's implementation. Through a thematic analysis of interview responses, document reviews, and observations, significant insights have emerged regarding how UDM C.A.R.E.S. functions as a student-centered, volunteer-based food security program within higher education. The discussion explores the best practices and successes of the initiative, identifies the challenges and limitations it faces, and considers the broader implications for replicating this model in other universities**.**

1. Institutional Innovation Behind UDM C.A.R.E.S.

The UDM C.A.R.E.S. (Crisis Aid, Relief, and Economic Security**)** initiative represents an important institutional innovation in addressing food insecurity among students in higher education. Unlike most university-led food assistance programs, which depend on financial aid, grants, or government subsidies, UDM C.A.R.E.S. operates entirely on in-kind contributions and volunteerism, making it a self-sustaining initiative. Conversations with university administrators, faculty, and students reveal that this non-monetary approach fosters a strong sense of shared responsibility, where members of the university—faculty, staff, students, and external donors—work together to ensure that students in need receive support. This program is closely aligned with UDM's Strategic Direction (QSS), particularly in ensuring Stakeholder Satisfaction (S) and reinforcing the university's commitment to sustainable and responsive student services (Universidad de Manila, 2024).

According to the University Legal Counsel and Head of Student Discipline, Attorney Christian Patrick Labajoy, "The challenge was not just to provide food, but to create a structure that would sustain itself without financial dependency. UDM C.A.R.E.S. became a response that aligned with our vision for student welfare." This perspective underscores how the program was not just about immediate relief but about integrating food security into the university's core mission, ensuring continuity and long-term impact.

Dr. Manuel Richard B. Martinez, a faculty and the College Secretary of the College of arts and Sciences (CAS) had also recognized the positive impact of UDM C.A.R.E.S. on students' academic engagement and performance. He noted that students have become more focused and participative in class, as the program helps alleviate hunger-related distractions, Moreover, he highlighted that removing food insecurity as a stressor allows students to better concentrate on academic tasks, improving the quality of their work and motivation to learn. These findings underscore that food security is not only a basic necessity but also a crucial factor in student success and overall academic performance. (Gano, 2024)

The program was developed as a direct response to growing concerns about student hunger affecting academic performance. Dr. Marvin Isidro, the Head of University Health Services, noted that prior to the program's implementation, students regularly attended classes without eating meals, leading to fatigue, lack of concentration, and frequent visits to the university clinic. Francine Alyssa Bonaobra, a student from College of Education, shared, "Before UDM C.A.R.E.S., I would sometimes attend classes on an empty stomach. It was difficult to focus, and I felt weak. Having access to meals has helped me stay in class and concentrate better." (Gano, 2024). This observation aligns with research suggesting that food insecurity negatively impacts cognitive performance, attendance, and well-being among students (Bruening et al., 2019). By embedding UDM C.A.R.E.S. into the university's welfare programs, UDM has taken a direct and sustainable approach to addressing this issue.

Professor Alistair Selorio, Director-General of UDM C.A.R.E.S., emphasized, "What makes this program work is that it isn't just a university initiative—it's a movement. Volunteers from all parts of UDM come together to make sure food reaches students who need it the most." His statement highlights how the program thrives on the active participation of the university community, demonstrating the power of collaboration over reliance on financial assistance.

One of the most innovative aspects of UDM C.A.R.E.S. is its operational framework, which allows various stakeholders to take initiative in planning and implementing food distribution. Rather than a centralized system where the university controls the program's funding and execution, UDM C.A.R.E.S. empowers volunteers and donors to independently organize and manage food distributions on a rotational basis. This flexibility allows the program to operate continuously as long as volunteers are available, making it highly adaptable and resource-efficient. Similar models of volunteer-driven university food security programs have been observed in international contexts, such as the Swipe Out Hunger program in U.S. universities, which relies on peer-led food assistance (Broton & Cady, 2020). However, unlike Swipe Out Hunger, which is partially supported by institutional funding, UDM C.A.R.E.S. is entirely self-sustaining, making it a unique model for financially constrained universities.

Furthermore, the program's alignment with UDM's *Institutional Goals* (SCALE)—specifically Systems, Academic Support, and Services Improvement (S) and Leveling Up Linkages and Community Extension (L)—demonstrates how an innovative approach can integrate student welfare, volunteer engagement, and community partnerships. This institutional framework reflects global best practices in higher education food security, where sustainable intervention models prioritize community collaboration over financial dependence (Henry, 2017). By embedding UDM C.A.R.E.S. into the university's operational strategy, the institution ensures its long-term viability while reinforcing its commitment to student-centered innovation.

The findings indicate that institutional innovation in university food security programs does not always require financial resources but rather a strategic mobilization of existing community assets. UDM C.A.R.E.S. has successfully demonstrated that a non-monetary, volunteer-led model can provide sustainable support for students, improve academic performance, and strengthen institutional-community relationships. These insights contribute to a broader discourse on alternative approaches to student welfare in higher education, particularly for low-income university populations where financial constraints may limit traditional food aid models.

2. Sustainability Mechanisms of UDM C.A.R.E.S.

The long-term success of food security programs in higher education often depends on financial resources, institutional support, and operational efficiency (Henry, 2017). However, UDM C.A.R.E.S. offers a groundbreaking alternative by eliminating financial dependency and instead focusing on volunteerism and in-kind donations. Findings from interviews with university administrators, faculty, and student volunteers suggest that the program's sustainability is built on three key mechanisms: *community-driven operations*, *flexible donor engagement*, and *integration into the university's institutional priorities*. These factors allow UDM C.A.R.E.S. to function without relying on external funding, ensuring its continuity even in times of financial uncertainty.

One of the most critical factors supporting the program's sustainability is its *community-driven operational model*. Unlike traditional food assistance programs, where the university centrally manages budget allocation and logistics, UDM C.A.R.E.S. empowers faculty, staff, and student volunteers to take direct ownership of the initiative. Volunteers coordinate food distributions independently, creating a sense of shared responsibility and commitment that fuels ongoing participation. Interviews with faculty and student volunteers revealed that their motivation stems not only from a sense of social duty but also from the visible impact the program has on students' well-being and academic performance. This aligns with research on social capital in volunteer-led initiatives, which suggests that a strong community-driven approach fosters long-term engagement without financial incentives (Muthuri et.al., 2009). Faculty members emphasized that their continued participation is rooted in their commitment to student welfare, reinforcing how community ownership enhances program sustainability.

Another essential mechanism ensuring the program's longevity is its *flexible donor engagement strategy*, which allows for continuous food availability even in times of resource fluctuations. Unlike traditional food aid programs that rely on fixed funding cycles, UDM C.A.R.E.S. accepts in-kind donations on a rolling, need-based basis, ensuring an adaptable approach to resource management. Findings indicate that donors—including faculty, staff, students, and external partners—are not bound by fixed schedules or donation quotas, making it easier for them to contribute when they are able. This flexibility encourages sustained participation, as donors are not pressured into long-term financial commitments. Research on adaptive food security frameworks supports this approach, emphasizing that flexible resource mobilization

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strategies help maintain program stability in uncertain economic conditions (Gundersen & Ziliak, 2018). Student volunteers observed that even during periods of lower donor engagement, smaller-scale food distributions continue, ensuring that students consistently receive support. This adaptability makes UDM C.A.R.E.S. highly resilient, unlike traditional models that often struggle when institutional budgets are cut or external grants expire.

Beyond its operational structure, the integration of UDM C.A.R.E.S. into the university's institutional priorities has been instrumental in sustaining the program. By aligning with UDM's Strategic Direction (QSS) and Institutional Goals (SCALE), the program is positioned not as a temporary relief effort but as a core part of the university's student welfare and community engagement initiatives (Gano, 2024). University administrators emphasized that this institutional recognition secures long-term support, including logistical assistance, promotional backing, and continued encouragement for faculty and staff involvement. Similar strategies have been observed in universities that embed food security programs within student support services, ensuring their long-term viability without requiring extensive financial investment (Broton, 2020). By framing UDM C.A.R.E.S. as a fundamental component of student success and community responsibility, UDM has created a sustainable framework that operates independently of financial aid but thrives through collective action.

Findings from this study suggest that monetary funding is not the sole determinant of sustainability in university food security programs. Instead, the success of initiatives like UDM C.A.R.E.S. relies on strong community engagement, adaptable resource mobilization strategies, and institutional integration. By demonstrating that a food security initiative can operate successfully without financial transactions, UDM C.A.R.E.S. provides a valuable model for other universities, particularly those serving low-income student populations where financial constraints pose challenges to traditional aid programs. This research contributes to growing discussions on alternative approaches to student welfare in higher education, reinforcing that sustainable, non-monetary food assistance models can be just as effective, if not more so, than financially dependent ones.

3. Comparative Analysis of UDM C.A.R.E.S. with Similar University-Led Food Security Programs

Food insecurity among university students in the Philippines has become an increasing concern, particularly in public and local universities where many students come from low-income backgrounds. While various higher education institutions (HEIs) have implemented student meal assistance and food security programs, most remain limited in scope, dependent on funding, and institutionally managed. A comparison of UDM C.A.R.E.S. with similar Manila-based and national food security initiatives provides valuable insights into how it stands out as a non-monetary, sustainable, and volunteer-driven model.

Swipe Out Hunger, an organization that collaborates with U.S. universities to facilitate meal-sharing programs for food-insecure students (Broton & Cady, 2020) allows students with unused meal plan credits to donate meals to peers in need, making it a structured and institutionalized approach to food assistance. While this model has been integrated into over 450 universities in the United States, its effectiveness depends heavily on meal plan structures and university partnerships, making its sustainability reliant on institutional budgets and student participation in dining services (Henry, 2017). In contrast, UDM C.A.R.E.S. does not require a meal plan system or institutional funding. Instead, it operates solely through volunteer efforts, in-kind donations, and decentralized food distribution, making it a flexible and cost-free alternative for universities in resource-constrained environments.

In Canada, many universities have established on-campus food banks, offering students access to non-perishable goods and occasional fresh produce. These food banks are primarily funded through student unions, alumni donations, or government grants, ensuring a structured and continuous source of food assistance (Graham, 2024). While effective, this model remains dependent on external funding, which can fluctuate, affecting its sustainability. Additionally, food banks tend to focus on packaged and non-perishable items, which may not fully meet students' nutritional needs (Maynard et al., 2018). In comparison, UDM C.A.R.E.S. addresses these limitations by providing freshly prepared meals through its Soup Kitchen and Student Community Pantry, ensuring students receive nutritionally balanced food options. Moreover, its decentralized model eliminates the need for inventory management, reducing logistical challenges and administrative costs.

The comparative analysis of existing food security initiatives in Manila and across the Philippines underscores that while multiple programs aim to assist food-

insecure students, many remain funding-dependent, temporary, or limited in scope. UDM C.A.R.E.S. is unique in its ability to sustain itself entirely through volunteerism, community collaboration, and in-kind donations, without requiring external monetary support. This model demonstrates that universities can create long-term, self-sufficient food security programs by empowering stakeholders to take collective action rather than relying on financial aid.

4. Policy Recommendations for Improving and Replicating UDM C.A.R.E.S. in Other Universities

The findings of this study highlight that UDM C.A.R.E.S. serves as a sustainable, community-driven model for food security in higher education, effectively addressing student hunger without relying on monetary donations or institutional funding. To further enhance the program and support its replication in other universities, a set of policy recommendations is proposed. These recommendations focus on institutional support, stakeholder engagement, integration into national education policies, and scalability strategies to ensure that similar initiatives can be successfully implemented in other HEIs.

Figure 1 presents the "UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model for Sustainable Food Security in Higher Education" illustrating the five interconnected components that contribute to the program's long-term success. Each component in the model corresponds to specific policy recommendations, ensuring that universities implementing this approach can develop structured and effective food security programs. The model serves as a scalable and replicable framework for HEIs aiming to address student food insecurity while promoting community engagement and volunteerism.

A key policy recommendation is for higher education institutions to institutionalize non-monetary, community-driven food security programs as part of their student welfare and support services. Findings indicate that one of the major strengths of UDM C.A.R.E.S. is its alignment with UDM's Strategic Direction (QSS) and Institutional Goals (SCALE), which has helped sustain the program beyond a temporary relief effort (Universidad de Manila, 2024). Universities looking to adopt this model should embed food security programs into their institutional priorities by integrating them into student affairs offices, extension programs, or campus volunteer initiatives. Formalizing these efforts ensures administrative support, encourages participation, and provides a structured framework for long-term implementation. Similar policies have been successfully adopted in international HEIs, where food

security programs are directly linked to student services and university outreach initiatives (Broton, 2020).

To ensure long-term sustainability, universities should develop *formalized volunteer networks and community partnerships* to guarantee consistent food provision. Findings show that UDM C.A.R.E.S. thrives due to its decentralized, volunteer-led approach, where faculty, students, and staff take collective responsibility for food distribution. However, establishing structured partnerships with local businesses, food producers, and community organizations could further enhance operational stability (Muthuri et.al. 2009). Universities should consider implementing memorandums of agreement (MOAs) with potential food donors—such as grocery stores, restaurants, and food suppliers—to secure regular food contributions. Similar strategies have been implemented in Canada, where university food banks have long-term agreements with local farmers and cooperatives to ensure consistent meal provision for students (Graham, 2024). Applying this collaborative approach in Philippine HEIs could significantly improve the reliability and diversity of food supplies for food-insecure students.
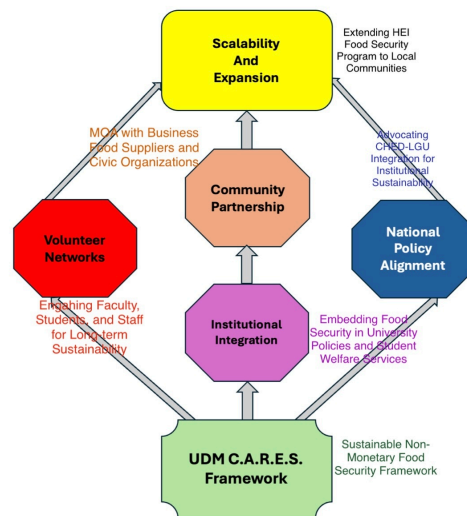

Figure 1. UDM C.A.R.E.S. Model for Sustainable Food Security in Higher Education

At a national policy level, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should consider developing a Food Security in Higher Education Framework, encouraging non-monetary food assistance programs as an alternative to financial aid-based initiatives. While current policies, such as the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) under RA 10931, provide financial assistance for students, they do not specifically address food security through structured university-led feeding programs (Commission on Higher Education, 2023). Findings from this study indicate that many food-insecure students do not qualify for financial aid, making it necessary for *CHED to encourage HEIs to implement community-driven food security programs* as an additional measure. Other countries, such as Australia and the United States, have successfully integrated food security initiatives into national student support policies, reinforcing the feasibility of such an approach (Henry, 2017).

As Atty. Labajoy noted, "This model is something that other universities can replicate, provided they have strong community involvement. Policies should encourage non-monetary solutions to student food insecurity."

Beyond university campuses, HEIs should explore *scalability strategies to extend food security initiatives to surrounding communities*. Findings suggest that UDM C.A.R.E.S. has the potential to serve not only UDM students but also vulnerable populations in nearby barangays. Universities adopting similar models can partner with local government units (LGUs) and civic organizations to expand food assistance initiatives to marginalized communities. For instance, the Student Eats Initiative in the UK has shown that university food security programs can evolve into community-wide sustainability projects by leveraging local partnerships and volunteer networks (Goddard et al., 2020). Applying this approach to Philippine universities could maximize social impact and reinforce HEIs' roles in community development.

These policy recommendations offer a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening and expanding the UDM C.A.R.E.S. model, ensuring its adaptability for other higher education institutions. By institutionalizing food security programs, fostering community partnerships, integrating them into national policy, and exploring scalability options, universities can establish long-term, sustainable solutions to student hunger. These initiatives will not only enhance student well-being and academic success but also position HEIs as key drivers of food security and community resilience.

Conclusion

Ensuring food security in higher education remains a persistent challenge, directly impacting students' academic success, health, and overall well-being. The UDM C.A.R.E.S. initiative offers a community-driven, cost-free model that demonstrates how universities can sustainably support students without relying on financial aid. By fostering institutional commitment, volunteer networks, and strong community partnership**s**, the program not only ensures that students have access to food but also promotes a culture of social responsibility and collective action within the university. Unlike traditional financial aid-dependent programs, UDM C.A.R.E.S. has proven that a decentralized, volunteer-led approach can effectively sustain food security initiatives, making it a viable and adaptable model for higher education institutions.

This study provides valuable insights into how universities can establish long-term food security programs, even in financially constrained environments. A comparative analysis with other HEI food assistance programs underscores that while many initiatives depend on external funding, UDM C.A.R.E.S. thrives due to its non-monetary, volunteer-led structure. However, to ensure that this approach is replicated on a larger scale, HEIs must collaborate with national policymakers, such as CHED and LGUs, to develop frameworks that encourage the adoption of community-driven food security initiatives across universities.

While this study has examined the impact and sustainability of UDM C.A.R.E.S., it also identifies key areas for further research. Future studies could explore the long-term academic and psychological eff**ects** of food security programs on students, particularly regarding academic performance, student retention, and mental health. A broader investigation into how other HEIs in the Philippines can successfully implement similar volunteer-driven models would provide valuable insights into scaling these initiatives. Additionally, research on public-private partnerships in food security programs could reveal effective ways for HEIs to collaborate with businesses, food suppliers, and community organizations to maintain long-term, sustainable meal assistance programs.

Prof. Selorio emphasized the program's potential for expanding beyond the university campus, stating, "I see UDM C.A.R.E.S. expanding beyond our campus, where students and nearby communities work together to reduce hunger. Universities should not just be places of education, but also of compassion and social

responsibility." His vision reinforces the idea that higher education institutions can play a larger role in addressing food insecurity beyond their student populations, extending their reach to vulnerable communities. Future research should explore how HEIs can collaborate with local stakeholders to expand food assistance initiatives, transforming universities into hubs for both education and social development.

The success of UDM C.A.R.E.S. demonstrates that food security initiatives in higher education do not need to rely solely on financial resources. Instead, by leveraging community participation, institutional support, and volunteer-driven efforts, universities can establish self-sustaining mod**els** that ensure no student is left behind due to hunger. By continuing research and policy development in this area, HEIs can further solidify their role in building inclusive, supportive, and socially responsible academic environments, ultimately contributing to greater food security and community resilience.

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University Identity Program (UID) on Fostering Value-Based Education Among Students Across Diverse Degree Programs

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Abstract

Explored was the impact of the University Identity Program (UID) in fostering value-based education among students across diverse degree programs at Universidad de Manila. Anchored on Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development, the research investigated how the integration of UDM's Core Values—Ethics and Integrity, Quality and Excellence, Unity and Collaboration, Achievement and Passion, and Leadership and Innovation (E.Q.U.A.L.)—shaped students' personal ethics, leadership capacity, and social responsibility. Utilizing a qualitative case study design, insights were drawn from student testimonials and administrator interviews to assess how the UID courses influenced moral reasoning, academic performance, and civic engagement. Findings revealed that the UID Program deeply resonated with students, guided their daily decision-making, strengthened their sense of identity, and motivated them to lead with purpose and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Subjects such as Ethics and Integrity and Quality and Excellence proved especially impactful in encouraging reflective thinking and cultivating high personal standards. Culminating from these insights was the development of the Value-Based Education Impact Framework (VBEIF), a practical guide for institutions seeking to integrate and evaluate values-based learning. Results affirmed that structured and well-contextualized values education significantly contributed to the formation of ethical, visionary, and socially responsible graduates.

Keywords: value-based education, transformative learning, University Identity Program (UID)

Introduction

Across the world, universities are increasingly expected to go beyond traditional instruction and develop students into socially responsible, ethical leaders.

In response to growing global challenges—climate change, inequality, misinformation, and a crisis of trust in institutions—higher education institutions are shifting toward values-based education (Shields, 2020). This movement reflects the need to prepare students not just for employment, but for active, ethical participation in society. UNESCO's Education 2030 agenda emphasizes the role of higher education in promoting sustainable development through civic-minded and values-driven curricula (UNESCO, 2019).

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) supports this vision by encouraging institutions to incorporate ethical reasoning, leadership, and citizenship into their academic programs (CHED, 2021). However, while national policies promote holistic student development, there remains a gap in how these values are systematically taught, evaluated, and experienced by students within the classroom and community. Many universities continue to focus on technical competencies without structured programs dedicated to the internalization of ethical values and civic responsibility (Reyes & Castor, 2020).

To address this, the Universidad de Manila (UDM) introduced the University Identity Program (UID), embedding its core values—Ethics and Integrity, Quality and Excellence, Unity and Collaboration, Achievement and Passion, and Leadership and Innovation (E.Q.U.A.L.)—into the curriculum of all 16 degree programs. While the program has clear institutional goals, no research has been conducted to assess how students perceive its impact on their personal growth, leadership development, and community engagement. This study, therefore, responds to a critical need to explore the UID's effectiveness in fostering value-based education, drawing from student and administrator perspectives. By investigating how values are being translated into action through the UID Program, the study contributes insights that can guide both policy and practice in higher education.

Theoretical Basis

This study is anchored on **Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development**, conceptualized by psychologist **Lawrence Kohlberg in 1958**. Rooted in cognitive development, the theory explains how individuals progress through stages of moral reasoning, evolving from decisions based on self-interest to those guided by universal ethical principles (Kohlberg, 1981). Kohlberg proposed six stages grouped into three levels: pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional. Each stage reflects a deeper understanding of morality, justice, and ethical responsibility.

The **University Identity Program (UID)** at Universidad de Manila aligns strongly with this framework, as it aims to promote personal and moral growth through value-centered education. Courses under the UID Program—such as *Ethics and Integrity*, *Quality and Excellence*, and *Leadership and Innovation*—engage students in reflective activities, experiential learning, and ethical decision-making. These learning experiences are designed to cultivate critical thinking and internalize core values, prompting students to transition from externally imposed rules to self-governed ethical standards.

In the context of this study, Kohlberg's theory provides a lens through which the researcher can analyze how students perceive and respond to the UID's value-laden curriculum. It helps explain how the program may influence their development from rule-based morality to principled leadership and civic responsibility. Student narratives reflecting enhanced integrity, social awareness, and proactive leadership indicate a progression along Kohlberg's stages. Thus, the theory supports the study's goal of examining how value-based education fosters ethical maturity and community engagement among students from diverse academic backgrounds.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to assess how the University Identity Program (UID) fostered value-based education among students across diverse degree programs by examining its influence on personal values, ethical development, leadership capacity, and community engagement, leading to the development of a guiding framework for its integration and evaluation. The following were the specific objectives achieved throughout the study:

1. To explore how the University Identity Program (UID) shapes students' personal values and ethical perspectives through the integration of UDM's Core Values (E.Q.U.A.L.) in academic and experiential learning.

2. To examine the perceived impact of the UID Program on students' leadership development, social responsibility, and commitment to community engagement.

3. To develop a framework based on the experiences of students and insights of administrators in order to guide the integration and evaluation of values-based education across diverse degree programs through the University Identity Program (UID).

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative case study design, which was appropriate for exploring the lived experiences and perspectives of students and administrators involved in the University Identity Program (UID) at Universidad de Manila. As defined by Yin (2018), a case study allowed for an in-depth understanding of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context were not clearly evident. The design suited the UID Program's emphasis on value formation, ethical development, and personal transformation.

Data were gathered from two key sources: in-depth testimonials from three students representing diverse degree programs and year levels, and insights from two administrators directly engaged in the design, delivery, and monitoring of the UID Program. This approach enabled **triangulation of data sources**, wherein the perspectives of students were compared and validated against the insights of administrators to ensure consistency, credibility, and contextual depth. By drawing from multiple viewpoints, the study was able to identify recurring patterns, interpret value-driven behaviors, and reveal perceived impacts from both learner and institutional lenses.

The qualitative findings informed the development of the **Value-Based Education Impact Framework (VBEIF)**, a practical model that emerged from the data. This framework offers guidance for integrating and evaluating values-based education across academic programs, demonstrating the UID Program's potential as a replicable institutional strategy for ethical and social development in higher education.

Results and Discussion

Objective 1. To explore how the University Identity Program (UID) shapes students' **personal values** and **ethical perspectives** through the integration of UDM's Core Values (E.Q.U.A.L.) in academic and experiential learning.

Name / Program / Year Level	Personal Values	Ethical Perspectives
Ronald Clarence Israel Aries BS Psychology, 2nd Year	• Embraced integrity, excellence, and purpose as guiding principles in academic and personal life; • values shaped his identity and motivated him toward leadership.	• Recognized that ethical behavior defines how one is remembered; • integrity became a moral compass guiding his choices and long-term aspirations.

Hendrick Gavino BA Communication, 3rd Year	• Developed strong sense of honesty and collaboration; • values quality contributions in teamwork; • sees values as part of responsible student leadership.	• Internalized honesty, respect, and ethical decision-making as essential in both academic and personal contexts; • sees ethics as essential in a challenging world.
Crispel Nacion BS Hospitality Management RL 32	• Believes E.Q.U.A.L. values promote holistic growth and wise decision-making; • applies values daily to become a compassionate leader and community member.	• Prioritizes doing what is right even when unseen; • views integrity as a habit that builds lasting character; • ethical living seen as continuous personal discipline.

Case Study 1: Ronald Clarence Israel Aries, 2nd year, Bachelor of Science in Psychology

Personal Values

Through the UID Program, Ronald Clarence Israel Aries developed a deeper commitment to personal growth and academic excellence. The courses awakened in him a sense of purpose anchored in the values of integrity, excellence, and passion. These values have not only shaped his study habits but also reinforced his drive to succeed with intention and dignity. As a future psychology professional, he now views these principles as his compass—helping him make choices that reflect both competence and character. His personal development has become grounded in living meaningfully and leaving behind a positive impact on others.

Ethical Perspectives

Ronald shared that the *Ethics and Integrity* course profoundly influenced how he views himself and the world. He realized that a person's actions may fade over time, but the values behind those actions leave a lasting impression. For him, integrity is not just a classroom concept—it's a personal standard he now holds himself to in daily life. The UID experience taught him that ethical behavior builds not only credibility but a legacy. He now believes that one's moral compass doesn't just shape one's future—it defines how others will remember them. This perspective fuels his determination to lead a life guided by respect, honesty, and meaningful purpose.

Case Study 2: Hendrick Gavino, 3rd year, Bachelor of Arts in Communication

Personal Values

For Hendrick Gavino, the UID Program became a turning point in understanding how personal values influence everyday choices and relationships. He learned that honesty and strong moral grounding are not just ideals but practical tools that shape how others perceive and trust you. These values now guide him not only in making personal decisions but also in building respectful, dependable relationships— both within the classroom and beyond. In his academic life, particularly in group activities and school projects, Hendrick now consistently aims to contribute meaningfully. He values collaboration and unity, making sure his efforts reflect not just individual performance but collective success. This practice, he believes, reflects responsible student leadership and sets an example for his peers.

Ethical Perspectives

Through the lens of the UID Program, Hendrick developed a deeper understanding of ethical behavior as a way of life. He shared that principles like honesty, respect, and ethical decision-making became clearer and more relevant as he encountered real-life scenarios where these values were tested. He now sees ethics and integrity as essential anchors in navigating a world that often presents moral challenges. Whether in school, at home, or in his broader community, Hendrick embraces these principles as non-negotiables that help him remain grounded and forward-looking. For him, being ethical isn't just about doing what's right—it's about becoming the kind of person others can trust and look up to.

Case Study 3: Crispel Nacion, BS Hospitality Management

Personal Values

Crispel Nacion sees the UID Program not just as an academic requirement but as a guiding philosophy for life. For her, the E.Q.U.A.L. values—Ethics and Integrity, Quality and Excellence, Unity and Collaboration, Achievement and Passion, and Leadership and Innovation—have become a personal toolkit for navigating both challenges and opportunities. She strongly believes that students who live by these values are more prepared to make thoughtful decisions and contribute meaningfully to society. "Core values are not just for school; they're a mindset for daily living," she shares. The program, in her experience, opened a pathway toward holistic growth— helping her become not only a better student but also a more compassionate and responsible member of the community.

Ethical Perspectives

Among the values she embraced, *Ethics and Integrity* left the most lasting impression. "It's easy to lose direction when no one is watching," Crispel reflects—a thought that shows how deeply she internalized the importance of doing what is right, even without recognition. She learned that consistency in truthfulness and fairness—even in the smallest of actions—builds character over time. Her favorite quote, "We are what we repeatedly do, so excellence is not an act but a habit," captures how she now chooses to live. These values guide her through day-to-day decisions, particularly when faced with situations that test her integrity. For Crispel, ethical living is not about perfection—it's about choosing courage, honesty, and responsibility again and again, especially when no one is looking.

Objective 1 Synthesis of the Three Case Studies

The three case studies—Ronald Clarence Israel Aries (BS Psychology), Hendrick Gavino (BA Communication), and Crispel Nacion (BS Hospitality Management)—collectively illustrate the transformative impact of the University Identity Program (UID) on students' personal values and ethical perspectives. Across all accounts, the integration of UDM's Core Values (E.Q.U.A.L.) has cultivated a deeper awareness of self, purpose, and responsibility. Each student demonstrated how values like integrity, excellence, and collaboration have transcended academic boundaries and become part of their everyday decision-making.

Ronald emphasized identity formation through ethical grounding, realizing that one's moral compass defines their long-term reputation. Hendrick reflected on honesty and teamwork as foundational principles for leadership and influence among peers. Meanwhile, Crispel revealed how values are not limited to formal settings—they guide real-world choices, even in quiet, unseen moments. All three students consistently identified *Ethics and Integrity* as the most resonant subject, affirming the program's ability to instill inner discipline, honesty, and a sense of legacy.

Together, their reflections confirm that the UID Program not only shapes ethical thinking but fosters an enduring commitment to lead with values. These shared insights strongly support the program's role in building a generation of students who are morally grounded, socially aware, and purpose-driven.

Transformative Role of UID – Insight of VPC Jefferey Litan

To further affirm the transformative role of the UID Program as reflected in the three student case studies, the insights of **Prof. Jeffrey Litan**, Vice President for Comptrollership and UID faculty member, provide strong institutional backing. Prof. Litan emphasized that the UID Program *"instills a strong sense of identity and responsibility in our students... it bridges the gap between academic learning and real-world application by embedding the university's core values into their mindset."* His statement reinforces the very themes echoed in the students' narratives—particularly the internalization of integrity, the pursuit of excellence, and the application of values in both personal and academic spheres.

Ronald's reflection on identity formation through ethics, Hendrick's emphasis on collaborative leadership, and Crispel's focus on moral consistency align with Litan's observation that UID encourages students to become value-driven individuals beyond the classroom. The administrator's perspective validates that the outcomes of the program are not accidental but intentional—designed to shape not just competent graduates, but principled citizens. Thus, Prof. Litan's comment strengthens the synthesis by linking students' lived experiences to the program's core mission: to foster ethical, socially responsible, and visionary leaders through values-based education.

Objective 2. To examine the perceived impact of the UID Program on students' **leadership development, social responsibility**, and **commitment to community engagement**.

Name/Program / Year Level	Leadership Development	Social Responsibility	Community Engagement
Ronald Clarence Israel Aries BS Psychology, 2nd Year	• Developing leadership traits through *Quality and Excellence*; • aspires to lead with purpose though has not yet taken *Leadership and Innovation*.	• Emphasizes integrity and future-oriented service; • sees ethics as foundation for influencing others positively.	• No current involvement, but expresses intent to apply values in future professional and civic settings.
Hendrick Gavino	• Exhibits leadership through peer	• Applies fairness, trust, and unity in team settings;	• Actively involved in clean-up drives

BA Communication, 3rd Year	collaboration and ethical modeling; • currently enrolled in *Leadership and Innovation*.	• sees leadership as service and influence.	and outreach programs; • demonstrates community-oriented values in action.
Crispel Nacion BS Hospitality Management RL 32	• Developing leadership mindset through *Unity and Collaboration*; • sees leadership as shared growth and uplifting others.	• Practices empathy and fairness; • guided by integrity and responsibility in personal and academic life.	• No formal outreach cited, but consistently applies values in daily interactions with family and community.

Case Study 1. Ronald Clarence Israel Aries, a second-year Psychology student, is in the early stages of leadership development, having completed *Ethics and Integrity* and *Quality and Excellence*. While he has not yet taken *Leadership and Innovation*, his reflections already show a developing sense of purpose and character. He aspires to lead with integrity and sees personal values as a foundation for future leadership roles. Ronald also expressed a growing sense of social responsibility, particularly in using his future career to uplift others through ethical service. Although he has not yet engaged in formal community work, he views the UID values as preparation for future civic contributions.

Case Study 2. Hendrick Gavino, a third-year Communication student, has completed up to *Achievement and Passion* and is currently taking *Leadership and Innovation*. His leadership mindset has already emerged strongly, particularly in academic and group settings, where he takes initiative and inspires peers through ethical conduct and collaboration. Hendrick's social responsibility is evident in his efforts to foster trust, unity, and fairness. His commitment to community engagement is most tangible—he participates in outreach programs and clean-up drives, living out the values promoted in UID beyond the classroom.

Case Study 3. Crispel Nacion, a Hospitality Management student, has taken UID courses that emphasize collaboration and values-driven action. While she has not yet taken *Leadership and Innovation*, her perspective on leadership has begun to take shape through lessons in *Unity and Collaboration* and *Quality and Excellence*. She defines leadership as shared success and models this through her respect for others

and consistent work ethic. Her sense of social responsibility is evident in her daily actions, guided by fairness and empathy. Though no specific outreach initiatives were mentioned, she applies the values in familial and community settings with quiet consistency.

Objective 2 Synthesis of the Three Case Studies

The three case studies demonstrate how the University Identity Program (UID) gradually cultivates leadership development, social responsibility, and community engagement, even before students complete all UID courses. **Ronald Aries**, having taken *Ethics and Integrity* and *Quality and Excellence*, shows early signs of leadership awareness rooted in personal values. While he has not yet taken *Leadership and Innovation*, he aspires to lead with integrity and contribute meaningfully in future settings. **Hendrick Gavino**, currently a third-year student enrolled in *Leadership and Innovation*, demonstrates the most evident leadership behavior. He consistently takes initiative in academic settings, applies ethical principles in teamwork, and engages in outreach programs, reflecting his strong civic commitment. **Crispel Nacion**, though she has not yet taken the leadership-focused UID, shows leadership-inclined behaviors shaped by collaboration and a sense of shared success. Her values are consistently applied in day-to-day life and community interactions.

Together, the cases show that leadership and social responsibility are not confined to a single subject but are gradually developed through the UID Program's spiral progression. As students internalize UDM's Core Values, they begin to view leadership as service, social responsibility as a lifestyle, and community engagement as a natural expression of their identity.

Transformative Role of UID – Insight of Dr. Robert Norberte

Dr. Robert Norberte, Head of the General Education Department, emphasized that the University Identity Program (UID) was deliberately crafted as a transformative journey for students—designed not merely to inform but to form ethical leaders and socially responsible individuals. He noted that students are not passive recipients of values; rather, they are immersed in reflective tasks, experiential activities, and context-rich case studies that push them to apply these values beyond the classroom. The reflections of Aries, Gavino, and Nacion clearly affirm this intent. Ronald, though still early in the UID sequence, already demonstrates value-driven aspirations and a strong sense of personal accountability. Hendrick's evolving leadership, especially his

active role in group dynamics and community service, mirrors the UID's objective of shaping civic-minded individuals. Meanwhile, Crispel's quiet leadership and consistent application of integrity and fairness illustrate that UID's impact is not confined to formal leadership roles but extends to everyday interactions and decisions. Dr. Norberte's insights underscore that UID's structure encourages gradual moral development, preparing students like Ronald, Hendrick, and Crispel to become ethical leaders who can navigate social complexities and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Objective 3. Developed a **framework** based on the experiences of students and insights of administrators in order to guide the integration and evaluation of values-based education across diverse degree programs through the University Identity Program (UID).

The synthesis of student reflections and administrator insights revealed recurring themes of ethical formation, identity development, leadership readiness, and civic engagement—strong indicators that the UID Program fosters value-based education in meaningful and measurable ways. Students articulated how the UID subjects influenced their personal beliefs, decision-making, and sense of social duty. Meanwhile, administrators confirmed that these outcomes are the result of intentional strategies such as reflective learning, experiential activities, and consistent faculty engagement.

From these insights emerged the need for a structured and replicable model: the **Value-Based Education Impact Framework (VBEIF)**. The framework is designed to guide institutions in both integrating values into academic life and evaluating how those values manifest in student behavior and community participation. It is composed of five interconnected components: (1) Core Values Integration Matrix, (2) Reflective Learning Loop, (3) Student Development Indicators, (4) Faculty and Administrator Engagement Plan, and (5) Impact Tracking Mechanism.
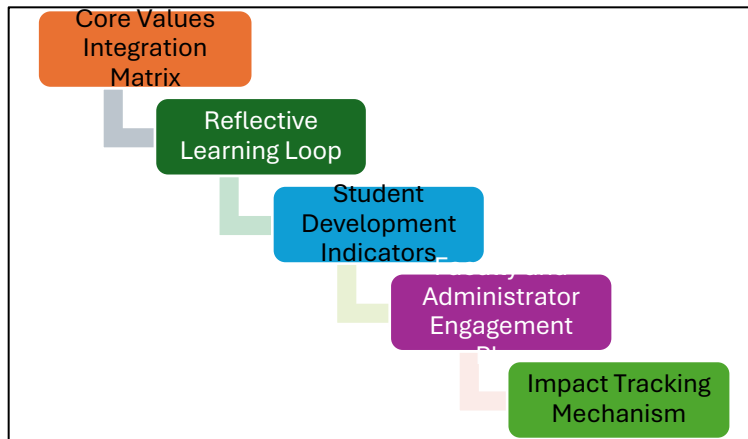
Figure 1. Value-Based Education Impact Framework (VBEIF)

The **VBEIF** framework addresses both curricular and co-curricular dimensions, ensuring that values are not just taught, but lived, reflected upon, and applied. This outcome directly supports the mission of the UID Program to produce ethical and visionary graduates who create meaningful change in society.

1. Core Values Integration Matrix

This component ensures that UDM's Core Values—Ethics and Integrity, Quality and Excellence, Unity and Collaboration, Achievement and Passion, and Leadership and Innovation (E.Q.U.A.L.)—are consistently embedded in the curriculum. The matrix maps each value to specific learning outcomes, subjects, and assessment tools across all programs. This intentional alignment ensures that values are not taught in isolation but are integrated into the academic experience of every student.

2. Reflective Learning Loop

Rooted in experiential learning, this component encourages students to engage in ongoing self-assessment, critical reflection, and values application. Through tools like reflective essays, group discussions, and personal journals, students internalize what they learn and apply it to real-life situations, promoting deep moral and ethical awareness.

3. Student Development Indicators

This component identifies qualitative indicators to assess personal growth, such as leadership behaviors, ethical decision-making, empathy, collaboration, and civic involvement. It provides a structured way to monitor students' values formation and helps guide improvements in instruction and support services.

4. Faculty and Administrator Engagement Plan

This recognizes the essential role of educators in modeling and reinforcing values. It includes faculty orientation, values-based pedagogy training, and regular collaboration between departments. Administrators ensure that institutional policies support the sustainability and consistency of the UID implementation.

5. Impact Tracking Mechanism

This involves collecting and analyzing data from student outputs, testimonials, faculty feedback, and community involvement records. It allows for the measurement of the UID's effectiveness and offers insights for continuous improvement. This mechanism ensures accountability and responsiveness to changing educational and societal needs.

This framework, grounded in empirical insights from both students and administrators, provides a practical, scalable approach to cultivating ethical, socially engaged graduates across all academic disciplines. It positions the UID not only as a values education model but as an institutional transformation tool for long-term societal impact.

Conclusion

The study affirms that the UID Program is a powerful platform for shaping students into ethical leaders and socially responsible citizens. It demonstrates that values-based education, when thoughtfully embedded across disciplines, can

influence not just what students know, but who they become. The UID and its accompanying framework provide a replicable model for institutions seeking to bridge academic instruction with character formation—positioning education as a force for societal transformation.

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ClinicCare System: A Technological Advancement in University Healthcare Management

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Abstract

This study evaluates the outcomes of a technological advancement initiative in university healthcare management through the implementation of the ClinicCare Patient Record Management System at the Universidad de Manila (UDM) Medical and Dental Clinic. Guided by UDM's mission of delivering quality education through dynamic technology-driven systems, this research aimed to assess how digitalization has improved the efficiency, accuracy, accessibility, and user satisfaction in healthcare service delivery, and to describe how this transformation has reshaped clinic operations. A mixed-methods research design was employed. Quantitative data were gathered using a researcher-developed pre- and post-assessment questionnaire, while qualitative data were obtained through video-recorded interviews with clinic end-users, including the university doctor and nurses. The results showed a notable increase in healthcare efficiency, transitioning from moderately functional manual processes to highly responsive digital operations. Accuracy in record-keeping significantly improved, reducing errors and promoting the completeness of patient data. Accessibility of information and prioritization of special cases were also enhanced, enabling faster and more reliable healthcare responses for students and staff. End-users expressed high levels of satisfaction with the system's usability, reliability, and role in improving service delivery. The system's features—such as real-time dashboards, automated consultation forms, and searchable patient lists—contributed to a more organized, user-friendly workflow. Most importantly, the study revealed how ClinicCare transformed healthcare at UDM from a basic administrative function into an efficient, data-driven service hub. This research demonstrates the value of technological advancement in educational institutions and contributes evidence for expanding technology-driven innovations in school-based healthcare settings.

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and technologically driven world, efficiency and accuracy are paramount in all sectors, including healthcare. Educational institutions, such as universities, play a critical role in ensuring the health and well-being of their students, which directly impacts academic performance and overall institutional productivity. This study was conducted at the Universidad de Manila (UDM), a local government-funded institution in the City of Manila, Philippines. UDM provides free education to the financially disadvantage but talented yet deserving students, as mandated by City Ordinance No. 8120. Many of these students attend classes without having eaten proper meals, making them prone to dizziness and weakness due to hunger. As a result, they frequently seek assistance from the University's medical clinic, which primarily caters to their healthcare needs.

At the Universidad de Manila, the traditional approach to patient record management in its Medical and Dental Clinic has long been a source of inefficiency and dissatisfaction. The manual system, reliant on paper-based processes, is not only time-consuming but also prone to errors and delays in service delivery. This outdated method often results in frustration for students and staff, as retrieving and updating medical records becomes a cumbersome task. These inefficiencies compromise the clinic's ability to provide timely care, particularly for urgent cases, underscoring the need for a transformative solution.

The development and implementation of the **ClinicCare System** are grounded in the principles of the **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)** by Davis (1989). This framework posits that the perceived usefulness and ease of use of a system significantly influence its acceptance and adoption. By automating routine processes and prioritizing urgent cases, ClinicCare ensures both utility and user-friendliness, addressing key barriers to technology adoption in healthcare. The integration of this theoretical framework highlights the program's potential for scalability and sustainability, justifying the need to evaluate its impact comprehensively.

Recognizing these challenges, the development and implementation of the **ClinicCare System** this 2024 represent a significant leap toward modernizing healthcare services within the university. By leveraging the power of modern information technologies, ClinicCare automates routine processes, enhances communication, and ensures that critical cases are prioritized effectively. This innovative system is designed to address the limitations of traditional methods,

streamline workflows, and improve the overall healthcare experience for its end-users—students, faculty, and staff. The introduction of ClinicCare aligns with global trends in technological advancement and healthcare modernization, providing a scalable solution that could serve as a model for similar institutions.

The need to conduct a study on the impact of ClinicCare is both timely and essential. While the system's implementation has shown promise, a comprehensive evaluation is necessary to assess its effectiveness and justify its continued development and potential replication. This study aims to evaluate the tangible and intangible benefits of ClinicCare, focusing on critical metrics such as efficiency, accuracy, user satisfaction, and overall service quality. By comparing the outcomes before and after the system's implementation, the research will provide valuable insights into the program's impact on healthcare management. Moreover, the study will highlight areas for improvement, ensuring that the system evolves to meet the dynamic needs of its users.

Conducting this research is also vital for justifying the allocation of resources toward digital innovations in public institutions. As universities strive to keep pace with technological advancements, understanding the practical benefits of systems like ClinicCare can guide strategic decision-making and foster a culture of innovation. Furthermore, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital healthcare solutions, offering a localized perspective that resonates with the unique challenges and opportunities in the Philippine context. The findings will not only benefit the Universidad de Manila but also serve as a benchmark for other institutions aiming to modernize their healthcare services.

Thus, the transition from a manual to an automated healthcare system at the Universidad de Manila represents a critical step in addressing longstanding inefficiencies and improving student welfare. This research will provide an evidence-based assessment of ClinicCare's impact, ensuring its sustainability and scalability while contributing to the broader discourse on technological advancement in healthcare.

Objectives of the Study

This study evaluated the outcomes of a technological advancement initiative in university healthcare management by assessing changes in service efficiency, accuracy, accessibility, and user satisfaction following the implementation of the ClinicCare System at the Universidad de Manila Medical and Dental Clinic, and by

describing how this technological advancement has reshaped healthcare service delivery within the university setting.

      1.   To compare the level of healthcare service efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility before and after the implementation of the ClinicCare System.
      2.   To determine the level of user satisfaction among healthcare providers (doctor and nurses) with the functionality and usability of the ClinicCare System.
      3.   To describe the outcomes of the technological advancement in university healthcare management brought about by the implementation of the ClinicCare System.

Methodology

This study aimed to evaluate the outcomes of a technological advancement initiative in university healthcare management by assessing changes in service efficiency, accuracy, accessibility and user satisfaction following the implementation of the ClinicCare System at the Universidad de Manila Medical and Dental Clinic, and by describing how this technological advancement has reshaped healthcare service delivery within the university setting. The respondents included the clinic's resident doctor, dentist, and nurses, as they were directly involved in the utilization of the system and were well-positioned to provide informed evaluations. The research was conducted at the Universidad de Manila Medical and Dental Clinic in August 2024, ensuring that data collection reflected the system's actual operational context.

Data were gathered using two primary tools. First, a researcher-developed pre- and post-questionnaire was administered to measure changes in efficiency, accuracy, and user satisfaction before and after the implementation of ClinicCare. Second, semi-structured video interviews were conducted with the respondents to obtain qualitative insights, complementing the quantitative data. The questionnaire was validated by a panel of experts in healthcare management, IT systems, and research methodology to ensure its reliability and relevance. A pilot test was also conducted with a small group of clinic staff outside the study to refine the instrument for clarity and appropriateness.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, with all respondents signing an informed consent form that outlined the purpose of the research, their rights as participants, and the assurance of confidentiality. Respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at

any time without repercussions. All collected data were anonymized to protect participants' identities. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the Universidad de Manila Ethics Committee to ensure adherence to ethical standards. This methodology provided a robust framework for assessing the ClinicCare System while upholding ethical integrity.

Results and Discussion

1. Differences In Healthcare Service Before And After The Implementation of the ClinicCare System

The following discussion presents the assessed differences in healthcare service efficiency and accuracy before and after the implementation of the ClinicCare System. It also determined the level of satisfaction among end-users (doctor and nurses) with the ClinicCare System's functionality and its impact on healthcare service delivery.

The table 1 to Table 4 compares the efficiency of the Universidad de Manila Medical and Dental Clinic's healthcare management processes under the **Manual system** and the **ClinicCare System** across three key indicators: time spent retrieving patient records, time spent processing patient information, and the speed of communication among clinic staff. The scores are based on a 4-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate greater efficiency.

Table 1. Efficiency Assessment

A.	Efficiency	Manual		ClinicCare	
		WM	VI	WM	VI
1	Time spent retrieving patient records	3.20	Efficient	3.80	Very Efficient
2	Time spent processing patient information	3.20	Efficient	3.80	Very Efficient
3	Speed of communication among clinic staff	3.00	Fast	3.80	Very Fast
	WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.13**	**Efficient**	**3.80**	**Very Efficient**

For the first Indicator "Time spent retrieving patient records", the respondents assessed that the Manual system is "efficient" (WM=3.20). This suggests that while the manual system was functional, it had room for improvement in terms of speed. On the other hand, the ClinicCare system was assessed "very efficient" (WM=3.80),

indicating a significant reduction in time spent retrieving records, showcasing the system's effectiveness in streamlining this process.

The second indicator "Time spent processing patient information" for the Manual system was categorized "efficient" (WM=3.20) reflecting an acceptable but not optimal process for handling patient information manually, while "very efficient" (WM=3.80) on the Clinic Care system demonstrating enhanced accuracy and speed in processing information due to automation.

For the third indicator "Speed of communication among clinic staff", the Manual system was categorized "fast" (WM=3.00), showing that communication was functional but could benefit from further improvement. The ClinicCare system, on the other hand, was categorized as "very fast" (WM=3.80), highlighting significant improvements in communication efficiency, likely facilitated by features like automated notifications or digital record sharing.

The overall weighted mean assessment on the healthcare service efficiency before and after the implementation of the ClinicCare System revealed that the Manual system was "efficient" (WM=3.13), indicating moderate effectiveness but points to inefficiencies in the traditional approach. The CliniCare system is categorized as "very efficient" (WM=3.80), reflecting the substantial enhancements brought by the ClinicCare System in all evaluated areas.

The findings demonstrate that the ClinicCare system significantly enhanced efficiency in healthcare management compared to the Manual system. By automating time-consuming tasks like patient record retrieval and processing, the system reduced delays and improved communication among clinic staff. These results align with Park University (2024), which highlights how digital health records improve healthcare efficiency and facilitate better coordination and accessibility. This underscores the transformative potential of ClinicCare in modernizing operational workflows, ultimately enhancing service delivery in a university healthcare setting.

Table 2. Accuracy Assessment

B.	Accuracy	Manual		ClinicCare	
		WM	VI	WM	VI
4	Error rate in patient records	3.20	Low	4.00	Very Low
5	Completeness of patient records	2.80	Complete	3.80	Very Complete
	WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.00**	**Accurate**	**3.90**	**Very Accurate**

For the fourth indicator, "Error rate in patient records," the Manual system was assessed as having a "low" error rate(WM=3.20). This indicates that while errors were not frequent, there was still a notable margin for improvement. The ClinicCare system, however, was rated as having a "very low" error rate (WM=4.00), highlighting its significant contribution to reducing inaccuracies in patient records through automation and improved data handling.

The fifth indicator, "Completeness of patient records," showed that the Manual system was categorized as "complete"(WM=2.80). This suggests that although most records were adequately maintained, some inconsistencies or missing information may have occurred. In contrast, the ClinicCare system was assessed as "very complete" (WM=3.80), indicating that automation and digital tracking significantly enhanced the thoroughness and consistency of patient records.

The overall weighted mean for accuracy revealed that the Manual system was categorized as "accurate" (WM=3.00), reflecting moderate reliability but also underscoring gaps in data integrity. Meanwhile, the ClinicCare system achieved a rating of "very accurate" (WM=3.90), demonstrating its superior ability to enhance the accuracy and completeness of patient records across all assessed metrics.

The results reveal that the ClinicCare system markedly improved accuracy in managing patient records. By reducing error rates and ensuring the completeness of records, the system addressed critical gaps in data reliability. This finding is consistent with Magical (2024), which emphasizes that automation in healthcare reduces errors and optimizes data accuracy through structured processes. The enhanced accuracy provided by ClinicCare not only strengthens patient record management but also builds trust and confidence in the healthcare services provided by the university.

Table 3. Accessibility Assessment

C.	Accessibility	Manual		ClinicCare	
		WM	VI	WM	VI
6	Ease of accessing patient information	3.00	Easy	4.00	Very Easy
7	Ease of prioritizing special cases	3.20	Easy	4.00	Very Easy
	WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.10**	**Accessible**	**4.00**	**Very Accessible**

The overall weighted mean (WM) for accessibility under the Manual system was 3.10 (Accessible), indicating that while users found the system moderately effective in providing access to patient information and prioritizing special cases, there was significant room for improvement. In contrast, the ClinicCare system achieved a weighted mean of 4.00 (Very Accessible), demonstrating a substantial enhancement in accessibility after the transition to an automated platform.

For accessing patient information, the Manual system scored 3.00 (Easy), showing that users could retrieve information with some effort. However, the ClinicCare system improved this aspect dramatically, receiving a rating of 4.00 (Very Easy), highlighting the intuitive and efficient nature of the system's interface and processes.

When it came to prioritizing special cases, the Manual system scored 3.20 (Easy), suggesting that while it was functional, its manual nature likely introduced delays in handling urgent cases. The ClinicCare system addressed this limitation effectively, as evidenced by a score of 4.00 (Very Easy), showcasing its ability to facilitate faster and more accurate prioritization through automation.

The ClinicCare system significantly enhanced accessibility, as evidenced by improved ease of accessing patient information and prioritizing special cases. The system's automated features simplified workflows, enabling faster responses to urgent cases. This is supported by eLeap Software (2024), which highlights how Electronic Health Records (EHRs) improve accessibility and collaboration among healthcare providers. By streamlining data access and prioritization, ClinicCare demonstrates its ability to address the limitations of traditional methods and ensure more efficient healthcare services.

2. Level Of User Satisfaction Among Healthcare Providers (Doctor And Nurses) With The Functionality And Usability Of The ClinicCare System

Table 4. User Experience Assessment

D.	User Experience	Manual		ClinicCare	
		WM	VI	WM	VI
8	Satisfaction with the in handling student/patient records	3.00	Satisfied	4.00	Very Satisfied
9	Usefulness of features in daily tasks	3.20	Useful	4.00	Very Useful
10	Overall satisfaction with the system in handling student/patient records	3.00	Satisfied	4.00	Very Satisfied
	WEIGHTED MEAN	**3.07**	**Satisfied**	**4.00**	**Very Satisfied**

The overall weighted mean (WM) for user experience under the Manual system was 3.07 (Satisfied), reflecting that users found the system moderately acceptable but not optimal in meeting their needs. Meanwhile, the ClinicCare system achieved a weighted mean of 4.00 (Very Satisfied), highlighting a significant improvement in user experience and satisfaction after transitioning to the automated platform.

For satisfaction with handling student/patient records, the Manual system scored 3.00 (Satisfied), indicating that users were content but likely encountered challenges with the manual processes. The ClinicCare system dramatically enhanced this aspect, earning a score of 4.00 (Very Satisfied), showcasing the system's capability to simplify and improve record-handling tasks.

In terms of the usefulness of features in daily tasks, the Manual system scored 3.20 (Useful), suggesting that while some manual processes were beneficial, they lacked the efficiency and flexibility needed for optimal workflow. The ClinicCare system excelled in this area, achieving a rating of 4.00 (Very Useful), demonstrating that its features significantly enhanced the efficiency and ease of daily operations for users.

For overall satisfaction with the system in handling student/patient records, the Manual system scored 3.00 (Satisfied), showing moderate acceptance but highlighting the limitations of traditional methods. In contrast, the ClinicCare system again scored 4.00 (Very Satisfied), reflecting high user contentment with its streamlined and user-friendly processes.

The ClinicCare system delivered substantial improvements in user experience, with higher satisfaction levels reported for handling patient records, the

usefulness of system features, and overall satisfaction. The intuitive design and automation of ClinicCare made daily tasks easier and more efficient for users. This aligns with findings by the Financial Times (2024), which discusses how AI-driven systems enhance user experience by improving communication and administrative efficiency. ClinicCare's user-friendly features not only enhance staff productivity but also contribute to a more responsive and effective healthcare management system.

3. **Outcomes Of The Technological advancement In University Healthcare Management Brought About By The Implementation Of The ClinicCare System.**

The story of ClinicCare at the Universidad de Manila is more than just the launch of a digital system—it is a story of transformation, care, and commitment. At the heart of this innovation lies UDM's mission to deliver quality education through dynamic technology-driven systems. But this mission doesn't stop in the classroom. It extends to the spaces that care for our students' well-being—like the university's medical and dental clinic, where this transformation took place.

ClinicCare was created out of a clear need. The manual system of keeping patient records, while functional, was no longer keeping pace with the growing demands of a busy university clinic serving students, faculty, and staff. Many of our students—some of the most economically challenged in Manila—seek medical help not just for illness, but because they come to school on empty stomachs, tired, or stressed. They deserve healthcare that is not only compassionate but efficient, accurate, and accessible. And that is what ClinicCare was designed to provide.

This change reflects UDM's core value of **Q – Quality and Excellence** from our **E.Q.U.A.L.** values. ClinicCare brings quality into every consultation, every record entry, and every follow-up. It made things faster, more organized, and less prone to error. But it also brought excellence to how our staff work—with more time focused on care, and less on paperwork.

The system also fulfills our goal under S – Systems, Academic Support, and Services Improvement from the S.C.A.L.E. framework. It strengthened our support services by ensuring the clinic is not only reactive but proactive, using data to identify cases that need immediate attention. That's real academic support—keeping our students healthy enough to stay in school and succeed.

Through the lens of Q – Quality Systems and Performance from the university's strategic direction Q.S.S., ClinicCare has shown that performance isn't just about

technology—it's about people. It's about doctors and nurses who now have better tools to serve with confidence. It's about students who feel safer knowing that their health information is handled securely and accurately. It's about a system that works quietly in the background but makes a huge difference in someone's day.

This transformation isn't just technical—it's deeply human. It's about making healthcare kinder, quicker, and more consistent for those who need it most. By blending innovation with compassion, UDM has taken a big step forward in showing how a university can lead—not just in education, but in care.

ClinicCare isn't just a project; it's a reflection of who we are as a university. One that believes in inclusion, innovation, and integrity. One that sees technology not as a luxury, but as a tool to serve. And one that is always moving forward—for the students, for the community, and for the future.

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UDM
Mission

Universidad de Manila is committed to provide equal opportunities by developing the learners' knowledge, skills, and values, through quality education and dynamic technology-driven systems, in a diverse yet inclusive environment for learning, research, and community engagement.

UDM
Vision

A leading Higher Education Institution that prepares visionary and ethical leaders who shall create a positive impact to society.

CORE
Values

E – Ethics and Integrity
Q – Quality and Excellence
U – Unity and Collaboration
A – Achievement and Passion
L – Leadership and Innovation

INSTITUTIONAL
Goals

S – Systems, Academic Support, and Services Improvement
C – Center for Micro-credentialing and Industry Training Promotion
A – Academic Excellence
L – Leveling Up Linkages and Community Extension
E – Engagement in Research