



Impact of Social Engagement Activities on Counselors' Well-Being

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Abstract— In Higher Education Institutions, counselors play a multiple role in serving an institution. Counselors play a crucial role in supporting individuals through various emotional, psychological, and personal challenges. But in spite of the many roles that counselors play, they still find in their busy schedule a time to participate in social engagement activities. This study aims to learn the factors that influence counselors to participate in social engagement activities. It also aims to know the challenges and coping mechanisms counselors use to overcome the challenges. Lastly, this study would like to know the impact of social engagement activities to counselors' well-being. It is anchored on the Lasallian Reflection Framework (LRF) which serves as a guide in various formation and social engagement activities. Participants were counselors at a private university in Manila assigned at College level. They were selected using purposive and convenience sampling design. Purposive because they have the characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study and convenience because of the availability, willingness and easy access of the researcher to the participants. The counselors were interviewed using a survey questionnaire answered via a Google form. The qualitative data gathered were interpreted through thematic analysis to identify common responses or ideas of the participants. In thematic analysis, common responses or ideas were coded into themes for easy analysis of data. It is hoped that this research will benefit counselors who prepare themselves when joining social engagement activities; mentally, emotionally and physically.

Keywords— counselors, impact, well-being, social engagement activities.

INTRODUCTION

Counselors play a multiple role in serving an institution. Counselors play a crucial role in supporting individuals through various emotional, psychological, and personal challenges. The primary role of a counselor is to assist clients in reaching their optimal level of psychosocial functioning through resolving negative patterns, prevention, rehabilitation, and improving quality of life (Chronister, 2023). Based on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019), counselors play a critical role in fostering academic success, emotional regulation, and postsecondary planning for students. To achieve this, counselors apply a variety of strategies, such as helping students set academic goals, manage emotions, and develop interpersonal skills, while also guiding them in planning for future opportunities, including higher education or entering the workforce. Counselors collaborate with families, teachers, administrators, and the community to ensure student success, advocating for students at Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and other student-focused discussions. They also utilize data analysis to identify students' issues, needs, and challenges and act as change agents within the school system to improve equity, access, achievement, and opportunities for all students. By focusing on these duties, counselors help create an environment where students can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially while preparing for life beyond school.



Aside from the above mentioned roles, Counselors are also committed to participate in Social Engagement activities. In an article, Admin (2018) stated that although counselors primarily spend their time working directly with clients, their professional identities extend far beyond the confines of their practice. The way they engage with their communities reflects the values and principles of the counseling profession. Counselors can leverage their unique skills to contribute to their communities in various ways, enriching the broader social fabric. According to Rachmad (2024), Social Engagement Theory defines social engagement as the active participation in social activities that benefit both individuals and their communities. Social engagement goes beyond mere involvement; it requires good communication, an understanding of shared values, and positive interactions among community members. By engaging meaningfully with others, individuals contribute to creating stronger relationships, whether personal or professional, that in turn foster a sense of belonging and support within the community. According to Luo (2020), social engagement, also called social participation or social involvement, forms the basis of social relationships or participation in a community, and provides a sense of belonging, social identity, and fulfillment. Kawachi and Berkman (2014) suggested that engaging in social activities promote healthy behaviors and discourages unhealthy ones by enhancing psychosocial processes through the provision of emotional support from trusted social networks, such as family, friends, neighbors and community.

It is in this light that the researcher got inspired to work on this paper that in spite of the many roles that the counselors play, they still find time to participate in social engagement activities. To be more specific, the researcher would like to answer the following research questions: (1) What factors influence counselors to engage in Social Engagement activities? (2) What problems do counselors encounter when they participate in Social Engagement activities? (3) How do they overcome these problems? (4) What impact do Social Engagement activities have on the well being of the counselors?

This study is anchored on the Lasallian Reflection Framework (LRF). The framework aims to provide a structured approach to understanding, reflecting, and responding to experiences within its context. The LRF is more than a set of guidelines; it is a transformative tool designed to shape how people should engage with the world. It helps individuals and groups approach formation holistically, encouraging personal growth and social change. The framework establishes support for commitment to integral human development by promoting deep reflection, critical analysis, and meaningful action.

The Lasallian Reflection Framework is composed of three interconnected stages: SEE-EXPERIENCE (Masid-Danas). This first stage involves close observation and personal experience of reality. It emphasizes the importance of seeing the situation clearly and experiencing it authentically. Through direct exposure—such as immersions, community engagements, or dialogue with marginalized groups. We are invited to encounter the realities of the world, especially those affecting the vulnerable and underserved. This stage cultivates a sense of empathy, awareness, and a deeper understanding of both self and others. ANALYSIS-REFLECTION (Suri-Nilay). In this second stage, the focus shifts to critical analysis and reflection. It encourages to examine underlying causes, complexities, and consequences of the realities encountered. By combining analysis and reflection, this stage allows individuals to connect their experiences to the broader social, cultural, and spiritual contexts. It deepens



awareness, challenges assumptions, and clarifies insights, enabling participants to discern meaningful ways to respond to the needs of others. COMMITMENT-ACTION (Taya-Kilos). The final stage calls for a concrete response based on insights gained from analysis and reflection. This is where reflection translates into commitment and action for change. It urges Lasallians to actively contribute to building a more just and compassionate society. Whether through community projects, advocacy efforts, or personal acts of kindness, this stage embodies the Lasallian commitment to service and mission, fostering tangible impacts that reflect the spirit of faith, service, and communion (De La Salle University Manila, 2024).

It is hoped that this research paper will help counselors recognize the value of social engagement activities and its effects on their well-being. The findings from this study will support counselors in preparing themselves for participating in social engagement activities—mentally, emotionally, and physically. With limited literature, this paper aspires to enhance the existing body of knowledge regarding the experiences of counselors involved in social engagement activities.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is the study of the nature of phenomena, including their quality, different manifestations, the context in which they appear or the perspectives from which they can be perceived, but excluding their range, frequency and place in an objectively determined chain of cause and effect (Busetto, et.al, 2020). Moreover, Corner et al. (2019) contend that qualitative research is a type of research that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world issues and problems by gathering participants' perceptions, experiences, and behaviour.

More specifically, a semi-structured interview approach was used in this study. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer uses open-ended questions to discuss some topics in more detail (Hancock et al., 2007). Open-ended questions empower the interviewer to collect related data from the interviewees in detail (Brinkman & Kvale, 2005) with personal feelings, emotion, ideas, and with less self-censorship. Mason (2002) has convincingly argued that qualitative interviews require a great deal of planning.

A semi-structured interview, as its name implies, needs to be preplanned and well prepared. The interviewer should have general questions related to their research, or topic guide (Hancock et al., 2007). General questions do not delve into the understanding of the interviewee, but instead break the ice and touch upon the topic briefly to prepare the interviewee for more challenging questions. Additionally, the interviewer develops follow up questions based on the answers or the conversation with the interviewees.

Applying this approach, the researcher intended to prepare open-ended questions related to the study which the respondents could freely respond to. As the qualitative approach implies, the focus is more on the experience and insights of the counselors rather than the frequency.



Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 10 counselors from a private higher education institution in Manila. They had at least one participation in social engagement activity. The researcher used purposive and convenience sampling techniques in identifying them. Purposive sampling is selecting participants intentionally based on characteristics, knowledge, experiences, or some other criteria. Convenience sampling is recruiting individuals basically based on availability, willingness, or accessibility or contact on a practical level.

According to Stratton (2023), purposive sampling is commonly employed in phenomenon-based qualitative research. In this approach, the researcher relies on their expertise or judgment to choose a sample that is intended to represent the target population. Convenience sampling is the selection of study subjects because they are accessible for one reason or another to the researcher.

Procedure

A Google form was created for the counselors to answer the research questions. The form also contains the informed consent to ensure the voluntary participation and confidentiality of the study. The participants were informed that all information will be kept anonymous and confidential. Their names will not appear anywhere and no one except the researcher will know about their specific answers and the research data will be used only in the context of the study. The participants were invited and requested to answer the Google form through email.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, particularly the inductive approach, was applied to analyze the data gathered. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that researchers use to systematically organise and analyse complex data sets. It is a search for themes that can capture the narratives available in the account of data sets. It involves the identification of themes through careful reading and re-reading of the transcribed data (King, 2004; Rice & Ezzy, 1999). In inductive analysis, data is coded without attempting to fit themes into an existing coding framework or the researcher's preconceived ideas about the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As a result, themes emerge directly from the data, without reference to themes identified in other studies. These themes are closely tied to the data itself, rather than the researcher's theoretical focus on the topic (Dawadi, 2020).

Following this method, the researcher clustered together common responses to come up with the themes. The themes were further categorized into sub-themes to capture all the responses of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

As a qualitative study that examines the in-depth experiences of the participants, the following ethical considerations were accounted to protect their rights; (1) an informed consent was executed, (2) the participants were informed that their participation is voluntary, (3) all information will be kept anonymous and confidential, (4) names of the participants will not appear anywhere and no one except the researcher will know about their specific answers, and (5) the research data will be used only in the context of the study.



2. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the results of the interview done via Google form and the analysis of the results for each research question. The responses were categorized using themes and sub-themes to identify common responses and ideas of the respondents. Each theme and sub-themes were also analyzed and the frequency of responses are also shown for better appreciation and understanding of the results.

A. What factors influence counselors to engage in social engagement activities?

These themes highlight a deep commitment to service, personal development, and faith, all of which converge around the goal of helping others, particularly those who are marginalized or in need of support.

Table 1. Factors Influencing Counselors to Participate In Social Engagement Activities

Themes	Sub-themes	Description	Frequency of Responses
Purpose and Fulfillment	Life Purpose	A clear sense of purpose and belief that they can make an impact on the lives of other people.	2
	Personal Growth and Sense of Fulfillment	Finding fulfillment and perspective through interactions with diverse groups.	2
	Transformation Through Engagement	Social engagement activities make them feel like a better person, fostering growth and new perspectives.	1
Counseling and Helping Orientation	Counselor Identity	Seeing themselves primarily as a helper, with counseling and outreach as complementary paths.	3
	Professional Obligation	Emphasizing the necessity of social engagement as part of the counseling profession.	1
Passion and Drive	Zeal for Service	Genuine enthusiasm for making a meaningful impact through service.	2
	Advocacy and Outreach	Commitment to advocacy and addressing needs beyond your immediate environment.	2
Core Values and Beliefs	Faith-Based Service	Inspired by Christ's footsteps to serve the last, the lost, and the least.	2
	Service as a Calling	Viewing service as a grace-filled opportunity and a personal mission.	1



Table 1 shows four (4) themes such as Purpose and Fulfillment, Counseling and Helping Orientation, Passion and Drive and Core Values and Beliefs while nine (9) Sub-themes were identified.

Counselors were generally driven to participate in social engagement activities because they feel a sense of purpose and fulfillment. They feel life purpose, personal growth and sense of fulfillment and they feel the transformation through social engagement. One mentioned that “no matter how tiring it can be, it's fulfilling and provides a fresh perspective in life. I also feel like I'm a better person when I involve myself in social engagement activities.” One also believes that, “...what we do in SE can have a big impact and motivates me to engage in SE activities.”

Counselors were also influenced by their counseling and helping orientation. Joining social engagement activities gives them a sense of identity and obligation to help people in the community. One shared that, “I see myself foremost as a helper. I studied Psychology because I wanted to help people. Social Engagement activities allow me to express myself besides doing counseling as a profession.” The other said that, “I want to have an opportunity to also help and serve others outside the DLSU community who are also in need of mental health support.”

There were others who were inspired to join because of their passion and drive and their core values and beliefs. According to them, it is their zeal for service, advocacy, faith and call for service that pushes them to extend their service to the community. A counselor shared that, “I consider it a grace to meet others outside the regular student population I serve.” One considered it as “Service to the last, the lost, and the least; Following Christ's footsteps,”

B. What problems do counselors encounter when they participate in social engagement activities?

These concerns reflect the real challenges of balancing the desire to serve with the practical constraints of time, energy, and resources. The difficulty in managing multiple commitments and the mental or emotional toll that this can take are important factors influencing the writer's ability to engage in social activities fully.

Table 2. Difficulties Encountered by Counselors

Themes	Sub-themes	Description	Frequency of Responses
Commitment vs. Capacity	Time Demand of SE	The significant time investment required for meaningful social engagement can feel like an added burden on top of existing responsibilities.	3
	Creating Balance	While passionate about service, the challenge lies in balancing professional obligations, personal well-being, and social engagement activities.	1
Time and Scheduling Conflicts	Loaded Calendars	Full schedules, often planned weeks in advance, make it difficult to accommodate additional commitments.	2



	Long Days and Travel	Out-of-town engagements and extended hours can strain your availability and energy.	1
	Sudden Changes in Schedule	Unexpected adjustments in the schedule create additional stress and make planning difficult.	2
Personal and Professional Struggles	Personal Challenges	Struggles with personal problems can affect your ability to fully engage in outreach activities.	1
	Counselor Responsibilities	Overlapping duties as a counselor sometimes limit your capacity to commit to additional social engagement tasks.	2
Logistical Concerns	Travel Logistics	Inefficient or uncomfortable travel arrangements to SE venues can be a deterrent, especially when better options are available.	1
	Financial Constraints	While manageable, time and budget considerations occasionally pose minor obstacles.	2

Table 2 also shows four (4) themes for the challenges counselors encounter when participating in social engagement activities; commitment versus capacity, time and scheduling conflict, personal and professional struggles and logistic concerns, while nine (9) sub-themes were identified.

Counselors were challenged by their commitment against capacity in terms of time demands and creating balance. They claimed that joining an activity eats up much of their time especially when the activity is set out of town. As one counselor simply said, “Long days and out of town SE.” One also shared that, “Since we also have a lot of work in CPS, sometimes it's challenging to commit to a social engagement since it will also demand time and additional tasks.”

Another challenge for the counselors is time and scheduling conflict. As they set their schedule for the whole term, inserting time for social engagement is also challenging. A counselor said, “I would say scheduling concerns hold me back from participating in more social engagements even if I want to do so. Usually our calendars get really loaded as much as a week ahead.” One also said, “Conflict of schedule.”

While the majority of the counselors are having problems with time and schedules, there are also some who are struggling with personal and professional issues and logistic concerns. One counselor shared, “I think one concern would be logistics.

When the team needs to sacrifice comfort in traveling to and from the SE venue even if there is a more efficient and comfortable way to travel.” Another also shared, “schedules, when you are struggling also with personal problems.”



C. How do they overcome these problems?

These strategies reflect a practical and balanced approach to managing the competing demands of social engagement, professional duties, and personal well-being. The key is planning ahead, being flexible, seeking support, and practicing self-care to ensure that one can maintain their commitment to social engagement without compromising their overall well-being or work responsibilities.

Table 3. Counselors' Coping Mechanism

Themes	Sub-themes	Description	Frequency of Responses
Collaboration and Support	Coordination with Team	Collaborating with colleagues and involving others in resolving scheduling or logistical issues.	3
	Social and Emotional Support	Turning to friends, availing counseling, or relying on the presence of supportive individuals.	2
Proactive Planning and Scheduling	Planning Ahead	Ensuring proper preparation by organizing work and SE calendars well in advance.	2
	Adhering to Commitments	Sticking to schedules you've signed up for to maintain consistency and limiting participation to one well-planned SE activity annually	2
Flexibility and Problem-Solving	Exploring Alternatives	Choosing nearby SE activities or shorter events within Metro Manila to reduce logistical strain.	1
	Budget Management	Working within financial constraints creatively to ensure successful participation.	1
Self-Care and Wellness	Time Management	Making time for rest, such as taking naps or filing vacation leave (VL) to recharge.	1
	Counseling and Reflection	Seeking professional help when needed and practicing self-compassion by accepting what's beyond control.	1
Mindful Participation	Selective Engagement	Choosing SE activities that align with your logistical and emotional capacity.	1
	Presence Over Perfection	Focusing on showing up and being present rather than aiming for unattainable standards.	1



Table 3 presents how counselors overcome the challenges they encounter when participating in social engagement activities. Five (5) themes namely; proactive planning and scheduling, flexibility and problem-solving, collaboration and support, self-care and wellness and mindful participation, while ten (10) sub-themes were identified

Counselors basically overcome their challenges by coordinating with the team or colleagues and getting social and emotional support from friends or other supportive individuals. A counselor shared, "I tried my best to cope with it by time management and asking assistance as well with other counselors, such as swapping COD assignments and delegating tasks." Another counselor also shared that, "...arrange and coordinate with people involved and seek support from friends, presence will do. at times I avail counseling."

Some counselors plan ahead by organizing their work and SE calendar. One simply said, "Proper planning of my work calendar." Other counselors just adhere to their commitment by sticking to the schedule they signed up to and trying to be consistent with the number of participation every year. As one counselor said, "I think being assigned and committing to one social engagement a year has really worked well for me thus far. It allows me to accordingly prepare the flow of my appointments." one also shared, "I adhere to the schedule that I signed up for."

There are also counselors who practice their flexibility and problem-solving skills by exploring alternatives and budget management. One counselor shared, "I look for SE that is nearby or within Metro Manila and for a day only" and another one also shared, "Well, since the budget is limited we just made it work."

The rest of the counselors do self-care and wellness and mindful participation by taking a rest, seeking professional help when needed or choosing activities that align with their capacity and standards. A counselor shared, "self-care, taking naps, filing VL, seek support from friends, presence will do. at times I avail counseling."

D. What impact do social engagement activities have to the well being of the counselors?

These themes highlight the positive psychological, social, and emotional effects of engaging with others in meaningful ways, with an emphasis on purpose and self-fulfillment, growth, and wellness.

Table 4. Impact on Counselors' Well-Being

Themes	Sub-themes	Description	Frequency of Responses
Purpose and Fulfillment	Increased Sense of Purpose and self-fulfillment	Volunteering and participating in community events contribute to a feeling of meaningful contribution.	7
	Satisfaction from Helping Others	Contributing to the well-being of others brings a sense of personal achievement and emotional satisfaction.	3



Stress Relief and Work-Life Balance	Break from Routine	Social engagement offers a refreshing break from the demands of daily work, reducing stress.	3
	Preventing Burnout	Engaging in non-work-related activities helps rejuvenate the mind and body, preventing burnout.	1
	Rejuvenation Through Nature and Travel	Out-of-town activities or nature trips provide physical and mental relaxation.	2
Personal Growth and Confidence	Building Self Confidence	Social engagements, especially in community settings, help improve communication skills and self-assurance.	1
	Learning from experiences and Others	Interacting with people from different backgrounds and experiences provides opportunities for knowledge exchange and personal growth.	2
Contribution and Impact	Community Development	Volunteering and service activities contribute to the betterment of the community.	1
	Positive Impact on Others	Helping others fosters a sense of fulfillment, knowing that one's actions have made a difference.	2
Social Connection and Bonding	Building Relationships	Bonding with colleagues and meeting new people fosters social connections.	1
	Engagement with Diverse Groups	Interacting with individuals from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds broadens perspectives.	1

Table 4 shows the impact of social engagement activities as presented in five (5) themes such as purpose and fulfillment, stress relief and work-life balance, personal growth and confidence, contribution and impact and social connection and bonding while eleven (11) sub-themes were identified.

Majority of the counselors feel the impact of social engagement activities in terms of increased sense of purpose and fulfillment in life and satisfaction in helping others. Many shared their experiences of feeling having a sense of purpose and fulfillment; "Participating in community events or volunteering increases my sense of purpose and fulfillment," "It's refreshing, fulfilling, and provides a deeper sense of purpose and contribution," "There is a sense of fulfillment after SE. Also, personally, SE activities makes me have a more positive outlook in life and a deeper sense of purpose." Other counselors also shared their feeling of satisfaction in helping other people; "I also feel



happy knowing that I helped the community even in my own little way," "Being able to contribute and help others - increased purpose and meaning of one's life."

While the majority of the counselors found social engagement activities satisfying and fulfilling, some found it as an opportunity to have a break from their usual routine. For some, it is also a way for them to prevent burnout and be rejuvenated. One shared, "It lessens my stress and prevents me from having burnout. One counselor stated, "It is a good breather from our heavy work in counseling. If it's an out-of-town SE, it gives an opportunity to do some side nature trips." " Another also shared, "It's refreshing."

As for the other counselors, their social engagement experiences create an impact in their lives in the form of building self-confidence and learning from experience and others. Some also appreciate it that they were able to contribute to community development and create a positive impact on other people they meet. They also feel the impact that as they engage in the community, they are also building relationships and engage with diverse groups of people. They said; "As an introvert, it builds confidence in public speaking," "Meeting different people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds also makes me more connected to the real world. This makes me feel that my life is more balanced," "I was able to share my knowledge about our field while also learning, especially when the activity began with the *masid-danas* activity."

IV. DISCUSSION

This study aims to identify the factors that influence counselors to participate in social engagement activities, the challenges they face, and how they overcome them. More importantly, it seeks to explore the impact of social engagement activities on counselors' well-being. Through the information gathered from this study, it is hoped that counselors would be able to better understand how social engagement activities could have an impact on their well-being and prepare themselves mentally, emotionally and physically when they join such activities. Several responses from the counselors were noteworthy.

It was revealed that the factors influencing counselors to participate in social engagement activities are basically because of their counseling and helping profession and that it gives them a sense of purpose and fulfillment. As counselors, they feel obliged to help and extend their service not only inside the school community but also to those people far and with limited access to mental health services. According to Admin (2018), the purpose of counselor community engagement is to assist populations in need, even if that assistance goes beyond the primary role of professional counselors and includes additional roles such as advocates, educators, fundraisers, and public speakers. Ultimately, we have the transferable skills, resources, and the desire to help, so we should step up and do so whenever possible. Another factor that influenced them were their personal values and beliefs that helping is a call. It is a call for service and to advocate for the marginalized people. In an article by Marty (2021) it was mentioned that Martin Luther's interpretation of vocation—our calling—is that each person should regard their life and work as a form of service to others. We are meant to use our time and abilities to help our neighbors and humanity as a whole. Whether in our careers, volunteer efforts, or personal roles, our purpose is to serve.



Alongside the reason for counselors to join social engagement activities are also the challenges they experienced. The present study also revealed that the counselors experienced hardship in balancing their personal and professional obligations with social engagement. The amount of time they render is also a challenge. A major drawback of community engagement is that it can be time-consuming. This is due to the need for extensive consultations and discussions with various stakeholders, which can delay decision-making and implementation, particularly in situations requiring swift action. The time-intensive nature of community engagement stems from the necessity of thorough discussions to ensure all perspectives are considered and voices are heard. Engaging a broad range of stakeholders, including community members, local organizations, government officials, and other relevant parties, is essential for meaningful engagement (Obiomah, 2023). Other problems include conflict in schedule and personal concerns and struggles like financial and travel arrangement.

Counselors overcoming the problems encountered when joining social engagement activities were well noted. It is through collaboration and support that they balance personal and professional obligations and manage their conflicts. They seek help from colleagues or other people for emotional and social support. According to Folkman and Moskowitz (2004), one of the major categories of coping is social coping (support-seeking) where an individual reduces stress by seeking emotional or significant support from their community. Moreover, Gold (2021) emphasized the importance of seeking help or support from therapists or friends for the helping professionals to cope. It was also highlighted how self care and wellness, mindfulness, planning, flexibility and problem solving skills helped counselors to overcome the challenges of social engagement activities. Professional counselors who provide mental health services must maintain healthy boundaries and engage in regular self-care practices to be effective (Stebnicki, 2017; Thomas & Morris, 2017). Brief (2023) also mentioned that It's essential to recognize that self-care is vital for counselors. It is important for counselors to prioritize their own mental well-being. Self-care can include various practices, such as regular exercise, healthy eating, and mindfulness or meditation. Additionally, having a robust support system, both professionally and personally, is crucial for counselors.

Finally, it was revealed in this study how social engagement activities impact the well-being of the counselors. Based on the results, they gain a sense of purpose and fulfillment that they are helping other people and they feel satisfied with their contribution in the community. They also take it as an opportunity to break their work routine to avoid burnout. For them it is a time to rest and be rejuvenated. They feel happy to meet diverse groups of people and travel to different places while sharing their knowledge and expertise. According to studies, the connection between mental well-being and community involvement can be viewed in various ways. Developing social connections, a central aspect of community engagement, has been repeatedly associated with improved mental health outcomes (Mouratidis, 2021; Gilmore et al., 2020). These relationships serve as a support network, reducing the effects of stress and fostering emotional well-being (Govindan et al., 2020). Moreover, Walker (2023) mentioned that Community engagement plays a key role in fostering holistic health by creating an environment that supports individuals' needs in various areas, such as physical, emotional, social, and mental well-being. More specifically, it gives a more sense of meaning and purpose or emotional fulfillment crucial in achieving overall well-being. When people actively participate in their communities, they help build a supportive network that provides



access to important resources like healthcare, education, and social services. It also strengthens social connections, reducing feelings of isolation and improving mental health. Engaged communities promote a sense of belonging and inclusion, encouraging individuals to adopt healthier habits and coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

Social engagement activities have positive impacts on the well-being of the counselors. It gives them a sense of purpose and fulfillment that they become instrumental in the transformation of communities they engage with in terms of mental health. Busy as they may be with the different roles expected of them at their office, they still get to commit and extend their service to people in the marginalized sector of the community.

They do encounter challenges or problems along the way but they know how to overcome them to make their engagement meaningful and fulfilling. Driven by their counseling and helping orientation, core values and beliefs, they feel blessed to have the opportunity to be of service with other people.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the result, counselors face several challenges or problems when they participate in social engagement activities. The researcher recommends an intervention or action plan to address these challenges. This will also help counselors as they prepare themselves for such an endeavor.

Action Plan for Managing SE Participation

1. Proactive Planning and Scheduling

- Set Annual Goals:

Commit to one major SE activity per year, supplemented by smaller, local events if time permits.

Action Step: Identify an SE activity at the start of the year and block time in your calendar.

- Coordinate Early:

Work with colleagues to swap or delegate tasks as needed well in advance.

Action Step: Use shared calendars or scheduling tools to align work and SE commitments with team members.

- Prepare for Logistics:

Opt for nearby venues or one-day events to reduce travel strain and financial impact.

Action Step: Research SE opportunities in Metro Manila or areas that minimize logistical challenges.

2. Efficient Time Management

- Time Buffering:

Leave space in your schedule around SE activities to account for unexpected delays or rest needs.

Action Step: Dedicate a day before and after major SE activities for preparation and recovery.



- **Task Prioritization:**

Identify tasks that can be postponed, delegated, or completed ahead of SE commitments.

Action Step: Use a task matrix (e.g., urgent-important) to prioritize and delegate responsibilities.

- **Integration with Work:**

Align SE activities with professional goals, such as connecting with SE partners to promote counseling services.

Action Step: Explore how SE aligns with work objectives to create synergy.

3. Collaboration and Support

- **Team Coordination:**

Actively involve colleagues in addressing workload issues and aligning calendars.

Action Step: Regularly discuss SE plans in team meetings to ensure mutual support.

- **Community Support:**

Seek assistance from friends or colleagues for encouragement and logistical help.

Action Step: Build a support network within your SE team or community to share responsibilities.

4. Self-Care and Wellness

- **Rest and Recovery:**

Prioritize naps, breaks, and vacation leave before or after SE activities.

Action Step: Schedule short wellness activities (e.g., a walk, meditation) post-SE to decompress.

- **Emotional Support:**

Avail counseling or informal support to address personal challenges.

Action Step: Include regular self-check-ins and emotional health reviews in your routine.

- **Accept Limitations:**

Embrace flexibility, acknowledging that not every challenge can be controlled.

Action Step: Practice gratitude journaling to focus on the positives of your SE contributions.

5. Strategic Participation

- **Selective Engagement:**

Choose SE activities that align with your values and logistical capacity.

Action Step: Prioritize meaningful activities that create impact while fitting your schedule.

- **Focus on Presence:**

Value your presence and contributions over perfection in execution.

Action Step: Reflect after each SE event to celebrate achievements and identify areas for improvement.



6. Continuous Improvement

- Feedback Loop:

After each SE activity, assess what worked and what didn't.

Action Step: Keep a simple log of SE experiences to refine your approach.

- Expand Resources:

Explore partnerships or collaborations that can ease logistical burdens (e.g., carpooling or funding).

Action Step: Network with like-minded individuals or groups to share resources and ideas.

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