

# THE MACRAMÉ BAG

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the acceptability and benefits of the Macramé Bag among the Extension Services Clients of Guimaras State College. The respondents were the beneficiaries of the skills training on Macramé Weaving which was offered to the community since 2010 up to the present. They were randomly picked from the different organizations in the community. This study made use of descriptive research design. A total of 51 respondents were identified with majority (58.82%) having ages 40 and below, 82.35% were high school graduates, and 54.90% are female and are married. Majority of them have income below Php10,000.00. The Macramé Weaving designs introduced and the choices of colors offered were all rated highly acceptable. The trained clients were selling their products at the Pasalubong Centers, relatives and friends at the different offices and other communities. The respondents have indicated that the Macramé Weaving technology transferred is sustainable even beyond five years. Positive comments relative to the skills acquired were given by the respondents which state that they have refrained from doing vices such as gambling. They further indicated that Macramé Weaving made them busy the whole day, had provided them with additional income and they were able to buy simple gadgets and appliances at home. This means that the project is worth to be transferred to communities where the college operates.

**Keywords:** Macramé Weaving, Extension Services Clients, Descriptive

## Introduction

Macramé Weaving is an art of decorative knotting without using needles or hooks. By using a series of knots, many ornamental patterns are created. Macramé can be created using any kind of material. You can use fine thread to make Macramé lace or even use leather strips. By a special technique, the Macramé craft keeps the knots in place while the work is being done. Macramé can be tried by anyone with a passion to create with little or no experience. Even a small child can try Macramé. Besides the many decorative items and useful products that Macramé creates, there are other benefits derived from Macramé. It is therapeutic in nature, pulling and working of the cords helps to strengthen the hands and arms; it helps to loosen the joints. Some people find that Macramé, an art of repetitive knots used to create designs is meditative bringing with it peace and calmness of mind. Some twine and a few basic knots are all a hobbyist needs to explore the immense possibilities that Macramé offers, Macramé craft does not employ many supplies or tools. Macramé is making a comeback in a big way. Cavandoli macramé is a variety of macramé used to form geometric patterns and free-form patterns like weaving. The Cavandoli style is done mainly in a single knot, the double half hitch knot. Reverse half hitches are sometimes used to maintain balance when working left and right halves of a balanced piece. Leather or fabric belts are another accessory often created via macramé techniques. Most friendship bracelets exchanged among schoolchildren and teens are created using this method. Vendors at theme parks, mall, seasonal fairs and other public places may sell macramé jewelry or decoration as well.

Macramé Weaving is the modern art of decorating with knots, is believed to have originated with 13th-century Arabian-Weavers. They knotted the excess thread and yarn along the edges of hand-loomed fabrics into decorative fringes on bath towels, shawls and veils. The original meaning of the Arabic Mi-gramah, from which the word Macramé is derived, is variously rendered as "Striped towel", "Ornamental fringes", and "Embroidered veil". As a result of the Moorish conquest the art of Macramé was taken to Spain, and from there it spread throughout Europe. It was first introduced into England at the Court of Queen Mary, the wife of William of Orange, in the late 17th century.

Sailors played an important part in keeping alive and spreading this exported Arab art. From China to the New World they sold or bartered their own Macramé objects made during the long months at sea. Macramé remained a popular pastime with the 19th century British and American seamen, who called it square knotting after the knot they most preferred in making their hammocks, bell fringe, and belts. **In the 1960s macramé became a popular craft and creative art technique in America and in Europe. It was used to create lampshades, plant hangers, bracelets, necklaces, clothes, hammocks, window coverings, and wall hangings.**

Another school of thought thinks that it came from Turkish "makrama" "napkin" or "towel" and was a way to secure the ends of pieces of weaving by using the excess thread and yarn along the top and bottom edges of loomed fabrics.

One of the earliest recorded uses of macramé style knots as decoration appeared in the carvings of the Babylonians and Assyrians. Fringe-like plaiting and braiding adorned the costumes of the time and were captured in their stone statuary. Macramé traveled from North Africa, with the Moors during their conquests, to Spain, and as a result of this conquest it spread, firstly to France, and then throughout Europe.

The Guimaras State College (GSC) being the Center of Higher Education in the Province of Guimaras has a role in making a difference in the lives of the people living within the portals of the community. This role did not only include the provision of quality education but also has a commitment to the people in the community through Extension works.

As a center for higher education, GSC has the responsibility of helping the people in the community to become production citizen in the country. This responsibility encompasses the capability building not only for those who lived free but also for those who had been persecuted but were eager to start on a clean state after they have received their sentences in prison.

The Buenavista Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) at San Isidro, Buenavista, Guimaras served as the sentence hall of the Buenavistahans who have committed crime such as Drug trafficking, robbery or thief, etc. This area is a serene place guarded by the Jail Officer and the warden who served as the watchmen of the prisoners.

Inmates of the said BJMP were practically passive and were using their whole time either by sleeping or talking to each other if they have no work to attend to; as such they become idle and helpless never knowing what will become of them as they go back in the normal society after being imprisoned.

As a part of the BJMP Thrust to effectively improve the Inmates Welfare and Development Program of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Region VI, SJO4 Efren C. Bersamena JMP, Officer In Charge requested. GSC Extension Services Office to provide and enhance the knowledge and capabilities of the inmates in such a way that they could use these skills and even make it as their means of livelihood resources when they go out of the Jail or even when they are still in jail and eventually go back to the mainstream of the society and be a law abiding citizen

Based on the survey and actual interview with the inmates it was noted that most of them were dependent on the support of their families since they don't have enough source of livelihood which could augment their daily needs while in jail. Some were earning income from their vegetable garden but not enough to sustain their own personal needs. The fact that they are imprisoned their families could not even visit them because they were busy earning something for their own personal needs The worst was one of the inmate's wife went with another man because her husband could not support them anymore. Some of the inmate's wife felt their children to their relatives to work as household helpers in the city just to support their daily needs. They left helpless considering that their family head could not provide them anymore. These were their comments during the interview conducted prior to the conduct of the program/project.

To this, the Guimaras State College being the Center of Higher education commits to help the inmates and other recipients become productive citizen of the nation through the extension program which will help capacitate them not only in the skills aspect but also in the intellectual and emotional aspect.

## **Objectives**

This study was conducted to determine the acceptability and benefits of Macramé weaving to the clients of Guimaras State College Extension Services.

Specific Objectives:

1. Determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, civil status, monthly income, etc.
2. Determine the acceptability of Macramé weaving technology, design and choice on the colors of the materials used;
3. Establish the economic benefits and sustainability of macramé weaving technology among its clients;
4. Determine the values formed and good practices developed among the clienteles.

## **Methodology**

Before the skills training was conducted, a need assessment survey was done to know the felt needs of the community. Coordination and prioritization were done together with the stakeholders. The materials were then prepared by tapping available resources and support from the LGUs and partner member agencies. Before the start of the training, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by both parties prior to the start of the project implementation. Then monitoring and evaluation were being done by the implementers and other stakeholders. Feedbacks of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders were considered for the improvement of the program.

In the conduct of this study, the descriptive research design was used. The respondents were the 51 beneficiaries of the Skills training in Macramé Weaving who were randomly picked from the different organizations in the community. A researcher made questionnaires were utilized in the conduct of the interview and survey and were validated by the panel of experts. The interviews were done either individually or by group and the clienteles were visited in their respective places. In San Roque Buenavista, the first group who were trained on Macramé weaving, only 4 were interviewed because some were not in their homes. The next barangay visited by the researcher were the group from San Isidro, Buenavista and 5 members were interviewed. Since the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) is located in San Isidro, 10 inmates were interviewed who were actually doing their macramé weaving because the rest were working in their vegetable garden. For the next group, the inmates from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) Jordan were also interviewed and 12 out of 39 trainees said that they were also receiving orders. The group from Umilig who were trained only last year were also interviewed plus the trainees from McLain, Buenavista who were trained last 2013. It took one week to finish the interviews for some could not be met in one day due to distances and conflict of schedules of the respondents. Nevertheless, the purpose was achieved and the data needed were completed.

The statistical tools used in analyzing the data were the frequency, mean, percentage and ranking.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1  
Profile of the Respondents

Categories	f	%	Rank
AGE			
40 and Below	30	58.82	1
Above 40	21	41.18	2
Total	51	100	
GROUP/ASSOCIATION			
San Roque	4	7.84	6
San Isidro	5	9.80	5
BJMP – Buenavista	10	19.61	3
Umilig	10	19.61	3
Mclain	10	19.61	3
BJMP - Jordan	12	23.53	1
Total	51	100	
GENDER			
Male	23	45.1	2
Female	28	54.9	1
Total	51	100	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
Elementary Level	0	0	6.5
Elementary Graduate	0	0	6.5
High School Level	10	19.61	3
High School Graduate	14	27.45	2
College Level	18	35.29	1
College Graduate	6	11.77	4
ALS Graduate	3	5.88	5
Total	51	100	
CIVIL STATUS			
Single	20	39.22	2
Married	28	54.9	1
Widow	1	1.96	4
Separated	2	3.92	3
Total	51	100	
MONTHLY INCOME			
Below 10,000	50	98.04	1
10,000 – 20,000	1	1.96	2
Above 20,000	0	0	3
Total	51	100	

The results of the survey showed that out of 51 respondents who were randomly picked and interviewed 30 or 58.82% belongs to 40 years old and below while 21 or 41.18% were above 40. When grouped according to sex, 23 or 45.10% were males while 28 or 54.90% were females. When it comes to their educational attainment, 10 or 19.61% were high school level, 14 or 27.45% were high school graduates; 18 or 35.29% were college level; 6 or 11.77% were college graduates and 3 or 5.88% were ALS graduates. When grouped according to their civil status, 20 or 39.22% were single; 28 or 54.90% were married; 1 was a widow and 2 were separated. When grouped according to their income, 50 or 98.04% were earning below P10,000.00 and only 1 is earning P10,000.00 – P20,000.00 per month.

Table 2.  
Acceptability of Macramé Weaving

Category	Mean	Interpretation
1. Macramé weaving technology	3.73	Highly Acceptable
2. Macramé Weaving design	3.58	Highly Acceptable
3. Color of the material used	3.68	Highly Acceptable
Total	3.66	Highly Acceptable

Scale: (1.00 – 1.75 = Not Acceptable (NA); 1.76 – 2.50 = Moderately Acceptable (MA); 2.51 – 3.25 = Acceptable (A); 3.26 – 4.00 = Highly Acceptable (HA)

In determining the acceptability of the technology in Macramé weaving, it came out that the mean was 3.73; while the mean for the design was 3.58; and mean for the colors of the materials used was 3.68 With the scale of (1.00 – 1.75) =not acceptable (NA); (1.76 -2.50)= Moderately Acceptable (MA); (2.51 – 3.25)= Acceptable (A); (3.26 -4) = Highly Acceptable (HA)=with a total mean of 3.66, it is interpreted as highly acceptable.

In establishing the economic benefits and sustainability of macramé weaving, the result shows that it was economically helpful to them for out of 51 respondents 51 also or 100% said yes;. When asked about their approximate income from macramé weaving per month 24 or 47.06% said that they were earning below Php500.00; while 19 or 37.25% said that they were earning Php 500-1,000 per month ; and 8 or 15.69% were earning above Php 1,000.00 per month

The respondents were selling their products at the Pasalubong Center in Jordan and in Buenavista, to the faculty and staff of Guimaras State College , to their friends and relatives, also inside the BJMP where the customers bought directly from the inmates, and some did not indicate their response.

According to the respondents, the belts were the most saleable products because 19 or 37.25% of them explained that it was because of the cost which was cheap but durable; while 11 or 21.57% indicated that for them the bags were the most saleable considering the attractiveness, usability and durability of the items; the rests were the wallets, cell phone holders and sling bag which were saleable to the young ones, although 9 or 17.85% did not indicate their response

Table 3  
Approximate net income per month.

	f	%	Rank
Below Php 500.00	24	47.06	1
Php 500.00 – Php 1000.00	19	37.25	2
Above Php 1000.00	8	15.69	3
Total	51	100	

Table 3 shows the approximate net income the respondents earned from making and selling Macramé weaving products. It is indicated that 24 or 47% were already earning below Php 500.00, 19 or 37.26% are earning Php 500.00-Php 1,000.00 and 8 or 15.69% are even earning above P1,000.00 per month. Although some were earning only less than Php 500 but ultimately once accumulated it could also be a treasure for the family. Some, although they were not selling yet but they are still making it for their family, their friends and relatives as gifts, which are lasting since the product is durable. To the project implementers, these could already mean something worthwhile doing, for the efforts were recognized and it motivated them to continue and persevere.

The result also showed that out of 51 respondents, 49 or 98.08% said that they could sustain the project for the next 5 years, while 2 or 3.92% said no. When asked if they could still sustain the project beyond 5 years, 46 or 90.20% said yes and only 5 or 9.80% indicated that they could not sustain it anymore.

## Values Formed

Aside from the economic benefits, the respondents also indicated that they have developed values formation and good practices which have changed their lifestyles. They have learned how to weave, how to make designs, and to create different products. The best value formation developed was it refrained them from doing vices like gambling and 40 or 78.43% indicated that, while 11 or 21.58% said no. In fact 31 or 60.78% said that macramé weaving kept them busy the whole day while 20 or 39.22% said no. Out of 51 respondents, 44 or 86.27% said that it provided them with additional income, while 6 or 11.77% said no and only 1 or 1.96% said maybe. What is good about them was that 20 or 39.22% indicated that they were able to buy some gadgets and appliances although 29 or 56.86% said no, still 2 or 9.92 said maybe. What was remarkable was out of 51 respondents at least 7 or 13.73% said that they were able to repair/construct their houses from their income in macramé weaving, and 18 or 35.29% indicated that they were able to send their children to school.

## Other results of intervention

1. Training on Macramé weaving- making of bags, belts, wallets and cell phone holders come out to be the no. 1 source of income of the inmates. One inmate said that he was thankful that he is in jail because if not for his detention he was not able to avail the training which is now his main source of income.
2. The BJMP inmates from Buenavista have already formed themselves into a cooperative. In fact they have their first dividend last December 2014 in the amount of P 1,350.00 each for four months of operation. The BJMP personnel and the inmates contributed their CBU and every time they sell their products, five (5) pesos is collected for their Pangkaahatan Fund, which is utilized every time a member got sick or goes to court for their hearing. Their coop buys the materials now and pay the labor, and then the extra income is deposited for their additional CBU.
3. The new inmates at the BJMP are trained by the old ones, so that they could also join in the activity.
4. One of the wives of the inmates detained at the BJMP said that before, she is always worried what to bring to her husband when she visits him, but now every time she needs allowances for their children she would just visit her husband at the BJMP and she would be given P500.00 or more. Some of the inmates commented that before, they were seldom visited by their families but now, every visiting day they could always have one, giving them a chance to be a productive head of the family, an opportunity to be united with their families.
5. The inmates know now how to delegate their works. For example, if the inmate is good in attaching the zipper his task would be that way, and if he is good in belt making , then he will just be assigned in it although they are also allowed to do other designs.
6. The inmates are now eager to learn and avail more training because they have internalized the importance of the skills that they could learn.
7. Enhancement of the training is being planned now to improve the skills and be able to utilize more resources in the community.
8. The relationship with the beneficiaries does not stop. Continuous follow up and support ear being done to ensure the sustainability of the project

## Conclusions

In conducting this study, the researcher was able to determine the demographic profile of the respondents as to their age, sex, educational attainment, civil status and monthly income. The acceptability of macramé weaving was also determined as to its technology, designs, color of the materials used and its benefits and sustainability.

In attempting to answer the objectives of this study, it was found out that the technology is highly acceptable to the clientele GSC serves and the project could be sustained for the next five (5) years or even beyond five (5) years as long as proper management and product development will be done

Guimaras State College (GSC) extension services was able to provide opportunities for the beneficiaries to earn additional income and formed themselves into a cooperative. Likewise the Extension Services center was able to implement a research study into an extension project of the college. Moreover, the acceptability of the training was determined and the center is now trying to find means to enhance the project implementation by utilizing resources within the community. In other words, discovering the range of market factors, social linkages, influences and environmental factors in varying circumstances, could motivate Macramé weavers/GSC to mobilize all possible resources for product diversification. But this plan still needs further study and careful planning together with the stakeholders and clienteles of the college.

In conclusion, it must be noted how livelihood systems play a necessary role in understanding and dealing with poverty, because dealing with different types of people also needs extra efforts and perseverance but once the advantages and opportunities are realized and felt by the people being served by the college, it would be a blessing not only to the beneficiaries but also to the implementers of the program knowing that the services are valued and preserved. Therefore, although many have benefitted from employing this Macramé Weaving, a more thorough study shall be made and conducted. If ever future plans will be implemented.

## **Recommendations**

1. More respondents or trainees of macramé weaving shall be met and interviewed to be able to gather and obtain a greater number of feedbacks for future basis of program/project enhancement. If majority of the trainees could be surveyed and interviewed, the researcher could be assured of the greater information for future decision making.
2. In determining the acceptability of the project, the trainees who were not able to practice or engage in the production will also be tapped so that their problems or issues could also be catered and given attention or action. It was noted from other trainees that some of them wanted to be trained again so that they could also compete with those who are already experts.
3. In determining the sustainability and benefits of the project, other aspects aside from economic benefits will also be considered like spiritual and emotional aspects which lead to the positive changes in their lifestyle, their behavior not only to themselves but to their families as well.
4. Values formation and good practices obtained and developed from macramé weaving should not be left out because it could be the basis of a successful endeavor making a difference on the lives of the clienteles which could be their lifelong learnings applicable to their daily lives. Although not all of the clienteles were successful upon obtaining the skills in Macramé weaving but the good values they have gained could contribute to the attributes of a good person they are now.

In extension services, the prime goal is to extend services to the clienteles in the form of transferring technologies so that the disadvantaged group could also avail the technologies for them to be at par with the growing need for global competitiveness.

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