



SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES: BASES FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative descriptive study examined the implementation, outcomes, and the policy recommendations of the Sangguniang Kabataan in the Municipality of Cabatuan, Iloilo. Eight Sangguniang Kabataan Officials and youth leaders were selected via purposive sampling as participants of the study. Data were gathered through use of semi-structured interview guide with SK Officials. Data gathered were triangulated via focus group discussion with youth leaders. Findings revealed that the SK in Cabatuan generally complied with the legal mandate, particularly in organizing youth-oriented programs in sports, education, health, and community engagement. Challenges such as limited funding, administrative constraints, and varying levels of youth participation affect program implementation and sustainability. Outcomes indicated positive contributions to youth empowerment, leadership development, and civic involvement within the municipality. Strengthening capacity-building, LGU coordination, and youth engagement improves SK governance effectiveness. Relevant policy recommendations were formulated.

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Keywords: *Sangguniang Kabataan Program, implementation, outcomes, policy recommendation*

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the research framework, incorporating the study's background, the specific problem statement, and underlying assumptions. It further details the research's significance, the defined scope and constraints, and a glossary of key terms.

Observations of youth programs and community activities at the barangay level underscore the significant role of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) in promoting youth participation, leadership development, and community involvement. However, the efficacy of these programs is intrinsically linked to how the allotted budget is planned, managed, and utilized to support priority initiatives. The success of the SK as a governing body relies not only on the intent of its programs but on the strategic fiscal management required to translate those plans into tangible community benefits.

According to the DILG (2022), engaging the youth in governance is vital for cultivating leadership skills and fostering a sense of civic duty at the local level. In the Philippine context, this involvement is formally structured through the Sangguniang Kabataan. Originally created by the Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160) and later enhanced by the SK Reform Act of 2015 (R.A. 10742), this body serves as the official representative for young citizens in every barangay.

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These legislative frameworks task the SK and the Katipunan ng Kabataan with spearheading initiatives focused on youth empowerment and active community participation. In the Municipality of Cabatuan, the Sangguniang Kabataan serves as a partner of barangay and municipal governments in implementing programs related to education, sports, health, environmental protection, and civic participation. While these initiatives are intended to enhance youth engagement and leadership, concerns remain regarding the consistency of policy implementation, the judicious utilization of resources, and the overall impact of SK programs on long-term youth development.

The existing hurdles in the sector underscore the necessity of evaluating the impact of local government structures on youth-led initiatives (DILG, 2022; NYC, 2021). As a vital demographic in the Philippines, the youth are officially defined by the National Youth Commission as those between 15 and 30 years old (NYC, 2021). Furthermore, the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Art. II, Sec. 13) reinforces this significance by explicitly mandating the state to recognize and harness the potential of young people in the process of nation-building.

Despite this mandate, the Sangguniang Kabataan has faced criticisms related to limited program impact, weak leadership capacity, and issues in fund utilization, raising concerns about its effectiveness as a mechanism for youth empowerment (Balanon, 2015; DILG, 2022).

Considering these concerns, it is necessary to evaluate how the Sangguniang Kabataan carries out its mandate at the local level. This study therefore assessed the policy mandate, implementation, and outcomes of the Sangguniang Kabataan in the Municipality of Cabatuan.

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The findings of this study aimed to provide insights that may contribute to improving program implementation, strengthening youth governance, and enhancing the role of the Sangguniang Kabataan as an effective instrument for youth empowerment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter details the research methodology employed in the study, encompassing the research design, participant profile, and sampling strategy. It further elaborates on the research instruments used, the systematic data collection procedures, and the specific statistical tools utilized to ensure the precision and validity of the data analysis and interpretation.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the implementation and outcomes of Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) programs as a basis for policy recommendations in the Municipality of Cabatuan, Iloilo. The qualitative descriptive approach was used to gather detailed information regarding the experiences, perceptions, and insights of SK officials and youth participants involved in SK activities.

This design is appropriate for studies that aim to understand how programs are implemented and how they influence participants and the community. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research is effective in exploring participants' lived experiences and understanding the meanings they attach to social phenomena.

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Additionally, qualitative descriptive studies provide comprehensive summaries of participant experiences that support the development of practical recommendations (Patton, 2021).

Furthermore, this study utilized thematic analysis to interpret the collected data from Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and individual interviews. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to organize responses into meaningful themes related to youth participation, program effectiveness, implementation challenges, and suggested improvements.

The use of qualitative descriptive design enabled the researcher to generate comprehensive findings that reflect the actual implementation of SK programs and provide relevant insights that may serve as a basis for strengthening policies and improving youth development initiatives.

Participants of the Study

The participants were composed of three (3) Sangguniang Kabataan officials, including selected SK leaders involved in planning and implementing SK programs, and five (5) youth participants who were active members of the Katipunan ng Kabataan (KK) and participated in SK activities.

Sampling Design

To ensure the selection of participants with expertise or traits relevant to this study, a purposive sampling approach was adopted. This non-probability technique allows for a deliberate focus on individuals who can best address the research objectives. The participants consisted of eight (8) individuals, including three (3) Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) officials and

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five (5) youth participants who were actively involved in SK programs and activities in Barangay Amurao, Municipality of Cabatuan, Iloilo. The selection of participants was based on their direct involvement and knowledge of SK program implementation, ensuring that they could provide relevant and meaningful information necessary for the study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) and Patton (2021), purposive sampling allows researchers to obtain in-depth information from participants who have direct experience with the phenomenon being studied.

Research Instrument

The central tool for data collection in this investigation was a self-developed, semi-structured interview schedule. This instrument was specifically crafted to gather nuanced qualitative insights into how Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) initiatives are executed and the subsequent impact of these programs. The guide consisted of open-ended questions used during individual interviews with SK officials and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with youth participants, focusing on program implementation, outcomes, challenges, and suggested improvements.

An audio recorder was used during the interviews and discussions, with participants' consent, to ensure accurate recording and transcription of responses. In qualitative inquiry, semi-structured interviews are a preferred method due to their inherent flexibility, which allows researchers to explore topics deeply while maintaining a rigorous and systematic approach to data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2021).

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Validity of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the interview guide was reviewed by research experts to assess the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questions. Suggestions from validators were incorporated to improve the structure and alignment of the questions with the objectives of the study. This procedure confirmed the instrument's efficacy in capturing the necessary data regarding the execution and results of Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) initiatives. Content validation is an essential procedure in qualitative research to ensure that research instruments accurately capture the concepts being investigated (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2021).

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher secured permission from the Municipal Local Government Operations Office (DILG) and Barangay Officials of Cabatuan, Iloilo before conducting the study.

Chosen SK officials and KK youth members were invited to join the study on a voluntary basis. Prior to their involvement, the research objectives were clearly explained, and participants were provided with formal assurances regarding the confidentiality of their data.

Data were gathered using a researcher-made semi-structured interview guide through individual interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and supported by field notes to ensure accurate documentation of responses.

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The recorded data were transcribed, organized, and prepared for thematic analysis following ethical standards in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Analyses

Qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interviews underwent thematic analysis, allowing for the systematic identification of recurring patterns and significant meanings within the participants' testimonies. The interview data were transcribed and reviewed to ensure accuracy and familiarity. Initial coding was then conducted by identifying key words, phrases, and ideas related to the implementation and outcomes of Sangguniang Kabataan programs.

These codes were then grouped into categories and themes that represent common patterns or significant insights across the responses of the eight (8) participants.

Thematic analysis is widely used in qualitative research because it allows researchers to systematically interpret textual data and develop meaningful conclusions that support policy recommendations (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research investigated the execution and impact of Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) initiatives within specific barangays in Cabatuan, Iloilo. The study's conclusions were derived from qualitative data collected through focus group discussions with local youth and semi-structured interviews with SK leaders. To ensure structural consistency, the findings were

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categorized in alignment with the six core research objectives detailed in the study's Statement of the Problem.

The findings revealed that the implementation of Sangguniang Kabataan programs was carried out through organized planning, coordination, and collaboration among SK officials, volunteers, and barangay leaders. Program planning included the conduct of youth profiling and Katipunan ng Kabataan (KK) assemblies to identify the needs and concerns of the youth sector. Budget allocation was managed through the mandated ten percent allocation from the barangay general fund (10% GF), while leadership responsibilities were supported through committee assignments and coordination with barangay officials. Youth participation was encouraged through organized programs and assemblies that strengthened involvement in community initiatives.

The findings also showed that the implementation of SK programs generated positive outcomes among youth participants and the community. These outcomes included increased self-confidence, enhanced leadership skills, improved participation in community programs, and strengthened cooperation among youth members. Participation in activities such as sports, environmental programs, and skills training contributed to youth empowerment and community development.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that implementation processes significantly influenced the outcomes of SK programs. Effective coordination, structured planning, and communication strategies contributed to positive program outcomes. However, the effectiveness of implementation was affected by limitations in financial resources, inconsistent

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ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VII, Issue III

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youth participation, and communication gaps. These factors influenced the sustainability and reach of certain programs.

The findings also identified several challenges encountered during program implementation. These challenges included limited financial resources, low youth participation, and a lack of effective information dissemination. Budget limitations restricted the ability of SK officials to fully implement planned programs, while communication gaps reduced awareness among youth participants. These challenges highlighted the need for improved planning, communication, and resource management.

Despite these challenges, the findings revealed that SK officials employed several coping strategies to sustain program implementation. These included seeking sponsorships, conducting fundraising activities, strengthening coordination with barangay officials, and improving communication strategies using social media platforms. These strategies demonstrated proactive leadership and commitment to sustaining SK programs despite resource limitations.

Lastly, the findings identified several policy recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of SK programs. These included strengthening program planning, improving financial management, enhancing communication strategies, diversifying youth programs, strengthening leadership development, and improving monitoring and evaluation systems. These recommendations emphasize strengthening and reforming existing SK programs rather than abolishing the institution.

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The implementation of Sangguniang Kabataan programs in selected barangays in the Municipality of Cabatuan, Iloilo followed a systematic and collaborative approach characterized by structured planning, proper budget utilization, leadership coordination, and active youth participation through activities such as youth profiling and Katipunan ng Kabataan assemblies.

Program implementation is supported by structured planning activities such as youth profiling and the conduct of Katipunan ng Kabataan (KK) assemblies, which ensure that programs are responsive to the needs and concerns of the youth sector. Coordination among SK officials, volunteers, and barangay officials strengthens the delivery of programs and promotes effective governance at the community level.

Sangguniang Kabataan programs contribute positively to youth empowerment, leadership development, participation, and community engagement. Participation in various SK activities enables youth to develop confidence, enhance leadership skills, and actively engage in community-based initiatives. These positive contributions support youth development and strengthen cooperation among members of the community.

Effective implementation processes such as structured planning, teamwork, proper communication, and resource management significantly influenced the achievement of positive program outcomes, including increased youth participation, leadership development, and community engagement.

Proper planning, coordination, and communication among stakeholders support the smooth execution of programs and encourage youth involvement. However, the sustainability and effectiveness of SK programs may be influenced by challenges such as limited financial

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resources, low youth participation, and communication gaps that reduce awareness of activities.

Adaptive leadership and resourcefulness among SK officials are demonstrated through the use of practical strategies to overcome implementation challenges. Efforts such as seeking sponsorships, conducting fundraising activities, and strengthening communication methods support the continuation of programs despite resource limitations.

Strengthening structured planning systems, communication strategies, financial management practices, and monitoring mechanisms is essential to improving the sustainability and effectiveness of Sangguniang Kabataan programs. Local government units may provide continuous leadership training, establish standardized communication platforms, strengthen financial accountability procedures, and encourage partnerships with community stakeholders to enhance program delivery and youth participation.

Continuous support, improved coordination, and strengthened accountability systems are essential to enhance youth participation and promote long-term community development within the Municipality of Cabatuan, Iloilo.

Conclusion

In light of the study's conclusions, the following measures are recommended for consideration:

Sangguniang Kabataan officials should continue strengthening structured planning processes by conducting regular youth profiling and Katipunan ng Kabataan assemblies to ensure that programs remain responsive to youth needs and community priorities.

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Youth-centered programs that promote leadership development, participation, and community engagement should be sustained and expanded to maintain the positive outcomes observed among youth participants.

Regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms may be institutionalized to assess the effectiveness of SK program implementation. Periodic program reviews and documentation may be conducted to ensure that planned activities are properly executed and aligned with approved youth development plans.

To address financial limitations, SK officials may strengthen partnerships with barangay officials, local organizations, and private stakeholders to secure additional resources through sponsorships, fundraising activities, and collaborative initiatives.

Communication strategies may be enhanced through the use of social media platforms, community announcements, and youth engagement campaigns to increase awareness and participation among different age groups of youth.

Local government units may establish standardized reporting systems, financial accountability procedures, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure transparency, improve program sustainability, and strengthen the long-term effectiveness of Sangguniang Kabataan programs.

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using larger sample sizes or mixed-method research designs to further validate the findings of this study and explore additional factors that may influence the implementation of SK programs.

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