



Implementation Assessment of Youth Investment Programs in Victoria, Laguna: Input to Budget Evaluation System

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the implementation of Youth Investment Programs (YIPs) by the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) in Victoria, Laguna, aiming to develop a framework for more efficient evaluation of financial resource utilization. Given the significance of youth-centered programs for community development, the research focused on three key SK initiatives: Sports Development, Education Development, and Health and Wellness. The study addressed the need for improved accountability and transparency in managing and evaluating these programs, particularly in areas like health and wellness that are often underrepresented. The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design to evaluate respondents' awareness and perceptions of the effectiveness of Youth Investment Programs (YIP). Data were collected in numerical form and analyzed using statistical tools. A total of 90 respondents, including SK officials and youth representatives from each barangay, completed surveys that assessed community awareness, fund utilization, and perceived program success. The findings indicated a high level of community awareness and strong participation in education and sports programs; however, engagement in health and wellness initiatives was notably lower, highlighting the need for targeted outreach efforts. The study also found a positive correlation between community awareness and program execution, underscoring the importance of effective communication in enhancing program success. To improve engagement in less represented areas, increasing transparency and outreach initiatives may be beneficial. The study concluded that a proactive communication strategy is essential for optimizing resource utilization and increasing program engagement. Recommendations included creating a structured assessment system to support continuous improvement, using diverse data collection methods, and gathering regular feedback from stakeholders. It also emphasized enhancing outreach, particularly for health and wellness programs, and exploring additional funding sources to improve program quality and sustainability. This study contributes a structured evaluation model for the SK, promoting transparency, accountability, and impact, and provides a foundation for future youth development efforts in the community.

Keywords: Youth Investment Programs (YIPs), Resource Allocation, Evaluation System, Financial Resource Utilization

1. Introduction

Globally, youth participation in community development has been acknowledged as a fundamental element for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth. Many countries have formalized youth involvement in governance by establishing youth councils that empower young people and engage them in local decision-making processes. In the Philippines, this form of youth governance is represented by the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), established under the "Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015" (Republic Act No. 10742). This legislation empowers the SK to formulate policies, launch programs, and implement initiatives that advance the welfare of the youth.

A primary responsibility of the Sangguniang Kabataan is the implementation of Youth Investment Programs (YIPs) designed to address the needs of the youth in their communities. These programs typically focus on sports development, educational development, and health and wellness initiatives. According to Section 20 of the SK Reform Act of 2015, 10% of the barangay's general fund is earmarked for SK programs. These financial resources are essential for promoting physical health, mental well-being, education, and overall youth involvement in community activities. Nevertheless, challenges such as limited resources, unclear guidelines, and inefficient financial management often hinder the smoother execution of these programs.

For youth development programs to succeed, financial resources must be managed transparently and effectively. Poor financial management can result in substandard facilities, insufficient educational resources, and missed opportunities for community participation. While previous research has largely examined the allocation of funds, little attention has been given to the efficiency and effectiveness of fund utilization. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the implementation of Youth Investment Programs in Victoria, Laguna, and analyzing how funds are utilized.

The research focuses on three core programs: Sports Development Programs, Educational Development Programs, and Health and Wellness Programs. It investigates how effectively funds are used, the challenges encountered, and the overall impact of these programs on the youth. The ultimate objective

is to develop a budget evaluation system that promotes transparency, accountability, and the efficient use of resources. Through this analysis, the study seeks to provide recommendations that can improve SK initiatives and foster comprehensive youth development in Victoria, Laguna.

2. Theoretical Background

This study is grounded in the theory of Structural Functionalism, as developed by Émile Durkheim and further elaborated by scholars like Talcott Parsons. This theory posits that every institution, relationship, role, and norm within a society serves a specific purpose, and these components are essential for the mutual sustainability of both society and its parts. By applying this framework, we can conduct a comprehensive analysis of the various components and functions within the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) and its youth investment programs (YIPs).

Applying structural functionalism involves analyzing the organizational structure of the SK along with the design and implementation processes of YIPs. This includes evaluating the hierarchical setup and roles within the SK, as well as examining the planning, execution, and monitoring mechanisms associated with youth programs. The framework distinguishes between manifest functions—such as skill development and civic engagement—and latent functions—such as fostering community cohesion and mitigating youth delinquency.

Moreover, understanding the interrelationships among various SK departments and stakeholders—including local government units and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—is critical for comprehending how efforts are coordinated to implement and evaluate YIPs. Feedback mechanisms play a pivotal role in this process by integrating participant and community input into continuous program improvement. Evaluating resource allocation efficiency and measuring YIPs' outcomes in terms of social and economic benefits are essential for identifying areas needing enhancement and ensuring optimal use of financial resources.

3. Research Problems

It specifically measured the level of awareness regarding youth investment programs related to sports development, education development, and health and wellness initiatives. Additionally, it examined the level of effectiveness surrounding the implementation of Youth Investment Programs (YIPs) in terms of budget allocation, program participation rates, and performance evaluation. Furthermore, it investigated whether there was a significant relationship between the level of awareness and the implementation of YIPs concerning budget allocation, program participation rates, and performance evaluation. Lastly, the study analyzed what action plan can be proposed for an efficient evaluation system on Youth Investment Programs (YIP) in Victoria, Laguna.

4. Data and Methods

The study used a quantitative research design to systematically collect and analyze numerical data on the financial resources allocated to youth programs by the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) in Victoria, Laguna. Data were gathered through surveys, financial record reviews, and structured interviews to evaluate fund utilization and identify areas for improvement. The study involved a total of 90 respondents, consisting of 5 SK officials and 5 youth respondents from each of the 9 barangays in Victoria, Laguna. This comprehensive approach ensured representation from both SK officials, including the chairpersons, and the youth constituents, providing a balanced perspective on program effectiveness and resource utilization.

5. Tables

The results of this study demonstrated significant correlations between financial inclusion and personal financial management among the teaching personnel at Laguna University. Key findings are detailed below.

Table 1. Summary of the Level of Awareness of Youth Programs by Sangguniang Kabataan in Youth Investment Programs

INDICATORS	Mean	sd	Verbal Interpretations
Sports development programs	4.30	0.86	Extremely Aware
Education development programs	4.12	1.06	Very Aware
Health and wellness programs	3.92	1.05	Very Aware
Overall	4.15	0.99	Very Aware

The overall level of awareness of youth programs in terms of sports development reached a weighted mean score of 4.30 with a standard deviation of 0.86, which was verbally interpreted as "extremely aware" among the respondents.

These findings align with observations from Reyes and Ramos (2023) and Jayson and Rosales (2023), who emphasized the SK's critical role in promoting youth engagement in sports at the barangay level. The strong awareness of the SK's efforts in organizing sports activities and allocating resources for sports facilities underscores its positive impact on youth development.

For Education Development Programs, respondents strongly agreed that the SK managed scholarships and financial assistance programs for students, with a mean score of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.91, indicating a high level of awareness and appreciation for these efforts. On the other hand, respondents were less aware of other educational services, such as tutorial programs and educational outreach activities, which received a lower mean score of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 1.24. This suggests that while scholarships were well-recognized, fewer respondents were informed about or participated in tutorial services and community learning activities.

The level of awareness regarding education development programs had a weighted mean score of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 1.06, categorized as "very aware."

This is consistent with the findings of Rana et al. (2021), who stressed the significance of scholarships in empowering students to pursue higher education and address local challenges. Although the awareness of tutorial and outreach services was slightly lower, the SK's role in supporting educational development remains crucial for community progress and student empowerment.

Regarding Health and Wellness Programs, respondents agreed that the SK provided adequate funding for maintaining and enhancing health and wellness facilities within their communities, with a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.93. Additionally, respondents acknowledged the existence of SK-funded health and wellness activities, such as "Barangay Fun Run," "Community Yoga/Zumba Sessions," and "Mental Wellness Workshops," though awareness of these activities was slightly lower ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.07$). This indicates a minor disparity in the respondents' awareness and engagement with these specific health initiatives compared to their recognition of facility improvements.

The level of awareness regarding health and wellness programs received a weighted mean score of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 1.05, interpreted as "very aware." These findings are in line with Wetmore and Marin (2020), who highlighted the importance of community engagement in improving health outcomes through awareness and accessibility.

Similarly, Bautista (2020) emphasized the significance of wellness programs in promoting youth well-being, consistent with the SK's role in supporting health facilities and activities. The slight variation in awareness across different health programs suggests the need for continuous outreach and improved accessibility to maximize their effectiveness.

Table 2. Level of Effectiveness of the Implementation of Youth Investment Programs

INDICATORS	Mean	sd	Verbal Interpretations
Budget allocation	4.04	1.01	Effective
Program participation rates	4.19	0.98	Effective
Performance evaluation	4.19	0.98	Effective
Overall	3.87	0.91	Effective

In terms of Budget Allocation, Youth Investment Programs, particularly their budget allocation for sports, education, and health initiatives, were deemed highly effective by participants. Sports development scored highest with a weighted mean of 4.12 and with a standard deviation of 1.01 followed by education with a weighted mean of 4.10, $SD = 0.97$, and health and wellness with a mean of 3.89, $SD = 1.06$. The overall effectiveness rating of 4.04 ($SD = 1.01$) indicates generally sufficient and well-utilized budgets. While all areas performed well, the slightly lower score for health and wellness suggests the potential for improved budget allocation or management in this area.

Edenedo, Akarah, and Tayire (2018) stated that effective budget allocation was pivotal for the success of sports development programs. Proper financial planning ensured that resources were allocated efficiently, influencing the quality of training, facilities, and participation. Correspondingly, Eze et al. (2020) highlighted that sufficient and strategically allocated budgets were crucial to the advancement of the education sector. When budgeting was done effectively, it secured resources for infrastructure, learning materials, and student support, all fundamental for educational success. Penwell-Waines et al. (2020) discovered that the presence of a designated wellness champion, allocated time, and a dedicated budget significantly enhanced the implementation of wellness programs and participant satisfaction.

Youth investment programs showed high effectiveness in participation rates across sports, education, and health/wellness. Sports programs were most effective (weighted mean 4.36, $SD 0.95$, "Very Effective"), driven by successful initiatives like competitive events and inclusive participation. Education programs were also effective (4.14, $SD 1.00$), with career guidance, tutoring, and scholarships boosting participation, though less so than sports. Health/wellness programs were effective (4.06, $SD 0.98$), with positive engagement from initiatives like health fairs and awareness seminars, although the environmental campaign had less impact. Overall, the programs were well-received having a weighted mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.98 interpreted as "Effective", with sports demonstrating exceptional success in youth engagement.

Youth investment programs received positive performance evaluations across sports, education, and health/wellness. Sports programs were rated "Very Effective" (weighted mean 4.36, $SD 0.95$), praised for accessibility and inclusivity, though equipment adequacy was a minor concern. Education

programs were rated "Effective" (4.14, SD 1.00), largely due to fair scholarship distribution, but with suggestions for expanding opportunities. Health/wellness programs also received an "Effective" rating (4.06, SD 0.98), recognized for budget management and awareness campaigns, but with concerns about service accessibility. Overall, Performance Evaluation's weighted mean of 4.19 and standard deviation of 0.98 shows all areas were "Effective", with sports programs particularly successful, while education and health programs identified areas for improvement.

6. Conclusion

1. The mean of 4.30 for sports development programs, 4.12 for education development programs, and 3.92 for health and wellness programs with a total score of 4.11 concluded that the respondents are very aware of the youth investment programs by Sangguniang Kabataan in Victoria, Laguna. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.86, 1.06, and 1.05 with an average mean of 0.99 respectively ensures the reliability of the data.
2. The weighted mean scores of 4.04 for budget allocation and 4.19 for program participation rates and performance evaluation that come up to the entire result of 4.14 disclosed that the level of effectiveness of the implementation of YIP in Victoria, Laguna is effective. Meanwhile, a homogeneous response was demonstrated by an SD of less than one which is 0.99, indicating the accuracy of the findings.
3. The study reveals a high level of community awareness regarding the initiatives implemented by the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK). This finding suggests that existing communication channels have been effective in disseminating information about SK programs. Such widespread awareness is indicative of a community that is informed and engaged, creating a favorable environment for youth participation and program success. This result also reflects positively on SK's ability to reach its intended audiences through various awareness campaigns and local platforms.
4. Among the various SK initiatives, those focused on education and sports garnered the highest levels of community engagement. These areas appear to resonate strongly with the interests and developmental needs of the youth population. The popularity of these programs may be attributed to their tangible benefits, such as academic support and physical development, as well as their alignment with existing community values. This level of engagement demonstrates the potential of well-targeted programming to mobilize youth participation and foster long-term community involvement.
5. In contrast to the strong participation seen in education and sports, health and wellness programs recorded significantly lower levels of community involvement. This discrepancy indicates that, while awareness of such programs may exist, it has not translated into active participation. The low engagement in certain program areas underscores the importance of enhancing the SK's outreach and communication strategies. Specifically, targeted efforts must be made to improve the visibility and perceived value of health and educational assistance programs. This involves tailoring messages to specific audiences, using appropriate channels, and ensuring clarity, consistency, and relevance in all communications. Strengthening these mechanisms will not only boost participation but also promote equitable access to all SK initiatives.
6. The study recommends the development of a more rigorous evaluation system. A structured and comprehensive framework would enable ongoing assessment of program effectiveness, responsiveness, and impact. Such a system should be adaptive and context-sensitive, capable of addressing the unique needs of different communities while ensuring accountability and data-informed decision-making.
7. Effective communication emerged as a pivotal factor influencing the success of SK programs. The study emphasizes that when communication is clear, consistent, and inclusive, it enhances program credibility, encourages community trust, and promotes active participation. When SK initiatives are communicated transparently and strategically, they facilitate not only increased community involvement but also greater accountability and long-term impact. This insight provides a clear directive for SK leaders to prioritize communication as a foundational pillar in the planning and implementation of all future youth development programs.

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