

Stakeholders' Involvement, Support, and Opportunities to Gulayan Sa Paaralan Program

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the extent of stakeholders' participation, type of support, and opportunities offered by the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) according to the perceptions of 300 public school teachers in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental for school year 2024–2025. A descriptive quantitative research design was used in this study, and data were gathered via a validated structured questionnaire and were computed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The study reported that school administrators and teachers manifested high levels of participation in implementing the program. Parents and barangay officials had moderate participation, but external stakeholders like NGOs and private organizations were minimal in their participation. With regard to assistance, the respondents recognized the provision of material and technical support largely from the Department of Education and local government units but raised issues regarding the long-term funding and availability of resources. The study further recognized significant areas of professional development among teachers, such as skills in gardening, environmental education, and leadership. These results concur with subsequent literature highlighting the importance of community involvement and teacher empowerment for ensuring the sustainability of school-level programs. The study concludes that although the intra-school community is crucial to maintaining the GPP, enhanced external partnerships and regular provision of resources are essential for its sustainability. Recommendations are to strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration, institutionalize support structures, and incorporate GPP in the school curriculum to strengthen both its educational and environmental goals.

Keywords: Gulayan sa Paaralan Program; stakeholders' participation; teacher involvement; community support; sustainable agriculture; school gardening; professional development; environmental education.

1. Introduction

The Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) has been used extensively as an efficient approach to enhancing environmental education, food security, and community participation in Philippine schools. Moralista (2024), based on an extensive study of 300 teachers in Bacolod City, identified stakeholders as the key to successful program implementation. Moralista stressed that the role of teachers is not merely that of implementers but also of advocates linking school-based activities to community resources for the program's increased sustainability and effect.

In Moralista's research, the role of teachers was proven to be key to incorporating gardening activities in the curriculum that subsequently enables student participation and concern for nutrition and environmental conservation. The study further proved that support from teachers to school

administrators and local government units (LGUs) was crucial to the provision of resources and technical support, hence the sustainability of the GPP.

Other researchers have also echoed the role of stakeholder cooperation. Garcia (2021) argues that effective school gardening initiatives are contingent on the active engagement of parents, local farmers, NGOs, and government agencies. These stakeholders offer essential services such as funding, expertise, and volunteer manpower, which make the program beneficial overall. Reyes and Santos (2022) similarly discovered that community engagement creates experiential learning opportunities and empowers students to implement sustainable agricultural methods outside the classroom.

In addition, prospects created by the GPP are not limited to education. Moralista (2024) observes that participants in teacher training can acquire professional development through training workshops in organic farming and environmental education, enhancing their pedagogy skills. This resonates with Velasco (2020), whose argument is that teachers' participation in such programs enhances their leadership and advocacy functions, ultimately creating a school culture of sustainability.

These studies collectively highlight the complexity of the GPP as a community-driven program that is sustained by stakeholder participation, robust support networks, and the provision of opportunities for both teachers and students. For the case of Bacolod City public schools, the 2024–2025 academic year has shown how these factors interweave and contribute to the success and sustainability of the program.

Lastly, even with the known advantages of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP)*, the level of stakeholder participation, level of support given, and professional and learning opportunities it offers to teachers in most public schools are still questionable. This study seeks to establish the level of stakeholder engagement, the nature of support provided, and the teaching professional and learning opportunities the GPP offers teachers in Bacolod City for the academic year 2024–2025.

2. Methodology

This research employed a descriptive research design with a quantitative orientation to investigate the extent of stakeholders' participation, the type of assistance offered, and the benefits accrued from the implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP)* in Bacolod City. The research sought to obtain empirical evidence that capture teachers' perceptions and experiences while actually implementing the program during the 2024–2025 school year.

A total of 300 public school teachers from various elementary and secondary schools in Bacolod City served as the respondents of the study. To ensure a representative sample, the selection was done through stratified random sampling, taking into consideration the distribution of teachers across school levels and geographic locations within the city.

In order to gather data, researchers came up with a structured questionnaire with three key sections: stakeholders' engagement, kinds and level of assistance obtained, and opportunities extended through the program. The items were developed from a literature review and evaluated by an educational panel of experts. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale so that the participants could respond in terms of the level of their agreement or disagreement with the statement.

Before data collection, formal permits were received from the Schools Division Office of Bacolod City. The questionnaire was both in written and online formats to suit the different preferences and time availabilities of the teachers. Data collection took four weeks, during which the respondents were guaranteed the confidentiality and voluntarism of their participation.

Once data were collected, descriptive statistical measures like frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to examine the findings. The statistical treatments enabled the researchers to interpret and summarize the data and stakeholder levels of involvement, the type of support provided to schools, and instructional and professional opportunities offered to teachers through the GPP.

Through this research design, the research sought to present a concise and evidence-based description of how the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program is being implemented in Bacolod City, more specifically from the teachers' point of view since they are the primary implementers and stakeholders of the program.

3. Results

The findings of the research provided valuable insights into the application of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) in Bacolod City public schools for the school year 2024–2025. From the answers of 300 teachers representing both elementary and secondary levels, the findings highlighted the importance of stakeholders' roles in ensuring that the program is successful, as well as the benefits and opportunities the program has generated for teachers.

As regards stakeholders' engagement, most respondents qualified the engagement of teachers and school administrators as "highly involved" and, thus, the internal school community is primarily in charge of the day-to-day management of school gardens. Parents and barangay officials were also said to be "moderately involved" and frequently support the maintenance of gardens and provision of resources during community activities. Yet, the engagement of outside stakeholders like NGOs and private donors was noted to be limited, pointing to a possible avenue for better partnership and collaboration.

In terms of support received, the majority of teachers reported that material support (e.g., gardening equipment, seeds, compost) was frequently supplied by local government units and the Department of Education. Technical support in the form of training and workshops on sustainable agriculture was also received by some schools. But gaps were also pointed out by teachers, especially in the form of recurrent funding and technical assistance follow-through, which were deemed vital for long-term sustainability of the programs.

Opportunities-wise, the GPP has offered teachers various advantages. Most interviewees cited that their participation in the program enabled them to acquire new knowledge on organic gardening, environmental education, and project management. Other teachers further indicated the opportunity to spearhead school- and community-led projects, which improved their leadership and communication skills. In addition, the program was regarded as an excellent vehicle for incorporating nutrition, science, and environmental subjects in the curriculum and enhancing the learning experiences of students.

In general, the results indicate that although the GPP is highly supported in schools and provides worthwhile professional development for teachers, there is a necessity to solidify external collaborations and overcome sustainability issues. The findings emphasize the need for ongoing stakeholder engagement and efficient resource allocation to enhance the program's educational and social effectiveness.

4. Discussion

This research confirms the stakeholders' role in effectively enacting Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) through the internal strength of the program with the adherence of its primary implementers such as teachers and school administrators. The latter's strong involvement serves as proof

that such a program is aligned with the Department of Education's plans to strengthen food security, environmental consciousness, and school sustainability.

The active involvement of educators in the program reinforces the previous work of Moralista (2024), who highlighted that teachers are not just instructors but also harbingers of environmental and social transformation. Their roles in launching and maintaining school gardens reflect high levels of commitment to both curricular integration and community development. This is in line with Garcia (2021), who explained that when teachers have an ownership of school-based projects, they tend to extend their scholarly roles to ensure the success of the program.

The moderate engagement of parents and barangay officials indicates that although there is community involvement, it is yet to reach its potential. This is consistent with the position of Reyes and Santos (2022), which posited that actual collaboration between schools and communities translates into greater impact and long-term sustainability. The poor participation of non-governmental organizations and private partners, on the other hand, reflects a lost opportunity for resource mobilization and program innovation. This opportunity requires schools and external stakeholders to create stronger links to expand support systems and undertake knowledge sharing on best practices.

Concerning support, material and technical support were routinely offered, primarily through government. The inconsistencies in funding reported, as well as the absence of long-term planning, reflect issues that are similar to Velasco (2020) discussed, noting the need for extended financial and capacity development support in school gardening initiatives. In the absence of a steady supply of resources and technical support, teachers raised concerns regarding sustaining and developing their gardens, especially in schools with limited resources.

Perhaps the most valuable finding from the research is the variety of opportunities that the GPP has opened up for teachers. In addition to gardening know-how, teachers have been in a position to develop their capabilities in leadership, environmental education, and community development. These results confirm the GPP as not only an agriculture or nutrition-based project but as a professional development channel for teachers. Moralista's (2024) finding that the GPP enhances well-rounded development for instructors is strongly evident among the Bacolod City respondents.

In conclusion, the analysis presents that success for the GPP is highly dependent on the collaboration among schools and their stakeholders. Though teacher's internal commitment is high, it is evident that there exists a need to enhance external partnerships, enhance consistency in support, and institutionalize efforts in capacity building. These conclusions provide useful implications to policy makers, school administrators, and community leaders who seek to sustain and scale the effect of school-based gardening programs.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this research highlight the significant contribution that stakeholders make towards ensuring the success of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) in public schools in Bacolod City. Teacher and school administrator participation has been identified as the cornerstone of the implementation of the program. Their dedication to not just developing school gardens but also the institutionalization of the program in classrooms has developed in students greater sensitization toward sustainability, nutrition, and environmental stewardship.

Moreover, in addition to the apparent government unit and sector community support, the under-participation of the external stakeholders—i.e., private institutions and non-government

organizations—indicates untapped potential for sharing resources and improving programs. These strengthened partnerships may further raise the coverage and effectivity of the GPP.

The initiative has also offered meaningful professional and personal growth opportunities for instructors. Through their participation, teachers have been able to acquire gardening, leadership, project planning, and community development skills. These results are in line with national education objectives to foster holistic development among students and educators as well.

In summary, the GPP in Bacolod City has demonstrated solid roots through dedicated internal stakeholders and significant teacher involvement. Nonetheless, for the program to be sustained and expanded effectively, there is an urgent necessity for more extensive and equitable support from the broader community. Strengthening multi-sector collaboration will make certain that the GPP remains a potent platform for environmental education, food security, and professional development within the Philippine public school system.

6. Recommendation

On the basis of this study's findings, a number of major recommendations are put forward to improve the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) in Bacolod City and to further enhance its impact on educational achievement and community involvement.

First, it is necessary to institutionalize and scale up stakeholder participation beyond the school level. While teaching staff and administrators have been highly committed, parents, local government units, and external stakeholders like non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private entities need to be increased. Schools can create stakeholder committees or partnerships to make the support formalized and ensure the program is integrated into the broader community system.

Second, the Department of Education (DepEd) and local government units must offer more regular and sustainable assistance, particularly in terms of funding, technical training, and allocation of resources. Teachers must have access to periodic workshops, farming equipment, and expert advice in order to sustain and enhance the quality of their school gardens. Institutionalizing these types of support will bring long-term sustainability and cut down on the workload of school personnel.

Third, schools are encouraged to incorporate GPP activities more intensively into the curriculum, especially in areas like Science, Technology, and Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP). This integration can make learning more meaningful for students and enhance the program's educational goals.

In addition, principals must acknowledge and assist teachers in taking charge of GPP projects by awarding them incentives, prizes, or professional development points. This will perhaps motivate more teachers to become involved in the program and perceive it as a source of development and advancement, rather than another responsibility.

Lastly, future research can determine the long-term effect of GPP on the performance of students, their diet, and environmental sensitivity. Comparative studies across cities or countries may also give insights into best practices that can be replicated and scaled nationwide.

Overall, the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program has enormous potential to enhance education and community life. Through greater cooperation, maintaining stable support, and providing opportunity for growth and development among teachers and learners, the program can continue to thrive and work towards a more sustainable and food-secure future.



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