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Teachers' Implementation, Management, And Sustainability of Farm Schools

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Abstract

This study explored the teachers' implementation, management, and sustainability of farm schools in Panay during the School Year 2024–2025. Conducted in March 2025, it involved all 147 teachers assigned to farm schools in the area, ensuring full representation of educators directly engaged in farm school operations. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized. The independent variables included age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of teaching experience, while the dependent variables focused on teachers' implementation, management, and sustainability practices. Data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire adapted from Miller (2021) for implementation, Hargreaves (2003) for management, and Gibson (2013) for sustainability. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and mean were applied, along with inferential statistics including the Mann-Whitney U Test, Kruskal-Wallis H Test, and Spearman's rho. All tests were computed at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that teachers' implementation of farm schools was rated "To a Very Great Extent", while management and sustainability were rated "Very High"). No significant differences were found in implementation, management, or sustainability when grouped according to age, sex, civil status, or length of teaching experience. However, highest educational attainment significantly influenced these variables. Strong and significant positive correlations were also found among implementation, management, and sustainability). The results indicate that effective implementation and sound management are crucial for the long-term sustainability of farm schools, and that teachers' educational background plays a meaningful role in shaping their professional practices.

Keywords: Farm Schools, Teachers' Implementation, Management, Sustainability

1. Introduction

The establishment of rural farm schools in the Philippines, mandated under Republic Act No. 10618 and supported by Department of Education Memorandum No. 176, s. 2013, reflects a national commitment to strengthening agricultural education and promoting sustainable farming practices among the youth. These schools serve as an alternative mode of delivering secondary education, particularly in rural communities, by combining academic instruction with hands-on agricultural training. Through this

approach, learners gain practical skills in crop production, livestock management, and sustainable agricultural practices while completing their formal education.

Teachers play a central and multifaceted role in ensuring the success of farm schools. Beyond classroom instruction, they are responsible for implementing agricultural programs, managing farm operations, and sustaining school-based farming initiatives. Their duties include organizing farm activities, supervising students' practical work, managing available resources, and building partnerships with the community. Given these expanded responsibilities, the effectiveness of farm schools greatly depends on teachers' competence in implementation, management, and sustainability practices.

Despite strong government support, farm schools continue to face challenges such as limited resources, infrastructure concerns, the need for ongoing teacher training, and varying levels of community engagement. Sustainability remains a critical issue, as long-term operations require financial stability, environmental responsibility, and relevant, adaptive curricula. Ensuring the continued viability of farm schools demands not only institutional support but also teachers' ability to balance educational and agricultural responsibilities effectively.

In response to these realities, this study examined the teachers' implementation, management, and sustainability of farm schools in Panay during the School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it assessed the extent of implementation, the level of management, and the level of sustainability practices. It also determined whether significant differences existed when teachers were grouped according to age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of teaching experience. Furthermore, it explored the relationships among these three dimensions to better understand how they collectively strengthen farm school operations.

Ultimately, this study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge in agricultural education and provide insights that may guide policy improvement, professional development programs, and institutional support mechanisms. Strengthening teachers' capacity in implementation, management, and sustainability is essential in ensuring that farm schools remain effective, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of learners and the agricultural community in Panay.

2. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive–correlational research design to determine the extent of teachers' implementation and the levels of management and sustainability of farm schools in Panay during the School Year 2024–2025. The descriptive approach allowed for a systematic description of current practices, while the correlational method examined relationships among variables without manipulating them.

The respondents were 147 teachers assigned to farm schools in Panay. A complete enumeration was conducted to ensure comprehensive representation. Teachers were classified according to age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, and length of teaching experience to identify possible variations in practices.

Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire aligned with the study's objectives and existing guidelines on farm school operations. The instrument consisted of four parts: teachers' profile,

implementation practices, management practices, and sustainability practices. It underwent expert validation and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency. A Likert-type scale was used to measure the extent and level of practices.

Prior to data collection, permission was secured from appropriate authorities. Ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly observed. After collection, responses were tallied, coded, and analyzed statistically.

Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) were used to summarize data. Inferential tests including t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient were applied at a 0.05 level of significance.

3. Results and Findings

The findings showed no significant differences in management practices when teachers were grouped according to age, sex, and length of teaching experience. Similarly, civil status did not significantly influence management or sustainability practices. These results suggest consistency in teachers' professional practices regardless of demographic characteristics.

However, highest educational attainment showed statistically significant differences in both management and sustainability practices. Teachers with advanced degrees demonstrated different levels of practice compared to those with bachelor's or master's degrees.

Strong and significant positive relationships were found among implementation, management, and sustainability. Effective implementation was strongly associated with strong management practices, and both were closely linked to sustainability. These findings highlight the interconnected nature of these three dimensions.

4. Discussion

The results indicate that demographic characteristics such as age, sex, civil status, and teaching experience do not significantly affect teachers' management and sustainability practices. This consistency may be attributed to shared training, standardized policies, and uniform expectations in farm school operations.

In contrast, educational attainment significantly influenced management and sustainability. Teachers with higher academic qualifications may have stronger theoretical foundations, leadership skills, and exposure to innovative and research-based strategies, which could explain the observed differences.

The strong correlations among implementation, management, and sustainability emphasize that these dimensions function together. Effective implementation supports sound management, and strong management enhances long-term sustainability. Farm school success, therefore, depends on the integrated performance of teachers across these areas.

5. Conclusion

Teachers assigned to farm schools in Panay demonstrated consistent management and sustainability practices regardless of demographic background. However, highest educational attainment significantly influenced both management and sustainability, underscoring the importance of academic qualifications in strengthening farm school operations.

The strong relationships among implementation, management, and sustainability confirm that these dimensions are closely interconnected. Strengthening one area positively impacts the others, contributing to the long-term viability of farm schools.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Schools Division Office strengthen professional development programs focused on advanced management and sustainability strategies for farm school teachers. Encouraging continuing education, graduate studies, and specialized agricultural training can further enhance teachers' competencies.

School administrators may implement mentoring and capability-building initiatives to support effective integration of implementation, management, and sustainability practices. Partnerships with agricultural agencies and local government units can also reinforce farm school programs.

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in other regions and consider additional variables such as leadership style, resource availability, and community involvement to further examine factors influencing the sustainability of farm schools.

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