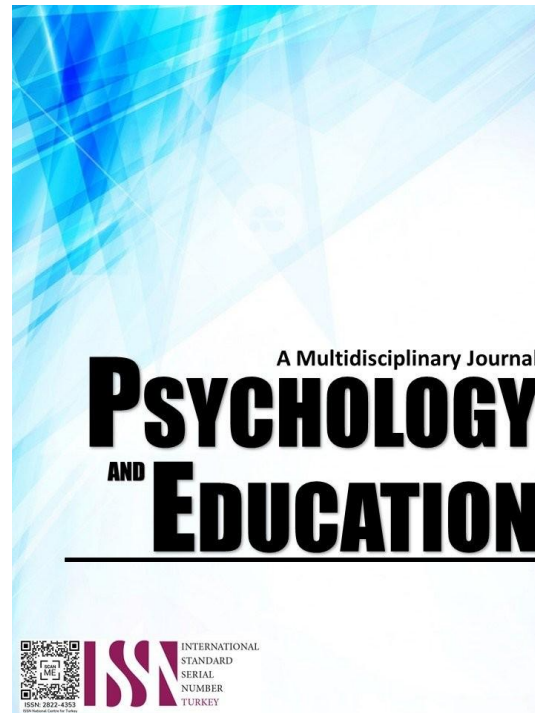


GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GULAYAN SA PAARALAN PROGRAM: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY



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Government Support and the Implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program: A Correlational Study

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Abstract

The Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) is a school-based initiative of the Department of Education designed to promote food security, improve learners' nutritional status, and encourage environmental awareness through vegetable gardening in schools. This study, "Government Support and the Implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program: A Correlational Study," examined the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) and its relationship to the level of implementation of the GPP in elementary schools in Pasacao 1 District, Division of Camarines Sur, during the School Year 2025–2026. The study aimed to determine how LGU support contributes to the effective implementation and sustainability of the program in schools. A descriptive–correlational research design was employed. Respondents included teachers, school heads, and barangay officials involved in the implementation of the GPP. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire that measured LGU support in terms of funding, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation. Program implementation was assessed across planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation. Data were analyzed using weighted mean and Pearson product–moment correlation coefficient. Findings revealed that LGU support for the GPP was generally low, while program implementation in schools was moderately high. Correlation analysis indicated a significant relationship between LGU support and program implementation, suggesting that enhanced local government involvement can improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the GPP. The study recommends strengthening school–LGU collaboration, increasing resource allocation, and implementing continuous monitoring and capacity-building initiatives further to enhance the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program.

Keywords: gulayan sa paaralan program, local government unit support, school-based gardening, program implementation, educational partnerships

Introduction

School-based gardening programs have gained increasing recognition as effective strategies for addressing issues related to nutrition, environmental awareness, and experiential learning among students. In many educational systems around the world, these programs serve as practical platforms that integrate agricultural practices into formal education, enabling learners to acquire knowledge and life skills beyond the traditional classroom setting. By engaging students in activities such as planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops, school gardens help develop responsibility, teamwork, and environmental stewardship while simultaneously promoting healthy eating habits. As concerns regarding food security, malnutrition, and environmental sustainability continue to grow globally, the integration of school gardening initiatives within the educational system has become increasingly important.

This study is anchored on Stakeholder Theory and Systems Theory, which provide a conceptual lens for understanding the collaborative relationship between schools and Local Government Units (LGUs) in the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. Stakeholder Theory emphasizes that organizations and programs achieve success through the active participation and support of multiple stakeholders who share common goals and responsibilities. In the context of school-based gardening programs, stakeholders such as schools, LGUs, community members, agricultural offices, and educational leaders play interconnected roles in ensuring the sustainability of the program. The theory highlights that effective collaboration, shared responsibility, and continuous support from stakeholders contribute to improved program outcomes and long-term sustainability.

Complementing this perspective, Systems Theory views organizations and programs as interconnected systems composed of various components that work together to achieve common objectives. Schools, LGUs, community organizations, and government agencies function as subsystems that interact and influence one another in implementing the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. The success of the program depends on the coordination, communication, and resource exchange among these subsystems. When one component of the system—such as LGU support—becomes weak or insufficient, the overall performance of the program may be affected. Thus, Systems Theory explains how the level of LGU support can significantly influence the effectiveness of program implementation in schools.

Globally, school gardening initiatives have been recognized as valuable tools in achieving several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to food security, health, quality education, and environmental sustainability. Programs that combine agricultural education with school-based activities help students understand the relationship between food production, nutrition, and ecological balance. These initiatives also contribute to the development of sustainable communities by encouraging collaboration among schools, families, and local institutions. Guided by Stakeholder and Systems perspectives, these programs highlight the importance of multi-sectoral partnerships and coordinated efforts to ensure successful implementation. However, the sustainability of

school gardening programs often depends on the availability of resources, technical expertise, and consistent institutional support from stakeholders, including local governments and community organizations.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education has institutionalized school gardening through the implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP)*, which aims to establish and maintain vegetable gardens in public schools. The program was designed to promote food production, improve the nutritional status of learners, and enhance students' understanding of agriculture and environmental conservation. Through the integration of gardening activities into school programs, GPP encourages students to develop practical agricultural skills while fostering appreciation for sustainable food systems. In addition, the program supports the government's broader efforts to address malnutrition among school-aged children and strengthen food security at the community level. Within the framework of Stakeholder and Systems Theory, the program represents a collaborative initiative that requires coordinated support from both educational and local governance structures.

Despite the clear objectives and potential benefits of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program*, its effective implementation requires strong collaboration among various stakeholders. Schools serve as the primary implementers of the program, but they often rely on external support to sustain garden operations and maximize program outcomes. Among the key partners in this initiative are Local Government Units (LGUs), which play a crucial role in providing resources, technical assistance, policy support, and monitoring mechanisms that can enhance program implementation. LGUs have the capacity to mobilize agricultural experts, allocate funding, and coordinate with community organizations to ensure the success and sustainability of school gardening initiatives. From a Stakeholder Theory perspective, LGUs function as essential partners whose support directly influences program effectiveness, while Systems Theory explains how their involvement strengthens the interconnected structure of program implementation.

Local government involvement is particularly significant because it bridges national educational policies with local development programs. Through agricultural offices, barangay partnerships, and community-based initiatives, LGUs can provide schools with the necessary inputs such as seeds, gardening tools, fertilizers, and technical guidance. Moreover, LGU-led training programs and monitoring activities can help strengthen the capacity of teachers and school administrators to manage and sustain school gardens effectively. When local governments actively participate in supporting educational programs such as GPP, the program becomes more integrated within the broader community development agenda, thereby increasing its impact and sustainability.

However, the level and consistency of LGU support may vary across different localities. Some schools receive sufficient assistance from local government offices, while others experience limitations in funding, technical guidance, or resource provision. These variations may affect the overall implementation and sustainability of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program*. In some cases, insufficient coordination between schools and LGUs may lead to underutilized garden spaces, inconsistent maintenance practices, and limited student participation. Consequently, the program may fail to achieve its intended outcomes of promoting nutrition education, agricultural literacy, and community involvement, which reflects the systemic imbalance described in Systems Theory and the lack of stakeholder engagement emphasized in Stakeholder Theory.

In the municipality of Pasacao in Camarines Sur, the implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in elementary schools presents a valuable opportunity to examine the role of local governance in supporting school-based initiatives. While some schools have been able to maintain productive gardens and integrate them into learning activities, others face challenges related to resource availability, technical support, and sustained participation from stakeholders. These challenges highlight the importance of examining how the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit influences the effectiveness of program implementation within the district.

Understanding the relationship between LGU support and program implementation is essential for identifying strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement. By analyzing the extent to which local government assistance contributes to the successful implementation of *Gulayan sa Paaralan*, this study seeks to generate empirical evidence that can inform policy development and program enhancement. Furthermore, examining the various forms of LGU support—including funding assistance, technical guidance, resource provision, policy backing, capacity building, and monitoring mechanisms—provides a comprehensive perspective on how local governance structures contribute to educational and community-based programs within the Stakeholder and Systems framework.

Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the improvement of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* by highlighting the importance of strong partnerships between schools and Local Government Units. Strengthening these partnerships can help ensure the sustainability of school gardening initiatives and maximize their educational, nutritional, and environmental benefits. Through a deeper understanding of the influence of LGU support on program implementation, policymakers, educators, and community leaders can develop more effective strategies to enhance the impact of school-based agricultural programs and promote holistic development among learners.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the influence of the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) on the implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in elementary schools in Pasacao 1 District, Division of Camarines Sur, during the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) to the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in terms of:

- 1.1 funding support;
- 1.2 technical assistance;
- 1.3 resource provision;
- 1.4 policy support;
- 1.5 capacity building; and
- 1.6 monitoring and evaluation?
2. What is the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools in terms of:
 - 2.1 planning and organization;
 - 2.2 garden maintenance;
 - 2.3 student participation;
 - 2.4 community involvement;
 - 2.5 resource utilization; and
 - 2.6 monitoring and evaluation?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of LGU support and the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program?
4. What policy recommendations may be proposed to enhance the support of the Local Government Unit and improve the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program?

Literature Review

Gulayan sa Paaralan Program Implementation

The Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) is a flagship initiative of the Department of Education designed to promote food security, nutrition awareness, and environmental education among learners through the establishment of school-based vegetable gardens. The program integrates agricultural practices into the educational system, allowing students to experience hands-on learning while contributing to school feeding programs and community-based food production initiatives. Recent studies emphasize that school gardening programs improve students' knowledge of nutrition, enhance environmental awareness, and develop practical agricultural skills that contribute to sustainable food systems (Santos & Rivera, 2021; Dela Cruz et al., 2022). These programs also support experiential learning by encouraging active student participation in planting, cultivating, and harvesting crops, which strengthens responsibility, teamwork, and environmental stewardship.

The implementation of GPP involves key components such as planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, and monitoring and evaluation. According to recent empirical research, structured planning and effective monitoring mechanisms significantly influence the sustainability of school gardening programs, particularly when supported by institutional partnerships and adequate resources (Garcia & Lopez, 2020). Schools that implement systematic garden management and stakeholder coordination demonstrate higher levels of program sustainability and improved nutritional outcomes among students. Furthermore, community involvement has been identified as a crucial factor in sustaining school gardening initiatives, as collaboration with parents, local farmers, and government agencies enhances resource availability and technical support (Torres et al., 2023). These findings suggest that the success of GPP is not solely dependent on school efforts but also on the collaborative support of external stakeholders.

Level of Implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program

The level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program reflects how effectively schools carry out the program's objectives and activities. Studies conducted in Southeast Asia and other developing countries show that school-based agricultural programs achieve better outcomes when implementation is supported by strong institutional coordination, adequate funding, and continuous monitoring (UNESCO, 2021; FAO, 2022). Schools with well-implemented gardening programs demonstrate improved student participation, better crop production, and increased integration of agricultural concepts into classroom instruction.

Recent Philippine-based studies indicate that variations in program implementation are often linked to differences in resource availability, administrative support, and stakeholder involvement. For instance, research by Mendoza and Castillo (2022) found that schools with consistent support from local institutions were more successful in maintaining productive gardens and integrating them into feeding programs compared to schools with limited external support. Similarly, Ramos et al. (2024) reported that regular monitoring, teacher training, and resource provision significantly contributed to higher levels of GPP implementation in public elementary schools. These findings highlight that effective program implementation requires coordinated efforts among schools, government agencies, and community stakeholders to ensure sustainability and long-term impact.

Relationship Between LGU Support and Program Implementation

Several recent empirical studies emphasize the critical role of local government units (LGUs) and community stakeholders in strengthening school-based agricultural and nutrition programs. LGU support typically includes financial assistance, provision of gardening tools and materials, technical guidance from agricultural experts, and capacity-building programs for teachers and school

coordinators. According to stakeholder collaboration research, inter-organizational partnerships enhance program effectiveness by facilitating resource sharing, policy alignment, and coordinated implementation strategies (Navarro & Bautista, 2021). This supports the principles of Stakeholder Theory and Systems Theory, which emphasize that program success depends on the interaction and cooperation of multiple institutional actors.

Empirical evidence also shows that local government involvement significantly improves program sustainability and community engagement. A study by Reyes et al. (2023) found that schools receiving regular LGU support demonstrated higher levels of garden productivity, stronger student participation, and improved nutrition outcomes compared to schools with minimal local government involvement.

Similarly, international studies on school feeding and agricultural programs highlight that government-community partnerships strengthen monitoring systems, improve resource allocation, and ensure long-term sustainability of educational and agricultural initiatives (World Bank, 2020; FAO, 2023). These findings confirm that LGU support plays a crucial role in enhancing the level of implementation of school gardening programs by providing the necessary institutional and technical support.

Overall, the literature suggests that strong collaboration between schools and local government units significantly contributes to the successful implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. The presence of funding support, technical expertise, monitoring mechanisms, and community partnerships enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of the program. However, existing studies also indicate that variations in LGU support can lead to differences in program implementation across schools, highlighting the need for further empirical investigation at the local level. This gap provides the basis for examining how LGU support influences the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in the municipality of Pasacao, Camarines Sur.

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive–correlational research design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), descriptive–correlational research is appropriate for studies that aim to describe existing conditions and examine relationships among variables as they naturally occur without manipulation. In this study, the descriptive method was used to determine the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao in the implementation of the program in terms of funding support, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation. So, as the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools in terms of planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, the descriptive method served as the basis for crafting policy recommendations aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program and enhancing LGU support.

Several studies have successfully applied descriptive research methods in evaluating school-based and community-supported programs. For instance, Olivares et al. (2020) used a descriptive approach to assess the implementation of school gardening programs in public elementary schools and identified critical factors affecting program sustainability. Similarly, Reyes and Santos (2021) employed descriptive research in examining local government support for school-based nutrition initiatives, which led to evidence-based program improvements.

On the other hand, the correlational method was used to determine the relationship between the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools and the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao. It was further utilized to measure the extent to which LGU support influenced the level of program implementation. As emphasized by Field (2018), correlational research is suitable for determining the strength and direction of relationships among naturally occurring variables. Supporting this approach, Toropova et al. (2021) found significant relationships between institutional support and the effectiveness of school programs, while Villanueva and Bernardo (2019) reported similar findings in the Philippine educational context. These studies affirmed the appropriateness of the descriptive–correlational design for the present investigation.

Respondents

The respondents of this study consisted of 184 teachers, 10 school heads, and 10 Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) officials, with a combined total of 204 respondents. The study utilized the total enumeration method, a sampling approach in which all members of the identified population were included as respondents. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), total enumeration is appropriate when the population is relatively small and accessible, and when the study aims to obtain complete and comprehensive data from all members of specific groups. This method is commonly applied in educational and community-based research to ensure full representation and eliminate sampling bias.

In this study, all teachers, school heads, and designated BLGU officials from the selected elementary schools in Pasacao 1 District were involved, thereby ensuring comprehensive representation of each stakeholder group directly involved in the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program.

Instrument

A researcher-made questionnaire was developed, which was used to generate the data from the respondents.

The primary instrument used in this study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to assess two key areas: the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in elementary schools and the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao. To address the first statement of the problem, the questionnaire included items that evaluated the implementation of the program along six components, namely: planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation. Respondents rated each item using a four-point Likert scale with the following options: 1 – Not Implemented, 2 – Partially Implemented, 3 – Fully Implemented, and 4 – Very Well Implemented. To address the second statement of the problem, the questionnaire also contained items that measured the level of LGU support in terms of funding support, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation, using a four-point Likert scale with the descriptors: 1 – No Support, 2 – Minimal Support, 3 – Moderate Support, and 4 – Strong Support.

Prior to its administration, the questionnaire was subjected to content validation by a panel of experts in educational management and program implementation to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the study. Revisions were made based on the experts' comments and suggestions. A dry run was conducted among respondents who were not included in the actual sample to test the clarity of instructions and items. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher, indicating acceptable internal consistency. The results of the validation and reliability testing ensured that the questionnaire was a valid and reliable instrument for data collection. Data gathered from the questionnaire provided essential information for analyzing the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* and the extent of LGU support in sustaining and enhancing the program.

Procedure

To accurately reflect the data collection procedure of this study on the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP)*, a systematic and organized process was followed to gather data from the identified 204 respondents in Pasacao, Camarines Sur. The researcher prepared a structured survey questionnaire designed to measure the level of Local Government Unit (LGU) support and the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in elementary schools. The instrument was aligned with the objectives of the study and focused on key indicators such as funding assistance, technical support, resource provision, monitoring mechanisms, planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, and community involvement. The questionnaire was reviewed and validated by experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items in relation to the study objectives.

After the validation of the instrument, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Office of Camarines Sur, the District Supervisor, and the school heads of the selected elementary schools in Pasacao to conduct the study. Coordination was also made with Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) officials to facilitate their participation in the research. Upon approval, the researcher personally distributed the survey questionnaires to the respondents, which consisted of 184 teachers, 10 school heads, and 10 Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) officials, with a combined total of 204 respondents. The respondents were given sufficient time to answer the questionnaire, and proper instructions were provided to ensure accurate and honest responses.

After the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher personally retrieved the completed instruments to ensure completeness and accuracy of the collected data. All responses were carefully checked, tallied, and organized for statistical analysis. The collected data were then encoded and prepared for interpretation to determine the level of LGU support and the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* in Pasacao, Camarines Sur. The entire procedure ensured consistency, accuracy, and reliability in the data collection process, allowing the study to generate valid and reliable findings.

Data Analysis

To ensure systematic statistical treatment of the data and the development of evidence-based outputs, appropriate statistical tools and a structured development framework were employed. All statistical computations were performed using electronic statistical software.

The weighted mean was used to determine the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program* and the level of Local Government Unit (LGU) support in Pasacao. This statistical tool summarized the responses from the 4-point Likert scale by computing the average ratings across indicators such as planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation, as well as funding support, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring mechanisms. The weighted mean provided a clear descriptive interpretation of the respondents' perceptions regarding program implementation and LGU support.

To determine the relationship between LGU support and the level of implementation of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan Program*, correlation analysis was employed. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was initially used to measure the strength and direction of the association between the two variables, which is common in educational and social science research. However, since the data were derived from a 4-point Likert scale (ordinal in nature), Spearman's rank-order correlation (ρ) was also considered to ensure stricter statistical rigor and to validate the relationship between the variables without assuming interval-level measurement. This



approach strengthened the reliability of the findings by addressing parametric assumptions.

To determine the predictive effect of LGU support on the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, simple linear regression analysis was conducted. This statistical method was used instead of interpreting correlation as influence, allowing the study to examine whether LGU support significantly predicts the level of program implementation. The regression analysis provided a more appropriate measure of statistical influence by estimating how variations in LGU support contribute to changes in program implementation and by determining the proportion of variance explained by the predictor variable.

The Modified ADDIE Model was utilized as a framework for developing the proposed policy recommendations of the study. This model was applied after the statistical analysis to translate research findings into practical outputs systematically. The Analysis phase involved examining the results to identify gaps and priority needs in LGU support and program implementation. The Design phase focused on planning appropriate strategies and policy interventions based on the findings, while the Development phase involved formulating and refining the proposed policy recommendations for the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. The inclusion of the Modified ADDIE Model was intended to provide a structured and evidence-based approach to developing intervention policies derived from the study results.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the conduct of this study to ensure the protection of the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants. Prior to data collection, official approval and permission to conduct the study were secured from the Schools Division Office of Camarines Sur through the endorsement of the Public Schools District Supervisor of Pasacao and the concerned school heads. Coordination with Barangay Local Government Unit (BLGU) officials was also undertaken to formally inform them of the purpose and scope of the study.

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, including teachers, school heads, and designated BLGU officials. The participants were clearly informed about the objectives of the study, the nature of their participation, and their right to decline or withdraw at any time without penalty. Participation in the study was voluntary, and no form of coercion or undue influence was employed. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were strictly maintained. Personal identifiers such as names, positions, and school affiliations were not disclosed in the presentation of the findings. All responses were coded and treated with confidentiality, and the data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes.

The study also adhered to data privacy and security protocols in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Physical and electronic data were securely stored, with access limited to the researcher. Electronic files were protected through password-secured storage to prevent unauthorized access.

In addition, the researcher observed academic honesty and research integrity in the collection, analysis, and reporting of data. Proper citation and acknowledgment of all sources were ensured to avoid plagiarism, and the results were reported truthfully and objectively without data fabrication or manipulation. With regard to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), specifically ChatGPT, the tool was utilized solely as a supportive aid in improving grammar, clarity, organization, and academic writing style. ChatGPT was not used to generate research data, analyze results, or draw conclusions. All interpretations, analyses, and final decisions remained the responsibility of the researcher. The use of AI was guided by principles of transparency, accountability, and responsible research practice, ensuring that the integrity and originality of the study were upheld.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study and provides a discussion of the findings based on the data gathered from the respondents. The results are organized according to the statements of the problem and are analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. The discussion interprets the findings in relation to the objectives of the study and relevant literature, highlighting implications for the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program and the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao.

Level of Support of Local Government Unit (LGU) Pasacao in the Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan

Table 1. *Summary Level of Support of Local Government Unit (LGU) Pasacao in the Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan*

<i>Level of Support</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>Int.</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Funding and Support	2.355	DA	1
Technical assistance	2.241	DA	4
Resource provision;	2.276	DA	2
Policy support;	2.268	DA	3
Capacity Building	2.122	DA	5
Monitoring and Evaluation	2.060	DA	6
Overall AWM	2.220	DA	

Note. 3.26-4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA) ; 2.51-3.25 = Agree (A); 1.76-2.50 = Disagree (DA); 1.00-1.75 = Strongly Disagree (SD) ; WM = Weighted Mean; Int = Interpretation; AWM = Average Weighted Mean



Table 1 presents the summary level of support of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao in the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. The table consolidates six dimensions of LGU support: funding support, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation. All dimensions obtained average weighted means ranging from 2.060 to 2.355, which were uniformly interpreted as Disagree (DA). Funding support ranked highest (AWM = 2.355), followed by resource provision (AWM = 2.276) and policy support (AWM = 2.268). Capacity building (AWM = 2.122) and monitoring and evaluation (AWM = 2.060) ranked lowest. The overall average weighted mean of 2.220 likewise indicated a generally low level of LGU support in the implementation of the program. The findings reveal that the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao in the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program was generally inadequate across all dimensions. Although funding and resource provision were relatively evident, low ratings in capacity building, technical assistance, and monitoring and evaluation indicate that LGU involvement remains fragmented and not fully institutionalized. This suggests that the LGU functions more as a supplementary partner rather than a primary driver of the program, limiting its overall sustainability and effectiveness.

Despite limited LGU support, the program continues to be implemented at a moderate to high level in schools. This implies that schools compensate through alternative support mechanisms such as Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) contributions, community donations, and partnerships with local stakeholders and non-government organizations. Strong school leadership, teacher participation, and community engagement sustain program implementation, making it largely school-driven. This finding aligns with Olivares et al. (2020) and Reyes and Santos (2021), who reported that inadequate and fragmented LGU support weakens school gardening and nutrition programs, highlighting the importance of consistent institutional backing.

From the perspective of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, the LGU represents the exosystem that provides external institutional support, while schools and communities operate within the microsystem and mesosystem. The weak LGU support reflects limited exosystemic influence, but strong internal engagement allows the program to remain functional. Strengthening LGU involvement through sustained funding, technical assistance, and monitoring would create a more integrated support system and enhance the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program.

Level of Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan of Elementary Schools

Table 2 summarizes the overall level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools across six key areas, namely planning and organization, garden maintenance, student participation, community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation. The average weighted means ranged from 3.000 to 3.316. Planning and organization obtained the highest rating (AWM = 3.316), interpreted as Strongly Agree (SA), while monitoring and evaluation recorded the lowest rating (AWM = 3.000), interpreted as Agree (A). The overall average weighted mean of 3.125 fell under the Agree category, indicating that the program was generally well implemented in the elementary schools.

Table 2. Summary of the Level of Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan of Elementary Schools

<i>Level of Support</i>	<i>AWM</i>	<i>Int.</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Funding and Support	2.355	DA	1
Technical assistance	2.241	DA	4
Resource provision;	2.276	DA	2
Policy support;	2.268	DA	3
Capacity Building	2.122	DA	5
Monitoring and Evaluation	2.060	DA	6
Overall AWM	2.220	DA	

Note. 3.26-4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA); 2.51-3.25 = Agree (A); 1.76-2.50 = Disagree (DA); 1.00-1.75 = Strongly Disagree (SD); WM = Weighted Mean; Int = Interpretation; AWM = Average Weighted Mean

An analysis of the rankings shows that planning and organization ranked first, followed by student participation, garden maintenance, and community involvement, while resource utilization and monitoring and evaluation ranked lowest, indicating areas that require strengthening. The relatively close average weighted means suggest that implementation efforts were generally balanced across domains, with schools demonstrating strong operational capacity but needing improvements in resource optimization and systematic monitoring to ensure sustainability.

Despite the low level of LGU support, the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program was generally well implemented in elementary schools, indicating that schools have developed internal mechanisms to sustain the program. Internal funding sources such as Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) support, community donations, and partnerships with local stakeholders contribute to program continuity. Strong school leadership, active student participation, and community involvement further embed the program in school culture, making implementation largely school-driven. This finding is supported by Reyes and Santos (2021), who found that strong planning and participatory implementation improve the sustainability of school gardening initiatives, while Dela Cruz and Bautista (2020) and Mendoza et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of LGU support, monitoring, and capacity building in enhancing program effectiveness.

These findings support Moore’s Public Value Theory, which emphasizes that public programs generate value through strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and effective implementation. As noted by Moore (2013) and Bryson, Crosby, and Bloomberg (2014), strong organizational capacity and stakeholder engagement enable public-sector programs to deliver meaningful outcomes even



with limited external resources. Strengthening resource utilization, monitoring systems, and LGU collaboration would therefore enhance the sustainability and public value of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program.

Significant Relationship between the Level of Support of Local Government Unit (LGU) Pasacao and the Level of Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan of Elementary Schools

This section examines the significant relationship between the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao and the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools. Table 3 presents the results of the correlation analysis to determine the strength and significance of the association between LGU support dimensions and the various aspects of program implementation.

Table 3. *Test on the Relationship between the Level of Support of Local Government Unit (LGU) Pasacao and the Level of Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan of Elementary Schools*

<i>Level of Support</i>	<i>Level of Implementation</i>	<i>r-value</i>	<i>Int.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Int.</i>
Funding Support	Planning and Organization	0.343	WC	0.001	HS
	Garden Maintenance	0.343	WC	0.001	HS
	Student Participation	0.349	WC	0.001	HS
	Community Involvement	0.541	MC	0.001	HS
	Resource Utilization	0.448	MC	0.001	HS
Technical Assistance	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.451	MC	0.001	HS
	Planning and Organization	0.334	WC	0.001	HS
	Garden Maintenance	0.352	WC	0.001	HS
	Student Participation	0.444	MC	0.001	HS
	Community Involvement	0.542	MC	0.001	HS
Resource Provision	Resource Utilization	0.419	MC	0.001	HS
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.461	MC	0.001	HS
	Planning and Organization	0.365	WC	0.001	HS
	Garden Maintenance	0.435	MC	0.001	HS
	Student Participation	0.441	MC	0.001	HS
Policy Support	Community Involvement	0.523	MC	0.001	HS
	Resource Utilization	0.431	MC	0.001	HS
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.480	MC	0.001	HS
	Planning and Organization	0.328	WC	0.001	HS
	Garden Maintenance	0.397	WC	0.001	HS
Capacity Building	Student Participation	0.368	WC	0.001	HS
	Community Involvement	0.501	MC	0.001	HS
	Resource Utilization	0.380	WC	0.001	HS
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.393	WC	0.001	HS
	Planning and Organization	0.317	WC	0.001	HS
Monitoring and Evaluation	Garden Maintenance	0.363	WC	0.001	HS
	Student Participation	0.364	WC	0.001	HS
	Community Involvement	0.461	MC	0.001	HS
	Resource Utilization	0.371	WC	0.001	HS
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.443	MC	0.001	HS
Monitoring and Evaluation	Planning and Organization	0.341	WC	0.001	HS
	Garden Maintenance	0.341	WC	0.001	HS
	Student Participation	0.404	MC	0.001	HS
	Community Involvement	0.489	MC	0.001	HS
	Resource Utilization	0.362	WC	0.001	HS
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.430	MC	0.001	HS

Note. 0.00-0.09=Negligible Correlation (NC); 0.10-0.39=Weak Correlation (WC); 0.40-0.69=Moderate Correlation (MC); 0.70-0.89=Strong Correlation (SC); 0.90-1.00=Very Strong Correlation (VSC); HS=Highly Significant; Int=Interpretation

The correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between LGU support and the level of implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, with relationships ranging from weak to moderate. This indicates that LGU support is associated with program implementation but does not fully determine it. Stronger relationships were observed in community involvement, resource utilization, and monitoring and evaluation, while weaker relationships were found in planning and garden maintenance, suggesting that LGU contributions are more influential in externally oriented and resource-dependent components than in internal operational processes. This pattern reinforces the earlier finding that schools remain the primary drivers of planning and day-to-day implementation, while LGU support enhances collaboration, accountability, and resource availability.

From the perspective of Public Policy Implementation Theory, successful program outcomes depend not only on resource provision but also on implementer competence, leadership, and stakeholder engagement. The results highlight a complementary relationship between LGU support and school-level initiatives, where internal school capacity sustains program operations and LGU assistance strengthens specific areas of implementation. The stronger connections in community engagement and monitoring suggest that these



areas are particularly responsive to external support and may serve as key leverage points for improving program effectiveness and sustainability through targeted LGU interventions and structured feedback mechanisms.

Related studies support these findings. Reyes and Santos (2021) emphasized that financial and monitoring support from LGUs strengthens community participation and program accountability, while Toropova et al. (2021) highlighted that institutional technical support improves program effectiveness and stakeholder engagement. Similarly, Olivares et al. (2020) noted that irregular resource provision undermines sustainability, and Villanueva and Bernardo (2019) and Dela Cruz and Aquino (2020) found that supportive policies and continuous capacity building enhance administrative follow-through and implementation outcomes. Collectively, these studies affirm that financial resources, technical assistance, policy support, and consistent monitoring are essential components in translating policy into effective school-based garden programs, thereby strengthening the overall impact and sustainability of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program.

Extent of Influence of Level of Support from the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao on the Implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in Elementary Schools

This section discusses the extent of influence of the level of support provided by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao on the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in elementary schools. It shows how different forms of LGU support affect various areas of program implementation.

Table 4. Extent of Influence of the level of support from the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pasacao on the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan program in Elementary Schools

Level of Support	Level of Implementation	r-value	r2-value in %	Int.
Funding Support	Planning and Organization	0.343	11.765	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.343	11.765	Low Influence
	Student Participation	0.349	12.180	Low Influence
	Community Involvement	0.541	29.268	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.448	20.070	Quite Strong Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.451	20.340	Quite Strong Influence
Technical Assistance	Planning and Organization	0.334	11.156	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.352	12.390	Low Influence
	Student Participation	0.444	19.714	Quite Strong Influence
	Community Involvement	0.542	29.376	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.419	17.556	Quite Strong Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.461	21.252	Quite Strong Influence
Resource Provision	Planning and Organization	0.365	13.323	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.435	18.923	Quite Strong Influence
	Student Participation	0.441	19.448	Quite Strong Influence
	Community Involvement	0.523	27.353	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.431	18.576	Quite Strong Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.480	23.040	Quite Strong Influence
Policy Support	Planning and Organization	0.328	10.758	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.397	15.761	Low Influence
	Student Participation	0.368	13.542	Low Influence
	Community Involvement	0.501	25.100	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.380	14.440	Low Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.393	15.445	Low Influence
Capacity Building	Planning and Organization	0.317	10.049	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.363	13.177	Low Influence
	Student Participation	0.364	13.250	Low Influence
	Community Involvement	0.461	21.252	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.371	13.764	Low Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.443	19.625	Quite Strong Influence
Monitoring and Evaluation	Planning and Organization	0.341	11.628	Low Influence
	Garden Maintenance	0.341	11.628	Low Influence
	Student Participation	0.404	16.322	Low Influence
	Community Involvement	0.489	23.912	Quite Strong Influence
	Resource Utilization	0.362	13.104	Low Influence
	Monitoring and Evaluation	0.430	18.490	Quite Strong Influence

Note: 82%-100%=Very high/strong influence;49%-81%=high/strong influence;17%-48%=Quite Strong Influence;5%-16% Low influence; and 0%-4%= Very Weak influence

The tabular presentation suggests that the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program continues to function effectively despite limited LGU support, indicating that schools rely on alternative resources such as Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE), NGO donations, and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) contributions to sustain the program. This demonstrates that program resilience is largely driven by internal school initiative and resourcefulness rather than solely by external assistance. A closer examination of the data shows that LGU support plays a critical enabling role in externally oriented and resource-dependent components, particularly in community

involvement, resource utilization, student participation, and monitoring and evaluation, while planning, organization, and garden maintenance remain primarily school-driven. This pattern indicates that financial resources, technical assistance, and policy support enhance collaboration and operational engagement but have limited influence on internal decision-making and daily routines.

From the perspective of Public Policy Implementation Theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, LGU supports functions as an enabling exosystem that provides essential inputs but does not directly control the school's microsystem of daily operations. Program success, therefore, depends on both external support and internal implementation capacity. Funding, policies, and technical assistance strengthen collaboration, accountability, and stakeholder engagement, but their impact on planning and operational sustainability remains limited without continuous integration into school systems. For long-term sustainability, LGU interventions should move beyond periodic assistance toward a more embedded partnership that aligns funding, capacity building, and monitoring with strategic school planning and operational management.

Related studies support this interpretation. Reyes and Santos (2021) found that LGU funding strengthened community engagement and accountability but had a limited impact on internal planning without administrative reforms, while Garcia et al. (2020) emphasized that financial support works best as a complementary implementation driver. Similarly, Toropova, Johansson, and Myrberg (2021) and Dela Cruz and Aquino (2020) highlighted that technical assistance improves stakeholder coordination and program quality when applied in practice-oriented domains. Villanueva and Bernardo (2019) also noted that policy support enhances community participation but requires funding, training, and monitoring to influence school operations, while OECD and UNESCO policy studies stress that sustained capacity building and formative monitoring are essential for improving internal management practices. Collectively, these studies affirm that funding, policy support, technical assistance, and monitoring function as enabling mechanisms that strengthen collaboration and accountability, thereby enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of the *Gulayan sa Paaralan* Program.

Conclusions

The study revealed that the level of support provided by the LGU of Pasacao for the *Gulayan sa Paaralan* Program was generally low across all dimensions, including funding, technical assistance, resource provision, policy support, capacity building, and monitoring. Despite this limited support, the program in elementary schools remained generally effective, driven by strong internal planning, active student participation, and the commitment of school personnel. Operational activities such as garden maintenance and community involvement were consistently implemented, whereas resource utilization, monitoring, and evaluation require further strengthening. Analysis of the findings also indicated a significant positive relationship between LGU support and program implementation. Funding, technical assistance, and resource provision had the strongest influence on community engagement, student participation, and monitoring, while internal planning, day-to-day operations, and garden maintenance were less affected. This suggests that schools sustain program activities largely through internal initiative and alternative resources, while LGU support functions as an enabling external factor that facilitates but does not fully drive implementation. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the program, it is essential to address the areas of lowest support—funding and capacity building—through targeted and strategic interventions. Enhancing financial support, providing structured capacity-building programs for teachers and staff, improving monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and fostering closer integration between LGU assistance and school operations can strengthen program implementation, institutionalize best practices, and promote greater community engagement. By aligning external support with internal school initiatives, the *Gulayan sa Paaralan* Program can continue to thrive as a sustainable and impactful educational and community-based initiative in Pasacao's elementary schools.

In line with the findings, it is recommended that the LGU of Pasacao prioritize interventions in areas where support was lowest—particularly funding and capacity-building initiatives. Using the ADDIE model as a guiding framework, the LGU should:

Analysis & Design: assess school needs to align budget allocations, technical assistance, and resources with specific gaps in internal planning and operational routines; **Development & Implementation:** provide targeted training, tools, and frameworks to build teachers' and staff capacity in resource management, monitoring, and garden maintenance; **Implementation & Evaluation:** establish systematic monitoring and feedback mechanisms to track program activities, evaluate outcomes, and guide continuous improvement; and **Integration:** embed LGU support within school operations, ensuring that funding, capacity-building programs, and technical assistance are consistently aligned with school plans, student engagement, and community collaboration. By focusing on these strategic, data-driven interventions, the program can strengthen internal management capacities, optimize resource utilization, and ensure the *Gulayan sa Paaralan* Program becomes sustainable, institutionalized, and fully responsive to both school and community needs.

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