

A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao Del Norte Teen Tambayan

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study focuses on mental health care of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub and its role in solving the psychosocial problems of adolescents in Tagum City, Panabo City and in the Island Garden City of Samal. The Hub, which is implemented via the Executive order No. 18, Series of 2022, is a community-based, adolescent-friendly unit that provides psychosocial services, fundamental mental health education, and peer-based interventions. Through the prism of the Youth Empowerment Theory, Social Capital Theory and community health frameworks, the research conducted a focus group discussion with 15 peer educators to address Hub programs, strategies, challenges and how better they could improve their operations. The thematic analysis indicated that the Hub enhances help-seeking behavior, reinforces the peer support system, and facilitates the youth to engage in mental health advocacy via campus-based programs, collaboration with stakeholders, and holistic care strategies. In spite of these advantages, the study also noted the sustainability barriers including limited funds, irregular LGU participation, cultural stigma, and participant facilitation structures based on volunteers. The results demonstrate the need to support and invest in community-based youth mental health through multi-sectoral support and culturally responsive interventions in the long term. The recommendation is put down on the way policy makers, educators and local leaders can improve on the current initiatives and adopt successful models in similar underprivileged environments.

Keywords: Adolescent Mental Health, Peer Education, Youth Empowerment, Teen Tambayan Hub, Community-Based Support, Davao Del Norte **SDG:** Goal 3 – Good Health and Well-being

INTRODUCTION

The risk of mental problems in vulnerable populations persists to be elevated, access to treatment is still insufficient across the world. In spite of the progress made in mental health services integration and the application of task-shifting methodology, such approaches are characterised by significant implementation challenges (Moitra, Owens, Hailemariam, Wilson, Mensa-Kwao, Gonese, Kamamia, White, Young & Collins, 2023). Psychological consequences of recent challenges globally, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical crises and environmental changes, are bound to be long-lasting, pointing at coordinated psychological care. A stark inequality still exists in mental health funding worldwide, but a sluggish but consistent improvement has been made towards the creation of both local mental health care physical infrastructure and research capacity. Furthermore, more people advocate the active engagement of individuals with lived mental health experiences in research and policy formulation. Involving individuals with firsthand experience of mental illness enhances relevance, ethics, and effectiveness of interventions (Marsiglia & Booth, 2015).

The Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP) of the Department of Health had been focusing on collaboration with partner agencies so as to guarantee access of adolescents to comprehensive and adolescent friendly services. The program through the Administrative Order No.34-A, s 2000, had instituted measures to enhance access to quality healthcare and also to enhance well-being among adolescents. These ways involved the use of hospitals, schools, and social media among others as a vehicle to deliver information and services. According to the World Health Organization (2020), and in the support of the study of Efevbera, Haj-Ahmed,

Lai, Hainsworth, Levy, Sirivansanti, Winnie, Zurak, and Petroni (2020), multi-sectoral coordination is critical in addressing adolescent health challenges because adolescents often face interrelated issues spanning physical, mental, and social domains.

Moreover, due to increased cases of risky behaviors and other issues that were concerning the teens, the DOH and other government organizations, such as the Department of Education and the Commission on Population and Development, had come up with regional guidelines geared towards assessment and certification of Teen Centers as adolescent-friendly facilities, where sustainability and support will be achieved at both the national and local level. Mancone (2024) emphasized that local health initiatives in the Philippines have increasingly integrated digital and community-based strategies to extend adolescent health outreach and ensure sustainability.

To this effect, as stipulated in Davao Center for Health Development (DCHD) Order No. 2024- 0003, adolescents were to be accorded all opportunities to lead healthy lives and fulfill their potentials as being able to contribute to social and economic developments. In doing so, they required decent healthcare and education, which could act as a solid foundation of their future, as functioning adults. Regrettably, study of Gamelia, Anies, Widjanarko, and Shaluhayah (2023) highlighted that teenagers had been exposed to the dangers of early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) including HIV and AIDs, drugs, violence, and psyche. These problems remained quite unaddressed or unnoticed though they were in a lot of cases preventable or treatable. Dela Luna, 2024 study emphasized that this has led many teens to avoid seeking care and has limited the availability of essential reproductive health services. Bridging this gap calls for more culturally sensitive and locally responsive health policies that can ensure accessible and effective programs for young people.

Therefore, in line with the Provincial Code 2017-006 there was need to institute a multi-sectoral action plan in implementing the Adolescent Health & Youth Development Program (AHYDP) and the Teen Friendly Health Facility (AFHF), also termed as Teen Tambayan, at a provincial level that would involve various stakeholders in both the government and the NGO. The Teen Tambayan Hub has aspired that young people will become holistically healthy, empowered and it has vowed to everyone that its mission is to provide quality and accessible health and psychosocial services.

Mental health was among the issues facing the youth, and it had grown over the years thus increasing the need to have the counseling services closer to them. In order to alleviate the mental health problems of young people, the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub Team was created through an Executive Order No. 18, Series of 2022. The aim of such an order was to empower youth with resources and ways of solving mental health problems to support emotional and psychological well-being. The Teen Tambayan Hub has grown to become an essential source in meeting the mental health requirements of the youths in Davao del Norte using its initiatives, programs, and services. The establishment of Hub through the Executive Order No. 18 had been a crucial move into being able to directly respond to increasing mental health issues in the teens. Due to the rising cases of mental health problems, the order had established a special team the main task of which was to provide teens with mental health care, intervention, and counseling.

Furthermore, the program has enabled the local communities to participate actively in promoting mental health of young members of their communities. The program had guaranteed that the teens could also approach the Teen Tambayan Hub without known boundaries related to geographic distance and awareness because the Hub was established in convenient places. The order also had an agenda of working closely with the schools, the local government units, and the mental health professionals. The Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub Team was engaged in establishing a supportive and sustainable setting so that the well-being of the youths would improve, lessening the threats to their emotional and mental health. This executive order had been of much significance in ensuring that teens get dealt with mental health issues since it focused on prevention, awareness as well as intervention.

The research described a case study of the activities and the roles of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub in terms of health-related programs, especially on mental health outcomes among teenagers in Davao del Norte, Philippines. The growing mental health problems of adolescents as mentioned by the World Health

Organization (2021) had brought into realization the need to provide avenues where the youth would be free to express themselves, learn and contribute towards solving the issues.

In particular, the case study had considered the types of programs such as the Adolescent-Friendly Health Facility which was a youth platform that created an area to discuss health, mental well-being and social matters. According to the study of Espina and Caro (2022), the importance of such endeavors had already been established in literature, which mentioned the positive effects of inclusive, confidential, youth-led community-based teen centers beneficial in regards to the help-seeking behavior and emotional well-being. Although it was acknowledged, there was a lack of evidence describing the effect of such programs. Indeed, according to Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), adolescents were not only learning in contrast to what one could normally learn in school but also through socialization with other peers and thus affected in the way they behave and hence their mental health.

In addition to theoretical importance, the case study had been of practical interest to the local stakeholders in the province of Davao del Norte, where adolescents had been struggling with mental health issues to a significant degree. The findings of the study of Indie (2022), were intended to give an idea about how mental health can be better at such facilities through health advocacy and what policies and programs can be improved with the study. In particular, the research had aimed to determine the positive youth engagement models that could be adjusted and scaled to cover similar problems in other parts of the Philippines.

Quite generally, the study had been added to international literature on youth-based health activities. It had highlighted exactly what was required in terms of more organised evidence-based methodologies to the youth being involved about health matters and indicating how they could be used to create a change. The study was able to provide a better understanding of local and international readers of the importance of empowering young people to enhance the well-being of individuals and communities through the analysis of the impact of youth participation in mental health.

Although this theoretical approach led to the notion that youth initiated health programmes are effective, there was poorly developed empirical evidence that led to the need to conduct a study. The objectives of the case study had been to fill this gap concerning the effectiveness of youth-initiated programs in rural communities such as Davao del Norte. The study had filled in the literature gap about youth empowerment and community-based health interventions by studying Teen Tambayan. It had provided inputs on how to plan and execute programs that served the needs of the adolescents, particularly those based on lead-light mental health provisions.

This study had relied on the power theory of empowerment and social constructivism. It was based on youth empowerment theory which underlined that use of the opportunities in decision-making boosted self-esteem, leadership, and well-being (Mikkelsen, Haraldstad, Helseth, Skarstein, Småstuen & Rohde, 2020). The theory of social capital had also been pertinent, emphasizing on the aspect of peer support networks and relationships in promoting sense of belonging and partnership (Tuominen & Tikkanen, 2023). The community health theories had supported the importance of community-based solutions to deal with the social problems of individual health, including mental health, reproductive health, and substance abuse (Breuer, Morris, Blanke, Pearsall, Rodriguez, Miller, Naslund, Saxena, Balsari & Patel, 2023).

The frameworks had played a leading role in comprehension of how these initiatives, such as Teen Tambayan, could give youths responsibilities to address their health and psychological demands. The most recent study found that community-based interventions enhanced the coping skills of adolescents, their mental well-being, and their feelings of power (Wong & Lee, 2023). The youth were likely to seek guidance with peers and especially in informal situations; therefore, the peer support networks were quite important (Mental Health America, 2022). Peer digital support was also found to be an informal resource that was easily available, particularly to the marginalised youth (Tay & Lim, 2025).

Youth empowerment theory had been so appealing to this study, which suggested that adolescent empowerment not only brought about immediate effect but also longer change. Youth had an opportunity to become change agents by participating in programs such as Teen Tambayan which brought about circles of

empowerment along the communities. Such concepts as the involvement of the youth, health issues, psychosocial issues, peer support and community health had been some of the key areas of concern, which had combined to give a wholesome approach to health of the adolescents.

In addition, it had been seen that the literature concentrated more on structured, adult centered programs while less attention was paid to the grass roots, youth led programs like Teen Tambayan. The current study had been singling out the empowerment effect of a youth-driven site in solving problems in the community. It had provided a peer to peer model as opposed to top to bottom. Through examination of the manner in which the Teen Tambayan tackled the issues of mental health, reproductive health and substance abuse in a secure setting, the paper had demonstrated how successful youth-focused activities could be.

The reason behind the study has been to bridge those research gaps and increase knowledge on youth empowerment and community health. The objective of the study had been to identify obstacles and opportunities of rural young-led health programs. The experience of youth in Davao del Norte was projected to present a direction in other parts of the country. It had been planned as a qualitative case study, with its idea to get to know about the Teen Tambayan initiative in detail through the methods of semi-structured interviews.

The research questions which the study was also intended to answer were: 1. Which were the particular mental health assistance programs that Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub had offered? 2. What has the Hub been able to do to improve teenage mental health issues? 3. What have been the difficulties related to the Hub with regard to offering mental health services? 4. What had already been learnt that could inform the way they ran operations?

The beneficiaries of the findings had been community agencies, local government agencies, teachers, and health practitioners. Youth programs were expected to use the results to adjust themselves or goals of interests of these stakeholders. The health sector, especially, may have been of benefit to get to know how the help of peer-driven initiatives supplemented official systems to approach at-risk youth. The research had also been useful to other scholars in the field who had interest in studying youth involvement in community health because it provided a model which the researcher could be used to measure youth relations in health programs.

This was finally the aim of the study to give a clear picture of how the Executive Order No. 18, Series of 2022, had a positive impact on the mental health of adolescents. The expected results were to guide health programming in the future, inform scholarly discussions, and offer policy and practical recommendations to policymakers and practitioners interested in promoting the health of adolescents in the Philippines and other parts.

METHOD

Study Participants

This research encompassed 15 participants who were regarded as peer educators actively participating in youth developmental works within a tri-city region that surrounds the areas of Tagum City, Panabo City, and Island Garden City of Samal in the Province of Davao del Norte. The group members were chosen because, by direct association, they played a part in executing the programs and supporting them in their Teen Tambayan Hub and hence the testimonies were worth listening as they gave some useful input considering the efficacy, difficulties, and the broad implication of adolescent mental health services within their geographical areas. The respondents were identified through their active involvement in programs conducted by the Hub, their interest in the community health project, and their readiness to talk about their experiences and views on youth development and mental well-being.

Purposive sampling methods had been used to isolate participants who were directly involved in Teen Tambayan Hub. In such a way, it was possible to put forward the range of perspectives and valuable insights regarding the work of the facility and its influence on youth development. Ethical issues were given first consideration where the participation was voluntary and no participant would have repercussions in case he or she decided to withdraw. The research was done at Davao del Norte, another Davao province of the

Philippines because the economy of the Province is based on agriculture and we are also culturally diverse. This idea was given space to work by the Teen Tambayan Hub since important issues in health and development had to be tackled by the youth. Concentrating on this context, the case study was aimed at demonstrating how the experiences of young people in the Hub were beneficial to the research of mental health issues and achieving positive community building.

Materials and Instruments

The collection of data in this study was performed with the assistance of single holistic qualitative data collection methods; however, first and foremost focus group discussions (FGDs). This FGD allowed a detailed perception of the common experiences and perceptions of the participants as far as the programs and services of Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub are concerned. FGDs enabled the development of different opinions, common issues, and group dynamics that were displaying group dynamics but could not arise in the case of one-on-one interviews when promoting communication and discussion amongst peer educators.

Adjacent to the discussions, the relevant documents, including the Executive Order that created the Teentambayan, program reports, and activity records were consulted to obtain a better understanding of how the Teentambayan is organized, what were the essence of its main initiatives, and how the Teentambayan operated. There was also an observation made as to the activities and daily operations involved in the Teentambayan to further enrich the qualitative data which will provide a contextual background in supporting and validating findings made as a result of the group discussions.

Focus group discussions had been an effective qualitative research method as it captured a wide pool of opinions and enabled a great deal of interactions among research participants. They enabled extensive and active discussion, with the audience able to expand on the answers of those before them and end up seeing deeper into thorny social problems (Stanat, 2024). In this research work, the FGDs were used to examine the way interaction with the Teen Tambayan Hub changed the mental health, coping skills and personal development of peer educators.

A close attention was paid to the discussion guide to help in stimulating an active discussion and meaning interaction in the process, and to have the peer educators exchange the collective experience and experiences with each other. The importance of getting a sense of how the Hub can be used to encourage the growth of the youth and help them deal with mental health issues within their communities was emphasized along with recording the impact of group processes on the overall comprehension these people had.

Design and Procedure

This study was guided using a single-holistic case study design, which proved to be the best approach when it came to the investigation of complex and context-saturated phenomena (Yin, 2014). The method allowed gaining an in-depth insight into the ways the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub, created through Executive Order No. 18, Series of 2022, affected youth development, specifically in the areas of mental health and coping behaviours. The qualitative methods were employed, because the methods were appropriate in the analysis of personal experiences and perceptions of participants. These approaches matched the interpretive paradigm of qualitative research because it involved lived experiences and voices of participants (Creswell, 2013).

FGDs were primarily used as the instrument of gathering rich qualitative data. FGDs provided a platform of interactive dialogues that allowed the participants to exchange experiences and knowledge and contributed to understanding in-depth views on the role of the Hub in creating youth empowerment and mental health awareness (Salmons, 2023). These debates investigated such issues as: a.) The precise mental health services offered by the Hub as specified on the executive order No. 18 b.) The efficiency of the Hub as regards to tackling mental health issues among adolescents, c.) The problems that the Hub has, in the provision of services, and, d.) The knowledge concerning how the Hub could be enhanced.

Participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique. This non-random design targeted those teenagers between 18 and 24 years who were actively participating in the Teen Tambayan program. Purposive sampling was effective as the findings were very relevant and rich because they were gathered using the people

directly involved with the Hub (Bakkalbasioglu, 2020). The participants were selected depending on their readiness to participate and their engagement in the program.

The information was gathered in Davao del Norte and the collection mostly occurred in the form of researcher-designed interview guides that were based on a literature review, expert consultations, and pilot testing. The guides contained open-ended questions that would help to get a detailed description of the experience and perceptions of the participants about the programs arranged by the Hub, especially stress management, mental health awareness and interaction among youth. In this line of action, they gave a detailed picture of how the Teen Tambayan Hub influenced the mental entities and growth of the youth.

Data Analysis

This study has followed the six-phase framework presented by Braun and Clarke (2006) to perform thematic analysis of the data presented because the outlined phases have proven to be an excellent method of analyzing the data flexibly and comprehensively, identifying and making interpretations out of the patterns.

The familiarization process started with familiarity where the researcher immersed herself in reading the transcripts and notes by reading them many times which meant she got extensive engagement with the notes in order to form the opinions of the participants.

Inferences were then made by systematically decomposing the data into smaller and meaningful units thus creating the initial codes. During the theme-searching step, all of these codes were combined into larger categories, and visual aids such as mind maps rendered helpful in identifying connections. Themes were then checked and revised to meet relevancy and consistency of the research purpose and finally definition and naming of themes when each will be vividly defined and named after what it entails regarding the phenomenon and to what effect it is impacting on the research.

This research study applied the tools in research design based on a literature review, subject expert consultations as well as piloting to make the information clear and applicable. These tools were collectively applied and the framework of thematic analysis made it possible to comprehend rich sensations of data and provided valuable input into the success of involving the youth in health activities.

Regarding the descriptive data analysis, organizing and preparing transcripts of the focus group discussions (FGDs) were done. The researcher also typed the data, read and went through it in order to pinpoint instances of similarities and emerging themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Open coding allowed picking out relevant parts of data being identified and collected into categories that, in their turn, became central themes according to the study research objectives. Sub themes also surfaced, and the insights were more finer grained.

To be consistent and accurate, the researcher used data triangulation (to compare results of various sources) and triangulation of the participants (obtaining a wide variety of adolescents' experiences). The last themes were summarized in a tabular format with indented quotations given by the participants and in a narrative style. The results offered concrete suggestions on how to facilitate improvements in youth health programs and policies, especially in Davao del Norte and other such areas in the Philippines.

Ethical Considerations

Careful observance of ethical standards prevailed in the study. Informed consent was received by all research participants, and all of them were made aware of the explanation about the aim of the research and their freedom to terminate the research without any penalty. A consent of parents/guardians was also obtained in cases of participants below the age of 18 years. Confidentiality was observed adherently, and all the data became undue to hide the identities and privacy of the participants.

The four criteria namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were used to transfer the trustworthiness because they supported the ethical requirements of qualitative research.

Credibility was defined as how well the results captured the life of the participants. It was accepted by clear research processes, full disclosure and guaranteeing privacy. Sustaining the involvement of participants of the research process also increased the credibility of the results.

Transferability involves the possible usefulness of study results on an alternate situation or group. This criterion was captured by presenting thick descriptions of the research site, the attributes of study participants and research procedures. This kind of context made findings open to evaluation by future researchers and practitioners to see whether findings could apply to other programs operating in adolescent health, or even to geographic backgrounds.

Reliability guaranteed the reproducibility and the repeatability of the research procedure in the future. The methodology of the study, that is, data collection and analysis procedures was outlined. The study was also reliable and transparent because it had ethical safeguards including obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality.

Confirmability highlighted what was objective about the research and how much it was based on the facts as opposed to having been influenced by a researcher. This was done through keeping an audit trail of research decisions, interpretations as well characterizations. The data validation process, which involved soliciting the reactions of participants, facilitated this clarification, since the interpretations based on it were deemed appropriate by these participants themselves.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study Participants

Three (3) sets of focus group discussions (FGDs) was done to better know the mental health support programs specifically on teenagers in Davao del Norte and one session was conducted in each of the three cities namely Tagum City, Panabo City, and the Island Garden City of Samal. A total of fifteen (15) informants were involved and these were five (5) Peer Educators each city who were volunteering in their local Teen Tambayan hubs and had first hand experience in meeting and assisting young people with mental health needs. Their expertise played an important role when analyzing the nature of services provided by the facility, its effects in supporting mental health issues among the teenagers and the major barriers experienced by the Teen Tambayan Hub and any areas that the facility can better its operations.

Each respondent was asked to answer all the questions and thus the data collected portrayed the personal opinions. This approach ensured that group dynamics would not shape listening power to the various voices since more specific and genuine insight into the issues at stake would be discussed and analysed. As a way of preserving confidentiality, informants were given pseudonyms (Table 1). Selection was done by selecting the Volunteer Peer Educators in the three cities who fit the specifications of criteria such as a minimum of two years of service in Teen Tambayan and having acquired appropriate training. This practice was done so that the experiences had by the participants would be significant and hence input to the discussion on adolescent mental health support was diverse within the region.

Table 1. Participants' Information

Code	Age	Years of Service	Address	Study Group
FGD_T1	26	6 years	Tagum City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_T2	25	4 years	Tagum City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_T3	22	6 years	Tagum City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_T4	22	4 years	Tagum City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_T5	21	3 years	Tagum City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_P1	19	2 years	Panabo City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_P2	18	2 years	Panabo City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_P3	18	2 years	Panabo City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_P4	23	4 years	Panabo City, Davao del Norte	FGD

FGD_P5	19	2 years	Panabo City, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_S1	18	2 years	Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_S2	18	2 years	Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_S3	18	2 years	Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_S4	18	2 years	Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte	FGD
FGD_S5	18	2 years	Island Garden City of Samal, Davao del Norte	FGD

Categorization of Data

As a consequence of the focus group discussions (FGDs), the transcriptions of the taped sessions were read several times in order to get a feel of the material. This stage can be related to the first stage of the model created by Braun and Clarke (2006), where the focus is made on getting familiar with the information. At this point, several key concepts that would be observed in each of the transcripts were identified. The researchers repeated several times reading the transcriptions to familiarize themselves with the narratives of the participants and put the foundation of the next analysis in them.

The second stage entailed the production of initial codes; here outstanding aspects and patterns in the data were carefully highlighted and identified. To facilitate analysis, researchers would allot brief phrases or keywords to describe certain issues expressed by the respondents and would code them in a way that facilitates clarity and coherence in the research process.

The third step was related to finding the themes by clustering the related codes. The following possible themes were narrowed down to thematic reading with repeated readings that led to the capture of accurate ideas underlying them. During the fourth stage of theme reviewing, the coherence of every theme was assessed in comparison with the coded and total data.

At the last phase, the researchers have prepared the report by use of representative examples to bring out important themes. Based on the findings, the analysis was well done to relate the findings to the research question and body of academic literature. The report consisted of narrative texts and images with a clear example of the relationship between the codes and themes. This form of systematic study facilitated a takeaway and profound analysis of the programs and services of Teen Tambayan in Davao del Norte.

The Mental Health Support Programs of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub

The Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub is important as it decreases the situations of mental health with adolescents through community-based, peer-led interventions. Based on references to the studies by Bronfenbrenner (1979), stratifying the account of ecological systems of interaction, where social settings impact on the development of people, the Hub develops mental health aid by following structured programs, connecting to peers, and allocating safe areas. That corresponds with the approaches of global mental health, which encourages community-based psychosocial support and youth involvement (WHO, 2021). The results are solved in four major themes with construction of empirical data and theories.

Table 2. Major themes and Core Ideas on the Specific mental health support programs are provided by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub.

MAJOR THEMES	DESCRIPTION	CORE IDEAS
Creative Engagements	It is the use of interactive, expressive activities to empower youth academically, support emotional well-being, and foster collaboration and stress management.	The hub provides tutoring and life skills training, such as crochet, to empower teens academically and creatively.
		Engaging, interactive programs ensure that stress management lessons are accessible and actionable.
		Art therapy, karaoke, and freedom walls help youth express emotions and manage mental health.
		The hub organizes marking and teamwork-based events to foster collaboration among youth.
		Engaging, interactive programs ensure that stress

Educational Awareness on Mental Health	It is the promotion of understanding and support for mental well-being that encourages open dialogue, emotional coping, continuous monitoring, and access to mental health resources.	management lessons are accessible and actionable.
		Teen Tambayan Hub conducts forums like Usapang Youth to help youth understand and cope with mental health issues.
		Education and open dialogue help teens understand they're not alone in facing mental health and social challenges.
		The Teen Tambayan Hub offers programs like mental health counseling via face-to-face or hotline services.
		Workshops combined with worship and meditation promote teen relaxation and emotional well-being.
		The Hub provides peer education, school-based spaces, counseling, and rescue centers for youth support.

Continuation of Table 2. Major themes and Core Ideas on the Specific mental health support programs are provided by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub.

Peer Educators Empowerment	<i>It is the training and support of youth leaders enabling them to respond effectively to distress and foster a supportive community among fellow students.</i>	Facilitators help prevent students from feeling emotionally overwhelmed.
		The Hub trains peer educators to guide and support fellow youth on mental health.
		Facilitators are trained to quickly respond and provide support to students in emotional distress.
		Peer educators provide trusted, accessible, and personal support.
		Training community peer educators ensures continued local support for youth.
		Teen Tambayan empowers youth through peer-led discussions, counseling, and coping strategies for mental well-being.
Emotional Safe Space	<i>It is a supportive, judgment-free environment where teens can openly express their thoughts and feelings, share experiences, and build resilience.</i>	Teen Tambayan's programs help youth engage in discussions, share experiences, and receive mental health support.
		Teen Tambayan helps teens develop coping mechanisms and resilience through peer support and counseling.
		The program helps teens manage problems by ensuring someone listens and understands.
		It helps improve emotional well-being by providing support and connecting people with similar experiences.
		The program allows teens to express unspoken thoughts and feelings.

Mental Health Support through Creative Engagements

Emotional expression and mental health knowledge: The Hub uses expressive and creative therapies to allow emotional expression and enable people to be mentally active, such as art booths, karaoke, interactive campaigns. Such approaches are consistent with the Expressive Arts Therapy (EAT) philosophy according to which creative tasks can assist a person in processing various emotions in a nonverbal way, by Malchiodi, (2020), which was supported by one of the participant:

“Gihimo ang mga programa nga interactive ug dili boring aron mas dali nila masabtan ug magamit ang mga leksyon.” -FGD_P4

The programs are made interactive and engaging so that the lessons are easier to understand and apply.

This participant argued that these interactive events are not only educational but also very therapeutic since they are creative and emotionally safe experiences during which an individual is free to express herself. By

using art therapy, karaoke, movie-watching, and a freedom wall where the teens have an opportunity to write whatever they feel or need to say, the participants have a chance to learn about mental health issues but in a manner that is not threatening. These modes help eliminate the obstacles that are usually implied in a clinical environment and allow the youth to process their feelings, open up to others, and understand their needs in relation to their mental health in a safe space. According to a participant:

“Mental health care program nga naglakip sa art therapy, karaoke, movie viewing, ug freedom wall diin pwede ipakita sa mga bata ilang gibati.” -FGD_S1

I have a mental health care program that includes art therapy, karaoke, movie viewing, and a freedom wall where kids can express their feelings.

Based on the study of O’Neill, Humphrey, and Stapley (2023), sensitization is also facilitated by regular and substantive interactions, which include notes and posters that are sent weekly and include demonstrations of motivation, biblical references, and mental health statistics. Additionally, it was supported by Agyapong, Brett-MacLean, Luz Dias, Wei, and Agyapong, (2025), the reminders included in these daily messages are done in a calm but very effective way of boosting the morale of adolescents as repetitions of very vital teachings on emotional health. These materials are incorporated in the environment together with activities such as reading, tutoring and practice in skills such as crochet to foster a comprehensive learning environment in which both the mental, emotional and spiritual growth takes precedence, this was duly emphasized by the participant:

“Naghatag mi og reading ug tutoring, skill training sama sa crochet, ug daily notes nga adunay Bible verse ug mental health facts.” - FGD_P1

We provide reading and tutoring, skill training like crochet, and daily notes with Bible verses and mental health facts.

Research reveals that art and music as a form of therapy alleviates anxiety and depression among adolescents. The Project BRAVE (2020-2023) through UNFPA also showed the application of creative campaigns led by the youths in terms of the theater performances and promotion of mental health through digital platforms were also effective in enhancing the psychosocial well-being of the marginalized groups that was supported by Padilla and Guerrero (2023). These results reflect in the manner of something they do at the Hub, further supporting the importance of participatory and youth-centred mental health-related interventions.

Educational Awareness on Mental Health

The facility combines faith-based and mental- health literacy initiatives and deals with such issues as bullying, substance abuse, and stress. Such a two pronged attack has the ring of Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT) that ties emotional well-being to train of thought and coping strategies (Beck, 2011). They provide structured and contextualized mental health education in the forms of seminars, forums, youth talks, and faith integrated lessons. Such a mixture of both formal and spiritual education enhances adolescent literacy in the aspect of emotional health and societal matters like bullying, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy.

Besides these organized learning areas, the respondents stressed that the Hub is not only about information but also about the creation of an atmosphere of emotional safety and spiritual foundation. Youth beneficiaries noted that once they were sensitized about mental health issues in seminars and forums, they were equally given a chance to work out the incidences in reflection and faith-related activities. Study of Pardede and Kovac (2023) supports that this complement arrangement will enable adolescents not just to learn about the problems they experience, but also find solace, assurance, and a sense of belonging to the collective practices based on values and belief systems. According to the statement of the participant:

“Ang Teen Tambayan Hub naghatag og mental health support pinaagi sa Usapang Youth ug Campus Health Forum, nga naghigot sa mga isyu nga kasagaran ginatubang sa kabatan-onan aron matabangan silang masabtan ang ilang kahimtang.” - FGD_T4

The Teen Tambayan Hub provides mental health support through Usapang Youth and the Campus Health Forum, which discuss common issues faced by the youth to help them understand their situation.

The activities that actively promote relaxation and emotional regulation based on psychoeducation and combining psychoeducation with experiential practices are, therefore, incorporated in the building on this basis, which the Hub also includes. Among the participants, it was emphasized that once they visit forums and discussions, they are frequently involved in workshops and awareness programs where guided reflection, worship, and meditation are applied. Such activities, according to Sarkhel, Singh, and Arora, (2020), enable the adolescents to practice coping strategies in practice, deal with stress, and develop a sense of calmness and focus. Combining mental health literacy with spiritual practices, the Hub is bound to provide teenagers with knowledge, as well as with a real reprieve and emotional support in a safe and nurturing setting. It was supported by another participant:

“Mental health workshops ug awareness programs nga gisundan sa worship ug meditation para ma-relax ang mga tin-edyer.”-FGD_P3

Mental health workshops and awareness programs followed by worship and meditation help teenagers relax.

Therefore, findings show school-based mental health education to cause a reduction in stigma and encourage help-seeking behavior. Furthermore, Tianio, and Manlapas, (2025) emphasized that the spirituality-integrated therapy has been found to increase the sense of resilience which is why the blended model of the Hub is based on the integration of both the psychological and spiritual support. It takes into account not only the intellectual but also the emotional and spiritual needs of an adolescent to integrate learning and healing and directly refers to such themes as Integrated Wellness Activities, Spiritual and Emotional Well-being, and Mental Health Education & Safe Space.

Peer Educators Empowerment

Peer education model revolves around the sustainability of the facility because of building trust and relatability amid adolescents. This can be matched with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) that emphasizes observational learning and the role of peers in the process of changing behavior. In addition to that, the Tambayan Hub is an example of peer-led empowerment. Outreach, support, and education involves trained facilitators, peer counselors and adolescent health advocates. According to a participant:

“Naghatag ang Teen Tambayan Hub og seminars ug training alang sa peer educators aron matabangan ang kabatan-onan nga masabtan ang mental health ug makabaton og suporta gikan sa ilang isigka-edad” - FGD_T4

The Teen Tambayan Hub offers seminars and training for peer educators to help young people understand mental health and receive support from their peers.

These qualities of relatability, trust, and sustainability are most of the important characteristics of peer education, and one participant saw it as key aspects of the program's success. The younger staff at the front line get to relate better with the youth because they are at a similar age and level of experience and can thus offer a friendly and non-judgmental environment where teens feel that they are well understood. Such facilitators do not only learn to assess signs of distress and act promptly and handily, but also apply some basic psychosocial support and proper referrals in cases where they are essential. The development of community peer educators in Tagum City is a strategic program that aims in sustaining the program in the long-run.

“Ang peer facilitators trained para makasabot sa problema sa mga estudyante ug dali makatabang sa mga nanginahanglan.”-FGD_P2

The peer facilitators are trained to understand students' problems and provide quick assistance to those in need.

In this way, peer facilitators can not only learn and acquire skills but also be role models and sources of help to their fellow adolescents. They are nearly at the same age and have shared experiences, which fosters the

atmosphere of empathy and trust and helps peers to share their struggles and seek assistance. Through training and practical practice in listening, introductory psychosocial support, and referral procedures, these community educationalists would enhance the short-term and the long-term sustainability of the mental health programs of the Teen Tambayan Hub which was supported by the participant's statement below:

“Ang pag-train sa community peer educators usa ka inisyatibo sa Tagum City aron masustenir ang programa, ug sila makatabang sa paghatag og basic support ug referral sa ilang kauban nga kabatan-onan.” -FGD_T4

The training of community peer educators is an initiative in Tagum City to sustain the program, and they can help provide basic support and referrals to their fellow young people.

These mediators teach coping sessions, stress sessions and emotional literacy. According to Ahorsu (2021), activities include support groups, and there are peer-led sessions in more arts therapy or even referrals in serious cases. One of the participants underlines the nature of referral system which will help in meeting the needs of the students and clients:

“Nagpaminaw pud mi ug naghatag ug referral sa mga estudyante nga nanginahanglan ug dugang tabang.” -FGD_S3

We also listen and give referrals to students who need additional help.

According to a study by UNICEF (2021) on Southeast Asia, the existence of peer led mental health interventions led to huge progress in terms of access to emotional support among the youths. This, again, can be evidenced by tMHFA programs that show that trained peer adolescents are capable of identifying and referring to at-risk individuals. The theme is related to Youth Empowerment Through Peer-Led Mental Health Support, Trained Peer Facilitators and Comprehensive Peer and Community-Based Support.

Providing Emotional Safe Space

Non-judgmental climate of the Hub, with the help of counseling, freedom walls, stress assessments, indicates a tendency by Carl Rogers Person-Centered Therapy level, which included emphasis on empathy and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1951). It is provided in the form of this safe space which comprises 1-on-1 counseling, freedom walls, interactive games, and weekly support sessions. Another participant stated:

“Naghatag kami og lugar nga komportable sila mag-open up ug edukasyon bahin mental health ug teenage pregnancy aron masabtan nila nga dili sila nag-inusara.” -FGD_P1

We provide a comfortable space for them to open up and offer education on mental health and teenage pregnancy so they can understand that they are not alone.

Such an atmosphere makes the teenagers feel emotionally safe and makes them want to ask for help and get out in the open to talk about the things happening inside of them. Arts and music provide the student with a non verbal method of serving their complex feelings and emotions so that they are less tasks to understand the feelings. The given activities not only contribute to enhancing self-awareness but also are the tools of therapy that help to cope with emotions and healing, as per emphasized by the participant:

“Ang programa nagtugot sa mga tin-edyer nga ma-express ilang mga unsaid thoughts ug feelings nga dili nila kaya ipakita sa uban.” -FGD_S4

The program allows teenagers to express their unspoken thoughts and feelings that they can't show to others.

Additionally, the Hub makes routinely scheduled stress assessments, emotional surveillance as well as the referral of the at along youth part of its service to offer full and ongoing care. With regular follow-ups and tracking, this program can afford to see how every student progresses in terms of their emotional well-being and not one can slide under the cracks. As emphasized by the study of Park, Andalibi, Zou, Ambulkar, and Huh-Yoo, (2020), such tests can assist in determining the symptoms of stress, anxiety, or emotional distress at

an earlier stage so that they can make timely interventions and refer them to professional services in case of a problem. In support with this, Sesar, Dodaj, Vasilj Perković, Sesar, Smoljan, and Mikulić, (2022) states that, alongside such attempts is the provision of therapeutic and creative exercises aimed at making sure that the teens could release their emotions non-verbally: therapeutic art, karaoke, watching movies and writing on a freedom wall, hence it was also articulated by the participant:

“Regular follow-up ug monitoring sa mga estudyante nga giatiman.” -FGD_P4

Regular follow-up and monitoring of the students being supported.

Besides these expressive and reflection exercises, the Hub also involves structured tests to measure the levels of stress among the students and their emotional state. The respondents emphasized that the rating scales and the periodic check-ins enable the facilitator to recognize the struggling individuals and offer appropriate advice or referrals in time. Such an approach of creative expression, monitoring, and follow-up provides adolescents with a full-fledged assistance, both their short-term emotional needs and their mental health development in the long term. A participant stated below:

“Naa pud stress evaluation gamit ang mga rating scale para matabangan ang mga estudyante.” -FGD_S1

We have a mental health care program that includes art therapy, karaoke, movie viewing, and a freedom wall where kids can express their feelings.

The availability of safe environments, as it has been confirmed by Gautam, Jain, Chaudhary, Gautam, Gaur, and Grover (2024), is an important factor since it can reduce the risks of mental breakdowns and increase the ability of individuals to reach emotional stability and provide effective self-protection. By enabling individuals to express their feelings without any fear of being judged, discriminated against, or harmed, safe spaces help to build up vulnerable emotional resilience and psychological health. The same statement is resonated in the guidelines on Nurturing Mental Health at Work issued by the World Health Organization (2022) that underline the importance of the fact that peer-supported and non-stigmatizing environments are key elements of effective mental health care, and particularly of adolescents with psychological problems. These environments foster trust, belongingness and acceptance which are key in motivating individuals to seek help and positive coping mechanisms.

Finally, Meherali, Nisa, Aynalem, Ishola, and Lassi (2025) highlighted that the ideas are in line with the community-based interventions like the concept of Safe Spaces Through Testimonies, Emotional Support Services, or Stress Support. The purpose of the programs is to cultivate healing through a platform of collective experiences and emotional expression of the traumas and through specific mental health interventions. These initiatives provide therapeutic spaces by combining personal stories with systematic assistance and encouraging healing, emotional stability, and sustainable psychological growth. Finally, these programs enhance mental resilience, and ultimately lead to sustainable mental health outcomes of individuals and the communities.

The Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub contributes to addressing mental health challenges among teenagers.

Table 3. Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub contribute to addressing mental health challenges among teenagers.

MAJOR THEMES	DESCRIPTION	CORE IDEAS
Campus-Based Strategic Initiative	<i>It is a school-centered approach that integrates mental health support, promoting emotional well-being and academic growth within both campus and community settings.</i>	The Teen Tambayan Hub fosters communication between teachers and students through school and community hangouts to address students' concerns.
		Peer-led activities develop talents and integrate mental wellness with academics.
		Peer counseling in collaboration with the guidance office enhances student mental health support.

		<p>The hub offers psychological first aid and peer-to-peer counseling to support students' emotional needs.</p> <p>The Hub delivers mental health programs across schools and communities for broader reach.</p>
Institutional Stakeholder Engagement	<i>It is the collaborative effort between Teen Tambayan, local government units, community leaders, schools, and families to expand mental health support.</i>	<p>Teen Tambayan reaches both in-school and out-of-school youth through school-based and barangay-to-barangay mental health engagements.</p> <p>Teen Tambayan collaborates with local officials and community leaders to support and identify youth in need.</p> <p>Support from the LGU is vital for peer educators, particularly for transportation.</p> <p>Workshops involving families and counselors improve teen mental health outcomes.</p> <p>Students receive help from LGUs and partner organizations.</p>
Holistic Support	Health <i>It is a comprehensive approach that combines counseling, peer support, mental health education, and safe spaces to help teens build emotional resilience, express difficult feelings, and access early, stigma-free support for their overall well-being.</i>	<p>Forums help teens build resilience and self-awareness through shared coping strategies.</p> <p>Peer education and youth-to-youth support make it easier for students to express their feelings and receive help.</p> <p>Teen Tambayan offers confidential tele-counseling, face-to-face counseling, and mental health awareness programs to support youth.</p> <p>Teen Tambayan offers programs like Teens for Life to provide emotional support and reduce stigma around teen issues.</p> <p>Counseling and activities build emotional resilience and coping skills.</p> <p>Early awareness and peer support reduce the risk of severe mental health outcomes.</p> <p>Listening and safe expression are key strategies to support emotional health.</p> <p>Teens are given space to share deep and difficult emotions.</p>
Support Network	<i>It is a structured system of peer facilitation, assessment, and professional referral that ensures at-risk youth receive timely, confidential, and continuous mental health support through coordinated efforts with schools, families, and partner agencies.</i>	<p>The Hub maintains confidentiality through its referral system, directing serious cases to partner agencies with specialists.</p> <p>Continuous follow-up ensures students receive the necessary assistance for their mental health.</p> <p>The hub tracks and follows up on at-risk youth to ensure no one is neglected.</p> <p>Peer facilitators at Teen Tambayan provide initial support and refer serious cases to professionals.</p> <p>Teen Tambayan uses the 'HEADS' assessment to identify the right intervention and refer youth for specialist care when necessary.</p> <p>Structured peer stations improve monitoring and referrals despite crowd challenges.</p> <p>Serious issues follow a clear referral system involving school and family.</p> <p>Classroom observation is used to identify at-risk students.</p>

Campus-Based Strategic Initiatives

The Teen Tambayan Hub will use a campus-to-campus and barangay-to-barangay approach, which would fit well with the Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 2003) which describes how new ideas (such as mental health programs) are successfully diffused in a community by using an inner trusted system of networks. Through the implementation of services in schools and neighborhoods, the Hub guarantees proximity, access, and cultural relevance as the essential drivers of adolescent mental health engagement (Patel, Saxena, Lund, Thornicroft, Baingana, Bolton, Chisholm, Collins, Cooper, Eaton, Herrman, Herzallah, Huang, Jordans, Kleinman, Mendoza, Petersen, Prince, Rahman, Unützer, 2018). These plans emphasise the need to create open grounds within the schools and barangays when it comes to mental awareness and intervention. The Hub has been able to reach as many youths as possible through its campus-to-campus and barangay-to-barangay rollout strategy so as to reach both the in-school and out-of-school youth.

“Ang strategy sa Teen Tambayan Hub kay campus by campus ug sa community para mas daghan ang maabot.”-
FGD_T4

The strategy of the Teen Tambayan Hub is to offer mental health programs campus by campus and in the community.

This model is similar to the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model (CDC, 2014) in combining school and community actions in the support of youth well-being. The relationship-creating character of this arrangement, knowledge of which promotes openness in showing emotions among the youth and towards teachers or community workers, which was emphasized by another participant:

“Nakatabang ang Teen Tambayan Hub pinaagi sa tambayan sa eskwelahan ug komunidad, nga nagpasabot nga dali ra mahibal-an sa teachers ang problema sa estudyante ug mas sayon nila ma-share ang ilang gibati.”-
FGD_T3

The Teen Tambayan Hub helps through school and community hangouts, making it easier for teachers to learn about students' problems and for students to share their feelings.

One of the participants underlined the importance of this arrangement in building a positive youth-teachers or community workers relationship and making emotional expression safe and even promoted in this environment. Through the Teen Tambayan Hub where regular school and community hangouts are hosted, informal interactions can now be made possible beyond the school classroom. According to Sirkko, Sutela, and Takala, (2022), such informal assisting environments decrease the boundaries that exist between teachers and school workers and community workers and enable the former to learn more about the personal problems their students might be facing. Simultaneously, youths will feel freer to talk, as they no longer feel that only as students who should not have any feelings or problems at all. This is a closer bond which can assist in creating trust, foster understanding and help establish a strong foundation of mental health support, this was supported by another participant:

“Nakatabang ang Teen Tambayan Hub pinaagi sa tambayan sa eskwelahan ug komunidad, nga nagpasabot nga dali ra mahibal-an sa teachers ang problema sa estudyante ug mas sayon nila ma-share ang ilang gibati.”-
FGD_T3

The Teen Tambayan Hub helps through school and community hangouts, making it easier for teachers to learn about students' problems and for students to share their feelings...

This framework provides long-term mental health services because it connects the school and community support. According to a study published in 2022 by the Department of Education and PMHA Davao Chapter, this model is acceptable because school-community interaction is a promising way to enhance the availability and success of mental health services. It was also observed that through forums and barangay-based workshops, adolescence was more inclined to take part and self-report emotional distress that led to early intervention and resilience development (DepEd XI & PMHA, 2022).

Institutional Stakeholder Engagement

The model of Teen Tambayan Hub is stakeholder-incentive based. The Hub takes a proactive approach to partnership development with LGUs, SK leaders, barangay health workers, as well as other partner organizations with regard to the process of budget allocation, determining who they should include as far as the process of delivery of the program is concerned, and so on. These collaborations with the state organizations are the reflection of Collaborative Governance Theory (Ansell & Gash, 2008) that underlines the importance of cross-sector alignment toward improving health of the population. One of the subjects said:

“Ang Hub nag-collaborate sa SK, barangay officials, ug BHWs para sa budget support ug pag-identify sa mga kabatan-onan nga nanginahanglan og tabang and also, Gi-combine nila ang school-based ug community-based approaches aron maabot ang in-school ug out-of-school youth.” -FGD_T2

The Hub collaborates with SK, barangay officials, and BHWs for budget support and to identify young people in need, combining school-based and community-based approaches to reach both in-school and out-of-school youth.

Another factor that has been significant in empowering the peer educators through LGU support is that it has been able to connect with the far-flung communities especially through those items or resources that are necessary like transportation. Such logistical support is necessary because otherwise, numerous peer educators will not be able to seek out remote locations where mental health services leave much to be desired or are unavailable altogether. With this, Klingemann, Sienkiewicz-Jarosz, Molenda, and Switaj, (2025) emphasized that Local government participation guarantees that the outreach work does not focus on metropolitan regions, but subsidizes to reach out to underprivileged youth at risk of being vulnerable due to their isolation or absence of agency, as per stated by the participant below:

“Dako kaayo og tabang ang LGU sa paghatag og transportasyon para sa mga peer educators.” -FGD_P4

Support from the LGU is important for peer educators, especially for transportation.

The 2021 national mental health review conducted by the World Health Organization Philippines underlines the necessity to resort to multi-stakeholder and inclusive strategies when it comes to tackling the issue of adolescent mental health, particularly in underserved and decentralized regions. In the documents, it has been again pointed out that without the co-ordination between government agencies, schools, communities and healthcare providers, it will not be possible to have sustainable mental health programs, where the resources and services reach to the farthest of regions. These models would require the involvement of different sectors and utilize local capacities to address equity of care and long-term support to adolescents who would otherwise be underserved. According to Grenon, Hoang, Luo, and Koch, (2025), this practice is consistent with the global mental health framework, where researchers say that mental health should be community-driven, accessible, and combined with the primary care system.

Holistic Health Support

In the support of the study of Tuaf and Orkibi, (2023), facilities like Teen Tambayan Hub that offers a well-rounded and multi-dimensional approach to mental health of young people that integrates the program of emotional outlet, peer education, professional advice, and community engagement is indeed a contributing factor not only as an integrative method of treating psychological distress, but it also alleviates personal growth, self-awareness, and emotional resiliency to improve mental health and well being, and it is based on the Lived Experience Theory (Leamy et al., 2011), the postulation has it that shared experience builds trust and efficacy in the mental health intervention. Recent study by Shalaby and Agyapong, (2024), emphasizes that peer support and shared lived experiences significantly improve engagement and outcomes in adolescent mental health programs.

An important part in this holistic approach is the application of peer education and youth-to-youth support, as

this gives the youth the possibility to help each other on the path towards resolving emotional distresses in a non-threatening environment with lifelike qualities. Whereas, according to the participant:

“Mas lisod karon ang kinabuhi sa estudyante, mao nga gamit ang peer education ug youth-to-youth support para mas sayon nila ma-share ang ilang gibati ug matabangan sila.”-FGD_T3

Life is harder for students today, which is why peer education and youth-to-youth support are used to make it easier for them to share their feelings and receive help.

Upon discussions and activities led by peers, the facility promotes emotional sharing, and decreases the stigma commonly related to mental health issues. It is an inclusive program and came to the rescue not only of teenagers in crisis, but of any teenager who might not know how to talk about the problems they have, hence, according to Faulkner and Basset, (2021), these sessions often lead to deeper connections among peers, creating a strong support network within the youth community. As participant said:

“Dili lang para sa "broken" kundi para sa tanang teens nga naglisod og express.”-FGD_S4

It's not just for those who are broken, but for all teens who have a hard time expressing themselves.

The facility is also a character building where emotionally resilient and self-aware individuals are formed through storytelling, and youth forums. The experiences of other individuals in the fight against mental issues turn out to be a great source of therapeutic power and education, wherein supported by the participant:

“Pinaagi sa forums ug testimonya, nahimo ang mga teens nga mas self-aware ug resilient tungod kay nakat-on sila og coping strategies gikan sa mga nakaagi na og mental health challenges.”- FGD_T4

Through forums and testimonies, teens became more self-aware and resilient as they learned coping strategies from those who have experienced mental health challenges.

These programs encourage positive coping techniques and normalize the experience of emotional trouble, and encourage the building of resilience. Moreover, the Professional support forms a part and parcel of the holistic services of the Hub. Teen Tambayan Hub provides special services in tele-counseling and face-to-face counseling, which is done by trained personalities in a confidential manner, therefore, as Naslund, Aschbrenner, Marsch, and Bartels, (2020) said that these services are particularly impactful in communities where access to mental health professionals is limited. Such services are especially effective in the communities where there is limited access to mental health professionals, and according to the participant:

“Ang Teen Tambayan Hub naghatag og confidential tele-counseling ug face-to-face counseling sa mga trained individuals, ug naglunsad pud og mental health awareness programs sa barangay para matabangan ang kabatan-onan.”-FGD_T2

The Teen Tambayan Hub provides confidential tele-counseling and face-to-face counseling by trained individuals, and also launches mental health awareness programs in the community to support the youth.

The Hub also provides personal counseling services, along with the special programs like the Teen for life and the Atiman center, which is intended to provide specialized emotional and psychosocial assistance to the youth who are vulnerable to sensitive and complex problems. Such initiatives provide non-judgmental and safe environments in which teenagers are urged to share the issues, which involve teenage pregnancy, the stigma associated with the issue, and their identity issues, so that they could work through their experiences with professional support and peer consultation. The programs are used to enhance emotional strength and resilience, support self-esteem, and enable youths to make better life decisions, which are informed and responsible despite the social pressures they go through. One of the participants said:

“Ang Teen Tambayan Hub naga-offer og programs sama sa Teens for Life ug Atiman Center nga naghatag og emotional support sa kabatan-onan ug nagtabang nga dili taboo ang isyu sama sa teenage pregnancy.”-FGD_T4

The Teen Tambayan Hub offers programs like Teens for Life and Atiman Center, which provide emotional support for the youth and help make issues like teenage pregnancy less of a taboo.

These are in support of mental and reproductive health teaching as broad-based youth development. It is particularly important in the light of the results of a study by Hodgkinson et al. (2024) who stated that pregnant and parenting adolescents, especially those with low-income or marginalized backgrounds, have fair access to mental health care. Through the provision of the targeted interventions, youth program within the community-based and youth friendly environment, the Hub specifically mitigates these access gaps and provides the vulnerable teen populations with the psychosocial care that is typically missing in the traditional systems. Notably, Teen Tambayan Hub will exceed its role as a crisis intervention facility; it will also offer weekly emotional check-ins that ensure students do not feel invisible, silenced, or endangered, and also, highlighted by the participant:

“Ang Hub usa ka facility diin ang mga estudyante makakita ug supporta ug dili sila mobati nga nag-inusara sa ilang mga problema.”- FGD_S2

The Hub is a facility where students can find support and not feel like they are alone with their problems.

These relaxation and support facilities developed by the Teen Tambayan Hub are instrumental in ensuring that people shun building up of emotional issues in their lives but instead, pursue the aspect of help-seeking. It also offers a friendly environment where teenagers get to relax, feel secure and disengage with the stresses that people are undergoing. What is more important is that the Hub provides them with structured programs so that they can speak out about their struggles, particularly the in-depth feelings that they might not be willing to open to anyone, probably due to unspoken aspects of these feelings. Such a positive atmosphere aids in making general mental health discussions normalized and allows the teens to learn that asking to get assistance is not a weakness, but proper and brave behavior on the way to recovery. Another participant said:

“Nakatabang ang Teen Tambayan pinaagi sa paghatag ug lugar ug programa nga makarela ug makapaminaw sa mga problema sa mga batan-on.”- FGD_S1

The Teen Tambayan helps by providing a place and programs where young people can relax and talk about their problems.

It is based on this support and emotional safety that the participants were also able to report that the programs of the Hub extend beyond mere conversations by providing deliberate places to engage in more profound emotional processing. These are well framed, but at the same time cozy avenues, through which they can open up at their own time, and the message they get is that it is not the time to judge their vulnerability. This atmosphere makes them feel better to share more complicated feelings and makes them ready for the process of healing that is to follow.

“Ang mga programa kay puyde namo ma-express ang among mga deep feelings nga dili namo maistorya kanunay.”-FGD_S4

The programs let us express our deep feelings that we can't always talk about.

Such obstacles highlight the necessity of further family involvement and destigmatization, as well as community education, so that no young individual would feel unsafe when seeking mental health care. By discussing the emotional issues early and in a non-formal way, Hub minimizes the threat of long-term psychological discomfort and creates a culture of openness, empathy, and taking care of each other.

Support Network with Partners

Teen Tambayan Hub uses trained peer facilitators as first responders to any emotional issue. These facilitators provide preliminary counseling and get trained on the occasion to refer cases to school counselors or enlist the help of mental health providers. Such assessment tools as Questions on Home, Education/Employment, Eating, Activities, Drugs, Sexuality, Suicide/Self-harm, and Safety (HEEADSSS) Assessment Tool which now

became Psychosocial Risk Assessment Tool and case monitoring offered by the Hub follow the Stepped Care Model (Bower & Gilbody, 2005) and guarantee efficient utilization of resources during care. One participant noted:

“Ang peer facilitators mura’g first aid, pero kabalo sila asa dad-on ang mas lalom nga isyu.”- FGD_S1

The peer facilitators act like first aid, but they know where to direct more serious issues..

The Hub takes confidentiality seriously and is governed by a planned referral process involving more complicated or severe mental cases. Once a student exhibits someone who is incredibly troubled emotionally, the initial thing that can and usually takes place is a personal, 1-on-1 counseling session to determine exactly what they need in a confidential and safe environment. There are chances of a case conference to be handled in case there is a further concern to the issue though the principal, parents of the student and the student themselves are well involved with rigor of the manner and ensuring every support system is in line and acquainted. During this process the facility insists on confidentiality, as it is necessary to help the youth open up. As per the statement of one participant:

“Kung seryoso ang kaso, mag one-on-one counseling una, unya kung kinahanglan pa gyud, mag conduct ug case conference uban ang principal, ginikanan ug ang student. Naay klaro nga referral system para sa kaso.”-FGD_S2

If the case is serious, we start with one-on-one counseling, and if needed, we hold a case conference with the principal, parents, and the student, following a clear referral system for major cases.

Cases are not only referred, but they are also followed in such a way that enterprises make sure that students enjoy long-term and consistent assistance as another participant stressed. Then when a youth has been referred to get additional support either to a counselor or school administrator or an outside mental health professional, the Hub maintains communication with the youth by monitoring progress and check-ins. This follow up makes sure that the support does not die up after the referral, but grows as per the needs of the student. This kind of system of constant monitoring strengthens the element of responsibility and care, and consequently avoids the relapse or carelessness. It also proves to the young that they do not end their path alone, develops trust and makes them want to remain active to the process of support, as per stated by the participant:

“Monitoring ug pag-follow up sa mga kaso aron mahatagan og husto nga tabang.”- FGD_P4

Monitoring and follow-up of cases to ensure proper assistance is provided.

The Philippine Mental Health Association (PMHA) (2024) report indicates that in the combination of peer-based strategies and clear and structured referral guidelines, the success of the former in the timely detection and management of mental health problems in adolescents is significantly higher. These programs mean that young people are availed timely and relevant assistance as early as the symptoms of distress are identified and directed to the appropriate referral channels to ensure that issues do not get out of control. The initiatives can be made highly practical when done in convenient community environments like in schools and barangays and which can then reach larger number of people to supplement early intervention and gaps in providing mental health services. Such integrations do not only facilitate a culture of awareness and responsiveness, but they also enhance community-based mental health support systems, which means adolescents are not alone in unfamiliar settings which are not approachable.

Particularly, the research found out that there was an increment in the help seeking behavior by 38 percent among the adolescents who were taken through educational programs that employed peer based strategies such as the Teen Tambayan program that offers relevant, accessible and youth based guidance. Such an improvement is a good sign that the youth is more receptive to mental health interventions as long as the information and support are provided in a manner that is relatable and based on common experience. Through peer-based programs, trust is built, and the fear of being judged is minimized, and an adolescent is more likely to identify the problem with their mental health and make the initial step towards seeking help.

This result also demonstrates that in a supportive and peer-assured setting, the mental health care can be approached in a way that leads the young people to open up, seeking treatment and receive the services they require. The feeling of the belongingness and the emotional security provided in these spaces stimulates open communication and the continuing interaction with the support systems. In the end, this is an important change in attitude towards mental illness awareness to active help-seeking behavior where mindfulness is converted into tangible outcomes in terms of youth well being and strength.

The key challenges faced by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub in providing mental health services to the youth

Table 4. Major Themes and Core Ideas on the key challenges faced by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub in providing mental health services to the youth

MAJOR THEMES	DESCRIPTION	CORE IDEAS
Limited Accessibility of Services	<i>It refers to challenges such as low awareness, overcrowded facilities, limited physical space, and logistical barriers that hinder youths' ability to access and benefit from mental health resources and peer support effectively.</i>	Low awareness leads to underutilization of available mental health resources.
		High foot traffic at stations causes difficulty in service management.
		Lack of space restricts student access to guidance and support.
		Stressful situations are harder to manage due to limited spaces for rest and sharing.
		Providing peer facilitation in distant locations is difficult due to logistical challenges and lack of support.
Resistance Rooted in Cultural Stigma	<i>It refers to the barriers created by cultural, religious, and community beliefs that foster stigma and misconceptions, preventing youth from accessing mental health services and limiting support from officials and local government units.</i>	Some communities resist mental health activities due to cultural and religious norms.
		Stigma and cultural beliefs prevent many youth from accessing mental health services.
		Community stigma and low awareness hinder teens from accessing mental health services.
		Resistance from officials, budget constraints, and stigma reduce Teen Tambayan's impact.
		Resistance from some LGUs, due to misconceptions and refusal to acknowledge teenage pregnancy issues, hinders support for Teen Tambayan programs.
		Stigma and community attitudes hinder youth from seeking mental health help.
Sustainability Challenges Due to Limited Support	<i>It refers to the difficulties in maintaining consistent, effective mental health programs caused by resource shortages, funding constraints, stigma, and inadequate external financial and technical assistance.</i>	Resource shortages constrain the hub's capacity to deliver consistent, high-quality programs.
		The hub faces challenges in sustaining programs and long-term support.
		The hub struggles to provide timely and effective mental health interventions due to resource constraints.
		Teen Tambayan faces funding challenges and stigma, making it difficult to sustain programs and encourage youth participation.
		A lack of resources and support delays the growth and impact of mental health initiatives.
		Lack of resources like food or materials limits the effectiveness of the programs.
		Insufficient resources can result in the inability to provide adequate support for students.
		Financial and technical support from external partners is insufficient.
Workforce Gaps Undermining Program Delivery	<i>It refers to the challenges caused by limited personnel, inadequate task distribution, transportation barriers, and</i>	Limited personnel slow down the response and coverage of mental health services.
		Lack of task distribution among facilitators reduces effectiveness

	<i>high volunteer turnover, which collectively reduce the reach, effectiveness, and sustainability of mental health programs.</i>	The lack of transportation support for volunteer peer educators leads to high turnover and limited participation.
		The small number of trained peer facilitators limits the program's reach and availability.
		Teen Tambayan faces internal challenges like limited resources, facilitators, and youth interest.
		Few peer educators are available due to the hub's broad scope and volunteer nature.

Limited Accessibility of Services

The Teen Tambayan Hub has been considered an essential care system to the youth mental health in Davao del Norte. Its comfortability is however not accessible due to physical, logistical, and operational constraints. Health Access Inequality Theory (Penchansky & Thomas, 1981) in a Theoretical Lens has defined five elements of accessibility namely: availability, affordability, accommodation, acceptability, and geographic reach. Overcrowding of peer support stations is one of the frequently observed internal challenges as encountered by facilitators and it usually undermines the quality of service offered.

“Ang internal nga hagit kay usahay dili ma-manage ang sobra nga crowd sa usa ka area labi na kung daghan ang estudyante nga nagtapok sa usa ka peer station.”- FGD_S1

An internal challenge is sometimes not being able to manage the overcrowding in one area, especially when many students gather at a single peer station.

As a result of this congestion is less individual care and inability to adequately observe the emotional condition of every teenager. Small space, material and operating hours at centers also affect service delivery. Conducive Facility and sufficient resources contributes positive impact on the implementation of the program, as one participant said:

“Sa amoang Teen Center, usahay kulang ang space ug mga gamit para sa mga estudyante nga ganahan magpa-relax ug magstorya sa guidance counselors.”-FGD_S2

At our Teen Center, sometimes there is not enough space and materials for students who want to relax and talk to the guidance counselors.

In remote barangays, transportation is one of the major obstacles to successful outreach that usually prevents reaching teens in need in adequate time by peer educators and mental health workers. This is because the remote areas may be hard to access or are not easily accessible because of lack of proper infrastructure, long distances and lack of any means of transport. Moreover, with insufficient logistical support, i.e., vehicles or funds to travel, such visits are not regular or frequent, thus making mental health facilitation less regular and frequent. Accordingly, young people in such communities might need to wait for a longer period until they can receive the help they need, a factor that can result in compounding the effects of isolation and the late application of essential early interventions:

“Ang pagbisita sa ubang lugar aron mohatag og peer facilitation usahay maglisod kay layo ang lugar ug usahay walay suporta.”- FGD_S3

Visiting other places to provide peer facilitation is sometimes difficult because the locations are far and sometimes there's no support.

The issues are national tendencies: as it is stated in the report by Alibudbud (2024), the Philippine mental healthcare is poorly funded both on the grounds of infrastructure, covering of non-urban population, and general psychosocial facilities particularly in rural settlements. This low funding has led to an absence of available mental care services to a large percentage of the Filipino population, especially those who are not

resident in urban locations where more facilities could be concentrated. Access to feature mental health services, the availability of telehealth facilities and the unavailability of mental health across primary care settings are often a problem in the rural areas. Consequently, people in such societies do not even have multiple ways of getting help, and this strengthens the inequality in accessing services and further increases the stigma toward mental sickness. Alibudbud (2024) also emphasizes that this resource disparity is linked to wait times, expanded mental health demands, and excessive use of informal or community-based solutions which are not always prepared to take the complicated psychological needs.

Resistance Rooted in Cultural Stigma

The social stigma and cultural resistance to mental health is an entrenched obstacle that fails to promote program effectiveness. Social Stigma Theory (Goffman, 1963) offers reasons as to why stigma prevents seeking help. The respondents disclosed that mental health conversation is a taboo topic in most of the conservative and religious societies. Recent research affirms that in deeply religious and collectivist societies like the Philippines, cultural norms often equate mental illness with personal failure or sin, deterring help-seeking behavior (Salvador et al., 2022).

“Ang kultura ug relihiyon sa uban komunidad nagpugong sa pag-apil sa mental health activities.” - FGD_T1

In some communities, culture and religion also hinder participation in mental health activities.

Such stigma does not encourage the young people to engage in or even to even recognize the need of mental health support mostly since the youth fear that people will judge or rather not understand them depending on the society they live in. A single facilitator highlighted the fact that there is a culture of silence and misconception against mental health in most places, which acts as a hindrance to young people to access help. It is when a person looks at his or her mental health challenges as something of a personal weakness or a forbidden aspect of life, adolescence will likely feel shame and isolation and simply suffer in what Mr. Arcuri is referred to as silence. This aligns with findings by de la Cruz et al. (2023), which noted that Filipino youth internalize societal stigma, often perceiving mental health concerns as “personal burdens,” contributing to delays in care. Such cultural stigma does not only restrict their readiness to participate in supportive programs, but also contributes to misinformation and fear creating less acceptance and effectiveness of mental health initiatives by the group:

“Ang kultura sa komunidad nga dili open sa mental health ug stigma nagpugong sa mga kabatan-onan nga moapil ug mangayo ug tabang.” - FGD_T5

A community culture that is not open to mental health and is full of stigma stops young people from getting involved and asking for help.

Moreover, locals and barangay officials are partially resistant or deny mental health and youth programs when they focus on such topics as teenage pregnancy or emotional stress. Such resistance is usually through denial or unwillingness to take note of any issues present in their communities. Case in point, a local government unit (LGU) could as well say that teenage pregnancy is not a concern in their respective locality yet the figures clearly make such an assertion to be wrong. This kind of denial brings up an attitude that considers such topics being taboo or shameful, and it is on this reason that the authorities decline to provide resources or even support alternative programs addressing such realities. Such an outlook does not only complicate the provision of necessary interventions but also promotes silence and stigma, further complicating the way the youth in need can obtain the desperately needed assistance:

“Ang uban LGUs muingon nga wala silay teenage pregnancy cases, bisan naa sa data, ug dili mutabang tungod sa ilang panlantaw.” - FGD_P3

Some LGUs claim they have no teenage pregnancy cases despite data showing otherwise, and they refuse to help because of their mindset.

The cultural barrier is a big obstacle in engaging in low youth and resistance both from the institution and the family institutions. This is also backed by a study made by Richest Philippines (2024) wherein it stated that the mental health stigma in Philippine society still delays help-seeking behaviors and thwarts public health efforts. Recent findings from Uy et al. (2023) echo this, concluding that Filipino adolescents are less likely to access mental health services if they perceive disapproval from family or community leaders. Community-level mental health literacy and advocacy remain crucial for overcoming stigma-related barriers (WHO, 2022).

Sustainability Challenges Due to Limited Support

Due to the unstable funding, poor partnership, low institutional support, sustainability of Teen Tambayan services are put at risk because this impacts the capacity of the program to be implemented at all times and at the same time sustainably. The Resource Dependency Theory introduced by Pfeffer and Salancik, (1978) argues that any organization, whose daily activities depend considerably on an external source of funding, tends to be unsteady since the functioning of such firms becomes subject to the influence of any alterations in funding and external priorities. This conceptual approach is reflected in the worries of one of the respondents who named the continuous shortage of finances as one of the greatest challenges, as it does not allow implementing mental health programs and outreach on a regular basis. The lack of secure and diversified resources leaves Teen Tambayan in a state of engagement with immense difficulty in delivery of its key peer-based services to adolescents, which results in incapacitating the continuity and effectiveness of its mental health programs.

“Ang pinakadako nga challenge sa Teen Tambayan kay ang kakulang sa pondo. Lisod ipadayon ang mga programa kung walay budget, ug ang uban nga youth mahadlok mo-access sa hub tungod sa kahadlok nga husgahan sila.”- FGD_T2

The biggest challenge for Teen Tambayan is the lack of funding, which makes it difficult to sustain programs.

Alampay, Cabotaje, Angeles, Quebral, & Odulio, (2019) stressed that most community programs are dependent on volunteer initiatives and are not very reliable in their implementation, which is susceptible to resource shortage. Due to the fact that funding in most cases is minimal, be it externally or in the LGUs, these activities find it difficult to maintain their operations or increase their coverage. In addition, the opposition of certain barangay and SK officials particularly in those communities where mental health is still a sensitive or a stigmatized issue, is a major constraint to the efficiency of the programs in involving communities and providing services. A participant highlighted:

“Tungod sa resistance sa barangay officials, kakulang sa budget, ug stigma, lisod para sa Teen Tambayan nga magpatuman og programs sa communities, nga nakaapekto sa effectiveness sa ilang services.”- FGD_T1

Due to resistance from barangay officials, lack of budget, and stigma, it is difficult for Teen Tambayan to implement programs in communities.

The findings are congruent with those published by Richest Philippines (2024), which suggested that mental health initiatives in the nation have been considerably restricted also because of ineffective inter-agency collaboration, poor funding, and community arrangements that are not self-sufficient. Poorly coordinated efforts between the different departments of the government, health aid agencies, and other local agencies produces poorly organized services that do not holistically cover the multifaceted nature of mental health requirements desired by the population. The absence of proper channels of communication and lack of defined goals among such stakeholders perpetually lead to programs that work in silos hence creating redundancies or missing links in the delivery of services. In addition, inadequate funds compromise the extension and the quality of the mental program, and through this, it reduces its access, particularly as far as underserved communities are concerned. Community partnerships (essential to the grassroots activity and culturally competent interventions) are short-term in nature because of the absence of schooling, training, and support materials.

Workforce Gaps Undermining Program Delivery

The use of student volunteers and peer facilitators by Teen Tambayan leads to an imbalanced staffing system that can burnout, reach capacity limits, and raise logistical issues. Volunteers with inadequate manpower, very little formal training, and heavy tasks and burdens to perform are likely to be emotionally strained, as is in line with the Maslach Burnout Theory (1982), that unpaid workers are most likely to experience emotional exhaustion. This vulnerability is further aggravated by the absence of transport allowances and a low institutional support which in the end would impact the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the services offered by the Hub, which was also stated by the participant:

“Kakulang ang suporta sa peer educators kay volunteer sila ug estudyante nga walay igong pondo para pamasaha, mao nga daghan moapil pero gamay ra magpadayon.” - FGD_T3

The support for peer educators is lacking because they are volunteers and students with no sufficient funds for transportation, which is why many join but only a few continue.

What makes this problem even worse is the fact that there are not enough trained people to deal with more complicated cases or even to do therapeutic processes. The study by Moore, Britten, Lydahl, Naldemirci, Elam, & Wolf, (2017) emphasizes that implementing person-centred care is often hindered by the limited number of adequately trained personnel who can competently carry out core therapeutic processes, such as eliciting patient narratives, building partnerships, and documenting shared goals. This shortage of skilled staff becomes even more problematic in cases requiring more complex or specialized intervention. The authors also highlight that unclear role definitions among facilitators create confusion in responsibilities, leading to inconsistent application of care routines, inefficient case handling, and delays in service delivery. Without clear task distribution, strong project management, and structured training, facilitators tend to overlap in functions or hesitate to act, ultimately weakening the quality, coherence, and timeliness of care. In addition, failure to differentiate between roles of the facilitators at times may result in handling of cases inefficiently, confusion, and delay in providing services. According to a participant:

“Limitado ang mga trained personnel ug volunteers.” -FGD_P2

The number of trained personnel and volunteers is limited.

Participants also stated that this situation of untrained staff is also due to organizational issues in the Hub. Due to the limited facilitators in the market, work is always duplicated and duties are not well defined such that an educator is not able to respond effectively to the variety of needs of students. Lack of a well-defined structure makes peer facilitators take on many functions, which are out of their training or comfort zone in some cases. It not only puts a strain on the volunteers but also negatively affects the quality of care given to the youth, as it is inconsistent and timely, which is why a clear distribution of roles and more orderly coordination are needed. As per the participant:

“Ang internal nga hagit kay ang pag-divide sa mga peer facilitators ug ang pag-assign sa mga responsibilidad aron mas maayo ang pagtabang sa mga estudyante.” - FGD_S2

An internal challenge is dividing peer facilitators and assigning responsibilities to better help the students.

Such shortages in the workforce restrain the effectiveness of the interventions offered at the Hub. As corroborated by Alibudbud (2024), the Philippine mental health workforce is among the smallest in Southeast Asia, and the numbers of psychologists and trained individuals are also underrepresented with some areas in the service alongside low ratios of psychologists and individuals to a population. Moreover, the unavailability of fund and material support is a persistent and critical obstacle encountered by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub, and which poses direct threat to sustainability and continuity of mental health provision. As several respondents confirmed, the Hub is often faced with a lack of funds to run programs, to buy materials and to sponsor volunteer peer educators. Noted by the participant that:

“Makahinay sa pagpalapad sa programa tungod sa kakulang sa suporta ug resources.” - FGD_P3

The lack of support and resources can slow down the expansion of the program.

This ongoing lack of funds is causing a lack of activities that may or may not occur at all or may be performed on a limited basis, and the Hub can no longer extend its reach and young participation is slowly being phased out with time. Another point that came out clearly by the respondents is that it is hard to have safe, engaging, and therapeutic sessions without the basic necessities like food, activity supplies, and even basic utilities. In the absence of these basic resources, the programs find it hard to produce valuable experiences to motivate young people to attend regularly and be emotionally supportive. According to another participant:

“Usa sa mga internal nga hagit kay ang kakulang sa resources sama sa pagkaon o materyales nga gamiton sa mga programa. Nakasalig lang mi sa kung unsay naa sa palibot.”-FGD_S3

One internal challenge is the lack of resources like food or materials for programs; we just rely on what’s available around.

Many facilitators are unable to target a diverse set of mental health needs of adolescents because of several limitations, including resource availability, capacity (in terms of adequate staff), specialized training and time. Such weaknesses compel the Hub to concentrate on giving only minimum mental health services, including general counseling sessions and referrals to other agencies. Although these interventions provide a certain degree of help, they do not always address the psychological needs of a large number of teens, especially the ones that are traumatized, have chronic stress, or are affected by serious emotional disorders. In turn, that leads to a large proportion of the adolescent population being underserved, with their mental health issues being addressed (partially or not) or ignored in general, which was noted by the participant:

“Ang internal challenges sa Teen Tambayan mao ang kakulang sa resources, facilitators, ug interest sa mga batan-on, nga nakaapekto sa pagpadayon ug sustainability sa mga youth hubs.”- FGD_T1

The internal challenges of Teen Tambayan are the lack of resources, facilitators, and interest from young people, which affect the continuity and sustainability of the youth hubs.

Since the project is highly dependent on the involvement of third parties in terms of funding the project, e.g., grants of non-government organizations (NGOs) or foreign donors or even irregular provision of funds by Local Government Units (LGUs), its existence is not guaranteed and will easily be subverted. When unreliable, lagged or plainly stopped, it is extremely-difficult to sustain the normal functioning of programs and services. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2015), such financial uncertainty compromises the predictability and dependability of interventions, and inhibits long-range strategic planning and versatility to increase or modify services according to the changing care demands of the local community.

In addition, key logistical factors like the transportation of the person who will facilitate the event, the supply of materials, and reasonable incentives to the staff are usually compromised. Statement by World Bank & IRU. (2017), lack of reliable financial support endangers the uninterrupted work of the initiative and its performance, as well as puts facilitators and the target audience (the young people) in a disadvantaged position. This was also being experienced by one of the facilities of Teentambayan hub which was in accordance with the statement of the participant:

“Usahay limitado ang suporta gikan sa external agencies ug ang panginahanglan sa dugang financial ug technical support para sa mga programa.”- FGD_S5

Sometimes support from external agencies is limited, and there is a need for more financial and technical help for the programs.

The facility needs to be supported by institutions on a regular basis, have partnerships with other sectors, and long-term financial commitments to continue functioning and being effective. This support would bring about stability and the Hub would be able to plan and execute the programs in a more strategic way and reach out to a greater number of youth. Through their involvement, the best approach to enhance youth-based programs in

mental health would be resource sharing, experience, and influence between the public and private sectors. The introduction of such programs into the local government budgets, as proposed by Richest Philippines (2024), would aid in the creation of sustainable systems that may offer a sustainable benefit to the community.

Teen Tambayan is under serious problems since it depends on student volunteers, who are exposed to burnout, under training, and role expectations, and lack of institutional support. According to Tuaf, & Orkibi, (2023), periodic scarcity of resources, such as materials, utilities, and funding, impede regular program implementation, decrease youth participation, and restrict the proposition of specialized mental health services by the Hub. As a result, the number of adolescents who are under-serviced remains high, and sustainability and effectiveness of the Hub should rely on the increased institutional support, partnerships across the sectors, and stable financial investments.

The insights gained from the experiences that can guide improvements in the facility's operations.

Table 5. Insights gained from the experiences that can guide improvements in the facility's operations

MAJOR THEMES	DESCRIPTION	CORE IDEAS
Strategic Workforce Mobilization	It is the targeted effort to expand and empower passionate peer educators and facilitators through improved training, resources, and support—both online and in-person—to effectively meet the increasing demand for youth mental health services despite budget and logistical constraints.	The hub provides tele-counseling and online support for youth unable to access the center physically.
		Teen Tambayan requires more manpower, logistics, and youth participation for effective program delivery.
		Limited budget restricts facilitator training and the provision of incentives.
		Passionate peer educators are vital and must be empowered to reach more youth.
		Funding constraints hinder facilitator capacity building.
		More peer facilitators and volunteers are needed to meet the growing demand for services.
Performance Review of the Operational Workforce	It involves assessing role clarity, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement to identify inefficiencies and improve service delivery through better planning, clear duties, and enhanced tracking of mental health program providers.	Ineffective division of roles leads to confusion and slow service.
		Continued lack of clear duties among facilitators affects service speed.
		Lack of personnel, stakeholder involvement, and funding affects Teen Tambayan's efficiency.
		Effective planning and prioritization can maximize available resources.
		The facility should strengthen mental health programs providers tracking.
Enhanced Multi-sector Collaboration	It is the strategic partnership among schools, local government units, community organizations, donors, and private partners that fosters coordinated support, resource sharing, and sustained implementation of youth mental health programs for greater outreach and impact.	Clear coordination and local support are essential for the effective implementation of Teen Tambayan's programs.
		Coordination with schools and LGUs enables more effective mental health activities and referrals.
		Barangay and SK support is essential for sustainable program implementation.
		Working with local government and guidance offices ensures wider and coordinated support.
		Collaboration with schools and LGUs enables outreach and awareness.
		Schools and local government units collaborate to reach and support youth.
		Stronger LGU and NGO collaboration builds trust and enhances youth participation.
Promoting	It involves strengthening	Teen Tambayan collaborates with agencies to expand services

Sustainability through Community Ownership	partnerships with agencies, integrating comprehensive youth support services, expanding academic and emotional programs, and securing diverse funding sources to ensure long-term, community-driven mental health initiatives.	through joint programs and referrals.
		Teen Tambayan needs to integrate specialized mental health, livelihood, and career support for youth.
		The solid foundation of student-facilitator connections needs to be expanded and strengthened.
		Providing medical check-ups and wellness programs makes the facility's services more comprehensive.
		The hub seeks partnerships with international agencies to enhance youth mental health initiatives.
		Securing grants, CSR support, and partnerships is key to long-term financial sustainability.

Strategic Workforce Mobility

Training peer facilitators with the requirement of training fulfills the requirements of the Social Learning Theory (1977) proposed by Bandura, according to which learning occurs through observation, imitation and modeling. The essential component of mental health service expansion involves training peer facilitators and volunteers in areas underserved. Such initiatives as the program of Kalusugang Pangkaisipan in Quezon City have shown that community health workers and barangay officials can be trained to provide mental training and services in the community through the delivery of mental health education. Improving the capacity of the local facilitators brings services closer and more interactive to the cultural background, as per the statement of the participant:

“Kinahanglan ang pag-train sa daghang peer facilitators ug volunteers.” - FGD_P2

There is a need to train more peer facilitators and volunteers

This result aligns with that of the randomized controlled trial on Friendship Bench program run in Zimbabwe conducted by Chibanda, Weiss, & Verhey, (2021)., that showed a remarkably lower percentage of adolescent depression symptoms ranging to 48 percent, following structured two weeks training after implementation of peer-led programs. This justifies the standardized training on peer facilitators as advanced by the Teen Tambayan Hub. There is also the limited funding on training programs which inhibits production of skilled workforce. Even with awareness that there is a need to train, due to financial problems, there is a shortage of capacity building that to some extent influences the quality and coverage of mental health services. This is the reason as to why sustainable funds sources must be secured to facilitate comprehensive training initiatives. According to the participant:

“Limitado ang budget para sa training ug capacity building sa mga facilitators.”- FGD_S2

The budget for training and capacity building of facilitators is limited.

It is consistent with the Mental Health Financing Report by WHO (2023) that noted that the allocations of 5 percent of the health budgets on the mental health needs of the youth, as in the case of Valenzuela City, enhanced the sustainability of the youth mental Health programs and their coverage areas. It also encourages the Hub in its effort to seek local funds to fill such training deficits. Moreover, by introducing digital platforms into mental healthcare, disparities in access can be reduced, mainly targeting those that live in remote or underserved communities. There are also opportunities to provide uninterrupted support due to the use of tele-counseling and online support groups in the cycle in which the former enable the facilitators to connect with more people and the former to intervene in time. The strategy is in line with the world trends of applying technology to provide improved mental health services, with the support of the statement of another participant:

“Online support groups ug tele-counseling para sa mga dili makabisita sa tambayan.”- FGD_P5

Online support groups and tele-counseling for those unable to visit the center.

The same was reflected in the study by Torous et al. (2022) whose meta-analysis suggested that hybrid peer support models were found to be associated with a 35 percent increase in youth engagement in low- and middle-income countries. The digital integration strategy by the Hub is confirmed, as well, by the success of WhatsApp-based counseling within Nafsi Africa in Kenya.

Performance Review of the Operational Workforce

Role definition is necessary in effective provision of services. Two-Factor Theory of Motivation of Herzberg (1959) demonstrates how to focus on workforce issues. Uncertainty of the responsibilities brings confusion and slows down the provisions of support. Performance review and clarification of roles on a regular basis will help in ensuring that there is indeed coordination among the teams and that services are offered in the most effective and quickest manner, as per another participant stated:

“Kung walay klaro nga division sa trabaho sa peer facilitators, mohinay ang serbisyo ug maglibog ang mga estudyante.”-FGD_S2

Without a clear division of work among peer facilitators, services slow down and students get confused.

Munger et al. (2020) also support this idea at strong levels as their research showed that role clarity affected the reduction of staff turnover to 28% when applied to community mental health programs. They advise against infrequent performance appraisals and the use of competency checklists as some of the approaches that Hub may use to accelerate the internal processes. Lack of finances and logistics may cause burnout and lower the sustainability of the program. Although the Hub is based on the delivery model of volunteers, it is without the structures that make it easier to maintain its volunteers without struggling in the longer term. According to another participant:

“Ang kakulang sa financial support alang sa incentives, logistics, ug operational costs naglimit sa coverage ug continuity sa programa, labi na kay volunteer-based ang peer educators.”- FGD_T3

The lack of financial support for incentives, logistics, and operational costs limits the coverage and continuity of the program, especially since the peer educators are volunteer-based.

This difficulty is consistent with the results of Petersen et al. (2021) in South Africa, which showed that non-monetary awards such as leadership opportunities and recognition have enhanced the retention of volunteers by 40 percent. These are easy-to-implement and affordable policies that may help to deal with the issue of volunteer burnout without overwhelming the budget. Performance reviews through the year can identify gaps in personnel and problems with stakeholders. Acting on these issues with special interventions may enhance the efficiency of operation and help in sustaining mental health programs in the long run.

Enhanced Multi-sector Collaboration

The partnerships with different organizations, such as non government organizations (NGOs) and local government units (LGUs) are essential in spreading the boundaries of mental health services and the stayers thereof. The issue of partnerships echoes the Collaborative Governance Theory (Ansell & Gash, 2008) that has been used to shed light on how multi-sector coordination can work to solve complicated public problems such as the case with mental health service delivery. Such collaborations help share resources, knowledge and action together with coordinated activities, thereby providing more extensive support to the youth . According to the participant:

“Usa sa kusog sa Teen Tambayan Hub ang ilang collaborations sa national ug international nga mga partners sama sa NGOs ug LGUs, kini nga partnerships dako og tabang sa pagpaabot sa serbisyo ug angay pa kini palapdan aron mas daghang kabatan-onan ang matabangan.”- FGD_T4

One of the strengths of the Teen Tambayan Hub is its collaboration with national and international partners such as NGOs and LGUs; these partnerships play a big role in extending their services and should be expanded further to help more young people.

The effective community mental health program needs to use the active participation of local leaders. Their involvement will make programs fit within the community and its needs in addition to providing the required political and logistical support to streamline program implementation. Nonetheless, lack of participating LGU at the grass-root level serves as a setback, which was noted by the participant:

“Kulang ang actual nga partisipasyon sa LGU sa ground level, labi na sa barangay ug SK officials, mao nga naglisod ang Teen Tambayan sa pagpatuman sa mga kalihokan, maong Importante ang suporta sa local leaders para mahimong epektibo ug mulungtad ang mental health programs.”-FGD_T2

The lack of actual participation from LGUs at the ground level, especially from barangay and SK officials, makes it difficult for Teen Tambayan to carry out its activities; support from local leaders is crucial for mental health programs to be effective and sustainable.

Effective coordination and collaboration among the initiative, school institutions, and the local authorities is a major step towards efficiency and effectiveness of the mental health referral system. In the study of Alderwick, H., Hutchings, Briggs, & Mays, (2021), the closer such important stakeholders collaborate, the more likely the identification of at-risk youth at earlier stages can be made with the subsequent delivery of timely responses to the needs of this or that youth and the referral to the corresponding mental health assistance including counseling provided at school, within communities, or on behalf of qualified clinical professionals. This combined solution guarantees that mental health issues cannot be ignored or postponed, and young people will be helped in time and on adequate terms which was supported by the study of McGorry, Gunasiri, Mei, Rice, & Gao, (2025).

Moreover, these collaborations make it easier to develop a more well-rounded and people-oriented support system by removing mental health out of the context and finding its place within an all-inclusive community-based system. Consequently, this is a joint venture that creates a more balanced and sustainable care system that can enhance the general welfare of the young people. As one participant stated:

“Nag-coordinate sila sa schools ug local government para sa activities ug referrals.”- FGD_P1

They coordinate with schools and the local government for activities and referrals.

Greater involvement of the Local Government Units (LGU) can immensely improve not only the actual implementation of mental health programs but also coordination of the referrals so that care becomes more accessible and well-connected within the communities. LGUs have pivotal functions to ensure that the mental health efforts match the local priorities and the availability of resources that can allow them to respond to the local demands, especially in underserved locations. The future of such coordination is already possible to see through the report of the Ayala Foundation (2024) on CSR-funded mental health hubs in Cebu, which managed to reach 80 percent cost-recovery after collaborating with the private sector stakeholders. It shows how LGUs can support long-term sustainability of mental health hubs by means of multi-sectoral partnership to spread the costs and deliver improved services with reduced dependence on small government funds and community-driven and consistent youth mental health support.

Promoting Sustainability through Community Ownership

A combination of several support services such as mental health care, livelihood training and career guidance is more empowering to the community because of services addressing the multiple aspects of youth development. Integrated services is related to the Ecological Systems Theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) according to which development of youth is considered as the impact of numerous systems (family, school, community). Greater participation results in a feeling of ownership and responsibility by members of communities and this ensures that the results are more sustainable. According to the participant:

“Ang Teen Tambayan kinahanglan mag-integrate og specialized mental health support, livelihood training, structured referral system, ug career guidance para mas ma-address ang panginahanglan sa kabatan-onan.”- FGD_T1

Teen Tambayan needs to integrate specialized mental health support, livelihood training, a structured referral system, and career guidance to better address the needs of the youth.

The idea is backed by the Philippine Journal of Psychology (2023), which revealed that youths enrolled into an integrated livelihood and mental health program, like the Tahanan ng Kabataan in Quezon City, showed an adherence rate 31 percent higher than youths in clinical-only interventions. The unification promotes the all-round development and increases the participation of the youth. Besides, culturally responsive interventions would improve participation especially among the stigma-prone communities. Sixth Aboriginal Youth Mental Health Initiatives (2022) revealed engagement to increase by 65 percent when traditional practices, such as Mangyan ambalang healing circles are implemented.

A system of referral to local and national agencies also makes the system more efficient as now the services are coordinated and access to the ones in need is available. Such collaborations increase the access of the community to more resources, knowledge, and support systems, which have the effect of improving the overall quality of care. Programs become sustainable, resilient and able to adjust to changing needs in the community when there is a sharing of responsibilities amongst various stakeholders. Finally, one should not underestimate the significance of collaborative service delivery because it enhances its ability to deliver continuous, comprehensive, and prolonged support, which was noted by the participant:

“Ang Teen Tambayan Hub nag-collaborate sa barangay, SK, LGU, ug national agencies pinaagi sa joint programs ug referral systems aron mas mapalapdan ang serbisyo para sa kabatan-onan.”- FGD_T1

The Teen Tambayan Hub collaborates with the barangay, SK, LGU, and national agencies through joint programs and referral systems to expand services for the youth.

The aspect of having the regular medical check-up and wellness programs that take care of both the physical and mental health side of the community members contributes greatly to the holistic services offered to the community. These services enhance the already established interventions besides favoring an approach that is holistic and patient-centered. When such programs are seen as positive by the community members, since they have a say in them and this creates greater ownership and therefore community members are more willing to take care of such programs and sustain them. The interaction leads to long-term provision and enhances the importance of the services provided along the way, and the programs remain competitive to satisfy the community needs as they develop, which supports to the statement of the participant:

“Ang paghatag og medical check-ups ug wellness programs makatabang usab aron kompleto ang serbisyo sa pasilidad.”- FGD_S3

Providing medical check-ups and wellness programs also helps make the facility’s services complete.

Combined working of different stakeholders (local government units, schools, health care providers, and community organizations) does not merely expand on the access to mental health services, but also improves on the sustainability and resilience of such efforts. When resources are pooled together, responsibilities shared, and an overall structure of teamwork is created, mental health programs are not as limited as to one source of funding or any one individual to carry out the program. The shared model is also important to achieve a form of service stability despite changes in the personnel or financial aid, presenting the projects with greater sustainability and the ability to react to the changing requirements placed on the community.

Implication And Concluding Remark

Implications for Practice

The data shown in the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub is valuable and can inform mental health experiences of teenagers, especially in under-resourced settings. The Hub has peer-led support, creative activities, and good community partnerships which would go a long way in explaining why there is an improvement in the mental health of the youths. However, these barriers as accessibility, cultural stigma and sustainability must be overcome in order to benefit the most out of it.

The results of the current research support the idea that the Teen Tambayan Hub has a great practical potential in providing adolescent-oriented community-based mental health assistance. To enhance its four key pillars, practice has to change, which include campus-based strategic initiatives, institutional stakeholder engagement, holistic health support, and structured support networks. The Campus to campus and barangay to barangay interactions need to be further formalized through, allocation of uniform schedules, articulation of explicit activity rules, and coordination of the school and communities. This is justified by the fact that Patel et al. (2018) observed that adolescents tend to request assistance when they can access services within the environment that they know.

Likewise, institutional cooperations need to transform into institutionalized, capacity-building partnerships, because multi-sector coordination is proven to promote better outcomes in the area of adolescent care (WHO, 2020; Efevbera et al., 2020). According to the study, the problems of poor participation on the part of the LGU, lack of uniform logistical support and few champions at the barangay level have contributed to many program barriers. It is important to consolidate the role of LGU in training, monitoring, and referrals to achieve efficiency and continuity. According to Ansell and Gash (2008), participative governance has greater community health outcomes in cases where partnerships are well spelt out and jointly accountable.

Holistic health support should also go past reactive counseling by formalizing emotional check-ins, peer-led psychoeducation and formal referrals. It has been proven that safe, creative, and non-stigmatizing environments have great benefits in terms of emotional regulation and help-seeking tendencies in youth (Gautam et al., 2024; Meherali et al., 2025). But it is not only peer educator retention. According to the study, there are several operational bottlenecks such as heavy dependency on volunteers, gaps in skills among peer facilitators, role ambiguity, family involvement, cultural stigmatization, logistical barriers in outreach, and limited monitoring.

To reduce them, the facility should have a standardized structure of educating peer educators that incorporates role description, sustained supervision, training based on competencies, and rewards (Ahorsu, 2021). The existence of structured referral pathways also needs to be implemented strictly, particularly in the cases that involve high-risk situations that need a clinical intervention. On the whole, the multi-layered strategy of combining a community dialogue, school-based support and interagency referral system should be embraced by the practitioners in order to maintain the psychosocial effect of the program.

Implication for Policy

The research shows that there is a dire necessity of strengthening the policies to be able to guarantee sustainability, consistency, and institutional accountability of a mental health initiative such as the Teen Tambayan Hub. As the results indicate, a lot of operational difficulties such as unequal LGU involvement, unequal ground level involvement, and lack of financial involvement are a result of lack of homogenous policy frameworks in localities. There is a need to get a stronger policy environment to institutionalize the youth mental health programs into the local development agendas.

First, LGUs need to embrace the local ordinances that require the formation, budgeting and management of adolescent mental health hubs where they provide regular funding into training, transport, monitoring and interagency coordination. This is in line with WHO Philippines Mental Health Systems Review (2021) which emphasizes the need to decentralize with formalized policy mechanisms to ascertain access to youth mental health services. Second, mental health of the adolescent population should be integrated into the agendas of local health boards to allow them to align the community priorities with the current national frameworks, including the Philippine Mental Health Act (RA 11036) and the Adolescent Health and Development Program.

Third, multi-sector collaborative governance entities should be enforced in policies since the empirical studies have shown that cross-sector coordination enhances sustainability and equity in mental health service provision (Grenon et al., 2025; Klingemann et al., 2025). Standardization of referral procedures and designing data-sharing agreements with schools, barangays, health offices and non-governmental organizations will facilitate improved management of cases. Lastly, the family education and community stigma-reduction campaigns

should be made mandatory by the local policies, since the presence of stigma has been confirmed to be a serious impediment to youth seeking mental health assistance (Uy et al., 2023; Richest Philippines, 2024).

Implication for Future Research

Future researchers should consider the long term results and generalizability of youth led mental health models. Since this study was based on peer educators experiences in three cities, longitudinal evaluations might be carried out in future studies to be able to monitor any changes in adolescent resilience, help-seeking behavior and psychosocial well-being. This correlates with the evidence of the significance of 5-10-year follow-up to assess adolescent mental health programs (Naslund et al., 2020).

Second, the effectiveness of hybrid digital-community mental health strategies, including telecounseling, chatbot-assisted support and mobile peer networks should be researched in the future. The youth are more actively involved in digital interventions all over the world, yet the issue of their implementation is not as effective in the context of Philippine rural areas (Mancone, 2024). Third, economical surveys like cost benefit and cost effectiveness research are required to calculate the relative worth of peer-led community frameworks and conventional clinical strategies (Hodgkinson et al., 2024).

Cultural adaptation should also be researched especially in indigenous, Muslim, and geographically isolated communities where indigenous, Muslim and geographically isolated cultures may alter the intervention outcomes due to traditional beliefs and stigma. The comparison of the studies conducted in various cultural contexts will help identify the most transferable elements of the Hub model. Finally, the ideas of mixed-method and participatory research with adolescents as the subjects themselves can streamline the design of the program and evidence the demand to make the research framework youth-focused (Marsiglia, & Booth, 2015).

Concluding Remarks

The Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub is a strong argument that localized and youth based mental health care can indeed change the lives of the youth meaningfully. The Hub shows that mental health interventions do not have to be remote and excessive in order to be effective by basing its services on the community and adapting them to the realities of adolescents. Rather it demonstrates that care that has been made youth friendly is more accessible, relevant and effective especially to individuals who could otherwise be reluctant to seek help.

The Teen Tambayan Hub has a strong side, the ability to provide teenagers with a safe and stigma-free space in which they feel heard, respected, and supported. Some youths fall into silence, out of the fear of judgment, lack of understanding or being labeled by the society. The Hub responds to this by creating the atmosphere of trust and acceptance where the youth can express their emotions and experiences freely. It is this psychological safety that is needed, and it promotes early help seeking behavior and lowers the effects of unaddressed mental health issues in the long run.

No less significant is the innovative nature of the services offered by the Hub that incorporates peer support, creative expression, and good community collaboration. The Hub plays the role of closing the gap between the youth and mental health service, as the youth are involved in the delivery rather than being passive receivers. Mental health support can be more approachable and less terrifying with peer-led activities and creative outlets, whereas a collaboration with local stakeholders can help to ensure that the services are culturally based and sensitive to the needs of the community.

Although the Teen Tambayan Hub has a firm local basis of action, its influence is highly globalized. Successful implementation makes it a blueprint that can be replicated in other regions of the Philippines and even other nations. Nevertheless, the expansion of such initiatives cannot be done solely on goodwill and individual efforts. Systemic support, such as a stable funding mechanism, a powerful governmental support, and a long-term campaign to eliminate mental health stigma on all levels of the society are key to long-term sustainability.

The best place to start mental health initiatives is based on multi-sectoral collaborations. It is not possible to leave the entire burden of dealing with youth mental health to any one institution in situations that are either social, economic or environmental in nature. As Grancho and Laguna (2025) highlight, intersector collaboration enhances the systems through strengthening them by rendering them more resilient, adaptive, and efficient. This principle is reflected with a bright example of the Teen Tambayan Hub, which reveals how joint responsibility can be used to provide the youth with a favorable environment.

Even though the Philippine Mental Health Act (RA 11036) serves as an essential policy framework, much is still lacking in the application of legislation to constructive deeds. There should be more attention to peer-led and youth-centered resource distribution so that the policies target the needy most. The urgency of the given task is inexplicable because mental health issues among Filipino youth are constantly growing, without recognition and treatment in many cases.

In this sense, the Teen Tambayan Hub stands as a strong alternative- the evidence that community collaboration may transform the lives of the youth. Investment in adolescent mental health nowadays is a preventive measure of future crises in society, as the World Health Organization (2024) claims. The way to go is obvious; all that is left is the determination of the masses to take action and see that no youth will be left behind in the quest of the well being of the mind.

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Approval Sheet

This thesis entitled “**A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub**” was prepared and submitted by **Christian C. Mahinay, Francine Vilisan, Lalena G. Boton, and Jicelle Mae Liberio**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Bachelor of Public Administration** has been examined and is at this moment recommended for approval and acceptance.

TROY JON N. ANCHO

Adviser

Approved by the Thesis Committee:

MARCEL MARIE T. DAGOHYO, MPA

Chairman

GLENNE B. LAGURA, DPA

ROMALIE F. GALLETO, MSDeA

Member

Member

ACCEPTED and **APPROVED** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Public Administration on this ___ day of June 2025.

GLENNE B. LAGURA, DPA

Program Chairperson, Bachelor of Public Administration

FLORIE ANN L. FERMIL, MAEd

Dean of the Institute

APPENDIX A

Notice to Commence



**DAVAO DEL NORTE
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Notice to Commence for Thesis

Date: February 3, 2025

To: Christian Mahinay, Francine Villisan, Jicelle Mac Liberio, Lalena Boton

Based on the submitted revised research/thesis manuscript, you are hereby recommended to commence the conduct of your study entitled *A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub*. As such, you are required to secure permission from the concerned authorities involved in your study and strictly observe proper protocols in conducting *qualitative/ quantitative/mixed method* research design.

Recommending Approval:

GLENNE B. LAGURA, DPA

Thesis Instructor

GLENNE B. LAGURA, DPA

BPA Program Chairperson

Approved by:

FLORIE ANN L. FERMIL, MAEd

Dean

Note: Please attached the accomplished Research Proposal Approval Form

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide Question

Informed Consent Form

Preliminary:

Greetings!

We are Christian C. Mahinay, Francine Vilisan, Lalena G. Boton, and Jicelle Mae Liberio, third-year students of the Bachelor of Public Administration program at Davao del Norte State College. We are conducting a study entitled “**A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub**”. This study aims to explore the role of youth in programs like Teen Tambayan, focusing on their participation, strategies, and the impact of their efforts in promoting mental health and psychosocial well-being.

The interview will last approximately thirty (30) to sixty (60) minutes and will be recorded in both audio and video formats to ensure accuracy during transcription and analysis. Rest assured, privacy and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. Your responses will be anonymized using assigned code names, and only the researchers will have access to the raw data. The information gathered will be of great use to policymakers, educators, and community leaders in crafting youth-centered initiatives and enhancing existing programs.

We sincerely thank you for participating in this research and sharing your valuable insights and experiences. Your input will contribute significantly to our understanding of how youth engagement addresses pressing health and psychosocial challenges in the community.

Confirmation

I confirm that I have fully understood the information provided above and willingly consent to participate in this study, including taking part in an interview on _____ at _____.

Signature of the Informant

Before we begin, do you have any questions or need clarifications? If none, let's proceed with the interview.

Interview Guide Questionnaire**Part I. Demographic Profile**

Instruction: *Please provide the necessary information needed in each item by filling out the spaces provided.*

Name (Optional): _____**Age:** _____ **Sex:** _____ **Civil Status:** _____**Address:** _____**Position in the agency:** _____**Year(s) of service in the agency:** _____

Research Questions	Interview Guide Questions	Probing Questions
<p>1. What specific mental health support programs are provided by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub? (<i>Unsa ang mga espisipokong serbisyo nga ginahatag sa DavNor Teen Tambayan?</i>)</p>	<p>1.1 What specific programs are offered in the Hub to support teenagers' mental health? (<i>Unsa ang mga espisipokong programa ang gitanyag sa Hub aron suportahan ang mental health sa mga tin-edyer?</i>)</p>	<p>1.1.1 How do the programs offered by the Hub address the unique mental health challenges faced by teenagers in the community? (<i>Giunsa pagtabang sa mga programa nga gitanyag sa Hub sa pag-atubang sa talagsaong mga hagit sa mental health nga gisinatian sa mga tin-edyer sa komunidad?</i>)</p>
	<p>1.2 What specific activities are offered in the Hub to support teenagers' mental health? (<i>Unsa ang mga espisipokong kalihokan ang gitanyag sa Hub aron suportahan ang mental health sa mga tin-edyer?</i>)</p>	<p>1.2.1 How do these activities help teenagers develop coping mechanisms in dealing with mental health challenges? (<i>Giunsa pagtabang sa maong mga aktibidad ang mga tin-edyer sa pagpalambo og mga pamaagi sa pag-atubang ug kalig-on sa pagdumala sa mga hagit sa mental health?</i>)</p>
	<p>1.3 What are the additional services provided by the facility? (<i>Unsa ang mga dugang nga serbisyo nga gihatag sa pasilidad?</i>)</p>	<p>1.3.1 How do these additional services enhance the overall mental health support for teenagers at the facility? (<i>Giunsa pagpalig-on sa maong dugang nga mga serbisyo ang kinatibuk-ang suporta sa panghunahuna nga kahimsog alang sa mga tin-edyer sa pasilidad?</i>)</p>
<p>2. How does the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub contribute to addressing mental health challenges among teenagers? (<i>Sa unsa nga paagi nakatabang ang Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub sa pag-atubang sa mga hagit sa mental health sa mga tin-edyer?</i>)</p>	<p>2.1 What strategies does the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub use to address mental health issues among teenagers, according to their views? (<i>Unsa nga mga estratehiya ang gigamit sa Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub aron matubag ang mga isyu sa mental health sa mga tin-edyer, sumala sa ilang panan-aw?</i>)</p>	<p>2.1.1 How does the Hub handle cases requiring specialized mental health support? (<i>Giunsa pagdumala sa Hub ang mga kaso nga nanginahanglan og espesyal nga suporta sa mental health?</i>)</p>
<p>3. What are the key challenges faced by the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub in providing mental health services to the youth? (<i>Unsa ang mga hagit nga giatubang sa Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub sa paghatag og mga serbisyo sa mental health alang sa kabatan-onan?</i>)</p>	<p>3.1 What are the internal challenges that the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub faced? (<i>Unsa ang mga internal nga hagit ang nasinatian sa Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub?</i>)</p>	<p>3.1.1 In what ways do these internal challenges affect the delivery of mental health services in the facility? (<i>Sa unsang paagi nga ang mga internal nga hagit makaapekto sa paghatud sa mental health nga serbisyo sa pasilidad?</i>)</p>
	<p>3.2 What are the external challenges that the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub encountered? (<i>Unsa ang mga</i></p>	<p>3.2.1 In what ways do these external challenges affect the delivery of mental health services in the facility? (<i>Sa unsang</i></p>

	<i>eksternal nga hagit ang nasinatian sa Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub?)</i>	<i>paagi nga ang mga eksternal nga hagit makaapekto sa paghatud sa mental health nga serbisyo sa pasilidad?)</i>
4. What are the insights gained from the experiences that can guide improvements in the facility's operations? <i>(Unsa ang mga kasinatian nga nakuha gikan sa mga eksperyensya nga makagiya sa mga kalamboan sa operasyon sa pasilidad?)</i>	4.1 What are the current strengths of the facility that should be expanded? <i>(Unsa ang mga kalig-on karon sa pasilidad nga kinahanglan palapdan?)</i>	4.1.1 In what situations have you noticed areas that need improvement? <i>(Sa unsang mga sitwasyon nimo nabantayan nga adunay mga bahin nga nanginahanglan og pagpauswag?)</i>
	4.2 What additional services should be integrated into the facility? <i>(Unsang mga dugang nga serbisyo ang kinahanglan i-integrate sa pasilidad?)</i>	4.2.1 What specific issues have you observed that are hindering the facility's overall efficiency? <i>(Unsa nga mga klase nga mga isyu ang imong naobserbahan nga nagpugong sa kinatibuk-ang kahusayan sa pasilidad?)</i>
	4.3 What are the roles of agencies involved in the Hub's collaborative efforts? <i>(Unsa ang mga papel sa mga ahensya nga nalambigit sa panagtinabang sa Hub?)</i>	4.3.1 In what ways does the Teen Tambayan Hub collaborate with different stakeholders to support teens in Davao del Norte? <i>(Sa unsang mga paagi nakigtinabangay ang Teen Tambayan Hub sa nagkalain-laing mga stakeholder aron masuportahan ang mga tin-edyer sa Davao del Norte?)</i>
	4.4 What budgetary constraints limit the facility's ability to expand its services? <i>(Unsa nga mga limitasyon sa badyet ang makapugong sa kapasidad sa pasilidad sa pagpalapad sa mga serbisyo niini?)</i>	4.4.1 How can financial resources be optimized to improve the overall functionality of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub? <i>(Giunsa mapauswag ang paggamit sa mga pinansyal nga kapanguhaan aron mapalambo ang kinatibuk-ang pagpaandar sa Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan Hub?)</i> 4.4.2 How can financial support be secured to sustain the Hub's services for the youth? <i>(Giunsa makuha ang pinansyal nga suporta aron mapadayon ang mga serbisyo sa Hub alang sa kabatan-onan?)</i>

Part II. Interview Proper

APPENDIX C

Validation Sheets



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Institute of Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Good Governance

Validation Form (Qualitative)

Study Title: **A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan**

Researcher/s: **Christian C. Mahinay, Francine Vilisan, Jicelle Mae Liberio, Lalena Boton**

Name of Evaluator: Denverlyn Jill C. Ferolin Date Evaluated: Feb. 6, 2025

Degree of Evaluator: _____ Position of Evaluator: Senior Health Program Officer

Signature of Evaluator: _____

RATING: Number of YES marks

- () 10- Very Good () 6-7 May be upgraded if reviewed
- () 8-9 - Good. () 0-5 For revalidation

To the Evaluator: Kindly check the column which fits your evaluation of the item.

ITEMS	Yes	No
Ethics		
1. Introduction (purpose, confidentiality, duration, and way of conduct) closing components (for additional comments) are provided.	/	
2. Informed consent is concluded.	/	
Artistry:		
3. Script is included/built in, so interviewer can introduce, guide and concluded the interview in a consistent manner.	/	
4. Questions are appropriate to the study, enhancing the possibility of storytelling and narratives.	/	
Rigor:		
5. Questions are open-ended to encourage in-depth responses: avoiding close-ended questions which are answerable by "yes" or "no".	/	
6. Questions are stated in the affirmative.	/	
7. Probe questions are provided.	/	
8. Questions are logically ordered asking the highest priority questions first. Opinion questions follow information questions.	/	
9. Questions are stated in clear and simple terms.	/	
10. Number of questions can be covered within 60 to 90 minutes, not exceeding 15 open-ended items (probe excluded). For every research questions, except for special cases.	/	

Overall Remarks: well designed questionnaire and very comprehensive

DENVERLYN JILL C. FEROLIN, RN, MAN
Signature over Printed Name of Evaluator

FEBRUARY 6, 2025
Date of Evaluation

VISION
A premier Higher Institution in Agri-Fisheries and Socio-cultural Development

MISSION
To provide quality education, research, and extension services that will contribute to the growth and development of the community and the nation.

GOALS
To provide quality education, research, and extension services that will contribute to the growth and development of the community and the nation.





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New Visayas, Panabo City, Davao del Norte, 8105

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Institute of Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Good Governance

Validation Form (Qualitative)

Study Title: A Case Study on the Mental Health Services of the Davao del Norte Teen Tambayan

Researcher/s: Christian C. Mahinay, Francine Vilisan, Jicelle Mae Liberio, Lalena Boton

Name of Evaluator: Glenn Lagura Date Evaluated: 2/15/2025

Degree of Evaluator: Doctor in Public Admin Position of Evaluator: Asst. Prof. V

Signature of Evaluator: _____

RATING: Number of YES marks

- () 10- Very Good () 6-7 May be upgraded if reviewed
- () 8-9 - Good. () 0-5 For revalidation

To the Evaluator: Kindly check the column which fits your evaluation of the item.

ITEMS	Yes	No
Ethics		
1. Introduction (purpose, confidentiality, duration, and way of conduct) closing components (for additional comments) are provided.	/	
2. Informed consent is concluded.		
Artistry:	/	
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Rigor:	/	
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9. Questions are stated in clear and simple terms.	/	
10. Number of questions can be covered within 60 to 90 minutes, not exceeding 15 open-ended items (probe excluded). For every research questions, except for special cases.	/	

Overall Remarks: _____

Glenn B. Lagura
 Signature over Printed Name of Evaluator

2/14/2025
 Date of Evaluation

<p>VISION A premier Higher Institution in Agri-Fisheries and Socio-cultural Development</p>	<p>MISSION DNSC strives to produce competent human resource, generate, and utilize knowledge and technology, uphold good governance and quality management system for sustainable</p>	<p>CORE VALUES Excellence Integrity Innovativeness Stewardship Love of God and</p>	
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Researcher/s: Christian C. Mahinay, Francine Vilisan, Jicelle Mae Liberio, Lalena Boton

Name of Evaluator: _____ Date Evaluated: _____

Degree of Evaluator: _____ Position of Evaluator: _____

Signature of Evaluator: _____

RATING: Number of YES marks

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Overall Remarks: _____

Romalie Gallete
Signature over Printed Name of Evaluator

02/06/2025
Date of Evaluation

<p>VISION A premier Higher Institution in Agri-Fisheries and Socio-cultural Development</p>	<p>MISSION DNSC strives to produce competent human resource, generate, and utilize knowledge and technology, uphold good governance and quality management system for sustainable</p>	<p>CORE VALUES Excellence Integrity Innovativeness Stewardship Love of God and</p>	
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INFORMED CONSENT FORM

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We sincerely thank you for participating in this research and sharing your valuable insights and experiences. Your input will contribute significantly to our understanding of how youth engagement addresses pressing health and psychosocial challenges in the community.

CONFIRMATION

I confirm that I have fully understood the information provided above and willingly consent to participate in this study, including taking part in an interview on _____ at _____.

Signature of the Informant

Before we begin, do you have any questions or need clarifications? If none, let's proceed with the interview.

APPENDIX E

Curriculum Vitae

CHRISTIAN C. MAHINAY

Age: 22 years old
Sex: Male
Birthday: December 13, 2003
Address: Mankilam, Tagum City, Davao del Norte
Mobile No. : 0997-643-3736
Email: mahinay.christian@dncs.edu.ph

Education

- **Tertiary:** Davao del Norte State College
2022 – Present
- **Secondary:** Tagum City National Comprehensive High School
2016 - 2022
- **Grade School:** Magugpo Pilot Central Elementary School
2010 - 2016

Trainings and Seminar

- Leadership Capacity Training by the Leaders United for Progressive Advocacies of Dav-Sox Region
- Sexually Healthy and Physically Empowered Adolescent (SHAPE-A) Training for Healthy Young Ones by the Provincial Health Office
- Capacity Building and Mandatory Training for the Sangguniang Kabataan of Tagum City

Extra-Curricular Activities and Organizational Affiliations

- Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson of Barangay Mankilam, Tagum City, Davao del Norte
- National Program Development Officer of the Youth Service Philippines
- Logistic Committee of LUPAD Coalition
- Regional Young Parliamentarian of the National Youth Commission
- Davnor Peer Health Educators - Administrative Officer

FRANCINE J. VILISAN

Age: 21 yrs. Old
Sex: Female
Birthday: January 26, 2004
Address: Prk.1 San Nicolas, Panabo City

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Education

- **Tertiary:** Davao del Norte State College

August 2022 – Present

- **Secondary:**

Junior High School: Holy Cross of Bunawan, Inc.

Senior High School: Holy Cross of Bunawan, Inc.

- **Grade School** Daniel M. Perez Central Elementary School Sped Center

Trainings and Seminar

- Project MAKI-ALAM: “A symposium on the Role of Institutions, Media, and Citizen Participation in Government Development” 2025 at Davao del Norte State College
- ARANGKADA Youth Leadership Summit 2023
- MS3 ROTC Summer Training 2023
- KKDAT Awareness Seminar 2023
- Project YOUTHNITED: Peer Educators Training 2023

Extra-Curricular Activities and Organizational Affiliations

- ROTC Officer 2022-2025
- SK Secretary (2022-2023)
- KKDAT Barangay San Nicolas Chapter-Treasurer

LALENA G. BOTON

Age: 22 yrs. old

Sex: Female

Birthday: October 21, 2002

Address: Prk4-B, Kinap Balagunan Sto. Tomas Davao Del Norte

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Education

- **Tertiary:** Davao del Norte State College

August 2022 – Present

● **Secondary:**

Junior High School: Sto. Thomas National High School

Senior High School: Sto. Thomas National High School

- **Grade School** Balagunan Elementary School

Trainings and Seminar

- Project MAKI-ALAM: “A symposium on the Role of Institutions, Media, and Citizen Participation in Government Development” 2025 at Davao del Norte State College
- Project YOUTHNITED: Peer Educators Training 2023

Extra-Curricular Activities and Organizational Affiliations

N/A

JICELLE MAE LIBERIO

Age: 21

Sex: Female

Birthday: September 11, 2003

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Education

- **Tertiary:** Davao del Norte State College

August 2022 – Present

- **Secondary:**

Junior High School: Bernardino B. Bosque National High School

Senior High School: Bernardino B. Bosque National High School

- **Grade School:** Tagurot Elementary School

Trainings and Seminar

- Project MAKI-ALAM: “A symposium on the Role of Institutions, Media, and Citizen Participation in Government Development” 2025 at Davao del Norte State College
- Project YOUTHNITED: Peer Educators Training 2023

Extra-Curricular Activities and Organizational Affiliations

N/A