TRANSPUBLIKA
Precise. Resilience. Felicitous.

Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Business
https://ojs.transpublika.com/index.php/JHSSB
Online ISSN 2810-0832

https://doi.org/10.55047/jhssb.v4i1.1509

Original Article

Beyond the Title: An In-Depth Exploration of the Leadership Experiences and Styles of Sangguniang Kabataan Presidents

Grezel Pasicaran-Escleto[1*], Albim Y. Cabatingan[2], Mark Anthony N. Polinar[3], Alexander Franco A. Delantar[4]

[1-4]Center of Advanced Studies, College of Management, Business, and Accountancy, Cebu Institute of Technology- University, Cebu City, Philippines
Email: [1)] grezelescleto@gmail.com, [2)] aycabatingan@gmail.com, [3)] mpolinar22@gmail.com, [4)] alexander.franco.delantar@gmail.com

Received : 28 October - 2024
Accepted : 18 November - 2024
Published online : 29 November - 2024

Abstract

Youth leadership is essential for nation-building, providing early exposure to governance and community service. The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) offers young people a platform to take on leadership roles in local government, allowing them to engage in decision-making and implement youth-focused programs. The experiences of SK Presidents often extend beyond their official duties, featuring various challenges, opportunities, and personal growth. This study explored the lived experiences of leadership among the Sangguniang Kabataan Presidents of Pangantucan, Bukidnon. The researchers used narrative inquiry or phenomenology to highlight the exploration of the key informants' lived experiences to understand the issue. It sought to answer the domains of inquiry: the lived experiences of the Sangguniang Kabataan officials on their leadership styles, the essence or meaning of their lived experience, and the factors that can improve or deteriorate their leadership. To collect data, the researchers used the descriptive-qualitative method. The study's eight key informants are the current SK President of Pangantucan, Bukidnon, where the study was conducted, and key informants who serve the public. The researchers were the primary instrument, a validated interview guide, and audio recordings were transcribed into written text. The researcher gathered significant statements from the outputs of the key informant interviews during data analysis, and five themes were generated. These themes served as feeders to the study's production. The study identified leadership challenges faced by key informants in the Sangguniang Kabataan of Pangantucan, Bukidnon. A proposed leadership model aims to address these challenges and promote effective governance in the barangay.

Keywords: Leadership Style, Lived Experience, Government, Public Administration, Sangguniang Kabataan.

1. Introduction

Leadership plays a vital role in the management of organizations (Leveriza, 1983). This is because an organization can only function effectively with a leader who directs it in accomplishing its goals. It is the ability to influence the behavior of other people. The same is true in the Sangguniang Kabataan; officials are the youth leaders in the barangay, and they need to exert influence to accomplish their Sangguniang Kabataan objectives.

Accordingly, being an effective leader means looking beyond daily happenings and visualizing a brighter future. Successful leaders work closely with the people they lead. Through collaboration, they can influence others to pursue common goals and achievements for the good of the group (Fullan, 2012). By establishing trustworthy relationships, influential leaders successfully convince others to follow and pursue a shared mission and vision (Marzano et al., 2005).

Copyright: © 2024 by the authors.
This is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the CC BY 4.0.

Under the Local Government Code, there shall be in every barangay a Sangguniang Kabataan to be composed of the chairman, seven members, a secretary, and a treasurer (SK Law, R.A. 10742). The council is the youth assembly's governing body, elected by eligible youths and registered under the Commission on Election (Nolledo, 2000). Under RA 7160, the main functions of SK are to promulgate resolutions necessary to carry out the objectives of the youth in the barangay to initiate programs designed to enhance the social, political, economic, cultural, spiritual, and physical development of the members; and to conduct fund-raising activities. The Sangguniang Kabataan is the unit that organizes and promotes leadership among the youth. It was created to allow young people to participate directly in local governance.

In many ways, the Sangguniang Kabataan has provided opportunities for youth to organize and participate in youth activities in their respective municipalities and provinces. Being a member of the Sangguniang Kabataan council carries much weight, and one should have the qualities of a leader that show in his service to the community. Involvement in local governance can also be beneficial in developing young people's leadership skills and confidence. Many young people will be empowered because they participate in the democratic process. This allows them to gain experience, learn new skills, become more responsible and accountable, develop confidence, and form meaningful connections with other youth and adults.

Ladia (2014) stated that Sangguniang Kabataan has faced many issues as an institution in the past few years. A 2007 study by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the UNICEF entitled, "*The Impact of Youth Participation in the Local Government Process: The Sangguniang Kabataan Experience*" stated: "The SK's performance for the past ten years has been generally weak. This is especially true regarding producing legislations, promoting the development of young people, submitting reports, and holding consultations with their constituents."

Aside from the lack of concrete legislative and youth development programs, I have heard of corruption, nepotism, and recurring programs focusing solely on sports festivals and pageantry. These were the primary reasons why Congress passed RA 10632, which resulted in the suspension of the SK election in October 2013 and its postponement from around October 2014 to February 2015. The 16th Congress began debating bills to amend the Local Government Code, specifically the Sangguniang Kabataan provisions. Some support amendments, while others advocate for the abolition of youth representation.

After the suspension of the SK election in October 2013 and up until February 2015, Republic Act No. 10742, "*An Act Establishing Reforms in The Sangguniang Kabataan Creating Enabling Mechanisms for Meaningful Youth Participation in Nation-Building, and for Other Purposes*," was finally passed by the Senate and House of Representatives on November 4, 2015, and November 11, 2015, respectively. This act combines Senate Bill No. 2401 and House Bill No. 6043. The President of the Philippines, Benigno S. Aquino III, signed and approved it on January 15, 2016.

Section 2 of the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015 states that the state recognizes the vital role of youth in nation-building and thus promotes and protects their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being, instills patriotism, nationalism, and other desirable values in them, and encourages their participation in public and civic affairs. The State shall establish adequate, effective, responsive, and enabling mechanisms and support systems to ensure youth participation in local governance and nation-building (Republic Act 10472).

At present, Under Republic Act No.10742, otherwise known as the "Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015", all newly elected Sangguniang Kabataan officials and members in the country's more than 42,000 barangays are mandated by law to attend the Sangguniang Kabataan Mandatory Training and Orientation Program before they can assume office. The training mandated by the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act and ordered by the Department of the Interior and Local Government in a January 2018 memorandum aims to prepare the elected and appointed officials for their new roles. Failure to attend shall constitute sufficient grounds to disqualify a Sangguniang Kabataan official. Hence, they advised all proclaimed Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson and members to coordinate with their local Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Officers for the training details (Memorandum Circular No. 2018-48).

Before the mandatory training, the Presidential Council for Youth Affairs gave optional training for newly elected officials, as per Title 3, Section 532, of Republic Act 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991. The training will cover 3 Module topics: two for module one. First is the decentralization and local governance; second is the history of the Sangguniang Kabataan and the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act, also known as Republic Act 10472. For module two, two other topics will be discussed. First is the meetings and resolutions, and second is the Planning and budgeting. Module three will focus on RA 6713, the Code of Conduct, and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

This research delved into the subjects' intense lived experiences and the essence of the meaning of their lived experiences. Lived experience refers to a representation of a given person's experiences and choices and the knowledge that they gain from these experiences and choices (Given, 2008). It is what the person, known as the key informant, went through. However, the goal is not to understand individuals' lived experiences as facts but to determine their understandable meaning (Van Manen, 2016).

2. Methods

2.1. Design

This study chose a qualitative tradition using a phenomenological research approach or tradition. It aimed to describe and understand the essence of the lived experiences of individuals who had experienced a particular phenomenon (Lichtman, 2023).

This study utilized a strategic inquiry approach to investigate the essence of human experiences related to the phenomenon, as described by key informants. Understanding lived experiences distinguishes phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method. The procedure entails studying a few subjects over a long period to develop patterns and relationships of meaning. During this process, the researchers bracket or set aside their own experiences to comprehend those of the participants in the study (Nieswiadomy, 1993).

This study used the descriptive qualitative research method and phenomenology qualitative design to collect data. This method is both a philosophy and a method for describing people's experiences as they would describe them.

2.2. Environment

The study took place in eight selected barangays in Pangantucan, Bukidnon, where the Presidents of the Sangguniang Kabataan were active. These barangays included Barangay Poblacion, Adtuyon, Malipayon, Lantay, Nabaliwa, Bacusanon, Madaya, and Bangahan. Pangantucan is one of the twenty municipalities located in Bukidnon. The province of Bukidnon is situated roughly seventy-five kilometers (47 miles) south of Malaybalay, the

capital of the province, and around 166 kilometers (103 miles) away from Cagayan de Oro City. Wao, Lanao del Sur, can be reached via a national road that is fifty kilometers (31 miles) long and paved with concrete and gravel toward the south of the municipality.

The term "*Bukidnon*" translates to "highlander" or "mountain dweller." This province covers a vast plateau in the central northern area of Mindanao Island and is known as the region's agricultural hub, chiefly producing rice and corn. The province is also known for its plantations that yield pineapples, bananas, and sugarcane. According to the Commission on Audit's Annual Financial Reports for 2018, 2019, and 2020, which were published in 2019 and early and late 2021, Bukidnon has consistently ranked fifth among the wealthiest provinces in the Philippines.

Pangantucan municipality shares its southwestern boundary with Lanao del Sur province and its southern boundary with North Cotabato province. The Municipality of Kalilangan is in the western part of Pangantucan, while the Mount Kitanglad Range lies to the northwest. Valencia, regarded as the commercial hub of Bukidnon, is adjacent to Pangantucan to the north, with Maramag and the municipalities of Don Carlos and Kadingilan bordering it to the east and south, respectively.

2.3. Respondents

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Key Informants

Key Informant	Sex	Age	Educational Attainment	Occupation
1	Male	19	3rd Year College	Student
2	Male	23	College Graduate	Billing Officer
3	Male	23	College Graduate	Teacher
4	Male	23	College Graduate	Admin Aide
5	Male	20	4th Year College	Student
6	Male	19	2nd Year College	Student
7	Male	19	2nd Year College	Student
8	Female	21	3rd Year College	Student

In terms of age, key informants 1, 6, and 7 are each nineteen (19) years old, key informant five is twenty years old, key informant eight is twenty-one (21) years old, and key informants 2, 3, and 4 are all twenty-three (23) years old.

Regarding educational achievement, only three (3) key informants hold college degrees—specifically, key informants 2, 3, and 4—while the remaining five (5) are still pursuing their studies at the tertiary level, which includes key informants 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8. In terms of occupation, three (3) key informants are currently employed, while the other five (5) are still students.

2.4. Key Informants' Vital Descriptions

2.4.1. Key Informant 1

The key informant, a 23-year-old male, currently resides in Poblacion, Pangantucan, Bukidnon. He is the grandson of the former Mayor of Pangantucan, which has given him a unique perspective on local governance and community dynamics. Having graduated from a program in Hotel and Restaurant Services, he possesses valuable skills relevant to the hospitality industry. In addition to his academic background, he is an avid sports enthusiast and an accomplished varsity athlete, demonstrating his commitment to teamwork and physical fitness. Presently, he is in his third year of pursuing a Bachelor of Science in

Entrepreneurship at Pangantucan Bukidnon Community College, where he is gaining insights into business development and management, preparing him for future endeavors in the entrepreneurial landscape.

2.4.2. Key Informant 2

Key Informant 2 is a 23-year-old male. He has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a focus on Human Resource Development Management. He has worked as a Billing Officer at Pangantucan Medical Hospital for 1 year and 4 months. He is also a cultural arts performer in Bukidnon Province. In college, he was a member of the Supreme Student Council, worked as a photojournalist for the school's publication, and chaired the committee on Youth Employment and Livelihood.

2.4.3. Key Informant 3

Key Informant 3 is a 22-year-old male with a Bachelor of Education degree, specializing in Physical Education. He has been employed as a College Instructor at Philippine Countryville College in Maramag, Bukidnon, where he has been teaching Physical Education courses for the past two years. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he is also an event host and organizer and possesses singing skills. Furthermore, he holds the position of committee chairperson for Education, Culture, and Youth Development within his local barangay, demonstrating his active involvement in community affairs.

2.4.4. Key Informant 4

Key Informant 4 was a 23-year-old male who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, majoring in Human Resource Development Management, and was presently working as an Administrative Aide at the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office, Local Government of Pangantucan. He was the committee chairperson on Anti-drug abuse and Social Protection.

2.4.5. Key Informant 5

Key Informant 5 was a 20-year-old male who was the committee Chairperson in the Sangguniang Kabataan Environmental Protection, a fourth-year college student, a varsity, and a member of the Supreme Student Council of a Local College in Bukidnon.

2.4.6. Key Informant 6

Key Informant 6 was a 25-year-old male, Chairman of the Sports and Development Committee, a Committee Member of the VAWC (Violence Against Women and Children) in the said barangay, and a second-year college student at a Local College in Bukidnon.

2.4.7. Key Informant 7

Key Informant 7 was a male, 19 years old, a second-year college student, a member of the Supreme Student Council of a Higher Education Institution's organization, and the committee chairman on Gender and development.

2.4.8. Key Informant 8

Key Informant 8 was a 22-year-old female who was the Committee Chairperson on Health Services and Reproductive Health, a third-year College Student at a prestigious University, and the SK Federated President of this municipality.

2.5. Instruments

The researchers served as the primary tool for the study. An interview guide was utilized to listen to and understand the responses from key informants, which were subsequently

documented, analyzed, and interpreted. Additionally, observations were supported by field notes, audio recorders, and the review of documents.

2.6. Data Gathering Procedures

The lead researcher secured permission from the Dean of the College of Management, Business, and Accountancy at Cebu Institute of Technology-University to carry out the study away from the university premises. The researchers reached out formally to the SK Federation President of Pangantucan, Bukidnon, to obtain consent for interviewing the Sangguniang Kabataan President at a time that suited them. Once approval was granted, the data collection process, which involved in-depth interviews with the primary informants, commenced effectively. The interviews were recorded via audio and subsequently transcribed into written form.

There are four compelling justifications for selecting interviews as the main source of data for this research. Firstly, qualitative interviews were deemed suitable for "investigating individuals' interpretations of meaning in their lived experiences" (Kvale, 1996). Secondly, the intent of interviewing is to discover what exists within someone's thoughts, as "We interview people to learn from them those details that we cannot see" (Patton, 1987). Thirdly, qualitative interviews produced detailed descriptions of the subjects being explored, allowing readers to ascertain the potential applicability of the study's findings (Merriam, 2002). Lastly, the interviews facilitated the triangulation of data gathered from other sources, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study's conclusions (Emerson et al., 2011; Merriam, 2002; Stake, 1995) from interviewing to data mining.

The qualitative data collection for this study includes interviews, observations, and written materials. According to Flood (2010), the most effective way to gather data in a qualitative investigation is through a semi-structured interview method. By employing a semi-structured interview guide, the researchers collected data from key informants for analysis and conclusions.

As per the schedule, each interview was intended to last between 30 minutes to one hour. The researchers allowed the key informants to review the interview guide prior to the audio recording, and the duration varied based on the promptness of the informants' responses to each question. The in-depth interviews were conducted at times and locations that were most convenient for the primary informants. The main informants were encouraged to express themselves freely without any fear of repercussions regarding their personal experiences.

The researchers presented open-ended questions from their self-developed interview guide, enabling key informants to share extensive details and experiences, while the researchers were able to explore further by posing probing follow-up questions. The researchers utilized their fundamental evaluation abilities, including observation and inquiry. If the researchers noticed they were no longer receiving fresh data or insights, this signified data saturation had been reached. After conducting the interviews, the researchers collected the data and reviewed the materials provided. The researchers then compiled and analyzed the data obtained from the interviews.

2.7. Data Analysis

This research study followed Creswell & Poth (2012) six steps for conducting qualitative data analysis, which start with the transcription of the interviews and conclude with the interpretation of the emerging themes.

a) Step 1: Preparation and organization. The taped interviews were converted into written documents as the first step. The audio recordings of the interviews were assessed and transcribed into Word documents during this phase.

b) Step 2: Analyzing the Data. In this phase, researchers examined the data to form a general understanding of what was occurring and then produced a comprehensive reflection. They also made notes and comments in the margins to highlight the important parts. This action aligned with Esterberg's recommendation to “get to know your data.

c) The researchers felt this would encapsulate the overall essence of the information and insights provided by the key informants.

d) Step 3: Coding the data into themes. The third phase involves coding to develop themes from the data. This technique is also referred to as indexing, as researchers organized the information according to the language or terms used by key informants during the interviews.

e) Step 4: Develop themes and their descriptions. The coded themes were described in detail. Through the coding process, researchers crafted a description of the context or individuals and established categories for analysis. Moreover, this step produced codes for the descriptions, leading to the generalization of a limited number of groups or themes.

f) Step 5: Enhance how the qualitative narrative will depict the themes. In this phase, the findings would naturally arise from the responses of key informants since researchers incorporate the emergent themes into narrative segments.

g) Step 6: Interpret the significance of the data. Creswell acknowledged that a researcher’s background plays a crucial role in the meaning-making process, akin to the researcher’s adherence to a theoretical framework. During the interpretation stage, the researchers’ knowledge shaped their understanding of the key informants' narratives, accurately representing their experiences, the conclusions they reached, and their aspirations for future practices.

2.8. Ethical Protocols

In the process of conducting this research, ethical considerations were also recognized, as follows:

a) Protection of human rights

In this research, the researchers followed all ethical guidelines. They focused on three main ideas: respect for people, doing good, and fairness. They treated the main informant as an individual and gave them the highest protection out of respect. To show they were doing good, the key informants made sure to look after everyone's well-being. The principle of fairness was also important in this study. The researchers aimed to distribute fairly based on what each person deserves. They used the following guidelines: (a) equal share for everyone, (b) support based on individual needs, (c) rewards based on individual effort, (d) contributions to society, and (e) achievements based on merit.

b) Risk-benefit assessment

The main participants in the study were exposed to both risks and benefits. First and foremost, when key informants participate in the suggested research procedure, they would likely lose time, feel apprehensive and uncomfortable, and be hesitant to determine whether to participate. They may believe that it was disruptive to their work or that it was essentially inconvenient for them. They would need adequate time to participate because some also do not like to listen to or answer questions; others would be willing to join but would need more time to finish the whole procedure; instead of doing it that day, they opted to finish it the next day. They may be tired from looking for comments and recommendations. However, they needed more time to formulate their thoughts or give their opinions because most of them were preoccupied with the main work tasks in their offices or departments.

Some hesitated to provide accurate information because they believed that telling the truth could jeopardize their employment standing; they feared potential problems or entanglements. There was also tension while recalling traumatic or unpleasant memories in a particular activity, which caused discomfort among participants and necessitated extended flashbacks. Recalling was an essential element of the data collection process. They experienced boredom, mental pain, and anxiety because of this procedure. They could still express their problems, grips, and suggestions through comments and suggestions. They were also excited to be a part of the research. This made them feel at ease and satisfied because they could assist the researchers by providing a variety of facts to serve as a foundation for the researchers' recommendations.

c) Content, comprehension, and documentation of informed consent

A semi-structured interview guide was created to collect the required qualitative data for this study. This served as the foundation for the guide for conducting the key informant interviews. It gave them enough information about the study to allow them to make an informed, voluntary, and logical decision about whether to participate. The researchers informed them about the study's time limit and data requirements, an essential aspect of responsible research.

The researchers established a data management plan at the study's outset to streamline processes related to leadership style. Key informants were informed about the importance of their contributions and how the data would be organized for clarity. They were educated about the data collection methods to ensure a robust study design.

Key informants were made aware of the commitment involved, including the time required for participation and the selection process. They understood that the study was voluntary and aimed at the researcher's post-graduate degree, with no external funding involved. Informants were briefed on potential risks and benefits, as well as the provision for compensation for their time.

Additionally, the confidentiality policy was explained, reassuring participants that their involvement was voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time without penalty. Researchers provided resources for informants to voice questions, comments, or concerns about the study.

d) Authorization to access private information

The researchers took the necessary steps to obtain permission from the relevant department to access the participants' private information. After a thorough review, this authorization was granted and discussed with the participants prior to the interviews. The consent form did not allow access to private information, which needed to be obtained separately. As outlined in the consent, only individuals who required knowledge of the study for university purposes were permitted access to this information.

e) Confidentiality procedures

Privacy and confidentiality were strictly adhered to preserving the study's primary information. Complete confidentiality was always respected.

f) Conflict of interest

The researchers declared no conflicts of interest during the interview, and the key sources were informed that it was entirely optional.

g) Incentive or compensation

The key informants were not compensated during the interviews. Instead, they have expressed gratitude for their participation in this research.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the study's findings. Specifically, the formulated themes identified based on their lived experiences were followed by the transcribed interviews from the key informants. From the interviews, the researchers gathered significant statements and similar experiences of the key informants. Moreover, the themes were derived from substantial statements from key informants and then classified based on the researcher's knowledge.

3.1. Research Themes

3.1.1. Theme #1: Leadership Role

Leadership positions can be both fulfilling and demanding. Influential leaders motivate and inspire their teams, establish clear objectives, and promote an inclusive atmosphere. They require persuasive communication abilities, emotional intelligence, and adaptability to changing situations.

Effective leadership also entails making impartial and complex decisions, managing conflicts, resolving disputes, and being accountable to all. It is about guiding others while remaining receptive to feedback and collaboration. In the end, the most effective leaders enable their team members to develop, thrive, and achieve success, fostering a culture of trust and innovation.

3.1.2. Theme #2: Sangguniang Kabataan Mandatory Training

The Sangguniang Kabataan, or Youth Council, is an important local government group that aims to empower young people and encourage them to take part in community growth and development. It plays a key role in youth representation, local governance, community engagement, and leadership development.

The significance of this council includes empowering youth, promoting social development, fostering civic responsibility, providing youth programs and services, and working together with other sectors. To handle these important tasks, it is essential to provide training and developmental activities so that young people gain experience.

3.1.3. Theme #3: Service Above Self and Committed to Serve Others

This theme encapsulates the profound principle that prioritizing the well-being of others should take precedence over one's own desires and ambitions. It underscores the significance of selflessness, illustrating how genuine satisfaction and a sense of purpose often arise from the meaningful connections we forge and the positive changes we create in the lives of those around us. By placing the needs of others before our own, we cultivate a deeper sense of community and enrich our own experiences in ways that mere self-interest cannot achieve.

3.1.4. Theme #4: Expert Consultation

Seeking expert advice can be extremely beneficial in a variety of situations. Regardless of the setting, leveraging specialized knowledge can result in enhanced decision-making and better outcomes. Experts possess extensive experience, insights, and current information that can aid in handling complicated scenarios. On one hand, it is crucial to ensure that the expert is credible and pertinent to the matter at hand. Additionally, integrating expert viewpoints with a range of perspectives can offer a more well-rounded understanding.

3.1.5. Theme #5: Sangguniang Kabataan, the Voice of the Youth

The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) plays a crucial role in representing the youth's voice in the Philippines. It provides a platform for young people to engage in local governance, express their concerns, and participate in decision-making.

The SK plays a pivotal role in promoting civic engagement among young people, emphasizing the importance of leadership development and advocacy in key areas such as education, health care, and environmental protection. This initiative empowers youth to voice their concerns and propose innovative programs that can lead to tangible changes within their communities.

Participants in the SK are encouraged to identify local challenges and work collaboratively to develop solutions that reflect their unique perspectives and needs. This hands-on approach allows young individuals to take ownership of projects, including educational workshops, health awareness campaigns, or environmental clean-up initiatives. These programs address immediate community issues and foster a sense of responsibility and leadership among participants.

However, the effectiveness of the SK can be compromised by several obstacles, including political influence that may overshadow the voices of young people and a lack of sufficient financial and logistical resources critical for the successful implementation of community initiatives. Additionally, bureaucratic hurdles can challenge access to necessary support from local governments and organizations.

Despite these challenges, the SK remains an essential framework for empowering youth, ensuring their insights and opinions are integral to shaping local policies. By actively involving young people in decision-making, the SK cultivates a generation of informed citizens prepared to advocate for their communities and create lasting impact. This strengthens civic engagement among youth and reinforces the idea that their contributions are vital to the collective well-being of society.

3.2. Discussion

This section of the paper highlights the extensive discussion of the five themes that emerged from the utterances of the Key Informants' interviews. The themes are a sum or total of all the significant statements from the various key informants that also emerged from the code book. The following are discussions of the themes of this study:

3.2.1. Theme #1: Leadership Roles

General impression:

Cunningham & Cordeiro (2003) remarked that today's leaders can only be successful with a broad understanding of the social, political, and economic dynamics that influence and are shaped by global competition. Leaders must know the ideologies, political pressures, and shifting economic and social conditions to provide effective leadership. In other words, present leaders must be conscious of what is happening in the internal and external environment.

In this study, the key informants mentioned proper time management, if not all. Being an SK official, time management is vital in their endeavor since they are to serve and represent the youth sector in the area on top of their administrative functions. According to Wikipedia, time management is the process of planning and exercising conscious control of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity. This is to efficiently use the time available at your disposal to the point that time wasters and other unnecessary activities are to be eliminated and should always be eliminated. If we allow inefficiencies and ineffectiveness to happen, productivity is normally hampered. Thus, the delivery of their services to the public is compromised. Indeed, proper time management will be considered as the lifeblood in leadership.

In the key informant interview, one of the prominent issues highlighted was time management as a potential source of conflict among the Sangguniang Kabataan officials. This

group comprises individuals with varying employment statuses—some are still pursuing their studies, while others are engaged in full-time jobs. This commitment to diversity presents a significant challenge when efficiently allocating their time as public servants. Many officials find themselves torn between their responsibilities in the Sangguniang Kabataan and their professional obligations, often prioritizing their jobs over their duties to the youth in their community. This shift in focus undermines their initial mission to advocate for and serve the young people they represent, leading to a potential erosion of the original goals and effectiveness of the Sangguniang Kabataan. The struggle to balance these roles affects individual officials and the organization, posing a challenge to effective youth leadership and engagement.

3.2.2. Theme #2: Sangguniang Kabataan Mandatory Training

General impression:

According to Memorandum Circular No. 2018-48, one of the legal bases of this memorandum is that the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform (SK) Act of 2015, or RA 10742, was approved on January 15, 2016, and strengthened and empowered the SK as useful conduct in community development. The legal document should pave the way toward realizing community involvement and development.

It is Implementing Rules and Regulation, specifically, Rule V, Section 30 of the Act states that "To emphasize the role of the youth in nation-building and mold them to become better citizens with the values of patriotism, nationalism, and honor as a Filipino, any SK official, whether elected or appointed or any member of LDYC (Local Youth Development Council) must undergo the mandatory training program before she or he can assume office."

The Sangguniang Kabataan mandatory training conducted can better emphasize their role as a youth being the leader in their respective barangay. Furthermore, it can enhance and mold their level of competence in serving the youth. However, some said that more than the Sangguniang Kabataan Mandatory Training is needed to sustain their knowledge and ability to lead the youth in their barangay through this mandatory training. While training may be limited, they have something to polish their skills, which will guide them in leading the youth. The said training courses are vital in their role as SK. They are also thankful for the additional training and seminars conducted, which will serve as their gateway to leadership.

Theme No. 2 proves that many Sangguniang Kabataan officials admitted that the SK mandatory training they attended unlocked their ignorance in serving the Sangguniang Kabataan. Youth leaders are who they are now; they need enough exposure to discharge their mandated duties and responsibilities.

3.2.3. Theme #3: Service above self and committed to serve;

General impression:

As cited in the book of Leveriza (1983), John K. Hemphill referred to Leadership "*as the behavior of an individual who is involved in directing group activities*". In still another perspective. John D. Pfefer and Robert Presthus thus called it "*the art that stresses the attainment of mutual ends through coordination and motivation of both individuals and groups*." Meaning that the art of leadership largely depends on the cooperation and collaborative efforts of the workforce. There would be no leadership if it were just a one-person show, but rather, it should be based on team effort and collaboration. As they say, TEAM means Together Everyone Achieves More.

Based on the data gathered from the key informants' interviews, some said that being a Sangguniang Kabataan official is difficult. They took an oath to give themselves a way of efficiently serving the Sangguniang Kabataan or the youth. Service above self means a

commitment to serve and serve others before yourself. This acknowledges that the primary resource of every organization is its people. The motto “service above self and committed to serve” exemplifies strong leadership among the Sangguniang Kabataan in barangay Poblacion, Pangantucan, Bukidnon.

3.2.4. Theme #4: Expert consultation

General impression:

Consulting an expert can be an invaluable strategy for effectively addressing specific challenges and optimizing outcomes. The primary purpose of engaging with an expert is to take the time to understand an individual's unique needs and circumstances, enabling the expert to assist in formulating a more effective plan for tackling problems and achieving personal or organizational goals. This process harnesses the specialized knowledge and experience of the expert, which can significantly enhance decision-making and problem-solving capabilities.

In the context of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), it is essential to recognize that many SK Presidents are often stepping into public service for the first time. This inexperience can leave them navigating a landscape filled with the intricate nuances of government and governance, which may initially seem daunting. However, these young leaders exemplify remarkable resilience and adaptability despite these challenges. They actively pursue avenues for personal and professional growth, seeking workshops that enhance their skills, engaging in mentorship programs that provide guidance, and fostering informal connections with seasoned officials who can share their invaluable insights and experiences. Through these efforts, they equip themselves with the knowledge needed to lead effectively and embody a commitment to continuous learning and improvement in their roles.

By embracing a proactive approach to education and development, SK leaders can gradually build their capacity to implement effective governance strategies. They often leverage community forums, online courses, and peer collaboration resources to gain insights and best practices. This ongoing commitment to learning ultimately empowers them to make informed decisions that positively impact their constituents and foster civic engagement among the youth in their communities. Section 10 of Republic Act No. 10742 states that “An official of the Sangguniang Kabataan, either elective or appointee, must be at least eighteen (18) years but not more than twenty-four (24) years of age on the day of the elections”. Considering their age, some do not know how to perform their expected duties, especially in their first quarter discharging such functions.

The key informants' insights indicate that the barangay council members serve as immediate consultants and advisers for the community. When residents require guidance or consultation, they turn to these council members, often regarded as local elders. This relationship underscores the accessibility and importance of the Barangay Councils in advising the community on various matters.

3.2.5. Theme #5: Sangguniang Kabataan, the voice of the youth

General impression:

The Sangguniang Kabataan officials are present in every barangay to lead the youth within the community. Cuyegkeng & Angeles (2011) states that Filipino leadership relies on its governing team to formulate strategies and build trust and relationships. The Sangguniang Kabataan serves an essential role in representing the needs and concerns of young people in their locality. They function as advocates for the youth by gathering input from various individuals and addressing these concerns at the barangay council level or with local government units.

The Sangguniang Kabataan officials play a crucial role as representatives and advocates for the youth within their barangays. According to interviews conducted with key informants, it became evident that many of these officials perceive their primary responsibility as being receptive to the various concerns and issues raised by the young people in their communities. This role involves listening to the youth and actively working towards finding solutions to those concerns.

Serving as the voice of the youth is not merely a title; it embodies a deeper commitment to providing meaningful service and fostering a sense of belonging among young individuals. The officials recognize that their effectiveness as leaders is closely tied to their personal qualities, such as empathy, integrity, and approachability. By exemplifying these traits, they set a standard for good leadership and inspire their peers to engage positively with the community.

Furthermore, the officials understand that good leadership is characterized by a proactive approach to addressing the needs of the youth. They are expected to advocate for these needs, mobilize resources, and collaborate with various stakeholders to implement effective programs and initiatives. In this way, they not only serve as intermediaries but also take on the vital role of agents of change within their localities, ensuring that the voices of the youth are heard and considered in decision-making processes.

4. Conclusion

Regarding young governance, the Sangguniang Kabataan is the lowest level of government. It was created to provide young people with a chance to lead our nation and allow them to exercise leadership with their subordinates. Young individuals are empowered through active participation to play an important role in their development and the development of their communities, assisting them in learning essential life skills, developing knowledge of human rights and citizenship, and promoting positive civic action.

Based on the study's findings, the Sangguniang Kabataan demonstrated its leadership abilities by assisting the Sangguniang Kabataan barangay in achieving its objectives; however, there were still some areas where it needed to improve by providing appropriate solutions to its challenges.

It is essential to recognize that, beyond their fundamental responsibilities as Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Presidents, these young leaders require comprehensive training in alternative leadership styles and community engagement methods. This is particularly important to ensure they are equipped to address the diverse needs of their constituents effectively. According to Rule V, Section 30 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 10742, also known as the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015, it is mandated that during their term of office, SK Presidents participate in ongoing training programs. The Commission should organize these programs in collaboration with the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

By taking part in these training sessions, SK Presidents will enhance their skills in strategic planning and program development. This preparation is crucial for initiating and implementing programs that foster improvement in their members' lives, including social, political, economic, cultural, intellectual, spiritual, and physical development. Ultimately, such development initiatives will empower the youth and strengthen their capacity to contribute positively to their communities.

Considering the findings from the study, the researchers advocate for the implementation of a specially designed model for Sangguniang Kabataan leadership in

Pangantucan, Bukidnon. This initiative seeks to address the challenges associated with youth leadership in the region. Additionally, it is recommended that the Proposed Sangguniang Kabataan Model of Leadership be actively adopted within the community. It is anticipated that this approach will facilitate meaningful and positive transformations, ultimately fostering a more engaged and effective youth leadership capable of making significant contributions to the development of the locality.

5. References

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

Cunningham, W. G., & Cordeiro, P. A. (2003). *Educational leadership: A problem-based approach*. ERIC.

Cuyegkeng, M. A. C., & Angeles, A. P. (2011). Defining Filipino leadership: a festschrift in honor of Fr. Bienvenido F. Nebres, SJ. *(No Title)*.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. University of Chicago press.

Fullan, M. (2012). *The Jossey-Bass reader on educational leadership*. John Wiley & Sons.

Given, L. (2008). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909

Kvale, S. (1996). Ch. 11: Methods of Analysis. *Interviews—An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 193–199.

Ladia, C. (2014). *Why the Sangguniang Kabataan need an overhaul*. https://www.rappler.com/move-ph/ispeak/70347-sangguniang-kabataan-needs-overhaul

Leveriza, J. P. (1983). Public administration: The business of Government. *(No Title)*.

Lichtman, M. (2023). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide*. Routledge.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. ASCD.

Merriam, S. B. (2002). Introduction to qualitative research. *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis*, *1*(1), 1–17.

Nieswiadomy, R. M. (1993). Quantitative research designs. *Foundations of Nursing Research.(2nd Ed.).(p 135). Norwalk: Appleton & Lange*.

Nolledo, J. (2000). *The 1991 Local Government Code*. https://www.ombudsman.gov.ph/UNDP4/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/UNPACKINGLGC91.pdf

Patton, M. Q. (1987). How to use qualitative methods in evaluation. *Saint Paul*.

Stake, R. (1995). *Case study research*. Springer.

Van Manen, M. (2016). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Routledge.