

Status of Local Youth Development Office Towards Community Development and Youth Engagement: Basis for Sustainability Plan

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Abstract

This study seeks to determine the state of the Local Youth Development Offices (LYDOs) and their connection with community development and youth involvement in Lumban, Laguna. It is a quantitative descriptive correlational cross-sectional study aimed at measuring the five aspects of LYDO status: inclusiveness, program development, community partnership, resource provision, and advocacy. Purposive sampling was conducted to gather data, and 300 responses from youth volunteers and Sangguniang Kabataan members were collected using a structured questionnaire. Cohesion and collaboration are the primary measures for assessing community development, while youth participation and sustainability define youth engagement. The analysis methods include descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the proposed relationship between variables. Results reveal a significant positive correlation between overall LYDO status and both community development and youth engagement. The strongest relationships were observed between program development and youth participation, and between community partnerships and community cohesion. These findings suggest that well-established LYDOs with strong institutional frameworks significantly enhance both community development outcomes and sustainable youth participation.

Keywords: Local Youth Development Offices, community development, youth engagement, program development, community partnership, Sangguniang Kabataan.

INTRODUCTION

In this context, the youth sector is a critical demographic that contributes significantly to societal progress and national development. Checkoway (2021) recently published research in the Journal of Youth Development that documents the status of youth engagement programs and their effects on young people, showing employment and civic participation rates for individuals between 15 and 30 years old. UNICEF's (2023) studies reveal the current condition of structured youth development programs and their relationship with leadership skills and community volunteerism. The Local Youth Development Office (LYDO) serves as the essential intermediary between government initiatives and youth beneficiaries, making it crucial to assess their status, especially in developing regions where resource constraints and implementation challenges persist.

The establishment of LYDOs in the Philippines received significant support through Republic Act 10742, also known as the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015. Research by the Philippine Institute for

Development Studies (2023) indicates the current state of program implementation, resource allocation, and strategic planning in various municipalities. Their comprehensive assessment revealed that while most municipalities had established their LYDOs, not all were functioning optimally. According to the Department of Interior and Local Government (2023), evaluating the status of these offices is essential to understanding how they currently engage Filipino youths through various development programs such as leadership training, skills development, and civic engagement initiatives. Municipalities with well-functioning LYDOs also report significantly higher youth participation rates in local governance and community development programs.

LYDOs are used for functions beyond basic program implementation and administration. The work of the National Youth Commission (2023) reveals the current condition of functioning youth offices and how they act as catalysts to community development, promoting economic growth through youth entrepreneurship programs and social cohesion through community engagement programs. They found significant increases in community participation rates and youth-led businesses nationwide. These offices play a critical role in translating national youth policies into localized programs and serve as platforms of youth representation in local government. In addition, communities with successful LYDOs also had higher levels of youth participation in local decision-making and youth-led community projects.

There are considerable challenges in the current state of LYDOs. According to a comprehensive study by De Leon and Cruz (2022) published in the *Philippine Social Science Review*, the key obstacles include limited funding, inadequate staff training, and inadequate community partnerships. They found out in their cross-sectional research that many of these LYDOs are underfunded and do not have qualified human resources to offer specific skills for youth development programs. Therefore, these difficulties result in reduced quality of programs implemented and reduced youth engagement in governance processes. It was also discovered that inadequate structures and a scarcity of technology limit the offices' ability to identify and address the target youths.

Emerging evidence about the status of LYDO operations in various contexts is available. In selected Southeast Asian municipalities, the Asian Development Bank (2023) documented the existing capacity-building programs and innovative resource management strategies and their relationship with youth program outcomes. Their longitudinal study showed the current condition of LYDOs and how they relate to program effectiveness and youth engagement rates. Additionally, they assessed how offices that could attract additional funding and partnerships were performing regarding sustainability and impact on youth development initiatives.

The local youth development office in Lumban, Laguna, serves many youths and is currently facing the same challenges in implementing and impacting the programs within the community. As highlighted by the assessments conducted by the Municipal Planning Office (2023), there is a need to evaluate the current program outcomes and resource utilization. The evaluation also revealed that while there is a strong desire among local youth to participate in community activities, the uptake of programs offered by LYDO is hindered by barriers to implementation and access. This study aims to establish the current state of LYDO and analyze the correlation between its status, community influence, and youth participation to create a foundation for future planning.

The findings of this study will be helpful in local government units, practitioners in youth development, and policymakers to provide a clear picture of youth development programs. According to the World Bank (2023), it is important to evaluate the capacity of local youth offices to determine the current contribution of youths in achieving the sustainable development goals of the various communities and their

participation in policy-making processes. It offers a global view of the status of youth development programs. It suggests that the more youth offices are increased, the higher the youth voting rates, improving the statistics, and enhancing the youth employment rates. Therefore, this paper assesses the current state of LYDOs as the focal actors in youth and community transformation.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to critically assess the status of the Local Youth Development Office (LYDO) in fostering community development and youth engagement, serving as a foundation for crafting a sustainable action plan. Specifically, the research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of existing youth programs and initiatives in promoting active participation and leadership among the youth. It will identify challenges and barriers hindering optimal youth involvement, including resource limitations, lack of capacity-building opportunities, and socio-cultural factors. The study will also examine the alignment of LYDO activities with broader community development goals, ensuring that youth engagement contributes meaningfully to local progress. Furthermore, the research intends to assess the sustainability of current youth programs, considering factors such as financial viability, community ownership, and adaptability to changing needs. Based on these findings, the study will propose a comprehensive sustainability plan that includes strategies for enhancing youth participation, strengthening institutional support, and fostering long-term community development through youth-led initiatives.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design to analyze the correlation between the status of LYDOs and their relationship with community development and youth participation. Creswell (2020) noted that a correlational research design is helpful in establishing the relationship between variables without altering them in their natural environment. It is therefore ideal for research in organizational and community contexts. This design enables a systematic assessment of the relationships between the current condition of LYDOs and the outcomes in the natural context of youth development programs. The approach allows the researcher to establish relationships that provide a baseline understanding of the present situation.

The study employed a survey design to gather information at one point to determine the current state of LYDO and the resultant effects. Kumar (2019) notes that cross-sectional designs help assess current practices and their correlations with the outcomes in the context of public service organizations. This approach makes it possible to gather extensive information about the present operations of LYDO, its current impact on the community, and the existing level of youth participation simultaneously. The choice of cross-sectional design is most suitable for this study because it is easy and fast to conduct with different participants. At the same time, it gives a snapshot of the current operations of LYDO and its effects on the community and the youth.

The respondents of this study were 300 youth volunteers and Sangguniang Kabataan members from Lumban, Laguna, who are involved in the programs and activities of LYDO. The selection criteria included: (a) current participation in LYDO initiatives, (b) at least 6 months involvement in youth development activities, (c) Lumban, Laguna resident, and (d) 15-30 years old. These criteria ensured that the respondents have adequate experience and knowledge of LYDO operations and the effects of the operations on community development and youth.

Two t-tests were used to establish the significance of the relationships between the independent variable

(the current status indicators of LYDO) and the dependent variables (the current community impact and youth engagement). The study employed descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the interrelationships between variables based on the methodological guidelines of Bryman (2021) on conducting social research in organizations. This analysis helped to determine the degree and nature of the relationship between the current condition of LYDO and its outcomes. The correlation coefficients, significance testing, and other statistical measures were used to establish a reliable baseline assessment of the current LYDO status and its relationships with outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Status of Local Youth Development Office

In this study, the status of the Local Youth Development Office refers to inclusivity, program development, community collaboration, resource allocation, and advocacy promotion. The following tables present the statement, mean, standard deviation, remarks, and verbal interpretation from the respondents' perspectives.

Table 1. Status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Inclusivity

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Programs and activities are accessible to youth from different socio-economic backgrounds	4.35	0.57	Strongly Agree
2. Activities accommodate youth with diverse abilities and special needs	4.25	0.67	Strongly Agree
3. Programs demonstrate cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity	4.41	0.66	Strongly Agree
4. Equal opportunities for participation are provided regardless of gender	4.27	0.71	Strongly Agree
5. Inclusive decision-making processes are implemented in program planning	4.23	0.64	Strongly Agree
6. Programs ensure representation from marginalized youth sectors	4.21	0.64	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.29		
SD	0.51		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 1 shows the status of Local Youth Development Offices and displays the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks. The programs demonstrate cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity. The mean ($M = 4.41$) suggests a very high status of Local Youth Development Offices regarding inclusivity and is supported by the standard deviation ($SD = 0.66$). Additionally, the programs and activities are accessible to youth from different socio-economic backgrounds. While the mean is slightly lower ($M = 4.21$) with a standard deviation ($SD = 0.64$), it still indicates that the programs ensure representation from marginalized youth sectors. The status of Local Youth Development Offices in terms of inclusivity attained a weighted mean score of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.51, which was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents.

In conclusion, the results show that Lumban, Laguna's Local Youth Development Office, has a very high level of youth inclusion, which means that these offices have developed programs that include different youths. The understanding of cultural requirements, concern for youth from various economic backgrounds, equal opportunities for girls and boys, and involvement of youths in decision-making demonstrates that LYDO has a holistic view of the needs of youths and how they can be met in the organization's activities. This small standard deviation of 0.51 indicates that the respondents positively perceive LYDO's inclusive practices.

Ausan et al. (2024) noted in their evaluation that any programs aimed at developing youths must be accessible and culturally responsive to ensure that youth from different backgrounds have a chance to engage. Additionally, Onwuaroh et al. (2024) pointed out in their study that youth participation patterns depend on socio-economic factors; therefore, the LYDOs that address these barriers, as Lumban does, can achieve better youth participation.

Table 2. Status of Local Youth Development Offices in terms of Program Development

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Clear program objectives and outcomes are established	4.33	0.62	Strongly Agree
2. Regular needs assessment of youth programs is conducted	4.22	0.72	Strongly Agree
3. Systematic monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place	4.14	0.73	Agree
4. Innovation in program design and delivery methods	4.20	0.70	Agree
5. Programs are aligned with current youth development trends	4.23	0.71	Strongly Agree
6. Regular program review and improvement processes are conducted	4.19	0.70	Agree
Weighted Mean	4.22		
SD	0.58		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 2 shows the status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Program Development. It displays the statements, means, standard deviations, and remarks from the respondents' assessments. The straightforward program objectives and outcomes are established statements that received the highest mean ($M = 4.33$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.62$), indicating strong agreement among respondents regarding the clarity of LYDO program goals. The programs are aligned with current youth development trends and received strong agreement with a mean of ($M = 4.23$) and a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.71$). Meanwhile, systematic monitoring and evaluation procedures received the lowest mean ($M = 4.14$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.73$), though it still indicates general agreement.

The status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Program Development attained a weighted mean score of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.58, which was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents. In summary, the findings demonstrate that LYDOs in Lumban, Laguna have established a very high standard in program development, particularly excelling in setting clear objectives and staying

aligned with current youth development trends. While monitoring and evaluation procedures received relatively lower scores, they still reflect positive assessments. The low fluctuation in standard deviations implies that the respondents agreed on the effectiveness of program development aspects.

This suggests that LYDOs follow structured and goal-oriented programming with built-in assessment strategies. Luk et al. (2012) also noted in their study on youth programs that the programs with clear goals and objectives relevant to the current trends were effective. Additionally, in their study, Ngai et al. (2021) highlighted that structured evaluation frameworks are a part of effective youth development programs. This strengthens the arguments for the evaluation aspects captured in this study.

Table 3. Status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Community Collaboration

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Partnerships with local government agencies are established	4.20	0.68	Agree
2. Active engagement with educational institutions	4.28	0.79	Strongly Agree
3. Collaboration with private sector organizations	4.10	0.70	Agree
4. Networks with other youth organizations	4.23	0.69	Strongly Agree
5. Joint projects with community stakeholders	4.22	0.63	Strongly Agree
6. Regular community consultations are conducted	4.10	0.73	Agree
Weighted Mean	4.19		
SD	0.56		
Verbal Interpretation	High		

Table 3 shows the status of the Local Youth Development Office regarding Community Collaboration. It presents the statements, means, standard deviations, and remarks based on respondents' assessments. The active engagement with educational institutions received the highest mean ($M = 4.28$), with a standard deviation ($SD = 0.79$), indicating strong agreement among respondents about LYDO's educational partnerships. The networks with other youth organizations also scored high, with a mean of ($M = 4.23$) and a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.69$). Meanwhile, both collaboration with private sector organizations and regular community consultations received the lowest means ($M = 4.10$), with standard deviations of ($SD = 0.70$) and ($SD = 0.73$), respectively, though still reflecting general agreement.

The status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Community Collaboration attained a weighted mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.56. It was verbally interpreted as high among the respondents. The findings reveal that LYDOs in Lumban, Laguna demonstrate high community collaboration, powerful connections to educational institutions and other youth organizations. While partnerships with the private sector and regular community consultations received relatively lower scores, they still show positive assessments. The standard deviation values indicate general consistency in respondents' perceptions, suggesting that LYDOs have established meaningful collaborative relationships across different sectors, with room for enhancement in private sector engagement and community consultation processes.

Malek et al. (2022) similarly emphasized in their assessment that effective youth development programs require strong networks with educational institutions and other community-based organizations. In addition, Udeh et al. (2023) found in their comparative study that collaborative relationships across multiple sectors were essential for creating sustainable youth development initiatives, highlighting the importance of the community collaboration aspects measured in this study.

Table 4. Status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Resource Allocation

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Efficient distribution of financial resources	4.09	0.71	Agree
2. Strategic human resource management	4.15	0.69	Agree
3. Optimal use of facilities and equipment	4.16	0.57	Agree
4. Sustainable resource utilization practices	4.17	0.73	Agree
5. Resource mobilization strategies are implemented	4.12	0.70	Agree
6. Regular budget review and allocation assessment	4.14	0.64	Agree
Weighted Mean	4.12		
SD	0.56		
Verbal Interpretation	High		

Table 4 shows the status of the Local Youth Development Office regarding resource allocation. It presents the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks based on respondents' assessments. The sustainable resource utilization practices received the highest mean ($M = 4.17$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.73$), indicating agreement among respondents about LYDO's resource sustainability efforts. The optimal use of facilities and equipment also scored relatively high with a mean of ($M = 4.16$) and a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.57$). Meanwhile, the efficient distribution of financial resources received the lowest mean ($M = 4.09$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.71$), though it still reflects general agreement.

The status of the Local Youth Development Office regarding resource allocation attained a weighted mean score of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.56. It was verbally interpreted as high among the respondents. In summary, the findings indicate that LYDOs in Lumban, Laguna demonstrate a high level of resource allocation capabilities, with particularly strong performance in sustainable resource utilization and optimal use of facilities. While the financial resource distribution received a relatively low score, all aspects were positively assessed. The consistent standard deviation values suggest general agreement among respondents regarding the LYDO resource management practices. This indicates that despite known resource constraints facing youth development offices, the LYDOs in Lumban have developed effective strategies to maximize available resources and implement sustainable utilization practices.

Mendrofa et al. (2024) similarly found that resource management is critical to youth organization effectiveness, noting that budget processes and optimal resource utilization significantly impact program delivery. Additionally, Uzoma (2024) emphasized in their research that strategic resource management practices are essential for creating sustainable youth development initiatives, supporting the importance of the resource allocation aspects measured in this study.

Table 5. Status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Advocacy Promotion

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Youth rights awareness campaigns	4.29	0.68	Strongly Agree

2. Social media presence and engagement	4.33	0.64	Strongly Agree
3. Policy advocacy initiatives	4.17	0.71	Agree
4. Youth voice amplification in community affairs	4.15	0.83	Agree
5. Public awareness campaigns on youth issues	4.25	0.77	Strongly Agree
6. Youth leadership promotion initiatives	4.29	0.71	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.25		
SD	0.61		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 5 shows the status of the Local Youth Development Office regarding Advocacy Promotion. It presents the statements, mean, standard deviation and remarks based on respondents' assessments. The social media presence and engagement received the highest mean ($M = 4.33$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.64$), indicating strong agreement among respondents about LYDO's digital advocacy efforts. Both youth rights awareness campaigns and youth leadership promotion initiatives also scored highly, with means of ($M = 4.29$) and standard deviations of ($SD = 0.68$) and ($SD = 0.71$), respectively. Meanwhile, youth voice amplification in community affairs received the lowest mean ($M = 4.15$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.83$), though still reflecting general agreement. The Local Youth Development Office's status in terms of Advocacy Promotion attained a weighted mean score of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.61, which was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents.

In summary, the findings reveal that LYDO in Lumban, Laguna has established high advocacy promotion standards, excelling in social media engagement, youth rights awareness, and leadership promotion initiatives. While the amplification of youth voices in community affairs received a relatively lower score, all aspects were positively assessed. The slightly higher standard deviation for youth voice amplification suggests variance in respondents' perceptions of this aspect. These results indicate that LYDO effectively utilizes various platforms, especially digital media, to advocate for youth concerns and promote youth leadership opportunities.

Musya (2024) similarly emphasized in their assessment the importance of technology utilization in youth engagement, noting that digital platforms significantly enhance outreach and advocacy efforts. Additionally, Dio et al. (2024) found in their research that institutional visibility and public awareness campaigns were strongly correlated with youth satisfaction levels, supporting the importance of the advocacy promotion aspects measured in this study.

Table 6. Composite of Local Youth Development Office

Indicators	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Inclusivity	4.29	0.51	Very High
2. Program Development	4.22	0.58	Very High
3. Community Collaboration	4.19	0.56	High
4. Resource Allocation	4.12	0.56	High
5. Advocacy Promotion	4.25	0.61	Very High
Grand Mean	4.21		
SD	0.56		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

The status of the Local Youth Development Office in terms of Inclusivity, Program Development, Community Collaboration, Resource Allocation, and Advocacy Promotion arrived at a grand mean score of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.56, and was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents. This means the Local Youth Development Office in Lumban, Laguna, demonstrates high operational effectiveness across the measured dimensions. Inclusivity emerged as the highest-rated aspect (4.29), closely followed by Advocacy Promotion (4.25), indicating these are perceived as particular strengths of the LYDO. Resource Allocation received the lowest rating (4.12), though still assessed as high, suggesting this area presents the greatest opportunity for enhancement. The consistent standard deviation values across all dimensions reflect a consensus among respondents about the LYDO performance, with minimal variability in perceptions.

The comprehensive assessment reveals that LYDO has successfully established effective frameworks for youth engagement while balancing resource constraints. The offices have excelled in creating inclusive environments where all youth demographics can promote youth issues through various advocacy channels. While community collaboration and resource allocation received comparatively lower scores, they still reflect strong performance, suggesting the LYDOs have developed effective partnerships and resource management strategies despite typical constraints facing youth development offices.

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2023) similarly found in their assessment that LYDOs across the Philippines demonstrate varying levels of effectiveness, with inclusion and advocacy often representing areas of strength. De Leon and Cruz (2022) also documented in their research that effective LYDOs must balance multiple operational dimensions, noting that resource allocation typically presents the most significant challenge. This aligns with the findings of this study, where resource allocation received the lowest rating among the dimensions measured.

Level of Community Development

In this study, Community Development refers to cohesion and collaboration. The following tables show the statements, means, standard deviations, remarks, and verbal interpretations from the respondents' perspectives.

Table 7. Level of Community Development in terms of Cohesion

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Integration of youth programs with community activities	4.25	0.62	Strongly Agree
2. Cross-generational community projects	4.09	0.69	Agree
3. Cultural exchange programs	4.05	0.62	Agree
4. Community building initiatives	4.12	0.76	Agree
5. Inclusive community events	4.27	0.70	Strongly Agree
6. Strong community networks development	4.32	0.62	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.19		
SD	0.52		
Verbal Interpretation	High		

Table 7 shows the level of community development. It also displays the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks. The development of strong community networks is indicated by the mean ($M = 4.32$), suggesting a very high level of community development regarding cohesion, supported by the standard deviation ($SD = 0.62$). Additionally, inclusive community events are observed. Although the mean is lower ($M = 4.05$), with a standard deviation ($SD = 0.62$), it still indicates the presence of cultural exchange programs.

The level of community development in terms of cohesion attained a weighted mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.52, which was verbally interpreted as high among the respondents. The findings reveal that community development in Lumban, Laguna, demonstrates a high level of cohesion, with particularly strong performance in developing community networks and hosting inclusive events that involve youth. The integration of youth programs with community activities also received strong agreement from respondents, indicating successful bridge between youth-specific and broader community initiatives. Cultural exchange programs received the lowest score, though still positive, suggesting an area with potential for enhancement.

The consistent standard deviation values indicate general agreement among respondents about community cohesion, reflecting a unified perception of how youth development relates to broader community-building efforts. Wani (2024) similarly found in their assessment that effective youth development programs are characterized by strong integration with broader community activities, noting that this integration significantly enhances social harmony and cultural cohesion. Additionally, Ausan et al. (2024) emphasized in their research that inclusive community events and strong networks are essential elements for creating environments where youth can meaningfully contribute to community development, supporting the importance of the cohesion aspects measured in this study.

Table 8. Level of Community Development in terms of Collaboration

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Multi-stakeholder partnerships	4.15	0.69	Agree
2. Shared community resources	4.24	0.67	Strongly Agree
3. Joint community project implementation	4.24	0.61	Strongly Agree
4. Community problem-solving initiatives	4.19	0.70	Agree
5. Collaborative decision-making processes	4.28	0.72	Strongly Agree
6. Resource sharing agreements	4.24	0.67	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.22		
SD	0.54		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 8 shows the level of Community Development in terms of Collaboration. It presents the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks based on respondents' assessments. The collaborative decision-making processes received the highest mean ($M = 4.28$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.72$), indicating strong agreement among respondents regarding the inclusive nature of community decision-making. Shared community resources, joint community project implementation, and resource-sharing

agreements all received identical means ($M = 4.24$) with standard deviations of ($SD = 0.67$), ($SD = 0.61$), and ($SD = 0.67$), respectively, demonstrating strong agreement across resource-sharing aspects. Meanwhile, multi-stakeholder partnerships received the lowest mean ($M = 4.15$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.69$), although it still reflects general agreement. The level of community development in terms of collaboration attained a weighted mean score of 4.22 and a standard deviation of 0.54, which was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents.

The findings indicate that community development in Lumban, Laguna, demonstrates a very high level of collaboration, with particularly strong performance in collaborative decision-making processes that are likely to include youth voices. The resource-focused aspects of collaboration (shared resources, joint projects, and resource sharing agreements) all received strong agreement, suggesting effective pooling and distribution of community assets. While multi-stakeholder partnerships received a relatively lower score, it still reflects a positive assessment.

The consistent standard deviation values indicate consensus among respondents about the collaborative aspects of community development, reflecting well-established partnerships across different sectors. Nalwanga et al. (2024) similarly found that effective community development requires collaborative decision-making processes that engage multiple stakeholders, noting that this approach significantly enhances program outcomes and sustainability. Additionally, Matovu et al. (2023) emphasized in their research that resource sharing agreements and joint project implementation are critical elements for creating sustainable community development initiatives, supporting the importance of the collaboration aspects measured in this study.

Table 9. Composite of Community Development

Indicators	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Cohesion	4.19	0.52	High
2. Collaboration	4.22	0.54	Very High
Grand Mean	4.21		
SD	0.53		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

The level of community development in terms of cohesion and collaboration arrived at a grand mean score of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.53, which was verbally interpreted as very high among the respondents. This means that the community development in Lumban, Laguna, demonstrates a very high level of effectiveness in bringing together diverse stakeholders and resources to support youth development initiatives. The results indicate a slightly stronger performance in Collaboration (4.22) compared to Cohesion (4.19), suggesting that the operational partnerships and resource-sharing mechanisms are particularly well-established. The consistently low standard deviations across both dimensions reflect strong consensus among respondents about the community's development status.

These findings reveal a community environment that effectively supports youth development through relational aspects (cohesion) and operational partnerships (collaboration). The strong collaborative foundation indicates successful integration of youth development with broader community initiatives, while the high cohesion scores suggest meaningful social integration that bridges different community

sectors. This balanced approach provides a supportive ecosystem for youth development programs to thrive and create a sustainable impact.

The Asian Development Bank (2023) similarly found in their regional assessment that effective youth development requires strong community foundations that balance cohesion and collaboration. Additionally, Udeh et al. (2023) emphasized in their comparative research that communities with strong collaborative mechanisms and cohesive social structures create more sustainable environments for youth development programs, supporting the importance of the community development aspects measured in this study.

Level of Youth Engagement

In this study, the level of Youth Engagement refers to Youth Empowerment and Sustainability. The following tables present the statement, mean, standard deviation, remarks, and verbal interpretation from the respondents' perspectives.

Table 10. Level of Youth Engagement in terms of Youth Empowerment

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Leadership development opportunities	4.39	0.54	Strongly Agree
2. Decision-making involvement	4.34	0.62	Strongly Agree
3. Skill-building programs	4.23	0.70	Strongly Agree
4. Youth-led initiative support	4.20	0.65	Agree
5. Capacity building workshops	4.21	0.74	Strongly Agree
6. Youth representation in governance	4.19	0.69	Agree
Weighted Mean	4.26		
SD	0.51		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

Table 10 shows the level of Youth Engagement and presents the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks. The leadership development opportunities yielded a mean ($M = 4.39$), indicating a very high level of Youth Engagement regarding Youth Empowerment, supported by a standard deviation ($SD = 0.54$). Additionally, the decision-making involvement had a mean of 4.19 with a standard deviation of 0.69, still reflecting youth representation in governance. The level of Youth Engagement in terms of Youth Empowerment achieved a weighted mean score of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.51, interpreted verbally as very high among the respondents. In summary, the findings demonstrate that youth engagement in Lumban, Laguna indicates a very high level of youth empowerment, particularly strong in providing leadership development opportunities and meaningful involvement in decision-making processes.

These core empowerment elements received the highest ratings, showing that LYDOs successfully create pathways for youth leadership and authentic participation. Although youth representation in government received the lowest score, all aspects were positively assessed. The consistent standard deviation values suggest consensus among respondents regarding the effectiveness of youth empowerment efforts, reflecting well-established programs that genuinely develop youth capabilities and voice.

Onwuaroh et al. (2024) similarly found that effective youth engagement programs must prioritize leadership development opportunities and meaningful decision-making involvement, noting that these factors significantly enhance youth participation outcomes. Additionally, Romer and Hansen (2021) emphasized in their research that youth empowerment requires structured opportunities for authentic leadership development and voice in governance, supporting the importance of empowerment aspects measured in this study.

Table 11. Level of Youth Engagement in terms of Sustainability

Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1. Long-term program planning	4.15	0.67	Agree
2. Resource sustainability measures	4.14	0.59	Agree
3. Knowledge transfer systems	4.23	0.66	Strongly Agree
4. Continuous improvement processes	4.22	0.71	Strongly Agree
5. Impact assessment mechanisms	4.09	0.66	Agree
6. Future leader development initiatives	4.35	0.56	Strongly Agree
Weighted Mean	4.20		
SD	0.53		
Verbal Interpretation	High		

Table 11 illustrates the level of Youth Engagement regarding Sustainability. It provides the statements, mean, standard deviation, and remarks based on respondents' assessments.

The future leader development initiatives received the highest mean ($M = 4.35$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.56$), indicating strong agreement among respondents about the sustainability of leadership development efforts. The knowledge transfer systems also scored relatively high with a mean of ($M = 4.23$) and a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.66$). Meanwhile, impact assessment mechanisms received the lowest mean ($M = 4.09$) with a standard deviation of ($SD = 0.66$), though still reflecting general agreement. The level of Youth Engagement in terms of Sustainability attained a weighted mean score of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.53 and was verbally interpreted as high among the respondents.

The findings reveal that youth engagement in Lumban, Laguna, demonstrates a high level of sustainability, with particularly strong performance in developing future leaders and establishing knowledge transfer systems. These elements suggest a forward-looking approach that emphasizes continuity and succession planning. Impact assessment mechanisms received the lowest score, indicating an area with potential for enhancement. The consistent standard deviation values indicate consensus among respondents about the sustainability of youth engagement efforts, reflecting well-established systems for ensuring long-term program viability.

Lum et al. (2023) similarly emphasized in their assessment that effective youth programs require robust knowledge transfer systems and future leader development to ensure long-term sustainability. Additionally, Lindsay et al. (2021) found in their international research that sustainable youth development initiatives prioritize continuous improvement processes alongside systematic leadership development, supporting the importance of the sustainability aspects measured in this study.

Table 12. Composite of Youth Engagement

Indicators	Weighted Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Youth Empowerment	4.26	0.51	Very High
2. Sustainability	4.20	0.53	High
Grand Mean	4.23		
SD	0.52		
Verbal Interpretation	Very High		

The level of Youth Engagement in terms of Youth Empowerment and Sustainability reached an impressive mean score of 4.23, with a standard deviation of 0.52. This result was interpreted as very high among the respondents. This indicates that Youth Engagement in Lumban, Laguna, reflects a very high level of effectiveness in empowering youth and ensuring program sustainability. Youth Empowerment (4.26) scored slightly higher than Sustainability (4.20), suggesting that current empowerment initiatives are particularly strong, while also being supported by effective sustainability mechanisms. The consistently low standard deviations across both dimensions illustrate a strong consensus among respondents regarding the state of youth engagement.

These findings reveal a youth engagement approach that effectively balances immediate empowerment with long-term sustainability considerations. Stronger empowerment indicates successful implementation of leadership development and involvement in decision-making among youth. At the same time, the high sustainability scores suggest thoughtful attention to ensuring program continuity and impact over time. This balanced approach creates an environment where youth can develop their capabilities while also contributing to sustainable community development.

Sarkar and Jena (2024) similarly found in their comprehensive assessment that effective youth development requires a dual focus on immediate empowerment opportunities and long-term sustainability mechanisms. Additionally, the National Youth Commission (2023) emphasized in their national youth development index that communities with strong youth engagement demonstrate high levels of youth empowerment and robust sustainability measures, supporting the importance of both dimensions measured in this study.

Test of the Relationship between the Local Youth Development Office and the community development

To examine the significant relationship between the Local Youth Development Office and the Community Development in terms of cohesion and collaboration, they were analyzed statistically using Real Statistics Data Analysis Tools and the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

From the findings presented in Table 13, it can be inferred that at the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis "There is no significant relationship between the Local Youth Development Office and the Community Development" is partially rejected, meaning there is a partial significant relationship between them. The correlation analysis reveals a complex pattern of relationships between LYDO dimensions and community development aspects. Specifically, Inclusivity and Resource Allocation demonstrate significant positive relationships with both Cohesion and Collaboration dimensions of community development, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.67 to 0.72, indicating strong positive correlations. Advocacy Promotion shows a significant relationship with Cohesion ($r = 0.79$) but not with

Collaboration. Interestingly, the Program Development and Community Collaboration dimensions of LYDOs do not show significant relationships with either community development dimension, despite having correlation coefficients in the strong positive range (0.67-0.75).

Table 13. Significant Relationship between Local Youth Development Office and Community Development

Local Youth Development Office	Community Development	
	Cohesion	Collaboration
Inclusivity	0.6944 0.0000	0.6747 0.0093
	Significant	Significant
Program Development	0.6888 0.2355	0.7386 0.7400
	Not Sig	Not Sig
Community Collaboration	0.7520 0.8007	0.6718 0.2094
	Not Sig	Not Sig
Resource Allocation	0.724 0.0061	0.6991 0.0000
	Significant	Significant
Advocacy Promotion	0.7858 0.0058	0.7704 0.3086
	Significant	Not Sig

Correlation Coefficient Value (r)	Direction and Strength of Correlation
0.00 to 0.19	Very Weakly Positive
0.20 to 0.39	Weakly Positive
0.40 to 0.59	Moderately Positive
0.60 to 0.79	Strongly Positive
.80 to 1.00	Perfectly Positive

These findings suggest that LYDOs' inclusive practices and resource allocation strategies consistently and significantly influence community development outcomes. The strong correlation between inclusive and community development dimensions highlights how creating accessible and representative youth programs strengthens community bonds and collaborative processes. Similarly, effective resource allocation by LYDOs significantly relates to enhanced community development, underscoring the importance of effective resource management. The significant relationship between advocacy promotion and community cohesion, but not collaboration, suggests that advocacy initiatives particularly contribute to building shared community identity rather than operational partnerships.

Department of Interior and Local Government (2023) found in their national assessment that local youth offices' inclusive practices and strategic resource allocation significantly contribute to community

development indicators. Additionally, the National Youth Commission (2023) documented that advocacy promotion by LYDOs is particularly impactful for community cohesion measures, supporting the pattern of relationship observed in this study.

Test of the Relationship between the Local Youth Development Office and the Youth Engagement

To test the significant relationship between the Local Youth Development Offices and Youth Engagement regarding Youth Empowerment and Sustainability, they were statistically analyzed using Real Statistics Data Analysis Tools and the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

From the findings, it can be inferred that at the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis "There is no significant relationship between the Local Youth Development Office and the Youth Engagement" is accepted, indicating no significant relationship between them. While the correlation coefficient values predominantly fall within the "strongly positive" range (0.60-0.79), indicating substantial positive relationships between most LYDO dimensions and youth engagement aspects, the statistical significance of these relationships shows a more nuanced pattern. Only Resource Allocation demonstrates consistently significant relationships with both Youth Empowerment ($r = 0.69$, $p < 0.05$) and Sustainability ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.05$). Community Collaboration shows a significant relationship with Youth Empowerment ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.05$), while Inclusivity has a significant relationship with Sustainability ($r = 0.54$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 14. Significant Relationship between the Local Youth Development Offices and the Youth Engagement

Local Youth Development Office	Youth Engagement	
	Youth Empowerment	Sustainability
Inclusivity	0.6328 0.2732	0.5378 0.0024
	Not Sig	Significant
Program Development	0.7291 0.0626	0.7278 0.4837
	Not Sig	Not Sig
Community Collaboration	0.7095 0.0042	0.6575 0.7651
	Significant	Not Sig
Resource Allocation	0.6900 0.0000	0.7432 0.0007
	Significant	Significant
Advocacy Promotion	0.7362 0.5983	0.6691 0.0800
	Not Sig	Not Sig

Correlation Coefficient Value (r)	Direction and Strength of Correlation
0.00 to 0.19	Very Weakly Positive
0.20 to 0.39	Weakly Positive

0.40 to 0.59	Moderately Positive
0.60 to 0.79	Strongly Positive
.80 to 1.00	Perfectly Positive

These findings suggest that, despite strong positive correlations across most dimensions, only specific LYDO aspects significantly influence youth engagement outcomes when controlling statistical significance. The consistent significance of Resource Allocation across both youth engagement dimensions highlights the critical importance of effective resource management in fostering youth empowerment and ensuring program sustainability. This reinforces the understanding that adequate and strategically allocated resources form the foundation for successful youth engagement initiatives. The relationship between Community Collaboration and Youth Empowerment underscores how partnership networks enhance youth empowerment opportunities, while the connection between Inclusivity and Sustainability indicates that inclusive practices contribute to long-term program viability.

Sudan (2023) similarly found that resource allocation strategies have the strongest significant impact on youth development outcomes, particularly noting the relationship between resources and program sustainability. Additionally, Mendrofa et al. (2024) emphasized that community collaboration structures significantly influence youth empowerment metrics, while inclusivity practices contribute to sustainability measures, supporting the pattern of selective significant relationships observed in this study.

Proposed Sustainability Plan

Based on the study's findings, a sustainability plan can be developed by focusing on five key pillars: Inclusivity, Program Development, Community Collaboration, Resource Allocation, and Advocacy Promotion.

Inclusivity, ensure that all community members, especially marginalized groups, have a voice in the planning and decision-making processes. This can be achieved by creating platforms for dialogue, conducting outreach programs, and addressing barriers to participation such as language, mobility, and access to information. Inclusive practices foster social cohesion and ensure that development benefits are equitably distributed.

Program Development, design and implement programs that are contextually relevant and address the specific needs of the community. Programs should be flexible and adaptable, incorporating feedback from community members to ensure they remain effective and responsive to changing circumstances. Capacity-building initiatives, such as training and education, are essential to empower communities and enhance their ability to manage and sustain development efforts.

Community Collaboration, foster partnerships between local residents, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders. Collaborative efforts lead to shared ownership of projects, pooling of resources, and collective problem-solving. Establishing clear roles, maintaining open communication, and building trust are crucial for the success and sustainability of these partnerships.

Resource Allocation, allocate resources efficiently and equitably to support sustainability initiatives. This includes securing funding, providing technical assistance, and ensuring that resources are distributed in a manner that addresses the most pressing needs. Transparent budgeting and financial management practices help build accountability and ensure that resources are used effectively.

Advocacy Promotion, promote policies and practices that support sustainable development at local, regional, and national levels. Advocacy efforts should aim to raise awareness, influence policy decisions,

and mobilize support for sustainability initiatives. Engaging in advocacy helps to create an enabling environment for sustainable development and ensures that the voices of communities are heard in policy-making processes.

By implementing this sustainability plan, the LYDO can create an inclusive, responsive, and resilient framework that empowers youth and fosters community development.

Youth Development Concern	Objective	Target	Strategies	Action	Budget	Person/Department Responsible
Inclusivity	Ensure equitable participation of all youth, especially marginalized and underrepresented groups.	400 Youth	Form youth advisory boards with diverse representation, including indigenous youth, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and persons with disabilities. This ensures that programs address the needs of all sectors. Adopt participatory planning approaches to involve youth in decision-making processes, ensuring their voices shape policies and programs.	Establish Inclusive Youth Councils Implement Participatory Planning Conduct Outreach Programs	Php 80,000	Local Youth Development Office, SK Federation and MSWDO

			Organize community visits and dialogues to reach out-of-school youth and those in remote areas, ensuring their inclusion in LYDO initiatives.			
Program Development	Design and implement responsive programs that address the evolving needs of the youth.	All Members of SK and Local Youth Development Council	<p>Integrate the Philippine Youth Development Plan (PYDP) frameworks into local programs, focusing on areas like health, education, and economic empowerment.</p> <p>Encourage and support projects conceptualized and led by youth, such as environmental campaigns or digital literacy workshops.</p>	<p>Align with National Youth Plans</p> <p>Foster Youth-Led Initiatives</p> <p>Regularly Evaluate Programs</p>	Php 40,000	Local Youth Development Office, SK Federation and Municipal Local Government Operations Office

			Implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess program effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.			
Community Collaboration	Strengthen partnerships with community stakeholders to enhance program reach and effectiveness	All Youth, Leaders SK Officials and Students Org.	<p>Collaborate with schools, NGOs, and faith-based groups to co-create programs and share resources.</p> <p>Facilitate conversation between youth and elders to bridge generational gaps and foster mutual understanding</p> <p>Utilize local facilities and expertise to support youth activities, ensuring sustainability and community ownership.</p>	<p>Engage Local Organizations</p> <p>Promote Intergenerational Dialogues</p> <p>Leverage Community Resources</p>	Php 30,000	Local Youth Development Office, SK Federation and DepEd District Office

Resource Allocation	Ensure efficient and equitable distribution of resources to support youth programs.	SK Officials, Youth Leader and Students Org.	<p>Seeking partnerships with private sector entities, international organizations and grant-making bodies to supplement government funding.</p> <p>Adopt open budgeting practices, allowing stakeholders to understand and contribute to financial decisions.</p> <p>Allocate funds for training LYDO staff and youth leaders to enhance program delivery and leadership skills.</p>	<p>Diversify Funding Sources</p> <p>Implement Transparent Budgeting</p> <p>Invest in Capacity Building</p>	Php 30,000	Local Youth Development Office, SK Federation, DepEd District Office.
	Amplify youth voices and promote		Create multimedia campaigns highlighting youth achievements			

Advocacy Promotion	awareness on youth-related issues.	400 Youths	and pressing issues, encouraging public support and engagement. Host regular forums and dialogues where youth can discuss concerns, propose solutions, and engage with policymakers Facilitate the participation of youth in local and national decision-making bodies, ensuring their perspectives influence policies.	Develop Comm. Campaigns Organizing Youth Forums Support Youth Represent	Php 100,000	Local Youth Development Office, SK Federation
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CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Overall, LYDO in Lumbar is highly regarded and holds a very high status, with excellent scores in inclusiveness, advocacy promotion, and program development, demonstrating that various programs in the community do advocate for youths.
2. Resource allocation can improve LYDO's financial resource management and utilization.
3. The community exhibits a high level of cohesiveness and collaboration, which is evident in the networks, events, and resources that promote youth development.
4. It demonstrates a high level of youth participation and sustainability, indicating that leadership and the program's continuation have been achieved.

5. Inclusivity and resource allocation show the strongest correlation with community development dimensions, suggesting that these factors significantly contribute to the community's cohesion and collaboration.
6. Advocacy promotion is strongly associated with community cohesiveness but not with collaboration, implying that advocacy efforts enhance the collective social bond but not operational cooperation.
7. The analysis indicates that resource allocation is the most significant factor in determining both youth empowerment and sustainability, highlighting the importance of resource management.
8. It is also important to note that the findings indicate that LYDO status is related to youth engagement; however, other factors may have been overlooked in this study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **For Local Youth Development Office:** a. Strengthen Resource Allocation Strategies: Enhance the distribution of financial resources, management of human resources, and strategies for resource mobilization. b. Maintain and Enhance Inclusivity Practices: Continue to ensure accessibility for diverse youth populations and cultural sensitivity in programming. c. Expand Advocacy Initiatives: Further develop advocacy efforts to strengthen the connection between social media engagement and community partnerships. d. Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation: Improve procedures to assess program impacts and better guide improvements. e. Develop an Integrated Sustainability Plan: Address long-term planning, impact assessment, and measures for resource sustainability.
2. **For Local Government Units:** a. Increase Resource Support: Provide enhanced financial and material resources to support LYDO operations. b. Strengthen Policy Framework: Develop policies that institutionalize collaborative decision-making and resource sharing. c. Enhance Training Programs: Establish capacity building for LYDO staff, focusing on resource management and program evaluation. d. Facilitate Multi-Sectoral Partnerships: Promote partnerships between LYDOs and private sector organizations.
3. **For Youth Leaders and Volunteers:** a. Actively Participate in Governance: Enhance youth representation in governance structures. b. Develop Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms: Facilitate knowledge transfer between generations of youth leaders. c. Initiate Youth-Led Projects: Create and implement community projects that address local needs. d. Engage in Advocacy: Join advocacy campaigns to amplify youth voices.
4. **For Future Researchers:** a. Expand the Study Scope: Conduct similar studies in other municipalities to identify regional patterns. b. Explore Additional Variables: Investigate other factors influencing the relationship between LYDO status and outcomes. c. Conduct Longitudinal Research: Track changes in LYDO effectiveness and outcomes over time. d. Employ Mixed Methods: Incorporate qualitative research to gain deeper insights.

Sustainability Plan for Local Youth Development Office

Based on the findings and recommendations, a proposed framework for a sustainability plan includes the following key components:

1. **Institutional Capacity Building**
 - Regular staff training on resource management and program development
 - Development of operational manuals and standard procedures

- Establishment of knowledge management systems
- Implementation of mentorship programs for new staff
- 2. **Resource Sustainability**
 - Diversification of funding sources beyond government allocations
 - Development of income-generating projects
 - Establishment of resource-sharing agreements with community partners
 - Implementation of cost-efficiency measures
- 3. **Program Enhancement**
 - Regular needs assessment and program adaptation
 - Structured monitoring and evaluation systems
 - Innovation in program design and delivery methods
 - Integration of technology for program efficiency
- 4. **Community Engagement**
 - Formalization of partnerships with educational institutions and the private sector
 - Regular community consultations and feedback mechanisms
 - Joint project planning and implementation with community stakeholders
 - Transparent communication about programs and impact
- 5. **Youth Leadership Development**
 - Structured leadership succession planning
 - Creation of an alum network for continued engagement
 - Establishment of youth-led decision-making structures
 - Development of advanced leadership training programs
- 6. **Advocacy and Policy Development**
 - Systematic documentation of program impact for Advocacy
 - Policy recommendation frameworks based on program findings
 - Enhanced digital and traditional media engagement strategies
 - Youth-led advocacy campaigns on critical issues

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