IJAMS
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
Volume IV, Issue 6 June 2024, eISSN: 2799-0664

The "Gulayan Sa Paaralan" Program (GPP): Success Stories of Teachers in Dujali National High School

JOEL H. CAMPION
Master Teacher I
joelcampion21@gmail.com

Abstract — This study documented the best experiences of teachers of Dujali National High School's "Gulayan sa Paaralan" in response to sustainable development. The following were raised to answer the main problem: (1) determine the GP's success stories of teachers; (2) assess the challenges met by teachers in the GP; (3) identify the lessons learned by teachers in the GP as guidelines for its successful implementation and monitoring. The researcher gathered the different stories of the teachers. From the narratives, the researcher classified the themes into the following: selling produce from the gardens; generating resources and conducting fundraising; reducing malnutrition among the students; clearer roles of the stakeholders; and training of parents. For Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, the following are the challenges encountered by the identified school: sustaining the garden; multiple tasks of teachers since teachers must focus on teaching; physical factors such as poor soil quality, space, poor drainage, and water access; lack of appropriate tools in documenting the contribution of the garden; inadequate funding support; and inadequate support from the school administrator. Lessons were learned by the teachers and other stakeholders. Unity, cooperation, and commitment were prime among the values. Sustainability of the program was also a priority made through resource mobilization and fund-raising activities. Parents were made more accountable for their children's health through proper nutrition and tending the garden in their spare time.

Keywords — School-based gardening, Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, challenges, lessons, food and nutritional security

I. Introduction

A school garden is a living laboratory, an innovative teaching tool and strategy allowing educators to incorporate hands-on activities in lessons. It engages students by providing them a dynamic environment where they can observe, discover, experiment, nurture, and learn by themselves. Rather than using textbook examples, school gardens provide a venue for learning that draws from real-life experiences, allowing students to become more active participants in the learning process.

Backyard gardening has always been a very important segment of the Filipino cultural life. Rural families depend to live sustainably based on the quality of garden harvest they reap during the harvest season. By the time they want to prepare for the day's meal, the vegetable garden is ready to provide a palatable food for their appetite. Before the arrival of the Spanish colonizers in the Philippines, life among the tribal Filipino families is inadequately centered in the farm due to its foraging lifestyle; inefficient gardening and shifting cultivation are obvious, brimming with

rituals. To ensure success, rituals of appeasement and permission have to be performed before embarking upon any hunting, gathering, planting, and harvesting activities; otherwise, the spirits would be hurt and bring about a bad luck (Jocano, 2000). Loarca, Alciña, and Buenventura's accounts in Inocian (2013) are sufficient support that "puso" (rice pouches) are used as a ritual object among the Cebuano farmers, before the Spanish colonization in line with telluric purpose, that has contributed to a certain form of mysticism of farm rituals – a celebration of a unique farmers' experience with nature.

To help the national government and other agencies tasked to alleviate the masses from hunger and poverty, on July 27, 2007, DepEd Memorandum No. 293 s. 2007) otherwise known as Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) was conceived and currently being implemented by the Department of Education. It sought to intensify its school-based food and nutrition program to address the "hunger and malnutrition problems which hamper children in pursuing education. The project aimed to promote self-help food production activities and inculcate among children the importance of agriculture as a life support system.

"*Gulayan sa Paaralan*" Program intends also to feed the school children with the school produce (gulay and rootcrops) taking into consideration the concern of teachers regarding the nutritional status of the learners. It is indeed very important to have good nutrition to have good learning. Research about learning told that poor health and hunger hinder the child's quest for knowledge and skills though how good the teacher is. It's time for the teachers now to help pupils achieve high level of performance, let's plant more crops and vegetables in the school.

However, it seems that "*Gulayan sa Paaralan*" was not clearly disseminated to all the school administrators especially in far flung areas as both teachers and school heads focus their energy to other programs of the DepEd such as Brigada Eskwela, Teachers' Month Celebration, Disaster Preparedness, Gender and Development, Sports Competition and among others.

In such premise, the researcher was motivated to conduct the current study to assess the status of the implementation of the "*Gulayan sa Paaralan"* in Dujali National High School, Division of Davao Oriental for the School Year 2021-2022. For this was the passion of the researcher since then. In this study, the researcher will focus on the success stories, experiences, challenges, and insights encountered in the implementation of "*Gulayan sa Paaralan*."

This study aimed to document the best experiences of teachers of Dujali National High School's "Gulayan sa Paaralan" in response to sustainable development. The following objectives were raised to answer the main problem: (1) determine the GP's success stories of teachers; (2) assess the challenges met by teachers in the GP; (3) identify the lessons learned by teachers in the GP as guidelines for its successful implementation and monitoring.

Teachers reported that working in the garden gave them an arena in which they could encourage pupils to become active and independent learners. According to the data gathered, Passy (2007), the experiences afforded by taking the pupils outside and encouraging them to undertake

investigative work involves a different kind of pedagogy in which pupils take greater control over their own learning and in which the teacher's role becomes more facilitative. The cognitive learning outcomes from such work were reported as including greater scientific knowledge and understanding, using scientific techniques, enhanced literacy and numeracy and the use of a wider vocabulary across all areas of the curriculum. Some of this learning appeared to be linked specifically to gardening and the garden, while other learning related more to being outdoors and being able to engage in physical activities that were not possible in the confines of the classroom. Teachers were able to identify cognitive outcomes in science across a variety of contexts that were not necessarily directly related to the physical act of gardening. They identified cases in which, through garden-related activities, children were able to demonstrate an understanding of scientific concepts (such as taxonomy), scientific methods (including devising experiments), scientific knowledge (including habitats and life cycles) and appropriate scientific language. The range of strategies teachers used were broader than was possible in a classroom and involved children moving about, touching, feeling, exploring, and observing for themselves. This type of work 'brings learning alive' in a way that pupils clearly enjoyed.

The impact of gardening on the affective domains (pupil attitudes, values, beliefs, and self-perceptions) was most evident in relation to enhanced self-esteem and motivation. Although this was described in many ways, the general feeling was summed up when a gardening lead described the garden as 'a real leveler…'. None of the teacher or parent interviewees expressed any reservations in relation to the role of the garden in this part of children's development. Indeed, work in the garden was frequently reported as an instrument to improve children's self-esteem, particularly for those who lacked confidence and self-belief.

Schools reported that the garden is a particularly appropriate place in which to gain new physical skills and to learn about healthy eating and sustainable living so that there was a behavioral change in relation to eating food. Almost all had stories to tell of individual children whose behavior had been greatly influenced (for the better) by the garden.

The Department of Education, through the Bureau of Learner Support Services- School Health Division (BLS-SHD), sustains the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP) in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools nationwide.

This program aims to address malnutrition and to promote vegetable production and consumption among school children. The agency issued series of Memoranda pertaining to GPP such as: Department of Education Memorandum No. 293,s.2007, which aims to encourage both public elementary and secondary schools to establish school gardens to ensure continues supply of vegetables for school feeding, Department of Education Memorandum No. 223,s.2016, which is to strengthen the implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in public elementary and secondary schools nationwide, and Department of Education Memorandum No. 095,s. 2018 which aims to sustain the implementation of GPP in public elementary and secondary schools nationwide.

The role of DepEd is to campaign for the entire community, where the school is situated, to put up an integrated garden in school and a nursery. The National Greening Program as stipulated through DepEd Memorandum No. 58 requires schools a functional backyard garden for the entire community, to be managed through a concerted effort of the schools' officials and families, to ensure sustainable growth, so that hunger is minimized.

For a successful school gardening, DeMarco (1997) proposed increasing teacher and environmental education and the interdisciplinary use of horticulture through school-based gardening. Gridley (1997) summarized important points in school gardening that promotes participatory process and environmental stewardship. More so, Hazzard (2010) established key factors for a successful school gardening program that include of having committed people, identifying a school garden coordinator, encouraging volunteerism, and using the garden academically and for the health. In addition, putting oneself engage to gardening which in turn would improve their chances at living a healthy life. School gardening has direct positive impact on a person's health, mobility, and future quality of life. Kumar, et. al (2009) examined the health benefits of activity outdoors such as gardening and suggested links to positive impacts on health. Mitchell and Popham (2008) added that the use of outdoor natural spaces is particularly important to person's health and the exposure to it could play a vital role in reducing health inequalities specially at this time of worldwide crisis.

The full involvement of the school principal, teachers, and other faculty members helped sustain the activities of the integrated school nutrition model. They organized meetings and focus group discussions with parents and the community, paving the way for financial and other support from the local government and private organizations to come in. Village officials, in partnership with the NGOs, provided the school with a potable water station, computer sets, air conditioners, school supplies, and other materials that helped the school implement the nutrition programs effectively. The Department of Education donated storybooks for the school's Nutrition Education LRC. The Health Center also donated flip charts and other health-related instructional materials.

The village health workers and nutrition scholars helped the conduct nutrition education to teachers, students, parents, and community members. The school regularly monitors and evaluates the nutrition education activities to make improvements and continually stir the interest of the students, parents, and the community. Asking for technical assistance from established nutrition and agriculture experts helped the school make the necessary adjustments.

This study is anchored on the Malthusian theory, which supports that as "human population increases geometrically, food production increases arithmetically". If human individuals find it difficult to prolong marriageable age, if not to suspend it, to limit the number of birth rates and curb the growing population, then it is a challenge on how government and non-government organizations can find ways to increase food production. This challenges different schools to be sustainable in resources management. TES-GP has exemplified a better strategy for School-based Management System (SBMS), upon which this study is basically moored. In the SBMS, the school

is given the blanket authority to make relevant decisions to ensure quality in the management of resources and anticipate growth.

Likewise, the TES-GP study is also transcended on Zahavi's Pre-Reflective Self-awareness Theory of Experience, which explains that pre-reflective self-awareness of the experience is nothing but the perpetual self-manifestation of the absolute flow of consciousness constitutes itself and brings awareness to the act of experience. According to Gee (2014) Zahavi's view on consciousness is the extended view of primal impression, retention, and protentional that constitute the presence, as one unitary element. The experiences of the subject in backyard gardening are juxtaposed since 2011 (retention) = to what it has brought now (primal impression) = to what will it bring base on the then and now experiences (protentional). Zahavi takes such a view to be able to maintain the presence so that he can hold his view of pre-reflective self-awareness where self-manifestation of the absolute flow and pre-reflective self-awareness coincide (Gee, 2014). This concurs that assessment of the TES-GP.

II. Methodology

Qualitative method of research design was used in the study. This means that qualitative methods were applied to interpret the gathered pertinent data (Creswell, 2003). In the study, the qualitative description of the situation using the narratives or responses factually and accurately without being influenced by the researcher.

Thus, the research design would provide basic information about the study specifically about the *Gulayan sa Paaralan* Program and how teachers responded to the mandate about it. This study used cluster sampling technique wherein teachers were grouped according to sex, and from the clustered groupings, the researcher employed a simple random sampling technique to get the desired sample of the study. In gathering useful and relevant data - informal interviews, adapted and modified questionnaires were used to answer the problems of the study.

The participants of the study were 10 teachers of Dujali National High School of Dujali, Davao Oriental. This would mean that the researcher got two (2) teachers each from grades 7 and 8; and three (3) teachers each from grades 9 and 10 for a total of 10 teachers. As to consideration of the School Head's recommendation on places to use as school garden, each group (year level) was given an area to utilize in their gardening activities.

The face-to-face interview using guided questions provided the most appropriate instrument to understand the phenomena. Most of the emphasis is on the role of the researcher to elicit and represent an interpretive relationship of the world (Hiller & Di Luzio, 2004). One-on-one interviews in qualitative research have advantages and disadvantages (Rubin & Rubin, 2001). The advantages include reduced time to collect data, greater access to research participants, a commonly accepted protocol for valid qualitative research, ease of replication of the research and observance of protective health protocols.

The gathered data were treated using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the thorough inspection of themes generated across an extensive assembly of practices in an array of forms such as written words and responses (Jupp, 2006). The process of thematic analysis in this paper involved stages of exploring the data.

Thematic analyses were used to analyze the recorded and transcribed responses of the participants. It requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher. Thematic analyses move beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focus on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is, themes. Codes are then typically developed to represent the identified themes and applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis. Such analyses may or may not include the following: comparing code frequencies, identifying code co-occurrence, and graphically displaying relationships between codes within the data set.

III. Results and Discussion

The researcher gathered the different stories of the teachers. From the narratives, the researcher classified the themes into the following: selling *produce from the gardens*; *generating resources and conducting fundraising*; *reducing malnutrition among the students; clearer roles of the stakeholders; and training of parents.*

For Gulayan sa Paaralan Program, the following are the challenges encountered by the identified school: *sustaining the garden; multiple tasks of teachers since teachers must focus on teaching; physical factors such as poor soil quality, space, poor drainage, and water access; lack of appropriate tools in documenting the contribution of the garden; inadequate funding support; and inadequate support from the school administrator.*

There were hurdles, hindrances, and struggles before and during the implementation of the program like negative reactions from some parents, teachers, and stakeholders. There were also questions of transparency and time constraints. But through teamwork, great work was achieved. The support of the LGUs and other stakeholders were vital in the success of the program. The school committees ensured transparency in the proceeds of the fundraising. Developing tangible outcomes helped the school earn the trust and loyalty of the stakeholders. Involving the community and stakeholders in school endeavors made the program successful. Their support was the anchor of the school. Their combined efforts made remarkable impact on the learners.

Analysis

The knowledge, attitudes, and practices of both parents and children on nutrition are probable contributors to a child's nutritional status. In delivering health and nutrition services, schools are appropriate settings because of their potential to reach millions of children. The

parents' experiences showed that through nutrition education, students learned the value of their health together with their parents and guardians. They can now easily identify the vegetables planted in the school garden because they also regularly visit it. Essential to a child's health is the participation of parents in the program so that they can apply healthy eating habits and cook healthy meals at home and influence the entire family, and eventually the community. It is through the gulayan project of the school that the students have learned about nutrition and parents had been made aware of its importance.

The barangay health workers and nutrition scholars helped the conduct nutrition education to teachers, students, parents, and community members. The school regularly monitors and evaluates the nutrition education activities to make improvements and continually stir the interest of the students, parents, and the community. Asking for technical assistance from established nutrition and agriculture experts helped the school make the necessary adjustments.

Lessons were learned by the teachers and other stakeholders. Unity, cooperation, and commitment were prime among the values. Sustainability of the program was also a priority made through resource mobilization and fund-raising activities. Parents were made more accountable for their children's health through proper nutrition and tending the garden at their spare time.

Discussion

The Department of education has already collaborated with the Department of Agriculture and Department of Health to answer for malnutrition and encourage vegetable gardening in schools. DepEd Memorandum No.191 series of 2013 stipulates that "Gulayan sa Paaralan" should be implemented in all public schools especially those with high prevalence of malnutrition, high poverty incidence, low academic performance, and other related factors.

Another initiative is the DO No.37 series of 2014 commonly known as School-based Feeding Program of SY 2014-2015. It aimed to address undernutrition and short-term hunger among public school children. These are but few of the numerous efforts to solve malnutrition and short-term hunger in school children. Success however cannot be measured by the number of memorandum or orders passed for project implementation. The bigger challenge lies on how effective and sustainable are these projects in terms of addressing the real issue.

A very good determinant of willingness to implement a project is on how much value you put on that subject matter. Primary and secondary schools should learn or appreciate the value of sustaining vegetable gardens not only limited to feeding and nutrition purposes but also because gardening skills among children preserves local and scientific knowledge especially on organic farming that is helpful for the environment. More importantly, as pupils work in team to create gardens, they develop or instill core values that are now diminishing because of the presence of some technologies. These values are honesty, perseverance, hard work and teamwork.

Moreover, the importance and value of gardening has heightened due to increasing pressure for strengthening local food systems through smallholder farmers and schools especially in developing countries and vulnerable countries to climate change impacts, like the Philippines. According to the World Food Program, food security is going to be extra challenging soon. So, the perfect time to do vegetable garden is now.

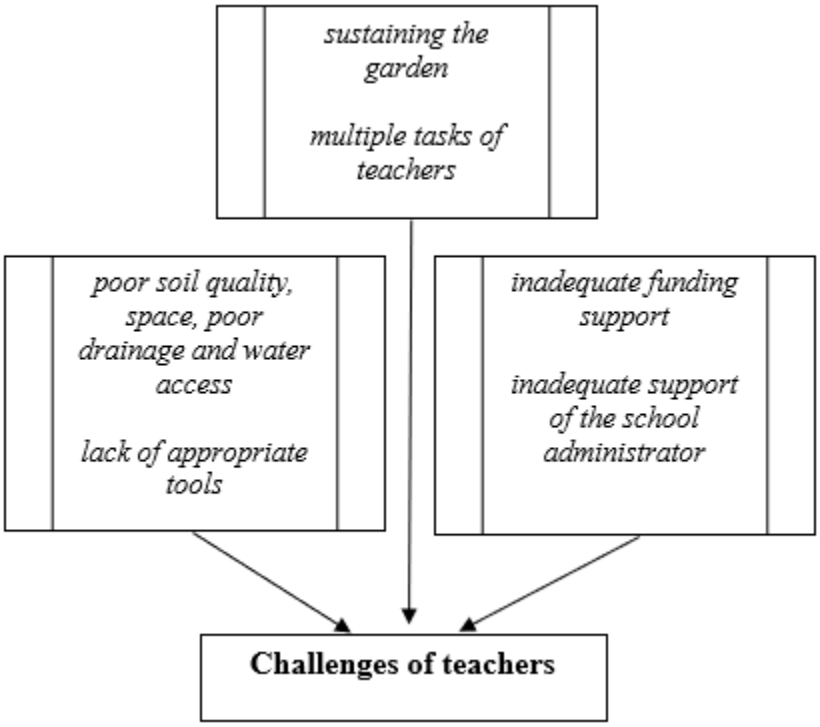
So, while we produce food and promote good nutrition with school vegetable gardening, the future of our children is also being secured with knowledge and skills they gain for their empowerment and for future resiliency. Thus, school gardening hits at least 3 birds with one stone. This is why school gardens make the best harvest, and that is total child development. There is no excuse that this should not be included or integrated in primary schools' curriculum. With this in practice in the entire DepEd, there's no doubt to see or read future social media blogs of how free lunch that is derived from school vegetable gardens helped a young poor boy finish school successfully. Then we have proved once again that poverty is not a hindrance to success.

REFERENCES

[1] Jocano, F. Landa (2000). Filipino indigenous ethnic communities. PUNLAD Research House, Manila, Philippines.
[2] Inocian, Reynaldo B. (2013). Lukay art in cebu: a heritage of living tradition. European Scientific Journal, Volume 9, No.32 , November 2013 Edition.
[3] Passy, R. (2012). School gardens: teaching and learning outside the front door. Education, 3(13) 1-16. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2011. 636371
[4] DeMarco, L. W. (1997). The factors affecting elementary school teachers' integration of school gardening into the curriculum. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Blacksburg, VA
[5] Gridley, M. M. (1997). Gardens for teaching: A case study in integrating behavioral factors in the design of outdoor educational environments for children. (Unpublished master thesis). State University of New York, Syracuse, NY.
[6] Hazzard, E. L. (2010). Utilization of garden-based education to positively impact children's nutrition knowledge and behaviors (Unpublished doctoral dissertation) University of California, Davis, CA.
[7] Kumar J, Muntner P, Kaskel FJ, Hailpern SM, Melamed ML. (2009) Prevalence and associations of 25-Hydroxyvitamin D deficiency in US children: NHANES 2001-2004. Pediatrics. 2009;4:.
[8] Mitchell, R. and Popham, F. (2008) Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequalities: an observational population study.The Lancet372(9650):pp. 1655-1660.http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/4767/ 25th November 2008 Glasgow ePrints Service https://eprints.gla.ac.uk
[9] Gee, Jared (2014). Phenomenology and time: Husserl, Derrida, Zahavi. Academia.edu https://www.academia.edu/
[10] Hiller, H. H., & DiLuzio, L. (2004). The Interviewee and the Research Interview: Analysing a Neglected Dimension in Research. Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 41(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1755-618X.2004.tb02167.x

[11] Rubin and Rubin (2001). Hearing the Interviewee. Community organizing development, Allyn and Bacon 2001.
[12] Jupp, V. (2006). The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods. SAGE.
[13] https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857020116
[14] DepEd (2018). DepEd Implements "Gulayan Sa Paaralan" Program (2008), Philippine School News, Retrieved April 30, 2015

APPENDIX



AUTHOR'S PROFILE

JOEL H. CAMPION

The author is 44 years old, and is married to Atty. Yasmin Valle-Campion, born on December 10, 1979, at San Miguel, Tagum, Davao del Norte, Philippines. He is currently living at Purok 1A, Cabayangan, Braulio E. Dujali, Davao del Norte, Philippines. He finished his primary and elementary education at Dujali Elementary School, Dujali, Panabo, Davao del Norte school year 1992-1993, and received honors. He then went on to complete his secondary education at

Dujali National High School, Dujali, Panabo, Davao del Norte school year 1996-1997, also with honors. He acquired his Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education major in Crop Science at the University of Southeastern Philippines, Mabini Campus, Compostela Valley Province. He graduated in this institution as Cum Laude and with flying colors in the academic year 2000-2001. Immediately after his graduation he took and passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers in the same year. His career began as a Supervisor at SM Mall, Ecoland, Davao City, a position he held until calendar year 2002. He then transitioned to the educational field, starting as a Local School Board Teacher at La Libertad National High School, La Libertad, Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte school year 2002-2003. On July 1, 2004, he secured his permanent position as Teacher I at Dujali National High School, Dujali, Braulio E. Dujali, Davao del Norte. He then pursued his Master's Degree in Education majoring in Educational Management at Quezon College of Southern Philippines, Inc., Tacurong City, and earned Thirty (30) units during the Academic Year 2018-2010. He then transferred to Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc., Davao City and continued his Master of Arts in Home Economics from 2020-2022 Academic Year.

Over the years, Joel's dedication, and excellence in teaching led to his promotion to Master Teacher 1 on December 1, 2022. As an educator he strives to inspire students in many ways to pursue their passions and instill in them the value of perseverance, hard work, and critical thinking and encouraging them to make a positive impact in their respective communities. His commitment to education is reflected in his words and actions which ultimately led to his promotion to Master Teacher II on May 14, 2024. Joel's commitment to education and his career reflects his belief in lifelong learning and his devotion to nurturing future generations.