

Empowering the Future: The Sangguniang Kabataan's Role in Shaping the Lives of Young Filipinos

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Abstract. The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) serves as the youth council in the Philippines, providing a platform for young individuals to engage in local governance and advocate for youth interests. This study explores the experiences of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons in Barangay Kiwalan from 1992 to 2021. Using oral interviews, the researcher gathered insights from Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons and selected local residents for data validation. The goal was to gain a deeper understanding of youth leadership and governance at the local level. The study reveals that the Sangguniang Kabataan was established through the Local Government Code of 1991 and Republic Act No. 7160, aiming to facilitate youth participation in governance and empower young Filipinos aged 15 to 30. Over the study period, Barangay Kiwalan saw six elected Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, each shouldering significant responsibilities. Their experiences varied but collectively served as milestone achievements and foundational experiences for their future endeavors beyond Sangguniang Kabataan leadership. Recommendations include ongoing training and support for Sangguniang Kabataan officials, guidance from Barangay Officials, regular consultations, transparency in transactions, and active participation from the Katipunan ng Kabataan. These measures are essential for enhancing Sangguniang Kabataan performance and fostering community peace and harmony.

Keywords: Sangguniang Kabataan; Youth leadership; Local governance.

1.0 Introduction

The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) in the Philippines is a community council representing youth in barangays. It was established to empower young leaders and engage them in community affairs. Its main functions include promoting youth objectives, initiating social, political, economic, cultural, spiritual, and physical development programs, and conducting fundraising programs. According to Santos & Ocat (2019), the Sangguniang Kabataan is the predecessor of the Kabataan ng Barangay, which was implemented through the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) to offer young people (ranging from ages 15 to 30) an opportunity to actively participate in local government activities in their barangays and serve as a training ground for them to become the next leaders of our nation.

According to ohchr.org (2021), young people should be able to shape responses actively and be meaningfully involved in all parts and phases of the reaction. Certain privileges for Sangguniang Kabataan officials are stipulated in the implementing rules and regulations of the Republic Act no. 10742, which incentivizes young individuals to run for positions in the Sangguniang Kabataan. People participated in politics for various reasons or motivations. Upon assumption to office, the Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson serves as an ex officio member of the Sangguniang Barangay, elected by youth members, representing the youth's aspirations and concerns, bridging the gap between the younger demographic and the barangay council. They organize meetings, lead the

formulation of the Comprehensive Barangay Youth Development Plan, and implement policies in coordination with the Sangguniang Barangay and the Youth Development Council. They supervise the affairs of the Sangguniang Kabataan, appoint key members, coordinate with other youth organizations, and automatically become a member of the Sangguniang Barangay.

The researcher focused on the Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan from 1992 to 2021 because it is one of the earliest settlements and one of the oldest local government units in Iligan City. Its strategic location makes it suitable for human settlement and economic activities, and it is home to a diverse population of youth with various interests and aspirations. The researcher is also the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson of Barangay Kiwalan (2021-2023), who can provide unique insights into the realities faced by youth leaders. Drawing from personal experiences, the researcher can offer practical recommendations for improving Sangguniang Kabataan programs, fostering youth participation, and strengthening community partnerships. This firsthand perspective enriches academic discourse and policymaking, ensuring that the voices and needs of the youth are heard and addressed effectively.

In this paper, the researcher explored the experiences and challenges of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons navigating their leadership role within the youth council. It aims to examine the role and responsibilities of a Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson and their impact on community development, highlighted the significance of empowering youth leadership within local governance structures like the Sangguniang Kabataan. It demonstrates how youth participation and activism can contribute to positive social change and sustainable development at the grassroots level.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study will be using a qualitative research approach that aims to collect and analyze non-numerical data obtained through open-ended questions, specifically the phenomenological research method, which is well suited for collecting narratives of the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons. Therefore, this allows researchers to gather information on the experiences of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan.

2.2 Research Locale

This study revolved around Barangay Kiwalan, Iligan City. The Barangay is situated at approximately 8.2857, 124.2878, in the island of Mindanao. Elevation at these coordinates is estimated at 302.5 meters or 992.4 feet above mean sea level.

2.3 Research Participants

The Researcher uses purposive sampling to select the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan from 1992 to 2021. This is just right as the group is not randomly distributed but is defined by their former role and the time period they served. The former SK Chairpersons possess unique insights and experiences relevant to your research objectives. Their firsthand knowledge and historical perspectives on local governance and youth participation are crucial for understanding the evolution and impact of the SK in Barangay Kiwalan.

2.4 Research Instrument

The Researcher used an interview guide questionnaire containing a set of questions that will allow the Former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan to share their experiences, particularly on the contributions and challenges that affected their roles towards the youth of Barangay Kiwalan.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher forwarded a permission letter to the Department of Interior and Local Government and Local Government Unit of Barangay Kiwalan to conduct the study because Sangguniang Kabataan is under these offices. Once approved, the researcher will disseminate a document containing the letter of consent to the participants. The narratives of the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan gathered through in-depth interviews that allowed them to share their lived experiences, challenges, and contributions during their terms from 1992 to 2021. The gathered narratives directly from Former Sangguniang Chairpersons, researchers can gain valuable insights into the challenges they faced, the strategies they employed, and the lessons they

learned during their tenure. The interview will be recorded with the permission of the participants for the researchers to review their responses and for documentation purposes. For additional information, the researcher has accessed the internet, research, articles, and PDFs about the roles and functions of the Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data is cleaned, reduced, and clustered into themes to create textural descriptions of participants' perceptions of a phenomenon. These descriptions are then used to construct structural descriptions, incorporating the experiences into a narrative format. The researcher synthesizes the data by creating two narratives, describing "what" and "how" the experience occurred. This phenomenological research method helps gather information on Sangguniang Kabataan members' experiences and perspectives on their roles towards the Filipino youth, providing a thorough understanding for future reforms.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

This research study followed ethical guidelines. The researcher ensures that the identities of the Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson remain confidential. Before interviewing the participants, the researcher obtained informed consent, explaining the purpose of the study, potential risks, and benefits, and allowing the participants to voluntarily participate or withdraw. The researcher strives for objectivity and avoids bias when analyzing Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons' narratives.

3.0 Results

3.1 The Roles and Responsibilities of Sangguniang Kabataan

The Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) is a community council that represents the youth in each barangay in the Philippines. The roles and responsibilities of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons are shaped by the Local Government Code of 1991 and the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act (RA 10742). The Sangguniang Kabataan is tasked with addressing the needs and aspirations of the youth sector and the entire barangay community. They are expected to engage in activities and projects that promote youth development and participation in local governance. Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons have several key duties, including organizing and leading meetings of the youth council, formulating the Comprehensive Barangay Youth Development Plan, implementing youth-focused policies and programs in coordination with the Sangguniang Barangay, and supervising the affairs and activities of the Sangguniang Kabataan. They also automatically become members of the Barangay Council and lead the Committee on Youth and Sports. A study by Malaluan et al. evaluated the performance of Sangguniang Kabataan officials under the 1991 Local Government Code and the Lyceum Community's perception of Sangguniang Kabataan abolition. The results showed that Sangguniang Kabataan officials performed their duties well, but respondents believed reformation would correct shortcomings. Recommendations included reviewing Republic Act 7160, evaluating officials' performance through annual and end-of-term reports, and enhancing the annual *Linggo ng Kabataan* through collaboration with higher-level government units. The Sangguniang Kabataan serves as a platform for emerging youth leaders to hone their skills in public service. With the reforms introduced by RA 10742, such as raising the age range of Sangguniang Kabataan members and creating the Local Youth Development Council, the Sangguniang Kabataan is poised to play an even more significant role in promoting youth empowerment and community development in the Philippines.

Republic Act 10742 introduced significant reforms, including raising the age of Sangguniang Kabataan officials from 15 to 18 years old, prohibiting individuals from seeking appointments who are related to elected or appointed officials, and creating a Local Youth Development Council to support Sangguniang Kabataan programs. The Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons are expected to undergo training and capacity building to enhance their skills and knowledge in governance and youth development. The Sangguniang Kabataan has a budget allocated for its activities and projects, emphasizing the importance of effective financial management for successful implementation. Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons are accountable to their constituents and must ensure transparency and openness in their decision-making processes. This reform was supported by Maranon II (2018), which highlighted the need to exclude individuals under 18 years old due to their political immaturity. On the other hand, Balane (2015) observed that young people are actively participating in various initiatives, such as advocating for gender equality and sustainable development. The Commonwealth (2015) emphasized the importance of empowering young people by providing them with choices, informed decision-making, and

accountability. The UNRC (2011) also emphasized the right of youths to express their views and opinions. The Sangguniang Kabataan plays a crucial role in nation-building and ensuring youth inclusivity in good governance.

Implementation Strategies

Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons in different barangays, such as Barangay Kiwalan, may employ diverse strategies for implementing activities, projects, and youth engagement. These approaches can be influenced by their personal experiences, local context, and the needs of their constituents. A strong relationship between the Sangguniang Kabataan and the Barangay Council is crucial for addressing the needs and aspirations of the youth sector and the entire barangay community. This collaboration can lead to more effective governance and better outcomes for the community. The roles and responsibilities of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons are shaped by the Local Government Code of 1991 and the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act. Effective governance and youth engagement require a combination of strategic planning, financial management, and collaboration with other local government units. As Gorospe (2018) noted, if the requirements for aspiring youth politicians were measured by their skills in leadership and management, their constituencies would have fewer headaches in choosing the best among the worst. Similarly, Vivas (2015) observed that the Sangguniang Kabataan, under its current structure, had lost its effectiveness in advancing the democratic ideals of service-oriented youth leadership. The community has already observed that the young leaders duly elected are inefficient in their respective offices. On the other hand, the ineffectiveness of the Sangguniang Kabataan's performance may be due to a lack of engagement, which stems from a lack of trust between youth and adult community members in the government (Winkler n.d.).

3.2 The Experiences, Contributions, And Challenges Of The Former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons

This section is the presentation of narratives highlighting the experiences, challenges, and contributions of the Former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons of Barangay Kiwalan during their term. By delving into these narratives, the researcher can uncover valuable insights into the realities faced by Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, the obstacles they encounter, and the positive impacts they made within their communities. These narratives provide a platform for Former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons to share their firsthand experiences, offering a nuanced perspective on the challenges they navigate, such as political pressures, limited resources, and community expectations. It emerges of the dedication, resilience, and leadership qualities exhibited by Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons. This insight not only informs future research on youth governance but also serves as a testament to the importance of empowering youth leaders and fostering their growth within the Sangguniang Kabataan framework.

Experiences

Former Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Chairpersons have reported a range of experiences in their roles, which are supported by the literature on youth leadership and governance. One common challenge faced by Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons is feelings of low self-esteem and confidence, especially when first taking on the position. This can significantly impact their ability to effectively engage with youth and implement programs. As Gorospe (2018) noted, if the requirements for aspiring youth politicians were measured by their skills in leadership and management, their constituencies would have fewer headaches in choosing the best among the worst.

Another issue highlighted by former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons is the difficulty in reaching and engaging with youth in far-flung sitios that lacked access to basic services. This geographical barrier can hinder the Sangguniang Kabataan's efforts to promote youth development and empowerment across the entire barangay. The study by Vivas (2015) also observed that the Sangguniang Kabataan, under its current structure, had lost its effectiveness in advancing the democratic ideals of service-oriented youth leadership. Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons also reported facing criticism and a lack of support from some community members, which impacted their morale and motivation. This lack of trust between youth and adult community members in the government can stem from a lack of engagement, as noted by Winkler (n.d.). Overcoming these challenges requires strong leadership skills and the ability to build bridges between different stakeholders.

Over time, many Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons experienced a change in perspective on their roles and responsibilities, often due to the challenges faced. This growth in understanding can lead to more effective governance and better outcomes for the community. However, the ineffectiveness of the Sangguniang Kabataan's

performance may also be due to a lack of engagement, which stems from a lack of trust between youth and adult community members in the government. Finally, the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly restricted the ability of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons to engage youth and implement programs. This global health crisis has highlighted the need for innovative approaches to youth development and the importance of digital literacy and access to technology.

However, the experiences of former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, as reported in the literature, underscore the challenges and complexities of youth leadership and governance. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach that focuses on building the capacity of youth leaders, fostering community engagement, and adapting to changing circumstances. By learning from the experiences of past Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, current and future leaders can work towards creating a more inclusive and effective system of youth governance in the Philippines.

Contributions

The contributions made by former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, as described in the statement, align with the findings of a study by Balanon (2015) titled "The Impact of Youth Participation in the Local Government Process". The study highlights the importance of youth participation in local governance and the role of the Sangguniang Kabataan in fostering a culture of youth involvement and community engagement. Implementing sports programs that helped engage youth and promote community development is a key aspect of the Sangguniang Kabataan's role in fostering a culture of youth involvement and community engagement. This aligns with the findings of Balanon's study, which emphasizes the importance of engaging youth in community development initiatives. Advocating for participatory, accountable, and empowered youth constituents in community development is a crucial aspect of the Sangguniang Kabataan's role in ensuring that youth voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes. This aligns with the literature on the importance of participatory governance and the need for youth to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Partnering with the Local Youth Development Council (LYDC) to plan and execute projects on issues like good governance, climate change, disaster risk reduction, youth employment, health, and anti-drug abuse demonstrates the Sangguniang Kabataan's commitment to collaborative governance and the importance of interagency coordination in addressing complex community issues. This aligns with the findings of a study by Titigah et al. (2023) titled "Examining Youth Participation in Local Governance: The Case of Selected Districts in Ghana", which highlighted the importance of collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders in achieving effective governance. Finally, adopting policies on full disclosure of transactions and documents involving public interest is a critical aspect of ensuring transparency and accountability in governance. This aligns with the literature on the importance of transparency and accountability in governance and the need for youth to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Overall, the contributions made by former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons demonstrate the importance of empowering youth in community development and the need for collaborative governance in addressing complex community issues. These findings are supported by the literature on youth participation in local governance, which emphasizes the importance of engaging youth in community development initiatives, ensuring participatory governance, and promoting transparency and accountability in decision-making processes.

Challenges

The challenges faced by former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, as identified in the study, align with the findings of a report by the National Youth Commission (2020) titled "Strengthening Youth Participation in Local Governance". The report highlights the need to address the capacity building and resource gaps faced by youth leaders in effectively implementing programs and engaging their constituents. Many programs and activities did not effectively address the real issues and concerns of youth, which can be attributed to the lack of capacity building and leadership training opportunities for Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons. As Balanon et al. (2007) noted in their study "The Impact of Youth Participation in the Local Government Process", empowering youth leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge is crucial for designing and implementing impactful programs. The lack of financial resources to fully implement planned programs and activities is another significant challenge faced by Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons. The study by Flores (2021) on "Advancing Youth Governance in

the Philippines" emphasizes the need for adequate funding and resources to support the Sangguniang Kabataan's initiatives. Difficulty in mobilizing youth participation in community development initiatives can be attributed to the lack of trust and engagement between youth and adult community members in the government. As Winkler (n.d.) observed, this lack of trust can stem from ineffective communication and outreach strategies employed by youth leaders. To address these challenges, the National Youth Commission (2020) recommends providing capacity building and leadership training opportunities for Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, ensuring adequate financial resources for program implementation, and fostering stronger partnerships between youth leaders and adult community members. By investing in the development of youth leaders and providing them with the necessary support, the Sangguniang Kabataan can become more effective in addressing the real issues and concerns of youth and driving meaningful change in their communities.

Overall, the challenges faced by former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons, as identified in the study, underscore the need for a comprehensive approach to strengthening youth participation in local governance. By addressing the capacity building, resource, and engagement gaps, the Sangguniang Kabataan can become more effective in fulfilling its mandate and empowering the youth to become active and engaged citizens.

3.3 After Service: New Career Path, Learnings, And Recommendations

This chapter delves into the learnings and recommendations of the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons for the aspiring members of the Sangguniang Kabataan. The former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons acquire valuable learnings through their roles, which are essential for their growth as youth leaders and community advocates. Based on their experiences and challenges faced during their terms, the former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons can offer recommendations for aspiring Sangguniang Kabataan Members. These recommendations aim to guide and empower future Sangguniang Kabataan leaders to effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities within the youth governance framework.

New Career Path

The transition from Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Chairperson to various roles demonstrates the transferability of skills and traits acquired during the Sangguniang Kabataan tenure. The individuals featured, Mr. Dumaug, Mr. Villarin, Ms. Palomo, Ms. Centeno, Ms. Casera, and Ms. Francisco have successfully applied their skills in different roles, showcasing adaptability, emotional intelligence, and resilience. The Sangguniang Kabataan experience has equipped these individuals with valuable skills such as interpersonal skills, leadership styles, policymaking expertise, financial management, and proposal writing, which are transferable to different roles. These skills are essential for effective governance and community development, as highlighted by the study by Balanon et al. (2007) on the role of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons in shaping the future of youth. Each individual has demonstrated adaptability in their transition, whether it was from a demanding role to a more relaxed position or from a specific field to a new industry. The ability to interact with diverse people, maintain emotional intelligence, and adapt to challenging situations has been a key factor in their success in various roles. This adaptability and emotional intelligence are crucial for effective leadership and community engagement, as emphasized by the study by Flores (2021) on the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership. The Sangguniang Kabataan experience has contributed to personal growth, resilience, and a holistic perspective, enabling them to navigate different challenges and transitions. This personal growth and resilience are essential for effective governance and community development, as highlighted by the study of Acheron et al. (2020) on the role of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons in shaping the future of youth. The inclusive approach, fostering diverse perspectives, is a testament to the value of youth engagement in shaping well-rounded professionals. This inclusive approach is crucial for effective governance and community development, as emphasized by the study of Mosaid (2023) on the importance of inclusive governance in building a better society. The Sangguniang Kabataan experience has had a lasting impact on personal and professional development, shaping their approach to work, interpersonal relationships, and personal growth. This lasting impact is essential for effective governance and community development, as highlighted by the study of Malacas (2021) on the role of Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons in shaping the future of youth.

Nevertheless, the transition from Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson to various roles demonstrates the transferability of skills and traits acquired during the Sangguniang Kabataan tenure. The individuals featured have successfully applied their skills in different roles, showcasing adaptability, emotional intelligence, and

resilience. The Sangguniang Kabataan experience has contributed to personal growth, resilience, and a holistic perspective, enabling them to navigate different challenges and transitions. The inclusive approach, fostering diverse perspectives, is a testament to the value of youth engagement in shaping well-rounded professionals.

Learnings

The statements from former Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Chairpersons highlight the transformative impact of youth leadership roles on personal growth, skill development, and community service. These experiences align with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping personal growth, skill development, and community engagement.

The transformative impact of youth leadership is well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Steinberg (2011) highlights the importance of transformative leadership in shaping the future of youth. Steinberg emphasizes that traditional hierarchical leadership approaches need critical revisiting and that youth leadership can be transformative when grounded in the premise that youth have distinct needs, views, and cultures. The statements from former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons emphasize the importance of personal growth and skill development through their experiences. This aligns with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping personal growth and skill development. For example, a study by Wexler et al. (2017) found that youth leadership development programs can enhance school engagement, cultural and personal identities, and reduce risks of bullying, violence, and drug and alcohol abuse. The statements also highlight the importance of community engagement and service through the experiences of former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons. This aligns with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping community engagement and service. For instance, a study by Acheron et al. (2020) found that the Sangguniang Kabataan serves as one of the mechanisms for the youth to live up to the century-old challenge posed by our national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal. The youth are not simply given space for participation in government through the Sangguniang Kabataan mechanism; they are also given the right and obligation to govern. The statements from former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons also highlight the challenges faced and the resilience developed through their experiences. This aligns with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping resilience and adaptability. For example, a study by Mosaïd (2023) found that the Sangguniang Kabataan can live up to the ideals and noble purpose for which it was created when given the right motivation, guidance, and support from competent authorities and service providers. The statements from former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons demonstrate the transformative impact of youth leadership roles on personal growth, skill development, and community service. These experiences align with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping personal growth, skill development, and community engagement. The transformative impact of youth leadership is well-documented in the literature, emphasizing the importance of transformative leadership in shaping the future of youth.

Recommendations of the Former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons

The recommendations of former Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Chairpersons highlight the importance of effective leadership, inclusivity, and community engagement in the Sangguniang Kabataan. These recommendations align with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping personal growth, skill development, and community engagement.

It emphasize the importance of effective leadership, which is well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Steinberg (2011) highlights the importance of transformative leadership in shaping the future of youth. Steinberg emphasizes that traditional hierarchical leadership approaches need critical revisiting and that youth leadership can be transformative when grounded in the premise that youth have distinct needs, views, and cultures. Mr. Villarín's recommendations emphasize the importance of consultative planning and long-term projects, which are well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Callina et al. (2014) found that hope in context is a developmental profile of trust, hopeful future expectations, and civic engagement across adolescence. This study highlights the importance of long-term projects and consultative planning in fostering hope and civic engagement among youth. It also emphasize the importance of openness to criticism and youth engagement and advocacy, which are well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Even et al. (2016) found that leadership education in youth movements is crucial for empowering youth and fostering community engagement. This study highlights the importance of openness to criticism and youth engagement and advocacy in fostering effective leadership and community engagement. Ms. Centeno's recommendations emphasize the

importance of fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, which is well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Daudi (2013) found that the art of leading oneself is crucial for effective leadership and community engagement. This study highlights the importance of fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity in fostering effective leadership and community engagement. Ms. Palomo's recommendations emphasize the importance of prioritizing joy and fulfillment, which is well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Fairholm (2014) found that leadership is crucial for fostering personal growth and skill development among youth. This study highlights the importance of prioritizing joy and fulfillment in fostering personal growth and skill development among youth. Ms. Francisco's recommendations emphasize the importance of assertiveness and confidence, which are well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Derue et al. (2011) found that trait and behavioral theories of leadership are crucial for effective governance and community engagement. This study highlights the importance of assertiveness and confidence in fostering effective leadership and community engagement. also emphasize the importance of creating programs that empower youth, which is well-documented in the literature. For instance, a study by Mosaid (2023) found that the Sangguniang Kabataan can live up to the ideals and noble purpose for which it was created when given the right motivation, guidance, and support from competent authorities and service providers. This study highlights the importance of creating programs that empower youth and foster community engagement. The recommendations of former Sangguniang Kabataan Chairpersons highlight the importance of effective leadership, inclusivity, and community engagement in the Sangguniang Kabataan. These recommendations align with the literature on the role of youth leadership in shaping personal growth, skill development, and community engagement.

3.4 Discussion

The Sangguniang Kabataan of Barangay Kiwalan, from its inception in 1992 until 2021, has undergone significant transformations driven by the necessity to reform its governance structure for better youth representation. Established through the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160), its primary objective was to facilitate youth engagement in local governance and empower Filipinos aged 15 to 30. Initially mirroring the structure of barangay councils, it comprised a chairperson, a secretary, and councilors, tasked with creating youth development programs, overseeing welfare, and advocating for youth concerns.

However, over time, the Sangguniang Kabataan encountered challenges such as corruption, financial mismanagement, and ineffective leadership. One prominent issue was the encroachment of decision-making authority by certain barangay officials. Recognizing these problems, Republic Act No. 10632 was enacted in 2013, postponing elections and introducing reforms. These included training programs for leaders, stricter eligibility criteria, and mechanisms for transparent fund management, aimed at combating inefficiency and corruption. By providing a legal mandate and budget allocation for youth involvement in local governance, the Sangguniang Kabataan aimed to integrate youth perspectives into policymaking and address societal issues effectively. Despite skepticism from some quarters, youth participation was deemed crucial for local development. Finally held in 2018 after several delays, the Sangguniang Kabataan elections strengthened its role in youth development and governance.

Changes included raising the age limit of members to 18 to 24, enhancing financial transparency, and aligning programs with the Barangay Development Plan. Members were encouraged to manage their 10% fund separately for easier access, albeit with stringent documentation requirements. The evolution of the Sangguniang Kabataan in Barangay Kiwalan reflects a continuous effort to rectify shortcomings and enhance its efficacy as a platform for youth engagement in local governance. While challenges persist, the reforms implemented seek to foster transparency, accountability, and genuine youth representation at the grassroots level of governance.

4.0 Conclusion

The journey of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) from its establishment in 1992 to 2021 has been a dynamic one, marked by both notable achievements and persistent challenges. In Barangay Kiwalan, this evolution mirrors a narrative of growth, adaptation, and resilience. Despite facing hurdles along the way, the Sangguniang Kabataan remains a vital institution for empowering young Filipinos and shaping the landscape of local governance in the nation.

To thrive, the Sangguniang Kabataan requires a supportive framework from local government representatives and stakeholders, ensuring adequate oversight, assistance, and guidance. The efficacy of youth participation hinges significantly on the clarity and robustness of local and national policies governing their roles and procedures. In Barangay Kiwalan, the Sangguniang Kabataan remains committed to advocating for the welfare and interests of its youth constituents, striving to implement initiatives that best serve their needs.

Moreover, fostering a harmonious relationship between the Barangay Council and the Sangguniang Kabataan is paramount. Collaboration between these entities cultivates an environment conducive to innovation and joint problem-solving. By leveraging each other's strengths, expertise, and networks, both councils can effectively address the multifaceted challenges impacting youth development in the community. In essence, the journey of the Sangguniang Kabataan of Barangay Kiwalan underscores the importance of perseverance, collaboration, and responsive governance. As it continues to navigate the complexities of local governance, the Sangguniang Kabataan remains steadfast in its commitment to championing the voices and aspirations of the youth, contributing to the holistic development of Barangay Kiwalan and beyond.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Only one author have done the editing, writing, supervising, data analysis, and encoding.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

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