

**Challenges encountered by SSLG officers in school governance:
Inputs for organizational enhancement**

Jubie Ann L. Chalajchaj*

Northeastern College, Santiago City, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study determined the level of community participation through the Parents–Teachers Association and its contribution to learners' nutrition programs in Mayoyao District public elementary schools. Specifically, it described the respondents' profile, assessed the level of community participation, determined the contribution of PTA participation to learners' nutrition programs, identified the challenges encountered by PTA members, and examined the significant relationship between community participation and learners' nutrition programs. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design involving thirty-eight PTA members from selected public elementary schools in Mayoyao District, Ifugao. A researcher-made questionnaire, validated by education and research experts, served as the primary data-gathering instrument. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that most respondents were within the young and middle adulthood age groups, had attained college-level education or were college graduates, and had been active PTA members for three to four years. The respondents demonstrated a very high level of community participation through the PTA, particularly in school gardening, volunteer work during feeding activities, cooperation with teachers, and participation in nutrition-related programs. They likewise perceived that PTA participation made a very high contribution to sustaining school feeding programs, increasing nutrition awareness, improving learners' eating habits, promoting healthier food choices, and supporting learners' overall health. However, respondents also encountered challenges related to limited time, inadequate resources, insufficient gardening tools and materials, and varying levels of parental involvement. The correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between community participation and contribution to learners' nutrition programs, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. The study concludes that while PTA members actively support school nutrition initiatives, strengthening institutional support, resource mobilization, and stakeholder collaboration remains essential for sustaining effective nutrition programs and improving learners' health outcomes.

Keywords: Community participation, parents–teachers association, learners' nutrition programs, school gardening, school feeding program, Mayoyao District.

Date Submitted: July 03, 2026

Date Accepted: July 07, 2026

Date Published: July 13, 2026

INTRODUCTION

*Corresponding author / Email: jubielagahe@gmail.com

Recommended citation:

Chalajchaj, J. A. (2026). Challenges encountered by SSLG officers in school governance: Inputs for organizational enhancement. *Pantao (International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences)* 5 (3), 1239-1246.

Learners' nutrition remains one of the essential foundations of quality basic education because proper nutrition contributes to children's physical growth, cognitive development, school attendance, and academic achievement. Schools play a significant role in promoting healthy eating habits through nutrition education, school feeding programs, and school gardening initiatives. However, the sustainability of these interventions depends not only on school personnel but also on the active participation of parents and the community. Community engagement enables schools to mobilize resources, strengthen program implementation, and create a supportive environment that promotes learners' overall well-being (Epstein, 2018; UNICEF, 2021).

In the Philippines, learners' nutrition programs are supported through the implementation of the School-Based Feeding Program and the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. These initiatives are reinforced by Republic Act No. 11037, otherwise known as the Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act, which institutionalizes national feeding programs for undernourished children and encourages stakeholder participation. Likewise, DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2007 institutionalized the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program to encourage schools and communities to establish sustainable school gardens that support nutrition education and feeding activities. These policies recognize Parents–Teachers Associations as important partners in achieving quality nutrition services for learners.

Despite these initiatives, the level of community participation varies across schools, and the extent to which PTA participation contributes to learners' nutrition programs remains an important area of investigation. Understanding parents' involvement and the challenges they encounter provides valuable information for improving school-community partnerships and strengthening nutrition interventions. Hence, this study assessed community participation through the PTA and its contribution to learners' nutrition programs in Mayoyao District public elementary schools.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to determine the level of community participation through the Parents–Teachers Association (PTA) and its contribution to learners' nutrition programs in Mayoyao District public elementary schools.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, and length of PTA membership or participation?
2. What is the level of community participation of PTA members in terms of school gardening activities, volunteer work during feeding activities, cooperation with teachers, and participation in nutrition-related programs and orientations?
3. What is the contribution of PTA participation to learners' nutrition programs in terms of sustainability of school feeding programs, nutrition awareness among parents, improvement of learners' eating habits, promotion of healthier food choices, and support for learners' overall health?
4. What challenges are encountered by PTA members in participating in learners' nutrition programs in terms of limited time, inadequate resources, insufficient gardening tools and materials, and varying levels of parental involvement?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of community participation through the Parents–Teachers Association (PTA) and its contribution to learners' nutrition programs?

6. Based on the findings of the study, what recommendations may be proposed to strengthen community participation and enhance the sustainability of learners' nutrition programs?

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the level of community participation through the PTA, the contribution of PTA participation to learners' nutrition programs, the challenges encountered by PTA members, and the significant relationship between community participation and learners' nutrition programs.

The respondents consisted of thirty-eight PTA members from selected public elementary schools in Mayoyao District, Ifugao. They were selected using total enumeration since all available and qualified PTA members were included in the study.

A researcher-made questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument. The questionnaire consisted of five parts covering respondents' profile, level of community participation, contribution to learners' nutrition programs, challenges encountered, and recommendations. Prior to administration, the instrument underwent expert validation to ensure content validity.

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Office, district officials, and school heads. The questionnaires were personally administered and retrieved by the researcher while observing ethical standards, including voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent.

The data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research process. Respondents were not required to disclose personally identifiable information in the questionnaire, and all responses were treated with the highest level of confidentiality. The collected data were used solely for academic and research purposes and were not disclosed to unauthorized individuals or organizations. Data were securely stored and handled only by the researcher to prevent unauthorized access. These procedures complied with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, which safeguards the privacy and protection of personal information collected during research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that most respondents belonged to the young and middle adulthood age groups. Female respondents were predominantly within the age group twenty-six to thirty years old, while male respondents were mostly within the age group thirty-one to thirty-five years old. Most respondents had reached college level or completed a college degree, indicating that they possessed sufficient educational background to understand and support school-based nutrition programs.

The respondents demonstrated a very high level of community participation through the PTA. Female respondents obtained an average mean of 4.39 interpreted as "Strongly Agree," while male respondents obtained an average mean of 4.43 interpreted as "Strongly Agree." The highest-rated indicators included participation in school gardening activities, contribution of gardening materials, volunteerism during feeding activities, attendance in nutrition-related orientations, and cooperation with teachers.

Similarly, the contribution of PTA participation to learners' nutrition programs received very favorable ratings. Female respondents obtained an average mean of 4.75 interpreted as "Strongly Agree," while male respondents obtained an average mean of 4.65 interpreted as "Strongly Agree." Respondents strongly believed that PTA participation sustained school feeding programs, increased nutrition awareness, improved learners' eating habits, enhanced the availability of nutritious food, and positively influenced learners' overall health.

The respondents also acknowledged several challenges affecting their participation. Female respondents obtained an average mean of 4.07 interpreted as "Agree," while male respondents obtained an average mean of 3.87 interpreted as "Agree." The major concerns identified were limited time, inadequate gardening tools and materials, insufficient resources, inconsistent parental involvement, and communication concerns between the school and the PTA.

The correlation analysis produced a Pearson correlation coefficient of negative 0.662 with a significance value of 0.444, which exceeded the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that no significant relationship existed between community participation through the PTA and the contribution to learners' nutrition programs.

The high level of community participation demonstrated by PTA members indicates that parents and guardians recognize their responsibility in promoting learners' nutrition and supporting school-based health initiatives. Their active involvement in school gardening, feeding activities, and nutrition education reflects a collaborative partnership between families and schools. This finding supports Epstein's theory that meaningful family-school partnerships contribute to successful educational and developmental outcomes by encouraging shared responsibility among stakeholders (Epstein, 2018).

The respondents' strong agreement regarding the contribution of PTA participation to learners' nutrition programs suggests that community involvement plays a vital role in sustaining nutrition interventions. Parents' participation in school gardening, resource mobilization, and volunteer activities reinforces healthy eating practices among learners and strengthens nutrition awareness within families. These findings are consistent with the observations of the Food and Agriculture Organization, which emphasized that school gardens become more effective when communities actively participate in their establishment and maintenance (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2019). Likewise, Contento (2016) explained that nutrition education programs achieve greater success when parents reinforce healthy behaviors at home.

Although PTA members reported very high levels of participation and contribution, the correlation analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This finding suggests that the success of learners' nutrition programs is influenced by several interacting factors beyond community participation alone. Bronfenbrenner and Morris argued that children's development is shaped by multiple environmental systems, including schools, families, communities, and institutional support, rather than by a single influencing factor (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Consequently, effective nutrition programs require collaborative efforts involving school administrators, teachers, local government units, health workers, and community organizations.

The challenges identified by respondents, particularly limited time, inadequate resources, and insufficient gardening materials, indicate areas where schools may strengthen stakeholder support and resource mobilization. Addressing these concerns through stronger partnerships, capacity-building activities, and improved communication may further enhance the sustainability of nutrition programs and promote better health outcomes among learners.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that community participation through the Parents–Teachers Association plays a valuable role in supporting learners' nutrition programs in Mayoyao District public elementary schools. The respondents, who were primarily parents and guardians within productive age groups and with adequate educational backgrounds, exhibited a very high level of participation in nutrition-related activities such as school gardening, feeding programs, volunteer work, resource provision, and collaboration with teachers. Their active involvement reflects a strong commitment to promoting the health, nutrition, and overall well-being of learners.

The study further established that PTA participation is perceived to make a substantial contribution to the sustainability of school feeding programs, the promotion of healthy eating habits, increased nutrition awareness among parents, and the improvement of learners' overall health. Despite these positive perceptions, PTA members acknowledged several challenges, including limited time, inadequate resources, insufficient gardening tools and materials, varying levels of parental involvement, and communication concerns between the school and the PTA. These challenges highlight the need for continuous support and effective coordination among schools, parents, and community stakeholders.

Finally, the statistical analysis revealed no significant relationship between community participation through the PTA and the contribution to learners' nutrition programs. This indicates that while parents actively support nutrition initiatives, the effectiveness of these programs is influenced by other factors such as school leadership, institutional support, program implementation, resource availability, and collaboration among stakeholders. Therefore, sustaining successful learners' nutrition programs requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach that combines active parental participation with strong administrative leadership, adequate resources, and continued community partnerships to achieve improved nutritional and educational outcomes for learners.

REFERENCES

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 1. Theoretical models of human development* (6th ed., pp. 793–828). John Wiley & Sons.
- Bundy, D. A. P., de Silva, N., Horton, S., Jamison, D. T., & Patton, G. C. (Eds.). (2018). *Disease control priorities: Child and adolescent health and development* (3rd ed., Vol. 8). World Bank.
- Contento, I. R. (2016). *Nutrition education: Linking research, theory, and practice* (3rd ed.). Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Department of Education. (2007). DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2007: Strengthening the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. Department of Education.

Department of Education. (2017). DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2017: Research management guidelines. Department of Education.

Epstein, J. L. (2018). School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2019). School gardens and nutrition education: An educational approach to promote healthy eating. <https://www.fao.org/3/ca0957en/ca0957en.pdf>

Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(3), 740–763. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015362>

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 3–42. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543067001003>

Langellotto, G. A., & Gupta, A. (2012). Gardening increases vegetable consumption in school-aged children: A meta-analytical synthesis. *HortTechnology*, 22(4), 430–445. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTTECH.22.4.430>

Morgan, P. J., Warren, J. M., Lubans, D. R., Saunders, K. L., Quick, G. I., & Collins, C. E. (2010). The impact of nutrition education with and without a school garden on children's fruit and vegetable consumption and nutrition knowledge. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 42(3), 148–155. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2009.01.009>

Ozer, E. J. (2007). The effects of school gardens on students and schools: Conceptualization and considerations for maximizing healthy development. *Health Education & Behavior*, 34(6), 846–863. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198106289002>

Philippine Health Research Ethics Board. (2022). National ethical guidelines for health and health-related research (2022 ed.). Department of Science and Technology.

Republic of the Philippines. (2012). Republic Act No. 10173: Data Privacy Act of 2012. Official Gazette. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2012/08/15/republic-act-no-10173/>

Republic of the Philippines. (2018). Republic Act No. 11037: Masustansyang Pagkain para sa Batang Pilipino Act. Official Gazette. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2018/06/20/republic-act-no-11037/>

UNICEF. (2021). Fed to learn: School feeding and child nutrition. United Nations Children's Fund. <https://www.unicef.org>

World Health Organization. (2020). School health and nutrition. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int>.