Interest of San Pablo City Youth Residing in Farming Areas: Basis for Sustainable Agricultural Training Interventions

Kristin Anne C. Corcega

***Abstract*—** In today's world, poverty and food security remains to be a major concern. One of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030 is to end hunger. However, the deteriorating number of young farmers seems not to follow this cause. Leavy and Hossain (2014) assert that we should divert our attention to the next generation of farmers, who are alarmingly decreasing in number. The study showed different perspectives of the farming interests of the youth (ages 15-24) of San Pablo City residing in farming areas and determine program interventions that would help them like agriculture. The internal factors referred to the identified likes and dislikes of the youth not related to farming, grouped into that which signify to any of the five Ps of Villaruel et. al (2003): Possibilities and Preparations, Participation, People, Places and Pluralism, and Partnership. The external factors referred to the training in farming that the youth may access are not limited to Crop Production, Plant Protection, Soil Health and Fertility Management, Horticulture Sector, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sector, Home Science/ Women Empowerment, Agricultural Engineering, and Capacity Building and Group Dynamics. Descriptive quantitative and narrative qualitative research design determine the suited farming program interventions for San Pablo City Youth residing in farming areas. The study revealed that the youth residing in farming areas are highly interested in all farming training needs. On the other hand, all identified themes on the youth's interests other than farming which are online games, sports, household chores, watching and studying have corresponded to the five P's emphasizing youth's abilities, developmental potentials, and promotion of thriving behaviors rather than their shortcomings.

***Keywords*—**Agriculture, Youth Interests, Farming Interventions, Philippines

I. Introduction

In today's world, poverty and food security remains to be a major concern. One of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2030 is to end hunger. Promoting sustainable agriculture and/or expanding economic opportunities in the agricultural sector is one of the government's solutions. However, the deteriorating number of young farmers seems not to follow this cause. Leavy and Hossain (2014) assert that we should divert our attention to the next generation of farmers, who are alarmingly decreasing in number. Emerging evidence indicates that social norms and desires of young people withdraw from work on land. Bezu and Holden (2014) hypothesize that youth's limited access to agricultural land forces the youth to abandon agriculture. Meanwhile, White (2012) argues that the unattractiveness of agriculture still relies on the fact that there is an absence of modern facilities in farms. Their disinterest in farming was attributed to several economic, social and environmental factors. Subsequently, there are less definitive studies of the youth of today's hobbies and interest that would probably suggest program interventions for them to like agriculture.

If farming is not among the interests of the youth, what are among their interests? According to Thulin and Vilhelmson (2019) youth these days are homogeneously considered as *digital natives*. They generally spend more time at home, perform more activities alone and travel less. Heavy media use is associated with less time spent on outdoor activity and sports, and watching TV. Thus, if we are to develop agricultural programs that would suit their preferences, would it be more likely that which is related to the digital preoccupation of the youth?

Education of the youth is also a primary concern. In the latest United Nation report, it is stated that without additional measures, an estimated 84 million children and young people will stay out of school. Focusing as well on SDG 4, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, and SDG 5, achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls, who represent half of the world's population and half of its potential, this study explored the farming and other interests of San Pablo youth ages 15-24, male and female, who are residing in farming areas. The type is a descriptive study which illustrated and further strengthened the possible claim of the suited program interventions to the youth interests. The study would later help the community of San Pablo make the next generation of skilled farmers to alleviate the recurring problem of poverty and food security, equal agricultural opportunities for both genders and proper training/education in farming.

At this stage, agriculture will be generally defined as farming activities such as Crop Production, Plant Protection, Soil Health and Fertility Management, Horticulture Sector, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sector, Home Science/ Women

Manuscript received October 23, 2024. This work was supported by PLSP Center for Gender Equality and Development Grant 2023-001.

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Empowerment, Agricultural Engineering, and Capacity Building and Group Dynamics determined in the study of Sajeev and Singha (2010) titled "Capacity Building Through KVKs: Training Needs Analysis of Farmers of Arunachal Pradesh.

This study sought to determine the San Pablo City Youth's farming interests that would suggest farming program interventions. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions: What are San Pablo City youth's (ages 15-24) farming interests? How would the Positive Youth Development (PYD) theory inform the development outcome of the youth's involvement in the training needs in farming by analyzing the youth's other interests not related to farming? What are the implications of gender inequality in the farming interest of the youth? What are the farming program interventions that would best suit the San Pablo City youth residing in farming areas?

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the conceptual framework below (Figure 1). Sociodemographic training needs on farming (external factors) and the positive development theory (internal factors) will inform the farming interventions suited for the youth of San Pablo City residing in farming areas.

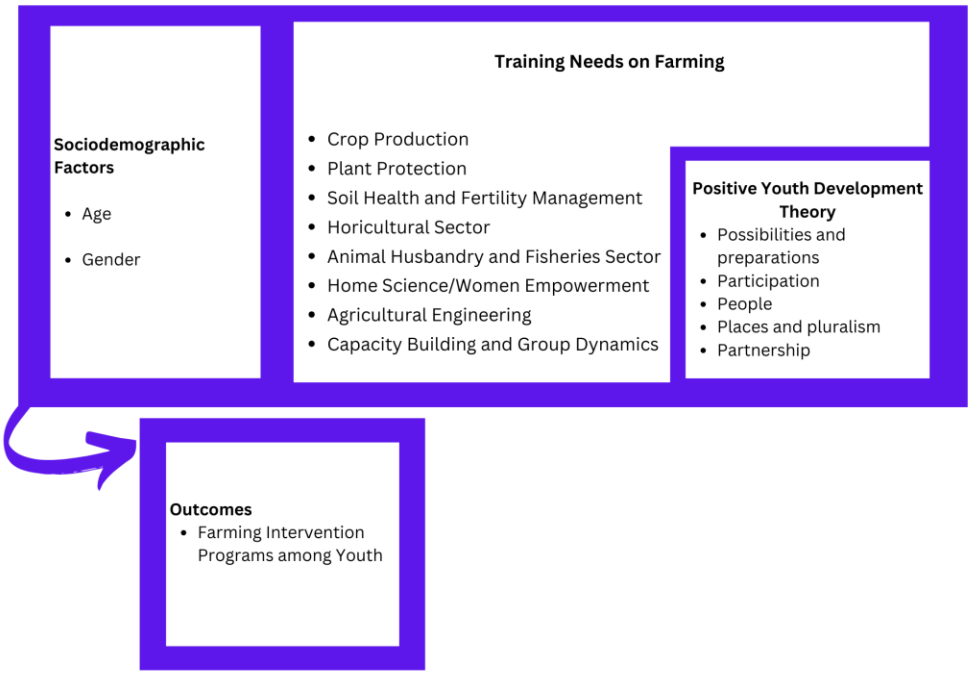

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Sociodemographic factors include age and gender. These were included in the study to categorize the youth into different age groups and gender.

The internal factors referred to the identified likes and dislikes of the youth not related to farming, grouped into that which signify to any of the five Ps of Villaruel et. al (2003): Possibilities and Preparations, Participation, People, Places and Pluralism, and Partnership, which as stated above emphasizes the abilities, developmental potentials, and promotion of thriving behaviors in youth rather than their shortcomings (Damon, 2004:14; Peterson, 2004:14; Peteru, 2008:28). These traits make individuals build assets that shield them from health-compromising behaviors, enhance positive developmental outcomes, and strengthen resilience against potential problems (Benson, 2002:125; Peteru, 2008:28).

The external factors, on the other hand, referred to the training in farming that the youth may access given their traits. These Training Needs of Farmers are but not limited to Crop Production, Plant Protection, Soil Health and Fertility Management, Horticulture Sector, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sector, Home Science/ Women Empowerment, Agricultural Engineering, and Capacity Building and Group Dynamics determined in the study of Sajeev and Singha (2010) titled "Capacity Building Through KVKs: Training Needs Analysis of Farmers of Arunachal Pradesh.

Analysis for the suited farming program intervention to the youth residing in San Pablo City farming areas will be determined by getting the frequency and mean distribution of the youth choice of a training program, and their dominant interests which corresponds to a positive youth development trait.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed method approach involving the data collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, triangulating data sources as a means for seeking convergence. Descriptive quantitative research design is used to identify the youth's farming interests, whereas narrative qualitative research design is utilized to discover the youth's other interest besides farming, combining both data sets to determine the suited farming program interventions for San Pablo City Youth

residing in farming areas. Table 1 below showed the data requirements, sources of data and collection techniques, types of analysis used, and ethical considerations as applied in the study.

Convergent mixed method will be employed in this study for the quantitative results will be combined with the qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis and create a framework for a suitable farming program intervention. The data collected at roughly the same time were integrated in the interpretation of the overall result.

According to Chase (2005), a narrative is any text used within a specific focus on the stories told by individuals. In this study it is used as a method of discovering the experiences in the lived and told stories of youth about their interests other than farming. On the other hand, the choice of the youth for the training need for farmers was revealed through the frequency measures of the answers to survey questions.

The research locale of this study are the five (5) barangays (Brgy.) of in San Pablo City with rich agricultural lands, which are Brgy. Santiago 1, Brgy. Santiago 2, Bgry. Santisimo, Brgy. Atisan and Brgy. Bautista respectively. Their main crops are mainly rice, vegetables and corn.

San Pablo city soil is suitable for farming and horticulture given its richness and fertility. Different barangays have lanzones and rambutan plantations besides coconut. Its' major income sources are agriculture and fishing.

According to the latest census report, the population of the youth ages 15-24 years old in Barangay Santiago 1 is approximately 461, Barangay Santiago 2 is 759, Barangay Santisimo Rosario is 285, Barangay Atisan is 450 and Barangay Bautista is 1800 respectively. [15]

Currently, the programs in agriculture for the youth in the locale are regional farm youth summits held annually. Also, agriculture strand is made available in these areas in the senior high school curricula. The Filipino young farmers are also invited in an internship program by the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) in CALABARZON. [15]

BARANGAY	ACTUAL POPULATION	REACHABLE POPULATION	SAMPLE SIZE
Brgy. Santiago 1	461	360	190
Brgy. Santiago 2	759	324	179
Brgy. Santisimo Rosario	285	139	130
Brgy. Atisan	450	150	109
Brgy. Bautista	1800	288	167

The participants were 15-24 years old, male and female youth from farming areas in San Pablo City which are Brgy. Santiago 1, Brgy. Santiago 2, Bgry. Santisimo, Brgy. Atisan and Brgy. Bautista respectively.

The help of the barangay gatekeepers or the chairman and SK chairman of each barangay were sought to locate the farming families of the youth, their residents, and their most frequented location such as basketball courts, *sari-sari* stores, etc. Participants who can extensively discuss their hobbies and/or past-time activities were sought through barangay SK organizations and/or other youth organizations in the areas to get the qualitative data on a one-on-one interview. Approximately one or two youth representatives per barangay will be interviewed until key information is saturated.

A heterogeneous sample of 15-24 years old youth from the five barangays had been randomly selected to participate in this study. *Slovin's* formula was used to calculate the sample size necessary to achieve a 95% confidence interval to sample the population of youth residing in farming areas. Figure below shows *Slovin's* formula computing the sample size of the youth in the five barangays.

A. Data Collection Method

An extensive data collection was done through multiple methods such as, survey, direct observation, key informant interviews to barangay officials, archival records and documents of selected 15-24 years old youth residing in respective barangays or farming areas.

A well-structured survey was employed to determine the sociodemographic information and the choice of San Pablo City youth on the training needs in farming. The survey questionnaire included a list of farming activities such as crop production, plant protection, soil health and fertility management, horticultural sector, animal husbandry and fisheries sector, home science/women empowerment and capacity building and group dynamics. The respondents were asked to check which among the scale from very unlikely to very likely will they most likely engage themselves into.

Youth representatives per barangay were interviewed until key information was saturated. Interviews were conducted in the barangay halls or if permitted in their respective houses free from disturbances. The interviews were recorded and transcribed each session. An open-ended question which generally pertains to the youth's hobbies and interests other than farming was given to the randomly selected respondents and they were also asked how they usually spend their time.

Key informant interviews (KIIs) were also done in this study. The barangay focal person of the five barangays involved in farming program and interventions were asked.

Apart from those, direct observation of male and female youth ages 15-24 years old in their respective barangays for one to four weeks were done to confirm the participants' responses. Access to the participants were through their parents and barangay officials. Informed consent form was sent to the parents of youth ages 18 and below

For data triangulation, pertinent documents in their archival records in the barangay hall/ office were reviewed to validate answers of participants in interviews.

B. Data Analysis

For the demographic information such as age and gender, frequency distribution was obtained along with its respective percentage from the sample.

Descriptive analysis using measures of central tendencies and frequencies were used to characterize and interpret the answers of the respondents to the training needs in farming. Since responses regarding the training needs in farming utilized the 5-point Likert scale of 1 – Very Unlikely, 2 – Unlikely, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Likely, 5 – Very Likely, the mean scores were obtained to determine their level of likeness on the type of

farming activity they'll very likely or very unlikely engage themselves into.

The number of the respondents and their percentage were presented in a table. The sum of all the values were divided by how many the values are to get the mean.

The mean distribution was tested using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. The decision rule was to accept the null hypothesis i.e., the variable is distributed when the p-value takes a greater than 0.05 value, meaning the data fitted the normal distribution.

To analyze the qualitative data, thematic analysis is done. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Patterns among the youth interests other than farming were noted, coded and arising themes relating to Positive Youth Development Theories Five Ps of Villaruel et. al (2003): *Possibilities and Preparations, Participation, People, Places and Pluralism,* and *Partnership*, were identified, reviewed and defined.

Data familiarization comes with a prior knowledge of the data and an initial analytic interest or thoughts, immersing in the data to the extent of familiarization with the depth and breadth of the content. It also involves repeated reading of the data, searching for meanings and patterns (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Generating Initial codes begins after the researcher/s are already familiarized with the data. It also refers to generating the semantic or latent features of the data that appears interesting and refers to the most basic segment or element of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

When all data has been coded and collated, it is time to search for themes, re-focusing the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes. This involves sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Reviewing themes involves the refinement of the set of candidate themes. Other themes may not have enough data to support them, or others might collapse into each other. Data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while having clear and identifiable distinctions between them (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The last phase involves defining and naming themes, where the themes are defined and further refined and then presented with the analysis. Defining themes means identifying the essence of what each theme is about and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures. It is vital to identify what is interesting about each theme and why (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

C. Ethical Considerations

A letter of intent to conduct the study was addressed and given to the gatekeepers such as the Barangay chairman, Barangay officials and/or Barangay SK chairman and parents (among minors, age 18 and below) prior to the data gathering. Likewise, an informed consent form indicating the researcher's information, purpose of the study, study procedures, duration, risks, benefits, statements of voluntary participation and confidentiality of data were given to the participants. If they are minors (18 years old and below), the informed consent form was given to the participant's parents/guardians.

Coming to the site, the researchers were dressed similarly to the participants. To be welcomed in the site, the researchers were to be accompanied and be introduced by the barangay chairman of barangay SK chairman to the participants or to the participants' parents. It helped that some of the enumerators/researchers have a relative or friend in either of the five barangays.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Subsequent discussions examined the youth likeness in farming activities and analyzed their other interests as it corroborates with PYD five Ps to arrive at appropriate farming program interventions.

The other interests of the youth other than farming were also assessed in this study by categorizing the dominant themes which arise on the interviews with the San Pablo youth residing in farming areas on the positive youth development theory based on the five P's identified by Villaruel et al. (2003:353), which are *possibilities and preparations, participation, people, places and pluralism and partnership.*

Possibilities and Preparations involve creating opportunities for youth to develop in various aspects of their lives (physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally). *Participation* seeks to understand, educate, and engage youth. Youth were identified and accepted their responsibilities as individuals, citizens, and group members by involving youth in decision-making at local, national, and global levels, they become part of solutions rather than problems. *People* are those who interact with youth daily and who oversee youth programs which involve family. *Places and Pluralism* are access to the resources that are available for youth to meet their needs and maximize their potential. Examples are service providers in the youth development sector who are responsible for mobilizing resources for youth. *Partnership* includes partners in the planning and implementation of programs affecting them. This view advocates for youth involvement in decision-making structures that impact their lives. Engaging youth fosters a sense of ownership and encourages proactive development.

Interviews with the youth were transcribed and familiarized. Codes were generated and themes were searched, reviewed and defined. Five themes have been identified after analyzing the codes and considering how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme. Below are the themes named and defined:

Sports. Sports that the youth engage themselves in the different barangays covered are mainly basketball for boys. In the country, not only in the barangays studied, but basketball courts are also placed near the barangay office. Not only does it serve as the covered court where meetings can be held that can house more people, but it can also be used as a place where barangay events like beauty contests, and the like are held. Sometimes, girls play volleyball in these basketball courts.

Online games. According to Thulin and Vilhelmson (2019) youth these days are homogeneously considered as 'digital natives. They generally spend more time at home, perform

more activities alone and travel less. Heavy media use is associated with less time spent on outdoor activity and sports, and watching TV. Observed in these barangays are also the use of handheld smartphones which have game applications which serves as their pastime activity. Online games may be too engaging that it can be time consuming that their youth engagement to other activities may be compromised.

Household chores. Youth who are still living with their parents are still tasked to do household chores while their parents are finding means to live or working to put food on their table. These tasks are mainly cleaning the house, cooking, taking care of siblings, feeding pets or chickens and pigs, and planting crops/ trees in their backyards. According to PCW, young women and girls stay at home, they are delegated with more household chores, including childcare, which lessens their time for learning other activities such as farming. This might also encourage parents, particularly those putting a lower value on girls' education, to keep their daughters at home even after schools reopen. According to Plan International's online survey, slim chances of returning to school are among the top concerns of young women and girls (Education Sector | Philippine Commission on Women, n.d.).

Studying. Also confirmed by the Barangay officials, that most of the youth ages 20 and below are still going to school. Studying here is limited to that which pertains to going to school, not normally individual studying at home for their time is compromised in doing the household chores.

Watching. There are still some households which have the conventional Television sets where national networks (channel 7 and 5) are still watched but most of the youth watch vlogs on *youtube, facebook* and *tiktok* videos on their cellular phones. Smart phones have a lot of use such as texting, chatting, playing games, but are mostly used in taking pictures and watching videos.

Below are tables showing the dominant themes which are categorized to one of the 5Ps of Positive Development Youth Theory. The data also shows which among the answers of the youth in the different barangays is the most dominant, one (1) being the topmost dominant interest other than farming of the San Pablo City Youth residing in farming areas.

Sports – Places and pluralism. Sports of the youth in the barangay which are limited to basketball enable the youth to access the resources available for the youth to maximize their potential. As stated earlier, resources such as basketball courts are provided by the barangay/LGU. Contests that are sponsored by the Barangay are also provisions of resources aiming to maximize their potential.

Household Chores – People These chores are done in the household where family members interact with one another. Generally, tasks are carried out through constant interaction of any family member to the youth. These chores which are cleaning the house, feeding pets, taking care of siblings, and the like are either instructed by the parents or siblings. According to PCW, young women and girls stay at home, they are delegated with more household chores, including childcare, which lessens their time for learning other activities such as farming. This might also encourage parents, particularly those putting a lower value on girls' education, to keep their daughters at home even after schools reopen. According to Plan International's online survey, slim chances of returning to school are among the top concerns of young women and girls (Education Sector | Philippine Commission on Women, n.d.).

Online Games – Possibilities and preparation. Online games are conventionally viewed as youth's pastime or something that merely amuses and it only serves to make time pass. Online games may be viewed not just the youth's form of recreation but since online games may be highly interactive and dynamic it can create platforms that creates opportunities for the youth to develop in various aspects of their lives, may it be physically, as it makes them less mobile, intellectually, as it engages their thinking processes, morally, as it also dictates their attitudes towards opponents, and; socially and emotionally, as they interact with their opponents and/or team.

Studying – Partnership Studying as referred to here as going to school made the youth gain partners such as their classmates, teachers, non-teaching personnel, and the administration in planning and implementing programs which contribute to the improvement of the youth's lives. Schools, according to Durkheim (1977), are those which hone the youth to become an equipped part of the society as education serves to teach people of the norms and values of society. Schools are advocates for youth involvement in decision-making structures that impact their lives and encourage proactive development.

Watching – Participation Watching mostly videos, vlogs and posts in social media sites makes them understand, be educated and be engaged in youth programs as they also can react and provide feedback of what they watched and inform the decision-making of local, national, and global agencies aiming to identify youth's responsibilities. They become part of solutions rather than problems.

In Barangay Atisan, the youth engaged more often in playing online games, although immediately following that are their participation in household chores. All themes were observed to have been existing in the answers of the youth of Barangay Atisan.

In Barangay Santisimo Rosario, sports is the most dominant interest of the youth although in the interview with the barangay official sports is not highlighted. It is just mentioned as one of the activities the youth engaged in. Following sports is youth's engagement in online games which may suggest youth's active involvement in recreational activities. All five themes are present in the interests of the youth.

Barangay Santiago 1 has similar dominant themes as Barangay Santisimo Rosario. Youth in both barangays are into sports and online games, although youth's engagement in online games topped up sports. Least mentioned in Barangay Santiago 1 is the youth's engagement in household chores. Same as the other first two barangays, all themes were identified in their responses.

In Barangay Santiago 2, sports is also the topmost dominant but next to it is the youth's participation in household chores. This may also suggest that even though they mostly responded to leisure, they also have great commitment to their active involvement in responsibilities at home. All themes were identified in the responses of the youth in Barangay Santiago 2.

Finally, In Barangay Bautista the top ranked is also online games, next to it is the youth's active engagement in sports. No one among the youth in Barangay Bautista have mentioned

studying although it is observed that some if not all youth are also going to school as mentioned by the barangay official. Watching in social media applications is the least mentioned.

IV. Conclusion

San Pablo City has agricultural lands which are suitable for farming. These are Barangay Atisan, Barangay Bautista, Barangay Santiago 1, Barangay Santiago 2 and Barangay Santisimo Rosario respectively. These farming areas have lanzones, rambutan and coconut plantations. Crops planted here are rice, vegetables and corn.

Majority of the youth respondents are male, comprising 58.2 % or 452 out of 776 respondents. Most of the respondents came from Barangay Santiago 1, comprising 24.5% or 190 out of 776 respondents. 465 out of 776 or 59.9 % of the respondents are minor or are 15 – 17 years old with an average age of 17.49 yrs. old.

The study accepted the alternative hypothesis that the youth residing in farming areas are highly interested in all farming training needs such as Crop Production, Plant Protection, Soil Health and Fertility Management, Horticulture Sector, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Sector, Home Science/ Women Empowerment, Agricultural Engineering, and Capacity Building and Group Dynamics determined in the study of Sajeev and Singha (2010) titled "Capacity Building Through KVKs: Training Needs Analysis of Farmers of Arunachal Pradesh and has rejected the null hypothesis. In all five barangays, the youth are highly interested in all areas of farming interests albeit according to barangay officials in the farming areas there is a low percentage of youth involvement in agriculture.

In Barangay Atisan results yield an average interest in animal husbandry and fisheries and an average interest in crop production, horticulture and animal husbandry and fisheries in Barangay Bautista. However, in Barangays Santiago 1, Santiago 2 and Santisimo Rosario, all training needs in farming yield high interest results.

On the other hand, all identified themes on the youth's interests other than farming which are *online games, sports, household chores, watching and studying* have corresponded to the five Ps of Villaruel: *Possibilities and Preparations, Participation, People, Places and Pluralism,* and *Partnership* emphasizing youth's abilities, developmental potentials, and promotion of thriving behaviors rather than their shortcomings. These traits will make them good candidates as trainees in doing farming activities which enhance the positive developmental outcomes in their areas.

Since among the other interests of the youth the only identified gender-related theme is *household chores* and majority of the youth residing in these farming areas are male, there is no significant implication that would corroborate with the gender equality perspective in this study, thus accepting the alternative hypothesis. Generally, young women or girls are assigned tasks in the household such as taking care of the siblings, doing laundry, and cleaning the house but since there are few females who participated in this study and it is the only gender-related theme/interest, these gender-biased roles cannot be ascertained as existing in the result of this study.

The youth's engagement with online games and sports, revealed as the most dominant themes found in this study, may suggest farming program interventions that are also connected to these interests. Given that online games are highly interactive and dynamic, and sports give access to resources available for the youth to maximize their potential, training needs in farming may also be designed as highly interactive and dynamic and be accessible through varied substantial resources.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who have supported me throughout the course of my research and the completion of this GAD Research. First and foremost, my sincerest thanks to one of our board of editors, Dr. Teresa A. Yema, for her invaluable guidance and constructive feedback. Her expertise and patience have been crucial to the success of this work. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of my GAD research committee, Prof. Teofila Azela Garcia, Director of the Center for Gender Equality and Development and her assistant director Dr. Kurt Cyrus John Cabral, whose insightful comments and suggestions significantly shaped the outcome of this research. Special thanks go to my colleagues and enumerators, Arghie Calica, Dexter Dinglasan, Arvin Octoman, John Nelson Ticzon and Jaymer Ann Bautista, for their hardwork, collaboration and shared knowledge. The many discussions and exchanges of ideas helped refine this study. I am especially grateful to my family and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement during this challenging time. To my late father, Odelon G. Contemplacion, for believing that I cannot do anything and that I deserve nothing but the best and to my husband, Edsel P. Corcega, for his patience, understanding and constant motivation. Finally, I extend my gratitude to the Center for Gender Equality and Development and to our university, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng San Pablo and its administration, for the funding this research. My heart goes to all of you. To God be the highest glory.

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