

Adolescent Health and Development Program in Negros Occidental Attitude, Applicability and Adherence

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Abstract:

This study evaluated the Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP) in a district of Negros Occidental for 2023–2024, focusing on attitude, applicability and adherence. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected from 378 respondents (out of 3,405) through a survey addressing variables like age, sex, average family monthly income, and size of the family. The questionnaire assessed three program areas: Responsible Adolescents Program, Peer Educators Training, and U4U (You for You) Teen Trail, each with 30 items. Statistical tools, including Frequency, Mean, Percentage, Mann-Whitney U Test, and Spearman Rho, were applied for and descriptive and comparative analytical schemes for analysis. Results showed "very positive" ratings for the Responsible Adolescents Program and Peer Educators Training, and a "positive" rating for the U4U Teen Trail. Beneficiaries' attitude, applicability, and adherence were rated "very positive" and "very high." Significant differences were observed when grouped by variables, with strong correlations among the program levels, positive attitude, applicability, and adherence.

Keywords: Adolescent health, attitude, applicability, adherence, development program, Negros Occidental

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

This study focuses on the growing concerns surrounding adolescents today, particularly the increasing rates of teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and risky sexual behavior. Negros Occidental's Responsible Adolescence Program, part of the Negros First Development Agenda on Social Services, emphasizes youth development and responsible parenting, promoting natural family planning to support family health. The program aligns with Republic Act 6365, the "Population Act of 1971," and subsequent amendments, including the Philippine Population Management Program (PPMP) and Executive Order No. 476, which integrated the Commission on Population (POPCOM) into the Department of Health.

The Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP), a critical component of the PPMP, aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health of young Filipinos aged 10–19. It seeks to reduce teenage pregnancies, STIs, and HIV/AIDS cases, aligning with the International Conference on Population and Development's Program of Action and the Comprehensive Sexuality Education mandates of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Law of 2012. Further government directives, including Executive Order No. 12 and Department of Health Administrative Order No. 2017-0005, support the implementation of modern family planning methods to achieve desired family sizes and reduce unmet needs.

Statistics reveal pressing issues: 40% of adolescents engage in early sexual activity, 18% of teens in Negros Occidental experience early pregnancies, and the Philippines ranks highest in teenage pregnancy rates in Southeast Asia. Additionally, risky behaviors like smoking, alcohol consumption, and drug use are prevalent, with 70% of youth drinking and 93% trying alcohol. These behaviors correlate with sexual risk-taking. Motivated by these findings and as a focal person for the AHDP in Negros Occidental, the researcher aims to use the study's results to enhance programs and activities to improve adolescent well-being in the province.

Current State of Knowledge

According to Letourneau et al. (2024), many initiatives aimed at preventing child sexual abuse (CSA) primarily focus on equipping children with strategies to recognize, resist, and report victimization; however, evidence suggests that these victimization-centered approaches may not effectively prevent CSA and often overlook the fact that many cases involve problematic sexual behavior by children and adolescents toward younger peers. To address this gap,

the Responsible Behavior with Younger Children (RBYC) program was developed as a novel, universal, school-based intervention aimed at preventing inappropriate, harmful, or illegal sexual behaviors among adolescents. Designed to provide adolescents and their parents with knowledge and tools to foster healthy interactions with younger children and avoid CSA-related behaviors, RBYC was implemented in four urban schools, yielding valuable insights into its development. A pilot randomized waitlist-controlled trial (RCT) involving 160 sixth- and seventh-grade students demonstrated that RBYC improved youth knowledge of CSA and CSA-related laws while increasing behavioral intentions to prevent CSA and peer sexual harassment. Although the sample size was small and the effects modest, the findings suggest that RBYC holds promise as a preventive intervention for problem sexual behavior.

Health-promoting behaviors among adolescents require strategic interventions tailored to the factors influencing these behaviors, as emphasized by Tabrizi et al. (2024), who recommend that policymakers and healthcare providers design targeted programs to encourage adolescents to adopt healthier lifestyles. Adolescent peer education programs, as highlighted by Obeagu and Gu (2024), are effective strategies for health promotion and disease prevention, particularly for addressing global health concerns such as sickle cell disease (SCD). By leveraging peer group influence, these programs foster awareness, encourage preventive behaviors, and support early intervention. Adolescents with SCD face unique challenges in disease management, adherence to treatments, and navigating social and educational environments. Peer education programs empower young individuals to disseminate health-related information, promote positive behaviors, and provide peer support, making them a promising approach to SCD prevention and management.

Similarly, addressing high-risk behaviors among Indonesian teenagers related to the TRIAD KRR—free sex, drug use, and exposure to HIV/AIDS—remains crucial, as 35.9% report engaging in free sex, 45.04% using drugs, and 45.9% being exposed to HIV/AIDS. Pramaswari et al. (2024) identify low knowledge levels and misinformation as major contributing factors to these behaviors. Mentoring by peer educators has proven effective in improving adolescents' knowledge of reproductive health, underscoring the importance of mentorship programs in increasing awareness and mitigating risks associated with the TRIAD KRR.

Moreover, depression and anxiety significantly impact the overall health and well-being of people living with HIV (PLHIV), making mental health management an integral part of HIV care. The Collaborative Care Model (CoCM), an evidence-based approach that integrates mental health services into primary care, offers a promising solution. A study by Dungca-Lorilla et al. (2024) reported that 95% of PLHIV participants were men with a mean age of 28 years, while 58% of other stakeholders were women, averaging 44 years of age and eight years of professional experience. Factors influencing the acceptability of CoCM included the urgent need for better mental health services, enhanced access to care, and the provision of holistic healthcare. Participants also emphasized the trust established during HIV care as a foundation for expanding the role of HIV providers to include mental health screening and care. However, barriers such as a shortage of psychiatrists, an overstretched HIV workforce, limited mental health knowledge among providers, and high implementation costs were identified. To improve the feasibility and acceptability of CoCM, the study recommends targeted mental health training for providers, collaborations to increase access to psychiatrists, the establishment of clear care integration protocols, and thorough planning and pilot testing. These measures are essential for creating a sustainable framework that integrates mental health into HIV care, ultimately enhancing outcomes for PLHIV.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The Philippine Commission on Population oversees the Adolescent Health and Development Program, managing policy, support, service delivery, capacity building, advocacy, information, education, and research. The program's foundation incorporates attitude theory, which has evolved as a key focus in social psychology since the 1950s. Attitude theory includes learning behavior and cognitive integration theories, emphasizing consistency, motivation, and cognitive processes. It informs the interplay of theory and practice, highlighting the importance of applying abstract theories to practical interventions.

Theories of applicability and adherence further guide the program's approach. Applicability theory connects abstract principles to real-world scenarios, while adherence theory explores perceptions of treatment to enhance program effectiveness. Together, these theories shape innovative strategies for adolescent development, addressing both sexual and non-sexual behaviors and integrating social influences to promote behavior change.

This study evaluated the Attitude, Applicability, and Adherence to the Adolescent Health and Development Program to assess its implementation and effectiveness. By examining how the program aligns with social influence and behavior change principles, the research highlights its role in addressing adolescent health concerns and refining strategies to meet its objectives.

Objectives

This study aimed to determine the attitude, applicability and adherence of program beneficiaries to Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Fourth District of Negros Occidental for Calendar Year 2023-2024. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1) the Attitude of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program according to the area of responsible adolescents' program, peer educator training, and U4U (You for You) teen trail and when all the areas are taken altogether; 2) the positive of applicability among beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program according to the aforementioned areas and when all the areas are taken altogether; 3) the positive of adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescents Health and Development Program according to the aforementioned areas and when all the areas are taken altogether; 4) the significant relationship between the positive attitude and the positive applicability among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program; 5) the significant relationship between the positive applicability and the positive adherence among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescents Health and Development Program; and 6) the significant relationship between the positive attitude and the positive adherence among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program.

Methodology

This section presents the over-all methods in the conduct of this research. This includes, but not partial to, the research design, the respondents of the study, the research instrument to be utilized in gathering of data, the validity and reliability of the research instrument, the data gathering procedure, and the statistical tools to be used in the analysis of the data.

Research Design

This study was used the descriptive research design in determining the attitude, applicability and adherence toward the beneficiaries of Adolescents Health and Development Program. For studies that aim to describe the current physiognomies of a certain phenomenon, descriptive research design is most suitable. According to H Cooper (2015), descriptive research design was used for the survey to see a general picture of the analysis in terms of attitude, applicability and adherence of the beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program. Furthermore, Peter M. Nardi (2015) likewise states that the descriptive method or survey research involves data collection in order to answer questions about the existing status of the subject or topic of investigation. In this case, the researcher aims to obtain an image of the attitude applicability and adherence of the beneficiaries towards the Adolescents Health and Development Program. The use of a descriptive research design is to measure the current phenomenon which is the attitude, applicability and adherence of the Adolescent Health and Development Program in three (3) areas which are the Responsible Adolescents Program (RAP), U4U teen trail and Peer Educators Training (PET); through the analysis of opinions, attitudes and behavior levels of the respondents by means of a survey questionnaire.

Study Respondents

The respondents of this study were the high school students who attended the classes of Adolescents Health and Development Program in the area of Responsible Adolescence Program, Peer Educators Training and U4U Teen Trail, conducted by the Population Workers and Officers in Calendar Year 2017 within Bago City, La Carlota City, Pontevedra, Pulupandan, San Enrique and Valladolid. Based on the listing provided by the Population Workers and Officers who were assigned in District 4 of Negros Occidental, there are 3,405 beneficiaries in the area, the total sample size are 378 beneficiaries were included as respondents.

Instruments

A survey questionnaire was developed to assess the extent of attitude, applicability, and degree of adherence of beneficiaries to the three core areas of the Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP). This tool, distributed among respondents, was guided by Executive Order No. 12, specifically Section 3(c)(i)(viii), which emphasizes POPCOM's mandate to adopt zero unmet need for modern family planning as a population management strategy. This aligns with efforts to assist couples in achieving their desired family size and reducing teenage pregnancy, alongside the Department of Education's implementation of Gender-Sensitive and Rights-Based Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in school curricula. The questionnaire comprised two sections: Part I focused on respondents' personal profiles, including age, sex, sexual orientation, and family size, while Part II contained ten items for each of the AHDP's three components—Responsible Adolescent Program, U4U Teen Trail, and Peer Educators Training (PET). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Very Positive" (96% and above) to "Very Negative" (50% and below), capturing beneficiaries' perceptions of the program's usefulness, value, and degree of importance. The research instrument was subjected to validity (4.9-excellent) and reliability (0.978-highly reliable). All of them were interpreted as worthy and good; respectively.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study and the survey questionnaires that embodied the study objectives was presented by the researcher to the thesis panel members. As the thesis panel members approved the research instrument, it was then subjected to validation and reliability testing. The researcher sent letter to the following School Superintendents; the Division of Bago, the Division of La Carlota and Division of Negros Occidental respectively; and will ask permission from the said Superintendents to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher will conduct the survey questionnaire to 378 students' beneficiaries from the two cities and four municipalities in the 4th District of Negros Occidental to administer the mechanics of survey administration. The researcher shall coordinate with the Local Chief Executives, the Population Office in the 4th District of Negros Occidental and the school principals to seek assistance for the conduct of the survey among others. The researcher acquired the list of beneficiaries from the attendance gathered by the Provincial Population Worker and Officer through the conduct of Responsible Adolescence Program (RAP), Peer Educators Training, and U4U activities on two Cities and four Municipalities in District 4 of Negros Occidental. The researcher conducted the survey through distribution of the questionnaire. Each item in the questionnaire will be discussed and explained in local dialect. After answering, the questionnaires will be retrieved, compiled, tabulated, interpreted and analyzed into the consideration of the objectives and hypotheses ability for the study. The respondents will be assured of the confidentiality of the data gathered.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

Objective No.1 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and mean to determine the Attitude of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program according to the area of responsible adolescents' program, peer educator training, and U4U (You for You) teen trail and when all the areas are taken altogether.

Objective No.2 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and mean to determine the positive of applicability among beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program according to the aforementioned areas and when all the areas are taken altogether.

Objective No.3 used a descriptive-analytical scheme and mean to determine the positive of adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescents Health and Development Program according to the aforementioned areas and when all the areas are taken altogether.

Objective No. 4 used a comparative analytical scheme and Spearman ρ to determine whether a significant relationship between the positive attitude and the positive applicability among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program.

Objective No. 5 used a comparative analytical scheme and Spearman ρ to determine whether a significant relationship between the positive applicability and the positive adherence among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescents Health and Development Program.

Objective No. 6 used a comparative analytical scheme and Spearman ρ to determine whether a significant relationship between the positive attitude and the positive adherence among the beneficiaries towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher ensured that respondents were given the free will to be involved in the study, their identities were not disclosed, and they were assured of the confidentiality of the data gathered. Anonymity and confidentiality are considered to safeguard the privacy of persons who willingly consent to participate in research. The possible harm to the participants, the researcher, the larger community, and the institution must be considered in the study. The harm can be in the form of distress, shame, and worry, which are difficult to anticipate or manage, as well as bodily harm, resource loss, emotional harm, and reputational impairment. After completion, all data stored in electronic gadgets were discarded to protect against unauthorized access or use of information.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Table 1

Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Responsible Adolescence Program

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Understanding Adolescents physical and emotional development.	4.69	Very High Positive
2. Four "I"s" Identity, Independence, Intimacy & Individuality.	4.17	High Positive

3. Clarification of puberty stage	4.44	Very High Positive
4. Human sexuality	4.45	Very High Positive
5. Adolescents believe in sexual myths.	4.01	High Positive
6. Fertility awareness	4.44	Very High Positive
7. Parts and functions of the male and female reproductive system.	4.46	Very High Positive
8. Identification of threats and risks of Adolescents	4.42	Very High Positive
9. Menstrual cycle and combined/joint fertility	4.38	Very High Positive
10. Protecting Adolescents	4.40	Very High Positive
Over all Mean	4.39	Very High Positive

Table 1 present the results of the Attitude of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the area of Responsible Adolescence Program (RAP). Eight (8) out of ten (10) topics were rated "Very High Positive" while only 2 topics were noted "High Positive" as presented by Table 3. Topic number one (1) that pertained to the "understanding adolescents physical and emotional development" got the highest rating with a mean score of 4.64 interpreted as "Very High Positive". According to Erikson there are plenty rooms for continued, psychosocial growth development throughout one's life. He puts a great deal of emphasis on the emotions and feeling of adolescents' which are critical in developing the persons' identity.

According to the theory, successful realization of the developmental tasks during each stage of development results in a health personality and acquisition of basic virtue. Basic virtues are characteristic strengths which the ego can use to resolve subsequent crisis.

On the other hand, topic number five (5) "Adolescents believe in sexual myths" got the lowest mean score of 4.01 interpreted as "High Positive". Adolescence is a stage of human life in which sexuality performs as a rediscovery, causing certain vulnerability due to myths and taboos. Thus, the Commission on Population gives emphasis to the role of young people. The Celebration of the World Population Day on July 11, 2014 launched with the theme "Investing in Young People", was adopted to raise the awareness on various risky behaviors of the adolescents. The activity focused on the crucial role of young people as special sector of the community and the support they need to attain their fullest potentials as individuals (Partners in Population and Development, 2014).

Over all, Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program in the area of Responsible Adolescence Program got the total mean score of 4.39 which is interpreted as "Very High Positive". This implies that the respondents were very positive in this program of Adolescent Health and Development in the area of Responsible Adolescence Program. POPCOM VI together with the Provincial Social and Development Office-Population and Development Division spearhead programs and activities to advocate sexuality awareness through symposium, forum and small group discussions and of teen centers in every high school as well as in community. It may not be cool to be a teenager. There may be lots of things going on in various sides of their lives. To become responsible adolescents, they should focus on their studies and do well in all their endeavors. There is time of everything. Take care of your health and hygiene. Healthy body and mind are important as you journey through adolescence.

Table 2

Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Peer Educators Training

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Me and I, Self-awareness/Self Concept.	4.53	Very High Positive
2. Sex & Gender	4.59	Very High Positive
3. Fertility awareness	4.30	Very High Positive
4. Threats and risk of Adolescents	4.33	Very High Positive
5. Peer Helping	4.09	High Positive
6. The power of Us	4.15	High Positive
7. Action Planning	4.14	High Positive
8. Society and I	4.36	Very High Positive
9. The Filipino Youth of Today	4.30	Very High Positive
10. Challenge to change	4.17	High Positive
Over all Mean	4.30	Very High Positive

Table 2 presents the results of the Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Area of Peer Educators Training assessed by the respondents' contrast from positive to a Very High Positive. Six (6) topics were interpreted as "Very High Extent" while around four (4) topics were interpreted as "High Positive". The overall mean score was 4.30 which was interpreted as "Very High Positive". This implies that the respondents were willing to help educate their peers.

Topic number two (2) pertains to the "Sex and Gender" got the highest mean score of 4.59 was interpreted as "Very High Positive". The highest mean score implies that the adolescents are aware of the program regarding sex and gender with the help of the implementation of Reproductive Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law of 2012 that stated, appropriate reproductive health education to the adolescents which shall be taught by adequately trained teachers especially gender-based violence and gender development.

It strengthens the awareness of the adolescents about the sex and gender issues. It also recognizes the effort of the population officers and workers in the area who conducted the classes regarding the sex and gender.

Among the ten, topic number five (5) "Peer helping" got the lowest mean score of 4.09 was interpreted as "High Positive". Peer helping is designed to teach the process of helping another person through peer assistance leadership. Students and out of school youth enter into one-to-one helping relationships; assume leadership roles, discuss leadership roles, tutor, participate in public speaking, peer counseling, facilitating, team building and in other interpersonal helping roles. The local government units allocate budget for the training of selected adolescents who are willing to render service to their peers. Adolescents seek help from their peers when they are experiencing some confusions, frustration, worry or concern. Teens relate more easily with their peers rather than adult counselors or professional therapists.

Table 3

Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area U4U (You for You) Teen Trail

What is your Attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Online portal health advocacy.	4.43	Very High Positive
2. Teen Text	4.24	Very High Positive
3. Teen trail	4.14	High Positive
4. Bakas bukas exhibit	4.02	High Positive
5. Teen chat	4.52	Very High Positive
6. Teen Tunes	4.16	High Positive
7. Teen Code	4.44	Very High Positive
8. Teen Color	4.09	High Positive
9. Teen Choice	4.01	High Positive
10. Teen Wait	4.08	High Positive
Over all Mean	4.21	High Positive

Table 3 presents the positive Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program assessed by the beneficiaries in the Area of U4U (You for You) Teen Trail. Four out of 10 topics got a "Very High Extent" while 6 were listed as "High Positive" as presented by Table 5. Topic number 5 that pertains to the "Teen chat" got the Highest mean score of 4.52 interpreted as "Very High Positive". This implies that their self-awareness on their physical changes is strengthened.

The Department of Health with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Philippines, revising the policy and served the Administrative Order 0013 National Health Policy Strategic Framework on Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP) which focus on the emerging issues of the adolescents which are the 10-19 years old.

On the other hand, the lowest over all mean score was 4.01 interpreted as "High Positive" for topic number 9 or the "teen choice". In spite of the massive campaign Health and Population workers/officers experienced difficulties in implementing this program. This may be due to lack of budget, and it can only accommodate 80 participants for fun and effective delivery of key messages.

The over-all mean was 4.21 interpreted as "High Positive". This implied the high rating of the respondents towards the Adolescent Health and Development Program in the area of U4U (You for You). It aims to deliver critical information to Filipino teens to avoid teen pregnancy and reduce the prevalence of sexual transmitted diseases.

This program supported the Sustainable developmental goals of United Nation Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents 2016-2030. This unique health challenges facing of young people but also their pivotal role in the society. The Sustainable Developmental Goals, investing the right policies and programs for adolescent to realize their potential and their human rights health, education and full participation in the society.

Table 4

Attitude of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program When Taken altogether

Areas	Mean	Interpreted
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Responsible Adolescents Program	4.39	Very High Positive
Peer Educator Training	4.30	Very High Positive
U4U (You for You) teen Trail	4.21	High Positive
Over all Mean	4.30	Very High Positive

Table 4 shows the overall mean of the areas representing the perception of the Attitude of beneficiaries Toward the Adolescent Health and Development Program.

The Responsible Adolescent Program has scored the highest mean of 4.39 interpreted as "Very High Positive". This shows that the local government units in the fourth district have fully implemented the responsible adolescent program which was availed by the adolescents. Several programs relative to adolescent development were implemented including the establishment of teen centers, conduct of symposium and small group discussion.

As we involve the adolescents in program of development we obliged to recognize and respect their rights. The committee on the Rights of the child discussed adolescent health and development; they mention the rights to health and development by creating a safe and supportive environment, which entails addressing attitudes and action of both immediate environments of the adolescent; family, peers, schools, and services as well as the wider environment created by inter alia, community and religious leaders, the media, national and local policies and legislation. It is dependent on the development of youth-sensitive health care, which respect confidentiality and privacy and includes appropriate sexual and reproductive health services.

The area that has scored the lowest mean of 4.21 interpreted as "High Positive" was U4U (You for You) teen trail. This implies that there are still topics that have received low response from the beneficiaries as represented by the respondents.

The challenge and struggle are real to attain the vision for Filipino Adolescents because of the rising of teen pregnancy, sexual transmitted infection and HIV and AIDS. Commission on Population in line with Duterte Administration's socio-economic fosters the Filipino's aspiration of "Matatag, Maginhawa at Panatag na Buhay". This aims to promote and improve the total well-being of adolescents through the reduction of teen pregnancy, HIV and AIDS, violence against young girls and other psycho-social concerns.

Table 5

Level of Applicability Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Area Responsible Adolescent Program

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Understanding Adolescents physical and emotional development.	4.56	Very High Level
2. Four "I's" Identity, Independence, Intimacy & Individuality.	4.42	Very High Level
3. Clarification of puberty stage	4.34	Very High Level
4. Human sexuality	4.41	Very High Level
5. Adolescents believe in sexual myths.	4.12	High Level
6. Fertility awareness	4.27	Very High Level
7. Parts and functions of the male and female reproductive system.	4.49	Very High Level
8. Identification of threats and risks of Adolescents	4.33	Very High Level
9. Menstrual cycle and combined/joint fertility	4.39	Very High Level
10. Protecting Adolescents	4.47	Very High Level
Over all Mean	4.38	Very High Level

Table 5 shows the data gathered to measure the "Very High Level" Applicability among beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the area of Responsible Adolescent Program. Data reveals that Topic Number 1 which is the "Understanding adolescents physical and emotional development" with mean score of 4.56 interpreted as "Very High Level". This implied that adolescents are willing to discover their personal and emotional development thru the correct information.

In Erick Erickson, eight stages of psychosocial development, teenagers face the challenge as identity versus role of confusion. The brain and body processes time to make puberty complex. Individual Physical maturation pushes into adolescence with peaks in strength, speed and fitness. Puberty triggers emotional, thinking and behavioral changes. Beyond the biological process individual control, it and it is important to keep these in mind that working with the adolescents.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score was 4.12 interpreted as "High Level" for item No. 5 or the "Adolescents believe in sexual myths". The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) issued Memorandum Circular

No. 2004-152 instructed the Local Government Units regarding the localizing of the Millennium Development Goals of Adolescent Reproductive Health, to educate parents on fertility, sexuality and Rural Health and mobilize them for the provision of information to young people and to provide health services and counseling.

The area of Responsible Adolescent Program garnered an over-all mean score of 4.38 that is interpreted as "Very High Level". This shows that the effort of population workers/officers in establishing the program is very helpful to adolescents. Achieving the outcome of the health is to build upon the behavioral changes, includes the increasing service utilization, adoption of healthy behaviors, avoidance of risky behaviors and participation in the community development.

Table 6

Level of Applicability Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Peer Educator Training

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Me and I, Self-awareness/Self Concept.	4.39	Very High Level
2. Sex & Gender	4.24	Very High Level
3. Fertility awareness	4.61	Very High Level
4. Threats and risk of Adolescents	4.38	Very High Level
5. Peer Helping	4.31	Very High Level
6. The power of Us	4.53	Very High Level
7. Action Planning	4.24	Very High Level
8. Society and I	4.25	Very High Level
9. The Filipino Youth of Today	4.66	Very High Level
10. Challenge to change	4.12	High Level
Over all Mean	4.37	Very High Level

Table 6 shows the means and interpretations of the data gathered on the "High Level" Applicability among beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Area of Peer Educators Training. The table express Topic Number 9 which is the "The Filipino Youth of Today" got the highest mean score of 4.66 interpreted as "Very High Level". The adolescent of today's, has both good qualities and some deficiencies in them. This stage has a series of understanding and emotions that the previous generation did not possess and we must give them always the benefit of doubt.

Adolescent Health and Development Program of Department of Health and the Philippine Pediatric Society (PPS) divides this period into Early Adolescence 10-13 years old, Middle adolescence 14-16 years, and Late adolescence 17-19 years old. Stages of adolescents have a unique realities and different concerns. For example, girls in early adolescents just began menstruating and their concern is menstrual hygiene. Compare to girls in late adolescence are probably concerned with romantic relationships.

For Topic Number 10 which is the "Challenge to change" and garnered a low mean score of 4.12 and interpreted as "High Level". We encourage our young people to change their risky behavior and most of all to avoid teen pregnancy, sexual transmitted infection and HIV and AIDS. We empower, encourage and promote their total well-being to become a better person in the community. The government recognizes the leadership and participation of adolescents as essential in nation building. Older adolescents are preparing for entry to the workforce. They are essential to the national and economic development, consider their potential for employment.

The overall mean score of this area is 4.37 interpreted as "Very". It understandably implies that the respondents recognize the program. Many ways to establish peer educators training, Peer educators are adolescents who trained and capacitated to effect behavior changed among the fellow adolescents. Collectively, they may also affect change at the community level by changing norms and advocating for policies and an environment that is supportive of adolescents.

Table 7

Level of Applicability Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area U4U (You for You) Teen Trail

What is your Attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Online portal health advocacy.	4.37	Very High Level
2. Teen Text	4.03	High Level
3. Teen trail	4.20	High Level
4. Bakas bukas exhibit	3.96	High Level
5. Teen chat	4.24	Very High Level
6. Teen Tunes	4.17	High Level
7. Teen Code	4.02	High Level
8. Teen Color	3.88	High Level

9. Teen Choice	4.17	High Level
10. Teen Wait	4.23	High Level
Over all Mean	4.13	High Level

Table 7 shows the data gathered on the "High Level" of Applicability among beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Area U4U (You for You) teen trail as assessed by the beneficiaries.

In this area, Topic Number 1 which is the "Online portal health advocacy" has got the highest mean score of 4.37 interpreted as "Very High Level". An interactive, entertaining and educational activity to deliver critical information to teenagers to prevent teen pregnancy and prevalence of sexual transmitted infection through online and mobile platforms.

Contrary, Topic Number 4 which is the "Teen Color" got the lowest rating of 3.88 interpreted as "Positive". Teen color is a short workshop on sex and gender. Despite educating young people on sex and gender issued stigmatize and exploitation of LGBT adolescents. They are risk for violence and discrimination. It identifies disparities, why such disparities exist, they determine the potential impediment to achieving results, and looks how they can have addressed.

Popcom collaboration with the Department of Health, Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP) and Local Government Units launched "Talk Tayo Ikaw ang Bida Dito". This demand generation strategy the target of inculcating responsible sexuality among adolescent sectors considering their special needs and other vulnerabilities highlighting the importance of responsible sexuality by acquiring correct information through comprehensive sexuality education.

Table 8

Level of Applicability Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program When Taken altogether

Areas	Mean	Interpretation
Responsible Adolescents Program	4.38	Very High Level
Peer Educator Training	4.37	Very High Level
U4U (You for You) teen Trail	4.13	High Level
Over all Mean	4.28	Very High Level

The data gathered on the Positive Applicability among beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program When Taken altogether is presented in Table 10.

Two areas were rated "Very High Level" but the area that got the lowest mean score of 4.13 is U4U (You for You) teen trail and the area that got the highest mean score is Responsible Adolescent Program, the over-all mean score is 4.28. The results imply that though the beneficiaries satisfied with the programs they attended, they are copacetic that the Adolescent Health and Development Program is beneficial and meaningful to change their risky behavior for the betterment of their life.

Table 9

Positive Adherence Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Responsible Adolescent Program

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Understanding Adolescents physical and emotional development.	4.60	Very High Degree
2. Four "I's" Identity, Independence, Intimacy & Individuality.	4.40	Very High Degree
3. Clarification of puberty stage	4.48	Very High Degree
4. Human sexuality	4.60	Very High Degree
5. Adolescents believe in sexual myths.	4.19	High Degree
6. Fertility awareness	4.48	Very High Degree
7. Parts and functions of the male and female reproductive system.	4.41	Very High Degree
8. Identification of threats and risks of Adolescents	4.59	Very High Degree
9. Menstrual cycle and combined/joint fertility	4.46	Very High Degree
10. Protecting Adolescents	4.61	Very High Degree
Over all Mean	4.48	Very High Degree

The results of Table 9 which presents the High Degree Adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program in the Area of Responsible Adolescent Program as assessed by the beneficiaries varied from High Degree to Very High Degree Nine (9) topics were interpreted as "Very High Degree" while the remaining one (1) topic garnered with "High Degree" The over-all mean was 4.48 which "Very High Degree". This implied that

the program of Adolescent Health and Development Program in the area of Responsible Adolescent Program is acceptable to the beneficiaries.

Topic Number 9 that pertains to the "Protecting Adolescents" has garnered the highest mean of 4.61 interpreted as "Very High Degree".

The PSWDO-Population and Development Division support the establishment of Comprehensive Sexuality Education to provides for age and Development applicable Reproductive Health Education to adolescents to be taught by adequate trained teachers and integrate in relevant subject such as values formation, knowledge and skills in self-protection against discrimination; sexual abuse and violence against women and children and other forms of gender based violence and teen pregnancy; physical, social and emotional changes in adolescents; women's right and children's right; responsible teenager behavior; gender and development; and responsible parenthood.

Among all the topics, topic number 5 that relates to "Adolescents believe in sexual myths" received the lowest mean score of 4.19 interpreted as Positive. It implies that the conduct of "Talk Tayo Ikaw ang Bida Dito" that aims to provide critical information regarding sexuality and reproductive health is a big help to avoid sexual myths of adolescents.

Table 10

Degree of Adherence Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Peer Educator Training

What is your attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
1. Me and I, Self-awareness/Self Concept.	4.45	Very High Degree
2. Sex & Gender	4.46	Very High Degree
3. Fertility awareness	4.33	Very High Degree
4. Threats and risk of Adolescents	4.17	High Degree
5. Peer Helping	4.54	Very High Degree
6. The power of Us	4.10	High Degree
7. Action Planning	4.17	High Degree
8. Society and I	4.32	Very High Degree
9. The Filipino Youth of Today	4.04	High Degree
10. Challenge to change	4.04	High Degree
Over all Mean	4.26	Very High Degree

Degree of Adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area Peer Educator Training was presented by Table 12. Five (5) topics were interpreted as "Very High Degree" and five (5) topics were also interpreted as "High Degree". The overall mean score was 4.26 which interpreted as "Very High Degree". This implied that the respondents eager to help educate their peers.

Among the ten (10) topics that has garnered the same Very Positive, topic number 5 that pertains to the "Peer Helping," has garnered 4.54, which is interpreted as "Very High Degree". In strengthening the program, Regional Training on Peer Education (Level I II & III) was held in Natures Village, Talisay City last September 25-28, 2017. The participants compose of Provincial/City Populations and Guidance Counsellors. The topic is relevant to adolescents' issues like teen pregnancy, gender development and equality, human sexuality, sexual and non-sexual behavior, HIV & AIDS, benefits of Peer Education and role of peer educators among others.

Topics number 9 and 10 that relates to "The Filipino Youth of Today" and "Challenge to change." received the lowest mean score of 4.04 interpreted as High Degree. The adolescents today focus on the present situation rather than the future. They obsessed in keeping up with the trends. Many of the adolescents today are subject to peer pressure. There is much evidence of the westernization of the Filipino adolescents. Their appearance and fashion are noticeably by the foreign culture.

When Pope Francis attended the 2013 World Youth Day celebration he said "I am asking you instead, to be revolutionaries, to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes that are incapable of responsibility, that you are incapable of true love". This is a call for a change.

To prevent this kind of behavior the PSWDO-Population and Development Division conduct a Peer Educators training to help adolescents mold their life to become a better citizen of this country.

Table 11

Degree of Adherence Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area of U4U (You for You) Teen Trail

What is your Attitude on the topics listed below?	Mean	Interpretation
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1. Online portal health advocacy.	4.21	High Degree
2. Teen Text	4.30	Very High Degree
3. Teen trail	4.10	High Degree
4. Bakas bukas exhibit	3.90	High Degree
5. Teen chat	4.11	High Degree
6. Teen Tunes	4.10	High Degree
7. Teen Code	3.96	High Degree
8. Teen Color	4.15	High Degree
9. Teen Choice	3.95	High Degree
10. Teen Wait	3.87	High Degree
Over all Mean	4.06	High Degree

Table 11 presents the data gathered on the High Degree of Adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area U4U (You for You) Teen Trail. Based on the table, Topic Number 7 got the lowest mean score of 3.87 interpreted as "High Degree" which is the "Teen Wait". Statistic shows the increasing number teen pregnancy. This is about 4 times higher than the 4 percent acceptable rate according to the Department of Health. In every three young people in the region has experiencing too early sexual activity which contributes to the increase in teenage fertility.

The population, health workers and the peer educators jointly conducted the "Talk Tayo Ikaw and Bida Dito" to help prevent the increase of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection, HIV and AIDS. Other identified risky behavior shall refer to other partners through Information Service Delivery Network (ISDN).

On the other hand, the "Teen Text" got the highest mean score of 4.30 interpreted as "Very High Degree". This indicates that most of the respondents are knowledgeable using gadget and social media. A dynamic interactive website that allows teen users to learn about self-identity, friendship, life skills and teen health advocacy.

The over-all mean score of the Degree of Adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program in the Area U4U (You for You) Teen Trail is 4.06 interpreted as "High Degree". This implies that as assessed by the respondents this program delivers critical information to prevent teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection through online and mobile platforms is useful to them. This is an informative and entertaining teen caravan that can set up easily in schools and community and managed by teen themselves, includes interactive exhibit, fun workshops, songs and dances.

Table 12

Degree of Adherence Among Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program When Taken altogether

Areas	Mean	Interpretation
Responsible Adolescents Program	4.48	Very High Degree
Peer Educator Training	4.26	Very High Degree
U4U (You for You) teen Trail	4.06	High Degree
Over all Mean	4.27	Very High Degree

Table 12 shows the overall mean of each of the areas and when taken altogether the overall mean of all the areas representing the overall perception of the Positive of Adherence among respondents/ beneficiaries towards Adolescent Health and Development Program.

The area on U4U (You for You) teen trail has the lowest mean score of 4.06 interpreted as "High Degree". This implies that the delivery of information in this area is only between 81-90 percent based the assessment made by the Adolescent Health and Development Program beneficiaries through the survey questionnaire. The facilitators manage the activity with fun and effective delivery of the key messages to the participants/beneficiaries of the U4U (You for You) teen trail.

To a better High Degree Adherence among beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program when taken altogether, the areas on Responsible Adolescent Program and Peer Educators Training bears the highest mean scores and interpreted as "Very High Degree". For the survey respondents, the Adolescent and Health Development Program in the areas of Responsible Adolescent Program and Peer Educators Training are between 90-100%. This is supported by the respondents'/beneficiaries' assessment which gave weight on the very high degree of Adolescent Health and Development Program on the implementation of the said programs.

Table 13

Relationship Between the Positive Attitude and Positive Applicability of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program

Variable	Rho	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Positive Attitude	0.924	0.00	0.05	Significant
Level of Applicability				

Table 13 shows the relationship between the Positive Attitude and Level of Applicability of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program. The table reveals the p value gathered is .000 interpreted as significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that states "There is no significant relationship between the Positive Attitude and the Positive Applicability of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program." is hereby rejected.

The positive attitude is highly dependent on the positive applicability. The respondents'/beneficiaries manifestation on the very positive attitude towards the application of the program.

Table 14

Relationship Between the Positive Attitude and Degree of Adherence of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program

Variable	rho	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Positive Attitude	0.964	0.000	0.05	Significant
Degree of Adherence				

Table 14 presents the Relationship Between the Positive Attitude and Level Applicability of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent Health and Development Program. The data gathered shows the p value of 0.000 interpreted as significant; hence the hypothesis that states "There is no significant relationship between the Level of Attitude and Level of Applicability of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent Health and Development Program" is hereby rejected.

Table 15

Relationship Between the Level of Applicability and Degree of Adherence of the Beneficiaries Towards Adolescent and Health Development Program

Variable	rho	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Extent of Applicability	0.960	0.000	0.05	Significant
Degree of Adherence				

The data on the relationship between the Positive Attitude and Level Applicability of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program is presented on Table 15. It shows the p-value obtained is 0.000 interpreted as Significant. Thus, the hypothesis that says "There is no significant relationship between the Positive Attitude, Positive Applicability and the degree of adherence of the beneficiaries towards Adolescent and Health Development Program" is hereby rejected.

Conclusions

In conclusions, participants in the Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP) have a "Very Positive" attitude toward the U4U Teen Trail and a "Positive" attitude toward the Responsible Adolescent Program and Peer Educators Training, demonstrating a strong appreciation for these government initiatives. AHDP activities are widely accessible and effective, as evidenced by the "Very High" and "High" applicability ratings for the first two categories and U4U Teen Trail, respectively. Adherence levels, which were impacted by regional resources like government finances, reflected similar findings, with "Very High" for the Responsible Adolescent Program and Peer Educators Training and "High" for the U4U Teen Trail. Respondents consistently rated the programs as worthwhile and beneficial, indicating optimism about their durability across criteria such as age, sex, wealth, and family size. Positive attitudes were shaped by the quality, appropriateness, and completeness of the programs, which directly influenced applicability and adherence. However, deficiencies in policy, administration, capacity, and support revealed gaps in the appropriateness and quality of services, underscoring areas for improvement to enhance program delivery and impact.

Recommendations

The study identified key deficiencies in the Adolescent Health and Development Program (AHDP) over the past three years, particularly in the responsible adolescent program, peer educators training, and U4U (You for You) teen trail. These gaps were also found in the implementation, budgeting, task allocation, and monitoring systems. To improve the program, it is recommended that the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office-Population and Development Division continue fostering positive attitudes, applicability, and adherence by enhancing management teamwork, policy involvement, and capacity-building programs. Population and health workers should maintain their high performance and address issues like teen pregnancy, STIs, and HIV by regularly reviewing and improving implementation. The program should be intensified to reduce risky behaviors among adolescents, with further research recommended for better insights. Additional recommendations include creating local Information Service Delivery Networks, institutionalizing adolescent health programs, raising awareness, organizing technical working groups, lobbying for support, and involving non-government organizations in the program's success.

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