

Assessment of the national drug education program implementation in region XII, Philippines

Hermer Tidalgo¹, Precy Regalado²

Mindanao State University, Philippines^{1&2}

hbtidalgo2013@gmail.com¹, pregalado@msugensan.edu.ph²



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Abstract

Purpose: This study assessed the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholder engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII. It also examined the relationship between these two components to support the development of continuity programs in school-based drug prevention.

Methodology/approach: A descriptive-correlational design was employed using a validated, researcher-made questionnaire administered to 388 school heads and NDEP coordinators across eight divisions in Region XII. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and Spearman's rank correlation.

Results/findings: The NDEP was highly implemented across curriculum and instruction, co-curricular activities, teacher and staff involvement, parent education, and research evaluation. Stakeholder engagement in BKD was also reported to a great extent, particularly in implementation and campaign initiatives. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p = 0.000$) was found between NDEP implementation and stakeholder engagement.

Conclusions: Greater NDEP implementation appears to support stronger stakeholder involvement in BKD initiatives. School-community collaboration remains central to sustaining preventive education.

Limitations: The study was limited to school heads and NDEP coordinators and relied on self-reported data from a single time point. Future studies should include broader stakeholders and track long-term outcomes.

Contribution: The study affirms the importance of strengthening implementation strategies to encourage broader participation in drug prevention efforts across schools and communities.

Keywords: *Barkada Kontra Droga, Correlational Study, Drug Prevention, National Drug Education Program, Stakeholder Engagement, Region XII*

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1. Introduction

Schools play an essential role in addressing drug-related concerns through strategies that reduce demand, limit supply, and mitigate health and social consequences (Kaley & Aryana, 2023). A 2019 evaluation of the school-based drug prevention initiative Tamojuntó in Brazil demonstrated the effectiveness of such programs in preventing substance use among adolescents in Brazil. These findings emphasize the importance of cultural adaptation in program implementation (Sanchez et al., 2017). However, challenges remain in the implementation of school-based drug education initiatives (Siagian, 2023). For instance, the Brazilian adaptation of the European Unplugged program produced varying

outcomes depending on contextual factors (Garcia-Cerde, Valente, & Sanchez, 2024). Additionally, a review of intervention strategies presents mixed evidence regarding their effectiveness, highlighting the need for multisectoral approaches involving families, communities, and policymakers (Thondoo et al., 2024).

The National Drug Education Program (NDEP) represents a comprehensive approach to drug prevention, integrating efforts from multiple sectors, while placing schools at the center of implementation. This initiative seeks to increase awareness of the dangers of substance abuse and promote positive behavior among learners. It involves collaboration among educators, parents, and local communities to equip students with essential life skills that enable them to make informed decisions and avoid drug use. Consistent with Section 43 of Article IV of Republic Act No. 9165, known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, the Department of Education affirms the significance of this program. Schools are responsible for carrying out anti-drug advocacy efforts, including the *Barkada Kontra Droga* initiative, to maintain a drug-free educational environment and encourage student participation in national campaigns (Reyes, 2020).

Despite these interventions, drug-related incidents involving minors remain a significant concern. Reports indicate that 1,145 minors aged 4 to 17 were apprehended for drug-related offenses during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a total of 4,230 minors involved in similar cases since the start of the anti-drug campaign in June 2016 (Lasco & Abesamis, 2024). In response, the Department of the Interior and Local Government introduced the *Buhay Ingatan, Droga'y Ayawan* (BIDA) program, which focuses on reducing drug demand and strengthening community-based rehabilitation efforts (Star, 2016).

However, gaps persist in the implementation of drug-education programs. Research suggests that school personnel often overestimate the effectiveness of their initiatives, while mandatory participation among at-risk youth may unintentionally reinforce deviant behavior. These findings highlight the need for carefully structured interventions tailored to the realities of student populations (Peters, 2022). This study seeks to establish a foundation for continuity programs that strengthen drug education initiatives in public secondary schools in Brazil. Through an in-depth examination of existing programs and their outcomes, this research aims to determine strategies that protect learners from the risks associated with illegal drugs, thereby ensuring their well-being and future opportunities.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study aimed to assess the implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the engagement of stakeholders in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* initiatives in Region XII, providing a basis for developing continuity programs. Specifically, this study seeks to address the following objectives:

1. Determine the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program in Region XII in terms of:
 - 1.1 Curriculum and instruction
 - 1.2 Co-curricular and ancillary services
 - 1.3 Teacher and staff involvement
 - 1.4 parent education and community outreach; and
 - 1.5 Research, evaluation, and monitoring.
2. The extent of stakeholders' engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* initiatives in terms of:
 - 2.1 implementation;
 - 2.2 Developmental seminars and training
 - 2.3 community outreach programs; and
 - 2.4 campaign initiatives:
3. Analyzing the relationship between the level of implementation of the NDEP and the extent of stakeholders' engagement in *Barkada Kontra Droga*.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

This study tests the following null hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholders' engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* initiatives in Region XII.

2. Literature review

This section presents a comprehensive synthesis of existing research relevant to the implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the engagement of stakeholders in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives. Specifically, the discussion explores five primary areas of the NDEP: curriculum and instruction, co-curricular and ancillary services, teacher and staff involvement, parent education and community outreach, and research, evaluation, and monitoring. Through these components, this review contextualizes the essential elements of effective drug prevention education in Philippine schools.

2.1 Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and instruction serve as the structural cores of school-based drug prevention programs. When integrated into regular subject areas, drug education becomes a consistent part of student learning. According to the Department of Education (2018), integrating drug-related content within disciplines such as Social Studies and Health Education ensures that learners are repeatedly exposed to essential prevention concepts throughout their academic journey.

Moreover, drug education delivery through formal instruction is most effective when supported by age-appropriate and context-relevant content. Hardin (2024) notes that messages must resonate with students' developmental stages, providing them with knowledge and practical skills, such as resisting peer influence and making informed decisions. Accordingly, instructional design should involve a range of activities that stimulate both engagement and reflection. These may include discussions, role-playing, storytelling, and problem-solving exercises that enable students to connect abstract concepts to real-life challenges.

Additionally, the adaptability of the curriculum to the learners' socio-cultural environment is a significant consideration. Schools often revise materials to reflect local realities, including community-specific risk factors, language nuances, and behavioral norms (Yılmaz & Temizkan, 2022). Such modifications are vital to ensure that the delivered messages are relatable and credible. Rather than adopting a uniform approach, institutions are encouraged to modify strategies to match their learners' lived experiences. Ultimately, drug prevention curricula are not only vehicles for disseminating information but also serve as platforms for value formation. Through sustained curricular integration, students can gradually internalize the knowledge and attitudes required to lead drug-free lives.

2.2 Co-Curricular and Ancillary Services

Drug education efforts are extended and enriched through co-curricular and ancillary service. These components reinforce classroom lessons in more informal and participatory settings. As Kayyali (2024) explained, co-curricular programs provide students with opportunities to experience and practice positive behaviors that align with the goals of drug prevention. Furthermore, student involvement in sports, cultural activities, seminars, and leadership training allows for the development of identity, responsibility, and community orientation (Cress, Collier, & Reitenauer, 2023). These structured activities provide a protective environment in which youth can express themselves, interact constructively with peers, and form meaningful connections with mentors. When learners are engaged beyond the academic setting, they are more likely to develop positive self-concepts and resilient attitudes, which in turn reduce their susceptibility to risky behaviors (Afzali, Hosseini, & Nooripour, 2024).

Ancillary services, including counseling, peer assistance, and wellness support, are equally important. These services are particularly effective for students dealing with complex family environments, low self-esteem, and early exposure to drug-related activities (Vincent, 2023). Schools that provide consistent access to psychosocial support mechanisms ensure that prevention messages are

supplemented with emotional care and individualized guidance for students. Moreover, co-curricular and ancillary efforts complement the formal curriculum without duplicating it. The Department of Education (2021) maintains that these activities provide continuity and depth to prevention education by introducing collaborative, service-oriented, and expressive approaches that engage students differently. Together, these services reinforce anti-drug values and provide varied contexts in which students can apply what they have learned in schools.

2.3 Teacher and Staff Involvement

Teachers and staff play an active role in the delivery and sustainability of school-based drug education. As primary agents of instruction, teachers are responsible for transmitting not only content but also behaviors, values, and preventive mindsets. Their attitudes and preparedness directly influence the program's success.

According to Constantinou and Wijnen-Meijer (2022), the effectiveness of drug education is significantly enhanced when teachers undergo professional development specific to prevention content and strategies. This includes learning how to handle disclosures, respond to student concerns, and navigate sensitive conversations with empathy and authority. Professional development opportunities are therefore not ancillary; they are fundamental to ensuring quality.

In line with this, Mushamiri (2021) emphasized the importance of equipping educators with a clear understanding of both policy frameworks and behavioral health approaches to address bullying. Teachers who are aware of the broader legal and social context are better positioned to guide their students and intervene when necessary. They are also more likely to contribute to school-wide planning and evaluation processes that shape drug prevention initiatives.

Furthermore, the involvement of school personnel extends beyond classrooms. Guidance counselors, administrative staff, and school heads contribute to program implementation through coordination, resource mobilization, supervision, and liaison with stakeholders (Geesa et al., 2022). A collective approach to staff participation yields a shared sense of accountability and coherence in the messaging throughout the school environment. Thus, when educators and staff are well informed, supported, and united in their objectives, the implementation of the NDEP becomes more cohesive, responsive, and impactful.

2.4 Parent Education and Community Outreach

In addition to the school's internal functions, drug education is significantly influenced by parental and broader community involvement. Huang and Chen (2022) observed that parental engagement significantly improves the alignment between home and school values, creating a more consistent environment for students to learn and apply preventive behaviors. Moreover, parent education initiatives typically include orientation sessions, skills training, and information campaigns aimed at equipping families with the tools to recognize the early warning signs of drug use (Maha, Kolawole, & Abdul, 2024). These efforts allow parents to act proactively, seek appropriate support, and reinforce their behavioral expectations at home. When parents understand the goals of a school-based program, they are more likely to support it through communication and consistent reinforcement.

Matson et al. (2022) assert that outreach programs targeting community members expand the reach and credibility of drug education efforts. These activities involve coordination with local leaders, civic organizations, and law enforcement units, enabling a shared response to drug-related risks among the youth. Community-based interventions, such as barangay forums, advocacy walks, and training camps, are effective in transmitting prevention messages and building social awareness. Community partnerships also allow schools to access additional resources and expertise, including guest speakers, training facilitators, and health professionals. These collaborations enhance the reach of the NDEP beyond formal structures, involving citizens in advocacy, information sharing and surveillance activities (Levin et al., 2021). Overall, community and parental involvement increases program reach, provides continuity across learning environments, and strengthens the collective will to sustain youth protection efforts.

2.5 Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring

A systematic evaluation of drug education programs is necessary to ensure that implementation remains aligned with the intended outcomes. . Hakimi, Quchi, Hasas, and Fazil (2024) emphasized that educational interventions must be guided by evidence and should undergo periodic review to remain relevant and responsive. As the Department of Education (2018) outlined, schools are expected to conduct internal assessments using standardized tools such as rubrics, logs, surveys, and reflective reports. These tools enable schools to document participation, assess effectiveness, and identify areas that require additional intervention or revision. While these practices are commonly recommended, their actual implementation varies due to time constraints, limited technical expertise, or lack of support.

Monitoring mechanisms are also used to inform decision-making and planning processes. When data are collected regularly, schools can adjust their approaches, update their instructional materials, and allocate resources where they are most needed (Jauhiainen & Guerra, 2023). Moreover, research activities such as small-scale studies or action research can provide deeper insights into emerging trends and learner responses (Mertler, 2024).

However, it is not uncommon for evaluation efforts to be deprioritized, especially when schools are burdened with multiple reporting requirements and limited resources. This presents a challenge, as the absence of reliable data reduces the ability to assess program outcomes and weakens the foundation for future planning (Alharbi & Csala, 2022). Therefore, sustained monitoring requires commitment from leadership, collaboration among staff, and access to training and tools that support the process. Research and evaluation ensure that school-based drug education remains dynamic and evolves in response to emerging conditions and learner needs.

2.6 Research Gap

Previous studies on drug prevention programs have primarily concentrated on general models and national-level implementation, often overlooking regional contexts such as Region XII, Philippines. The literature provides insufficient examination of how the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives are operationalized across key dimensions—curriculum and instruction, co-curricular activities, teacher and staff involvement, parent education, community outreach, and research evaluation—across the Philippines. Moreover, the engagement of stakeholders in implementation, developmental seminars, outreach programs, and campaign initiatives has not been comprehensively analyzed within an integrated framework to date. Most existing studies treat these aspects in isolation, resulting in a fragmented understanding of how program components function in specific localities.

This study addresses these gaps through an in-depth regional analysis of both the implementation of the NDEP and the extent of stakeholder engagement in BKD initiatives in Region XII. It employs a descriptive correlational design to investigate the relationship between these two components in actual school settings. In doing so, the study provides empirical evidence grounded in local practice, which may inform more cohesive and sustainable program strategies and anti-drug education interventions in public secondary schools in the future.

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study will utilize a descriptive-correlational research design to assess the implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the involvement of stakeholders in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII, Philippines. The descriptive-correlational design is particularly suitable for this study as it aims to describe the current status of drug prevention programs and examine the relationships between different variables related to their implementation and stakeholders' engagement.

The descriptive aspect of the research will focus on gathering information regarding the level of implementation of the NDEP in terms of curriculum and instruction, co-curricular services, teacher and

staff involvement, parent education and community outreach, and research, evaluation, and monitoring. Additionally, the extent of stakeholders' engagement in BKD initiatives is described, specifically regarding their involvement in program implementation, developmental seminars and training, community outreach, and campaign initiatives. Data will be gathered through surveys, interviews, and document reviews to provide a comprehensive picture of the current state of these programs (Jomarie V. Baron, 2024).

The correlational component of the design seeks to identify the relationships between various factors, such as the extent of implementation and the level of stakeholder involvement, and their potential impact on the success of drug prevention efforts. Specifically, it examines how the engagement of teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders influences the effectiveness of the NDEP and BKD initiatives. Statistical analysis will be used to determine the strength and direction of these relationships (Jomarie V Baron, 2024).

Hence, using this design, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to the success or limitations of drug prevention programs in Region XII and how different aspects of implementation and stakeholder involvement are interrelated. This approach will allow for a clearer understanding of the current challenges and opportunities for improving these programs in the region of interest.

3.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the Department of Education (DepEd) across eight divisions in Region XII, which includes South Cotabato, Kidapawan, Koronadal, Cotabato Province, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, Tacurong, and General Santos City. The focus of this study was on schools that are actively implementing the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) programs. These schools were selected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of how these initiatives are implemented at the local level.

Specifically, the study included fifteen (15) schools from General Santos City, ten (10) schools from Kidapawan, seven (7) from Koronadal, sixty-three (63) from Cotabato Province, twenty (20) from Sarangani, forty-three (43) from South Cotabato, thirty-one (31) from Sultan Kudarat, and five (5) from Tacurong. These schools were identified based on their participation in the NDEP and BKD programs, respectively. Data for the study were collected through pre-surveys, observations, ocular visits, and securing a list of NDEP-implementing schools from the region. This study aimed to assess the implementation and effectiveness of these programs in various school settings across the region, highlighting the diverse contexts in which the NDEP and BKD initiatives are applied.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Respondents

Following the approach recommended by Khaneghahi, Sefatgol, and Siyasar (2022), this study employed a cluster sampling technique to determine the respondents. Schools in Region XII were organized into clusters based on their implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives within eight school divisions of the region. Schools were randomly selected from these clusters to ensure representation from each division.

Cluster sampling was chosen over other sampling methods because of the geographic distribution of schools across multiple provinces and cities, which made simple random sampling logistically impractical. This approach enabled more efficient data collection while maintaining representation across diverse educational settings and program contexts in the field. A total of 388 respondents participated in the study, comprising School Heads and NDEP Coordinators. These individuals were selected because of their direct involvement in the planning, execution, and monitoring of the NDEP and BKD programs. Their experiences provided relevant and grounded data for assessing implementation levels, stakeholder engagement, and operational challenges encountered in drug prevention efforts.

3.4 Data Gathering Instrument

Data for this study were collected using a researcher-designed questionnaire specifically tailored to address the study's objectives. The questionnaire underwent a thorough validation process, ensuring that the items were aligned with the research objectives and relevant to the target respondents (J. V. Baron & Cruz, 2023). It was reviewed by experts in the fields of education, drug prevention programs, and research methodology to ensure content validity (J. Baron, 2022).

Following the validation, the instrument was pilot-tested among a small group of respondents from schools that were not included in the study. This pilot test aimed to evaluate the clarity, reliability, and relevance of the questionnaire. The pilot test results were analyzed, and necessary revisions were made to improve the instrument's clarity and effectiveness before it was administered to the actual respondents. The final version of the questionnaire was used to collect data from the selected respondents.

3.5 Statistical Treatment

To address the study objectives, appropriate statistical methods were employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholder engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII. Specifically, frequency counts, mean scores, and standard deviations (SD) were computed to summarize the data. These descriptive measures provided an overview of the distribution of responses and allowed for the characterization of the implementation levels and stakeholder participation in terms of curriculum and instruction, co-curricular services, teacher involvement, parent education, community outreach, research, evaluation, and monitoring for the NDEP, and implementation, developmental seminars and training, community outreach programs, and campaign initiatives for the BKD.

For inferential analysis, Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (Spearman's rho) was used to determine the relationship between the level of NDEP implementation and the extent of stakeholder engagement in BKD initiatives. This non-parametric test was selected because it is suitable for analyzing ordinal data and does not assume a linear relationship. Spearman's rho was used to assess the correlation between the specific aspects of NDEP implementation, such as curriculum and instruction, co-curricular services, teacher involvement, parent education and community outreach, and research, evaluation, and monitoring, and the engagement in BKD initiatives, including implementation, developmental seminars and training, community outreach programs, and campaign initiatives. The significance of the correlation was tested at $p = 0.05$.

4. Results and discussion

This section presents the findings derived from the survey questionnaire responses, focusing on the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholder engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII.

4.1. Level of Implementation of the National Drug Education Program in Region XII

This section presents the findings regarding the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) across Region XII. The NDEP is a critical initiative aimed at preventing drug abuse and promoting awareness through structured educational activities in schools. The level of implementation was assessed across various key indicators, including curriculum and instruction, co-curricular activities, teacher and staff involvement, parent education and community outreach, and research, monitoring, and evaluation (RME). The findings are summarized in Table 1, which presents the composite mean for each indicator and the overall level of the program implementation.

Table 1. Level of Implementation of National Drug Education Programs in Region XII

Indicators	Composite Mean	Description
Curriculum and Instruction	4.35	Highly implemented

Co-Curricular Activities and Ancillary Services	4.42	Highly implemented
Teacher and Staff	4.25	Highly implemented
Parent Education and Community Outreach	4.41	Highly implemented
Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation	4.41	Highly implemented
Overall Mean	4.36	Highly implemented

Table 1 presents the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) across various indicators in Region XII. The data show a composite mean of 4.36, suggesting that the program is highly implemented in all aspects.

The Curriculum and Instruction component received a mean score of 4.35, indicating that the educational content related to drug prevention was effectively delivered. Co-Curricular Activities and Ancillary Services received the highest score of 4.42, indicating that extracurricular programs supporting the curriculum are being successfully implemented. Teacher and Staff involvement received a mean of 4.25, reflecting a high level of participation, though slightly lower than the other indicators. Parent Education and Community Outreach scored 4.41, demonstrating practical efforts to engage parents and the community in the program. Lastly, Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation had a mean score of 4.41, indicating a strong focus on assessing and improving the program's impact.

The overall results indicate that the National Drug Education Program is effectively implemented across Region XII. The data emphasize the integration of drug prevention into both formal and informal educational settings, such as co-curricular activities and community outreach. The slightly lower score for Teacher and Staff involvement suggests that there might be a need to engage educators further and ensure they are fully equipped to support the program.

The strong performance in Curriculum and Instruction, Co-Curricular Activities, and Ancillary Services points to the effectiveness of a comprehensive approach that includes both classroom and extracurricular activities. The focus on Parent Education and Community Outreach and Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation also demonstrates ongoing efforts to engage the broader community and ensure continuous program improvement. These results underline the importance of sustaining collaboration among schools, teachers, staff, parents, and the community to maintain and enhance the NDEP's effectiveness.

4.2 Extent of Stakeholders' Engagement in the Barkada Kontra Droga Initiatives in Region XII

This section explores the degree of involvement of various stakeholders in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives within Region XII. The BKD program encourages active participation from a wide range of community members, including school staff, parents, and local organizations to combat drug abuse. This study assessed stakeholders' engagement across key areas, such as program implementation, developmental training and seminars, community outreach efforts, and campaign initiatives. The results of these assessments are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Extent of Stakeholders' Engagement on Barkada Kontra Droga Programs in Region XII

Indicators	Composite Mean	Description
Implementation	4.54	Very Great Extent
Developmental Training/Seminars	4.04	Great Extent
Community Outreach Program	4.04	Great Extent
Campaign Program	4.61	Very Great Extent
Overall Mean	4.26	Great Extent

Table 2 presents the extent of stakeholders' engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) programs in Region XII. The data revealed an overall mean score of 4.26, indicating that stakeholder engagement in BKD initiatives occurs to a great extent across all areas.

The Implementation indicator received the highest mean score of 4.54, indicating that stakeholders were highly involved in the program's actual execution. This indicates a strong commitment to ensuring that the program activities are carried out effectively within the region. The Campaign Program followed closely, with a score of 4.61, reflecting significant engagement in the BKD initiative advocacy efforts, which are vital for spreading awareness and fostering community participation.

In contrast, Developmental Training/Seminars and the Community Outreach Program scored 4.04, reflecting that these initiatives are implemented to a great extent. Although these areas demonstrate high engagement, the score suggests that there may be room for enhancing stakeholder involvement, particularly in areas related to training and outreach activities, to maximize their impact (Morshedzadeh et al., 2022).

Overall, the findings suggest that stakeholders in Region XII are highly engaged in the BKD program's implementation and advocacy components. However, additional efforts may be needed to enhance participation in developmental training and community outreach activities. This emphasizes the importance of continuing to involve all relevant groups in the planning and execution of BKD programs to sustain and increase their effectiveness in the region (Aks, 2023).

4.3 Relationship Between the Level of Implementation of NDEP and the Extent of Stakeholders' Engagement in Barkada Kontra Droga

The correlation between the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholders' engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII was examined to assess the degree to which these two factors are connected. The data in Table 3 show a significant positive relationship between the two variables, suggesting that the more effectively the NDEP is implemented, the higher the level of stakeholders' involvement in BKD initiatives. This finding highlights the importance of collaboration and active participation of all parties involved in ensuring the success of drug prevention efforts in the region.

Table 3. Correlation Results Between the Level of Implementation of NDEP and the Extent of Stakeholders' Engagement in the BKD Program in Region XII

Variables	Mean	Computed r	Degree of Relationship	p-value	Remarks
Level of Implementation of National Drug Education Programs	4.37	0.68	Strong Positive Correlation	0.000	There is a significant relationship
Extent of Stakeholders' Engagement	4.27				

**Tested at 0.05 level of significance*

Table 3 presents the correlation results between the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholders' engagement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) program in Region XII. The computed correlation coefficient (r) of 0.68 indicates a strong positive relationship between these two variables. This suggests that as the level of NDEP implementation increases, so does the extent of stakeholder engagement in BKD initiatives. The mean scores for the two variables were 4.37 for NDEP implementation and 4.27 for stakeholder engagement, indicating that both aspects were highly present in the region. The positive correlation indicates that improvements in the implementation of the NDEP are likely to lead to greater stakeholder involvement in BKD programs, reinforcing the interconnectedness of these efforts in combating drug-related issues in the region.

Additionally, the p-value of 0.000 indicates that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This provides strong evidence that the observed relationship is not due to chance and that the level of NDEP implementation has a meaningful impact on the extent of stakeholder engagement in

BKD programs. In summary, the findings suggest that enhancing the implementation of national drug education programs may lead to stronger stakeholder involvement in BKD initiatives (Parmar, Narasimha, & Nath, 2024). This highlights the importance of coordinated efforts between drug education programs and community stakeholders to effectively address drug-related challenges in Region XII.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

This study focused on the level of implementation of the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives in Region XII. The findings revealed that both programs were implemented at a high level across the region, with significant involvement from teachers, staff, parents, and the broader community. The analysis shows a notable positive relationship between the implementation of the NDEP and the level of stakeholders' engagement in the BKD programs, suggesting that the success of these initiatives is interconnected.

These results highlight the importance of continued cooperation between educational institutions, local communities, and government agencies to support drug prevention efforts. The strong relationship between the two variables emphasizes that the effective implementation of the NDEP can encourage increased participation in BKD programs, which is essential for addressing drug-related issues in Region XII.

5.2 Limitations

This study had several limitations. It focused solely on public secondary schools in Region XII that implemented the National Drug Education Program (NDEP) and *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) initiatives. Consequently, the findings may not be generalizable to other regions with different administrative conditions, support structures, or implementation capacities. The sample was limited to school heads and NDEP coordinators, excluding the views of other relevant stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, and community leaders.

Data collection relied on self-reported responses, which may have been influenced by personal or institutional biases. Moreover, the cross-sectional nature of the study allowed only a one-time assessment, preventing the examination of changes or trends in program implementation and stakeholder participation over time. The study also did not account for socio-economic, cultural, or contextual factors within the region that may influence the success or limitations of the programs themselves.

To address these limitations, future research should adopt a longitudinal design to track developments in program delivery and engagement across multiple school years. Including a broader range of respondents would also provide a more complete account of how NDEP and BKD initiatives function in school communities. Additionally, incorporating variables related to regional context, such as cultural practices, access to resources, and local governance, may help explain variations in program outcomes across different settings.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the study findings and conclusions. First, schools in Region XII should prioritize the professional development of teachers to ensure that the NDEP curriculum remains effective and responsive to emerging drug-related challenges. This can be achieved through targeted training programs that focus on enhancing teachers' skills in delivering drug education content.

Second, stakeholder involvement in the *Barkada Kontra Droga* (BKD) programs should be enhanced, particularly through stronger collaboration with local government units and community organizations. This would help expand the reach of community outreach initiatives and ensure that stakeholders are actively engaged in addressing the challenges of drug prevention in the community.

Finally, a more integrated approach between the NDEP and BKD programs is recommended to ensure consistency in the delivery of drug prevention efforts across schools and communities. Joint initiatives, such as division-wide Drug Awareness and Prevention Weeks, may serve as concrete examples of this integration. Such activities may combine classroom-based instruction under the NDEP with BKD-led community engagement, including student forums, advocacy campaigns, and barangay-level seminars. Through this coordinated strategy, schools and communities can align their efforts, maximize available resources, and maintain consistent messaging to promote drug-free environments for learners.

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This work is dedicated to my friends, colleagues, and family.

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