

# Juvenile Justice Initiatives: An Analysis of Local Government Strategies in Lagawe

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut, with a focus on programs for the prevention of delinquency and reduction of recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL). Using a qualitative research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with selected stakeholders, including social workers, barangay officials, and law enforcement personnel. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which identified key themes related to program implementation, challenges encountered, and coping strategies. Findings revealed that local government units implement various community-based and rehabilitative programs such as psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities. These programs address the emotional, behavioral, and social needs of juveniles and serve both preventive and corrective functions. However, challenges such as limited financial resources, insufficient trained personnel, and inconsistencies in program delivery affect the overall effectiveness of these initiatives. Despite these limitations, stakeholders employ strategies such as strengthening coordination, maximizing available resources, and promoting community participation to sustain program implementation. The study concludes that while juvenile justice programs are relevant and aligned with rehabilitative principles, their effectiveness depends on consistent implementation, adequate support, and strong collaboration among stakeholders. It is recommended that local government units enhance resource allocation, strengthen inter-agency coordination, and institutionalize sustainable mechanisms to improve program effectiveness and long-term impact.

**Keywords:** juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, recidivism, community-based intervention programs, interagency collaboration, qualitative study, Lagawe

## INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquency remains a significant social concern that affects not only the development of young individuals but also the safety and well-being of communities. In response, many countries have adopted rehabilitative approaches that emphasize prevention, reintegration, and the protection of children's rights rather than punitive measures. In the Philippines, the implementation of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, reflects this shift by promoting diversion, community-based interventions, and restorative justice practices for children in conflict with the law (CICL). Local government units (LGUs) play a critical role in operationalizing these initiatives through programs that address the behavioral, emotional, and social needs of juveniles.

Despite the presence of these programs, challenges persist in ensuring their consistent and effective implementation at the local level. Limitations in financial resources, availability of trained personnel, and coordination among stakeholders may affect the delivery and sustainability of juvenile justice interventions. Furthermore, variations in program execution across municipalities highlight the need to examine how these initiatives function in practice, particularly in rural or resource-constrained settings. Understanding these dynamics is essential in assessing whether current strategies effectively prevent delinquency and reduce recidivism among CICLs.

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by LGUs in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. Specifically, it seeks to identify the programs used for delinquency prevention and recidivism reduction, determine the challenges encountered in their implementation, and explore the coping strategies employed by stakeholders. By providing insights into the strengths and gaps of existing interventions, the study contributes to the development of more responsive, sustainable, and community-based juvenile justice programs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What programs are implemented for the prevention of delinquency and reduction of recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL)?
2. What challenges are encountered in the implementation of these juvenile justice programs?
3. What coping strategies are employed by stakeholders to address these challenges?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. Specifically, it sought to:

1. identify the programs implemented for the prevention of delinquency and reduction of recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL);
2. determine the challenges encountered in the implementation of these programs; and
3. analyze the coping strategies employed by stakeholders to address these challenges.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1977), which posits that behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and interaction within a social environment. In the context of juvenile delinquency, this theory suggests that children develop behaviors based on the influences of family, peers, and community. Exposure to negative environments may increase the likelihood of delinquent behavior, while positive reinforcement, guidance, and role modeling can promote behavioral change. This framework supports the use of psychosocial counseling, parenting interventions, and youth development programs as mechanisms for reshaping behavior and preventing reoffending among children in conflict with the law (CICL).

In addition, the study is supported by Social Learning and Social Structure Theory by Ronald L. Akers (2017), which integrates social learning processes with structural factors such as community conditions and social control. This theory emphasizes that delinquent behavior is influenced not only by individual interactions but also by broader social and environmental contexts. It highlights the importance of community-based interventions, diversion programs, and interagency collaboration in addressing juvenile delinquency. Together, these theories provide a foundation for understanding how behavioral change can be achieved through supportive environments, structured interventions, and coordinated efforts among stakeholders.

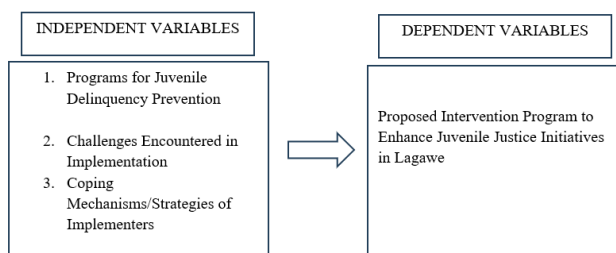
### **Conceptual Framework**

This study is anchored on the premise that the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives is influenced by the interaction between program implementation, contextual challenges, and stakeholder responses. The independent variable consists of the juvenile justice programs implemented by local government units, including psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities.

These programs are designed to address the behavioral, emotional, and social needs of children in conflict with the law (CICL), thereby promoting delinquency prevention and reducing recidivism.

However, the implementation of these programs is affected by intervening variables such as limited financial resources, insufficient trained personnel, and inconsistencies in program delivery. These challenges may hinder the effectiveness, reach, and sustainability of interventions. In response, stakeholders employ coping strategies, including interagency collaboration, resource maximization, and community participation, which serve as moderating factors that help sustain program implementation despite constraints.

The dependent variable of the study is the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives, reflected in improved behavior, reduced reoffending, and successful reintegration of juveniles into the community. Overall, the framework suggests that while program implementation directly influences outcomes, its effectiveness is shaped by the presence of challenges and the extent to which stakeholders are able to respond through adaptive and collaborative strategies.



### Significance of the Study

The results of this study are significant to the following:

1. School head. This study would inform the school head of the usefulness of technology and the positive impact of technology in online education. It enriches the development of his/her skills on how to use technology as instruction.
2. Lecturer. This study would enhanced professional career development of the lecturer by imparting information about technology which can improve knowledge of school heads by providing access to more and better educational resources, introducing applications like Google classroom and zoom use for good teaching practice to online class, catalyzing trainer-to-school head collaboration and increasing camaraderie.
3. Schools Division Superintendent. This study would gave encouragement to Schools Division Superintendent of MBHTE in Sulu to facilitate another training workshop for teachers regarding the importance of technology in education.
4. For Future Researchers. The insights generated by this study can provide a foundational resource for subsequent research investigating related topics.

### Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on examining the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. It specifically covered programs related to the prevention of delinquency and reduction of recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL), including psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities. The study involved selected stakeholders such as social workers, barangay officials, and law enforcement personnel who are directly engaged in the implementation of these programs. Using a qualitative research design, data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions and analyzed using thematic analysis. The study was limited to the perspectives of the identified participants and did not include quantitative measures of program outcomes or direct assessment of juveniles. Furthermore, the findings are context-specific to the selected municipalities and may not be generalized to other settings.

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## REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE

Juvenile delinquency has been widely examined through theoretical and empirical perspectives that emphasize the role of social environment, behavioral learning, and community influence. According to Albert Bandura (1977), behavior is learned through observation and interaction, suggesting that exposure to negative environments increases the likelihood of delinquent behavior, while positive reinforcement promotes behavioral change. Similarly, Ronald L. Akers (2017) highlights that delinquency is shaped by both learned behavior and social structures, reinforcing the importance of family, peers, and community in influencing juvenile actions. These perspectives support the implementation of interventions that focus on guidance, supervision, and positive engagement.

In response to these insights, contemporary juvenile justice systems have shifted toward rehabilitative and restorative approaches rather than punitive measures. Programs such as diversion and community-based rehabilitation have been recognized as effective strategies in addressing juvenile delinquency, as they promote accountability while maintaining the child's integration within the community (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001). Preventive interventions, including youth development programs and family-centered approaches, have also been shown to reduce risk factors associated with delinquency by fostering positive social relationships and life skills (Howell, 2003). These approaches align with international standards that emphasize the best interests of the child and the importance of reintegration.

In the Philippine context, juvenile justice initiatives are guided by Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, which institutionalizes diversion, rehabilitation, and community-based interventions for children in conflict with the law (CICL). Studies have shown that programs such as psychosocial counseling, parenting seminars, and community involvement play a significant role in improving juvenile behavior and reducing recidivism (Labajo & Lucero, 2017). However, challenges such as limited resources, lack of trained personnel, and inconsistencies in implementation continue to affect program effectiveness, particularly in local government settings.

Despite the presence of these programs, there remains a need to examine how juvenile justice initiatives are implemented at the local level and how stakeholders respond to existing challenges. Previous studies have often focused on program outcomes or theoretical perspectives, but limited attention has been given to the actual experiences of implementers and the practical realities of program delivery. This study addresses this gap by exploring the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives in selected municipalities, focusing on program implementation, challenges encountered, and coping strategies employed by stakeholders.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach to examine the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units. It focused on understanding program implementation, challenges encountered, and coping strategies from the perspectives of key stakeholders. The methodology was designed to generate in-depth insights into the dynamics of juvenile justice programs in selected municipalities

### Research Design

The study utilized a qualitative case study design to explore the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives within the specific contexts of Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. This design was deemed appropriate as it allows for an in-depth examination of real-life situations and processes involving program implementation at the local level. The case study approach enabled the researcher to capture detailed accounts of stakeholders' experiences, perspectives, and practices related to juvenile justice programs. It also facilitated the identification of patterns and themes that explain how these programs function, the challenges encountered, and the strategies employed to address them.

### Research Locale

The study was conducted in the municipalities of Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut, which are located in the province of Ifugao, Philippines. These areas were selected due to their active implementation of juvenile justice programs and the presence of children in conflict with the law (CICL) within their jurisdictions. The

municipalities represent local government units with varying levels of resources and program delivery, providing a suitable context for examining similarities and differences in implementation. The locale also reflects a community-based setting where collaboration among stakeholders plays a critical role in addressing juvenile delinquency.

### **Respondents of the Study**

The respondents of the study consisted of selected stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of juvenile justice programs. These included municipal social workers, barangay officials, and law enforcement personnel such as members of the Women and Children Protection Desk (WCPD). Their inclusion was based on their direct involvement and experience in handling cases of children in conflict with the law, as well as their roles in planning, implementing, and monitoring intervention programs. Their perspectives provided valuable insights into both the operational and practical aspects of juvenile justice initiatives

### **Sampling Design**

The study employed purposive sampling to select participants who possess relevant knowledge and experience in juvenile justice program implementation. This sampling technique ensured that only individuals who are directly engaged in the delivery of interventions and services for CICLs were included in the study. The selection criteria focused on stakeholders who have handled juvenile cases, participated in program implementation, or are responsible for monitoring and evaluating these initiatives. This approach allowed the researcher to obtain rich and meaningful data that are directly aligned with the objectives of the study.

### **Research Instrument**

The primary research instrument used in the study was a semi-structured interview guide designed to elicit detailed responses from participants. The instrument consisted of open-ended questions focusing on the types of programs implemented, challenges encountered, and coping strategies employed in juvenile justice initiatives. The interview guide was developed based on the objectives of the study and was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research questions. It was also pilot-tested with a small group of participants to refine the questions and improve its effectiveness in capturing comprehensive and reliable data.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions conducted with the selected participants. Prior to data collection, permission was secured from relevant authorities, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. The researcher scheduled interviews and discussions at convenient times and locations to ensure participants' comfort and availability. During the sessions, participants were encouraged to share their experiences and insights openly, while the researcher facilitated the discussion using the interview guide. All responses were recorded, transcribed, and organized systematically for analysis. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the data gathering process to protect the identity of the participants.

### **Statistical Treatment of Data**

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework of Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006). This method involved familiarizing with the data through repeated reading of transcripts, generating initial codes, identifying patterns, and grouping these into themes. The themes were reviewed, refined, and interpreted in relation to the research objectives. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to systematically organize qualitative data and extract meaningful insights regarding program effectiveness, challenges, and coping strategies. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, consistent coding procedures were followed, and findings were supported by participants' responses.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of the study present the key findings on the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives implemented by local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut. The analysis focuses on the programs employed for delinquency prevention and recidivism reduction, the challenges encountered in their implementation, and the coping strategies adopted by stakeholders. The findings are discussed in relation to existing theories and related literature to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of juvenile justice interventions in the selected municipalities.

The findings of the study reveal that local government units (LGUs) in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut have established a range of juvenile justice initiatives aimed at preventing delinquency and reducing recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL). These initiatives are primarily community-based and rehabilitative in nature, reflecting the principles of restorative justice and child protection. Programs such as psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities are actively implemented by stakeholders. These interventions collectively address the behavioral, emotional, and social dimensions of juvenile delinquency, indicating a holistic approach to rehabilitation and prevention.

Psychosocial counseling emerged as a core intervention in addressing juvenile delinquency. Stakeholders emphasized its role in helping juveniles process emotional distress, develop self-awareness, and improve decision-making skills. Through individual and group sessions, counseling provides a safe space for juveniles to express their experiences and challenges, which contributes to behavioral improvement. This finding supports the perspective of Albert Bandura (1977), which highlights the importance of social interaction and guided learning in shaping behavior. By providing structured support and positive reinforcement, psychosocial counseling facilitates behavioral change and reduces the likelihood of reoffending.

In addition to counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation programs were identified as effective strategies for both prevention and reintegration. These programs allow juveniles, particularly first-time offenders, to avoid formal legal proceedings and instead participate in community-based interventions that promote accountability and restoration. At the same time, these initiatives help prevent future delinquency by addressing underlying risk factors and strengthening community ties. This aligns with the restorative justice framework, which emphasizes repairing harm and reintegrating individuals into society. The involvement of families and communities in these programs further reinforces positive behavior and social responsibility.

Parenting seminars and youth development activities also play a significant role in preventing delinquency. Stakeholders noted that strengthening family relationships and improving parenting practices contribute to better supervision and guidance of juveniles. Meanwhile, youth development programs such as sports, leadership training, and skills development provide constructive alternatives that engage young individuals in productive activities. These findings are consistent with the work of Ronald L. Akers (2017), which emphasizes the influence of social environment and learned behavior in shaping delinquency. By creating positive environments, these programs help reduce exposure to negative influences and promote pro-social behavior.

Despite the presence of these programs, the study identified several challenges that affect their effective implementation. One of the primary concerns raised by participants is the insufficiency of financial resources, which limits the frequency and scope of program activities. In many cases, stakeholders reported that planned interventions are either scaled down or postponed due to budget constraints. Additionally, the limited number of trained personnel affects the consistency and quality of service delivery, as existing staff often handle multiple responsibilities. These challenges highlight the gap between program design and actual implementation at the local level.

Another significant challenge is the inconsistency in program delivery across different municipalities. Variations in resources, administrative support, and stakeholder coordination result in uneven implementation of juvenile justice initiatives. Some areas are able to conduct regular activities, while others struggle to maintain continuity. This inconsistency affects the overall effectiveness of programs and limits their ability to achieve long-term

outcomes. It also underscores the importance of structured implementation plans and stronger institutional support to ensure that programs are delivered consistently and equitably.

In response to these challenges, stakeholders employ various coping strategies to sustain program implementation. These include strengthening coordination among agencies, maximizing available resources, and actively engaging the community. Interagency collaboration among social workers, barangay officials, and law enforcement personnel plays a critical role in maintaining program continuity. By sharing responsibilities and resources, stakeholders are able to address gaps in implementation and ensure that essential services are delivered. Community participation also enhances monitoring and support for juveniles, reinforcing both preventive and rehabilitative efforts.

Overall, the results indicate that juvenile justice initiatives in the selected municipalities are relevant and aligned with rehabilitative and restorative principles. However, their effectiveness is influenced by the interplay between program implementation, resource availability, and stakeholder collaboration. While existing programs demonstrate strong potential in addressing juvenile delinquency and reducing recidivism, their long-term impact depends on sustained support, consistent implementation, and strengthened partnerships. These findings highlight the need for a more structured and resource-supported approach to ensure that juvenile justice initiatives achieve their intended outcomes and contribute to the well-being of both juveniles and the community.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section presents the summary of the study's key findings, followed by the conclusions drawn from the results and the corresponding recommendations. It synthesizes the major insights on the effectiveness of juvenile justice initiatives, the challenges encountered in their implementation, and the strategies employed by stakeholders. The purpose is to provide a clear basis for improving program implementation and guiding future actions in addressing juvenile delinquency.

### **Summary of Findings**

The study found that local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut implement a variety of juvenile justice programs aimed at preventing delinquency and reducing recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL). These programs include psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities, which collectively address the behavioral, emotional, and social needs of juveniles. These interventions reflect a rehabilitative and community-based approach that supports both prevention and reintegration.

However, the implementation of these programs is challenged by several factors, including limited financial resources, insufficient trained personnel, and inconsistencies in program delivery. These constraints affect the regularity, scope, and sustainability of interventions, particularly in ensuring continuous support for juveniles and their families. Variations in implementation across municipalities further highlight the need for stronger institutional support and structured program management.

Despite these challenges, stakeholders employ various coping strategies to sustain program implementation. These include strengthening interagency coordination, maximizing available resources, and promoting active community participation. Such efforts demonstrate adaptability and commitment among stakeholders in maintaining program continuity and effectiveness. Overall, the findings indicate that while juvenile justice initiatives are present and relevant, their effectiveness is influenced by the level of support, consistency of implementation, and collaboration among stakeholders.

### **Conclusions**

The study concludes that local government units in Lagawe, Hingyon, and Lamut have established relevant and community-based juvenile justice initiatives that address both the prevention of delinquency and the reduction of recidivism among children in conflict with the law (CICL). These programs, which include psychosocial counseling, diversion and community-based rehabilitation, parenting seminars, and youth development activities,

reflect a holistic and rehabilitative approach that supports behavioral change, family involvement, and community reintegration.

However, the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives are influenced by operational challenges, particularly in terms of limited financial resources, insufficient trained personnel, and inconsistencies in program implementation. These constraints affect the regularity, scope, and overall delivery of services, thereby limiting the full potential of the programs. Variations in implementation across municipalities further indicate the need for more structured and consistent approaches.

Despite these limitations, stakeholders demonstrate adaptability and commitment through collaborative efforts, resource maximization, and community engagement. These strategies play a significant role in sustaining program implementation and addressing existing gaps. Overall, the study concludes that while juvenile justice initiatives are functional and aligned with rehabilitative principles, their success largely depends on sustained support, effective coordination, and consistent implementation across all levels.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that local government units strengthen the implementation and sustainability of juvenile justice initiatives through enhanced financial and logistical support. Adequate resource allocation should be prioritized to ensure the regular conduct of psychosocial counseling, diversion programs, and community-based activities, thereby improving the consistency and reach of interventions.

Furthermore, capacity-building programs and continuous training should be provided to stakeholders, particularly social workers, barangay officials, and law enforcement personnel, to enhance their competence in managing juvenile cases and delivering effective interventions. Strengthening interagency coordination and establishing formalized partnerships among local government units, community organizations, and other stakeholders are also essential to improve program implementation and monitoring.

In addition, mechanisms for regular evaluation and assessment of programs should be institutionalized to ensure responsiveness to the needs of juveniles and their families. Increased community awareness and participation should be encouraged to promote shared responsibility in preventing delinquency and supporting rehabilitation. Future studies may also consider incorporating quantitative measures and broader geographic coverage to further assess the long-term effectiveness and impact of juvenile justice initiatives.

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