

An Assessment of School Clinic Services: Administrative Challenges and their Effectiveness in Promoting Student Health and Academic Support

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Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of school clinic services and the administrative challenges encountered in their delivery at Malbug National High School. The study was anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, Imogene M. King's Theory of Goal Attainment, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which emphasize the importance of environmental support, collaborative healthcare, and health and safety in student development. A descriptive-survey research design was employed involving forty (40) student respondents selected through convenience sampling. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire and analyzed using frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). The findings revealed that the respondents were predominantly female, with equal representation from the 12–15 and 16–18 age groups, and most were Grade 12 students. School clinic services, including first aid and emergency care, medical consultation and referral, health assessment and monitoring, and the provision of medicines and supplies, were rated highly effective. Likewise, accessibility, adequacy of facilities and equipment, competence of clinic personnel, and responsiveness to students' health needs were assessed as very effective. Despite these positive assessments, respondents identified serious administrative challenges related to insufficient medicines, inadequate facilities and equipment, limited clinic services, lack of health personnel, and inadequate funding. The study further found a significant positive relationship between the challenges encountered and the effectiveness of school clinic services. The study concludes that school clinic services play a vital role in supporting student health and academic success but require continuous improvement through enhanced resources, adequate staffing, sufficient funding, and stronger collaboration with stakeholders. The study supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Good Health and Well-Being and SDG 4: Quality Education by highlighting the importance of accessible school health services in promoting student wellness and learning outcomes. Its sustainability contribution lies in providing evidence that may guide improvements in school health programs, resource allocation, and service delivery, thereby fostering a healthier and more supportive learning environment.

Keywords: Accessibility; Administrative Challenges; Effectiveness; School Clinic Services; Student Health; Student Well-Being

1. Introduction

School clinic services are essential in promoting student health, well-being, and academic success. By providing first aid, health assessments, basic treatment, health education, and referrals, school clinics help reduce absenteeism and support a safe learning environment. Since health and education are closely linked, effective school clinic services contribute to better learning outcomes and overall student development. This study assesses the effectiveness of school clinic services and the administrative challenges encountered at Malbug National High School.

1.1 Background of the Study on School Clinic Services and Student Health

School clinics serve as the first point of healthcare access for many students, providing timely medical assistance and preventive care (Zhang et al., 2025; Agreda et al., 2025). Research shows that healthy students are more likely to attend school regularly and perform better academically (Samuel et al., 2020; Wall, 2023). School health personnel also play a vital role in managing health concerns and promoting wellness among learners (Estrada et al., 2020). Despite their importance, school clinics often face challenges such as inadequate facilities, shortages of medical supplies, insufficient funding, and limited healthcare personnel, which may affect service effectiveness (Sabando & Alo, 2021; Dajac, 2025; Gerald, Nja, & Dankogi, 2024). These concerns highlight the need to evaluate school clinic services at Malbug National High School.

1.2 Themes and Insights from Related Literature

Literature emphasizes that school clinics promote health, prevent illness, and support academic achievement through accessible and youth-friendly healthcare services (Olowolafe et al., 2020; Muguna et al., 2021; Shonubi & John-Akinola, 2025). Effective school health programs include first aid, health education, referrals, monitoring, and disease prevention

(WHO, 2021; Gabor et al., 2020). Studies also identify accessibility, adequacy of facilities, competence of personnel, and responsiveness to student needs as important indicators of effective school clinic services (Borkowski, Goddard, & Gaffney, 2023; Hines, 2020). However, challenges such as inadequate resources, lack of personnel, and limited funding continue to affect service delivery (Lazaleta, 2020; Rivera, 2020; Flores & Aquino, 2022).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context

Globally, school-based health services improve students' health, attendance, and academic performance (Olson, 2021; Koloski, 2024). In the Philippines, school clinics are recognized as essential components of school health programs that support disease prevention and student welfare (Guia et al., 2024; Doctolero et al., 2022). At the local level, Malbug National High School serves learners from Barangay Malbug, Cawayan, Masbate. Assessing the effectiveness of its clinic services can provide valuable information for improving student health support within the school community.

1.4 Theoretical Basis

This study is anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979), which explains the influence of environmental systems on student development; Imogene M. King's Theory of Goal Attainment (1981), which emphasizes collaboration between healthcare providers and clients; and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), which highlights health and safety as prerequisites for learning and development.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale

Although previous studies have examined school health services, limited research has assessed both the effectiveness of school clinic services and the administrative challenges affecting their delivery in rural public secondary schools. No localized assessment has been conducted at Malbug National High School. This study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between administrative challenges and the effectiveness of school clinic services in promoting student health and academic support.

1.6 Alignment with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The study supports SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) by promoting access to health services and student wellness. It also aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) by recognizing the role of health in improving learning outcomes and school participation.

1.7 Importance of the Study to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

This study contributes to educational and public health sustainability by providing evidence that may help improve school health programs, resource allocation, and service delivery. Strengthening school clinic services can enhance student well-being, support academic success, and promote a healthier school community. The increasing demand for efficient, accessible, and technology-driven services has encouraged higher education institutions to adopt digital solutions that improve administrative processes and client satisfaction. As Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU) advances its Smart Campus initiative, the Registrar's Office continues to handle a high volume of document requests and client transactions. However, existing processes remain largely manual, limiting operational efficiency, service monitoring, and data-driven decision-making. This study proposes the development of a Web-Based Registrar e-Assist System integrating online requests, transaction tracking, automated notifications, customer feedback, analytics, appointment scheduling, and Natural Language Processing (NLP)-based chatbot technology to improve accessibility, efficiency, and service quality.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-survey research design to gather, analyze, and describe information regarding the effectiveness of school clinic services and the challenges encountered in their delivery. This design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to obtain an accurate description of existing conditions without manipulating variables. It also allowed the examination of relationships between the effectiveness of school clinic services and the administrative challenges affecting their implementation. The collected data were systematically analyzed to identify patterns, determine areas for improvement, and provide recommendations for enhancing school clinic services.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Malbug National High School. The school served as the research setting because it provided the population needed to assess the effectiveness of school clinic services and identify challenges encountered in their delivery. The study focused on the experiences and perceptions of students regarding the services provided by the school clinic.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were forty (40) students enrolled at Malbug National High School. These students provided information regarding the school clinic services, their effectiveness in promoting student health and academic support, and the challenges encountered in service delivery. Their responses served as the primary source of data for the study.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study utilized convenience sampling in selecting the respondents. Students who were readily accessible and willing to participate were chosen because this method allowed efficient data collection within the available timeframe. The researcher personally distributed and retrieved the questionnaires to ensure proper guidance and complete responses. All selected respondents participated and returned the accomplished questionnaires, resulting in a 100 percent response rate. This sampling procedure enabled the researcher to obtain sufficient and reliable data for analysis.

2.5 Research Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire was utilized to gather data. The instrument collected respondents' demographic profiles and assessed school clinic services, service effectiveness, and administrative challenges. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The study followed several stages: approval of the research proposal, development and validation of the questionnaire, securing permission from school authorities, administration of the survey, and data tabulation and analysis. The researcher personally distributed and retrieved the questionnaires to ensure complete responses.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Frequency count and percentage were used to describe the respondents' profile. Weighted mean was employed to determine the level of school clinic services, effectiveness, and challenges encountered. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was used to determine the relationship between administrative challenges and the effectiveness of school clinic services.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of the Student Respondents

3.1.1 Age

The respondents were equally distributed between the 12–15 and 16–18 age groups, with 50.00% belonging to each category. This indicates that the participants were within the typical age range of secondary school students. The finding supports Athumani and Mboineki (2025), who emphasized the importance of considering age and educational level in adolescent health interventions.

3.1.2 Sex

Among the respondents, 62.50% were female while 37.50% were male. The predominance of female respondents suggests greater female representation in the study. This is consistent with Adomako Gyasi, Sun, Zhou, Dwumfour, and Darko (2025), who highlighted the role of school-based services in supporting students' health and academic performance.

3.1.3 Grade Level

Most respondents were Grade 12 students (45.00%), followed by Grade 9 (25.00%) and Grade 7 (17.50%). This suggests that the findings largely reflect the perspectives of senior high school students, particularly those nearing completion of secondary education.

3.2 School Clinic Services Provided

3.2.1 First Aid and Emergency Care

The respondents strongly agreed that the clinic provides immediate first aid, responds promptly during emergencies, and properly administers first-aid procedures, with an overall weighted mean of 3.54. The findings indicate that the clinic effectively delivers emergency health services and promotes student safety. This supports Jubilee Christian Academy (2020), which emphasized the importance of accessible first-aid services in schools.

3.2.2 Medical Consultation and Referral

The respondents strongly agreed that the clinic provides consultation services, informs parents of serious health concerns, and refers students to appropriate health facilities when necessary, obtaining an overall weighted mean of 3.60. These findings suggest that the clinic effectively monitors students' health and ensures proper referrals. This is consistent with Gabor et al. (2020) and the Philippine Science High School (n.d.).

3.2.3 Health Assessment and Monitoring

Students strongly agreed that the clinic conducts regular health assessments, monitors health records, and identifies health concerns early, with an overall weighted mean of 3.46. The findings indicate that the clinic supports preventive health care through regular monitoring. This agrees with Salanguit (2024) and Bergado (2020), who emphasized the value of systematic health assessment and documentation.

3.2.4 Provision of Medicines and Supplies

The respondents strongly agreed that medicines and first-aid supplies are available and useful in addressing minor illnesses, resulting in an overall weighted mean of 3.43. The findings suggest that the clinic is equipped to address common health concerns and provide immediate assistance to students. This supports Einstein School Cebu.

3.3 Effectiveness of School Clinic Services

3.3.1 Accessibility

The clinic was rated Very Effective in terms of accessibility, with an overall weighted mean of 3.53. This indicates that students can readily access health services when needed. The finding supports Borkowski, Goddard, and Gaffney (2023), who identified accessibility as a key component of effective school health services.

3.3.2 Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment

The clinic obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.43 and was rated Very Effective. The results suggest that the clinic provides a clean, safe, and conducive environment for health service delivery, although improvements in medical equipment may further enhance service quality. This is consistent with Delos Reyes and Bautista (2021).

3.3.3 Competence of Clinic Personnel

The competence of clinic personnel was rated Very Effective, with an overall weighted mean of 3.63. This indicates that students perceive clinic personnel as knowledgeable, professional, and capable of providing quality health services. This supports the findings of Muguna et al. (2021).

3.3.4 Responsiveness to Students' Health Needs

The clinic's responsiveness was rated Very Effective, with an overall weighted mean of 3.34. The findings suggest that clinic personnel provide timely and appropriate responses to students' health concerns. This aligns with Hines (2020), who emphasized responsiveness as an essential component of effective school health services.

3.4 Administrative Challenges Encountered in School Clinic Services

The respondents assessed the challenges encountered in the delivery of school clinic services as Serious, with an overall weighted mean of 2.88. The most significant concerns were insufficient medicines, inadequate facilities and equipment, limited clinic services, lack of health personnel, and inadequate funding. These findings indicate that resource limitations affect the quality and accessibility of school clinic services. Addressing these challenges is necessary to improve service delivery and better support student health. This finding supports Dan, Ukpata, Edet, and Lale (2021), who emphasized the importance of strengthening school-based health services to promote student well-being.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that the respondents were primarily female students, with equal representation from the 12–15 and 16–18 age groups and a majority from Grade 12. The school clinic services, including first aid and emergency care, medical consultation and referral, health assessment and monitoring, and the provision of medicines and supplies, were perceived as highly effective and reliable. The clinic was also rated very effective in terms of accessibility, adequacy of facilities and equipment, competence of clinic personnel, and responsiveness to students' health needs. However, serious challenges related to medicines, equipment, personnel, and budget were identified. The findings further showed a significant positive relationship between the challenges encountered and the effectiveness of school clinic services.

The school administration should enhance the availability of medicines, first-aid supplies, medical equipment, and facilities to improve service delivery. Additional qualified health personnel should be assigned, and continuous professional development should be provided to clinic staff. Adequate funding should be allocated to support clinic operations and health programs. Regular health checkups, awareness campaigns, service evaluations, and feedback mechanisms should be conducted to improve service quality. Strengthening collaboration with parents, local health centers, and government health agencies is also recommended to support students' health needs.

The study was limited to forty (40) student respondents from Malbug National High School selected through convenience sampling. The findings were based solely on students' perceptions of school clinic services and may not fully represent the views of other stakeholders or schools. As a result, the generalizability of the findings is limited to the context and

respondents included in the study.

Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest. This study received no external funding and was conducted at Malbug National High School with the voluntary participation of student respondents. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, which was carried out using a non-invasive survey questionnaire. All responses were treated with strict confidentiality, and no identifying information of the participants was disclosed in any part of the study.

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