
Assessment of Good Governance Practices In Southern Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Good governance promotes the collective responsibility of the government, civil society and private sector for improving the lives of all citizens, particularly the poor. In this study, 95 registered voters of North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon were interviewed using a researcher-made questionnaire to assess the good governance practices of the barangay officials in terms transparency, participation, accountability, rule of law, leadership, continuity in the implementation of programs, predictability and sustainability. Results show that the voters perceived that the six key indicators of good governance practices are possessed by incumbent local political leaders, however they are weakly implemented. This implies that there is a flow and accessibility of information between the local barangay council and the albeit it needs to be strengthened. The respondents also gave suggestions on how to improve good governance practices for future local government leaders.

KEYWORDS: *Good Governance Practices, Local Governance, Governance, Public Administration*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of “good governance” evaluates practices whether it is effective and efficient in its administration. It is therefore the key to a successful development agenda. However, good governance should not only be present at the national and international levels but also at the sub-national levels, specifically at the local level.

The Local Government Code of 1991 (RA 7160) expressly stated the role of barangay as the basic political unit that will serve as the primary planning and implementing unit of government policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities in the community. The barangay also serves a forum wherein the collective views of the people may be expressed, crystallized, and considered, and where disputes may be amicably settled. Therefore, the barangay political system is characterized by a more personal and intimate relationship of barangay officials which is an integral part in the governance and decision-making as the front liners in the delivery of social services. Under R.A 7160, the powers of these barangay officials are expressed to make them more accountable to their constituents, enact laws and assure effective and efficient delivery of goods and services.

The study will assess the good governance practices of local government (barangay) officials of North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon practices good governance, based on the key indicators of Transparency; Participation; Accountability; Rule of Law; Leadership; and Continuity in the Implementation of Programs, Predictability and Sustainability. These indicators were based on the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the European Commission (2004) publication, *Governance Indicators: A User's Guide.* By doing such, the good governance practices of a local government unit in the Philippines, is assessed vis-à-vis international standards.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. It has been manifested as cited by Nob (2011) that the function of governance is to ensure that an organization or partnership fulfills its overall purposes, achieve its intended outcomes for citizens and service users, and operates in an effective, efficient, and ethical manner. This principle should guide all governance activity. Good governance requires all concern to be clear about their functions of governance and their own roles and responsibilities and those of others, and to behave in ways that are consistent with those roles. Being clear about one's own role, and how it relates to that of others, increases the chance of performing the role well.
2. Pagatpat (2012) cited that good governance practices "promote collective responsibility of the government, civil society and private sector for improving the lives of all citizens, particularly the poor." Good Governance Practices therefore, is the "key to a successful development agenda". But this calls for good governance not only at the national and international levels but also at the sub-national levels specifically at the local level to properly materialize the Good Governance Practices. This has been supported by Israr, SM et.al. (2006) that good governance will occur when there is an "effective political framework that is conducive to private economic action, efficiency of stable regimes, triumph of the rule of law, presence of an efficient state administration adapted to the roles that government can actually perform, and a vigorous and dynamic civil society independent of the state."
3. In 2017, Saada Ahmed Ali conducted a qualitative research to investigate the role of good governance practices in enhancing service delivery in public institutions in Tanzania. Using the Tanzanian Electric Supply Company Ltd, the study explored how good governance practices improved the service delivery in public institutions in Tanzania. The results of the study showed that good governance practices are adhered at TANESCO and that good governance had significance contributions to quality service delivery. Finally, the study concluded the existence of a relationship between good governance and service delivery.
4. Tikue (2014) conducted a study on the role of good governance in local development. This study aimed to examine the performance of good governance in Tigray Regional State. It assessed the performance of good governance in land administration. More specifically, the study assessed the performance of good governance in terms of

transparency, accountability and responsiveness. The study was conducted using 182 household heads selected via convenience sampling. Furthermore, focused group discussion, interview and secondary data were employed to gather relevant data. The study found out that local governments that achieved better transparency, accountability and responsiveness are more likely to about development than their counterparts.

5. In a World Bank study on good governance indicators involving 175 countries released in 2002, the Philippines scored relatively low ratings in the indicators used, namely accountability, political stability, rule of law, regulatory quality, voice and accountability, and control of corruption (ADB, 2005).
6. Masagca, J.T. et.al (2009) revealed that good governance of barangay can be affected by the lack of capabilities of officials; indecisiveness of officers during assumption of duties as officers-in-charge; influence of their siblings and family relatives; and sensitivity of the issues and concerns being addressed. The researcher of the study proposed that programs and projects (P&P) on capacity building of barangay officials must be accomplished vigorously in collaboration with the various higher education institutions (HEIs) and groups/organizations on local governance. Moreover, certain provisions for building upon the hard earned achievement of barangay officials through budget allocation for the annual programs on merit and recognition of achievements are also suggested to enhance local governance and community development.
7. Adriano (2014) attempted to establish the relationship between the quality of governance and the state of local development of the Top 9 Performing LGUs in the Philippines (La Union, Albay, Cavite, Ilocos Norte, Makati City Valenzuela City, Taguig City, Davao City and Angeles City) as measured by the Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS), the nationwide governance performance evaluation and management tool used in the Philippines. Results revealed that that there is no relationship between the quality of governance and the state of local development in the consistently top performing LGUs in the Philippines for the period 2009-2011.
8. A Philippine study by Capuno (2005) traced and found evidence linking quality of governance and local development since the adoption of the fiscal decentralization policy in the Philippines in 1991. Findings showed that the initial level of economic conditions determined the acceptable quality of local governance.
9. Gabriel and Gutierrez (2017) provided evidence on the link between organizational effectiveness, legislative performance and observance of good governance principles. This case study was able to measure the influence of the aforementioned variables within the component cities of Nueva Ecija.
10. The scientific article of Brillantes and Fernandez (2011) addressed the issues of the continuing decline of trust in government and the imperatives for reform. They surmised that unresponsive governance has been responsible for the continuing decline of trust in the government.

These studies underpin the need to investigate the extent of good government practices at the local level to be able to enhance or strengthen the efficient delivery of government services at the grassroots level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to assess the Good Governance Practices of the barangay officials of North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon by determining the Good Governance Practices of the barangay according to the following key indicators:

- a. Transparency
- b. Participation
- c. Accountability
- d. Rule of Law
- e. Leadership
- f. Continuity in the Implementation of Programs, Predictability and Sustainability.

Significance of the Study

This study is an endeavor to promote good governance practices of the barangay officials in North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon. The result of the study will be used to determine the good governance practices of the barangay officials of North Poblacion and may be used as a tool to improve the good governance practices of the barangay officials in North Poblacion. The result of this study will be used in facilitating policy dialogues, supporting initiative reform activities and providing arena for cooperation among civil society organizations, NGO's, PO's and other private sector to improve local governance and thereby enhancing the good governance practices of barangay officials.

At the national level, results of the study can help identify a mechanism to evaluate good government practices at the local level, as basis for national policies regarding good governance in the sub-national levels. This is vital because governance at the grassroots level provide the foundation for government practices in the national level.

At the international level, the findings of the study can solidify good government practices in the Philippines which might be at par with other countries. Moreover, it can help focus on "glocalization" or globalization contextualized in the local levels.

Finally, the result of this study will be used in facilitating policy dialogues, supporting initiative reform activities and providing arena for cooperation among civil society organizations, NGO's, PO's and other private sector to improve local governance and thereby enhancing the good governance practices of barangay officials.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used qualitative-descriptive approach to describe the existing condition or phenomenon and inquire into the "how" and "why" of the subject of inquiry. A researcher-made interview schedule with close and open ended questions was employed to determine the observance of good governance practices from the perspective of registered voters.

The respondents of the study were selected via random sampling from a list of voters acquired from the Municipal Office of the Commission on Election in Maramag Bukidnon. The Philippine Social Science Survey Research (PSSSR) formula was used to determine the number of

respondents from the total number of registered voters in Barangay North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon. Random sampling was done in order to avoid biases in getting the specific respondents who answered the draft research instrument.

Descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage and frequency count was used for measuring, summarizing and analyzing the gathered data.

In the second part of the questionnaire, every answer had corresponding points namely: 5 for STRONGLY AGREE, 4 for AGREE, 3 for UNDECIDED, 2 for DISAGREE, and 1 for STRONGLY DISAGREE. All responses or answers to the indicators of each practice were then combined in order to get a total of at most thirty five (35) points if they answered a certain practice STRONGLY AGREE to all of its 7 questions/ indicators.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shown in Table on the next page, are the six (6) key indicators of Good Governance Practices which have an average ranging from 22.72 - 23.96, the latter being the highest average mean and the former being the lowest average mean. With the designated ratings discussed in the previous chapter, the table shows that the six (6) Good Governance Practices are ALL PRESENT in Barangay North Poblacion Maramag Bukidnon.

Table 1. Summary Table of Good Governance Practices of the Barangay Officials of North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon.

Good Governance Indicator	AVERAGE	Descriptive Quality	RANK
1. Transparency	23.96	PRESENT but WEAK	1 st
2. Accountability	23.94	PRESENT but WEAK	2 nd
3. Leadership	23.75	PRESENT but WEAK	3 rd
4. Rule of Law	23.60	PRESENT but WEAK	4 th
5. Participation	23.59	PRESENT but WEAK	5 th
6. Continuity in the Implementation of Programs, Predictability and Sustainability.	22.72	PRESENT but WEAK	6 th

5 to 15 – ABSENT, 16 to 25 – PRESENT but WEAK, 26 to 35 – PRESENT and STRONG

The data in Table 1, implies that the respondents of the study who are the registered voters of North Poblacion Maramag Bukidnon assessed that good governance are being practiced by their barangay officials. Further, it also shows that among the six (6) good governance practices, Transparency ranked first (1st), which implies that there is a free flow and accessibility of information between the barangay council and the constituents and residents of North Poblacion Maramag Bukidnon. While the key indicator Continuity in the Implementation of Programs, Predictability and Sustainability ranked sixth (6th) or the lowest among the sixth key indicator, which entails that the programs and projects in barangay North Poblacion Maramag Bukidnon are subject to regular evaluation and continuous enrichment of the barangay council.

In addition, the table above also presents the strong and weak key indicators of Good Governance Practices of North Poblacion Maramag, Bukidnon using the average mean of each Good Governance Practice. As shown in the table, all good governance practices are **PRESENT** but rated **WEAK** as practiced by the barangay officials. This suggests that the respondents of the study are not completely satisfied with the performance of their barangay officials.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the six (6) key indicators of the Good Governance Practices are **PRESENT** but rated **WEAK** as practiced in the barangay council of North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon. This implies that there is a need for the barangay council the delivery of social services in order to satisfy these good governance practices that the barangay council possesses.

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