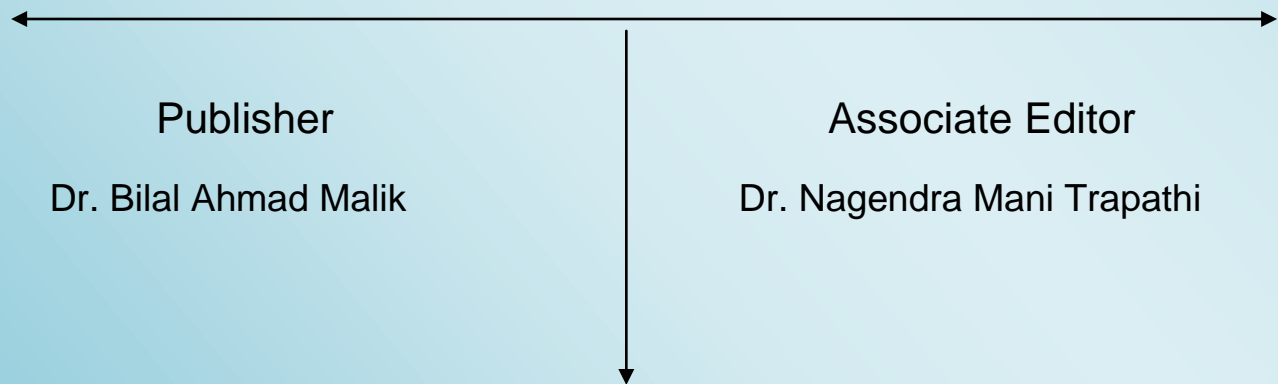


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GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF THE COMPONENT CITIES IN NUEVA ECIJA

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ABSTRACT

The study tried to determine the relationship between the performance of five Sangguniang Panglunsod in Nueva Ecija and personal qualities of local legislators. It also determined the influence of; a) organizational capability b) creation of enabling environment and c) shared commitment to good governance principles on local legislative performance. The respondents are 55 City Councilors who served the five City Councils of San Jose, Cabanatuan, Munoz, Gapan and Palayan in Nueva Ecija. The study covered the years 2007 to 2012. The data gathered were treated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Measures of Central Tendency and Percentile Ranking. The study showed that: a) personal qualities of local legislators have “little to slight” positive influence on legislative performance; b) organizational capability has “little” correlation to legislative performance as supported by an r value of 0.246 not significant at 0.071. The study revealed that there is enough statistical evidence to show that there is a “strong positive correlation” between legislative performance and shared commitments to good governance principles as supported by an r value of 0.642 significant at 0.000. In view of the findings of the study, it is recommended that institutional and structural mechanisms be established to accurately measure the performance of local legislators and the degree of commitment to shared governance principles in the field of actual political and administrative practice. A study may also be undertaken to measure the desirable degree of popular participation to ensure faithful observance of governance principles among local politicians. The study is useful not only for practical purpose but also as a theoretical foundation to analyze the operation of local legislative body.

I. INTRODUCTION

a. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The implementation of Local Government Code or RA 7160 institutionalizes and cemented a strong partnership between the national government and LGU for local development (LGC, 1991). It also adopted decentralization as a mechanism for genuine local development (LGC, Section 2.). But decentralization, as strategy, demands efficiency in the use of local government resources. Efficiency which is measured by filling

the gap between supply for public goods and the demand for service delivery (Yilmaz, Beris & Berthet, 2008). The supply side which is entirely dependent on the local government official's public policy choices and the demand side pertaining to the citizens demand for quality social services.

The function of a decentralized LGU is to redistribute limited resources for the good of its constituents. The use of such resources requires performance measurement to determine the cost of public service delivery and ensure that every cent goes to where it is appropriated. Towards this end, performance measurement is necessary not only for management efficiency and effectiveness (Local Legislators Toolkit, 2004), but also, to preserve democratic space rather than limit it. Performance measurement of LGU encourages re-engineering the bureaucracy that promotes efficiency, effectiveness in service delivery (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2004).

At present, there is inadequate body of knowledge in the field of LGU performance measurement in the Philippines. In fact, the recent disappointment with the linkage of democracy and development adds to the increasing pressure to measure local governance performance and device conceptual framework for performance measurement (World Bank, 2005).

The study aimed at measuring the performance of the five *City Sanggunians* in the province of Nueva Ecija, Specifically the study looked into the;

- 1) Description of *City Sanggunians* in terms of personal attributes
- 2) Description of *City Sanggunian* member's personal attributes and their effect on their performance such as:
 - 2.1) Civil Status;
 - 2.2) Gender;
 - 2.3) Age;
 - 2.4) Highest educational Attainment;
 - 2.5) Other occupation;
 - 2.6) Political party membership in NGO;
 - 2.7) Monthly salary;
 - 2.8) NGO membership;
 - 2.9) Chairmanship in committee

3. To measure the *Sanggunians*' organizational capability and its influence to legislative performance in terms of;
 - 3.1) Capability of legislative staff;
 - 3.2) Adequacy of legislative equipment;
 - 3.3) Inter- office relations;
 - 3.4) Organizational culture

4. To determine the influence of the *Sanggunians*' commitment to good governance principles on legislative performance in terms of:
 - 4.1) Mobilizing people's participation;
 - 4.2) Transparency;
 - 4.3) Accountability;
 - 4.4) Development orientation;
 - 4.5) Gender and development orientation.

5. Relationship between legislators' personal attributes and legislative performance;
6. Relationship between shared governance principles and legislative performance.

b. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Philippine political system is characterized as a republican and democratic State (Art II Section 1, 1987 Philippine Constitution). As a republican State, it has three great branches whose functions and powers are outlined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. The Executive Department exercising the power to implement laws (Article VII, Section 1). The Judicial Department exercising the power to decide on cases involving violation of rights and laws or deciding on cases involving legal controversy arising from violation of rights of citizens (Article VIII, Section 1); and the Legislative Department whose main function is to exercise the power to repeal, amend or enact laws (Article VI, Section 1). This political system arrangement maintains political power equilibrium (Albano, 2003).

The *Sanggunian Panglunsod* as one of the branches of LGU performs a crucial role for local development. It serves as the vehicle to deliver social services to the locality through the exercise of its power

to decide to a certain extent the “government purse” (Section 3). It is the body approving or disallowing budget proposal of the City Mayor (Toolkit, 2004).

The importance of the role of *Sanggunian* to development cannot be undermined. Without good resolutions and policies forged by *Sanggunian*, cities cannot cope with the demands of the community. However, despite its importance to local development, a few study is made regarding local legislation. Ordinarily, voters consider local executive position as more important than legislation. The visibility of the local chief executive relegated to the sideline the crucial role played by local legislative body in ushering countryside development.

Thus, a study on how the local legislative performance may be measured is needed to evaluate accurately local legislative body contribution to local development.

c. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant to the following:

The researcher The result of the study would give opportunity for the researcher to contribute to the dearth of reference materials on local legislation in the area of performance measurement.

The local government for the results of the study would contribute to baseline data for local legislation to improve its performance based on the theories and organizational practices herein presented

The students of politics and public administration for the study contains a rich source of ideas, theories, and practices in the area of local legislation in the Philippines and abroad.

To future researcher for his and her intellectual curiosity may be aroused by the present study sufficient to consider and replicate the same using other study locale and area of local government operation.

II. METHODOLOGY

The method used in the study is a descriptive - case study, qualitative, quantitative and content analysis as its research designs. It also has the dimensions of historical and operations research in so far as period, and area of operation are concerned.

This is a qualitative research in as much as the study tried to correlate certain characteristics of a group of administrators with a certain pattern of performance involving a political institution (*Sanggunian*). The case study method was also applied considering that the focus of inquiry is on the *Sanggunian* of the five cities in Nueva Ecija. It tried to understand the relationship between personal attributes and performance of the members of local legislative body. The study looked into a certain pattern or characteristic which can be used to generalize the results to population outside of the present subject of inquiry (Catane, 2002). The study has a dimension of Historical Research for it focused on the past operational experiences of *Sanggunian* members during the years 2007-2012. It also applied Operations Research in so far as it analyses the functioning of the *Sanggunian* as an institution. Observation was used to identify possible problem areas that hindered the smooth operations of the system of legislation. Finally, the study also employed content analysis because data pertaining to organizational capability and commitment to good governance principles were looked into based on the past accomplishment reports of the entire *Sangguniang Panglungsod* of the component cities.

There were two areas of measurements involved in the study, the measurement of the overall performance of *Sanggunian* and individual performance of its members. From the overall performance, the individual contribution of local legislation was measured vis-a-vis the overall performance of the institution.

The respondents were selected *Sanggunian* members of the five component cities of Nueva Ecija during the years 2007-2012. The component cities subject to the study are: Cabanatuan City, Science City of Munoz, Palayan City, San Jose City, and Gapan City.

Method of Collecting Data

The data were collected by means of survey questionnaires composed of three parts: the first part contained the independent variables (personal attributes) of *Sanggunian* members. The second part contained questions pertaining to the organizational capability of the *Sanggunian*. The third and last part of the instrument contained items intended to measure *personal commitment of individual Sanggunian* members to good governance principles.

Statistical Treatment

The statistical treatments used were: percentile ranking, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Pearson product was used to analyze the correlation of the different variables and individual outputs of the

Sanggunian members. Measures of central tendency was used to establish the pattern of performance vis- a -vis certain organizational variable which influence performance.

Analysis of data

The study adopted Max Weber’s Organization Theory to the analysis of human social and political interactions. It asserts that organization operates based on legal, absolute authority, logic and order and is influenced by an open system (Weber) An ideal organization for Weber is one having a bureaucratic type of operation (in Walonick, 1993). Applying the open system model of organization, it is also considered that the *Sanggunian* is using an information processing network making it is responsive to social environment. As an open system, peoples’ will and interest collectively expressed in terms of public demand serving as stimulus for organizational operation. It is in this light that legislator’s accountability to the people forces him to work on a “mechanistic environment enough to exemplify Weberian” bureaucratic man.”

The study adopted the system’s approach to the analysis of political life developed by David Easton of Cambridge University to wit;

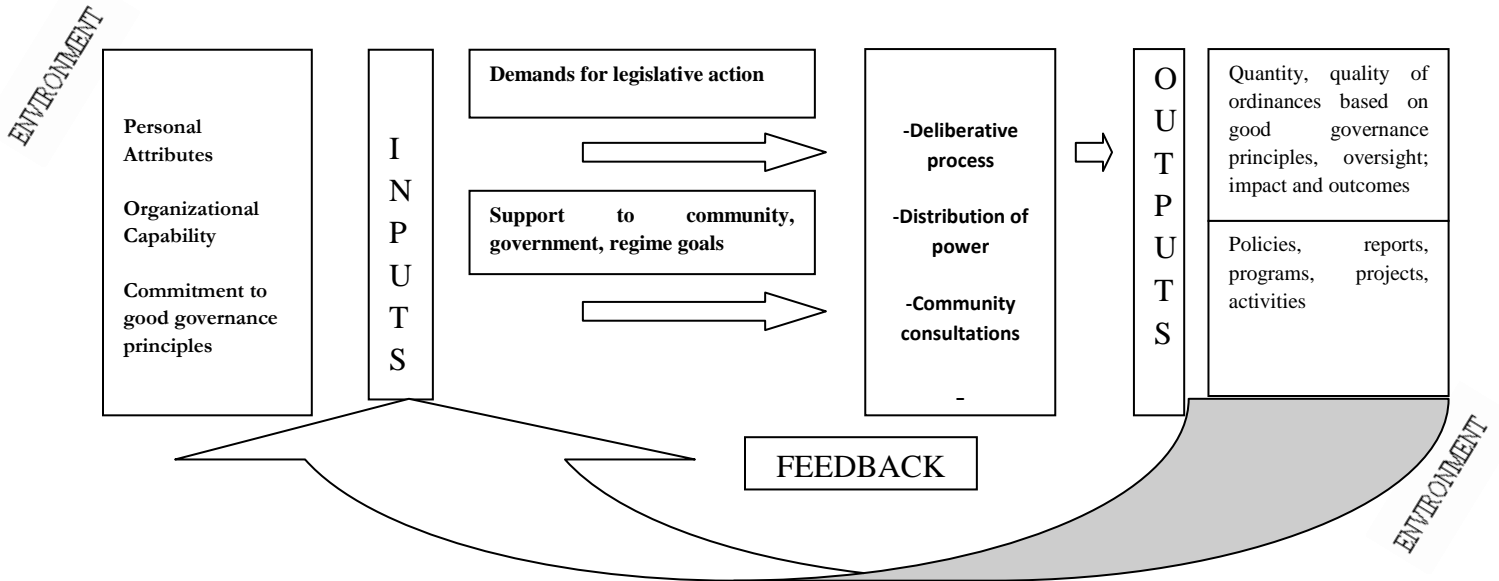


Figure 1: Research Paradigm

The study argues that *Sanggunian* is a political entity operating on the basis of established procedures and analysis of the system could be done through the continues cycle of **input-process- output**.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. DESCRIPTION OF FIVE SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNGSOD

a. Sponsorship of ordinances during the years 2007-2009, 2010 – 2013;

The five cities of Nueva Ecija produced a total of 1422 ordinances for the years 2007-2012. If divided equally each of the five councils has an average of 237 ordinances passed per year covering numerous legislative areas of local government and development concerns. Assuming that ordinances are equally distributed in a year, each of the five *Sanggunians* produced around 39.5 ordinances per year. An average of 4 ordinances per month.

b. Completed resolutions

A resolution lacks the permanence of an ordinance and a mere expression of sentiments of the City Council (LGC, 1991). The *Sanggunian* of the five cities of Nueva Ecija produced a total of 1380 resolutions in 6 years dealing on various local government areas of concern. If equally distributed, it has an average of 220 resolutions in a year. The highest number of resolutions sponsored and made was in City A having a total of 469 or 35% of the total resolutions made by 5 cities.

c. Contribution of individual members to the overall Sanggunian performance

If the *Sangguniang Panglunsod* is vested with power to make local laws other than maintain balance of political powers in the locality (Ayson&Ayson, 2000); then the ultimate and concrete measure of its performance is the quantity of ordinances and resolutions (results) the *Sanggunian* approved and made. However, the difficulty of monitoring the whereabouts of the “bureaucrats” and how they spend their official time, justifies the need for a result -based measurement of performance as an effective tool to determine local legislative performance (Lipsky, 1997).

2. RELATIONSHIP OF PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES TO THE PERFORMANCE OF CITY COUNCILS IN NUEVA ECIJA

2.1 Civil Status

. In some research, civil status of a legislator influences legislative performance. Study found that such variable, as a whole, has a *slight correlation* to legislative performance as shown by an r value of 0.16 significant

at 0.244. The result implies that civil status affects legislative performance but the result cannot be conclusive. Civil status indeed is an attribute that affects legislative performance.

2.2 Gender

The gender of a legislator has been found to affect legislative effectiveness. This is the theme of some researches made by foreign scholars like Snyder and Miguel in 2004. The study supports this idea to a certain extent. The r value of 0.083 point has direct positive correlation to the level of performance at 0.546 level of significance. Hence, a *slight relationship suggest that gender affects performance but the effect is insignificant.*

2.3 Age

The result of the study contradicts the absolute belief of laymen in regard to age and performance. The study came out with a *slight correlation* between age and legislative performance. Though the relationship is *slight*, its direction leans towards positive direction. This means that age and performance and their positive impact to each other could be realized up to a certain degree of inter-connection. Ostensibly, the older the legislator, the greater the quantity of legislative enactments he /she may produce. A logical reason is deduced under the circumstance. If a legislator serves for six years, then his output seems to be more compared to one who serves only for three years. But this deduction is independent on the quality of legislative enactments.

2.4 Educational Attainment

Likewise, the relationship between education and legislative performance shows a *little positive correlation* as shown by an r value of 0.238 significant at 0.081. This means that there is a positive direction toward higher degree of education causing greater number of legislative output. Put in another way, the higher the educational attainment the more effective the execution of legislative performance. This finding is admissible simply because legislative work requires intellectual and conceptual precisions. Thus, one with higher educational background could produce more ordinances compared to one with relatively lower level of education. This analysis is independent of the availability of administrative support that a legislature may have access to.

2.5 Other Occupation

The study provides the correlation between “other occupation” and legislative performance. This result implies a *slight positive correlation* at 0.3 level of significance. An r value of 0.142 confirms the verbal

interpretation and its implication. The result suggests that, the higher the occupation or income the higher the legislative performance. Thus, a legislator with higher paid salary tends to produce more ordinances compared to those with lower level of salary. If one looks at the salary as a motivational variable, the result is true.

2.6 Membership in Political Party

The relationship between political party and legislative performance creates an impression that there is a *little positive correlation* at 0.107 degree of significance. The r value of 0.22 goes higher than the limit of significance hence the positive relationship could be concluded as *significant* and correlative to the legislative performance.

2.7 Monthly Salary

The inter-relationship between salary received and legislative performance yielded a slight 0.136 r value or slightly *significant* at 0.321 level of significance. This means that the salary of the legislative member motivates them “slightly” to go on with the job of making public choice. Thus the higher the income the greater the possibility to improve legislative performance.

2.8 Personal advocacy

There is a slight positive correlation between personal advocacy and legislative performance creating an impression that the greater the degree of advocacy on a certain issue, the more motivated a legislator to push thru with his legislative agenda. An r value of 0.101 is significant at 0.465. This is not surprising considering that legislative work is very much affected by advocacy. The same advocacy as the motive behind legislative sponsorship.

2.9 Membership in NGO

The membership in NGO has a slight positive correlation of 0.088 not significant at 0.521. If this result is to be interpreted, this means that the more active a councilor to non government organization activities, the greater the tendency to improve legislative performance.

2.10 Number of terms elected

The r value of 0.233 shows a positive direction towards greater positive influence on legislative performance. Thus, the greater the number of terms in office served by a councilor, the higher the degree or chances of contributing more to the Sanggunian performance. This is logically possible considering that a re-elected councilor has the entire six years to legislate compared to a newly elected one who has only 3 years to legislate.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF SANGGUNIAN'S PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

Describing the *Sanggunian* present status in terms of organizational capability, the study showed that:

3.1 Organizational capability

The operation of any organization depends on its human and non human resources. The case of City Councils, as an institution and organization is perhaps affected by this theoretical interrelationship of organizational performance and organizational capability. The study measures the organizational capability of the *Sanggunian* using the domains of human and non human resources.

3.1.1 Capability of legislative staff

In the case of five *Sanggunian Panglunsod* of Nueva Ecija, the prevailing perspective does not hold true. The importance of improving the capability of legislative staff is given lower weighted mean score across cities. A weighted mean of 2.66 or “sometimes” points to the administrative perception that “keeping an effective legislative staff “is not a prerequisite to effective legislative performance. This finding contradicts the results of some studies e.g. Briones in 2009 and UNDP in 2009; showing that capability of local government personnel improves the viability of implementing the medium term development goals of the Philippines.

The legislative work follows the dictum of “learning by doing” (Snyder & Miguel, 2004). In the case of the *Sanggunians of five cities of Nueva Ecija*, the contrary perception holds true. In fact, the result of a simple statistical treatment deduces the quantitative description of organizational capability into a “rare” relationship between training and seminar and efficiency of legislative staff as prerequisite of legislative performance. A weighted mean average of 2.56 or “rarely” shows the city councilors’ perspective.

3.1.2 Adequacy of office equipment

The presence and availability of office and office equipment receives scant attention of the legislators as the factor affecting their legislative performance. This is shown by a weighted mean average of 2.407 or adjectival rate of “rarely”. However, personal observation of the researcher could prove that all the city councils visited are supported by adequate office equipment and legislative staff. This therefore creates inconsistency such that if on the eyes of local legislators, office equipment is not a prerequisite for higher level of legislative performance. If this is so, then budget for office equipment should have been allotted for some other legislative concerns other than for office equipment. But no evidence is shown proving that other office equipment contributes to higher legislative performance.

3.1.3 Political networking

The 1987 Philippine Constitution designs the Philippine government structure in a way that each of the three branches of government exercises legal and political supremacy within its own spheres (Gabriel 2013). Theoretically, one is independent of the other two branches. But in actuality, the operation of government observes the relation of inter-dependence rather than complete independence (Albano, 1998). In legislative work, political alliances and inter-connections among different local political leaders and offices affect performance. In fact, Snyder & Miguel assert that legislative effectiveness and careers are a function of, among others, party affiliation and institutional positions (2004). In the case of the component *Sanggunian Panlungsod*, political networking is not perceived as contributory to legislative performance. In fact, it has only a weighted mean score of 3.09 or “sometimes.” This implies that the consideration given by respondent -councilors to political alliances is of less importance in legislative work. This finding again is doubtful, it contradicts even the decades old theory that interdependence of the three branches tends to produce greater results than complete independence. In fact, cases of legislative deadlock happen due to political differences between the branches of government. Such case is not present when there is political understanding and networking between local leaders.

3.1.4. Organizational culture

Behind the steering- up of an organization is the organizational culture. This consists of the political values, work ethics and the use of political symbols and insignia (Ayson &Ayson 2000). In the case of five *Sanggunians*, an average weighted mean of 2.93 or” sometimes” shows that components of ideal organizational culture are not always considered as factors influencing legislative work performance. The work ethics of

independence and result- based performance are “rarely “ considered as shown by the weighted mean scores of 2.58 and 2.52 respectively.

4. DESCRIPTION OF SANGGUNIANs’ PERFORMANCE IN TERMS OF SHARED COMMITMENT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

It has been tried and tested in many research studies that observance of governance principles improves administrative performance. Governance principles are guide to higher level of public service. The study used as parameters governance principles and look for their influences on legislative performance. The results are as follows:

4.1 Mobilization of peoples’ participation

Strengthening bureaucratic space produces resilient government institution. The creation of enabling laws in local government is not enough to create enabling environment. It must be accompanied by intensified peoples participation in decision making and active participation in local development program implementation (UNDP 2009; Gaventa 2011). The finding shows that City B and D give premium to peoples’ mobilization. It is shown by average weighted mean scores of 3.67 and 3.57 respectively verbally described as “very often”.

4.2 Transparency

A “gold fish in a gold fish bowl” is an adage in public management. Creating a participatory environment presupposes observance of transparency. It is even mandated in other jurisdictions that transparency should be observed not only by public organizations but even private corporations dealing with government functionaries. This leads to the implementation of “sunshine legislation” (ICMA, 2009). Transparency provides information to people to participate in local development and make informed decision (Dillany, 2011). The higher level of the principle of transparency is observed by City B. In fact, an average weighted mean of 3.56 or “very often” is showed by the responses of councilors working in City B. This also means that on the perspective of the city councilors of city B transparency has something to do with the legislative output.

4.3 Accountability

It is a constitutional mandate that accountability to the people is a continuing requirement that brings reason to public officer to stay in power (1987 Philippine Constitution). This mandate realizes the legal fiction of

sovereign power held and reserved to the people. But this principle seldom reigns in government offices where street level bureaucrat acts as mediator between the public service and the public (Hill 1997). Some scholars assert that the need to improve government accountability necessitates linking government official's exercise of discretion and accountability (Yilmaz et al. 2008). The five Sanggunians in Nueva Ecija believed that shared principle of accountability is "sometimes" considered important to legislative performance. The accountability principle as expressed in "recall election" is rated **sometimes** to check abuses in local government.

4.4 Development orientation

As a domain of shared commitment to good governance principles, Cities B,C,D rated **development orientation the highest**, with mean scores of 3.59, 3.41 and 3.94 respectively way above the average weighted mean of 3.43 across cities, although the adjectival description is the same as "very often". This result showed that majority of the respondent's city councilors consider tangible development projects as measure of their success in local governance. Though highly debatable, that development can be measured by the number of farm to market roads constructed, there is no gain saying that the measure of development goes beyond tangible development projects but also in terms of quality of life to the constituents. The role of the private sector in local development receives a weighted mean of 3.22 higher than 3.06.

4.5 Participatory local governance

The principle of participatory local governance can influence local development when it is made as a matter of legal right (Gaventa, 2011). Professor Hector De Leon maintains that, the true essence of genuine local development revolves around genuine popular participation (De Leon 1997). In the case of the five cities under study, participation is done through indirect people's participation. The principle that members of the *Sanggunians* as speaker of peoples' interests is revealed by the "very often" attendance to *hearing and sessions* of the city council. The weighted mean score across cities is 3.44 which means that among participatory governance practices, indirect participation is given priority and is attributable to local legislative performance. This weighted mean score is way above the average weighted mean of 3.29 or "sometimes". The finding is significant because true participation must go beyond indirect participation but must be in the form of actual people's participation. Participation of people especially in local development projects requires performance of active role. Otherwise, falling short to this degree is *tokenism*.

5. CORRELATION BETWEEN THE SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNGSOD PERSPECTIVES ON ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY AND LEGISLATIVE PERFORMANCE

The organizational capability of the *Sanggunian Panglungsod* is measured using the following constructs; a) legislative staff; b) availability of office equipment; c) motor vehicle for monitoring and attendance to seminar.

5.1 Capability of legislative staff

The effectiveness of legislative staff logically translates into quantity of ordinance produced. In view of the Philippine Medium Development Goals and its capacity requirement for LGU personnel, the upgraded capability of legislative staff is a must (Briones, 2007). An overall r value of 0.246 shows a *little positive correlation* not significant at 0.071 showing in effect that for the city legislators, the quality of legislative staff and quantity of ordinance authored and approved have negligible relationship. This finding departs from the prevailing idea that staff capability is a key to better legislative performance. It is unexpected to know that little improvement in legislative performance is attributable to capacity of legislative staff. This means that the higher the legislative capability, there is only a little improvement in legislative performance.

5.2 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture affects legislative output. Four measures of organizational culture are identified, namely: a) the value of independence; b) harmony; c) result based measurement and d) adherence to democratic deliberative process. The correlation coefficient of statistical treatment showed that among four workplace culture based ethics, *office harmony* and *democratic deliberation* are preferred. The members of the *Sangguniang Panglungsod* believed that they are two important features of a good working environment. The variables showed a **moderate positive relationship** of 0.228 significant at 0.094 r values. In other words, in terms of organizational culture the *City Sanggunian* maintained a good working environment necessary to make the organization perform well.

5.3 Political networking

Political networking involves the interrelationship of political actors and officers in regard to local development efforts including but not limited to local legislation. The study is based on the practical observation that the concept of power is the motive force behind political activities. In the case of the five cities in Nueva

Ecija, an overall correlation value of 0.307 shows *little* relationship between political network and ordinance produced. This having a significant value at 0.023. This positive correlation and significant value confirmed the political observers hypothesis that political interrelationship is important to the performance of political function. It is under the backdrop of “patronage” political culture that the statistical result was generated.

6. CORRELATION BETWEEN THE SANGGUNIANG PANGLUNGSOD MEMBERS SHARED COMMITMENT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES AND LEGISLATIVE PERFORMANCE

There are five good governance principles measured in the study: creation of enabling environment; transparency; accountability; development orientation and participatory governance.

To create enabling environment in local governance requires not only creation of enabling laws but also intensified peoples participation (UNDP 2009). But creation of participatory environment presupposes observance of transparency as a measure to prevent graft and corruption. Both private and public organization must give priority to transparency to prevent corruption (ICMA, 2009). Transparency also provides information to people to participate in local development and create informed decision (Dillany, 2011).

6.1 Mobilizing people's participation

Under the construct “creation of an enabling environment” for community participation in development efforts, the following overall r values are arrived at, to wit: r values of 0.373 with a *little* degree of correlation for *mobilizing peoples participation* significant at 0.005; 0.543 with moderate degree of correlation for transparency significant at 0.000; 0.396 with *little* degree of correlation significant at 0.00; 0.396 with *little* degree of correlation significant at 0.003 for accountability; 0.379 with *little* degree of correlation significant at 0.004 for development orientation and 0.493 with *moderate* degree of correlation at 0.000 for participatory local governance.

The finding is supported by the study of Brillantes and Tigno in 1993 showing that there is a widespread accreditation of NGO in local government units in the Philippines. The present study shows that local legislators believe in the accreditation process and its positive correlation significant at 0.005 with legislative performance. But absence of sufficient data could not provide conclusion whether such accreditation is transformed into genuine and actual NGO participation.

6.2 Transparency and Legislative Performance

The transparency principle is based on the measurement of three variables namely: a) early submission of financial report; b) posting of fiscal information on the website; c) updated e mail and social media for feedback and civic engagement.

Noteworthy is the findings gathered from the responses of cities B and C having the r values of 0.719 interpreted as strong degree of correlation for city B and 0.406 moderately significant at 0.168 respectively. At a glance, the r values show a **direct strong positive correlation** between transparency principles and legislative output yielding an overall degree of correlation 0.543 and moderately significant at 0.000. This finding correlative to cities B and C creates an impression that among the five cities, it is cities B and C that give importance to transparency showing in effect that good governance principle when translated into legislative output would considerably *increase* the quantity of legislative measures produced. This supports the idea that monitoring on how public funds are spent and participation in budget allocation heightens the government commitment to provide quality service and performance measurement (Victorian, 2012).

Indeed, transparency creates accountability. Accountability ensures effective legislative performance. A moderate correlation coefficient of 0.543 significant at 0.000 supports the shared commitment to transparency principle of the respondents' councilors across cities.

6.3 Accountability and Legislative Performance

The accountability principles of a) posting of legislative procedure, b) observance of internal rules; c) suspension of barangay officials and d) support for recall elections are elements of accountability. Based on data gathered, the following overall r values are arrived at: a) 0.323 significant at 0.396 for city A ; b) 0.523 significant at 0.149 for city B ; c) negative -0.65 significant at 0.016 for city C; d) negative -0.327 not significant at 0.429 for city D and, e) 0.304 not significant at 0.253 for city E respectively.

The principle of accountability in local governance is proven to affect parliamentary performance. In general, increase accountability pushes the government official to perform better while in office. Good governance principles, e.g. Accountability; works toward effective parliamentary performance (WorldBank, 2008).

6.4 Development Orientation and Legislative Performance

The local legislative body development orientation is subject to the scrutiny of this study. Development orientation is sub categorized into: a) importance of livelihood training b) farm to market road; c) the role of private sector and d) gender and development orientation. Among the four measured constructs, the following r values are arrived at: 0.519, 0.483 and 0.483 interpreted as *positively correlated* to quantity of ordinance produced. Such correlation is interpreted as *moderately* affecting the legislative output of cities A, B and C. However, these r values are not significant at 0.152 to 0.438. The findings support the studies made in the area of local government where development orientation matters much in local governance.

The role of private sector in local development is indispensable. The constitutional mandate of attracting private sector to share with the local government unit the burden of developing the countryside, receives wide acceptance (Brillantes & Tigno, 1993). The finding of *little correlation* between development orientation and legislative output is different from actual observation of the researcher when he considers the proliferating market based economy of the city where active market activities are observable in addition to the catena of list of private enterprises the five cities accommodated. Be that as it may, the participation of the private sector is important to a market based economy which the city would like to establish.

6.5 Participatory Local Governance and legislative performance

Participatory governance is measured by looking into the importance of community participation and civic engagement in legislation. The following are the constructs measured, a) “barangay hopping”; b) attendance to hearing and deliberation, and c) providing proper place for sectoral representation for community participation.

The statistical procedures yielded the following coefficient correlation results of: a) 0.416 for city A with a degree of correlation as *moderate* and a significance level of 0.265 b) an r value of 0.492 also interpreted as *moderate correlation* for city C. Meanwhile, the case of city B presents a higher correlation value of 0.87 *significant* at 0.002 with a degree of correlation of very strong. This finding for city B provides a significant basis for the importance of participatory governance approach to local development. It simply shows the tendency of the local legislators to increase ordinance output as they observe the principles of participatory governance. The strong correlation is significant because the principles increase the level of accountability on the part of local legislators to the electorate. And increase observance (*direct correlation of the principles to ordinance produced*) of the principle motivates transparency and thereby increase accountability.

Hence, the results provide that on the point of view of the local legislators of city B there is a ***strong positive correlation between principles of participatory governance and legislative performance***. The positive correlation suggests that the more local legislative body accommodates local demand for public choice, the greater the tendency for the local legislator to perform effectively on his legislative function. This is attributable to the fact that wider democratic space for community participation creates higher degree of accountability on the part of the political leaders who are members of *Sangguniang Panglunsod*.

Among the participatory governance practices, the ***high mark of correlation*** between ***deliberative process*** and quantity of ordinance having r value of + ***0.804067*** is noticeable. The positive direction means that the more sessions and debates, the greater the number of session hours, the greater the number of session hours the more issues are resolved. The more issues resolved, the more resolutions and ordinances produced for the locality.

In general, the ***Sangguniang Panglunsod of the five cities*** showed that there are more variables having ***positive correlation*** to legislative performance than negative. The variables under study are found to influence or considerably increase legislative performance.

IV. SUMMARY

The study focused on the determination of local *Sanggunian's* performance and correlation of personal attributes of Sanggunian members. It also tried to determine the relationship between organizational capabilities, creation of enabling environment and shared commitments to good governance principles and performance of local legislative bodies of the components consisted of 55 city counselors from the five cities of Nueva Ecija namely: Cabanatuan City, San Jose City, Palayan City, Science City of Munoz, and Gapan, City. The study found out that:

- a. Sponsorship of ordinance during the years 2007-2009 and 2010-2012;

Based on the data gathered, from the years 2007 – 2012, the five cities / councils produced a total of 1422 ordinances. The City B produced the highest number of ordinances having a total of 646 legislations contributing to the 45% of the overall ordinances produced in six years by all city councils under consideration.

b. The respondents' city councils produced a total of 1380 resolutions in six years while the highest in terms of completed resolutions is city A with a total of 578 or 42% of the entire resolutions moved and approved by the five city councils.

c. Community consultations held

No sufficient documentary and office records are available to support any conclusion as to the number of the community consultations made.

d. Individual members contribution to over all Sanggunian performance

1. The members of the different Sanggunians contribution to the overall performance of the institution in 6 years, to wit;

The city Sanggunian Panglungsod A had three well performing councilors namely: 1) Councilor 6 with 73 ordinances in six year. He was followed by councilor 9 with 53 ordinances and councilor 8 with 41 finished ordinances. In terms of resolution making, the following data were gathered; the city Councilor 7 produced 83 resolutions followed by Councilor 9 with 46 resolutions and Councilor 20 with 65 resolutions.

In terms of ordinances produced, the city council of City B produced 646 ordinances. With Councilor 1 made 115 ordinances followed by Councilor 6 whose output produced 111 ordinances and finally Councilor 10 was instrumental for the legislation of 101 ordinances.

City C produced a total of 216 resolutions in 6 years. City Councilor 9 contributed to 46 or 60% of the total resolutions made while Councilor 13 was able to move and approve 17 resolutions.

City D produced 180 ordinances in 6 years. However no specified names of councilors are listed on the accomplishment report. The sanggunian also approved 309 resolutions. Councilors

The city D had a total of 107 ordinances finished. 27% of which is attributed to councilor 1 while the other 35 ordinances equivalent to 32% of the total is attributable to councilor 10.

2. *The Description of City Sanggunians in terms of personal attributes* showed the following conclusions:

The five *Sanggunian Panglungsod* had 16 single members equivalent to 29% of the entire membership. The remaining 71% or 39 claimed that they were married.

In terms of gender, 83% or 46 of the members of the five *Sanggunian are males while the remaining 9 members or 17% are female.*

The age bracket of the councilor respondents is between 31 and above to 51 and above. Attributing to 49% belonging to 51 years old and above while 16 or 31% of the respondents belonged to the age bracket 41 and above and lastly the remaining councilors claimed that they belonged to the age bracket 31 and above.

Majority of the respondents are degree holders consisting of 34 members equivalent to 67% while 11 claimed that they earned post graduate degrees equivalent to 22%. The remaining 11% earned high school diploma.

The membership in political party of the respondents showed that more than simple majority or 67% are members of the ruling party. The remaining 27% percent are non majority members while the remaining 6% of the respondents opted not to answer the question on the political affiliation.

The city sanggunian members received different amount of salaries depending on the financial capability of a city. In general, city a councilors received more than fifty thousand pesos a month. Two of the cities (D and E) claimed that they received more than forty thousand pesos a month. The remaining councilors revealed that they are receiving more than thirty thousand pesos a month. No one received less than thirty thousand a month. The members report for work once a week. It is during the designated session day.

The advocacy of the entire group of *sanggunian*, showed that 20 respondents or 39% believed the need to advocate environment protection as the agenda to prioritize. This followed by a social advocacy of 6 councilors or 12% while 21 of the councillors or 41% believed in the importance of accountability in legislation and chose as their personal advocacy.

The role of NGO in local development is indispensable. This is even showed by the responses of the city councilors. Majority believed in the importance promoting women interests equivalent to 51% or 26 members.

22% or 11 members of the *Sanggunian* showed that they promote urban poor interest and 12 or 24% claimed that they are members or supporters of youth organizations.

Majority of the respondents were first term- councilors during the period covered by the study. 32 or 58% were elected for the first time. The 34% consisting of 19 councilors were re-elected during the years 2007 to 2012. Lastly, 5 of the respondents were three termer councilors.

3. *The study measured the relationship between personal attributes and Sangguniang Panglungsod performance.*

Statistical evidences tested the following results:

The variable of civil status and *Sanggunian* performance based on the quantity of ordinance produced yielded a positive correlation. This is not a significant relationship such that as shown by a *slight* correlation description.

The personal attribute of gender showed only a *slight* positive correlation with legislative performance but such relationship is *not significant*.

In so far as the age of the respondents is concerned, it was found that it has a positive *slight* correlation with the performance of city councilors.

Educational attainment and performance of councilors have found to have *little* positive correlation but is shown to be significant.

The existence of “other occupation” is found to have *slightly* but positively affecting the performance of *Sanggunian Panglungsod* members. This finding is also found to be *significant*.

4. *The membership in political party has little positive correlation to legislative performance.*

The income received by a local legislator has found to have *slight* positive correlation to legislative performance.

There was a *slight* positive correlation between NGO membership and legislative performance based on ordinance output.

The term of office of the city councilors has *little* positive correlation to legislative output in terms of quantity.

The committee chairmanship has slight positive correlation to ordinance output of councilors.

5. Description of Personal profile

1. Correlation between organizational capability and Sanggunian performance

The study found that capability of legislative and other organizational attributes have something to do with the entire Sanggunian performance. The findings on the area are as follows:

a. Capability of legislative staff

There is found to have a slight negative correlation between the capability of legislative staff and the legislative performance of *Sanggunian Panglungsod*;

b. Adequacy of legislative equipment;

There is a direct but little positive correlation between legislative performance and completeness of legislative equipment;

c. inter- office relations;

The same findings are established between inter-office relations and legislative performance where a positive little correlation is found.

d. organizational culture

Finally, there is a little positive correlation between organizational culture and legislative performance.

2. Correlation between good governance principles and legislative performance

The study found that there was a positive and significant correlation between good governance principles and legislative performance. Correlation results proved that all the sub -domains of governance principles have something to do with legislative output. The gathered data statistically led to the following results of relationship:

a. Mobilizing people's participation;

A significant relationship between the variable mobilizing people's participation was found. Though the relationship is found *little*;

b. Transparency and legislative performance established a direct moderate positive correlation which is found to be significant.

In terms of accountability principle, statistical evidence showed little but positive relationship.

c. Development orientation and legislative performance has been established to have positive little but significant relationship;

Finally, participatory governance and legislative performance has moderate but positive correlation established to be significant at certain level.

V. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION

Given the findings, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

CONCLUSION

Based on the conducted study and its findings the following conclusions were drawn:

- i. Majority of the of the personal qualities are positively correlated though the interpretation ranges from "*little to moderate*" influence;
- ii. The first variable of the capability of legislative staff has "*slight*" correlation while the remaining four has "*little*" correlation;
- iii. The third group of variables showed "*little to strong*" correlation with significant implications.

- iv. There was insufficient records and bases to show that the local legislative bodies undertake community visits in the exercise of their **oversight function**;
- v. There was not enough evidence to prove that the subject local legislative bodies observed their legislative function of **inquiry in aid of legislation**.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. There is a need for the local *Sanggunian*'s elected officials to devise a scheme on how to monitor the performance of functions. This would greatly increase the degree of **accountability** of elected officials to the electorate and to the society at large.
2. Increase the degree of **transparency** in government operation to stimulate popular participation and public trust. As an open system, it has to respond to the demands of the outside citizens/ consumers.
3. Encourage and monitor the NGO participation in local development specially in local legislation;
4. There is a need to increase the pressure exerted against the local legislators to perform their sworn duties. The pressure must come from both the national government and the electorate.
5. Given the lack of reliable records of data on the exercise of oversight function and frequency of community visits to encourage community consultation, the local government unit has to measure accurately the manner elected officials time is being spent. This could contribute to professionalism of local legislative body.
6. The significant correlation between good governance principles and legislative performance, structural and institutional mechanisms may be instituted to accurately measure their faithful observance.
7. Reassessment of organizational culture is necessary so that it could be harmonized with the nature and demands of legislative works without necessarily undermining the democratic practice of check and balance.
8. For the respondents to take advantage of the social media to solicit popular support and increase civic engagement.

9. The local legislators are encouraged to consider the exercise of oversight functions so that they could provide strengthened cooperation with the executive department and entities assigned to implement development program emanating from approved ordinances. This will prevent policy implementation loopholes.
10. Intensify local government performance measurement to ensure policy implementation and increase the level of observance of public policy made.
11. Improve the quality of voters to improve the quality of legislation

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