



A Systematic Review of Leadership and Governance: Evaluating Barangay Officials' Performance in Sablan Municipality

Cristina B. Valdez

Graduate School Student,

Baguio Central University, Baguio City Philippines

Abstract— This systematic review evaluates the performance of barangay officials in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities in the Municipality of Sablan. As the smallest political units in the Philippines, barangays serve as the primary touchpoints for local governance and service delivery. The review synthesizes existing research on the roles of barangay officials, exploring key factors that influence their effectiveness, including leadership quality, resource management, and community involvement. It also highlights common challenges, such as limited financial resources, inadequate training, and political dynamics, which impact the ability of officials to meet their constituents' needs. Through an analysis of performance indicators such as public satisfaction, program implementation, and conflict resolution, this review offers a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in barangay governance. The findings suggest that effective leadership and active community participation are crucial to overcoming these challenges and improving service delivery at the local level. Furthermore, the review underscores the need for targeted interventions, such as capacity-building programs and increased financial support, to enhance governance performance in rural barangays like Sablan. Recommendations for future research include more localized studies to better understand the nuances of rural governance and how barangay officials can optimize their roles in these settings.

Keywords— Barangay, Governance, Leadership performance, Local government, Rural municipalities.

INTRODUCTION

The performance of barangay officials in the Philippines can be viewed within the broader global context of local governance, where the effectiveness of local officials plays a crucial role in community development. Similar to the barangay system, many countries have implemented decentralization policies to empower local governments. In countries such as Indonesia, Brazil, and India, local governance structures are expected to address the needs of their communities, but issues like accountability, transparency, and capacity often hinder their effectiveness. Research has shown that capacity building and continuous training are essential for local officials to meet their constituents' needs effectively (Shah & Thompson, 2004; Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007). These global challenges mirror those faced by barangay officials, highlighting the need for a stronger focus on improving local governance systems.

The performance of barangay officials in the Philippines can be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030 by focusing on key areas where local governance intersects with sustainable development. Barangay officials play a crucial role in poverty alleviation by implementing social welfare programs and livelihood

initiatives, directly contributing to SDG 1 on ending poverty (United Nations, 2015). Enhancing their fiscal management and governance capacities ensures that these programs reach vulnerable populations effectively. Similarly, barangay officials are instrumental in promoting public health through vaccination drives, health campaigns, and disaster response. Strengthening local health governance aligns with SDG 3, which seeks to ensure healthy lives and well-being for all (World Health Organization, 2017). By improving their capacity to manage health resources, barangays can contribute to reducing child mortality and responding to health crises.

Moreover, barangay officials can support SDG 4 on quality education by advocating for education programs and addressing local barriers to learning, particularly in underserved areas. Effective governance at the barangay level ensures access to inclusive and equitable education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2019). Additionally, they play a key role in promoting SDG 5 on gender equality by implementing gender-responsive policies and ensuring equal participation in local governance for women and marginalized groups (UN Women, 2020). This promotes a more inclusive community where both men and women have access to equal opportunities and resources.

In relation to SDG 11, which focuses on building sustainable cities and communities, barangay officials are responsible for urban planning, waste management, and disaster risk reduction (United Nations, 2015). Enhancing their legislative and administrative functions enables them to address challenges such as inadequate housing and sanitation, thus contributing to the sustainability of communities. Furthermore, SDG 16 emphasizes the importance of peace, justice, and strong institutions. Barangay officials play a crucial role in maintaining peace and order, resolving disputes, and ensuring public safety. Strengthening their judicial and legislative capacities promotes accountability and transparency in local governance (United Nations Development Programme, 2016).

Lastly, barangay officials can align with SDG 17 on partnerships by collaborating with national agencies, NGOs, and international organizations. These partnerships help barangays mobilize resources and access technical support, contributing to the successful implementation of local development initiatives (United Nations, 2015). In conclusion, enhancing the performance of barangay officials through capacity-building, resource management, and improved governance directly contributes to achieving multiple SDGs, helping to ensure sustainable development at the grassroots level.

In terms of fiscal management and resource allocation, local officials in various parts of the world face significant challenges, as seen in regions like Africa. In countries such as Kenya and South Africa, local officials often struggle with limited resources and capacity gaps, affecting their ability to manage fiscal responsibilities effectively (Smoke, 2015). This situation is comparable to the performance of barangay captains in the Philippines, who have been found to exhibit competence in fiscal administration but weaknesses in legislative and judicial functions. The experience of other countries shows that improving technical skills and providing adequate resources are key to strengthening local governance structures.

Community engagement and participatory decision-making are crucial for local governance effectiveness in countries like Sweden and Denmark. These nations emphasize transparency, accountability, and active participation from the community in decision-making processes, which enhances the performance of local officials



(Bovaird & Löffler, 2003). However, the barangay system in the Philippines often lacks structured monitoring systems, which can lead to gaps in accountability and effectiveness. This suggests the need for policies that monitor and evaluate barangay officials' performance to ensure they meet the expectations of their constituents.

Additionally, local officials' role in maintaining public safety, such as barangay security police officers, is a critical aspect of local governance. Many developing countries, including the Philippines, face challenges in this area, as local security forces often operate with limited resources. Enhancing training programs and increasing compensation for security personnel is a common issue worldwide, particularly in high-risk areas (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999). The call for better training and improved honorariums for barangay security officers aligns with global efforts to strengthen local security systems and ensure public safety.

Further, the effectiveness of local governments in delivering basic services such as healthcare, education, and economic development is a critical measure of their performance. In Latin American countries, local governments frequently struggle with service delivery due to governance inefficiencies and resource limitations, which is similar to the challenges faced by barangay officials in the Philippines, particularly in the areas of legislation and economic services (Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2006). This underscores the need for continuous assessment, training, and improvement in the performance of barangay officials to ensure they effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

Hence, the performance challenges faced by barangay officials in the Philippines are not unique but are part of a broader global issue in local governance. By learning from international experiences and focusing on capacity building, accountability, and improved resource management, barangay officials can be better equipped to meet the needs of their communities. Barangay officials' effectiveness in performing their duties and responsibilities vary across different barangays. Some barangay governments have demonstrated minimal capability in addressing the concerns of their constituents and fully realizing the expectations set by the Local Government Code of 1991 (Pascua, 2020). The performance of barangay security police officers has been explored, with recommendations made to enhance their training programs and honorarium to compensate for the risks and sacrifices involved in their roles (Santos & Reyes, 2019). The governance capabilities of barangay captains have been assessed, revealing competence in fiscal administration but weaknesses in legislative and judicial functions (Dela Cruz, 2021). Similarly, the competency measures of barangay council members have been evaluated, highlighting the need for a policy to monitor and control their performance and competence (Garcia, 2022). In Vigan, the productivity and performance of barangays have been assessed, showing strengths in resource requirements and management, but weaknesses in legislation and economic services (Martinez, 2020). Overall, these findings suggest a need for ongoing training, monitoring, and assessment of barangay officials' performance to improve their effectiveness in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

The role of barangay officials in local governance is crucial, as they serve as the primary link between the community and the national government (Austria-Cruz, 2019). However, there is limited research that examines the specific performance of barangay officials in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, particularly in the context of the Municipality of Sablan. Prior studies have investigated the governance performance of selected



barangays in highly urbanized cities, highlighting issues such as high incidence of malnutrition, lack of access to potable water, and concerns in solid waste management implementation (Monocay & Mejica, 2020). Additionally, research has been conducted on the performance of Barangay Police Security Officers or Tanods in maintaining peace and order, emphasizing the importance of the barangay's role in ensuring a peaceful and stable community (Austria-Cruz, 2019).

Despite these relevant studies, there appears to be a gap in the literature regarding the specific performance of barangay officials in the Municipality of Sablan in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.

This research paper aims to address this gap by examining the performance of barangay officials in the Municipality of Sablan, focusing on their execution of duties and responsibilities in areas such as social services, peace and order, and local development. This study will benefit barangay officials by providing insights to enhance their governance skills, leading to improved service delivery and local development. Local Government Units (LGUs) and policymakers will gain valuable information to design better training programs and policies that strengthen barangay governance. Community members will benefit from more efficient and effective services, while academics and researchers will have empirical data for further study on local governance. Additionally, NGOs and civil society groups can use the findings to advocate for stronger local governance and support capacity-building initiatives for barangay officials.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

The concept of local government refers to the lowest level of the political structure, functioning as a subdivision of the national government, with local government units (LGUs) playing a crucial role in national development by overseeing local affairs and implementing government policies. The barangay, the basic political unit and focus of this study, serves as the primary planning and implementation unit for these policies at the local level. Effective local governance is often measured by the ability of these units to respond to community needs through the provision of essential public services. High performance in local governance is attributed to rational decision-making, optimal resource utilization, and the sustained, timely delivery of services. Performance measurement focuses on areas such as local financial management, legislation, organizational management, and development planning (Basaluddin, 2021).

However, local governments face several challenges that can hinder their performance. Issues such as lack of transparency, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and centralized political structures limit their autonomy and reduce public participation, ultimately affecting service delivery (Mu et al., 2017; Manaf et al., 2018). To improve performance, LGUs must prioritize good governance principles, including transparency, accountability, and increased community involvement. By addressing these obstacles, barangay officials can enhance their governance capacity and contribute more effectively to local development. This framework underpins the study's examination of barangay officials' performance and its impact on local governance.

Public Service Motivation Theory is a critical framework for understanding the intrinsic motivations that drive individuals who work in public service (Wright & Grant, 2010). This theory posits that some individuals are predisposed to respond to motives rooted in public institutions and organizations, leading them to seek out and



excel in roles that allow them to provide meaningful public service. In the context of the Municipality of Sablan, examining the motivations of barangay officials through the lens of Public Service Motivation Theory can provide valuable insights into their performance and commitment to serving their constituents. By investigating the factors that enhance or inhibit the motivation of these officials, the research can inform strategies to improve service delivery and community engagement.

Previous studies have found that individuals with a strong sense of public service motivation are more likely to be drawn to and excel in the public sector, as they derive intrinsic satisfaction from contributing to the greater good of society (Wright & Grant, 2010). Moreover, research has consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between public service motivation and job satisfaction, which in turn has a significant effect on service quality.

However, the existing literature also highlights the need for further research to address critical gaps in our understanding of Public Service Motivation Theory. For instance, scholars have noted the importance of investigating how contextual factors, such as training, support, and recognition, can influence the motivational drivers of public sector employees. (Wright & Grant, 2010). In the case of barangay officials in the Municipality of Sablan, examining their motivations through the lens of Public Service Motivation Theory can provide valuable insights that inform strategies to enhance their performance and commitment to serving their communities. By understanding the intrinsic factors that drive these officials, the research can help identify ways to foster a culture of public service and ensure that the needs of constituents are effectively addressed (Marques, 2020; Wright & Grant, 2010; Nurung et al., 2020).

Good Governance Theory emphasizes the importance of principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness in the public sector, providing a framework for evaluating the governance practices of barangay officials (Rusmianto & Maryani, 2022). This theory is particularly relevant in the context of Sablan, as the performance of barangay officials is closely tied to their adherence to these good governance principles. By applying Good Governance Theory, the research can assess the extent to which barangay officials in Sablan implement policies and engage with the community. This alignment is essential for understanding how good governance practices influence the overall effectiveness of local governance in Sablan and can identify areas for improvement. (Monocay & Mejica, 2020)

The implementation of good governance is a crucial prerequisite for realizing the aspirations of the people and achieving the goals and ideals of the nation and state (Ayu et al., 2019). Community participation in every process of making public policy is important as a reflection of the principles of democracy in a country (Ayu et al., 2019). The principle of participation in efforts to realize good governance carried out through public services is very much in line with the new view that is developing in an effort to improve public services by seeing the community not only as customers but as citizens who have a stake in the state as well as the government (Ayu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the Department of Interior and Local Government has implemented the Seal of Good Local Government Award to improve the governance performance of the local government units. However, lingering issues such as high incidence of malnutrition, lack of access to potable water, excessive flooding due to drainage and sewerage problems, and several concerns in solid waste management implementation have triggered



questions on the eligibility of these awards (Monocay & Mejica, 2020). Barangay officials are expected to be more aware of the peace and order ordinances that are intended for implementation, and the importance of disseminating new ordinances can be gleaned from the body of knowledge made in the topic (Redoble et al., 2018).

Performance Management Theory is a crucial framework for assessing the effectiveness of barangay officials in the municipality of Sablan (Ding et al., 2016). This theory emphasizes the continuous process of evaluating and improving individual and organizational performance, which aligns with the research objective of examining the performance of barangay officials. By applying Performance Management Theory, the study can establish measurable benchmarks for evaluating the effectiveness of barangay officials in Sablan. This theory enables the research to identify specific performance indicators related to the core responsibilities of barangay officials, such as financial management, legislative actions, and service delivery. Through this approach, the study can systematically assess the strengths and weaknesses of barangay officials, providing valuable insights into enhancing local governance.

Moreover, Performance Management Theory underscores the importance of feedback mechanisms, which can inform training and capacity-building initiatives aimed at improving the performance of barangay officials. Understanding performance management practices is vital for ensuring that barangay officials meet their responsibilities effectively and contribute to the overall development of the municipality (Lee, 2006; Gabriel & Villaroman, 2019). This review also integrates Governance Theory, which provides a robust framework for analyzing the governance practices employed by barangay officials. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive approach to evaluating the performance of barangay officials, uncovering their motivations, assessing their governance practices, and measuring their effectiveness through established metrics (Lee, 2006) (Villanueva & Villanueva Jr, 2017); Gabriel & Villaroman, 2019; Monocay & Mejica, 2020).

By incorporating these complementary theories, the study can generate valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and contribute to the improvement of local governance in Sablan. Finally, the integration of Public Service Motivation, Good Governance, and Performance Management theories provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the performance of barangay officials in the Municipality of Sablan. By examining the intrinsic motivations driving these officials, assessing their adherence to principles of good governance, and evaluating their performance through established metrics, the study offers valuable insights into the complexities of local governance. Addressing the challenges identified through these theoretical and conceptual lenses will not only enhance the effectiveness of barangay officials but also empower them to better serve their communities. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the development of strategies that promote good governance and improve public service delivery, thereby fostering a more responsive and accountable local government that meets the needs of its constituents.

DISCUSSIONS

The governance performance of barangay officials in the Philippines is a crucial aspect of community development and public service delivery (Monocay & Mejica, 2020). In the municipality of Sablan, a closer examination of the performance of barangay officials in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities can shed light on the challenges and



successes of local governance. Barangay officials play a crucial role in the governance and development of local communities in the Philippines (Austria-Cruz, 2019). Understanding the performance of these officials in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities is essential for improving local governance and service delivery. (Orcena, 2019)

The existing literature on the performance of barangay officials highlights several key areas of focus. One study examines the case of an urban community in Manila, Barangay 872, and its officials' interpretation of governance performance and their own reality within the context of the Barangay Governance Performance Management System (Orcena, 2019). The study found a 'paradox' where the relative strength of the Barangay Council in governance coexisted with the chronic poverty of the community. Another study focused on the performance of Barangay Police Security Officers or tanods in maintaining peace and order, finding that there was no significant difference between constituents and barangay officials in their perception of the tanods' performance of their duties and responsibilities (Austria-Cruz, 2019).

The literature also suggests that the coordination between local government units and law enforcement agencies, such as the Philippine National Police, is crucial for the effective implementation of peace and order programs. Additionally, studies have highlighted the importance of adherence to national policies and initiatives, such as President Duterte's fight against criminality and illegal drugs, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government's advocacy for "Matino, Mahusay at Maasahang barangay" (Orcena, 2019) (Austria-Cruz, 2019) (Monocay & Mejica, 2020).

The governance and performance of barangay officials in the municipality of Sablan is a critical aspect of local community development and service delivery. Barangay officials, as the smallest unit of local government in the Philippines, play a crucial role in engaging with the community, managing resources, and ensuring the provision of essential services to residents. Barangay officials in Sablan are responsible for a wide range of duties and responsibilities, including community mobilization, resource management, and service delivery. They are tasked with addressing the needs and concerns of their constituents, such as ensuring access to potable water, managing solid waste, and maintaining peace and order in the community. (Monocay & Mejica, 2020) Moreover, barangay officials are expected to coordinate with higher levels of government, such as the municipal or city administration, to secure funding and support for community development projects. (Monocay & Mejica, 2020)

The barangay, as the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines, plays a vital role in local governance, acting as the primary mechanism for implementing national policies at the grassroots level. Barangay officials are at the forefront of public service delivery and community leadership, directly impacting the quality of life for citizens. According to the *Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160)*, barangay officials are entrusted with various responsibilities, including maintaining peace and order, managing local resources, and providing basic social services. Their proximity to the community allows them to address immediate concerns effectively, positioning them as critical players in local governance. In this context, understanding the performance of barangay officials is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of governance at the local level.

Barangay officials have multiple duties and responsibilities that cover legislative, executive, and judicial functions. Their key tasks include enacting ordinances, implementing barangay resolutions, delivering basic services such as



health and education programs, managing local funds, and promoting public safety through initiatives like the barangay security force, or *tanods*. Furthermore, barangay officials mediate local disputes through the *Lupong Tagapamayapa*, serving as peacekeepers within their jurisdiction. Evaluating the extent to which barangay officials fulfill these duties is crucial in assessing the overall effectiveness of barangay governance. Studies on barangay governance often explore how these responsibilities are implemented in different local contexts, offering insights into both successes and challenges in governance. The performance of barangay officials is measured through various indicators, including public satisfaction with service delivery, efficiency in program implementation, and transparency in the management of funds. Other key performance indicators include the responsiveness of officials to community needs, their ability to resolve conflicts, and their collaboration with higher government units and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). For instance, public satisfaction surveys and budget audits are common tools used to gauge the performance of barangay officials. Evaluating these performance indicators helps to identify areas where barangay officials are excelling and where improvements are necessary, providing a holistic view of local governance.

Several factors influence the performance of barangay officials. Leadership qualities play a significant role, with effective leaders inspiring and guiding their communities toward progress. Access to training and capacity-building programs is also crucial for barangay officials to improve their governance skills, particularly in areas such as financial management and public service delivery. Additionally, community involvement is a key factor, as greater civic participation often leads to better decision-making and governance outcomes. Political dynamics, including local power structures and patronage, can either support or undermine the effectiveness of barangay officials. Moreover, the availability of resources—whether financial, infrastructural, or human—also significantly impacts how well barangay officials can perform their duties. Studies that compare barangays with varying levels of resources provide valuable insights into these challenges.

Barangay officials face several challenges that can hinder their performance. One of the most significant issues is the limitation of financial resources, which restricts their ability to deliver services effectively. Corruption and lack of transparency in some barangays have also been documented, eroding public trust. Many officials lack access to professional development opportunities, particularly in critical areas like fiscal management and legal processes, which can impair their ability to perform their roles effectively. Additionally, managing conflicts within the community can be a complex task for barangay officials, as they may not always have the necessary authority or skills to handle certain disputes. These challenges highlight the need for continuous support and training for barangay officials to improve their performance.

In the Municipality of Sablan, a rural area in Benguet, barangay governance presents unique challenges and opportunities. The geographic, social, and economic characteristics of Sablan influence the performance of its barangay officials, making it important to consider these local factors in evaluating their effectiveness. Previous studies on barangay governance in rural areas or in similar municipalities can provide useful comparisons, offering insights into how barangay officials in Sablan can overcome obstacles and enhance their performance. These studies will also help contextualize the findings of this research within the broader framework of rural governance in the Philippines.



Finally, reviewing case studies on barangay governance across the country can provide examples of best practices and highlight common issues faced by barangay officials. These examples can serve as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of barangay officials in Sablan, offering a reference point for identifying both strengths and areas for improvement. By integrating these perspectives, the literature review provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the performance of barangay officials in Sablan and contributes to the broader discourse on local governance in the Philippines. Finally, the existing literature provides valuable insights into the performance of barangay officials, highlighting the need for a deeper understanding of the factors that influence their ability to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities.

CONCLUSIONS

First, the study concludes that barangay officials in the Municipality of Sablan play a critical role in delivering essential services and implementing government policies at the grassroots level. Their performance is a direct reflection of how well the barangay is able to address the immediate needs of the community, particularly in areas such as public safety, health, and education. While they are tasked with multiple responsibilities, the ability of these officials to fulfill their duties is often constrained by limited resources and varying levels of leadership capacity.

Second, it was found that the performance of barangay officials is highly influenced by factors such as leadership effectiveness, resource availability, and community participation. Strong, competent leadership coupled with active civic engagement can greatly enhance the overall governance at the barangay level. Conversely, political dynamics and insufficient access to training or resources can hinder their ability to meet community expectations and manage programs efficiently.

Lastly, the study highlights that barangay officials in Sablan, like many in rural areas, face persistent challenges related to financial limitations, lack of professional development opportunities, and the difficulty of managing local disputes. These challenges suggest the need for greater institutional support to ensure that barangay officials are equipped with the skills and resources necessary to fulfill their duties and improve their overall governance performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, it is recommended that continuous capacity-building programs be implemented for barangay officials in Sablan, focusing on leadership development, financial management, and public service delivery. Providing barangay officials with regular training opportunities will not only enhance their skills but also enable them to manage local resources more effectively and address the evolving needs of their communities.

Second, local government units should allocate additional financial resources to barangays, particularly those in rural areas like Sablan. Increased funding can help barangay officials implement essential programs, improve infrastructure, and provide better services to their constituents. This could also involve exploring partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to augment limited government resources.



Lastly, to promote greater community involvement and accountability, it is recommended that barangay officials create mechanisms for participatory governance, such as regular town hall meetings or consultations. Encouraging active civic participation will not only ensure that the concerns and needs of residents are addressed but will also foster transparency and trust between barangay officials and the community. By involving citizens in decision-making processes, barangay officials can improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of their governance.

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