



RESEARCH PAPER

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Performance of barangay officials in Zamboanga Del Norte: Basis for generating a training manual on leadership enhancement

S. Maria Blanca*

Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Main Campus, Dapitan, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines

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Abstract

The study described the level of performance of the Barangay officials bordering the province of Zamboanga de Norte. Selected Barangays were rated by the officials and residents as to Governance, Barangay Fiscal Administration, Development Planning, Barangay Legislation, Barangay Basic Services and Facilities and Compliance to Directives using standard questionnaires by the Department of Interior and local Government Unit (DILG). The findings revealed that Governance, Barangay Fiscal administration, Development Planning, Barangay Legislation, Barangay Basic Services and Facilities and Compliance to Directives were satisfactorily performed. This necessitate at the barangay officials should look into the six areas for Barangay development and initiate programs in order to augment the livelihood source, income, economy and the constituents quality of life. Importantly Barangay officials should encourage the community people to develop entrepreneurial endeavors as a way of augmenting Barangay income and economy.

* **Corresponding Author:** S. Maria Blanca ✉ fabicalunsag@gmail.com

Introduction

The Philippines is currently facing a crisis characterized by stark inequalities in opportunities across nearly all aspects of life. This disparity has reached alarming levels, leaving many citizens struggling to cope. In response, people naturally turn to the government for support—not only to survive these trying times but also to thrive in an increasingly competitive world.

However, the government has fallen short in addressing the challenges, particularly those faced by the country's most marginalized groups. Instead of delivering comprehensive solutions, it has called on everyone to work together and persevere, with the hope that these collective efforts will eventually lead to an improved quality of life for all citizens.

Fajardo *et al.* (2001) emphasized that the government, faced with the overwhelming challenge of a growing population, struggles with its capacity to mobilize and direct both human and material resources toward achieving social and economic development. Lingayah *et al.* (1999) evaluated various performance measures of Local Government Units (LGUs), particularly at the barangay level, including training, workshops, planning, and the use of community-based indicators.

Lingayah concluded that for programs and projects to be effectively implemented, the "three legs of the stool" must be firmly in place: (1) clear governance objectives—whether aiming for efficiency, effectiveness, or accountability; (2) a thorough understanding of barangay circumstances, including available resources; and (3) a proper evaluation of the appropriateness of the programs being implemented.

Rohrbaugh (2004) highlighted that a key aspect of organizational performance lies in identifying the factors that contribute to organizational effectiveness. He underscored the significance of implementing a "high-performance" management system as a cornerstone for achieving this goal. Research on high-performance management systems has evolved

through various competing approaches to understanding and enhancing organizational effectiveness, offering valuable insights into optimizing performance and achieving sustained success.

Carreon (2003), in his study titled "Resource Management in Relation to Employee Performance in the Local Government Units of the First Congressional District of Zamboanga del Sur," revealed that the performance of local government units in the district was rated as very satisfactory. Notably, the performance levels were consistent across the board, particularly in areas where effective resource management was evident. This highlights the critical role of resource management in driving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of local government operations.

To address the need for more effective governance, Republic Act 7160, commonly known as the Local Government Code, introduced the principles of decentralization and autonomy. Enacted to empower local governments, it aimed to make them more responsive and accountable to the people (Bederio *et al.*, 2004). Decentralization fosters shared responsibility, enhancing the public's access to decision-making and policy-making processes. According to Nolledo (1998), this framework encourages citizens to move away from passivity, fostering self-reliance while promoting maximum freedom, peace, order, and an overall improved quality of life.

In this context, the evolving and unpredictable dynamics of the barangay political arena require leaders who are both innovative and capable of adopting new strategies to address the complex challenges faced by their communities. These leaders must ultimately strive to enhance the quality of life for their constituents.

To this end, the present study was conducted to evaluate the performance levels of Local Government Units (LGUs) in the localities bordering the province of

Zamboanga del Norte. The assessment focused on key areas of local governance, including Barangay Governance, Fiscal Administration, Development Planning, Barangay Legislation, Barangay Basic Services and Facilities, and Compliance with Directives.

The findings of this study aim to serve as a foundation for strengthening barangay functions and responsibilities, ensuring that local governance becomes more effective in responding to the needs of the community and fostering sustainable development.

Materials and methods

The study employed the descriptive-survey research method, utilizing the performance evaluation checklist developed by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

A total of 2,618 respondents from 238 barangays in Zamboanga del Norte participated in the study. To ensure unbiased data collection, an on-site sampling procedure adapted from the Social Weather Station (1997) was implemented.

This procedure involved two key steps: determining a random starting point for each barangay (where to begin the interview) and identifying the first household to be interviewed, known as the random start. The lottery method was used to randomly select both the starting point and the random start, ensuring that the sampling process was objective and representative of the population. This approach enhanced the reliability and validity of the data gathered during the study.

Results and discussion

Table 1 highlights the performance of barangays in the area of governance, as evaluated by both barangay officials and residents. The results indicate that barangays performed satisfactorily in governance-related activities. This suggests that while governance activities—such as planning initiatives, formulating and enforcing ordinances, conducting barangay assemblies and public hearings, and organizing task forces or committees to address community concerns—were moderately emphasized by barangay officials, there is room for improvement.

Table 1. Barangay performance in terms of governance

Governance	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
Conducts Barangay assembly	3.05	S	2.97	S
Conducts public hearings	3.06	S	2.98	S
Enforces laws and ordinances	3.06	S	2.98	S
Negotiates, enters into, signs contract in behalf of the Barangay, upon authorization of the SB	3.07	S	2.98	S
Maintains public order	3.00	S	3.00	S
Formulates plans for future achievements	3.00	S	3.02	S
Formulates environmental rules and regulations	3.00	S	3.02	S
Organizes Community volunteer service for the needs of residents	3.00	S	3.00	S
Demonstrates the duties of citizenship/good stewardship	3.00	S	2.84	S
Organizes task forces and committees to respond to concerns or needs to residents	3.01	S	2.95	S
Mean	3.02	S	2.97	S

Table 2. Barangay performance in terms of fiscal administration

Barangay fiscal administration	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
Resource generation	2.99	S	2.98	S
Resource allocation	3.01	S	2.96	S
Resource accountabilities	3.02	S	2.96	S
Grand mean	3.01	S	2.97	S

The findings imply that barangay officials may have either fallen short in fully executing their responsibilities or missed opportunities to optimize the implementation of governance-related activities. Additionally, it is possible that they lacked the necessary resources to effectively carry out their duties, which may have hindered their ability to achieve a higher level of performance in barangay governance.

Table 2 presents the ratings given by barangay officials and residents on barangay fiscal administration in terms of resource generation, resource allocation, and resource accountability.

The data indicate that fiscal administration was satisfactorily performed across the barangays.

This suggests that barangay officials, as key figures in fiscal administration, demonstrated adequate performance in managing these aspects.

Resource generation, allocation, and accountability are critical to enabling barangays to effectively fulfil their duties and responsibilities. However, fiscal administration remains one of the most challenging aspects of barangay management, particularly because not all barangay officials possess advanced educational qualifications. This highlights the need for barangay officials to develop a strong foundation in fiscal administration. Without this knowledge, the proper management and utilization of funds may be compromised, potentially affecting the barangay's overall performance.

Table 3. Barangay performance in development planning

Development planning	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
Prepares annual budget plan	2.98	S	2.96	S
Approves Barangay development plan	2.96	S	2.96	S
Organizes Barangay development councils	2.99	S	2.97	S
Formulates plans for the protection of children	3.07	S	2.99	S
Prepares public safety plan/Disaster preparedness	3.03	S	2.97	S
Initiates plans adoption by Sangguniang Barangay (SB)	3.02	S	2.94	S
Develops entrepreneurial skills of the community people with potentialities	3.01	S	2.92	S
Encourages entrepreneurship for out-of-school youth and other prospective clientele	3.00	S	2.90	S
Supports agricultural development for sustenance of every household	3.04	s	2.96	s
Mean	3.01	s	2.95	s

Table 4. Barangay performance in Barangay legislation

Barangay legislation	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
Conducts regular sessions	2.98	S	2.92	S
Presides the session of the Sangguniang Barangay using parliamentary procedures	3.01	S	2.93	S
Organizes the mandatory committee (appropriation committee, women and family human rights, youth and sports development, environmental protection and cooperative	3.03	S	2.94	S
Delineates the roles and functions of the committee	3.04	S	3.01	S
Adopts rules of procedure in conducting hearings of disputes	3.05	S	3.00	S
Formulates ordinances for the community people to follow	3.01	S	3.00	S
Determines the consistency and validity of in ordinances in the Barangay	3.02	S	2.96	S
Empowers Sangguniang Barangay (SB) to enact ordinances and resolutions that are serve the needs of the community	3.00	S	3.04	S
Effects a temporary presiding officers among the members of the SB, in the absence of Punong Barangay	3.04	S	3.00	S
Establish orderly procedure and quality and/or effective legislation in its internal riles of procedures	3.04	S	3.00	S
Mean	3.03	s	2.98	s

Table 3 illustrates the performance of barangays in development planning as assessed by barangay officials and residents. The results show that barangays in Zamboanga del Norte achieved a satisfactory level of performance in this area. This indicates that barangay officials performed adequately in planning for various aspects of barangay development, including budget preparation, crafting development plans, ensuring safety and security, promoting agricultural initiatives, and supporting the entrepreneurial efforts of community members.

These findings emphasize that the effective execution of development plans hinges on the active participation and performance of barangay officials. Without their leadership and commitment, barangay initiatives would likely stagnate, rendering development efforts ineffective.

Additionally, barangay officials must possess the necessary skills and expertise in planning to serve

their constituents effectively and meaningfully during their tenure. Continuous skill enhancement in development planning is essential to achieving sustained progress in the community.

Table 4 highlights the performance of barangays in the area of barangay legislation, as evaluated by barangay officials and residents. The data indicate that the barangays performed satisfactorily in this aspect. While this suggests that barangays have established ordinances, rules, and regulations, it also points to a gap in their consistent implementation.

This inconsistency in enforcement may explain why the overall performance in barangay legislation fell short of expectations. To address this, barangay officials must prioritize not only the formulation of policies but also their effective and sustained implementation to ensure that the intended benefits reach the community and contribute to its development.

Table 5. Reflects the performance of the barangays in basic services and facilities

Barangay basic services and facilities	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
Health care and well being	3.00	S	2.97	S
Food service and nutrition	3.00	S	2.97	S
Water and environmental protection	3.01	S	2.95	S
Income/livelihood and employment	3.00	S	2.99	S
Peace, order and public safety	3.00	S	2.98	S
Education and functional literacy	3.00	S	2.98	S
Mean	3.00	s	2.97	s

Table 6. The performance of barangays in terms of compliance with directives

Compliance to directives	Barangay officials		Barangay residents	
	AWV	D	AWV	D
The barangay officials have created/organized the barangay based on organization such as barangay Tanod	3.05	S	2.99	S
Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Committee (BADAC)	2.97	S	2.98	S
Barangay Peace and Order Committee (BPOC)	2.94	S	2.95	S
Barangay Nutrition Committee (BNC)	2.97	S	3.01	S
Lupong Tagapamayapa	3.02	S	3.02	S
Barangay Solid Waste Management Committee (BSWMC)	2.99	S	2.99	S
Barangay Physical Fitness and Sports Development Council (BPFSDC)	3.05	S	3.01	S
Barangay Council for Protection of Children (BCPC)	3.01	S	3.01	S
Barangay Development Council (BDC)	3.00	S	2.98	S
Barangay Disaster Coordinating Committee (BDCC)	3.00	S	2.98	S
Mean	3.00	s	2.99	s

Table 5 presents the performance of barangays in providing Basic Services and Facilities, including healthcare and well-being services, food and nutrition programs, water and environmental protection, income/livelihood and employment opportunities, peace and order, public safety, education, and functional literacy. The overall results indicate that barangays performed satisfactorily in delivering these essential services and facilities.

This suggests that barangays have successfully provided the community with vital services, meeting the basic needs of their constituents. Moreover, it implies that barangays have made commendable efforts in initiating and developing these services and facilities, thereby contributing to the overall well-being and development of the community. However, continued improvement in these areas is essential to further enhance the quality of life for residents.

Table 6 presents the performance of barangays in terms of compliance with directives. The data show that barangays satisfactorily complied with the directives issued. This indicates that barangays have established various directives for different purposes and areas of operation.

However, the findings suggest that the diverse functions of barangay officials may hinder their ability to fully ensure compliance across all areas. Key areas such as well-being facilities, food and nutrition programs, and education should be closely monitored by barangay officials to ensure effective implementation. Additionally, environmental protection programs must be prioritized and adopted.

Furthermore, it is essential for barangay officials to encourage the community to engage in entrepreneurial ventures, as this approach can help augment local income and strengthen the local economy. By fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, barangays can significantly contribute to sustainable economic growth and self-reliance within the community.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the barangays involved in the study have performed their basic functions at a moderate level and have made partial progress toward achieving the goals of self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and improved quality of life for their constituents.

Barangay officials should focus on enhancing governance by addressing the most pressing concerns of the community and initiating programs aimed at improving the livelihood sources of residents. Creativity and innovation are essential for officials to effectively meet the diverse needs of the constituents. In terms of fiscal administration, it is crucial for barangay officials to implement a proper tax scheme and establish fair charging systems for clearances and other required documents, thereby enhancing resource generation.

Additionally, officials should ensure that the income from community taxes is appropriately shared to bolster barangay finances. The allocation of resources for barangay expenditures must be carefully examined to ensure adequate funding for development projects. Barangay officials must also assume full responsibility for the accounting of barangay funds, as they are entrusted by the community to manage these resources transparently and responsibly.

Development planning should be taken seriously by barangay officials, as it is key to improving livelihood opportunities, boosting the local economy, and enhancing the overall quality of life for the residents. Legislation should be enacted and strictly enforced to ensure more effective and efficient barangay operations. Furthermore, the provision of essential services such as health and well-being facilities, food and nutrition programs, and education must be diligently monitored to ensure that they meet the needs of the community. Environmental protection programs should also be adopted and integrated into the barangay's initiatives.

Finally, barangay officials should actively encourage and support entrepreneurial endeavors within the community, as this is a vital strategy for increasing income and strengthening the local economy. By fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, barangays can build a more sustainable and prosperous future for their constituents.

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