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Citation	多文化社会と留学生交流 : 大阪大学国際教育交流センター研究論集. 2015, 19, p. 75-81
Version Type	VoR
URL	<a href="https://doi.org/10.18910/51629">https://doi.org/10.18910/51629</a>
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## Do Mayors' Orientations affect Performance in each Island Group? Empirical Evidence from a Local Government Survey in the Philippines

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### Abstract

In the Philippines, Local Government Code 1991 was enacted, and then we have observed various efforts for decentralization. Its two main purposes were democratization and the promotion of efficient and effective implementation of local public services. The former involves citizen oriented governance mobilizing people's participation while the latter often utilizes leadership oriented governance largely based on the political will of the mayor.

In this paper, we will analyze general characteristics of local governance in the Philippines based on a social survey. We conducted an interview survey on representative 300 local governments with a 100% response rate.

We have examined which of the two types of local governments exhibits higher performance. We also tested interactions of the types of governance and the three island groups (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao) on performance. We found that in the Visayas islands, citizen oriented local governments had higher performance than the leadership oriented ones in the areas of health, education, and peace.

【Keywords】 Local Government Survey, Philippines, Decentralization, interview survey, local governance

### 1 Introduction

Traditionally, mayors in the Philippines have been described by the concepts of patron-client (Lande 1965; Anderson 1988) and of weak state (Migdal 1988). In these concepts, mayors are depicted as “patrons” who develop reciprocal personal relationships with constituents and exchange benefits and political support with them, or they are depicted as “bosses” who use coercion and prerogatives derived from their political positions and/or their own economic and social resources to control constituents and seek their personal interests instead of providing public services (Sidel 1999). Their political behaviors are criticized as rent-seeking (McCoy

1994).

However, since Local Government Code 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) was enacted, we have observed various efforts for decentralization and re-orientation of local governments in the Philippines. Two main purposes of decentralization are democratization and the promotion of the efficient and effective implementation of local public services. The former involves citizen oriented governance mobilizing people's participation while the latter often utilizes leadership oriented governance centered on the political will of the mayor.

The Philippines has developed evaluation systems of good local governance, such as the Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS) of the

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Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Galing Pook Awards of the Galing Pook Foundation. Under these circumstances, more local governments are involved in endeavoring for efficient and participatory governance.

Therefore, there are case studies on citizen oriented local governments as well as leadership oriented local governments which show us different factors for the improvement of the performances of local governments in their respective unique concepts.

For example there is a famous case study on Naga City which operates a people's council for the making, implementation and evaluation of policy. In fact, Prof. Abinales points out that "The participation of NGOs and POs has been conspicuous and there is the development of the coalitions between sectoral representatives and younger generation of some political clans" (Abinales & Amoroso 2005: 251) and "in urban areas, "popular forces" such as NGO/PO have successfully compelled local government officials to implement social welfare programs" (Abinales 2005: 137). As one case study summarizes, "the tripartite relationship between concerned community, NGO and local government" can achieve political goals effectively in some cases. (Holden 2012: 175)

There are also observations of efficient public management such as the efficient tax collection of Quezon City under the leadership of Mayor Belmonte (Belmonte 2002) and an effort for the efficient operation of a public market under the scheme of the Public-Private Partnership in Mandaluyong City (Celestino 2002).

In this paper we will analyze general characteristics of local governance in the Philippines based on the social survey and statistical theories. For this purpose, we utilize the results of an interview survey on randomly selected 300 local governments (municipalities and cities) in the Philippines.

We will also explore two questions utilizing two-

way analysis variance. One is which one shows higher performance among the two types of local governance mentioned above. The second one is to examine if there are differences in correlation between the types of governance and performance among 3 island groups - Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

## 2 Data

We conducted a survey "2011 Local Government Survey in the Philippines: Local Capability and Decentralization," shortly, 2011 Local Government Survey in the Philippines (The principal investigator was Fumio Nagai, Osaka City University). The survey was implemented by Social Weather Stations (SWS) in the Philippines (see Kobayashi et al 2013 for details).

We interviewed a mayor and a planning and development coordinator at each local government. We used a questionnaire for mayors and a separate one for coordinators. Only nominated persons can answer to the questionnaires. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face. In very few cases, they were interviewed via telephone and self-completion, given the limited schedules of respondents. Questionnaires were written both in English and Tagalog. Still, all respondents used English.

Mayors were asked from October 12, 2011 to November 27, 2012. Coordinators were asked from October 12, 2011 to April 19, 2012.

The population was 1,515 local governments in 16 regions in 78 provinces as of February 2, 2011. Out of all the 1,591 governments in 17 regions in 79 provinces, we excluded 76 governments in 2 provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) due to their political instability. The population consists of 135 cities and 1,380 municipalities; 771 governments in Luzon, 336 in Visayas, and 408 in Mindanao.

We used a representative sample of 300 local governments in 16 regions in 71 provinces. It consists of 93 cities and 203 municipalities; 170 governments in

Luzon, 67 in Visayas, and 63 in Mindanao. No substitution was allowed.

A systematic random sampling was used. All the 1,515 governments were numbered from the north to the south. Then, 300 governments were selected at even intervals, based on their population sizes. The interval was 236,500 residents. To simplify sampling, we did not use information on land sizes and income levels of

governments.

We had 300 respondents and 100% response rates for both mayors and coordinators. The sample contains one-fifth of all governments from the entire country. Yet it covers more than half of the residents of the nation. Cities are overrepresented in the sample because of their large population sizes. The sample mostly maintains proportions of governments and residents by island groups.

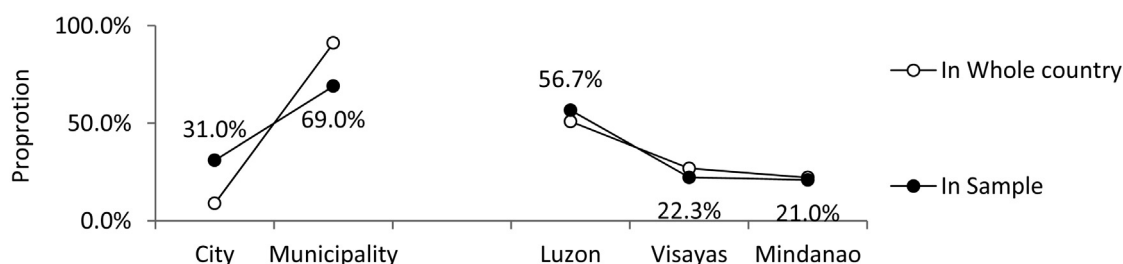


Figure 1. Comparisons of Whole Country and Sample (N=300)

### 3 Descriptions

#### 3-1 What Style of Governance Do Mayors Prefer?

Firstly, we see the result of the question about the mayors' idea of good local governance (Figure 2). We

asked "in your opinion, what is good local governance?"

Options were "to implement projects with lower cost and faster speed" or "to satisfy as much as the widest range of constituents regardless of the cost and speed of project implementation."

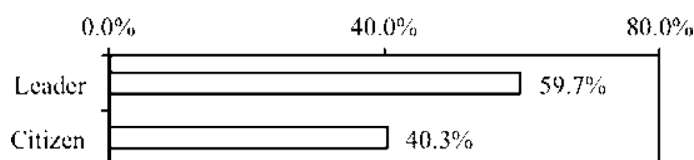
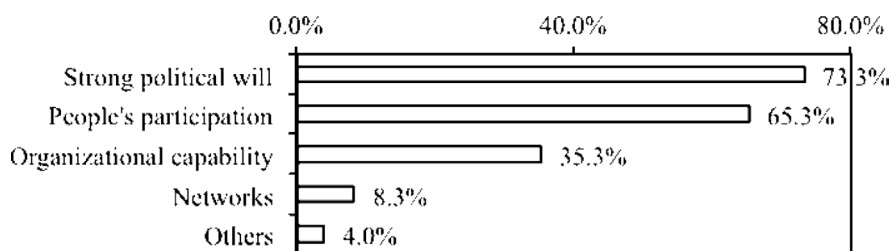


Figure 2. Mayors' Idea of Good Local Governance (N=300)

From Figure 2, we see that 179 mayors (59.7% of the 300 mayors) consider pursuing efficiency (leadership oriented governance) to be good governance and 121 mayors (40.3%) think that attending to the needs of the widest range of constituents (citizen oriented governance) is good governance.

This is also proven by the results of the question on the important elements for good local governance

(Figure 3). We asked "what do you think is the most important element for good governance?" in a multiple choice. Options were "strong political will of the chief executive," "to activate the people's participation," "enhancement of the organizational capability of local government," and "strengthening the network with other political figures such as congressman."

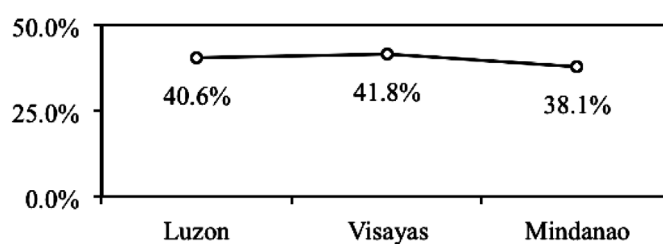


**Figure 3. Important Elements for Good Local Governance (N=300, multiple answer)**

Figure 3 shows that more than two-thirds of the mayors think that strong political will is important for good local governance followed by the peoples' participation. On the other hand, quite a small number of them consider the strengthening of political networks an important element for good local governance. Therefore leadership oriented governance as well as citizen

oriented governance are the focal points of analysis.

We also see the distribution of the types of governance by island group - Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Figure 4 shows that there are no significant differences in proportion of citizen oriented mayors by island groups.



**Figure 4. Percentage of Citizen Oriented Mayors by Island Group (N=300)**

### 3-2 Four Indices of Performance

Here, we explore two questions related to local governance in the Philippines. One is which type of governance, leadership oriented or citizen oriented, shows a higher performance of the local governments. The other is whether there are any differences of interactions of mayors' orientations and island groups (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao) on performance.

So, our independent variable is mayors' orientations: citizen oriented or leadership oriented. If a mayor answered "implementing projects with lower cost and faster speed" as good local governance, we regarded the answer as leadership oriented. If he answered "satisfying as much as the widest range of constituents," we consider it to be citizen oriented.

Our dependent variable is based on performance indicators of Social Governance from the Local Governance Performance Management System (LGPMS) in 2010 by the Department of the Interior and Local Government. These indicators include the fields of (i) Health Services, (ii) Education Services, (iii) Peace, Security, and Disaster Risk Management, and (iv) Housing and Basic Utilities. LGPMS uses a five-point scale to evaluate the performance of local governments. Point 5 indicates the highest performance and 1 the lowest.

Distributions of performance in each area are shown in Figure 5. In all four areas, performance concentrates on points 4 and 5. Most peaks are 4. Means are 4.7 in health, 4.4 in education, 4.3 in peace, and 3.5 in housing.

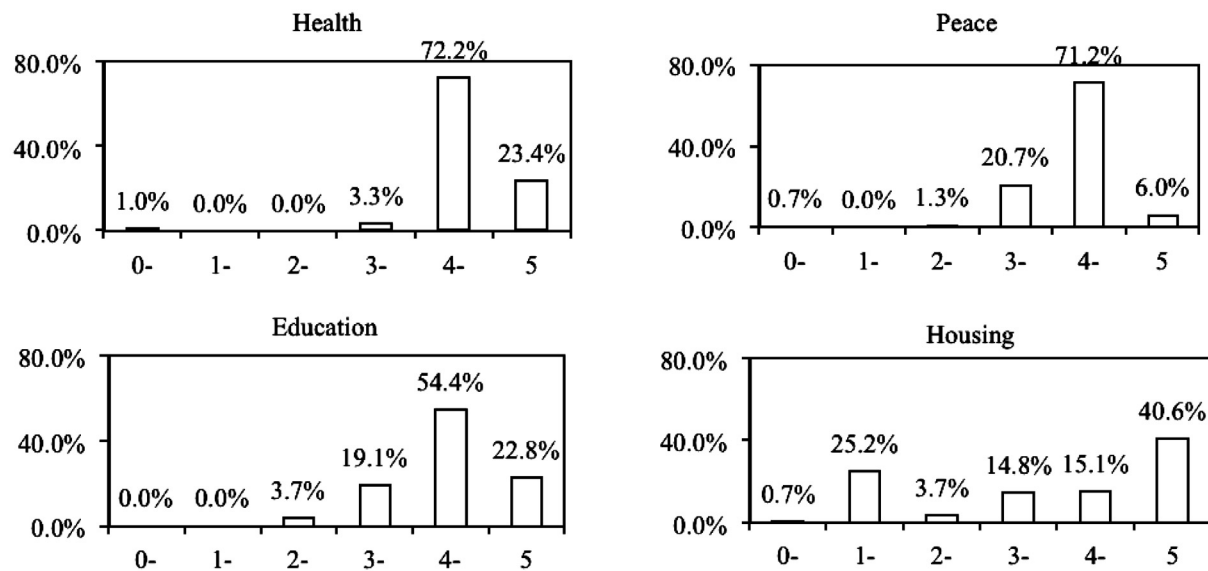


Figure 5. Distributions of Performance (N=300)

As the group variable, we focus on the three island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. With these variables, we will compare if there are any differences of performance between citizen oriented governments and leadership oriented ones as well as among the three island groups. We use two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

#### 4 Results: Do mayors' Orientations Affect Performance?

##### 4.1 Comparisons by Islands and Orientations

Comparing performance by island and by type of orientations, we find that there is a difference in education at 5% significant level among islands (Figure 6, left). Luzon has a significantly higher performance in education.

However, there is no significant difference by the governance type of mayors (Figure 6, right). Both citizen oriented mayors and leadership oriented ones have almost same performance.

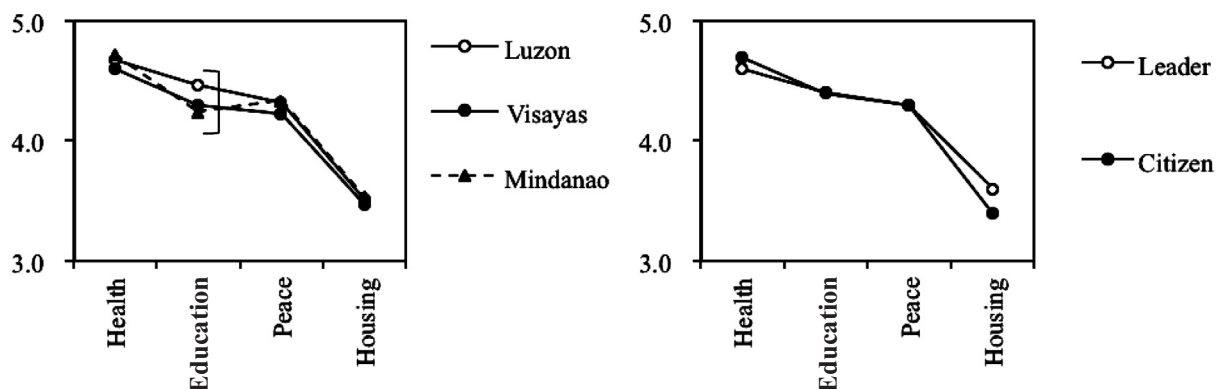
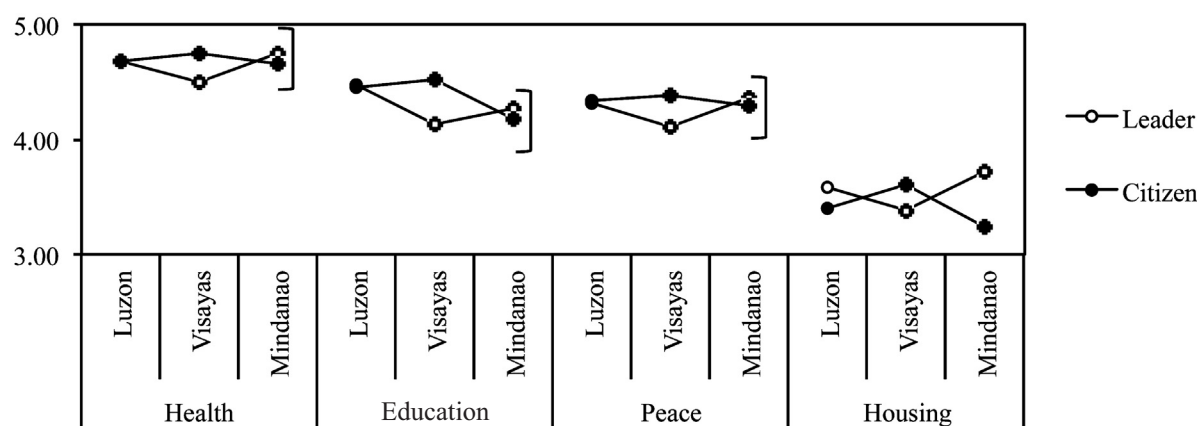


Figure 6. Mean Performance by Islands and by Orientations (N=300)  
Note: Parentheses show significant differences in ANOVA tests ( $p < .05$ )

## 4.2 Interactions

Then, effects of interactions of orientations and islands on performance were compared. Figure 7 shows the results. In the Visayas islands, citizen oriented governments show generally higher performance than

leadership oriented ones. These interactions are statistically significant in the areas of health, education, and peace (when comparing the Visayas to Luzon and Mindanao).



**Figure 7. Mean Performance by Islands and Orientations (N=300)**  
**Note:** Parentheses show significantly different interactions in ANOVA tests  
 ( $p < .05$  for education and  $p < .1$  for health and housing, Visayas vs others)

## 5 Discussion

We found that in the Visayas islands, citizen oriented local governments had higher performance than the leadership oriented ones in the areas of health, education, and peace. Why is this? We have only tentative explanations.

Firstly, historically people in the Visayas may have been participation oriented. During the 70's and 80's there were active organizing movements by progressive clergy and the communist party in this region, especially in the Western Visayas (Wurfel 1988: 261-262). As a result, they had involved people in rural areas for the promotion of the human rights of the poor and the improvement of social services in communities.

Secondly, local governments in the Visayas have accepted relatively many community development projects such as coastal management supported internationally<sup>1</sup>. These factors may have boosted people's participation.

## Notes

1. Thiele et al. (2005) points out that the Philippine's earliest and largest community-based coastal management program internationally supported was implemented in the Central Visayas in 1984. In fact, among three regions, Visayas has most number of marine protected area under the scheme of community participation (Lavides et al. 2005; CRMP 2004).

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\* This work was supported by MEXT/JSPS KAKENHI 21252003, 22402017, 25283009.