



Citizen's Satisfaction with Local Government Response in a Selected Municipality of Tarlac

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Abstract

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Measuring citizens' overall satisfaction with services is important for administrators involved in local citizen surveys and scholars interested in understanding how citizens respond to municipal government. The study focused on evaluating citizen satisfaction based on the local government response in the selected Municipality of Tarlac. The researchers used three instruments: a questionnaire, an interview guide, and a documentary analysis. The study revealed that citizens were highly aware of the mobile LGU and DRMM services. Most of those aware claimed that they had availed of such services of the municipality. On frontline services delivery (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.), citizens were satisfied because some of the services were fast and easy to acquire. On the other hand, citizens were also highly satisfied with traffic management due to the effort and hard work of those individuals who work to maintain smooth traffic within the area. Public information services obtained moderate satisfaction. One major problem encountered by the citizens on governance and response was no fire safety orientation/seminar/training was conducted. As agreed by the citizens and implementers, the top recommendation was that the barangay should maintain a barangay disaster risk reduction management plan.

Introduction

Measuring user satisfaction with public goods and services is at the heart of a citizen-centric approach to service delivery and an important component of organizational performance strategies for continual improvement. Perception data are commonly used to evaluate citizens' experiences with government organizations and obtain their views on the outputs received. Such information can help public managers identify which elements

of service delivery will drive satisfaction and monitor the impact of reforms on end-users. Moreover, citizen satisfaction can be a vital outcome indicator of overall government performance (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2013).

Measuring citizens' overall satisfaction with urban services is important for administrators involved in local citizen surveys and scholars interested in understanding how citizens respond

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to municipal government. However, little empirical research has been devoted to developing and testing measures of overall citizen satisfaction (Van Ryzin, 2014).

Customer satisfaction is a measurement that determines how happy customers are with a company's products, services, and capabilities. Customer satisfaction information, including surveys and ratings can help a company determine how best to improve or change its products and services (American Society for Quality, 2021). For example, Shin and Jhee (2021) explored the direct and indirect impact of the local management capacity in Korea using structural equation modeling. They mentioned that given the importance of increased local empowerment in promoting desired public goods, the hypothesized advantages of decentralization on public service delivery need to be examined to determine whether they still hold when applied to citizens' satisfaction with public services. Their results indicate that decentralization has a direct negative impact on public service satisfaction, but its impact is not mediated by local management capacity. Accordingly, due to Korean citizens' lower expectations regarding decentralization, citizens' satisfaction is not improved even when local management capacity is increased via higher decentralization.

Reyes (2013) stated that customer satisfaction in market-oriented business organizations is considered an important factor in the continuance of a business. It helps to stay in the competition as well as improve and build market share. In contrast with the public sector, profit is not a motive, but this does not mean that customer satisfaction will be treated as unimportant and ignored. According to the literature, engaging in activities to increase user satisfaction can build public trust or confidence; promote integrity and accountability in local government. There is a need to exert any effort to evaluate the consistency in satisfaction at any level of service to identify deficiency or failing points in the service they are delivering.

In the Philippines, Congress passed RA 7160, also known as the "Local Government Code of 1991" (LGC), in which the policy on local autonomy was more explicitly stated: "It is hereby declared the policy of the State that the territorial and political subdivisions of the State shall enjoy

genuine and meaningful local autonomy to enable them to achieve their fullest development as self-sufficient communities and to make them more effective partners in the attainment of national goals." To this end, the State shall establish a more responsive and accountable local government structure through a decentralization system in which local government units (LGUs) are given more powers, authority, responsibilities, and resources. With that the decentralization process will be carried out from the National Government to the local government units.

Hence, it is stated in the Citizen Satisfaction Index System that the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) envisions LGUs to be self-reliant, development-oriented, safe, peaceful, socially-protective, business-friendly, environmentally protective, as well as transparent, accountable and participative (DILG, 2016). Their mandate requires them and the local government sector to keep up with the trends in governance and public management by setting higher performance management standards that target fulfilment of actual needs. Accordingly, if citizens are able to avail and maximize services that promote basic human development conditions, they are more likely to participate in economic and civil life. Also, individuals may express greater support for the system if they are satisfied with the performance of their local officials. However, suppose local institutions are unable to meet the demands, citizens will be dissatisfied with local governments. They may also become increasingly dissatisfied with the way democracy works throughout the country.

Different tools were used by the country to determine the level of satisfaction of the citizens with the services of LGUs, all geared toward determining specific action/strategies to improve the services. One of these tools is the Citizen Satisfaction Index System (CSIS), which serves as a tool for drawing in applicable information for gauging citizen satisfaction (DILG, 2021). The CSIS aimed to build data that LGUs and stakeholders can use to craft well-informed policies and management decisions when providing basic services to their communities.

This study evaluated citizen satisfaction in governance and response in the Municipality of Concepcion, Tarlac. Specifically, it evaluated the awareness, availment, and satisfaction of the



citizens on the local government services in governance and response; and determined the problems encountered governance and response. This study was limited to evaluating the governance and response service area, which is focused on the system that directs and controls entities. It is concerned with the structure and processes that govern decision-making, accountability, control, and behavior at the highest levels of an organization. It can be related to the reaction after something is done on the different services or programs by the government.

Methodology

The method used in the study was descriptive and evaluative. Descriptive evaluation studies explain the process and impact of system development and implementation. The findings are frequently contextualized within the implementation environment. Descriptive evaluations employ a variety of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, and the study design can incorporate a variety of assumptions, ranging from positivist or interpretivist viewpoints to critical theory and critical realism.

This study covered the Municipality of Concepcion, Tarlac, selected because of its accessibility to researchers and their unique experiences as to the problems encountered by its citizens and implementers in governance and response such as the lack of knowledge of barangay officials/personnel in writing and publishing a newspaper for the barangay, lack of trainings and seminars among officers in the barangay about the proper way of accommodating citizens and the citizens are not aware and does not know how to use the Citizen Charter. Thus, citizens can more effectively discern whether or not the local governments are meeting the expectations due to the proximity.

The respondent citizens of the study were pro-rated based on the population of barangays in Concepcion, Tarlac. The following scale was devised to identify the number of respondents in each barangay: 1000-3000 population: 5 respondents; 4000-6000 population: 10 respondents; and 7000 and above population: 15 respondents. The total

number of respondents is 300 representing 45 barangays. The study used random sampling to provide equal chances to all citizens in the barangays. The qualified respondents were male and female at least 18 years old and resided in the locality for at least six months.

On the other hand, the implementer-respondents were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sample selected based on the population's characteristics and study objectives (Crossman, 2020). Primarily implementers were chosen based on their involvement in the services provided in the study. Personnel or officials directly involved in frontline services, mobile LGU services, catering conflict and dispute settlement, Peace and Order and Public Safety related incidents, disaster management, traffic management, and public information services were included. The implementers of governance and response services interviewed include: Civil Registry Office (5), LGU-PNP (10), Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (5), Public Information Office (5), Public Assistance and Complaints Unit (5), and Barangay Captains (45).

The CSIS is one of the DILG's assessment tools in determining citizen satisfaction with the LGU's services. The indicators used in this study were primarily taken from CSIS (DILG, 2016). The researcher made improvements in order to comply with DILG's recommendations. Services provided by the municipality and barangays that are not covered by the tool are added by the researchers. The DILG also requested that a disclaimer be included, stating that the views and opinions represented in the report do not necessarily reflect the department's official policy or position. Furthermore, the methodology employed by CSIS was applied in the study (DILG, 2016). However, changes were made, particularly in terms of the number of respondents--CSIS only requires 150 respondents, whereas this study required 300.

The questionnaire consisted of all possible questions that answer the problems raised in the study. In determining the level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction with the services provided, citizens were given questionnaires to answer. In the data gathering proper, the researcher followed the concept of CSIS wherein only those who are aware of the services are qualified to



answer the availment questions, and only those who have availed such services are qualified to answer the satisfaction questions. In addition, it also includes the problems and proposed recommendations of respondents. To assure the correctness and reliability of the data, validation and interview were done to confirm that all claims are true, existing, and reliable. For the problems encountered, respondents were given a checklist questionnaire to help them determine the most rampant problems encountered and recommendations to improve the service delivery in the municipality. Finally, as part of the documentary analysis, the CSIS tool was examined to see if all the services listed were available in the municipality; accordingly, changes were made. The interviews were conducted from March to May 2017.

Data collected were tallied and tabulated to facilitate interpretations and analysis. Frequency count continuum, mean and simple percentages were used. Regarding ethical considerations, the views and opinions expressed in this study are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the respondents. Furthermore, the identities of the respondents were kept confidential. Obtained documents will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Results and Discussion

Citizens' Awareness of Governance and Response Services

Governance and response of the municipality of Concepcion were evaluated in terms of the level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction of citizens with the services provided. Awareness refers to the respondent's presence of knowledge of the service being offered by the LGU. Before dealing with satisfaction, respondents' awareness of the services provided by their LGU should be determined first (DILG, 2016). Table 1 presents the overall awareness of the citizens on the services of governance and response. It can be gleaned in Table 1 that five services were rated with high awareness, while the remaining three services were rated with low awareness.

The mobile LGU services obtained the highest average of 76.67% (Table 1). This result is because

most of the services were readily available in the barangay, and these services are commonly needed by the citizens. These are also the services already known by the citizens for a long time. The mobile LGU service was followed by disaster risk reduction and management with 63.11% or described as high awareness. Notably, some citizens are not aware of the existence of the DRRM. As a result, they were not able to participate in the activities or programs conducted.

Delivery of frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.) garnered 60.74% or equivalent to high awareness. This result is because most of the services are directly involved in the life of the citizens or these are the things they use to complete certain transactions (e.g. during enrolment, students are required to present their birth certificates to be admitted to the school; parents are required to get their children's birth certificates).

However, conflict and dispute resolution in the barangays also obtained high awareness with 59.50%, implying that citizens are already aware of the barangay officials' functions and responsibilities, mainly on their judiciary function. With that, most small or big conflicts and troubles in the barangay are directly reported and settled by the barangay officials.

In addition, traffic management acquired 57.59% or high awareness because most citizens are aware of the services provided by the barangay and municipality on the roads. These services include the barangay patrols or police who maintain and monitor the traffic in the area, especially during road construction and unexpected events, such as fiestas and special occasions.

On the other hand, public information services (55.45%) or local government's response or action to complaints against the LGU office, officials, or personnel (53.67%), and timely response to peace and order and public safety-related incidents (50.17%) attained low awareness rating. This result may be because citizens are not that familiar with the services provided in this area. This service is mostly provided to specific individuals who will avail of a particular transaction. Most of those who have claimed that they are not aware of the services are residing/living in the far-flung areas of Concepcion.



Table 1

Overall Awareness of Citizens on Governance and Response Services (n=300), Concepcion, Tarlac, 2017

Service/Programs	Average	Adjectival Rating
Mobile LGU services; Provision of health and social services (Mobile Services)	76.67	High
Disaster Risk Reduction Management	63.11	High
Delivery of Frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.)	60.74	High
Conflict and dispute resolution in the barangay	59.50	High
Traffic Management	57.59	High
Public Information Services	55.45	Low
Local government's response or action on the complaints against an LGU office, official, or personnel	53.67	Low
Timely Response to Peace and Order and Public Safety-related incidents	50.17	Low
Total Average	59.61	High

Legend: High (55.67-100); Low (0-55.66)

Overall, a total average of 59.61% is the awareness of the citizens on the services provided by the barangays and municipality. With this result, further improvement in the information dissemination, especially in the far-flung areas of Concepcion, should be done to increase the awareness and participation among the citizens.

Bueno (2014) revealed that CSIS program implementation in Candon City, Ilocos provided social accountability mechanism that fostered a systematic and sustained engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) and citizens in local governance. National government agencies and the legislature can benefit from CSIS data by gaining a basis for targeting programs, projects, and other interventions to specific demographic characteristics or geographic locations. CSOs can also gain a better understanding of service areas that need complementation.

Tomas and Reario (2020) conducted a survey on citizen satisfaction in Santiago City, Isabela, Philippines in 2017. The survey assessed the citizens' awareness, availment, and satisfaction with the local government's provision of essential basic services. The paper also compared the 2017 and 2014 survey results to see if the perceptions and opinions of the residents changed after three years. The citizens assessed the basic services

of Santiago City positively and data revealed a remarkable fair increase in the overall assessment of programs and services in 2017 as compared to 2014. While the results indicate continuous opportunity to improve overall satisfaction with specific local government services, most citizens keep a positive opinion about the Santiago city government and its services.

Citizens' Availment of Governance and Response Services

Table 2 presents the overall availment of the citizens on the services on governance and response. Amazingly, all services were highly availed by the citizens. But it is to be noted that only those who were aware of the services have the chance to avail such services. Availment refers to the contact of the respondent with local government through programs, projects, and services being implemented or offered. This indicator may suggest the demand or utilization of public services by the citizens. Only those who said they were aware of the service were asked the availment questions (DILG, 2016).

Mobile LGU services obtained the highest average of 85.01% because most of these services are directly available and accessible in the barangay. These services are also considered



Table 2*Overall Availment of Citizens of Governance and Response Services, (n=300) Concepcion, Tarlac, 2017*

Service/Programs	Average	Adjectival Rating
Local government's response or action on complaints against an office, official or personnel of the LGU.	89.47	High
Conflicts and dispute resolution in the barangays	87.86	High
Mobile LGU services; Provisions health and social services (Mobile Services)	85.01	High
Public Information Services	84.91	High
Traffic Management	84.67	High
Disaster Risk Reduction and Management	82.31	High
Delivery of Frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc)	80.54	High
Timely Response on Peace and Order and Public Safety-related incidents	76.58	High
Total Average	83.92	High

Legend: High (55.67-100); Low (0-55.66)

basic services provided by the barangay, such as the immediate education for children under seven years old, which can be availed in the barangay daycare centers.

The public information services is 84.91%, which may be due to the information provided by the barangay that allows participation among citizens. At the same time, traffic management (84.67%) is also a service directly availed by the citizens almost every day when they travel from one place to another.

Disaster risk reduction and management services availment was at 82.31%. Most of the respondents who have availed of the service were from locations prone to disaster, such as flooding. According to Lacadin et al. (2016), six barangays in Tarlac are moderate to highly susceptible to flooding (Minane, Pando, San Isidro, Sta. Rita, Sto. Cristo, and Tinang), and 12 barangays are low to moderately susceptible to flooding (Caluluan, Parang, Parulung, San Antonio, San Francisco, San Juan, Santiago, San Vicente, Sta. Maria, Sta. Rosa, Sto. Niño and Sto. Rosario/Magunting). Others have availed the services by attending their children's school seminars and training about disaster management. Others, especially those living in the far-flung areas, did not even experience such services, and sometimes citizens

were not informed about such services in the barangay.

Moreover, availment of delivery of frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.) was 80.54%. Citizens engaged in work or currently looking for a job are those who usually availed of such services. This service can be obtained from the barangay or municipality. Sometimes, some landowners availed of other frontline services like getting a land title or obtaining any public records. Lastly, availment of timely response on peace and order and public safety-related incidents was 76.58%, due to the needs of the citizens, especially during public safety-related incidents.

Overall, a total average of 83.92% have availed of the service among those who were aware. This is because of the accessibility, and the need for such service yet further improvement should be done to increase the availment of the different services. The LGU may undertake interventions to increase citizens' knowledge regarding the programs/services available. In addition, the municipality, together with the barangays, should exert its effort to inform citizens about the services they provide, which may be through social media or house-to-house visitation. As mentioned by the respondents, Citizen Satisfaction Index



System (CSIS) data and information were gathered using face-to-face interviews to determine the perception of the citizens on their level of awareness, availment, and satisfaction among services provided by LGU under governance and response. To wit, information gathered may influence and serve as an input to policymakers' government actions. Primarily in determining ways to enhance the availment and satisfaction of various local government services targeting improving citizens' socio-economic wellbeing. Carinugan (2015) states that information gathered through the application of the CSIS can be used to improve services and enable the voice of citizens to influence government actions. Since LGUs primarily depend on citizens' insights and participation in achieving efficient and effective service delivery.

Citizens' Satisfaction with Governance and Response Services

Table 3 presents the citizens' overall satisfaction with the services on governance and response. Satisfaction refers to the citizen's contentment with their experience in availing of local government services or contacting the LGU. In some cases, this can also reflect the citizen's fulfillment of expectations with the services they were able to experience or service indicator level assessments. Only those who have availed of

the particular service are asked the satisfaction question (DILG, 2016).

It can be gleaned that four services were rated with high satisfaction, while the remaining four services were rated with moderate satisfaction. Among all the services, conflict and dispute resolution in the barangays obtained the highest mean of 2.67, described as high satisfaction. This result is because services under such indicators were given to citizens properly and on time. At the same time, there were no charges or fees imposed during the settlement. This service was followed by mobile LGU services and provision of health and social municipal services to the barangays with a mean of 2.62, also described as high satisfaction. These services are the most commonly availed services in the barangay, which are on education, health, and the environment. These services are free of charge, actually easing the burden of the family who needs such service.

The satisfaction level for the delivery of frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.) and Traffic management had a mean of 2.54 described as high satisfaction. Citizens were highly satisfied with the fast and easy to acquire delivery of frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.). On the other hand, high satisfaction in traffic

Table 3
Overall Citizen Satisfaction of Governance and Response Services, Concepcion, Tarlac (n=300), 2017

Service/Programs	Grand Mean	Adjectival Description
Conflict and dispute resolution in the barangays	2.67	High Satisfaction
Mobile LGU services; provision of health and social services (Mobile services)	2.62	High Satisfaction
Delivery of Frontline services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.)	2.54	High Satisfaction
Traffic Management	2.54	High Satisfaction
Timely Response to Peace and Order and Public Safety-related incidents	2.49	Moderate Satisfaction
Local government's response or action to complaints against an LGU office, official, or personnel	2.46	Moderate Satisfaction
Disaster Risk Reduction and Management	2.33	Moderate Satisfaction
Public Information Services	2.27	Moderate Satisfaction
Total Grand Mean	2.49	Moderate Satisfaction

Legend: High Satisfaction (2.50-3.00); Moderate Satisfaction (1.50-2.49); and Low Satisfaction (1.00-1.49)



management is due to the effort and hard work of those individuals who work to maintain smooth traffic within the area, which brings satisfaction to citizens.

The timely response on peace and order and public safety-related incidents was rated 2.49, described as moderate satisfaction. Further improvement on services needs to be done to increase satisfaction. The local government's response or action on complaints against an LGU office, official, or personnel obtained a mean of 2.46, described also as moderate satisfaction. This result implies that complaints and suggestions of the citizens must also be considered, especially in decision making.

Moreover, the mean satisfaction level for disaster risk reduction and management services was 2.33, or moderate satisfaction. Citizens still find loopholes with this service. They suggested that equipment and facilities being used, and even the personnel capabilities need to be improved. Lastly, the service with the lowest mean rating at 2.27 with moderate satisfaction is public information services. Further enhancement in disseminating of information is needed to allow citizens' participation to improve government services.

Overall, the total grand mean satisfaction level was 2.49, which means citizens are moderately satisfied with all the services provided under governance and response. This response is somehow due to lack of information dissemination among the barangay or municipality on the existence of such services. This moderate satisfaction level can also be related to the lengthy processes citizens have encountered while availing of the services.

Based on the satisfaction level for the delivery of frontline services under governance and response, the study can relate to Bulos (2021), wherein he assessed the awareness and satisfaction of the people in Tumauni, Isabela, with the services for public works and infrastructure delivered by the LGU. A face-to-face interview was used with a survey questionnaire to gather the needed data. Overall, results revealed that citizens of Tumauni are aware and satisfied with the different service indicators of the public works and infrastructure programs. Results of the study may help local government officials craft policies and make

management decisions to improve the performance of the local government of Tumauni in the provision and delivery of such services to its constituents.

Problems Encountered by the Citizens on Governance and Response

This section discusses the problems encountered by the citizens and implementers regarding the LGU services under governance and response (Table 4). There was no fire safety orientation/seminars/trainings conducted was the top problem encountered by the citizens with a frequency of 151 or 50.33%. Since such service was seldom performed in barangays, respondents thought it important for the citizens to be ready and equipped during such occurrence. Related to this problem is the lack of fire safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire trucks, and others at the second rank or mentioned by 144 or 48% of the respondents. Usually, during a fire, the lack of fire-fighting equipment and fire trucks may worsen the situation. This could result in more damage, such as loss of lives or properties.

On the third rank is the lack of facilities and equipment for emergency cases (physical injuries) with a frequency of 140 or 46.67%. The barangay health center facilities and equipment may not be enough to cater to all severe physical injuries and accidents in the barangay. There are also no available trucks/equipment for garbage collection (fourth rank with 124 or 41.33% of the respondents). Due to the insufficient budget of barangays, they are not capable of purchasing new trucks for garbage collection. With this problem, uncollected garbage were thrown everywhere in canals and even along the roads, which may cause flood and even diseases.

Moreover, officials in the barangay tend to bestow too much advantage to their families, supporters, and acquaintances, and the lack of awareness on responding to earthquakes tied on the fifth rank with a frequency of 115 or 38.33%. The first problem is one of the reasons why citizens are dissatisfied with the delivery of frontline and other services provided in barangay. One example cited by respondents is in the use of barangay facilities like the basketball court for drying paddy. Some officials let people they know use the facility without a permit; only verbal request is enough. On the other hand, other people who want to use



Table 4*Problems Encountered by the Citizens on Governance and Response Concepcion, Tarlac (n=300), 2017*

Problems	f	%	Rank
There is no Fire Safety Orientation/Seminars/Trainings conducted	151	50.33	1
Lack of fire safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire trucks and others	144	48.00	2
Lack of facilities and equipment for emergency cases (physical injuries)	140	46.67	3
There is no available trucks/equipment for garbage collection.	124	41.33	4
Officials in the barangay/municipality are giving undue advantage to their relatives (ex. in using their facilities and property of barangay)	115	38.33	5.5
Lack of awareness on responding to earthquakes	115	38.33	5.5
Lack of medical and dental equipment in barangay health centers	110	36.67	7
The signatories are not around	97	32.33	8
Slow delivery of services	96	32.00	9
Lack of information dissemination and posting of information materials of recent municipality/barangay plan, programs, projects and activities	91	30.33	10
Lack of information dissemination on Disaster Risk Reduction Orientation/Seminar/Trainings in the barangay	90	30.00	11
The Day Care Center facilities and equipment are not enough to cater all students.	89	29.67	12
There is no Citizen Charter posted in the barangay/municipality	84	28.00	13.5
Vaccines used for immunization are not enough, so only limited citizen can avail the service.	84	28.00	13.5
Too many signatories	83	27.67	15

the facility need to submit a letter or go directly to the barangay hall to acquire permission from the officials. The lack of awareness in responding to earthquakes or other disasters or calamities may be due to the lack of seminars and trainings conducted in the barangay to enlighten and boost citizens' awareness of what should be done when disaster strikes.

Another problem mentioned by 110 or 36.67% of the respondents was the lack of medical and dental equipment in the barangay health centers. Some of the equipment being used are already obsolete or not useable, which tends to hinder the delivery of medical and dental services to citizens.

Rank 8 problem is the issue of signatories not around mentioned by 97 or 32.33% of the respondents. This problem is one of the reasons why the processing of documents takes a long time to be released. Based on interviews with

respondents, they claimed that due to unavailable signatories, they need to go back to the LGU two or three times just to get the signature of the officials, which lengthens the process and increases the burden on citizens and their expenses.

Slow delivery of services is on the ninth rank, mentioned by 96 or 32% of the respondents. There is an inadequate number of personnel to cater to all citizens, especially when the office is overcrowded and busy. Accordingly, this problem may be due to the excessive number of documents required to obtain a service.

The lack of information dissemination and posting of information materials of recent municipality/barangay plans, programs, projects, and activities ranked 10th with a frequency of 91 or 30.33%. According to the respondents, the barangay or municipality does not have a bulletin board where all the programs, projects, plans, and



activities of the municipality or barangay can be posted.

Moreover, the lack of information dissemination on disaster risk reduction orientation/seminar/trainings in the barangay ranked 11th or mentioned by 90 or 30% of the respondents). This result may be due to the lack of coordination with the higher authorities concerned.

The rank 12 problem, reported by 89 or 29.67% of the respondents, is that the Day Care Center facilities and equipment are not enough to cater to all students. Respondents said that the children's classroom was too small and could not accommodate the entire class simultaneously, so the teachers assigned students for morning and afternoon sessions. Other problems observed by the citizens were classrooms are not properly ventilated; and some materials used for teaching are not enough. As a result, some respondents claimed that they resorted to enrolling their children in private schools that have good facilities and ventilation, and where students were given attention but in return it was more expensive.

Another problem is that no citizen charter is posted in the barangay (13th rank, observed by 84 or 28% of the respondents). The citizens are not that aware of the use of the citizens' charter. RA 9485 provides that a citizen charter be posted in the area for the citizens to know the processes, duration of time, and the persons responsible during the avancement of the service so this will help them accomplish transactions with no trouble and with ease. Also at the same rank is the insufficiency of vaccines used for immunization. Only a limited number of citizens can avail of the free immunization service. Based on the respondents, this problem is attributed to the lack of budget and giving priority to relatives and friends of barangay officials even though they are capable of paying for the vaccines.

Lastly, the problem of too many signatories was on the 15th rank, reported by 83 or 27.67% of the respondents. This problem happens when citizens are accomplishing documents, and due to numerous signatories, this tends to lengthen the process and causes a delay in the processing of documents. As mandated in RA 9485, there should only be five maximum signatories in a document; if the officer responsible is not around, an officer in charge should be assigned to sign all

the documents.

Problems Encountered by the Implementers of Governance and Response Services

Table 5 presents the problems encountered by the implementers on the services of governance and response. It can be gleaned that side roads being used to dry palay and corn by farmers is considered the topmost problem mentioned by 69 or 23% of the respondents. Most of the time, this activity causes traffic congestion and accidents in the area. Based on interviews with implementers, many farmers are hard-headed, wherein even if the officials have already requested them to remove their palay and transfer them to other open areas, free from any encumbrance, farmers typically tend to commence an argument. In return, the official will just allow them to use the road just to avoid conflicts.

The second rank problem encountered by implementers (67 or 22.33% of the respondents) was on citizens parking their cars along the road, which causes traffic. This problem usually happens during events, occasions, or gathering wherein some citizens do double parking, which causes traffic congestion and accidents. This problem may also fire up arguments between the motorists, which again becomes a problem of the officials.

While on the third rank with 46 frequency or 15.33% is the sidewalks being used for business purposes. During holiday seasons or fiesta, various sellers can be seen on the sidewalks of the road with their merchandises, this causes a problem to the officials in traffic management. This is one of the reasons for traffic clogging in the area. Also, an enormous amount of waste are left in the area after the event.

On fourth rank stated by 45 or 15% of the respondents is the problem with some complainants filing complaints directly to the municipality even though they did not undergo settlement in the barangay. Citizens neglect the rules and hierarchy on filing cases. They sometimes belittle the capability and competence of the barangay to resolve such issues.

Implementers observed that some citizens who are situated in disaster-prone areas do not want to evacuate during calamities (identified as fifth rank problem, mentioned by 40 respondents or 13.33%).



Table 5*Problems Encountered by the Implementers on Governance and Response Concepcion, Tarlac (n=300), 2017*

Problems	f	%	Rank
Side roads are being used to dry palay and corn by farmers.	69	23.00	1
Some citizens park their cars along the road, which causes traffic	67	22.33	2
Sidewalks are being used for business purposes.	46	15.33	3
Some complainants filed complaints directly to the municipality even though they did not undergo settlement in the barangay.	45	15.00	4
Some citizens who are situated in disaster-prone areas do not want to evacuate during calamities	40	13.33	5
Lack of budget to purchase new equipment and facilities for education and health.	37	12.33	6.5
The citizen does not go to the barangay hall to see and read the announcement regarding recent programs and projects of the municipality and barangay.	37	12.33	6.5
Lack of seminars and trainings of officials on the rules, guidelines, and procedures of the Barangay Justice System	35	11.67	8
The citizens don't attend and participate during barangay assemblies.	31	10.33	9.5
Insufficient budget to purchase information materials, like flyers, tarpaulins, and bulletin board	31	10.33	9.5
Lack of knowledge of barangay officials/personnel in writing and publishing a newspaper for the barangay	30	10.00	12
Lack of trainings and seminars among officers in the barangay about the proper way of accommodating citizens.	30	10.00	12
The citizens are not aware and do not know how to use the Citizen Charter	30	10.00	12
Some frontline service providers give priority to their relatives or friends	30	10.00	12
Insufficient budget to procure new trucks/equipment for garbage collection.	30	10.00	12
Lack of coordination with other disaster reduction and management offices as to information dissemination and evacuation during a disaster.	21	7.00	15
The complainant refuses to attend during the settlement	20	6.67	16
The citizens do not participate in Fire Safety Orientation/Seminars/Trainings conducted in the barangay or municipality.	18	6.00	17
Lack of budget to purchase a new ambulance and other equipment for peace and order and public safety-related incidents	16	5.33	18

Implementers think most of the citizens are hard-headed, refusing to follow the official's advice or instruction during calamities. These officials are aware that when something happens to their constituents, the culpability will be on their side. Even though these citizens are resisting, force is used by the officials concerned to save the lives of the people within the area.

The lack of budget to create new facilities and

purchase new equipment to accommodate citizens garnered the sixth rank. With that being said, lack of budget means that they cannot ensure good quality of service. Wherein, this may prolong the process instead of giving immediate action to the citizen's queries, concerns and problems. On the same rank is the problem of citizens not reading the announcements in the barangay hall (37 or 12.33%). It is hard for the officials to inform everybody in the barangay or



municipality about their programs and projects. Many citizens do not bother to go or visit the barangay for them to see the plans and services provided by the barangay.

Another problem identified by implementers is the lack of seminars and trainings of officials on the rules, guidelines and procedure of Barangay Justice System (BJS) (eight rank with a frequency of 35 or 11.67%). This problem may cause dissatisfaction among constituents and may result in improper handling of issues by the official concerned. Due to the lack of knowledge on the guidelines of BJS the government official will not be able to address their constituent's issues and concerns accurately.

Moreover, that citizens do not attend and participate during barangay assemblies obtained ninth rank (31 or 10.33%). Citizens tend to ignore or neglect assemblies when they feel that they will not get any benefits. Implementers think that many citizens are motivated to participate only if there is money involved or other benefits.

In relation, insufficient budget to purchase information materials, like flyers, tarpaulins and bulletin boards also garnered the same rank with frequency of 31 or 10.33%. Even though officials want to inform the citizens about the services, programs, and projects of the barangay or municipality, the limited budget hampers them to do things like posting updates on a bulletin board or distributing flyers that will boost citizen awareness.

Next is the lack of knowledge of barangay officials/personnel in writing and publishing a newspaper for the barangay ranked 12th (30 or 10.33%). Officials in the barangay are not that knowledgeable in writing and designing a newspaper. They also lack trainings about the proper way of accommodating citizens or the appropriate manner in entertaining and communicating with citizens, which later leads to conflict and dissatisfaction. Still on the same rank, citizens are not aware and do not know how to use the Citizen Charter. Since citizens are not well-versed on the use of a citizen charter, repetitive questions are raised, which may result to repetitive responses by the officer-in-charge, resulting in waste of time and resources.

Also on the 12th rank is the insufficient budget to procure new trucks/equipment for garbage collection. This problem is usually the reason why some roads or areas are flooded during typhoons because of clogged canals due to garbage.

The lack of coordination with other disaster reduction and management offices as to information dissemination and evacuation during disaster ranked 15 (21 or 7%). Due to the lack of coordination with other offices and people trained and well-versed on disaster management, some offices are not informed about the up-to-date strategies and equipment that can be used to detect and avoid loss of lives during disasters.

On 16th rank or observed by 20 or 6.67% of the respondents is the problem of victims not wanting to participate in settlement because most of the time the victim and defendant are not able to come up or agree with a decision. Some victims do not believe in the capability of the mediator to resolve such cases.

Furthermore, the citizens do not participate in fire safety orientation/seminars/trainings conducted in the barangay ranked 17th (18 or 6%). Most of the time, citizens lack interest or are too busy to join or participate in such activities. They perceive it as a waste of time and effort, especially when they think they will not get something in return.

Ranked last problem (16 or 5.33%) is the lack of budget to purchase new ambulance and other equipment to be used for peace and order and public safety-related incidents. This constraint may hinder the officials from giving the best quality of service to the people, since they do not have equipment and resources that can help them to immediately respond during disaster/calamities in the area.

Conclusions

Based on the overall awareness of the citizens on the services provided by the barangays and municipality with this result, further improvement in the information dissemination, especially in the far-flung areas of Concepcion, should be done to increase the awareness and participation among the citizens.



Thus, disaster risk reduction and management services were availed of the service among those who were aware. This is because of the accessibility, and the need for such service yet further improvement should be done to increase the availment of the different services. Since there was lack of facilities and equipment that can be use during disasters/calamities.

Then with the satisfaction level for the delivery of frontline services which means citizens are moderately satisfied with all the services provided under governance and response. This response is somehow due to lack of information dissemination among the barangay or municipality on the existence of such services.

While, based on the problems encountered by the citizens on governance and response that there was no fire safety orientation/seminars/trainings conducted was the top problem encountered by the citizens and the problems encountered by the implementers on the services of governance and response.

The study revealed that among the services/programs, mobile LGU services, provision of health and social services (mobile services) attained the highest awareness rating. In contrast, timely response to peace and order and public safety-related incidents got the lowest awareness rating. Overall, citizens are highly aware of the services provided by the Municipality of Concepcion. For availment, citizens showed high availment on the local government's response or action on complaints against an LGU office, official, or personnel. Most of those who were aware were able to avail the municipality's services. Citizens who availed of the services gave a moderate satisfaction rating. Conflict and dispute resolution in the barangays obtained the highest satisfaction rating and public information services obtained moderate satisfaction rating.

This research on citizens' satisfaction with governance and response will open floodgates of ideas among local government units, citizens, and civil society organizations on enhancing and improving government services or the well-being and satisfaction of all. The citizens' satisfaction will gauge the performance of the local government units and the implementers of the services.

Based on the findings, the municipality and barangay need to concentrate in addressing the prevailing problems revealed by the citizens and implementers in this study. With that, efficient and effective delivery of service will be obtained. But the participation and involvement of citizens should not be forgotten because, in the end, they are still the wheels toward success.

R e c o m m e n d a t i o n s

Based from the findings of the study, the following recommendations were derived.

First, the municipality together with the barangays should exert its effort to inform citizens on the services they provide which can do through social media or house-to-house visitation.

Second, create their own leaflets and brochures that will help them to promote not only the municipality but also its services.

Third, the municipality may train the barangay officials on how to responds during disasters/calamities. Wherein, they can also share the knowledge that they have gain to their constituents during barangay assemblies. Consequently, coordinate with other agencies that will help them to provide facilities and equipment that can be use during disasters/calamities.

Fourth, create a citizen friendly website wherein all queries and concerns by the citizens may be answered immediately. This will also features the services that are provided in the municipality.

Fifth, the municipal government and the barangays may implement different programs, projects, and activities to heighten citizens' awareness of these services. Through this, availment of such service will be maximized and may result in human development, which leads to satisfaction. As every LGUs should keep in mind that when they meet a specific need, they do not just stop there but lay down another standard/target to be achieved that will lead the LGU and citizens greatest satisfaction. Consequently, the municipality and the barangays should inform citizens on the services they provide through social media or house-to-house visitation.



Sixth, the barangay should maintain a Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan since this plan will cover all kinds of disasters that may possibly strike in the area. Through this citizen and the barangay will be equipped and prepared during the occurrence of such calamities or disasters. The LGU concerned should mandate all the barangays within their jurisdiction to accomplish a Barangay Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan which should be accomplished by Barangay Development Council together with their citizens. This will not only help them to properly respond during disasters, they will also know what are the things they need to do in order to be prepared and best equipped to save the citizens.

Seventh, barangay in coordination with the municipality should conduct regular orientations/seminars and trainings on how to respond during earthquakes and fire. This will ensure the safety of their constituents in times of disasters or as such and update them of new ways on how to handle other catastrophe to avoid loss of lives. This will also be equipped them with the right knowledge on how to react to these circumstances during disasters.

Eight, barangay officials should undertake different seminars and trainings about good governance, leadership, decision making and ethics which will enhance their competencies in governing their barangay. These seminars and trainings should be conducted regularly in coordination with DILG and other departments which can impart knowledge and share their experience and expertise in governing people. This will not only help the officials to be enlightened on the proper and appropriate ways of governing, but this will also enhance their values and action in dealing with people, and most importantly these officials will be able to appreciate the importance of their position and action to the welfare of their constituents.

Ninth, increase the competencies of barangay officials through seminars and trainings were also on third rank. They will learn proper management and leadership skills on good governance to be able to serve their constituents effectively and efficiently.

Tenth, barangay should conduct orientation about the guidelines and procedures in filing

complaints, and how to obtain protection order, which should be done at least twice a year, acquired the fifth rank at 240 or 64%. Through this the barangay officials will be able to fully understand the concepts and processes in dealing with complaints, and to know the importance of issuing protection order and determine when and how this will be issued. At the same time officials will be trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge on basic legalities of law in filing and resolving complaints.

Eleventh, the municipal government should coordinate with other LGUs/NGOs and POs that can help plan future programs, projects, and activities in the municipality. Through this, the municipality can also gain support from these organizations, and most importantly, this will promote participation among the citizens in the municipality.

Lastly, future researchers may consider looking into the citizens' satisfaction with the other services provided by the province, such as health, support to education, social welfare, governance and response, public works and infrastructure, environmental management, and economic and investment promotion.

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