

Practices in Transparency and Effectiveness of Government Officials and Workers

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Abstract - *This examines the Practices in Transparency and Effectiveness of Government Officials and Workers as perceived and observed by the respondents. Descriptive - type of research was utilized to the study. Results showed that the best practices of government officials and workers in the city of Passi are highly transparent and effective as they are perceived and observed by the respondents. Transparency and effectiveness have significant relationship. The officials and workers of Passi city are highly transparent in taxation, budgeting, and meetings and effective in policy facilitation and integrity; functional and operational expertise; initiative; and personal development. It is commended that transparency be improved because it influence effectiveness through more trainings by government agencies concerned with transparency such as ombudsman, civil service commission, and department of justice . Furthermore, the city government may improve its transparency campaign because it has multiplier effect towards productivity which may lead to progress and development.*

Keywords: *Transparency, Government Officials, Iloilo City*

INTRODUCTION

The practices in different areas of government services offered to the public as classified under transparency and effectiveness are the main focus of this study. The practices are those which are seen by the employees of the public offices and workers themselves. This is considered a self-assessment among themselves which may give light to them in their delivery of services to the public.

Hartford (2005) emphasized the government as an important tool for improving governmental performance; their decisions to publish many of the “mayor’s mailbox” communications online were intended to encourage grass-roots feedback, place pressure on bureaucratic agencies to change their behaviour, and build a stronger popular image for local governments. While Hartford focused on feedback online, Xue and Liou (2012) examined reforms in China which included new governance concepts of promoting managerial competency, organizational capacity, accountability and transparency, and citizen participation.

Kwon (2004) cited transparency as one of the norms of government reforms that should pursue high level of the overall performance, and transparent public administration. While Kwon’s focus is on transparency and performance, Boeltzig; Pilling;

Timmons and Johnson (2010) examine the roles and responsibilities and effectiveness in improving employment service delivery in the systems, the commonalities and differences associated with the roles between the two countries and discusses for improving effectiveness.

Similar to the study of Hartford, Chen (2013) examines the workplace e-learning effectiveness, can reform efforts focusing on e-learning that provide an opportunity to explore e-learning effectiveness and the perceptions and attitudes of employee toward workplace e-learning are positive, and relevant factors that affect learner-perceived effectiveness and e-learning expected values are identified. Furthermore, Durrant (2006) cited that the portal or gateway sites on the World Wide Web to facilitate the delivery of e-government information and services, the E-government via internet is seen as aiming to provide all citizens with an efficient and alternative medium for accessing public services and for interacting with public sector providers, and the potential of these websites to provide access to information and to contribute to the effectiveness of e-government activities.

Effectiveness may be traced to the personnel. Roberts (2000) cited that local government human resource management practices are under pressure

with changes in family structure, increasing workforce diversity, the aging of the workforce and organizational reinvention initiatives and the strength of local government benefit packages centres on the traditional benefits of health insurance, pension benefits and paid time-off; however, Glennerster (2012) argues that randomised impact evaluations can provide an effective way to generate the information needed to make government more effective.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to determine the best practices in transparency and effectiveness of government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines and to explore reasons why the City of Passi remains a more progressive and peaceful component city in the Province Iloilo. Specifically, the study aimed to identify the practices among government officials and workers which are perceived and observed as to transparency and effectiveness; and find out if the best practices in transparency and effectiveness are related.

Analytical Framework

There is a need for government reforms as with overall performance and transparency as bases (Kwon, 2005) and examination of reforms in China which cited transparency (Xue & Liou, 2012) serve as the foundation on this study to find out the degree of transparency in the areas of taxation, budgeting, meeting, auditing, public recording and administration. As to the degree of the perceived and observed effectiveness of the practices, the ideas of Kwon (2004), Boetltzig, et al and Glennester (2012) were among the bases. The researchers delved into the relationship between the two variables.

METHODS

This study aimed at ascertaining the practices in transparency and effectiveness of government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines.

The study was conducted among the government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines.

The survey-correlational method of research was employed in this investigation. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2003), the major purpose of survey research is to describe the characteristics of a population. In Essence, information is collected from a group of people in order to describe some aspects or

characteristics (such as abilities, opinion, attitudes, beliefs, and or knowledge) of the population of which the group is part. In correlation research, sometimes called associative research, the relationships among two or more variables are studied without any attempt to influence them. In their simplest form, correlational studies investigate the possibility of relationships among the two variables, although in investigations of more than two variables are common.

The participants of this investigation were the 250 randomly selected permanent and job hired government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines for a total of 450, in different departments and offices. The simple random sampling method was employed in the selection of the sample participants of the study. With the sampling frame as reference, the names of the participants were written on slips of paper, rolled, and placed inside a box. Then, the lottery technique was employed, whereby the names of the participants that appeared on the slips of paper drawn were included as samples or participants of the study. They were asked to accomplish the data-gathering instruments.

Two (2) researcher made instruments were utilized to obtain data for the study of best practices in transparency and effectiveness of government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines. These data gathering instruments were duly validated by panel of experts. Each item in the data-gathering instrument is provided with numerical choices in the 1 (Lowest) to 5 (Highest) continuums. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the office of the City Mayor, City of Passi.

The data-gathering instruments were personally distributed and retrieved by the researcher. Data-gathering instruments contained directions for completion. In addition, the researcher reviewed the directions for completion of the questionnaires with all the participants. The respondents were given 20 to 30 minutes to complete the data-gathering instruments.

Upon retrieval of the accomplished instruments, the obtained data were coded, tallied, computer-processed, and interpreted. Means and standard deviations were employed as descriptive statistics; while the Pearson's *r* was employed as inferential statistics.

The .05 alpha level was used as the criterion for the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The Practices among Government Officials and Workers which as Perceived and Observed as to Transparency

Transparency	M	VI	SD	Rank
Taxation	4.03	HT	1.211	1
Budgeting	3.52	HT	1.448	2
Meetings	3.42	HT	1.413	3
Auditing	3.36	T	1.436	4
Public Recording	3.13	T	1.467	5
Administration	3.03	T	1.489	6
General Mean	3.59	HT	1.071	

4.21 – 5.00: Very Highly Transparent (VHT); 3.41 – 4.20: Highly Transparent (HT); 2.61 – 3.40: Transparent (T); 1.81 – 2.60: Less Transparent (LsT); 1.00 – 1.80: Least Transparent (LT)

Generally, the best practices in transparency of government officials and workers in the city of Passi are *highly transparent* (M=3.59; SD=1.071); in Taxation (M=4.03; SD=1.211); Budgeting (M=3.52; SD=1.448); Meetings (M=3.42; SD=1.413); Auditing (M=3.36; SD=1.436); Public Recording (M=3.13; SD=1.467); and Administration (M=3.03; SD=1.489).

The findings conform with that of Bellver and Kaufmann (2005) Economic and institutional transparency includes measures of “economic transparency, e-government, access to information laws, transparency in the budget process, transparency of policy and transparency of the public sector”, while political transparency “includes elements such as transparency of political funding, openness of the political system and freedom of the press to monitor government’s performance and express the people’s voice”. It also conforms to the ideas of Xue and Liou (2012) on accountability and transparency which are needed in taxation, budgeting and meetings. Furthermore, the result agrees with Kwon (2004) who believed that reforms use transparency as a norm in public administration which can be found in the areas rated.

Generally, the best practices among government officials and workers are effective as they are perceived and observed (M=3.03; SD= 1.227), in policy facilitation and integrity (M=3.29; SD=1.496); functional and operational expertise; initiative; and personal development (M=3.22; SD=1.470).

The findings conform with that of Abdullah, Mansor & Hamzah (2013) they examine the effectiveness and responsiveness of public services for the development and usage of government to

experiment with innovations seen as improving the efficiency.

Table 2. The Practices among Government Officials and Workers as Perceived and Observed as to their Effectiveness

Effectiveness	M	VI	SD	Rank
Policy Facilitation	3.29	E	1.496	1.5
Integrity	3.29	E	1.496	1.5
Functional and Operational Expertise	3.22	E	1.470	4.0
Initiative	3.22	E	1.516	4.0
Personal Development	3.22	E	1.470	6
Citizen Service	3.20	E	1.568	7
Planning	3.18	E	1.581	8
Vision	3.17	E	1.396	9.5
Staff Productivity	3.16	E	1.399	9.5
Media Relations	3.16	E	1.399	11
Creativity	3.12	E	1.572	12
Budgeting	2.97	E	1.450	13.5
Citizen Participation	2.94	E	1.482	13.5
Financial Analysis	2.94	E	1.447	15
Risk Taking	2.92	E	1.409	16
Diversity	2.91	E	1.545	17
Technological Literacy	2.90	E	1.499	18
Innovation	2.89	E	1.515	19
Human Resources Management	2.85	E	1.454	20
Advocacy and Interpersonal Communication	2.84	E	1.417	21
Democratic Advocacy	2.76	E	1.469	22
Strategic Planning	2.75	E	1.463	23
Presentation Skills	2.46	LE	1.397	24
General Mean	3.03	E	1.227	

4.21 – 5.00: Very Highly Effective (VHE); 3.41 – 4.20: Highly Effective (HE); 2.61 – 3.40: Effective (E); 1.81 – 2.60: Less Effective (LE); 1.00 – 1.80: Not Effective (NE)

Thus, e-government has been enthusiastically promoted by the government and has spread across most government organisations at central and sub-national levels. Furthermore, it provides details of a range of services both within government and for society that are available in e-government modes as found in technological literacy and policy facilitation. Effectiveness of government officials are also reflected on the works of Xue and Liou (2012), Kwon(2004),Roberts(2010) and Glennerster (2002).

There is a significant relationship between transparency and effectiveness of government officials and workers in the City of Passi, Province of Iloilo, Philippines. This implies that if there is an increase or decrease in the level of transparency of government

officials and workers in the City of Passi will also lead to the increase or decrease of their effectiveness.

Table 3. The relationship between transparency and effectiveness of government officials and workers

Correlated Variables	r-value	p-value
Transparency & Effectiveness	.781**	.000

** Correlation at 0.01(2-tailed)

This conforms to the study of Heinrich (2007) wherein he noted that the evidence-based policy and performance management is to improve government effectiveness and transparency by developing and utilizing a more rigorous base of information and scientific evidence to guide decisions about program design, funding, implementation, and management. However, differences and tensions between these movements—such as their methods and standards for assembling and analyzing data, and the strategic timing and use of this information to influence policy and hold public managers accountable for performance—could limit their success. Finally, using the cases and empirical studies, this evidence should be communicated, the quality and reliability of evidence and performance information, should achieve and balance between processes that produce rigorous information for decision making and those that foster democratic governance and accountability and improving the government effectiveness by using more rigorous information in decision making, along with acknowledgment of the limitations and risks associated with such efforts. Similarly, it conforms to the studies and ideas of Boeltzig, et al (2010) about roles, and responsibilities and effectiveness in improving employment delivery in the systems.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The officials and workers of Passi city are highly transparent in taxation, budgeting, and meetings. Being a component city in the Province of Iloilo, Philippines, the city needs revenues in order to finance its operations; therefore, the taxation must be transparent and effective. The Bureau of Internal Revenue of the Philippines has its reforms and campaigns for increased revenues which may have enhanced the transparency. In budgeting, the national and local government of the Philippines follow the prescribed budget process by the Department of Budget and Management which is from bottom to top and from top to bottom schemes. Consultations and

budget hearings are done for participation and transparency. In LGU meetings, the meetings are recorded, transcribed and interpreted. They are filed for retrieval later when they are needed.

They are effective in policy facilitation and integrity; functional and operational expertise; initiative; and personal development. Workers and employees in Passi City are effective especially in policy facilitation where policies are well-prepared, are relevant, properly disseminated and implemented. Similarly, they have integrity because of their unquestionable reputation. They are also effective in their functional and operational expertise particularly in the exercise of their work. The new projects and the increase in the income of the workers may be due to their initiative and personal development effectiveness. *Transparency and effectiveness are significantly related.* Transparency among the workers in Passi City is a function of their effectiveness. If transparency is changed, a corresponding change will also follow in their effectiveness. It is recommended that transparency be improved because it influences effectiveness. This may be done through more training by government agencies concerned with transparency such as ombudsman, civil service commission, and Department of Justice. Furthermore, the city government may improve its transparency campaign through the use of mass media especially online because transparency has multiplier effect towards effectiveness.

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