



Good governance practices of barangays in one LGU in Negros Occidental

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine governance practices of selected barangays in Sagay City and test its hypothesis. The study was anchored in the Behavioral Theory of Leadership and Contingency Theory of Leadership. A descriptive-quantitative research design was applied, and a modified research instrument that underwent validation with a 0.79 content validity index and Cronbach alpha of 0.967 was used. Therefore, most participants are residents, followed by appointed personnel and elected officials. The results also showed that there is a high level and significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the level of good governance practices in the selected barangays in Sagay City in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability when they are grouped according to their category. Thus, the selected barangays in Sagay City perform good governance practices wherein the officials rule their constituents in a good political manner, execute fairness in decision-making for the progression of their people, and observe the current situation in their barangays for them to implement good governance. The researchers recommended that elected officials maintain their good governance practices in terms of transparency, responsiveness, and accountability and future research about good governance practices-related variables.

ARTICLE INFO

Received : Feb. 10, 2025

Revised : June 3, 2025

Accepted : June 30, 2025

KEYWORDS

*Artificial Intelligence,
Education Technology,
Narrative Review, Philippine
Education*

Suggested Citation (APA Style 7th Edition):

Geroso, P.J.M.S., Hernan, J.B., Jimenez, J.M.D., & Amaro, M.S. (2025). Good governance practices of barangays in one LGU in Negros Occidental. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, and Management*, 5(2), 99-107. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15907315>

INTRODUCTION

Good governance for social and economic advancement, is essential. It encourages chances for sustainable growth, empowers citizens, and builds social trust. The foundation of nation-building is good governance because it fosters an atmosphere in which people can interact with their government in a meaningful way, hold it responsible for its actions, and have faith that it will fulfill its commitments (Dy, 2023). Good governance is evaluated by how responsive the government to the demands and grievances of the people (Linde & Peters, 2020). According to Yang and Northcott (2019), one important factor in fostering confidence is the government's accountability.

Transparency is the disclosure of all relevant variables and data on significant issues (Farwell et al., 2019). It has to do with giving details on the main decision-making processes, how they work, and how well they operate (Sridhar et al., 2020). Furthermore, public trust is bolstered by free access to information from governmental bodies, which demonstrates openness and fosters the idea that the government is operating lawfully (Nedal & Alcoriza, 2018). Local elites have influence over the networks that enable them to organize local citizens determines responsiveness (Van Baalen, 2021). This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and responsiveness of the public policy on the program implementations of the delivery of basic services in the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160) by transferring authority from national government agencies to the local government units devolved on education, health, social welfare, and the environment (Bueno, 2018).

Accountability consists of restraining the power of an authority that gives an account of its actions, motivations, procedures, and outcomes. At the same time, accountability is a concept permitted by several values, practices, and expectations to improve democratic procedures (Yauri-Miranda, 2019). Accountability is a measure to make local officials responsible not only to their superiors but also to the public in general. The research determines the good governance practices of the selected barangays of Sagay City which specifically sought the level of good governance practices of the selected barangays in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability when taken as a whole and grouped according to category and to determine if there is significant difference in the level of good governance practices in the selected barangays in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability when grouped according to category, with such objective this research was anchored to the Behavioral Theory of Leadership by Blake and Mouton in 1964 and the Contingency Theory of Leadership by Fiedler in the 1960s. The BTL of Robert Blake and Jane Mouton states that specific behaviours differentiate between leaders and non-leaders, which relates to the study because it measures the practices of good governance of elected officials, and this theory can support that their practices will differentiate from their ability to lead their constituents also the CTL of Fred E.

Fiedler states that effective leadership is contingent upon the situation which applies to this study that the elected official can be an effective leader in one circumstance and ineffective in another. It combines the attributes of the official and the attributes of the challenge. Some increases in individual education and efficacy, representation of marginalized groups and social justice, and government accountability were seen in the Philippines, but they seem to be peculiar to the local setting. Civil society and democratic legitimacy advancements, nevertheless, were weaker, at least partly due to difficulty in incorporating third-party mediators in the process and persistent issues with elitism and corruption (Franklin & Ebdon 2020).

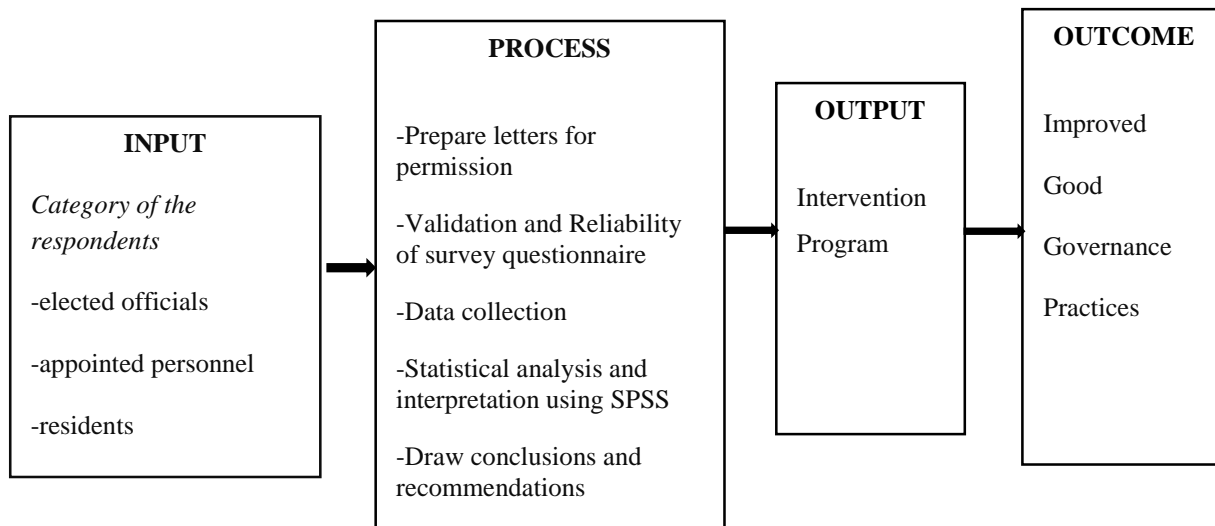


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram Illustrating the Conceptual Framework of the Study

This framework shows the overall outline of the study. It comprises a four-step model: the input, process, output, and outcome. The input shows the category and study variables. Profile variables include only the category, while the study variables include Good Governance practices, Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability. The process is the second most important framework of the study. The very step of the way, from drafting letters to signing from authorities for permission, validating questionnaires from certified valuers and pilot testing for reliability analysis, to collecting quantitative data using descriptive survey questionnaires, to the interpretation of data gathered using SPSS and drawing conclusions and recommendations.

The whole process is present as part of the structure of this study. Once the process is done, the output is the intervention or proposed program by the researchers. The outcome of the said intervention was to develop and establish Good Governance practices in selected barangays. Furthermore, this research has substantial implications for several industries. This study will provide the foundation for elected officials to assess whether barangays exhibit effective governance practices. Additionally, the community would be aware of the good governance methods used by the elected officials in their own barangays, enabling them to provide proposals for community development and support the local government.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A descriptive-quantitative research design was employed, this study describes the good governance practices of elected officials and follows the procedure of gathering and evaluating numerical data, is best suited for a descriptive research design. Averages, like mean, were used in this study to describe the investigation.

Respondents of the study

Elected officials, appointed personnel, and residents in the five selected barangays of Sagay City Negros Occidental, namely: Barangay Old Sagay, Barangay Poblacion I, Barangay Poblacion II, Barangay Paraiso, and Barangay Rizal are the research respondents. The population of the elected officials is 45, for appointed personnel is 206, and the residents are 57,926; the total population is 58,217. The study samples are 41 elected officials, 135 appointed personnel, and 382 residents; the total sample is 558. Elected officials encompasses barangay captains, kagawads and SK chairperson while appointed personnel includes the barangay secretary, barangay treasurer,

barangay tanod, and barangay health workers. Thus, the technique used in this study is appropriate. A stratified random sampling technique was employed in this study. Proportionate stratified random was applied since it involves getting samples from stratified groups in proportion to the population. The sample size of this study was calculated through the Raosoft calculator with a margin of error of 5%, a 95% confidence level, and a response of distribution of 50%.

Data Gathering Instrument

This study used a modified research instrument. The instrument was based on the work of Mansoor (2021) and published in PubMed Central (PMC). The tool is easy to analyze and understand. It is composed of two major parts: Part 1 presents the category of the respondents in every selected Barangay, and Part 2 presents the 30-item of good governance practices from its three (3) sub-variables: Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability.

Validity and Reliability

In terms of the validity of the research instrument, the tool used content validity through the criteria set forth by the Lawshe validity tool. The Content Validity Index of the instrument is 0.79, which means it is valid. And in the reliability testing was conducted on 30 respondents from a selected barangay using the Cronbach's Alpha instrument which resulted to .967, which means Excellent Internal Consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data was collected using a validated and reliable survey questionnaire. Also, gathering all the necessary data and responses from our respondents was permitted by the school and barangay captains. When all the necessary documents, such as permission letters, were approved and the study was subject to collect data, the researchers visited their respective barangays after obtaining approval for all required documents, including permission letters, and before beginning the data collection phase of the study. Microsoft Excel was used to tally and encode all of the collected data, and the Special Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze it. As a result, the data collection process was implemented following the identification and signature of each method by the relevant authorities.

Statistical Treatment

This study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviations were applied for descriptive statistics to determine the level of good governance practices. In determining the significant difference in the level of good governance practices, One-Way ANOVA was used. Interpretation of the Likert Scale is shown below.

Scale	Mean Score	Description	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.26-4.00	Very High	Very high level of good governance practices
3	2.51-3.25	High	High level of good governance practices
2	1.76-2.50	Low	Low level of good governance practices
1	1.00-1.75	Very Low	Very low level of good governance practices

Ethical Considerations

The permission of the participants was obtained through a letter of consent before the survey was conducted. The researchers explained the purpose and procedures of answering questions to the participants. For ethical safeguards all data collected and stored by our team is solely for research purposes and to ensure the protection of respondents' personally identifiable data and ensure that all research findings of this study are accessible to policymakers and the public and that all methods and analyses are reported openly. Lastly, for data protection, the researchers were held responsible for protecting all the data from the respondents by RA No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Category of the respondents

Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Elected Officials	41	7.3
Appointed Personnel	135	24.2
Residents	382	64.5
Total	558	100.0

The data in table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents are the residents of the five barangays of Sagay City, which garnered 64.5% of the 558 total samples. Appointed personnel got the second highest percentage, 24.2%, and elected officials got the lowest percentage, 7.3%.

Table 2. Level of good governance practices of elected officials when taken as a whole

Variable	SD	Mean	Description
Transparency	.888	2.76	High
Responsiveness	.900	2.77	High
Accountability	.944	2.74	High

Overall, the results indicate that there is a high level of good governance practices in terms of Transparency, with a mean score of 2.6 (SD = .888), Responsiveness with a mean score of 2.77 (SD = .900), and accountability with a mean score of 2.74 (SD = .944). This shows that the respondents are satisfied with the administration of their local leaders or elected officials. The result in transparency implies that the elected officials in the selected barangays encourages the community residents to participate in planning activities of the barangay, settle conflicts among community residents, and ensure clear and appropriate sharing of roles, responsibilities, and reporting.

The elected officials can see the progress and situations of government administration, and they implement the barangay plan and program transparently. Baskin & Gross (2019). Transparency can assist government representatives, legislators, and even medical professionals in making well-informed decisions for their careers. Responsiveness results implies that the elected officials monitor and evaluate the implementation of programs and activities in the barangay, make a genuine attempt to assist residents in need of assistance, and treat the citizens who appeal to the government properly, they consider complaints and signals of citizens professionally and responsibly and ensure the constituents' satisfaction with the services offered by the barangay. Qiaoan and Teets (2020) believe that responsive government is characterized by attentiveness, interaction, and effective feedback provision. It is evaluated based on which the public be certain of the government that pays attention to them and addresses their concerns.

In terms of accountability, the outcome implies that elected officials ensure proper and authorized use of their budgets, take responsibility for their actions, and ensure wise and productive use of public funds. Furthermore, elected officials consider the interests of future generations. Anderson et al. (2019) stated that these commitments served as the foundation for officials' accountability in future forums.

Table 3. Level of good governance practices of elected officials when grouped according to category

Variables	Elected Officials			Appointed Personnel			Residents		
	SD	Mean	Description	SD	Mean	Description	SD	Mean	Description
Transparency	.435	3.23	High	.689	3.13	High	.927	2.58	High
Responsiveness	.530	3.20	High	.706	3.13	High	.939	2.60	High
Accountability	.515	3.28	Very High	.716	3.13	High	.983	2.54	High

In terms of Transparency, the result revealed that there is a high level of good governance practices of elected officials per category, where elected officials got the highest mean score of 3.23 (SD=.435), followed by appointed personnel with a mean score of 3.13 (SD=.689), and residents with a mean score of 2.58 (SD=.927). In terms of Transparency, this implied that elected officials ensure public access to information and facilitate understanding of how local public officials are decided, fairness in decisions and actions, and transparently disclose the entire process of the government as perceived by the residents, appointed personnel, and elected officials themselves. Increasing the transparency of government operations and procedures is a fundamental component of governance practices in liberal democracies (Cook's, 2018) while Jiménez & Daniel (2018) concluded that a lack of transparency hides corrupt practices and that a good indicator of the possibility of corruption is a refusal to divulge information.

The results in responsiveness revealed that there is a high level of good governance practices of elected officials in the five chosen barangays in Sagay City per category, where elected officials got the highest mean score of 3.20 (SD=.530), followed by appointed personnel with a mean score of 3.13 (SD=.706); and residents with a mean score of 2.60 (SD=.939). In terms of Responsiveness, the results imply that the elected officials are responsive, quickly respond to the public's request, and provide quality solutions for public needs efficiently, as perceived by the residents, appointed personnel, and elected officials themselves. The study by Qiaoan & Teets (2020) confirmed that the degree to which the public believes that the government pays attention to them and answers their questions is a measure of responsive government, which is associated with interaction, attention, and the provision of effective feedback.

Accountability results shows that there is a very high level of good governance practices of elected officials in the five chosen barangays in Sagay City in the category of elected officials who got the highest mean score of 3.28 (SD=.515), and high level of good governance practices in terms of appointed personnel with a mean score of 3.13 (SD=.716) and residents with a mean score of 2.54 (SD=.983). In terms of accountability, as perceived by the participants, including the residents, appointed personnel, and officials themselves, the results imply that the elected officials are accountable for their public funds. They followed treasury rules and regulations in all circumstances and presented their financial statements on time. The study of Ernawati et al. (2020) states that representatives should be held accountable, provide reports, and reveal all activities that fall under the purview of the party in charge. According to Choudhury (2022), accountability is the obligation that public servants, elected officials, and appointed officials must uphold in order to use their position of power and influence over the assets entrusted to them by the general public. As a result, the government must be managed appropriately and in accordance with current regulations.

Perceived accountability, Responsiveness, and Transparency were found to be highly significant in describing the public's degree of trust in local government in Ethiopia by Beshi and Kaur (2019). In this instance, participants' trust in the city administration was higher than that of their counterparts when it came to their perceptions of Accountability, Responsiveness, and Transparency. The literature mentioned earlier was validated by the present findings.

Table 4. A significant difference in the level of good governance practices of elected officials when grouped according to category

Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Interpretation
Transparency	40.237	2	20.118	28.014	.000	Significant
Responsiveness	36.964	2	18.482	24.770	.000	Significant
Accountability	48.331	2	24.166	29.948	.000	Significant

*0.05 level of significance

The findings revealed in table 4, a significant disparity in good governance practices in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability. Using One-Way ANOVA the results show that there was a significant difference in terms of Transparency under good governance practices, with a Sum of Squares of 40.237 and Mean Square (20.118); $F(2) = 28.014$, $p = .000$. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in terms of

Responsiveness under good governance practices, with a Sum of Squares of 36.964 and Mean Square (18.482); $F(2) = 24.770$, $p = .000$. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in terms of accountability under good governance practices, with a Sum of Squares of 48.331 and Mean Square (24.166); $F(2) = 29.948$, $p = .000$. Thus, the assumption of a null hypothesis is failed to reject. Since all variables are significant, post hoc analysis helps determine what specific set of categories are significantly different in the level of good governance practices of elected officials.

Using the Post Hoc Test – Tukey HSD, in terms of Transparency, there is a significant difference in the level of good governance practices between the elected officials and the residents (and vice versa) with a mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.65100 ($SE = 0.13927$), $p = .000$. In addition, there is also a significant difference between the appointed personnel and the residents with a mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.55284 ($SE = 0.08485$), $p = .000$. Thus, the assumption of null hypothesis is rejected.

In addition, using the Post Hoc Test – Tukey HSD, in terms of Responsiveness, there is a significant difference in the level of good governance practices between the elected officials and the residents (and vice versa) with a mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.59983 ($SE = 0.14196$), $p = .000$. Also, there is a significant difference between the appointed personnel and the residents with a mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.53879 ($SE = 0.08649$), $p = .000$. Thus, the assumption of hypothesis is rejected.

Additionally, with a mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.74122 ($SE = 0.14763$), $p = .000$, the Post Hoc Test – Tukey HSD indicates a significant difference in the degree of good governance practices between the elected officials and the residents (and vice versa) in terms of accountability. Furthermore, a significant difference (mean difference (I-J) of ± 0.59481 ($SE = 0.08994$), $p = .000$, exists between the residents and the appointed personnel.

Therefore, the hypothesis's premise is rejected. The findings imply that accountability, Responsiveness, and Transparency are critical components of elected officials' good governance practices in the chosen barangays of Sagay City. Based on elected officials, appointed staff, and residents, the results imply that the elected officials are carrying out their roles and responsibilities effectively.

The study by Han et al. (2019) titled "Perceived Quality of Governance and Trust in Government in Rural China: A Comparison between Villagers and Officials" confirms that while officials had higher levels of trust in the government, their perceptions of the quality of national governance did not differ significantly from those of the general villagers. Additionally, there are no appreciable differences in the impacts of perceived governance quality on trust in the majority of governmental levels between local authorities and villagers.

In this study, there is a significant difference in the level of good governance practices of the selected barangays in Sagay City.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the study's conclusions, excellent governance practices such as Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability, are significantly different based on the responses. This means that the elected officials in the local government perform good governance practices wherein they rule their constituents in a good political manner which they execute fairness in decision-making for the progression of their people.

Elected officials also observe the current situation in their barangays so they can implement good governance, they play a role in ensuring good governance practices at the local level. Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability are essential variables of good governance that elected officials must possess to serve their constituents effectively. Also they are open and honest in dealing with the public. They provide transparent decision-making processes, budget allocations, and use of public funds, and they are available to respond to public requests. In addition, elected officials are accountable for their actions and decisions, and they are responsible for any misconduct or wrongdoing. They follow protocols and proper procedures and are subject to oversight by their local community.

Furthermore, they can respond to the needs and concerns of the community, and they are accessible and responsive to the needs of their members with the collaboration of government agencies and stakeholders to address issues regarding good governance practices. Thus, elected officials can create a more inclusive, equitable, and successful community for all by adhering to good governance standards such as openness, Responsiveness, and accountability.

Since the p-value in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability was .000, it is significant, and thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. From the findings and conclusion of this study on the good governance practices of the selected barangays in Sagay City, the research advances the following recommendations to improve and enhance the good governance practices.

Firstly, elected officials can continue to exercise good governance in terms of Transparency, Responsiveness, and accountability with the help of the DILG they may urge community members to participate in barangay planning activities to guarantee a clear and appropriate distribution of rules and obligations. They may inform their jurisdiction to abide by their community rules and regulations to maintain good governance practices. They also ensure the proper usage of its budget to ensure wise and productive use of public funds; with that, their constituents will follow their way of governance.

Appointed personnel may follow and disseminate the barangay ordinances mandated by the local and national governments. They may be properly trained and supported by the local government officials to perform duties effectively, and they may establish clear communication channels for decision-making and problem-solving within the barangay.

Moreover, residents may participate in projects and programs of local governments for the development of their community. Residents may also consider advocating for strong legal frameworks and oversight mechanisms to ensure that elected officials adhere to ethical considerations and good governance practices.

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