

Citizens' Satisfaction Level On Governance: A Case From The City Of Palayan Nueva Ecija

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ABSTRACT

Local Government Units (LGUs) play a crucial role in promoting community development by creating essential links between the public and the governing bodies. Citizens are in a better position to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in relation to their specific needs and timeliness. It is critical to comprehensively identify community needs in order to effectively address them. This will ensure that all relevant stakeholders receive the assistance, programs, and services they require to improve their quality of life. If this event occurred, it would have a significant impact on our country's national economy. The primary aim of this research is to determine the level of satisfaction among Palayanos with the local governance practices. The study also looks at the difficulties citizens and other stakeholders have in navigating the services and programs provided by the local government. Finally, the researchers developed a list of that the local government can use in developing the comprehensive development plan in order to effectively deliver its services and initiatives in order to meet the needs of its residents and the broader community. Quantitative research methodology was applied to examine the respondents. Given the necessity for computation, quantitative research was appropriate for this study given that it used percentages and frequencies to examine the study's variables. This study primarily aims to evaluate the programs and services of Palayan city using the Citizen Satisfaction Index System in terms of Health Services, Support to Education, Social Welfare Services, Governance and Response, Public Works and Infrastructure, Environmental Management, and Economic and Investment Promotion. The results shows that most of the Palayanos are able to experience the programs/activities of the Local Government very satisfactory. On the other hand, the respondents proposed some of the problems that the Local Government Unit has to provide solutions and actions to ensure that the community will experience the quality of life.

Keywords: *Citizens Satisfaction; Governance; Local Government Unit*

Introduction

The government is in charge of enacting laws and policies that are necessary for society to function. It is expected that the government will take proactive measures to improve the general welfare of its citizens. Republic Act No. 7160, also known as the Local Government Code of the Philippines, lays out the procedures for assigning responsibility and authority to local government units (LGUs) for the delivery of essential services. Improving local service delivery and increasing the efficiency of resource allocation were the goals.

Local Government Units (LGUs) play a crucial role in promoting community development by creating essential links between the public and the governing bodies. In addition to making sure that policies are followed and influencing the local population, they actively participate in addressing the different problems and worries that each of their communities faces.

The LGU serves as the alter ego office of the National Government. The devolution doctrine is the source of this idea. Devolution refers to the transfer or delegation of authority from a central government at a higher level to a local or regional administration at a lower one. This suggests that local governments will now be tasked with the planning and implementation of some projects, programs, and activities that were previously handled by a centralized, national organization.

In terms of taxation, infrastructure development, and basic social and economic services, the LGUs' jurisdiction and accountability are outlined in Section 18 of the Philippine Local Government Code. Apart from the aforementioned legal provision, the state has inherent authority to carry out these actions. Because it is

inherent, this power cannot be taken away from the state as long as it exists. These authorities cover the LGU's jurisdictional boundaries and authority over eminent domain, law enforcement, and taxation. These powers enable the state to obtain various grants and funds, which it can then use for a range of government expenses, including projects, programs, and activities.

With the above context, the study aimed to widen the purview of decision-making by encouraging stakeholder participation, especially locally. It is expected that local government entities will be in charge of offering their constituents' basic services under this Republic Act. This will be accomplished with the leadership and proactive work of different department heads and elected LGU officials.

In the Philippines, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) is responsible for maintaining public safety, promoting peace and order, and strengthening local government units' ability to effectively deliver basic services to the general public. The democratically elected president of the nation receives assistance from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) in managing the affairs of local government entities. This is accomplished by creating and enforcing laws, policies, and guidelines that control the operations of local governments. A variety of measurement techniques, such as competitive appraisal, surveys, assessment tools, and the LGU Scorecard, were used to assess the capabilities and performance of Local Government Units (LGUs).

In 2012, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) took the initiative to introduce, launch, and conduct a pilot test of the Citizen Satisfaction Index System (CSIS), a performance measurement tool for Local Government Units (LGUs). CSIS implementation began in 2013 with the goal of gathering feedback from citizens on their level of awareness and satisfaction with the basic services provided by the local government unit (LGU).

In this context, municipalities must assess the extent to which citizens benefit from the services they provide (Orselli et al., 2017). The Citizen Satisfaction Index System (CSIS) is a useful tool for gathering relevant data to assess citizen satisfaction. It can be used effectively to inform the agenda-setting process for Local Government Units' (LGUs') economic and human development plans and goals. The CSIS was reestablished as part of the DILG's renewed and expanded commitment to improving opportunities for participation in local governance, with the ultimate goal of fostering the advancement of transparent, accountable, and high-performing local governments.

The Citizen Satisfaction Survey evaluates seven distinct services, which include Health, Support to Education, Social Welfare, Governance, Public Works and Infrastructure, Environment, and Economic and Investment Promotion.

CSIS data has significant potential for various stakeholders who are actively involved in contributing to socioeconomic development at both the local and national levels. CSIS data is a valuable resource for stakeholders, particularly local government units (LGUs), in developing evidence-based policies and making informed management decisions in order to fulfill their responsibility of providing essential services to the population. Local Government Units (LGUs) may benefit from the Citizen Satisfaction Index System (CSIS) by effectively gauging public sentiment and thus improving their ability to respond to the needs and concerns of a larger segment of the population. The use of data can improve decision-making processes for policies and programs that prioritize the improvement of services in specific areas.

However, it is worth noting that currently, the conduct of Citizen Satisfaction Index System (CSIS) by Local Government Units (LGUs) is not occurring on a regular basis. In some cases, due to excessive workloads, the completion of this assessment may have been inadvertently overlooked. If the assessment is not performed on a regular basis, it will be difficult for a Local Government Unit (LGU) to determine which programs to offer to the general public. This CSIS should be part of the LGU's system so that they can list the structured programs, projects, and activities (PPAs) to be written down on their Comprehensive Development Plan (CPD) under the list of structured programs, projects, and activities (PPAs).

It is critical to comprehensively identify community needs in order to effectively address them. This will ensure that all relevant stakeholders receive the assistance, programs, and services they require to improve their quality of life. If this event occurred, it would have a significant impact on our country's national economy.

Citizens are in a better position to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in relation to their specific needs and timeliness. Moreover, citizens, as the intended recipients and end-users of public services, possess the legal jurisdiction to evaluate the performance of the Local Government Unit (LGU) in fulfilling its obligation of delivering services to the population. Increasing citizens' awareness, according to Almarshad (2015), is a valuable strategy for encouraging their participation and improving service delivery.

The city of Palayan is located in the province of Nueva Ecija. The aforementioned city comprises a total of nineteen barangays. The main economic activities of the region are around rice agriculture, vegetable production, etc. The city possesses an agricultural-based economy. Additionally, it provides the seven distinct services that are offered under the criteria of CSIS.

The Locale of the study was selected due to the researchers' affiliation as professors in the said city. The researchers aim to enhance the services offered by the government.

Therefore, the primary aim of this research is to determine the level of satisfaction among Palayanos with the local governance practices. This study assessed the citizens satisfaction level on the seven programs and services of the Local Government of Palayan, Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it answers the following questions:

How may the satisfaction level of the respondents based on the Citizen Satisfaction Index System be assessed in terms of Health Services, Support to Education, Social Welfare Services, Governance and Response, Public Works and Infrastructure, Environmental Management, and Economic and Investment Promotion?

What are the problems encountered by the respondents in the availability of the services and programs of the LGU in terms of Health Services, Support to Education, Social Welfare Services, Governance and Response, Public Works and Infrastructure, Environmental Management, and Economic and Investment Promotion?

What list of structured programs, projects, and activities may be proposed to address the problems encountered by the respondents in availing the programs and services of the LGU?

Review of Related Literature

Operation of Local Government Units (LGUs). The administration of towns, cities, counties, and districts is the responsibility of local government. One of the primary functions of local government is to deliver goods and services. Local governing bodies should represent and include individuals in determining specific local public needs and methods to meet those needs (Fazlagić & Szczepankiewicz, 2020).

According to *Baseline Study on Policy and Governance Gaps for the Local Government Support Fund Assistance to Municipalities (LGSF-AM) Program (Integrated Report)* (2024), local governments continue to expand at different rates and face challenges in providing devolved basic services. Simultaneously, the national government has been providing various types of assistance to local governments in order for them to carry out devolved tasks and improve their ability to exercise true budgetary autonomy. A desk study discovered a low revenue effort as well as insufficient use of mandatory development funding across municipalities. These factors, such as a lack of clarity on development initiatives, a lack of cooperation, and poor monitoring, have been linked to delayed local development and inadequate planning.

To investigate ideas about sustainable management, public management researchers and local government professionals are invited to form partnerships in order to improve evidence-based decision-making in local government (Zeemering, 2021).

As claimed by Beshi and Kaur (2019), the importance of transparency in local government cannot be overstated. Because people want clear information in order to assess and monitor the government's operations, as well as to know what is happening and what will happen. In Malaysia and Singapore, the concept of "good governance" is frequently linked to and confused with transparency. It is regarded as a factor that can improve the performance of local legislative bodies and serve as a mechanism to improve the quality of legislative services in accordance with public funds allocation. Nonetheless, as Gabriel et al. (2019) point out, there is a gap in the understanding and application of openness and accountability. Despite this, these two principles continue to be effective tools for fostering public trust. Those perceived accountability procedures have a significant impact on public trust in local government, and citizens deserve to be governed fairly and to receive appropriate responses to their questions. Responding to this is thus regarded as an essential component of effective governance practice.

Importance of Local Governance. Local governance is a perfect illustration of decentralization since it is basically a system that empowers individuals to control their own local affairs. As a result, it should be founded on a set of fundamentals as well as prerequisites for implementing autonomy and the goals for local government established by the state and local communities (Fatih, 2018).

The variance in the quality of local governance in Indonesia is indeed related to both the variation in the intensity of clientelistic practices and the extent to which the local economy relies on the state (Berenschot & Mulder, 2019).

As written in Department of Tourism (2010), national governments may contribute to economic progress despite local governments' importance. Local and national governments supplement each other. Both levels need each other to support the economy.

In the view of Maravilla and Grayman (2020), participation is intrinsically political, yet it cannot be overlooked as a powerful weapon for practicing democracy. Without forsaking the formal domains of participation, the paper emphasizes the possibility of participatory behaviors in popular and informal places.

Implementation of Programs, Projects, and Activities in other Countries. Program implementation refers to the process of ensuring the successful functioning of a program. The program's structure and operation encompass the identification of individuals involved, the nature of the program, its location, and the manner in which it is established and executed. The apprehension regarding the execution of social programs arises from the acknowledgment that policies cannot be comprehended in isolation from the methods by which they are

implemented. The successful establishment of initiatives relies on more than just a contributing component; effective implementation plays a crucial role. Existing research indicates that the level of implementation quality exerts a substantial influence on the attainment of desired results. If a program is implemented with suboptimal or just satisfactory execution, it is improbable that its objectives will be accomplished, or the outcomes will be of diminished significance.

Program execution is subject to the availability of sufficient money, which may fluctuate over time due to economic circumstances, the preferences of Federal and regional governments and funding organizations, and other factors. It is important to regularly assess and prioritize initiatives in Los Angeles, California, taking into consideration funding constraints and the objectives of the city (*Preparing for Rising Seas: How the State Can Help Support Local Coastal Adaptation Efforts*, 2019). In contrast, the government of Thailand is actively pursuing the advancement of open and digital government policies within the country, with the objective of facilitating their effective design and implementation. Furthermore, the government seeks to capitalize on the potential synergies that exist between these two domains of public sector reform, as highlighted by the Cangiano et al. (2013). Based on the aforementioned framework, it can be observed that each state has formulated a comprehensive national development policy with the aim of attaining the optimal welfare of their respective populations.

Mihalic et al. (2004) asserts that the identification of effective programs has been a prominent focus within the national discourse on violence reduction over the past decade. There has been a growing emphasis by federal funding agencies on the implementation of programs that have been proven effective for promoting social welfare. In the United States, federal agencies and select private organizations have compiled lists of programs that exhibit discernible evidence of favorable outcomes pertaining to violence/aggression, delinquency, substance misuse, and associated risk and protective variables. Collectively, this body of work has yielded a substantial collection of evidence-based programs that are available for selection by practitioners in the field. Moreover, in China, there has been a notable emphasis on prioritizing social welfare for women within the framework of their administration. In accordance with Sustainable Development, China has implemented national initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and ensuring the balanced development of both men and women (*Gender Equality and Women's Development in China*, 2024). These programs have been designed to establish clear objectives and strategies for achieving gender parity. It may be inferred that individual states devise distinct strategies to develop suitable programs and initiatives for the social welfare of their citizens.

Program implementation varies throughout different countries. Each country has its own distinct approach to implementation, which is influenced by its prioritization of economic factors and investment opportunities. The establishment and development of multiple agencies in Singapore to assist and lead the implementation of economic strategies have played a pivotal role in their governance. Kumar et al. (2010) argue that the structural characteristics of the system reflect the initial implementation of a tripartite model including government, business, and labor in order to promote economic growth. While certain nations prioritize governance and leadership, others endeavor to enhance their economy and improve the standard of living for their citizens through various initiatives aimed at expediting national growth. The Republic of Korea (ROK) has emerged as a notable exemplar of successful development for developing nations, as it has effectively transcended poverty to attain both economic prosperity and democratic governance. The Government of the Republic of Korea has made significant efforts to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into both domestic and international policy frameworks (Park & Park, 2023). These efforts include various approaches to incorporating the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of the SDGs into policies and actions. Additionally, the government has conducted an analysis of initiatives aimed at ensuring the principle of leaving no one behind. Furthermore, there have been endeavors to adapt the institutional framework in order to effectively implement the SDGs.

Japan has implemented a Future Vision 2030 plan that encompasses several technical methods in the areas of mobility, supply-chain, healthcare, and living technologies, thereby presenting economic and investment prospects (Yang et al., 2019). In addition, the United States endeavors to bolster its manufacturing sector through the strategic implementation of Advanced Manufacturing Partnerships (AMPs), a pioneering initiative centered around collaborative endeavors between the public and private sectors. Furthermore, the government spearheads the Networking Information Technology R&D (NITRD) program, which aims to foster advancements in the field of information technology through coordinated efforts. In contrast, Germany has advanced its Industry 4.0 strategy to the Platform Industry 4.0 strategy, while concurrently providing assistance for the development of the Cyber Physical System (CPS) (*Industrie 4.0*, 2024). The aforementioned nations implemented technology investments as a component of their economic growth plan.

There is an undeniable need to prioritize the consideration of health care as a crucial program. Healthcare services in Australia are financed by a combination of funding sources, namely the Australian Government and private health insurance. The funding for this initiative is derived from the tax contributions made by all Australian citizens (*Australian Healthcare System*, 2023). In Japan, it is observed that Japanese inhabitants tend to have a comparatively higher life expectancy than individuals in other countries. This phenomenon may be attributed to the presence of a well-regarded healthcare system inside the nation (*How Foreigners Can Access the Health Care*

System in Japan, 2024). The healthcare systems of various countries prioritize preventative treatment over reactive care, in contrast to other healthcare systems.

Finally, the education services program holds significant importance over the entire state. In recent years, the Government of the Philippines has undertaken a comprehensive education reform initiative aimed at providing all citizens with the necessary skills to actively and effectively participate in societal activities (Al-SamarraiSamer, 2023). In recent years, numerous nations have implemented significant reforms within their education systems, thereby facilitating the inclusion of foreign providers of educational services. The significance of accreditation, quality assurance, and recognition of international degrees and certificates has grown in prominence for both providers and recipients of educational services (*WTO | Services: Education Services*, 2024).

However, considering the aforementioned context, it is important to note that not all planned policies can be effectively implemented in every action. Furthermore, when making decisions, certain aims may hold greater significance compared to others. The decision makers hold the responsibility of determining the most effective means of implementing the adopted policies of the general plan, with careful evaluation of factual conditions, in order to prioritize the well-being and welfare of the public in terms of health and safety.

Citizen Satisfaction Level towards Local Governance. As stated by Beerli et al. (2018), higher levels of public trust and satisfaction with local government are connected with performance management. Furthermore, the socioeconomic level of the community moderates the mediated link between performance management and citizen satisfaction and trust.

The constant availability of such services has a higher predictive value for the desire to utilize them indefinitely. It is advised that platforms engage in structural assurance controls. These measures may be used to develop a sustainable model for such services. A successful confluence of the variables will hasten the delivery of government services by altering the public service environment (Upadhyay et al. ,2022).

According to Nie and Wang (2022), citizen satisfaction is favorably influenced by actional and explanatory replies, but citizen satisfaction is adversely influenced by referral responses. Furthermore, external influences have a moderating impact on these interactions.

In the context of a holistic viewpoint, every perspective and their associated design elements contributed to their own service perceptions, which impacted perceived service quality, and influenced citizen happiness. Service perceptions indicated that they have a complementary role in influencing perceived service quality (Chan et al., 2020).

Tejedo-Romero et al. (2022) asserts that citizen engagement is promoted as an effective tool for retaining and promoting government legitimacy, but the degree to which and how participation influences government trust has not been properly explored. Citizens who think that their perspectives on healthcare reform are taken into account by the government tend to be more satisfied with the healthcare system's performance, which leads to greater confidence in the government.

Systems Theory. Hussain et al. (2019) posits that according to management systems theory, every organization may be conceptualized as a unified and interconnected system comprising several interdependent components or subsystems. Every element of the entire system is interconnected and cannot function optimally without the presence of the others.

Implementations of beneficial organizational activities, such as work tools, financial aid, supporting policies, and engagement and wellness initiatives, are carried out at the team level. The presence of inadequate technology infrastructure, weak communication, insufficient training, punishing policies/practices, organizational leadership challenges, unresponsive colleagues, and ineffective team policy/process implementation were deemed unhelpful. The implementation of hybrid work arrangements has resulted in significant benefits for employees, including increased savings, enhanced productivity, and improved work-life balance. Nevertheless, individuals are still faced with the challenge of blurred boundaries and the difficulty of disconnecting from work, both while working remotely and now with the added task of sustaining productivity owing to changes in their work location (Teng-Calleja et al., 2023).

Iranshahi et al. (2024) state that the effectiveness of governance structures is a major aspect in their stability and resilience, as well as the capacity of governments to withstand turbulent times surrounding them. When a political structure falls, the first step of that system is a series of inefficiencies, and this is the primary cause of its demise, before any other element. To assess the efficiency of governments (monopoly on the use of force, extractive, molding national identity, regulatory, sustaining internal cohesion, and redistribution), it was adapted to the political framework of this age.

Effective communication is a crucial and essential element of an organization, playing a fundamental role in promoting collaboration in the workplace. This, in turn, has a direct influence on the performance of the organization and the process of decision-making. Utilizing the systems theory indicates that vital and efficient communication possesses an advantageous impact on the efficiency of an organization (Musheke & Phiri, 2021).

In connection with social relations, Hofkirchner (2019) proves that Bertalanffy's organizational links are easily associated with social ties. His view is that social links, like organizational linkages, are unobservable and

need theoretical explanation. His worldview suggests a social system structure were social interactions and actors balance unity and variation as ought.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers used a quantitative research methodology to examine the respondents. Given the necessity for computation, quantitative research was appropriate for this study given that it used percentages and frequencies to examine the study's variables. Quantitative research employs mathematical, statistical, and computational techniques tool for attaining outcomes. It is clear in its goal in attempting to quantify the effects. By looking for data that can be projected to a larger population, you may identify the problem and determine how common it is.

Quantitative research refers to the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data. It has the capability to identify patterns and calculate averages, formulate hypotheses, examine causality, and extend findings to larger groups.

A descriptive study design aims to systematically gather data in order to accurately characterize a phenomena, circumstance, or population. More precisely, it assists in addressing the what, when, where, and how inquiries related to the research problem, rather than focusing on the why aspect. The descriptive research strategy allows for the examination of the target variables through a range of research methods. While qualitative data may be employed for descriptive purposes on occasion, quantitative data is predominantly utilized (Voxco, 2021).

Respondents

This study was conducted in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, where the respondents of this research came from.

The respondents of this study were the citizens of Palayan City, Nueva Ecija. The initial requirements that were considered in the determination of the respondents were the legality of age, which is 18 years old and above , and the length of the residence, which is at least six months. These criteria ensured that the respondents were not only legally eligible to take part in the study but also had enough knowledge about the city to offer meaningful and well-informed perspectives.

This study utilized the Raosoft application to determine the sample size with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, there are 381 total number respondents.

This study employed the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a type of non-probability sampling method when a researcher exercises their own judgement to pick specific individuals from the population to participate in their surveys (Ben-Joseph, 2021).

Data Gathering Instrument

The study's findings were obtained through the use of survey forms and random face-to-face interviews. The database was utilized to gather and store the data, and statistical software was employed to analyze the findings. Survey research is the primary and essential tool used in all quantitative outcome research procedures and studies.

Respondents were given instructions to complete the survey questionnaire, which is a series of questions designed to help the study achieve its objectives. The survey questions were divided into two parts.

Part I consists of questions that assess the satisfaction level of the citizen using the Citizen Satisfaction Index System Instrument. This part of the instrument was formulated in the modified 4-point Likert scale, Very Satisfied (4); Satisfied (3); Somehow Satisfied (2); Dissatisfied (1). It was patterned and modified from the part of 3.1 Service Areas and Service Indicators, website of the DILG, copyrighted in the year 2023.

Part II comprises the problems encountered by the respondents in terms of the seven programs and services of the Local Government of Palayan, City. This part is made up of an open-ended question and categorized. The respondents were asked to write their honest opinions regarding the questions.

The research instrument was validated corrections and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft; interviews were done with the other consumers to check the reliability and validity of the instrument.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers have collected data and information from relevant research and papers available on the Internet. The questionnaire was devised based on the collected material and reviewed by the researchers' mentors. In addition, the researchers have performed a trial to assess the dependability and accuracy of the developed questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was tested and measured to check the internal consistency with the following consistency results, Health services garnered .9622; Support to Education has

.9439; Social Welfare Services has .915; Governance and Response has .8257; Public works and infrastructure has .8324; Environmental Management has .8229; and Economic and Investment Promotion has .8887. The research instrument's validity was confirmed by submitting it to experts for their opinions. The experts scored the instrument with a general weighted mean of 4.88, indicating a high level of quality giving a verbal interpretation of "Very good" surveys. The instrument's reliability coefficient was assessed and quantified to determine its internal consistency. The study instrument's validity was confirmed by presenting it to specialists who evaluated and graded it.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from the respondents was encoded, tallied, and analyzed. Statistical tools such as Percentage, Frequency Distribution, and Weighted Mean were used in analyzing the data gathered.

Table 1
Scales for Interpretation of the Satisfaction Level

Scale	Mean range	Verbal interpretation	Description
4	3.26 - 4.00	Very Satisfied	Expectation was achieved and No improvement is needed
3	2.51 - 3.25	Satisfied	Expectation was achieved but there are still improvements to be done
2	1.76 - 2.50	Somehow Satisfied	Expectation was not achieved and there are some improvements to be done
1	1.00 - 1.75	Dissatisfied	Expectation was not totally achieved and there are lots of improvements to be done

Table 1 shows the scales used by the researchers in interpreting the data collected using the 4-point Likert scale.

Aside from the scale mentioned above, the researchers used the following statistical tools to classify:

The researchers utilized weighted mean to assess the satisfaction level of the respondents based on the CSIS. In describing the related problems encountered by the respondents, frequency, and percentage were utilized by the researchers.

RESULTS

1. Assessment of satisfaction level of the respondents based on the Citizen Satisfaction Index System

1.1 Health Services

Table 2. *Health Services*

Health Services	Weighted mean
1.Vaccination for Infants/Children	3.53
2.Pre-natal/Post-Natal/Childbirth Services	3.49
3.Free General Consultations/Access to Secondary and/or Tertiary Health Care	3.49
4. Free Basic Medicine or Low-Cost Medicine Program	3.40
5. Prevention and Management of Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases	3.43
6. Basic Dental/Oral Hygiene	3.17
7. Family Planning/ Reproductive Health Distribution of Reproductive Health Supplies, Information Dissemination and Other Services	3.32
AVW	3.40
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6. Basic Dental/Oral Hygiene	3.17
7. Family Planning/ Reproductive Health Distribution of Reproductive Health Supplies, Information Dissemination and Other Services	3.32
AVW	3.40

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above indicates the respondents' degree of satisfaction with the health services provided by the Palayan City Local Government Unit. The "vaccination for infants/children" has the highest weighted mean of 3.53, which is translated verbally as very satisfied. The result shows that the respondent's expectation was met, and no improvement is required; the service is ranked first.

1.2 Support to Education

Table 3. *Support to Education*

Support to Education	Weighted Mean
1. Provision of Medical and/or Nutritional Services to School Clinics	3.50
2. Sports Programs and Activities	3.40
3. Scholarships and Other Assistance Programs for Students	3.48
4. Alternative Learning System and/or Other Special Education Programs	3.45
AVW	3.46

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above shows how satisfied respondents are with the support to education offered by the Palayan City Local Government Unit. The highest weighted mean is 3.50 for "provision of medical and/or nutritional services to school clinics," which translates orally as "very satisfied." The outcome demonstrates that the respondent's expectations were met, and no more improvement is required; the service is ranked #1.

1.3 Social Welfare Services

Table 4. *Social Welfare Services*

Social Welfare Services	Weighted mean
1. Child and Youth Welfare Program	3.43
2. Women's Welfare Program	3.35
3. Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Welfare Program	3.42
4. Older Persons / Senior Citizens Program	3.48
5. Family and Community Welfare Program	3.44
6. Programs for Internally Displaced Persons	3.35
AVW	3.41

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above illustrates how happy respondents are with the Palayan City Local Government Unit's social welfare services. The highest weighted mean for the "Older Persons / Senior Citizens Program" is 3.48, which translates orally as "very satisfied." This result shows that the respondent's expectations were met, and no more improvement is required; the service is ranked first.

The greatest weighted average in this category is 3.48, which corresponds to "very satisfied" when expressed verbally. On average, respondents are highly pleased and fulfilled with the Older Persons / Senior Citizens Program provided by the local government. A weighted mean of 3.48 indicates that the respondents' expectations have been not only fulfilled but surpassed, showing a commendable execution of the program.

1.4 Governance and Response

Table 5. *Governance and Response*

Governance and Response	Weighted mean
1. Delivery of Frontline Services (retrieval of birth and marriage certificates, public records, land titles, etc.)	3.36
2. Local Government's Response or Action on Complaints against an Office, Official or Personnel of the LGU	3.43
3. Mobile LGU Services; Provision of Municipal Services to the Barangays	3.25
4. Conflict and Dispute Resolution in the Barangays	3.28
5. Timely Response on Peace and Order, and Public Safety-Related Incidents	3.38
6. Traffic Management	3.28
7. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management	3.37
8. Public Information Services	3.29
AVW	3.34

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above shows how satisfied respondents are with the governance and response of the Palayan City Local Government Unit. The highest weighted mean for the "Local Government's Response or Action on Complaints Against an Office, Official, or Personnel of the LGU" is 3.43, which translates orally as "very satisfied." This result indicates that the respondent's expectations were met, and no further improvement is needed; the service is ranked first. According to the data collected, Palayanos are highly satisfied with the governance and

reaction offered by their Local Government Unit (LGU), particularly the steps taken in response to citizen concerns.

1.5 Public Works Infrastructure

Table 6. *Public Works Infrastructure*

Public Works Infrastructure	Weighted mean
1. Barangay Roads	3.24
2. Municipal Roads and Bridges	3.25
3. Barangay Hall	3.35
4. Multipurpose Halls or Civic Centers	3.32
5. Public Markets and Satellite Markets	3.40
6. Public Parks and Open Spaces	3.47
7. Road Safety	3.38
8. Sports Centers and Facilities	3.38
9. Information and Reading Center	3.31
10. Municipal Government Buildings	3.38
11. Public Cemetery	3.34
12. Flood Control Management System	3.36
AWM	3.35

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above indicates how happy respondents are with the Palayan City Local Government Unit's Public works and infrastructure. The highest weighted mean for the Public Parks and Open Spaces service is 3.47, which translates orally as "very satisfied." This result shows that the respondent's expectations were met, and no additional improvement is required; the service is placed #1.

1.6 Environmental Management

Table 7. *Environmental Management*

Environmental Management	Weighted mean
1. Community-Based Greening Projects	3.23
2. Air Pollution Control Program	3.14
3 Solid Waste Management	3.27
4. Waste Water Management	3.24
5.Clean-up Programs/Projects	3.31
AWM	3.24

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above shows how satisfied respondents are with the Palayan City Local Government Unit's environmental management. The highest weighted mean for the Clean-up Programs/Projects service is 3.31, which translates orally as "very satisfied." This result indicates that the respondent's expectations were met, and no extra improvement is required; the service is ranked first.

1.7 Economic and Investment Promotion

Table 8. *Economic and Investment Promotion*

Economic and Investment Promotion	Weighted mean
1. Public Employment Services	3.28
2. Regulation and Supervision of Businesses	3.29
3. Promotion of Barangay Micro Business Enterprises	3.13
4. Livelihood Programs	3.25
5. Development and Maintenance of Tourist Attractions and Facilities	3.29
6. Product/Brand Marketing and Promotion of Local Goods and Tourist Attractions	3.25
7. Investment Promotion Activities such as Trade Fairs, Fiestas, Business Events and Similar Events	3.30
8. Organization, Accreditation and Training of Tourism-Related Concessions	3.28
9. Organization and Development of Farmers, Fishermen and their Cooperatives	3.14
10. Access to Irrigation Facilities or Use of Irrigation Equipment	3.12
11. Prevention and Control of Plant and Animal Pests and Diseases; Fish Kills and Diseases	3.02
12. Distribution of Planting/Farming/Fishing Materials and/or Equipment	3.20
13. Access to Facilities that Promote Agricultural Production such as Fish Hatcheries and Breeding Stations	3.13
14. Water and Soil Resource Utilization and Conservation Projects	3.23
15. Post-Harvest Facilities such as Crop Dryers, Slaughter Houses or Fish Processing Facilities	3.11
16. Accessible Farm Harvest Buying/Trading Stations	3.22
17. Enforcement of Fishery Laws in Municipal Waters to Promote Sustainable Use of Aquatic Resources	3.16
AWM	3.20

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very Satisfied

The table above illustrates how satisfied respondents are with the economic and investment promotion of the Palayan City Local Government Unit. The highest weighted mean for "Investment Promotion Activities such as Trade Fairs, Fiestas, Business Events, and Similar Events" is 3.30, which translates orally as "very satisfied." This result indicates that the respondent's expectations were met, and no additional improvement is needed; the service is ranked first.

Table 9. Summary of the Satisfaction Level of the Respondents Based on the Citizen Satisfaction Index System

Programs and Services of the Local Government of Palayan City	Weighted Mean
Health Services	3.40
Support to Education	3.46
Social Welfare Services	3.41
Governance and Response Services	3.34
Public Works and Infrastructure	3.35
Environmental Management Services	3.24

Economic and Investment Opportunities	3.20
Average Weighted Mean	3.34

Legend: 1.00-1.75 Dissatisfied; 1.76-2.50 Somehow Satisfied; 2.51-3.25 Satisfied; 3.26- 4.00 Very

Satisfied

The table above shows that among the programs and services provided by the local government unit of Palayan City, Support to Education ranked number 1 with 3.46 weighted mean with verbal interpretation of “Very Satisfied” while Economic and Investment Opportunities ranked last with weighted mean of 3.20 and verbally interpreted as “Satisfied”

2. The problems encountered by the respondents in the availability of the services and programs of the LGU

2.1 Problems encountered in terms of Health Services

According to the data gathered, 20 percent of the entire sample size has problems with the LGU's health services and programs. According to the findings, majority of the respondents claimed that "limited health services" provided by the Palayan LGU was the source of their concerns. Other problems encountered by the respondents were as follows, the city infirmary cannot assist patients immediately even in emergency; slow service and dispensing of medicine in RHU; the staff are not giving positive attitude; and lack of health machineries and equipment.

2.2 Problems encountered in terms of Support to Education

According to the gathered data, 17 percent of the total sample size had difficulty accessing the LGU's support to education services and programs. Majority of the respondents expressed worry about the absence of scholarship granted by the Palayan LGU. There were also some findings indicating that the process for releasing the scholarship stipend is too slow and it is hard to apply for scholarship.

2.3 Problems encountered in terms of Social Welfare Services

16 percent of the total sample size of the respondents have encountered problems in terms of social welfare services. Lack of beneficiary monitoring was the main problem in social welfare services encountered by the respondents. They have also encountered slow announcements of information about benefits and delayed distribution of Benefits (Cash Benefits, Goods etc.) in terms of Social Welfare Services.

2.4 Problems encountered in terms of Governance and Response

The research data indicates that eight percent of the respondents provides significant sentiment throughout the community concerning the local governance in Palayan. 5.77% of respondents were dissatisfied with the local government's response pace, deeming it too slow. Residents are worried about the promptness and effectiveness of activities carried out by the local authorities. Furthermore, a minority of 1.57% cited concerns regarding leadership or administration in different barangays.

2.5 Problems encountered in terms of Public Works and Infrastructure

The 27% of the total sample size of the respondents have problems with the availability of the LGU's services and programs in terms of Public Works and Infrastructure. "Roads are in poor condition" was the most frequently encountered problem. Also, the results show that the following were the other problems of the respondents in terms of public works and infrastructure, roads are flood prone; roadwork is slow (can lead to traffic); and inadequate infrastructure development

2.6 Problems encountered in terms of Environmental Management

12 percent of the total sample size has issues with the LGU's environmental management. According to the data, majority of the respondents expressed worry about the "lack of garbage collection schedule" by the Palayan LGU as their main environmental management problems. The results also show the other problems in terms of the environmental management such as ‘the waterways are not in good condition’ and existence of pollutions (Waste and Air).

2.7 Problems encountered in terms of Economic and Investment Promotion

A total of 21% of the sample size proved that they are problematic in terms of economic and investment promotion of the city. Result indicates that majority of the respondents have faced limited business economic opportunities, while other respondents have encountered limited solutions to individual financial and economic problems in relation to economic and investment opportunities. Lastly, poor employment opportunity happened to be another problem of the respondents in terms of economic and investment promotion.

DISCUSSION

1. Assessment of satisfaction level of the respondents based on the Citizen Satisfaction Index System

In terms of health services, the results highlight a general pattern of high satisfaction among Palayan City citizens with the health services offered by their Local Government Unit (LGU), particularly focusing on the vital aspect of immunization for newborns and children. This positive mood indicates that the LGU has effectively and successfully met the healthcare demands of its residents. According to the respondents, vaccination programs given by the Rural Health Unit have a crucial role in protecting the economic well-being of their households by reducing the occurrence of vaccine-preventable diseases. Families experience less financial strain from medical expenses associated with treating these diseases, resulting in enhanced economic production due to a healthier workforce. Respondents reported significant cost savings with this government program. It prevented their children from potential future illnesses.

Recognizing the Local Government Unit's involvement in providing children vaccinations is in line with acknowledging the crucial job these units play in promoting and protecting public health. According to the respondents, the recognition of the LGU's success in implementing childhood immunization programs is important, indicating a good blend of outreach and teaching methods. These tactics are crucial for combating vaccine hesitancy and increasing community understanding about the vital significance of vaccination. Local government units (LGUs) play a crucial role in promoting and ensuring childhood vaccinations in their jurisdiction. Effective LGU programs employ various outreach and education strategies to address vaccine hesitancy and increase awareness about the importance of vaccination (Tuckerman et al., 2022).

For education services, recognizing that several Local Government Units have successfully established creative and efficient nutritional programs in school clinics highlights the variety of tactics used to meet this objective. Engaging neighborhood organizations, conducting nutrition education campaigns, and implementing tailored interventions for vulnerable populations demonstrate a proactive strategy to address the specific health needs of children. These activities beyond fundamental services, showing a dedication to comprehensive health promotion and an acknowledgment of the varied issues encountered by various parts of the student body. The respondents stated that this kind of support makes them feel comfortable that their children are properly being monitored.

Palayanos' pleasure with the LGU's support for education, specifically in providing medical and nutritional services to school clinics, demonstrates a community-focused government strategy. It emphasizes the significance of education and a dedication to the holistic welfare of the youth. Successful LGUs are characterized by their use of innovative and comprehensive measures to address the health and nutritional requirements of pupils (Chan-Pongan, 2006).

In terms of social services, it indicates that the respondents view the services offered in the Older Persons / Senior Citizens Program as extremely effective and advantageous. If there is no perceived need for further improvement, it indicates that the local government has effectively met the community's requirements and expectations for social welfare programs for older individuals.

Local Government Units (LGUs) in the Philippines play a crucial role in developing programs tailored to the unique requirements of the elderly. Most local government units (LGUs) demonstrate compliance with national laws, such as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act (RA 9994), to guarantee the availability of essential services such as discounts, medical assistance, and social pensions ("Republic Act No. 9994," 2010). The government in Palayan City is catering to various requirements of senior citizens, with a focus on their social and mental well-being. The Department of Social Welfare and Development has enforced a new component of the Expanded Senior persons Act, providing a monthly social allowance of 500 pesos to impoverished senior persons. According to the City Social Welfare and Development (MSDO), the majority of senior citizen recipients in Palayan City receive their regular benefits. This is considered a concrete demonstration of the government's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of its people, especially those who are more prone to risks related to ageing. Another program being enforced is the compulsory enrollment in PhilHealth, suggesting that the government can provide

support to elders for medical needs. Moreover, senior folks benefit from a discount designed just for them, which encourages social responsibility and civic engagement. Respondents indicated that the monthly social pension for older inhabitants is utilized to offset living expenditures and provide medical assurance through complimentary PhilHealth membership. The 20% discounts given to elderly persons are utilized to pay for costs associated with food, medicine, and other essential items.

It is important to acknowledge the different methods and levels of success in carrying out these programs in different areas. Cablao et al. (2019) have pointed out that there are differences in the extent and effects of programs aimed at elderly citizens, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the specific local situation. The variation in how programs are carried out can be explained by factors such as resource availability, administrative capacity, and regional priorities, underscoring the significance of customizing programs to address the specific requirements of each community. An in-depth investigation of these variations can help policymakers improve and standardize the implementation of programs for older individuals, leading to a more consistent and fair distribution of social welfare benefits across the country.

Result for governance and response shows that complaints addressed to Local Government Units (LGUs) are crucial means for citizens to express dissatisfaction with public service delivery, whether related to their offices, officials, or staff. How local government units address these complaints is crucial for improving governance and promoting accountability in the public sector. The respondents stated that the government's response in times of problems and calamities made them feel secured. With this, it is evident that the procedure of the government in response and governance should be well executed because it affirms its ability to promote satisfaction and self-assurance among the participants, which reflects well on the local government's dedication to addressing citizen issues and providing accountable governance.

Studies have shown that there is a lack of uniform procedures across Local Government Units (LGUs) for addressing complaints. This inconsistency may lead to misunderstanding, delays, and unequal treatment of complainants, as noted by Boex and Simatupang (2015). Many local government units struggle with inadequate resources, including people, financial allocations, and technology infrastructure, which are crucial for effectively resolving complaints. The scarcity of these resources frequently results in delays, prolonged processing times, and ineffective follow-up procedures, as highlighted by Tupas (2020). As a result, the capacity of Local Government Units (LGUs) to effectively and equitably resolve citizen complaints is hindered, causing a discrepancy between what the public expects and the real provision of transparent and responsible government. LGUs must emphasize creating clear and uniform complaint-handling methods while also addressing resource inadequacies to solve this scenario. This guarantees a better organized method for resolving complaints and helps establish public trust and confidence in the effectiveness of local government systems.

Based on the data gathered for public works infrastructure, Palayanos are highly satisfied with the governance and responsiveness of their Local Government Unit (LGU), especially on Public Parks and Open Spaces. The research results show a significant degree of satisfaction among Palayanos with the governance and responsiveness of their Local Government Unit (LGU), particularly in relation to Public Parks and Open Spaces. Using the term "very satisfied" suggests a strong and positive opinion within the community regarding the overall performance of their LGU. Emphasizing Public Parks and Open Spaces highlights the importance of these shared locations in influencing inhabitants' views on governance. The importance placed on the management and policy of public recreational places indicates their crucial role in promoting community satisfaction. The inhabitants appreciate the LGU's efforts to improve the quality of life by maintaining public places, which goes beyond essential services. This favorable feeling can enhance communal well-being, physical and mental health, and foster a healthy relationship between Palayanos and their local government. Although the data shows a high level of satisfaction, a more in-depth analysis could reveal specific factors that contribute to this favorable perception and pinpoint potential areas for ongoing improvement in the governance and responsiveness of the Palayan City Local Government Unit.

Respondents emphasize that these public locations are essential sanctuaries for relaxation and vital family bonding time. According to Chavez (2021), the physical aspects of Public Open Spaces (POS) are acknowledged for playing a key role in improving people's quality of life, including benefits connected to health, social interaction, and economic value. Swift urban growth presents a major risk by reducing the functionality of these areas. Chavez (2021) highlighted that limited funds and decreasing public interest are further obstacles, as supported by the collected statistics. The interaction of these difficulties may weaken the long-term sustainability and efficacy of Public Parks and Open Spaces. Thus, it is crucial for Local Government Units (LGUs) to tackle these difficulties in a proactive manner. Strategies may include following sustainable development methods, allocating sufficient funding for upkeep and enhancement, and launching community engagement programs to revive public interest in these essential communal areas. By skillfully overcoming these problems, LGUs may guarantee that Public Parks and Open Spaces remain vital contributors to the well-being and social structure of the Palayano community.

The data gathered shows a level of satisfaction among Palayanos with the environmental management measures carried out by their Local Government Unit (LGU), particularly focusing on clean-up programs and projects. Local Government Unit (LGU) clean-up efforts are acknowledged for their crucial role in promoting a clean and healthy environment, promoting sustainable waste management methods, and benefiting public health.

According to the respondents, effective garbage collection methods, like those carried out by LGUs, can lead to substantial decreases in the amount of waste ending up in landfills and illicit dumping sites. The activities are in line with international standards and help achieve the overarching objective of reducing the environmental footprint of waste. These strategies can effectively reduce the negative impacts of incorrect trash disposal on ecosystems, wildlife, and environmental sustainability. The World Health Organization emphasizes the important connection between efficient waste management and public health. Efficient clean-up initiatives that reduce trash are directly linked to a lower risk of diseases related to inappropriate garbage disposal (*Global Waste Management Outlook*, 2023). Diseases spread through contaminated water or vectors thriving in improperly dumped waste can be reduced with organized waste management activities.

The palpable joy shown by Palayanos indicates their happiness with the cleanliness of their surroundings and recognition of the favorable effects on public health and environmental sustainability. Local Government Unit (LGU) clean-up projects enhance the aesthetics of the environment and demonstrate a dedication to the community's welfare. The local government's alignment with global health and environmental standards demonstrates its commitment to comprehensive and sustainable development, in line with the wider goals of creating a cleaner, healthier, and more ecologically aware community.

When respondents describe themselves as "very satisfied" in terms of economic and investment promotion, it indicates that they view the services offered in investment promotion, such as trade fairs, festivals, business events, and related activities, as exceptionally praiseworthy. This degree of satisfaction indicates that the local government has effectively fulfilled the community's economic and investment promotion needs and expectations. Research indicates that trade fairs are successful in obtaining Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), especially for small and medium-sized firms (SMEs). Research conducted by UNCTAD revealed that enterprises engaging in trade fairs had a 50% higher probability of exporting their products (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018). The success of trade fairs relies on aspects like event size, exhibit quality, and marketing activities (Sarmiento & Simões, 2018). The Department of Tourism in the Philippines (2010) described fiestas as traditional festivals that typically include cultural acts, food, and games. Hence, they can also be utilized to advertise investment prospects. It is crucial to make sure that fiestas do not only aim to attract investment, as this may diminish their cultural importance.

The lack of perceived need for further improvement suggests that the Palayan City Local Government Unit has effectively implemented its policy in this particular area. This service's top ranking highlights its success in receiving favorable comments from the respondents. This good perception might enhance the local government's image about its dedication to economic growth and investment promotion among people.

2. The problems encountered by the respondents in the availability of the services and programs of the LGU

The research data reveals that Palayan's healthcare infrastructure is limited to an infirmary center and a City Health Office, which are the only facilities available to handle the health needs of its population. The insufficient healthcare services provided by these departments have created a notable gap, causing Palayanos to seek medical care in a different city with a hospital. The local healthcare provision is clearly inadequate since residents must travel outside their city to receive complete healthcare services. The limited medical facilities in Palayan, consisting of only an infirmary facility and a City Health Office, indicate a scarcity of resources, which may restrict the variety and standard of healthcare services accessible to the community. This deficiency is especially crucial when residents need specialized or intense medical treatment that is not accessible within the current local healthcare system. The necessity for Palayanos to journey to a different city with a hospital highlights the seriousness of the situation, suggesting that the local healthcare facilities are inadequate to address the varied and frequently pressing healthcare requirements of the community. This scenario could result in discomfort, heightened expenses, and delays in residents receiving prompt medical care. The local government must invest in and enhance healthcare infrastructure in Palayan to alleviate the healthcare deficit. This may include setting up more medical facilities, improving current services, and working with healthcare professionals to create a more thorough and accessible healthcare system for the residents. The research data offers useful insight into the present healthcare concerns in Palayan, highlighting the need to address these issues promptly to enhance the health and well-being of the community.

The lack of hospital facilities and limited service is a significant public health concern worldwide. Zhang et al. (2019) further explain the reduced quality of care as limited hospital facilities and services can lead to delayed diagnoses, inadequate treatment, and compromised patient safety. Studies have documented increased

mortality rates, longer hospital stays, and higher readmission rates in areas with limited healthcare access. In addition, Frenk et al. (2010) presents the negative patient outcomes that lack of adequate healthcare resources leads to poorer health outcomes for individuals and communities. Studies have linked limited access to healthcare with higher rates of chronic diseases, infectious diseases, and preventable deaths.

Another research data reveals that the healthcare infrastructure in Palayan is limited to an infirmary center and a City Health Office to cater to the health needs of its citizens. The insufficient healthcare services provided by these agencies have created a notable disparity, prompting Palayanos to seek medical care in a different city with a hospital. The local healthcare offering is clearly inadequate, as residents must travel outside their city to receive complete healthcare services. The limited medical facilities in Palayan, consisting solely of an infirmary facility and a City Health Office, indicate a scarcity of resources, which may restrict the variety and standard of healthcare services accessible to the community. This deficiency is especially crucial when residents need specialized or intense medical treatment that is not offered by the current local healthcare system. The necessity for Palayanos to journey to a different city with a hospital highlights the seriousness of the situation, suggesting that the local healthcare facilities are inadequate to address the varied and frequently pressing healthcare requirements of the community. This scenario could result in inconvenience, heightened expenses, and delays in citizens' access to timely medical care. The local government must invest in and enhance healthcare infrastructure in Palayan to alleviate the healthcare deficit. This may include setting up more medical facilities, improving current services, and working with healthcare professionals to create a more comprehensive and accessible healthcare system for the residents. The research data offers vital insight into the existing healthcare concerns in Palayan, highlighting the need to address these issues promptly to improve the health and well-being of the community.

In line with the above context, a major concern is the financial burden placed on students and families without access to scholarships. Rising tuition costs and living expenses make higher education increasingly inaccessible, leading to student loans and debt. Studies by Prashanth (2023) highlight how this disproportionately affects low-income students, hindering their ability to pursue education and career aspirations. According to Heath et al. (2022), increased debt can negatively impact students' mental health and well-being, potentially leading to anxiety, depression, and lowered academic performance. Research suggests that scholarship recipients are less likely to drop out due to financial constraints, contributing to higher graduation rates.

The study also showed that the local social welfare and development office lacks regular monitoring of its recipients. Beneficiary monitoring is essential for the department to track and evaluate the locations, conditions, and statuses of its beneficiaries. The respondents' failure to consistently monitor led to their names being removed from the receiving list. They were worried that it might affect their future government benefits. Creating a website to track the advancement of beneficiaries and evaluate their compliance with the DSWD's specified requirements for receiving conditional cash transfers (*Journeying With Communities: A Community Engagement and Organizing Handbook for University Extension Workers* | Uniservitate, 2021). Monitoring is necessary for both benefit claimants and the department to guarantee compliance with report obligations. Another issue faced by the responders in the aforementioned situation is the delayed announcement of information regarding social assistance benefits. If the local office implements monitoring, pertinent announcements will be easily accessible to receivers since they are aware of their surroundings. Timely and effective communication would help alleviate many challenges for the agency. Monitoring will enhance the performance of the 4Ps program by reducing fraudulent beneficiaries and enabling the DSWD to effectively supervise its receivers (*Journeying With Communities: A Community Engagement and Organizing Handbook for University Extension Workers* | Uniservitate, 2021).

Although the percentage is low, it indicates that some residents believe there are deficiencies in the governance of nearby regions. The findings highlight the need for effective and prompt governance, prompting the local government to improve response times and possibly implement strategies to improve leadership and management practices, ensuring a better overall experience for the community. The insights provide useful considerations for local authorities to enhance the overall efficacy and perception of governance in Palayan.

The data shows that respondents are significantly concerned about the Local Government Unit (LGU) in Palayan having a slower response rate than expected by the community. This observation indicates a disparity between citizens' expectations and the LGU's actual responsiveness in addressing neighborhood issues. Zhang et al. (2019) states that a delay in providing key services including as healthcare, education, and infrastructure can result in shortcomings in addressing the population's demands. The slower response rate of the LGU may have consequences for essential services, thereby affecting the overall welfare and progress of the community. The data highlights the necessity of prompt and effective actions from the local government to ensure the efficient provision of key services and fulfill the people's expectations. The LGU has to examine and enhance its responsiveness to meet community expectations and worldwide standards for providing important services promptly.

Another finding highlights the significant influence of poor road conditions on the daily lives and experiences of Palayan locals. Inadequate road conditions present a complex dilemma, impacting the accessibility of the population and leading to safety risks, higher economic costs, and worse quality of life. The significant number of responders expressing concern indicates the need for immediate action by the LGU to enhance road

infrastructure. The local government can improve the physical connectedness of the community and reduce the negative impacts on safety, economic activity, and the overall well-being of Palayan people. This data is essential for the LGU to prioritize infrastructure investments in accordance with the community's expressed demands. Poor road conditions pose a significant challenge with widespread effects on different aspects of society, including safety, economic productivity, and overall well-being. The 2019 report from the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) thoroughly examines the various impacts of inadequate road infrastructure. The paper emphasizes that worsening roads lead to increased car operating costs, causing drivers to spend more on fuel, repairs, and tires. Individuals and corporations are both impacted by this financial strain. Decreased productivity is a major consequence for organizations dealing with financial losses due to both time wasted in traffic congestion and the economic impact of accidents. Poor roads provide significant safety risks, increasing the probability of accidents and their consequences. The study highlights the negative impact on quality of life caused by poor road conditions, which impede easy navigation and lead to increased noise and air pollution. The results emphasize the necessity of taking proactive steps to improve road infrastructure, as it has a direct impact on the safety, financial stability, and general satisfaction of the community.

For the environmental issues, the large percentage of responders concerned about the lack of a garbage collection schedule highlights the need of consistent waste disposal services in the neighborhood. Inconsistent garbage collection schedules can result in environmental damage, health risks, and a deterioration in living circumstances. The data indicates that the Palayan LGU has to improve its environmental management policies, especially in waste collection. Establishing a dependable and regular waste collection timetable helps address people's worries and promote a cleaner and healthier environment. It emphasizes the significance of efficient communication and cooperation between the LGU and the community to ensure that environmental management initiatives meet the inhabitants' needs and expectations. Resolving these issues can enhance the environmental quality and, consequently, the welfare of the Palayan community.

Residents claim that the LGU is not taking care of up rubbish from them. There are research studies that provides discussion on the importation of waste collections. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 17% of the global population lacks access to proper waste collection services (Zhang et al., 2019). A study by Landrigan PJ, et al. (2018) published in *The Lancet Global Health* found that poor waste management contributes to approximately 1.6 million premature deaths annually. The lack of garbage collection poses a significant threat to public health, the environment, and the socioeconomic well-being of communities.

The data shows that the local government does not have a well outlined economic strategy to support the economic development of residents and businesses. The insufficient competence of the leadership in the business licensing and investment departments might hinder fair and transparent business operations and lead to mismanagement of resources. Inadequate resource allocation might hinder the successful implementation of policies and initiatives aimed at promoting economic growth. Inadequate strategic planning and absence of vision could hinder the creation of a conducive company environment. According to the responses, the local government did not have a thorough recovery plan to help small companies deal with the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak. The respondents believe that the government should improve economic and investment policies to promote small businesses. Chan et al. (2020) agreed that the government is vital in creating policies, initiatives, and laws to help small businesses handle their limited resources and lack of skills. Small businesses can improve their performance, increase efficiency, and achieve growth by strengthening their capabilities and obtaining government backing. The respondents also cited facing a lack of job prospects, in line with the previous discussion. The limited economic opportunities have resulted in a lack of job prospects due to the town having a small number of active businesses.

According to the study respondents, some family members need to relocate to pursue better prospects. Respondents reported a decline in job opportunities post-epidemic, as only a few firms had restarted operations. Insufficient funding limits small firms from expanding and providing growth chances to their employees, which inhibits their competitiveness and capacity to offer career advancement paths (Chan et al., 2020). Thus, it is indisputable that in times of sluggish or stagnant economic growth, companies may have challenges in extending their activities and hiring new employees.

Respondents faced a challenge of having few options available to address their personal financial and economic issues. Nevertheless, thirty-nine percent of the participants do not encounter any issues with economic and investment prospects.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers were able to draw the following conclusions:

Most of the respondents are very satisfied with the services that the health services from LGU can provide. But some of the respondents stated that there are problems regarding some of the staff, machineries, operation, and budget of the city to provide all of the health services that the community needed; majority of the respondents are very satisfied with the services of school clinics, while seeking for more opportunity to be part of a scholarship program to support their education financially received only satisfied remark; the programs of the LGU for the

senior citizens gave the respondents a very high satisfaction, and unemployment is one of their concerns; satisfaction of the respondents are achieved through the actions made by the LGU regarding the complaints against office, officials or personnels, while they still noticed that the responses that the LGU can provide were too slow; most of the respondents are very satisfied with the Palayan City's public parks and open spaces. But too worried about the conditions and development of the roads; clean-up projects of the LGU gave a high satisfaction to the respondents, but the garbage was not collected properly, according to 36 respondents; lastly, majority of the respondents are very satisfied with the investment promotion that the city was conducting through fair trade, fiestas, and business events but financial support was still limited to other barangays.

Based on the results of the gathered data, the researchers were able to present the following recommendations:

In terms of health services, Local Government Unit should prioritize essential services, and optimizing resources by identifying and listing all health services currently offered, and conducting a resource inventory, including staff, equipment, and facilities.

In terms of support to education, needs assessment should be implemented through conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the target demographic and their specific educational needs. And partnerships by collaborating with private enterprises, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations to create scholarship programs and expand available opportunities.

In terms of social welfare services, development of monitoring system should be done programs like skills training programs, and job matching platforms should be done to implement skill development initiatives aligned with local economic needs and equip residents with relevant skills to enhance employability. And establish platforms connecting job seekers with local employment opportunities. Leverage technology and partnerships to streamline the job matching process.

In terms of governance and response, digital transformation, and citizen service portals are the proposed solutions to the problems encountered by the respondents. This can be implemented through embracing technology to automate processes for immediate response by developing user-friendly online platforms for citizens to submit requests and receive updates.

Prioritizing critical repairs, engaging with local authorities, and exploring funding options for infrastructure improvements should be implemented by the LGU for the problem encountered by the respondents in terms of public works and infrastructure.

For environmental management, encouraging the community members to actively participate in waste management. and run information campaigns to raise awareness about responsible waste disposal should be an activity of the LGU.

Through conducting a thorough assessment of the economic and social needs of each barangay to understand specific challenges and opportunities. And explore alternative funding sources, such as grants, donations, and partnerships with NGOs, to supplement government funds, the problem regarding the economic and Investment promotion will be resolved.

It is recommended to consider the use of a crafted structured list of programs, projects, and activities of the researchers in drafting the comprehensive development plan of the city for the next review. It will contribute to a more participatory and inclusive approach to problem-solving within the community.

Lastly, for the future researchers, it is recommended to use the current study as a foundation for exploring other related topics as a strategic suggestion aimed at building on the existing knowledge base and expanding the scope of research. This might involve incorporating new variables, exploring additional factors that influence the phenomena under investigation, or adapting the framework to different contexts.

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