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### Influence of Socio-political Factors in the Discharge of Leadership Functions of Barangay Captains in the Baybay District of the Province of Laguna

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#### Abstract

Barangay captains play a crucial role in local governance, serving as the primary implementer of government programs and policies at the grassroots level. However, their ability to effectively discharge their leadership functions is influenced by various socio-political factors. This study examines the influence of social and political elements on the leadership performance of barangay captains in the Baybay District of the Province of Laguna. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected through survey questionnaires and key informant interviews. The study focused on three major areas: Social factors (population size, barangay income, geographical location, and interest groups), political factors (affiliations with ruling parties, opposition influence, and independent candidates), and interpersonal relationships (superiors, peers, subordinates, and residents). Findings reveal that population size and barangay income significantly influence governance by shaping

administrative workload and resource allocation. Among interest groups, religious organizations, farmers' associations, and business groups exert a strong influence, while professionals and militant groups have minimal impact. Politically, barangay captains align closely with ruling parties, while opposition groups and independent candidates have limited influence. Interpersonal relationships, particularly with residents and subordinates, play a critical role in leadership effectiveness, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and public trust in governance. It highlights the need for enhanced community engagement, political neutrality, and leadership development programs to improve governance at the barangay level. Recommendations include strengthening barangay autonomy, increasing financial support, and fostering inclusive decision-making processes to ensure sustainable local governance.

**Keywords:** Barangay Leadership, Socio-Political Factors, Local Governance, Political Influence, Community Engagement

#### Introduction

The Philippines, as a developing nation, faces a myriad of challenges in its quest for effective and accountable governance, particularly at the local level. One critical aspect of this is the role of barangay captains, who serve as the primary leaders of the country's smallest administrative divisions.

Barangay government management is the term used to describe the administration of the barangay, which is the lowest level of government in the Philippines. The residents elect a Barangay Captain, who serves as the community's leader. Along with providing the community with basic services like public safety, healthcare, and education, the barangay administration is also responsible for enforcing regional laws and ordinances. Effective barangay government management requires strong leadership, good communication, and efficient resource management. In addition to managing the budget and personnel, the Punong Barangay, also called the Barangay Captain, is responsible for overseeing the barangay's daily operations and representing it in meetings and discussions with other government officials.

Barangay government administration also include close communication with the neighborhood, requesting comments on regional concerns, and including locals in decision-making. This entails implementing outreach and education initiatives to enlighten locals about government services and policies, as well as holding frequent meetings with citizens. The Local Government Code of 1991, Republic Act 7160, which describes the duties and authority of the barrio government, including the Barangay Captain and the Sangguniang Barangay, is another legislation and regulation that governs the management of

the barangay government (Barangay Council).

The activities and obligations of a leader in performing their role within an organization or society are referred to as the discharge of leadership functions. These responsibilities may include establishing priorities and goals, creating plans and strategies, making choices, allocating resources, and inspiring and leading subordinates or employees. The performance of leadership roles can be strongly impacted by sociopolitical circumstances. These prerequisites may include elements like a society's cultural and social standards, economic development levels, and political and governmental stability. Leaders may have more discretion in making choices and carrying out programs in a stable democratic government with a robust economy. Leaders may, however, have a difficult time doing their tasks successfully in a nation with a weak government or constant political unrest.

Norms of culture and society can also influence how leaders are viewed and the decisions they make. For instance, a strong authoritarian leadership style may be perceived favorably in some cultures while encountering opposition in others. To be effective in their positions, leaders must be aware of and adapt to the socio-political environments in which they work.

Barangay-level governance is crucial because it immediately affects residents' daily lives and forms the basis for more extensive regional and national growth (Floranza, 2021)<sup>[5]</sup>. From spreading information to acting as first responders in an emergency, barangay captains are tasked with a variety of duties (Mercurio & Hernandez, 2022). Nonetheless, socio-political issues can have a substantial impact on the efficient performance of various leadership roles, which calls for a thorough examination.

The complex relationship between socio-political factors and the performance of barangay captains in the Philippines has been examined in recent research by Floranza (2021)<sup>[5]</sup>, Monocay & Mejica (2020)<sup>[8]</sup>, Mercurio & Hernandez (2022), and Macella (2020)<sup>[7]</sup>. These studies have clarified the intricate interactions among variables like educational background, length of service, and the barangay's socioeconomic situation.

Thus, this study intends to explore the influence of these socio-political elements on the discharge of leadership tasks of barangay captains in the Baybay District of Laguna. By examining these variables, the study seeks to offer insightful information on the opportunities and difficulties faced by barangay leaders. Developing policies and methods to promote governance, boost the role of barangay officials in community development, and increase leadership effectiveness will be made easier with an understanding of these effects. By ensuring that barangay captains are more prepared to serve their residents, this study ultimately hopes to support the ongoing enhancement of local governance.

## Materials and Methods

In order to examine how sociopolitical factors affect the leadership roles of barangay captains in the Baybay District of the Province of Laguna, this study used a descriptive research approach. Finding and evaluating the different sociopolitical elements influencing leadership performance was the main goal of the descriptive component. The study was carried out in the Province of Laguna's Baybay District, which is made up of a number of barangays with various sociopolitical environments. This region was chosen

because of its distinct economic circumstances, demographic makeup, and range of political participation, which makes it a place to study how social and political elements interact in barangay governance.

The primary respondents of the study was the 295 barangay captains of 16 municipalities in the Baybay District, as they are directly responsible for barangay governance and decision-making. Additionally, 400 selected barangay council members, and 5 community representatives (such as leaders of interest groups) each barangays was included to provide a more comprehensive perspective on the socio-political influences affecting leadership functions. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that the selected respondents have direct experience and involvement in barangay administration.

Data collection utilized structured questionnaire developed and distributed to assess the perceptions of various socio-political factors influencing their leadership. Key Informant Interviews was used to gain deeper insights into how socio-political factors affect governance. These interview allows the respondents to elaborate on challenges, strategies, and best practices in barangay leadership. Data was presented in tabular form using weighted mean to summarize the responses from survey questionnaires.

To ensure ethical integrity, all participants was informed of the study's purpose, and their consent were obtained before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and respondents have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. The study adhere to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

## Results and Discussions

Table 1 highlights the socio-political factors that influence the ability of barangay captains to perform their functions effectively. Under social factors, population size (4.23 – Strongly Agree) emerges as a key determinant, implying that governance challenges increase as barangay populations grow. Barangay income (3.39 – Agree) is also recognized as a factor, though to a lesser extent, suggesting that financial resources contribute to governance but are not the most pressing concern. Geographical location (3.10 – Neither Agree nor Disagree) receives a neutral rating, indicating that while location may present challenges for some barangays, its impact is not universally significant.

Interest groups play varying roles in barangay governance. Religious groups (4.50 – Strongly Agree) and farmers' associations (4.32 – Strongly Agree) exert significant influence, highlighting their active participation in community matters. Business groups (4.10 – Agree) and youth organizations (4.10 – Agree) also play important roles, likely contributing to economic and developmental initiatives. However, professionals (2.91 – Neither Agree nor Disagree) and women's groups (3.20 – Neither Agree nor Disagree) are perceived as having only a moderate influence, suggesting that their engagement in barangay governance varies. Meanwhile, militant groups (1.61 – Strongly Disagree) are considered the least influential, likely due to their minimal presence or negative perceptions in local leadership.

Numerous social elements, such as population dynamics, local economic situations, geographic features, and the impact of interest groups, are closely related to how well leaders perform their duties (Audenaert & Decramer, 2016). Whether acting alone or in combination, these elements

have the power to profoundly influence a leader's capacity for decision-making, policy implementation, and, eventually, effective governance (Macella, 2020) [7]. Any organization's performance depends on a leader's ability to effectively manage a team, achieve organizational standards, represent their group, and handle job-related obligations (Singh *et al.*, 2022) [12]. Therefore, for leaders looking to maximize their performance and accomplish desired results, it is essential to comprehend and navigate these social components (Dinibutun, 2020) [3].

Since bigger and more diverse populations frequently offer leaders with a greater array of requirements, preferences, and expectations, demographic composition and population size can have a significant impact on leadership functions (Othman *et al.*, 2019) [9]. Because of this complexity, leaders must adopt a responsive and inclusive leadership style that involves interacting with a greater variety of stakeholders and resolving potentially conflicting interests. Leaders need to be aware of the social processes that lead to problems and take proactive steps to fix them (Esquierdo-Leal & Houmanfar, 2021) [4]. Additionally, places with high population densities may put a burden on infrastructure and resources, necessitating that authorities give infrastructure development and resource allocation first priority.

Overall, the findings emphasize that barangay captains' effectiveness is shaped by demographic, economic, and community engagement factors. Population size and income levels influence governance demands, while religious groups, farmers, businesses, and youth organizations play substantial roles in shaping barangay policies. However, professional groups, women's organizations, and militant groups are seen as having minimal influence. This underscores the varying degrees of power and engagement among different sectors in barangay governance.

**Table 1:** Social factors affecting the discharge of functions of barangay captains

Social Factors	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Population	4.23	Strongly Agree
2. Barangay Income	3.39	Agree
3. Geographical Location	3.10	Neither Agree/Neither Disagree
4. Interest Groups		
4.1. Religious Group	4.50	Strongly Agree
4.2. Business Groups	4.10	Agree
4.3. Professionals Group	2.91	Neither Agree/Neither Disagree
4.4. Youth Group	4.10	Agree
4.5. Women's Group	3.20	Neither Agree/Neither Disagree
4.6. Farmer's Association	4.32	Strongly Agree
4.7. Militant Group	1.61	Strongly Disagree

In terms of political factors shown in Table 2, the ruling party (4.34 – Strongly Agree) is seen as a dominant force in governance, indicating that barangay captains often align with the current administration. Conversely, opposition parties (3.06 – Neither Agree nor Disagree) receive a neutral rating, implying that their influence depends on specific political dynamics within the barangay. Independent

candidates (1.75 – Strongly Disagree) are perceived as having little influence, suggesting that barangay politics remains largely party-driven.

Moreover, interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in governance, with strong agreement on the importance of relationships with superiors (4.45), peers (4.34), subordinates (4.47), and residents (4.61). The highest rating for residents emphasizes the importance of public trust and community engagement in effective barangay leadership. Strong relationships with superiors suggest the significance of guidance from higher officials, while positive peer and subordinate interactions highlight the need for teamwork and administrative coordination.

Barangay captains, as leaders of the smallest administrative divisions in the Philippines, operate within a complex web of political and interpersonal dynamics that significantly influence their ability to effectively discharge their mandated functions (Floranza, 2021) [5]. These functions, which range from maintaining peace and order to delivering basic services, are often intertwined with the intricate relationships between the captain, other barangay officials, community members, and external political actors (Ibáñez *et al.*, 2024). The political landscape within a barangay can be a microcosm of larger political structures, with competing factions and power struggles potentially hindering the captain's ability to implement policies and programs effectively (Bocar & Pasok, 2008) [2]. Interpersonal relationships also play a crucial role, as the captain's ability to build trust and rapport with community members can significantly impact their willingness to cooperate with barangay initiatives (Mercurio & Hernandez, 2022). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for comprehending the challenges and opportunities faced by barangay captains in fulfilling their responsibilities (Bocar & Pasok, 2008) [2]. The influence of political factors on a barangay captain's ability to govern effectively is multifaceted. The pervasive nature of patronage politics in the Philippines can significantly impact a captain's decision-making processes, potentially leading to biased resource allocation or the prioritization of projects that benefit political allies rather than the community as a whole (Ramírez, 2023) [10].

**Table 2:** Political and interpersonal factors affecting the discharge of functions of barangay captains

Political Factors		
1. Present Ruling Parties	4.34	Strongly Agree
2. Opposition to the Ruling party	3.06	Neither Agree/Neither Disagree
3. Independent Candidate	1.75	Strongly Disagree
Interpersonal Relationship		
1. Superior	4.45	Strongly Agree
2. Peers	4.34	Strongly Agree
3. Subordinates	4.47	Strongly Agree
4. Residents	4.61	Strongly Agree

Existing literature has examined the functions and legal responsibilities of barangay secretaries (Gannaban, 2023), the role of barangay captains in implementing risk reduction measures at the community level (Shaw, 2009) [11], and the influence of municipal mayors on the administration of local social welfare programs (Yu, 2013). However, there is a dearth of research that specifically focuses on the socio-political factors that shape the leadership functions of barangay captains.

Overall, the findings highlight that barangay captains operate within a politically influenced environment, where alignment with the ruling party is crucial, while opposition parties and independent candidates have minimal impact. Additionally, successful barangay governance relies heavily on strong interpersonal relationships, particularly with residents, superiors, peers, and subordinates, underscoring the importance of collaboration and community engagement in local leadership.

### Conclusion

A complex interaction of sociopolitical factors influences decision-making, the execution of policies, and the effectiveness of leadership in barangay governance, it is found. In addition to political alignment, effective barangay leadership requires the capacity to work with stakeholders, address social issues, and sustain positive community ties. The report emphasizes the necessity of policies that encourage inclusive governance, better administrative and financial support, and capacity-building initiatives for barangay captains. To ensure sustainable and efficient local governance in the Baybay District and beyond, it is imperative to develop political neutrality, strengthen leadership abilities, and increase community involvement.

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