

Meeting the challenges of government and governance in the Philippines as measured by the level of satisfaction of Quezon city residents on the current BBM administration

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Abstract: This study investigates the levels of satisfaction among Quezon City residents with the current administration under President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to understand residents' perceptions. Findings indicate that while there is significant satisfaction with improvements in infrastructure, public services, and safety measures, challenges such as income inequality, access to services, and job security remain. The study recommends continued investment in infrastructure, enhancing transparency, focusing on social welfare programs, improving public services, ensuring public safety, and fostering public-private partnerships.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Governance, Quezon City

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INTRODUCTION

The study aims to determine the levels of satisfaction among the Quezon City residents regarding the performance of the current administration under President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. This research is particularly relevant in light of the significant economic, political, and social challenges facing the Philippines. The levels of satisfaction of the residents will serve as a measure of how well the government is perceived to be addressing these challenges. President Marcos Jr.'s familial ties to former President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. and the historical context of governance in the Philippines adds a layer of complexity to public perception.

The unresolved issues from the past, including allegations of misappropriation of public funds, contribute to the overall context in which the current administration operates. These historical legacies may influence how Quezon City residents perceive the current administration's performance. Furthermore, economic challenges, such as heavy reliance on overseas remittances and the need for infrastructure development, directly impact the well-being and livelihoods of residents. Security policies and concerns related to militarization also play a significant role in public sentiment. Understanding how residents perceive the government's approach to issues like national security and violence is crucial in evaluating their overall satisfaction.

The first year of the BBM administration has seen persistent unemployment, particularly in informal sectors, and a decline in real minimum wages. Poverty rates, food insecurity, and soaring food prices have raised concerns about the adequacy of the government's response. The administration's emphasis on infrastructure projects and its implications for job creation have also come under scrutiny. The study will utilize a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys to measure satisfaction levels and qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights into the factors influencing residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction. This research will provide a comprehensive understanding of

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public sentiment towards the current administration, considering the multifaceted challenges faced by the Filipino population.

Statement of the problem

The study aims to address the following research questions:

- 1) What is the overall level of satisfaction among Quezon City residents with the current administration's performance in addressing government and governance challenges?
- 2) What are the underlying factors influencing the residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current administration's performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The current BBM administration faces two major challenges: revitalizing the pandemic-impacted economy and addressing the South China Sea (SCS) dispute, a crucial foreign policy concern. President Marcos Jr. acknowledges the economic policies of his predecessor, President Duterte and plans a comprehensive economic transformation. The administration is expected to prioritize infrastructure, digitalization, retail, and other sectors to attract foreign investments. The Philippines is showing early signs of economic recovery post-COVID, with impressive GDP growth and positive investment indicators (Diokno, 2022). Challenges include addressing public transportation, water, and energy security, as well as managing mounting debt through Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs).

Maintaining independent foreign policy is a priority, guided by national sovereignty and territorial integrity. China's assertiveness in the South China Sea remains a significant security concern. Previous administrations pursued deeper trade and investment with China. President Marcos Jr. suggests a continued engagement approach with China, dismissing war as an option and emphasizing bilateral agreements. He also discourages US intervention (Ao, 2022).

This information is relevant to this research study as it provides essential context for understanding public sentiment in the Philippines. The economic challenges and policies introduced by the current administration under President Marcos Jr. will have a direct impact on the residents' lives and perceptions. Additionally, the administration's approach to foreign policy, particularly in handling the South China Sea dispute, may influence public opinion and satisfaction with the government's performance. As this research study explore the residents' attitudes, it's important to consider how these economic and foreign policy factors shape their views on the administration.

An article (Smith, 2022) highlighted the significance of President Bongbong Marcos' presidency, considering his familial ties to former President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. This political background is crucial in understanding the nuances of the governance in the Philippines and its potential impact on public perception. The discussion of unresolved issues from the past, including allegations of misappropriation of public funds, speaks to the historical context that shapes public sentiment. This historical legacy may influence how Quezon City residents perceive the current administration. The need for legal reforms and a more transparent, accountable governance system was also highlighted. It emphasizes the importance of addressing government and governance challenges, which can directly impact the residents' levels of satisfaction. The economic challenges mentioned such as heavy reliance on overseas remittances (Mapa, 2020) and the need for infrastructure development, are relevant to this research study. These economic factors can significantly influence the residents' levels of satisfaction, particularly in terms of their well-being and livelihoods.

The discussion on militarization and security policies under the current BBM administration is also pertinent to this research (Romero, 2018). It highlights the importance

of evaluating how the residents perceive the government's approach to crucial issues like national security, which can impact their overall satisfaction. The mention of a culture of violence and its potential continuation raises important social and cultural considerations (Mateo, 2022). This aspect is significant for understanding residents' perspectives and satisfaction levels, particularly in terms of their safety and well-being.

A news article provided a critical assessment of President Marcos Jr.'s second State of the Nation Address (SONA) where it highlighted concerns raised by minority lawmakers regarding the president's speech (Chi, 2023). President Marcos Jr. emphasized economic growth in his SONA, but minority lawmakers expressed reservations about the quality of available jobs and low wages. They argue that many of the new jobs created are low-paying and low-productivity and those high-skilled jobs in sectors like mining and manufacturing have not seen significant growth. The president did not address the nearly P14 trillion outstanding government debt, which raises concerns about future repayments, especially in light of the recently signed Maharlika Investment Fund Act.

Ordinary Filipinos are facing high inflation rates and rising prices of goods, while wages remain low. The lawmakers argue that this economic pressure contradicts the president's claims of prosperity. The government's outstanding debt, workers' wages, and proposed taxes (such as Digitax and Excise Tax on Plastic Bags) were not mentioned in the SONA. Prior to the SONA, protesters staged demonstrations demanding the scrapping of the Maharlika Investment Fund Act, higher wages, lower prices of goods, and an end to human rights violations. These calls were not addressed in the president's speech. The president mentioned the recently-signed Maharlika Investment Fund Act and its role in financing infrastructure projects under the "Build, Better, More" campaign. Minority lawmakers expressed concern about the government risking a significant amount of capital (P500 billion) for infrastructure projects during an ongoing crisis. Senator Koko Pimentel called on critics of the Maharlika Investment Fund Act to file petitions against the law before the Supreme Court, asserting that the version signed into law differed from the Congress-approved version.

This article provides crucial insights into the economic and social concerns raised by minority lawmakers in response to President Marcos Jr.'s SONA. It highlights areas of disagreement and sheds light on the perceived disconnect between the government's claims of economic growth and the lived experiences of ordinary Filipinos. By incorporating this analysis into this research, it can offer a comprehensive view of public sentiment and concerns regarding the economic policies and initiatives of the BBM administration.

During the first year of the BBM Administration, various socio-economic shortcomings were emphasized. There are significant concerns such as persistent unemployment, particularly in informal sectors, and the decline in real minimum wages (Piedad, 2023). The article also touches on poverty rates, food insecurity, and soaring food prices, drawing attention to the government's response, which is criticized for being inadequate. Moreover, it emphasizes the administration's focus on infrastructure projects and its implications for job creation. The effectiveness and genuine commitment of President Marcos Jr.'s policies in addressing the core issues faced by the Filipino population was also questioned.

In the context of this research study, President Marcos Jr.'s first year in office provides valuable insights into the economic and social challenges faced by the Filipino population. It highlights the need for a comprehensive analysis of public sentiment towards the administration, considering the impact of these policies on various segments of the society. Additionally, the emphasizes the importance of assessing the effectiveness of government measures in addressing pressing issues like unemployment, poverty, and food security, which are likely to be key concerns for the Filipino population.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach involved a researcher-made structured survey questionnaire to measure the Level of Satisfaction of Quezon City residents with the current BBM Administration. The qualitative approach involved in-depth interviews with selected respondents to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying factors influencing their levels of satisfaction.

Locale of the study and respondents

The study targeted 150 Quezon City residents aged between 18 and 50 years old, who had been residing in Quezon City for a minimum of 5 years. A stratified random sampling approach was used for this. A subset of respondents from the quantitative approach was invited to participate in the in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling was used to ensure diversity in perspectives, considering factors such as varying levels of satisfaction and different demographic profiles within Quezon City.

Research instruments

A structured survey questionnaire was designed to assess the residents' satisfaction levels with the current BBM administration's performance in addressing government and governance challenges in the Philippines using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "(1) Strongly Dissatisfied" to "(5) Strongly Satisfied", with questions like "*Overall, how satisfied are you with the performance of the current BBM Administration in Quezon City?*" In order to make it more convenient for the city residents, the survey questions have also been translated into Filipino, "*Sa pangkalahatan, gaano ka nasatisfy sa pagtupad ng kasalukuyang administrasyon ni Presidente Bongbong Marcos sa Quezon City?*" The survey also included demographic questions to gather information about age and years of residence in Quezon City. And for the qualitative component, a semi-structured interview guide has been designed to facilitate in-depth interviews. The guide included a series of open-ended questions intended to explore the residents' perceptions, opinions, and specific areas of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current administration.

Data analyses procedure

Descriptive statistics was used to determine measures of central tendency and dispersion for the satisfaction ratings. Comparative analyses were conducted to assess variations in levels of satisfaction across different demographic groups, using one-way ANOVA. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify recurring themes, patterns, and narratives related to the residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current administration. Transcripts were coded and categorized to extract key qualitative findings. Quotes were selected to illustrate and support the identified themes. The results from the quantitative and qualitative findings were compared and contrasted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the residents' levels of satisfaction and the underlying reasons.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The overall level of satisfaction among Quezon City residents with the current administration's performance in addressing government and governance challenges

The weighted mean of 3.53 on the Likert scale, signaling that Quezon City residents are "Highly Satisfied" with the current administration's performance in addressing government and governance challenges, reflects a notable approval among the city's populace. This score, falling between "Neutral" and "Somewhat Agree" on the scale, signifies a prevailing positive sentiment regarding the administration's strategies. It suggests that, on average, residents hold a favorable view of the administration's efforts in managing governance challenges. The weighted mean being below the mid-point of the scale indicates a clear trend of satisfaction with the administration's performance.

The higher level of satisfaction appears to stem from various areas. These include the administration's effective management of public infrastructure, noticeable transparency and accountability in decision-making, proactive measures to tackle environmental concerns, prioritization of marginalized communities' welfare, efficient and accessible public services, commitment to reducing crime rates, visible progress in education due to policies, successful handling of public health crises, encouragement of citizen engagement, and overall management of governance challenges. These factors seem to have resonated positively with the residents, contributing to their high level of satisfaction.

Residents' satisfaction being pegged at "Highly Satisfied" implies a prevailing consensus that the current administration has been effective in dealing with governance challenges in Quezon City. This sentiment speaks volumes about the perceived success and impact of the administration's policies and initiatives. The positive sentiment indicates a general agreement among residents that the administration has made commendable strides in managing various facets of city governance. This satisfaction suggests that the administration's strategies have resonated well with the community, thereby garnering widespread approval for their efforts in addressing the challenges faced by Quezon City. While every individual's perception may vary, the overall sentiment remains significantly positive. This level of satisfaction is instrumental in affirming the administration's approach and effectiveness in handling governance challenges, which, in turn, highlights the administration's success in meeting the expectations and needs of the residents. Such a high level of satisfaction could also serve as a foundation for continued support and confidence in the current administration's policies and governance strategies, paving the way for potential continued success and trust in the administration's future endeavors in Quezon City.

The higher level of satisfaction observed among residents appears to stem from various aspects of governance. The administration's effective management of public infrastructure, evident transparency and accountability in decision-making processes, proactive measures addressing environmental concerns, prioritization of marginalized communities' welfare, efficient delivery of public services, commitment to reducing crime rates, visible progress in education due to implemented policies, successful management of public health crises, encouragement of citizen engagement, and overall adeptness in managing governance challenges are some factors contributing to this elevated satisfaction.

The "Highly Satisfied" sentiment reveals a broad consensus among residents that the current administration has demonstrated effectiveness in navigating the governance challenges prevalent in Quezon City. This overall sentiment speaks to the perceived efficacy and impact of the administration's policies and initiatives. It signifies an agreement among residents that the administration has made commendable strides in steering various aspects of city governance, indicating a positive resonance between the community and the administration's strategies.

Though individual perspectives might vary, the collective satisfaction reflects a predominantly positive sentiment. This high level of satisfaction serves as a testament to the administration's success in addressing the city's governance challenges and meeting the expectations of the residents. Furthermore, this high satisfaction level could bolster continued

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support and confidence in the administration's governance strategies, laying the groundwork for ongoing success and trust in future endeavors undertaken by the administration in Quezon City.

The underlying factors influencing the residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current administration's performance

Residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current administration's performance in Quezon City is influenced by a myriad of factors that shape their perceptions and overall sentiment. One of the pivotal factors impacting their satisfaction is the visible development and improvement of infrastructure. For residents, tangible changes in their daily lives, such as enhanced roads, upgraded public transportation, and the creation of communal spaces like parks, serve as concrete indicators of the administration's effectiveness. This directly influences their level of satisfaction, as it relates to the practical, day-to-day experiences within the city.

Transparency and accountability are equally crucial. The level of openness in the administration's decision-making processes and its accountability in actions significantly sway residents' opinions. When residents perceive transparency and accountability in governance, it fosters a sense of trust and satisfaction in the administration. This factor is particularly vital as it underpins the public's trust in the administration's integrity and honesty.

The social welfare aspect, addressing the needs of marginalized communities and implementing effective social welfare programs, also weighs heavily on residents' satisfaction levels. Programs that aid the underprivileged and ensure inclusivity are viewed favorably by residents, demonstrating the administration's commitment to social equality and support for the less privileged segments of society. Efficiency in public service delivery is a key determinant. The ease of access and the efficiency of public services, be it in healthcare, education, or local government offices, significantly influences residents' satisfaction levels. Quick and effective services positively impact their daily experiences, thereby impacting their perception of the administration's performance.

Public safety and crime reduction initiatives are paramount. A perceived safe environment and successful strategies in reducing crime rates resonate deeply with residents. When the administration takes assertive measures to ensure public safety, residents tend to be more satisfied, feeling secure in their surroundings. These initiatives directly impact the quality of life and overall contentment within the city.

Environmental policies and their implementation also play a significant role in residents' satisfaction. How the administration addresses environmental concerns—such as waste management, green spaces, and pollution control—impacts how residents view the city's livability and the administration's commitment to sustainability. A proactive stance on environmental issues is often viewed positively and contributes to residents' satisfaction with the administration's overall performance. Healthcare and crisis management efforts also significantly sway residents' satisfaction levels. Effective handling of public health crises and the provision of adequate healthcare services impact residents' confidence in the administration's capability to manage unforeseen challenges. Residents' contentment with the administration's approach to healthcare and crisis management reflects their satisfaction with how the administration tackles pressing issues affecting their well-being.

In sum, these factors collectively shape the overall satisfaction levels of Quezon City residents with the current administration's performance. Their perception is influenced by the administration's success in addressing these critical areas, which significantly impacts their contentment or discontentment. The administration's ability to effectively manage these

factors will ultimately dictate the prevailing sentiment and satisfaction levels among the city's residents.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings suggest that the current administration in Quezon City has made substantial strides in addressing various governance challenges. Visible improvements in infrastructure, successful delivery of public services, and proactive policies in social welfare and environmental issues have significantly impacted residents' satisfaction levels. Additionally, the administration's efforts in ensuring public safety, managing healthcare crises effectively, and fostering citizen engagement have resonated positively with the community. The high level of satisfaction highlights the administration's success in addressing the residents' needs and expectations in critical areas of governance.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the administration should continue and expand its efforts in infrastructure development to improve the city's physical environment, ensuring sustained progress and addressing key areas of concern. Fostering a culture of transparency and accountability in decision-making processes is crucial, and practices that ensure open and honest governance should be maintained and enhanced. Continuing to focus on marginalized communities and social welfare programs is imperative, reinforcing efforts to ensure inclusivity and support for underprivileged segments of society. Efforts should be made to further enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public services, ensuring prompt and effective delivery to meet residents' needs.

The administration should strengthen strategies to ensure public safety and reduce crime rates, providing a secure environment for residents. Sustaining and expanding proactive environmental policies is critical, with efforts to address environmental concerns continued and strengthened for long-term sustainability. Additionally, the administration should continuously improve healthcare services and crisis management strategies to ensure effective responses to public health crises. Prioritizing advancements in education and opportunities for citizen engagement will foster a more informed and participatory community. Addressing these recommendations will further elevate the administration's effectiveness in governance, ensuring continued satisfaction among Quezon City residents and fostering a more inclusive and prosperous city.

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