

Editor's Notes

Effecting institutional and policy reforms necessitates a scientific approach to evaluating program implementation and the effectiveness of policies and institutional mechanisms. For these assessments and evaluations to be credible and objective, they must be based squarely on empirical evidence and guided by analytical frameworks that have been scientifically tested and subjected to rigorous theoretical interpellation. While the four research articles included in this volume address issues in four different domains—informality in microenterprises, air transport regulation, disaster risk adaptation in agriculture, and data management in disaster risk and climate adaptation strategies of local governments—they all demonstrate the importance of empirical analysis and evidence-based research in addressing gaps in policy implementation and engendering governance reforms.

In Deeme Shawn Manalo and Lianne Angelico Depante's study "Revisiting the Barangay Micro-Business Enterprises Act of 2002: A Policy Evaluation Using National-Level Data," the data culled from a national-level survey serves as a starting point in evaluating a two-decade-old law that was meant to address the high level of informality in the microenterprise sector in the Philippines. Employing descriptive statistics in processing the data from the survey of microentrepreneurs and a parallel survey of business counselors, the study identified issues in the implementation of the legislation and its ineffectiveness in encouraging barangay-level enterprises to register and avail themselves of the incentives and benefits of business formalization. Based on the findings, Manalo and Depante formulated short and long-term recommendations to address the weaknesses in the implementation of the microbusiness law.

Similarly, the study "Analysis of Loss and Damage in Philippine Agriculture Due to Natural Hazards: Evidence-Based Policy Recommendations for Climate Adaptation" by Saturnina Halos, Alicia Ilaga, and Abraham Manalo, relies mainly on empirical analysis of the Department of Agriculture's data on the impact of natural hazards on agriculture from 2011 to 2020. The study also used descriptive statistics, coupled with frequency mapping and index calculations, in accounting for agricultural losses due to typhoons, floods, moisture stress, pest and disease infestation, earthquakes, and volcanic activity. Through mapping, the study identified which provinces are more prone to disaster impacts, vis-à-vis the months when natural hazards often strike. From these findings, the government, through policy and other institutional instruments, can devise adaptation strategies such as shifting the agricultural calendar, providing targeted disaster response funding, and promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices.

The use of data in disaster risk reduction (DRR) management and climate change adaptation (CCA) is also central to the study "Data Management in Local Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Change Adaptation in the Philippines: Scenarios and Strategies" by Xavier Venn Asuncion, Gerard Martin Suarez, Lourdes Santos, and Reginald Ugaddan. How local governments manage and

use CCA- and DRR-related data is crucial to addressing and mitigating the impacts of natural hazards. The research team, through a futures thinking approach, projected different future scenarios that may aid local governments in devising goals and strategies that will guide them in institutionalizing programs and policies at the local level.

Meanwhile, Doreen Zules took a theoretical route in determining the gaps and overlaps in the regulation of the air transport sector in the Philippines. In her study entitled “Air Transport Governance in the Philippines from the Lens of New Institutional Theory,” Zules employed DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) concept of isomorphism and the framework devised by Besharov and Smith (2014) in analyzing the complexities and institutional logics of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), including its development and evolution, as the main regulatory agency of the Philippine government concerning air transportation. Zules identified the overlapping and conflicting roles of the CAAP as both the main investigative and operating body governing civil aviation, as the main issue that has to be rectified.

The special section of PJPA Volume 69 features two non-peer-reviewed articles—a policy note on pandemic preparedness plans in some European countries and an exploratory research on tourist inflows and tourism-generated revenues in selected local government units vis-a-vis their use of digital platforms for tourism promotion.

In the research note “Digital Governance and Tourism Promotion: An Exploratory Study of Social Media Strategies in Philippine Local Government Units,” Marie Christine Chan-Tayo and Reginald Ugaddan examine the role that digital platforms, such as social media pages and official websites, play in tourism promotion of local governments. Through content analysis, the study looked into the ways in which local governments maximize their digital presence in engaging and attracting tourists to visit tourist destinations in their localities to boost local revenue.

Peter Mameli, an Associate Professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, looked into the recent assessments of pandemic preparedness plans of some European countries using different public policy theories to frame his analysis. The policy note also weighed on which pathways to take in improving pandemic preparedness plans—whether hazard-specific planning, an all-hazard approach, whole-system civil emergency planning, or top-hazard planning as the more suitable approach in pandemic preparedness response.

The Editor