

THE VALENZUELA MANDATORY DISCLOSURE PROGRAM: TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY OPERATION POLICY

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Abstract

Transparency and accountability are fundamental principles of good governance. In recent years, many local governments in the Philippines have implemented disclosure programs to promote transparency and enhance citizens' access to information. The Disclosure Program implemented by the Valenzuela City government is one such initiative. This paper aims to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in promoting transparency and accountability. This paper employed a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews with residents and government officials, as well as document analysis of program reports and relevant policies. The study focuses on four key areas: the accessibility of information, the completeness of information, the usefulness of information, and the accountability of local officials. The findings of this study will be relevant not only to the Valenzuela City government but also to other local governments in the Philippines and beyond. The research contributes to the growing body of literature on disclosure programs and their effectiveness in promoting transparency and accountability. The paper is significant because it addresses a critical gap in the literature. While many studies have examined the impact of disclosure programs on financial transparency, few have focused on their broader impact on governance and accountability. The paper will provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Valenzuela City Disclosure Program and highlight areas for improvement.

Keywords: Disclosure Program, Transparency, Accountability, Local Government, Valenzuela City

Introduction

The government should be open and honest. Transparency encourages accountability and informs the public about what their government has been doing. Citizen engagement enhances the efficacy and effectiveness of government decisions. While considering how to improve government openness, officials must recognize that the public do not always comprehend the more intricate aspects of government that they do (Stuart, 2012).

The City Government of Valenzuela's operations being defined in terms of efficiency or empathy may affect the citizen's trust in the City Government. It could also be necessary to consider the information's content about the City Government's performance. On the one hand, any informational provision could have the same impact on confidence regardless of the outcome. Just letting the citizens see how decisions are made, how they are implemented, and what the outcomes are could increase trust. On the other hand, since they may use that information to revise their perceptions about the caliber of the City Government of Valenzuela, people may have more or less trust depending on the outcomes they perceive. It may not be sufficient to increase perceptions of how transparent governments are simply opening up the City Government of Valenzuela. Moreover, Transparency primarily focuses on public access to information and decision-making transparency in public policymaking. According to one, concerns of confidence and quality assurance in the civil service are relevant (Shpak et al., 2019).

The Ordinance No. 637 Section 2, The City Government of Valenzuela recognize its duty to implement a policy of full public disclosure of all its transaction involving public interest, promote transparency of its dealings and transactions, uphold the people's right to information and rights to access public records involving official acts and transactions as well as the protection of data privacy rights of data subject as part of its effort to take effective measures towards good governance and accountability to people.

The purpose of this paper is to collect information or data about how the implementation of the program affects the citizens of Valenzuela in terms of building their trust to the local government as well as how this policy will foster good transparency between the citizens and the Valenzuela city local government unit. It is the act of providing the public reliable information needed to make informed decisions on matters affecting the operation of government. As stated by Orelli (2016), It creates trust among citizens, enhances citizens' engagement with the government, improves internal efficiency, and promotes open government on a global scale.

This paper identifies and further examine the effectiveness of the program and how it will create impacts to the citizens to fully lay down their trust to the government and to seek

remedies and recommend development to the local government on how this program can be more concrete that may lead to a numerous implementation of a well and enhance policy.

Moreover, Citizens may hold the local government unit responsible through transparency. Given its importance, the local governments should continually be working on measures to improve openness. A good, just local government then prioritizes the best interest of its residents and is honest and open in the process of serving them. The city government of Valenzuela implements its Mandatory Disclosure Program. This program focuses on the operation of transparency in the local government unit (LGU), where the residents can easily access information about the programs or other important announcements and major projects concerning the welfare of the residents.

Research Methodology

This study focuses on effectiveness of the Mandatory Disclosure Program and how it will create impacts to the citizen. The citizen of Valenzuela City make up the research population and are the source of the study's object. Additionally, using the simple random sampling technique, the population is filtered to create the study's final sample according to the following standards:

a) Gender of the Respondents - The views of men and women for the program may be varied and created an effect that is useful to the study.

b) Age of the Respondents - Different perspective based on their age provides a wider point of view about the program

c) Years of Residency - The years of residency of the participants at least 3 years to make sure they are able to experience and acquire knowledge about the transparency of the LGU or any agency in Valenzuela City

The researchers used mixed methodology to analyze how the mandatory disclosure program takes affects in evaluating the satisfaction of the Valenzuelanos in terms of transparency level in the local government of Valenzuela City. The data gathered highlighted the following: the Socio-demographic Profile of the Respondents, The Experience of the Public towards the Implementation of the Mandatory Disclosure Program, The Mandatory Disclosure Program on the Transparency and Accountability of the Local Government, and Institutional Framework on Transparency Policy and Government Disclosure of Information. The researchers obtained a more thorough understanding of the way public local governance works with the support of public trust and government accountability to citizens in providing information through a critical review of the gathered studies.

Results

The Sociodemographic of the Respondent

Table 1: Final Sample of the Study in terms of their Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	36	36%
Female	44	44%
LGBTQ	14	14%
Rather not Disclose	6	6%

In response to the first statement of the problem, each participant's defined socio-demographic profile, such as years of residency, age, and gender, was employed as crucial variables in analyzing the program's efficiency.

The table shows the percentage of people by gender, count, and percentage. The majority of the respondents are female, making up 44% of the total which is the largest group in the table. 36% of the respondents are male which came to be the second largest group in the table. 14% of respondents are LGBTQ which came to be the third largest group in the table. While the remaining 6% of people did not want to disclose their gender.

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

	Mean	Range	Deviation
Age	27.63	20.39	9.38

It shows that the average (mean) age of the respondents is 27.63 with a range of 20.39 and a standard deviation of 9.38.

Table 3: Years of Residency of the Respondents

	Mean	Range	Deviation
Years of Residency	20.39	24	7

With regard to the length of the respondents' residency in the city of Valenzuela, the mean is 20.39 years, a range of 24 years and standard deviation of 7 years.

The Experience of the Public towards the Implementation of the Mandatory Disclosure Program

Table 4: Likert Scale

SOP 2 QUESTION #	4	3	2	1	
1	67	31	2	0	100
2	47	40	10	3	100
3	44	47	9	0	100
4	51	48	1	0	100
5	53	42	5	0	100
6	58	40	2	0	100
7	46	45	7	2	100
8	43	52	4	1	100
9	48	48	4	0	100
10	48	48	4	0	100

The table reflects responses to ten questions on the Likert scale, with 4 representing the strongest agreement and 1 representing the strongest disagreement. The table also displays the percentage of respondents that selected each answer option for each question. The table findings indicate that the majority of respondents agree with the statements stated in the questions.

Table 5: Weighted Mean, Mean2, and Standard Deviation

STATEMENT #	WEIGHTED MEAN	MEAN2	SD
1	3.65	13.59	3.153
2	3.31	11.55	2.871
3	3.35	11.63	2.877
4	3.5	12.52	3.003
5	3.48	12.46	2.997
6	3.56	12.96	3.066
7	3.35	11.71	2.891
8	3.37	11.73	2.891
9	3.44	12.16	2.953
10	3.44	12.16	2.953

Gwm 3.45

The table represents the computed the Weighted Mean, Mean2, and the Standard Deviation of the responses of the participants.

Table 6: Scale and Value Allocation

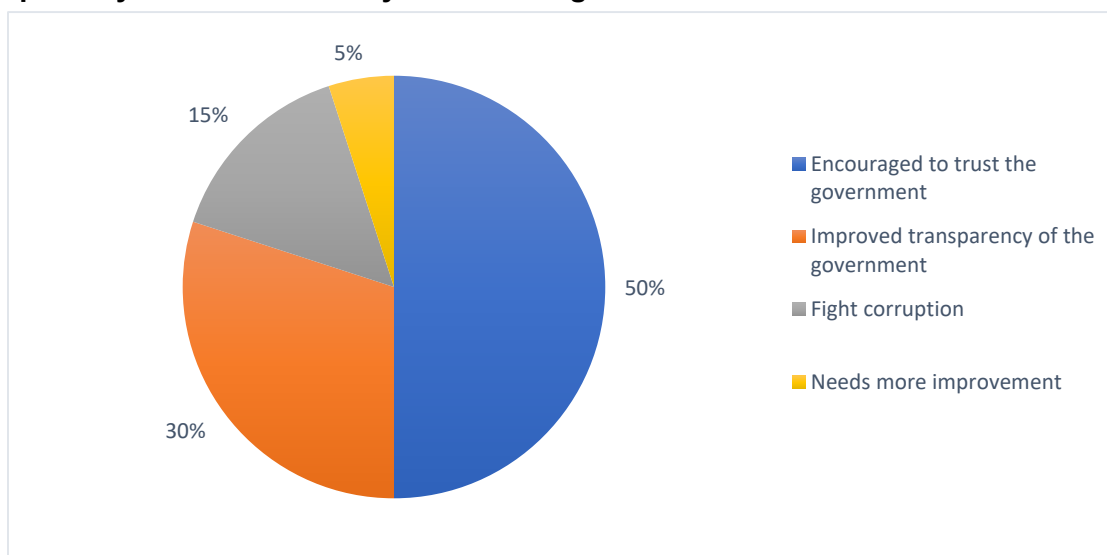
SCALE			square
STRONGLY AGREE	4		16
AGREE	3		9
DISAGREE	2		4
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1		1

RESPONDENCES	100
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VALUE ALLOCATION	
3.26 - 4	STRONGLY AGREE
2.6 - 3.25	AGREE
1.76 - 2.5	DISAGREE
1 - 1.75	STRONGLY DISAGREE

The chart demonstrates that the public's experience with the implementation of the mandatory disclosure program is that they are able to use the Valenzuela City website, with the highest weighted mean of 3.65 indicating "Strongly Agree". The data also shows that respondents "Strongly Agree" with their experience implementing required disclosure, with a general weighted mean of 3.45. This just suggests that the majority of respondents, based on their experiences, favor the mandatory disclosure program.

The Mandatory Disclosure Program of Public Documents which contributes to the transparency and accountability of the local government



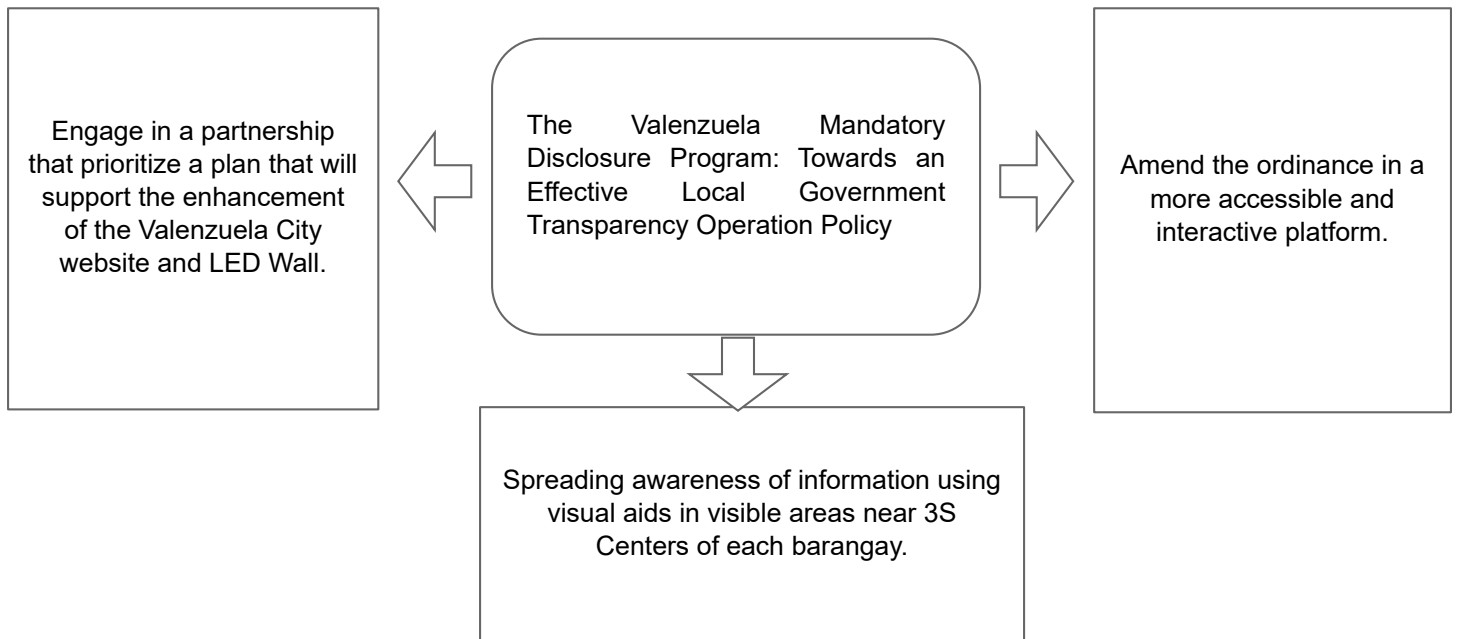


Figure 1: Opinion on Transparency of Information and Documents

The respondents were questioned in the third part of the survey, "What is your opinion on the transparency of information and documents in our city?" The data shows that transparency of data and documents has a positive effect considering a high percentage of respondents, 50%, said it encouraged everyone to trust the government." The second most often answered question indicates improved government transparency, with a total of 30%. The report also indicates how transparency fights corruption, with an average of 15% and 5% saying that it has to be improved.

Framework to Develop the Implementation of the Mandatory Disclosure Program

The ordinances and resolutions that are presented and implemented in Valenzuela City are more focused on the City's transparency policy and enforce the people's right to information and right to access public records, as well as to protect the data privacy of data subjects, to provide for a local mechanism for the disclosure of information involving public interest and access to public records, and to create a plantilla position of City Transparency and Data Protection Officer and Department Policy implementers should also consider how residents would get information in a more convenient and well-organized manner. This advice will help to improve program implementation.

The study's last problem focused on developing a framework to improve the implementation of the mandatory disclosure program. The framework is based on the outcomes and findings obtained from the field's responses to the questions answered. The primary objective is to form a cooperation and create a plan to support the enhancement of the Valenzuela City website and LED Wall. The second step is to raise awareness of information by placing visual aids in visible areas near each barangay's 3S Centers, and finally, to amend the ordinance to make it more accessible and interactive.

Discussion

The Sociodemographic of the Respondent

The findings of the study indicated that the sociodemographic profile of the respondents shows and demonstrate a near even split between their gender, age and years of residency showcasing a balanced and diverse group of participants. As a result, this diversity is essential for obtaining a wide spectrum of viewpoints and insights about the Mandatory Disclosure Program.

The Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure Program (VMDP) is a local government transparency operation policy that was implemented in Valenzuela City, Philippines in 2013. The program requires all government agencies in the city to disclose information on their finances, operations, and services to the public. The creation of VMDP has led to increased public awareness of government activities. As a result, the program has made it easier for citizens to access information about government spending, contracts, and other activities. This has led to increased public scrutiny of government, which has in turn led to improved government performance.

The Mandatory Disclosure Program of Public Documents which contributes to the transparency and accountability of the local government

The amalgamation of data inferred that the Mandatory Disclosure Program has improved the transparency of the local government added by the fact that a number of citizens believe that the program combats corruption or malpractices through publicized documents like budget statements. In turn, the accountability and transparency is increased at the same time the trust of the citizens are secured which made possible through implemented ICT initiative or the website of the local government. There is room for improvement of transparency implementation given that the perception of the public is relative to what they experienced and how the government disseminate information, the policy implementer affirmed that the program helps the government obtain the public's trust.

The awareness of program is unreached for some citizens incapable of using technology which means the availability of information is limited, the medium of information is only available through physical means such as magazine, newsletter, infographics and other visual aids that the government must consider and strategize in the future on how to improve in that aspect. The existence of the LED wall helps in spreading awareness in the constituents to which the same can be implemented in the future around the vicinity of barangay hall or 3S centers wherein concerned citizens may benefit from the principle of information dissemination employed in the LED wall.

The Experience of the Public Towards the Implementation of the Mandatory Disclosure Program

In so far of the Mandatory Disclosure Program implementation, the public expressed positive experiences in totality wherein the information in the website are comprehensible, adequate, accurate, and readily available published in the Valenzuela website and the perceived clarity of the LED wall. The citizen's perception is further built upon from the factors of reduced corruption, and transparent operations resulting to the improvement of citizen's trust as there are mechanisms to actualize the desire of the public for good governance.

The program has been successful in implementation at its state because many citizens are generally aware of its purpose and benefits from information dissemination yet the percentage of disagreeing minority reveals that the program is weak in terms of the following: the platforms used are inadequate and shall be further expanded, there is lack of details on the published information, and the lack of medium for economically incapable citizens and the other people are unexposed and unskilled at technology resulting to lack of convenient access of reliable public information through electronic means.

The public reflected the recommendations towards on how the local government can further improve the Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure Program. There is general consensus that is said about the program that it has the potential to flourish if the LED wall will be expanded in the barangay halls or 3S centers in the future but the limits of budgetary restrictions and the prominence of modern era on using technology may pose some hesitation on the side of local administrators to expend more resources on the conventional tangible awareness that is costly maintained at present. The presence of social media is a popular trend wherein information are regularly consumed by the public that should be exploited by the local government to lead the public towards the available features of readily available public service website medium of the Valenzuela City to further enhance the efficiency of accessibility of public service towards the public.

Conclusion

The Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure is a successful transparency operation policy as the following objectives is answered as such: the demographic profile provided clarity of the attributes thereof towards the program implementation, the experiences of the public towards the program is positively impactful, the Mandatory Disclosure Program of Public Documents provision helped significantly the government upon improving transparency and accountability, and the framework of development is the specific method of framework employed to further address the areas of possible development of the program.

The synthesis of the paper further leads the Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure Program as a critical tool on enhancing transparency and accountability in the local public administration. The program is proven to be effective and minimal at level to implement, the public is given more options to obtain information of government activities, the government is able to respond as soon as possible towards the concerns of the citizens, and the reduction of corruptive practices is realized due to integration of ICT based practices.

Recommendation

This paper have based with the following recommendation drawn from the summed-up findings and conclusion of the research. The list is based from the careful analysis of implementing policy and thought up resolutions accorded with the improvement of several implementations under the Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure Program.

The city government will gain more from maximizing its concurrent impact by collaborating on a plan to promote the enhancement of the Valenzuela municipal website and LED Wall. Effectively developing administration and, to some extent, improve response in accessible means to address the concerns of individuals who are affected. The ultimate goal is to build a joint contingency strategy that may determine conditions in which collaborative governance will be more or less effective as a policy making and public management method.

Moreover, the use of visual aids in accessible locations near 3S Centers of each barangay to promote awareness of the data is such a significant turning point in establishing the recognition on the unreached demography incapable or unwilling to use technological medium by will, informing them of the purpose and merely what can be accessed according to the jurisdiction or rights granted.

Furthermore, Improve the ordinance in a more accessible and interactive platform that will attract unaware individuals or feel lacking in the implementation by obtaining their valuable suggestions and feedbacks through organized discussions and in the type of a forum at the

completion of conducting knowledge giving seminar or workshop, the local government would desire to know what has occurred while improving responsiveness of developers and possible amendments to suit the concern. Residents will be the ones among the first to benefit from this policy action. This recommendation seeks to make the website and LED Wall into significant community resources, supporting the idea that effective governance requires collaboration, openness, and citizen participation. Overall, the study reveals that programs such as the Valenzuela Mandatory Disclosure Program can help to strengthen ties between governments and citizens, promoting to more responsive and successful governance systems.

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