

# **Critical Challenges in Implementing the Citizen's Charter Initiative: Insights from Selected Local Government Units**

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*Globally recognized as a best practice, the Citizen's Charters were developed under the paradigm of New Public Management (NPM), which uses business-like perspective and tools by bringing the public as a customer in the center of public service delivery. Building on these successes, the Philippine government launched an anti-red tape program based largely on RA 9485, which mandates the creation of Citizen's Charters for all frontline services of the government including local governments. This paper evaluates the compliance of selected charters to the provision of the law and reveals that the Citizen's Charters developed show absence of stakeholder involvement in their formulation, varying levels of compliance with the required information in the charter, inconsistencies in the information provided, and lack of customization and innovation on the part of the LGUs with respect to content and form of the charter. These findings indicate that the Citizen's Charter as implemented does not consistently hold the basic principles of NPM and "charterism."*

**Keywords:** *Citizen's Charter, New Public Management, local government, charterism, anti-red tape*

## **Introduction**

From the late 1970s, the revitalization of government service delivery has taken the direction of implementing a set of reforms under the label of New Public Management (NPM) (Manning, 2001). One of the main features of NPM is that it brings the customer or the public into the center of public service. A popular way of doing this was through the Citizen's Charter (Taylor, 1999; Clark, 2000; Manning, 2001; Turner, 2002; Hood, 1991).

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