PHILIPPINE JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

REFLECTIONS FROM SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS

PHILIPPINE JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Editor's Note

This issue features three main articles that deal with public management in three different aspects—managing interlocal cooperation, inducing and maintaining motivation, and municipal restructuring. Each article enriches our understanding and knowledge of local governance and disaster management, and, at the same time, demonstrates how various methods or analytical tools could be applied to inform our knowledge.

Berse and Tumanut explore the aspect of local government linkages through town twinning or sister city relationships. Using network analysis, the authors find that Philippine cities are engaged in partnerships and linkages, and that they are also members of international and local organizations. However, they describe the linkages to be more informal and ad hoc rather than formal and structured. These linkages are often defined and described by one-off events such as study visits related to local economic promotion and disaster management. Sister city relationships are also defined by unequal role attribution between a big sister and a little sister. The authors note the challenge of transforming the existing partnerships into active ones that could serve as avenues for collaborative problem solving and sharing of ideas and practices on urban management.

Perez applies Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to identify and examine the factors that contribute to job satisfaction among disaster responders. Using a mixed method of survey, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews, he shows that disaster responders are motivated by recognition, satisfaction with responsibility assigned to them, salary, prospects of personal growth, achievement, organizational policies, and relationship with peers, thus supporting Herzberg.

Tumanut looks at municipal restructuring in Japan from an institutional perspective, using a Veto Player approach. He highlights the roles of institutions and interest groups in influencing the results of the most recent municipal merger program in Japan. A case of merger of two cities is presented, which provides a nuanced understanding of how merger results are influenced by the interaction, engagement and combination, and number of actors in a defined historical moment.

A special piece, more of a reflection paper by Ocampo, is included in this issue. The reflection is about the possibility of hope in dealing with the wicked problems and failures of government. Ocampo highlights the views of several studies and authors and their prescriptions on how to deal with the "difficulties of governance." Ocampo closes his reflection by sharing in the hope expressed by others, a guarded optimism—that the difficult problems faced by government and society can be solved, and that alternative approaches or solutions are available.

Untwining Twinning: A Cursory Examination of Sister City Relations in the Philippines

Kristoffer B. Berse and Michael A. Tumanut*

The latter half of the 20th century saw the active interlinking of cities globally and domestically, facilitated in large part by the proliferation of sister city or town twinning arrangements. However, while this has been taking place steadily across and within countries, few studies have been made, if at all, looking at the specific experience of local authorities from the so-called South in general, and the Philippines in particular. This article attempts to fill this lacuna by examining the nature and scope of bilateral sister city relationships among local authorities in the Philippines. Findings from a mixed-mode survey (41% response rate, 144 cities) administered in 2015-2016 show that study visits and information exchange account for most of the interconnectivity of local governments. More than half of the participating cities organized study visits related to local economic promotion (LEP) and disaster risk management (DRM). But the potential for collaborative problem-solving or even co-production of knowledge to improve DRM, LEP, or any other aspect of urban management has yet to be fully realized. From a network perspective, the interconnectivity between and among local governments was found to be weak, with many of the relations seemingly established independent of preexisting ties. In many cases, the partnership seems to be anchored on big sister-little sister arrangement. Structure-wise, there appears to be no systematic process of matching the needs and resources of the participating local governments, other than to establish political ties that may or may not be tapped to improve DRM or facilitate LEP by either party. Given its very limited practice and benefits, sister cities are not well monitored and sustained. Changes in leadership and constraints in budgeting and staffing also render the partnership spotty or mostly non-functional.

Throughout history, cities are known to have linked with each other in pursuit of economic, military, and political objectives. In many cases, these ties have been used as platforms to promote, propagate, or transfer technologies, systems, pratices, and ideas aimed at addressing specific challenges in urban management. In the United States, sister cities were formed in the aftermath of the Second World War as a sub-state strategy to heal the wounds of war and

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abate the risks attendant to the ensuing Cold War. This approach practically mirrored the "town twinning" programs in many European cities, an offshoot of the international municipal movement that gained significant traction upon the establishment of the Union Internationale des Villes (now International Union of Local Authorities or IULA) in Ghent, Belgium in 1913. Since then, this global interlinking of cities has evolved in structure and objectives, and has come to be called differently in various contexts (Berse & Asami, 2010).

In general, the literature on sister cities is emerging (Berse & Asami, 2015), but still sparse at the domestic/local level of engagement (Park, 2017). This is particularly true in the Philippines, where the phenomenon is traditionally seen as part and parcel of a larger local governance scheme—that of interlocal cooperation (Brillantes et al., 2012; Brillantes & Tumanut, 2007). The structure and scope of sister city relationships in the country have yet to be examined closely as an independent area of inquiry.

Accordingly, this article aims to address the paucity of research by profiling the country's sister cities and other forms of linking between and among the cities (and municipalities). It also aims to describe the varying objectives sought by such relationships, especially with respect to two important local government functions, namely, disaster risk management (DRM) and local economic promotion (LEP). By and large, this cursory review seeks to advance understanding of domestic interlocal cooperation networks, and hopefully inform the practice of twinning in the Philippines and other similarly situated countries.

In line with the foregoing, the article examines the level of participation of the cities in terms of how they link up with other local authorities. Specifically, it aims to answer the following research questions: 1. How interconnected are the cities in the Philippines to other local authorities in the country and abroad?; 2. What are the different forms of these relationships?; and 3. Are there any patterns in terms of how the cities are connected to other cities?

The overarching objective of this article is to provide baseline information and first-level analysis on the nature of sister city relations in the Philippines. The scope of the study includes all types of bilateral relationships forged at the level of local authorities with at least one Philippine city or municipal government involved. It does not examine the role of national networks (e.g., League of Cities of the Philippines) and international/regional networks (e.g., CITYNET, a coalition of local authorities in Asia-Pacific), where Philippine local authorities are members.

In this article, "local authorities" refer to the official local government entity of a local government unit (LGU) at both city and municipal levels. Given the lack of universal consensus on the delineation between what makes a city and

a municipality, the term "cities" is generally applied to mean both municipality and city, unless otherwise specified. It must be noted that under the Philippines' Local Government Code of 1991, there is a clear distinction between cities and municipalities as determined according to land area, population, and income.

Findings from the study may inform the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), and the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) in assessing the usefulness of networks or twinning in the Philippines. Likewise, the results of this study may be useful to local resource institutes, particularly the University of the Philippines-National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP-NCPAG), in disseminating good practices for replication, as well as to Philippine local authorities interested in engaging in twinning program.

Review of Related Literature

Amidst the twin processes of urbanization and globalization, the role of local governments has become more salient than ever. In the Philippines, the 1991 Local Government Code sets the framework for local governments, in pursuit of local development, to collaborate with other local or international entities. This article investigates one mode of collaboration: twinning. It is usually regarded as an information and cultural exchange (Douglass, 2002), but recent practices have demonstrated the inclusion of commercial exchanges into the program (O'Toole, 2010). Contemporarily, it is viewed as an urban process (Jayne et al., 2011) and a tool to promote not only cultural but also economic ties, viewing the former as a factor affecting trade and investment particularly in an international twinning program (Baycan-Levent et al., 2010; Ramasamy & Cremer, 1998). Other studies show the potential of international twinning in improving administration and responsiveness (Bontenbal & van Lindert, 2008; Jones & Blunt, 1999), influencing urban planning practices (Tjandradewi et al., 2006), and promoting good practices (Berse & Asami, 2012a) in building local resilience to disasters and climate change (Berse & Asami, 2012b; Berse et al., 2011; Tjandradewi & Berse, 2011). A bandwagon effect has been observed at least among Korean municipalities, i.e., sister city formation at the domestic level is associated with pressure from neighboring towns (Park, 2017). Park (2017) also presents a typology of sister city relations based on similarities (i.e, historical, cultural, natural resource, and municipal name) and differences (i.e., regional harmony and urban-rural exchange).

Very little is known about the nature and impact of local (and international) municipal linkages involving Philippine local governments. A localized form of public-public partnership, these linkages are popularly known as "sisterhood," "sister cities," or "friendship cities" arrangement in the Philippines. Whereas Roldan (2010) and Yu-Jose (2010) examine the role of Philippine sister cities

in international relations, Berse (2013) shows the high level of readiness of Philippine cities, particularly the medium-sized cities, to engage in linkages, as well as the importance of internal support. Moreover, there are other forms of inter-municipal relationships (i.e., institutional alliances, metropolitan arrangements, and, at the extreme, political integration or amalgamation) that center around service delivery, environmental management, and economic cooperation (Brillantes & Tumanut, 2007). The budding literature on municipal alliances or interlocal cooperation in the Philippines primarily focuses on three areas: typology, success factors, and policy recommendations (Brillantes et al., 2012; Brillantes & Tumanut, 2007; Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines & Philippine Development Forum, 2010; GIZ Decentralization Program Philippines, 2012; Osorio et al., 2010; Tayao, 2007). From an institutional perspective, formation of sister cities may be viewed as trans-scaling type of reform in local government structure or inter-municipal relations that is non-instrusive, unlike municipal amalgamation or metropolitan arrangement that intrude on territories and jurisdictions (see Tumanut, 2015).

There is no accessible study yet on domestic sister cities or bilateral linking among local governments in the Philippines. A quick online research shows stark differences between two economic giants in Metro Manila. Makati City first engaged (with memorandum of agreement) in sister city relationship in 1989 with Los Angeles, and had its first local twinning with Cabagan, Isabela in 1993. In 2014 alone, 34 agreements were endorsed and approved by its City Council. Quezon City, on the other hand, is among the first to forge sister city relations outside the country with Salt Lake City in 1967. Its most recent agreement was in 2013 with Roxas City, while its first domestic town twinning was in 1987 with Cotabato City. However, the types and objectives of the linkages sought by these two major cities have yet to be examined and compared. Whether or not such agreements were implemented and sustained is another subject of investigation.

At the international stage, these municipal or city pairings are referred to differently by various scholars and agencies: sister cities (Zelinksy, 1991), city-to-city cooperation (UN-HABITAT, 2003), municipal international cooperation (Schep et al., 1995), international municipal cooperation (Hewitt, 1998), friendship agreements (Spence, 2005), local government to local government partnership (Storey, 2009), North-South/South-North partnerships (Johnson & Wilson, 2006), decentralized cooperation (De Villiers, 2009) and linking (UNDP, 2000), among other terms. Berse and Asami (2015; 2010) note that the use of these various terminologies denotes the pursuit of different activities and objectives, which may include cultural/youth exchanges, study visits, industry delegation, sports events, exhibits/trade fairs, lobbying, and technical assistance.

Regardless of nomenclature, sister cities or town twinnings are established based on the mutual interest of the participating cities. Such may spring from commonalities in name, history, language, economic base, or other similarities

(Park, 2017; Zelinsky, 1991). In practice, however, the benefits of twinning may not always be reciprocal. This is particularly true in cases where sister cities go beyond mere cultural exchanges and move towards more substantive development-oriented cooperation, wherein one city assumes the role of a beneficiary and the other a resource. When a beneficiary city is simply interested in a best practice from the resource city, a structured study visit may be arranged. On the other hand, a resource city may provide advisory services to the beneficiary city by dispatching its own experts to understand the latter's problems and offer concrete solutions based on its own experience. A pilot project may also be carried out to demonstrate the benefits of a best practice transfer that the beneficiary has adopted from the resource city.

Methodology and Framework

Data for this study were culled through a combination of mailed and online surveys administered to all 144 cities in the Philippines. Aside from the survey, key informant interviews, document review, and organizational network analysis were carried out in different phases of the research. This article presents the findings of the first phase that involved a macro-level scoping and network analysis with regard to the cities' involvement in sister city relationships.

The approach and framework adopted for this study is one that fits the cursory nature and descriptive objective of this article: network analysis. Based on the survey or macro-level scoping, the key attributes of the city-respondents are described, particularly the type of bilateral linkages among city governments in the Philippines. In the network analysis, linkages are analyzed according to type of activity (e.g., active, formal, inactive, or ad hoc); network is described (whether sparse, dense, or complete); and groupings identified. Moreover, cities are also assessed according to number of connections (degree centrality), potential to connect cities (betweeness centrality), connection to network's primary actors (eigenvector centrality), and potential for specialized cooperation (clustering coefficient). The analysis was carried out through NodeXL, an open source network analysis and visualization extension of Microsoft Excel.

Results and Discussion

Nationwide Survey

Of the 144 cities in the Philippines (as of June 2015), 59 cities responded to the survey, a response rate of 41%. A little over half of the 59 respondents are from Luzon (54% or 32 cities), about a fourth (24% or 14 cities) from the Visayas, and a fifth (22% or 13 cities) from Mindanao. However, this figure only accounts for 44%, 36%, and 39% of the total cities in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao,

respectively. Metro Manila cities (11 cities) account for 34% of the Luzon participants. Slightly over half (54.5% or 18 cities) of the 33 highly-urbanized cities in the country participated.

City Attributes

The average size of the city-respondents in terms of land area is 259 km^2 with San Juan having the smallest area (8 km^2) and Davao the largest (2,444 km^2). In terms of population, Canlaon is the least populated (50,627) and Quezon City the most populated (2.76 million). The average population is 331,000. The average budget of city-respondents in 2014 is PHP 1.8 billion, with La Carlota City having the least budget (PHP 317 million) and Quezon City, the most (PHP 13.5 billion). Half of the respondents (31) are first-class cities, 7% (4) are second-class, 19% (11) third-class, and 15% (9) fourth-class (see Figure 1). The average number of city personnel (for 2013/2014) is 2,238 (about the size of Marikina City), with minimum value of 259 staff complement (Digos City) and maximum of around 14,000 (Davao City, which includes contractual employees).

Figure 1. Distribution of Cities by Income Classification
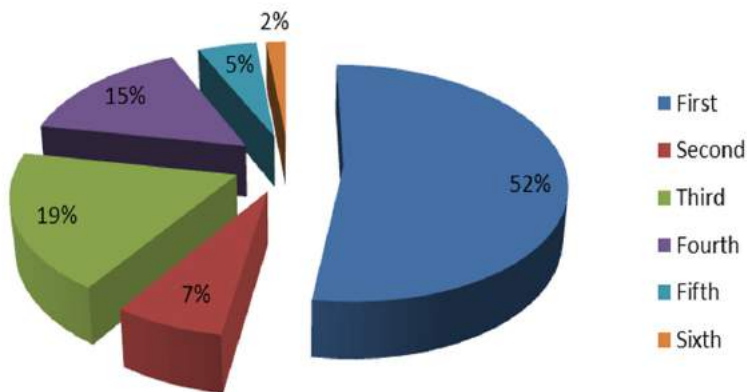
City Linkages

Most of the city-respondents are members of different local and international organizations or networks. Of the 59 cities, half (30 or 51%) are members of at least one interlocal arrangement. About half of these are located in Luzon, mostly because 11 cities are members of Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), the biggest alliance in terms of membership. In Mindanao, Davao Integrated Development Program (DIDP) and Davao Gulf Management Council (DGMC) are the leaders with five and four members, respectively. In the Visayas, three city-respondents are members of Southern Negros Disaster Management Alliance (SONEDMA).

Whereas half (30 cities) are members of at least one interlocal arrangement, a quarter (8 cities) of these are members of two interlocal arrangements in the country. In this survey, at least 19 local-regional alliances on areas of coastal management, disaster, economic, and urban development are identified. The interlocal health zones (ILHZ) are not included in this tally as many local governments in the Philippines (including cities) are members of these ILHZs, but only four city-respondents (7%) explicitly indicated in the survey their membership in such.

About a fourth (22% or 13 cities) of the city-respondents are members of an international alliance. Of those with global linkage, 69% (9 cities) are highly-urbanized cities, 77% (10) are Luzon-based and 38% (5) are in Metro Manila. More than half of the city-respondents (58.3%) are members of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI).

One-fourth (25% or 15 cities) of the city-respondents have multiple memberships (whether local or international), other than their membership in national leagues, regional development council, and ILHZ. Iloilo City, with six, has the most, followed by San Fernando (La Union) and Kabankalan with five, and Catbalogan with four. Membership in multiple organizations is equally observed in the three island groupings: six city-respondents in Luzon, five in the Visayas, and four in Mindanao. However, one-third of these are Metro Manila cities, while almost half are highly-urbanized cities.

Other than being members of LCP, Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), their respective Regional Development Councils (RDCs), and ILHZ, a few are members of national networks, such as Philippine International Sisterhood and Twinning Association (e.g., Imus, Sta. Rosa, General Santos), Mindanao Economic Development Council/Mindanao Development Authority, and the old Rural Improvement Club. A few respondents even stated other types of linkages that are not germane to this study (e.g., professional linkages such as mayors' association, vice-mayors' league and other associations such as museum associations).

Focal Point Person or Office

Based on those who filled out the questionnaire, sister city or any kind of linkage is managed by the city planning and development office (56%), followed by the mayor's office (20%). At least three cities' ties (San Juan, Marikina, and Mandaluyong) are managed by the Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office, and two (Sta. Rosa and Digos) are assigned to the Information Office. The big cities of Makati, Cebu, and Davao have created a special department to manage and supervise domestic and international linkages. Makati City has its International Relations Department, Cebu City its Sister City Commission, while Davao City has its own International Relations Board with Davao Investment and Trade Promotion Unit as the specific unit in charge of sister cities.
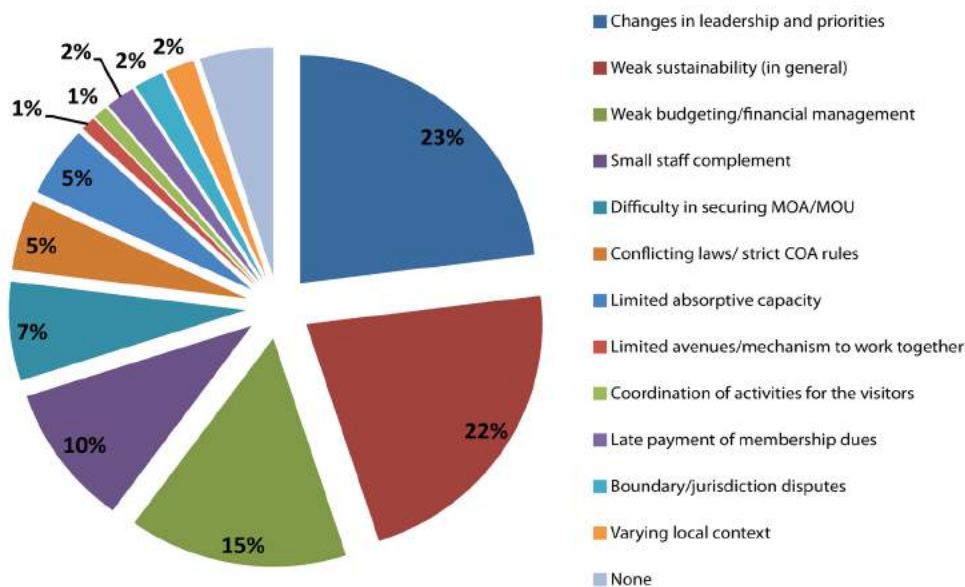
City-to-City Partnership

Of the 59 cities, 55 or 93% have at least one bilateral relationship with another LGU. Only four (7%) do not have ties with another local government inside and outside the country. These are Canlaon, Malolos, Mabalacat, and Cabuyao. Based on their attributes, income class and population do not seem to correlate with their ability or interest to build ties with others. However, all four are below average in terms of land area and city staff complement. Moreover, all of them are adjacent to at least two cities or highly-urbanized municipalities. Three of them are located in Luzon.

The four cities with no linkage provided the following reasons for not fostering any kind of interlocal partnership: "absence of MOA & Sangguniang Panglunsod resolutions"; "[no] benefits…in entering partnership with other LGUs"; "there are no orders from the national agencies that require or encourage to engage in partnering with other cities"; "LGU prioritize[s] the projects and programs of the city"; "there was no[thing] to prevent [or no problem to solve that requires partnership with others]"; and "LGU was not able to consider having a sister city partnership."

Challenges in Implementation and Sustainability

Of those with partnership, 65% (36 cities) have activities related to disaster risk management, while 60% (33 cities) indicated activities accruing to local economic promotion or development. However, different implementation challenges abound. About one-fourth (14 cities) point to the changes in leadership and priorities of the administration, one-fifth (13 cities) indicated sustainability of partnership in general, while financial constraint (9 cities or 15%) also render the partnership turbulent. Other minor challenges encountered include staff complement (6 or 10%), difficulty in securing MOA/MOU (4 or 7%), conflicting laws/strict COA rules (3 or 5%) and limited absorptive capacity (3 or 5%). Other specific challenges identified are: lack of/limited avenues/mechanisms to work together; coordination of activities for the visitors; late payment of membership dues; boundary/jurisdiction disputes; and varying local contexts. A few city-respondents encountered no challenges.

Figure 2. Challenges in Sister City Ties

- Changes in leadership and priorities
- Weak sustainability (in general)
- Weak budgeting/financial management
- Small staff complement
- Difficulty in securing MOA/MOU
- Conflicting laws/ strict COA rules
- Limited absorptive capacity
- Limited avenues/mechanism to work together
- Coordination of activities for the visitors
- Late payment of membership dues
- Boundary/jurisdiction disputes
- Varying local context
- None

Organizational Network Analysis

The survey revealed a total of 1,599 bilateral links, although not all of them are active and not all are based on sister city arrangements. Seventy percent of the links have had at least one activity, 53% of which as part of sister city relations. The rest were either not specified or based on informal, ad hoc exchanges.

Table 1. Summary of Links

	Inactive Links		Active Links		Total	
	No.	% of Total	No.	% of Total	No.	% of Total
Sister city	597	37%	530	33%	1,127	70%
Non-sister city	0	0%	472	30%	472	30%
Total	597	37%	1,002	63%	1,599	100%

Objectives of Partnership

The interconnections of cities to fellow cities were observed in 348 of the links (35%), municipalities 519 (52%), provinces 82 (8%), and overseas local units in 53 (5%). In terms of activities, study visits were the most prevalent as it was reported in 57% of the active cases. This was followed by information exchange (35%) and material aid (30%). The least activity used in the bilateral exchange was personnel secondment, as reported in only 37 cases (4%). Most of the activities were one-way, as only 10% of the exchanges have been mutual (102 out of 1,002).

Figure 3. Types of Activities
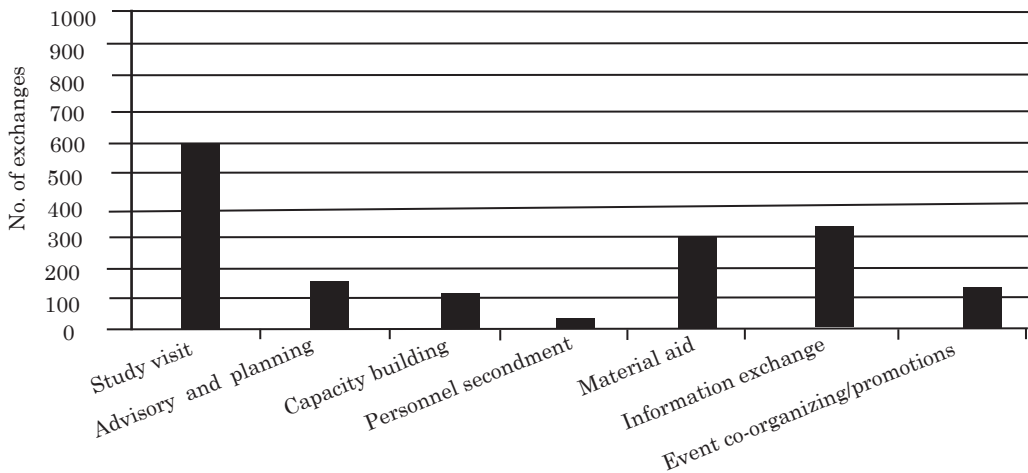
A total of 667 actors were involved in the linking. Municipalities comprise the biggest number of participants, accounting for 67% of the total participants (450 out of 667). This is followed by cities (122 or 18%), overseas local partners (50 or 8%), and provinces (45 or 7%). Relative to the total number of LGUs in the Philippines, this indicates a participation rate of 30% for municipalities (450 out of 1,489), 85% for cities (122 out of 144), and 56% for provinces (45 out of 81).

Nevertheless, while there is a relatively large number of participating LGUs, the network is sparse with a density of 0.0045. The dark line in Figure 4 indicates a sister city relationship, while the light line is for non-sister city-based activities. The network graph shows that most of the interactions were one-on-one, with very limited interconnection among the different actors. This lack of a "multiplier effect" indicates that the exchanges have yet to take root as a practice in most of the participating LGUs (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Network Structure of Philippine Cities

Legend: ■ Sister city ■ Non-sister city
Line thickness indicates types of interactions (max: 7; min: 1)
Size of vertex indicates number of partners
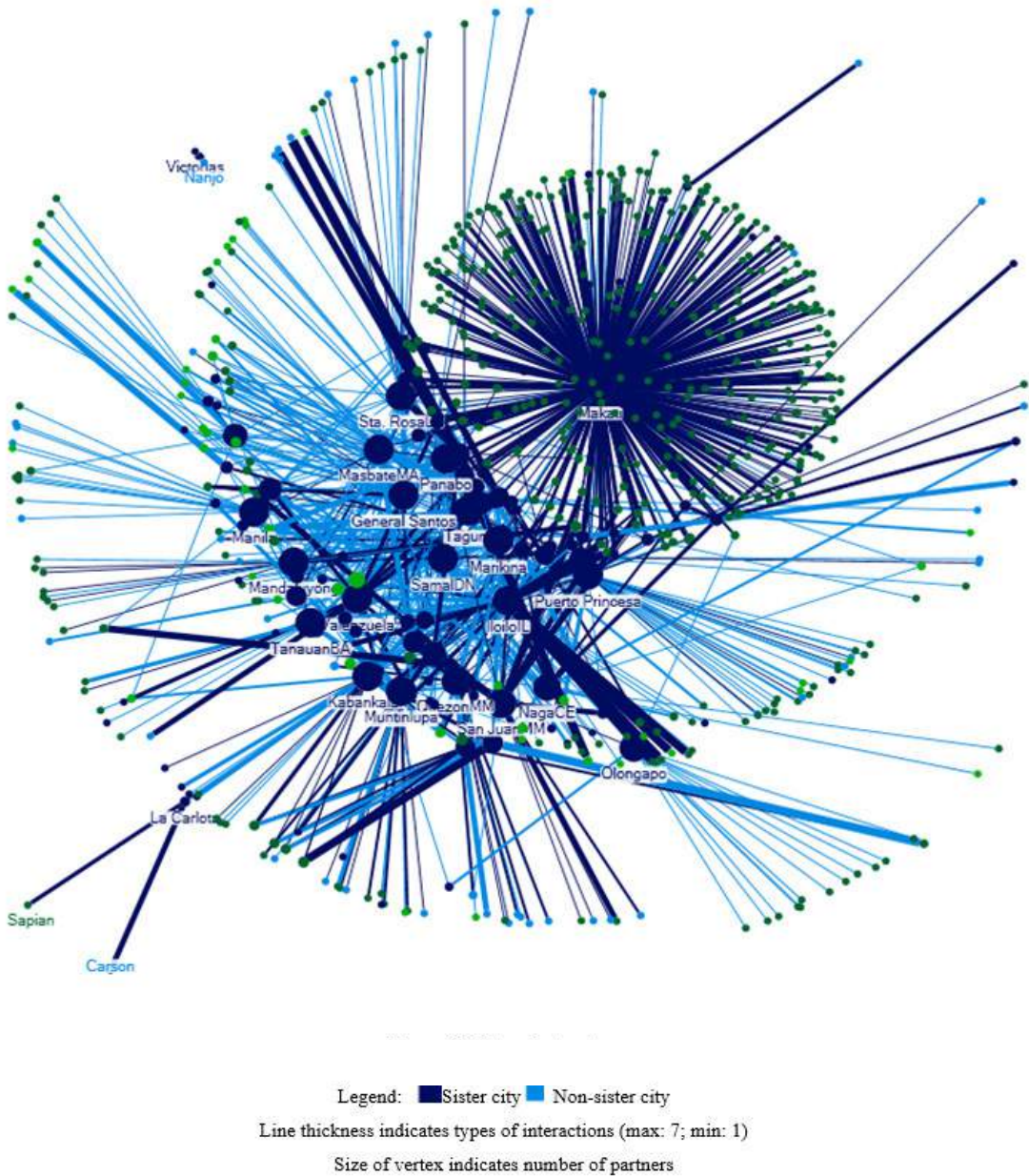
Results show three primary groupings in the network. The first group is composed of Makati's links with various municipalities and cities in the Philippines. Most of these are formal sister city relations. Makati has been very active in forging sister city relations in recent years, but most of these partnerships have been uni-directional, with Makati either providing material aid to a partner or hosting the study visit of that partner in the metropolis.

The second group is made up of LGUs—provinces, cities and municipalities—with links to Makati and other LGUs outside of the Makati network. As can be gleaned from the network graph (Figure 4), this is where activities involving many LGUs are very prominent, including both sister city (dark lines) and non-sister city relations (light lines). These cities serve as a "bridge" between Makati and other LGUs that have no direct link to Makati.

The third grouping set the networks' boundaries where linking has stopped, consisting mostly of municipalities. These are the partners of the second group, dominated mostly by non-sister city-based activities.

A fourth level may emerge in the future, following the lead of the city of La Carlota, which has forged a sister city agreement with Carson and Saipan, LGUs that have no other connections within the network. An "orphan" connection was also reported between Victorias and Nanjo.

Degree Centrality

To assess the number of connections that a city has, the degree centrality measure was calculated for each participant. The degree score is a simple counting of the total number of edges or links a city is connected to. Among the cities, Makati has reached out to most number of actors in the network, as it is linked to 380 out of the 667 actors in the network (57%).

Ninety-three percent (93%) of Makati's activities were anchored on formal sister city agreements (355 out of 380). Yet it must be noted that, overall, this only accounts for 62% of Makati's total number of reported links. This means that 197 of Makati's links have been non-functional, with no reported activity.

The top 15 cities with highest degree scores are shown in Table 2. Next to Makati, Puerto Princesa and Iloilo have the most number of active links, with 62 and 41, respectively. Six of them were from Metro Manila, namely, Makati, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Manila, Mandaluyong, and San Juan.

Table 2. Top 15 Cities, by Degree Score

Name of city	Number of links	Name of city	Number of links
1. Makati	380	9. Kabankalan	30
2. Puerto Princesa	62	10. Muntinlupa	29
3. Iloilo	41	11. Manila	27
4. Samal	38	12. Sta. Rosa	27
5. Panabo	37	13. Mandaluyong	25
6. Masbate	36	14. San Juan	22
7. General Santos	35	15. Tagum	21
8. Marikina	33		

It must be noted that while Makati has the most number of connections, these were one-time engagements mostly in the form of study visits. Iloilo fared better with partnerships that have iterative or multi-modal engagements. As can be seen in Figure 5, Iloilo has five sister city partnerships that consist of at least five activities, while Makati has none.

Figure 5. Comparison Between Makati and Iloilo Showing Links with at Least Five Interaction Modes
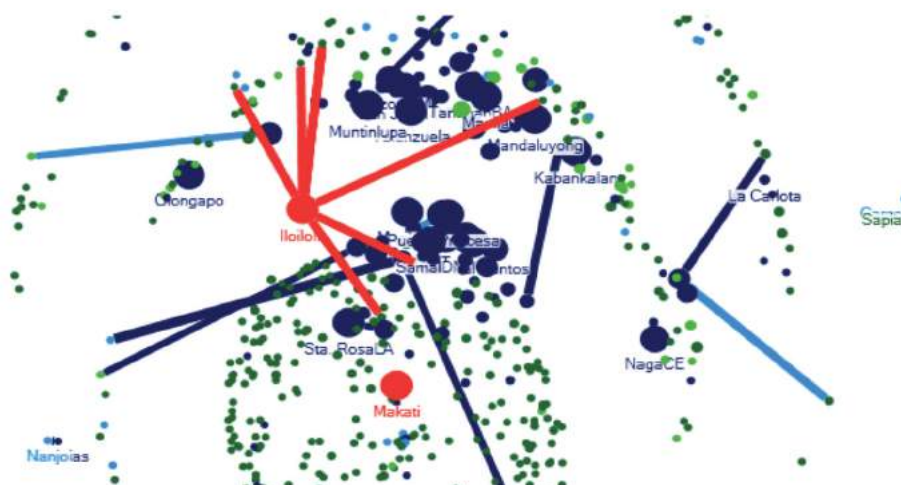
Betweenness Centrality

To get some idea on which among the cities have the "potential" to serve as a "bridge" to connect cities together, the betweenness centrality score of each network actor was calculated. What is important to note is that cities with

relatively lesser partners may have better potential as "bridges" than those who have more partners. The former are those that are included in many of the shortest paths between other LGUs (i.e., so-called geodesic distances), such that their withdrawal from their own sister by city agreements may disenfranchise its partners from the whole network.

The betweenness centrality score can give an indication as to which cities may be used as channels to introduce cities to each other for institutional linkage. They can also be seen as potential anchors to mobilize resources, action, or information.

Table 3. Top 15 Cities, by Betweenness Centrality

Name of city	Number of links	Name of city	Number of links
1. Makati	172512.65	9. Panabo	9607.89
2. Puerto Princesa	22492.80	10. Muntinlupa	9385.93
3. Iloilo	17266.92	11. Sta. Rosa	9151.96
4. Samal	13862.47	12. Olongapo	8056.67
5. Panabo	13679.38	13. Manila	7932.74
6. Masbate	11907.85	14. Himamaylan	6087.75
7. General Santos	11269.85	15. Quezon	5980.37
8. Marikina	11212.97		

As can be expected from their sheer volume of links, the top four most active cities have the highest potential to bring actors in the network together. However, there are less-connected cities that play a more critical role as conduits, perhaps to pass information or to even send feelers for partnership, than well-connected ones. For Metro Manila, the top central "linkers" are Makati and Marikina, followed by Muntinlupa, Manila, and Quezon City. Other prominent cities by main island groupings are Puerto Princesa, Iloilo, Kabankalan, and Himamaylan for Visayas; Masbate, Santa Rosa and Olongapo for Luzon; and Samal, General Santos, and Panabo for Mindanao.

Figure 6. Subgraphs for Cities with High Betweenness Score

(a) Olongapo   (b) Himamaylan   (c) Quezon City
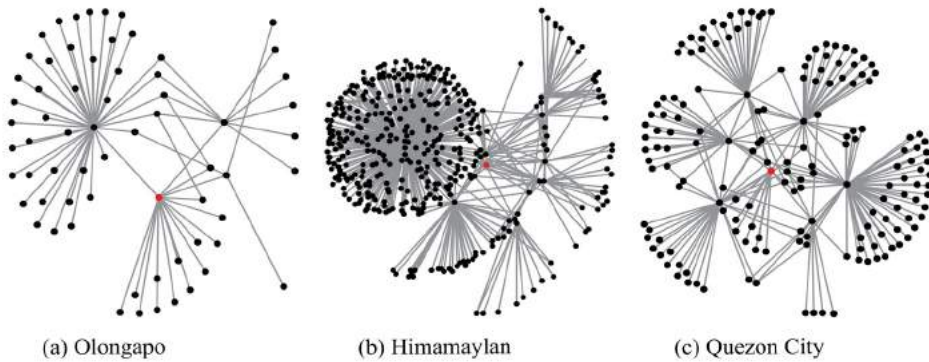
Eigenvector Centrality

The eigenvector centrality was also calculated to tell which of the cities are connected to actors that have a high degree centrality. A high eigenvector centrality indicates how an actor is closely connected to the leading actors in the network. Results, however, were not very significant due to the relatively sparse network. By and large, no single LGU was found to be strongly or commonly connected to the "most popular" sister cities.

But for comparative purposes, the top five cities in order of eigenvector score are Makati (.041), Puerto Princesa (.006), Iloilo (.005), Panabo (.005), and Masbate (.005). Note that Panabo and Masbate have lesser connections than Samal, but it appears that they are better connected to the other major players in the network than Samal. Of the top 15 cities with most partners, Samal is only connected to Makati, Marikina, and General Santos.

Clustering Coefficient

Lastly, clustering coefficient was calculated to measure the interconnectedness of one actor's partners to one another. This could tell us whether or not there is any potential for specialized cooperation or focused thematic interaction within a group of actors in a network.

Eighty-two percent (82%) of the actors (550 out of 667) have a clustering coefficient of 0, indicating a relatively weak interconnectivity among the participating LGUs. Excluding links involving two cities only, only four cities have a score of 1, namely, San Carlos (Pangasinan), Surigao, Mati, and Oroquieta. The partners of these cities are also interconnected to each other.

San Carlos has a sister city partnership with Makati and Silay and a working relationship with Puerto Princesa. Makati, Silay, and Puerto Princesa are, in turn, linked to each other.

Among cities with more than ten partners, cities from Negros Occidental were found to have the highest clustering coefficients, namely, Sipalay (.378), Bayawan (.309), and Silay (.291). This means that about one-third of their partners are connected to each other. This is partly because these cities are all part of Southern Negros Disaster Management Alliance (SONEDMA), an alliance of eleven LGUs in the region for disaster management. This is particularly true for Bayawan and Sipalay.

Figure 7. Subgraphs for Cities with Highest Clustering Coefficient

(a) Sipalay   (b) Bayawan   (c) Silay
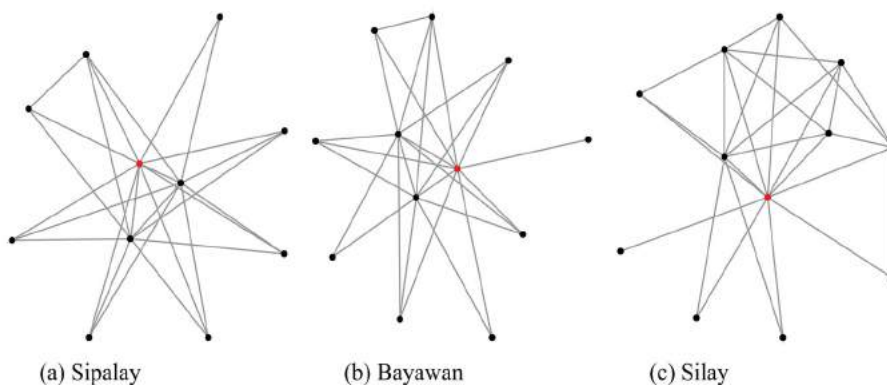
Except for Bayawan, majority of Silay's and Sipalay's partnerships were based on formal sister city relationships. Silay's purpose of interaction with other LGUs is more varied, covering local economic promotion, DRM and other areas—unlike Sipalay and Bayawan which were primarily SONEDMA-driven, hence, DRM-oriented.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the activities identified, study visits and information exchange mostly account for the interconnectivity of local governments. Many of the activities were lopsided, benefiting only one party. While many of the city-respondents are members of different international and local organizations or

networks, there is relatively weak interconnectivity between and among the participating LGUs. More than half of the participating cities organized study visits related to local economic promotion and disaster management.

City-to-city linkages are not necessarily manifested through formal ties, such as sister city arrangement. Almost one-third of the linkages is attributable to informal or ad hoc activities. Cities in general are more connected (in terms of their participation) than municipalities. Moreover, due to status and capacity, highly-urbanized cities in Luzon are better linked at the global stage. Half of the activities of the participating cities are only attributable to sister city relations. Makati is found to have the highest degree (most connected) and betweenness (serving as bridge or link) centrality. However, most of these engagements are one-off and lopsided. Iloilo City with a much lower score fared better due to multi-modal and multiple engagements. Cities in Negros Occidental are found to have the highest clustering coefficients or interconnectivity because most of their partners are connected to each other. This high interconnectivity is partly induced by membership to a very active multilateral network, not necessarily from bilateral sister cities.

It must be noted that sister city relations in the Philippines are not confined among cities alone. The survey revealed a number of formal sister city agreements between a city and a municipality. In many cases, while the agreement usually invokes mutual cooperation, the partnership seems to be anchored on big sister-little sister arrangement. There appeared to be no systematic process of matching the needs and resources of the participating LGUs other than to establish political ties that may or may not be tapped to improve disaster risk reduction and management or facilitate local economic promotion by either party.

By and large, given the very limited practice and benefit of the partnership, the sister cities are not well monitored and sustained. Changes in leadership and priorities of the administration and constraints in budgeting and staffing render the partnership spotty or mostly non-functional.

Findings from the study indicate that Philippine cities in general are not averse to forging ties with other LGUs, be it at the city, municipal, or provincial level. The high penetration rate of bilateral linkages in the network analysis supports this. The crux of the matter lies in the operationalization of the partnership as evidenced by mostly uni-directional, one-off exchanges in the form of study visits. The potential for collaborative problem solving or even co-production of knowledge to improve DRM, local economic promotion, or any other aspect of urban management has yet to be realized.

In light of the foregoing, the following recommendations are put forward:

• Updated guidelines from the Department of the Interior and Local Government or the League of Cities of the Philippines on sister city relations

may help cities maximize benefits from bilateral twinnings. It can also provide practical guidance on how they can go about in making the partnerships more functional and problem-oriented as observed in the case of international municipal linkages.

• Documentation of good practices can highlight the costs and benefits of sister city relations. The cases from Iloilo would be worth looking into, as the city has been involved in several bilateral partnerships that go beyond mere study tours. There can be other good examples from both bigger and smaller cities.

• Incentive mechanisms may be explored to encourage more participation of cities in sister city relationships. There have been partnerships that were not covered by a formal agreement, hence, there is no assurance that such arrangements will remain functional in the event of leadership changes at the local level. One way to encourage formalization of ties is by tying it up as part of a program or project or as a prerequisite for multilateral or interlocal cooperation.

Methodological limitations did not allow the researchers to look at the function of third parties, such as nongovernment organizations, in the formation, functionality, or sustainability of the sister city relationships. The impact of bilateral twinning on communities is also worth looking into, since this study focuses only on the institutional aspect of sister city partnerships.

The role of mayors and political motivations behind the establishment of sister cities can likewise be investigated. Lastly, the study can be extended to further illustrate, using case studies, the various uses and effects of twinning, as well as to cover the international relations of Philippine cities and see how they contribute to the strengthening of urban management in the country.

Acknowledgments

Endnote(s)

[1] Philippine cities are organized and linked by the League of Cities of the Philippines and the League of Municipalities of the Philippines. Even the provinces and barangays are interconnected by of the League of Provinces and *Liga ng mga Barangay*, respectively.

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Job Satisfaction of Disaster Responders: The Response Operation for the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting 2015

Joe-Mar S. Perez*

Disaster responders work to ensure the safety and security of communities during emergencies. However, the job satisfaction of disaster responders in the Philippines has not yet been thoroughly analyzed as a subject of research in the field of organization studies. The article examines the job satisfaction of disaster responders mobilized by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders' Meeting held from 18 to 19 November 2015 in Pasay City. Using Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as the framework, it analyzes how motivation, hygiene, and demographic factors affect the job satisfaction of disaster responders. Findings reveal that the job satisfaction of disaster responders is positively affected by recognition, responsibility, and relationship with peers, but negatively affected by age. Furthermore, motivation factors significantly affect job satisfaction. Notably, the significant job satisfaction factors contribute to the innate desire of disaster responders to help others in times of emergencies. The article confirms the assumption of the Two-Factor Theory that motivation affects job satisfaction.

Keywords: *disaster response, job satisfaction, Two-Factor Theory*

Job satisfaction is one of the known areas of interest in the field of organizational studies. It forms part of the concerns of supervisors and managers to help address various job-related issues and provide interventions to prevent employees from leaving the organization.

While examining job satisfaction factors has already been a common subject in most researches, such is not the case in the field of disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM). Specifically, in the Philippines, few available studies on job satisfaction apply to the work of disaster responders.

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The need for a study on job satisfaction involving disaster responders in the Philippines cannot be overemphasized. According to the World Risk Report (2016), the Philippines ranks as the third country in the world that has the highest risk to disasters. With this ranking, the work of disaster responders in the Philippines is undeniably essential. During emergencies, the government has to rely on the services of disaster responders to perform life-saving acts. They help prevent or minimize casualties. Disaster responders, therefore, must remain motivated and contented to perform their roles well. Otherwise, the feelings of dissatisfaction, demoralization, and demotivation among the disaster responders will have repercussions.

Ensuring the job satisfaction of disaster responders in the Philippines is difficult because the work of disaster responders is multidisciplinary in nature. Although the disaster responders generally work under the auspices of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), they are also employees of government agencies and organizations with their own mandates, organizational set-up, and institutional policies. Also, disaster responders are not homogenous in terms of their personal attributes, skills, resources, and capabilities. In fact, not all disaster responders working under the NDRRMC receive the same material incentives and benefits. Given the plurality of factors surrounding the work of disaster responders, it will not be that simple for the NDRRMC to determine the appropriate interventions that will keep the responders satisfied with their jobs without conducting a thorough study.

One of the commonly cited theories on satisfaction in the workplace is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which highlights the motivation and hygiene factors as drivers for satisfaction in the workplace (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). According to the theory, motivation factors are those that encourage people to perform well, thereby causing them to be satisfied with their jobs (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). Hygiene factors, on the other hand, are those that prevent people from feeling dissatisfied with their jobs (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). The theory can provide an academic and practical explanation as to what factors affect job satisfaction of disaster responders in the Philippines.

The study focuses on the disaster responders mobilized by the NDRRMC for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), particularly the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting (AELM) held from 18 to 19 November 2015. Using the Two-Factor Theory, it analyzes how job satisfaction is affected by motivation and hygiene factors, and by demographic factors.

Significance of the Study

The study is academically and practically significant to the field of public administration. In terms of academic significance, the study helps test the validity and applicability of the Two-Factor Theory in determining job satisfaction of disaster responders in the Philippines. While some studies have already confirmed the validity and applicability of the said theory in certain organizations, other studies proved otherwise. As such, this study sheds light on how the Two-Factor Theory can explain the job satisfaction of disaster responders in the Philippine setting. It can also contribute to understanding the dynamics of public administration in the NDRRMC since only a few literature focus on public administration components, particularly on the organizational management aspects of the NDRRMC.

In terms of practical significance, the study aims to help the NDRRMC develop and implement the appropriate policies, programs, and interventions to ensure job satisfaction of disaster responders. The findings and recommendations can provide the bases for the NDRRMC in coming up with specific measures to keep disaster responders contented with their jobs.

Scope and Limitations

One limitation of the study is that it focuses only on disaster responders who were deployed for the AELM 2015 operation. Prior to choosing the AELM responders as the subject, the researcher initially considered coming up with a consolidated database of disaster responders nationwide, particularly those who were involved in past calamities. However, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), which serves as the NDRRMC Secretariat, does not have records of disaster responders coming from all government agencies.

Another limitation of the study is that it only applies to disaster responders operating at the national level. The scope of the study is limited to the disaster responders of the NDRRMC and does not include those from the regional and local levels. It also excludes the disaster responders from civil society organizations, private sector, and volunteer groups.

Lastly, the study focuses on a potential disaster situation but not a real emergency. The hosting of the AELM was generally peaceful with no major incidents reported. Hence, the data gathered from the disaster responders reflect the peaceful conduct of AELM 2015 operation.

Understanding Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is generally known as the individual's feeling of contentment towards his or her job. One definition of job satisfaction is that it pertains to whether an individual likes his or her job or not (Spector, 1997, p. 2). A more complex definition is that job satisfaction includes multidimensional psychological responses with cognitive, affective, and behavioral components to a person's job (Hulin & Judge, 2003 as cited in Judge & Klinger, 2009, p. 394). Accordingly, the most cited definition of job satisfaction is the one provided by Edwin A. Locke: "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304 as cited in Saari & Judge, 2004, p. 396).

The differences in the definitions of job satisfaction can be attributed to a plurality of factors affecting it. These factors may be individual, social, cultural, organizational, and environmental (Mullins, 2010, pp. 282-283). The conceptual domain of job satisfaction is broad as it includes all the job characteristics and the environment (Lipinskiene, 2008, p. 289). Moreover, the applicability of the job satisfaction factors differs from one individual to another (Tomaževi, Seljak, & Aristovnik, 2014, p. 9).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Several theories emerged to explain the concept of job satisfaction as well as the factors affecting it. One of these is the Two-Factor Theory. From the name itself, the Two-Factor Theory explains that job satisfaction is generally affected by two factors: motivation and hygiene. Motivation factors lead to job satisfaction by encouraging employees to work hard and enjoy their jobs (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). These factors help workers develop intrinsic motivation (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). Hygiene factors, on the other hand, do not lead to job satisfaction. Instead, depriving workers of these factors can result in job dissatisfaction. In other words, the role of hygiene factors is simply to prevent workers' discontent (Hyun, 2009, p. 8). Motivation and hygiene factors are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Composition of Motivation and Hygiene Factors

Motivation Factors	Hygiene Factors
Achievement	Policies
Recognition	Supervision
Responsibility	Working Conditions
Career Advancement	Salary
Personal Growth	Relationship with Peers

Sources: Greene et al.,(n.d., 5); Hyun (2009, p. 8); Manisera, Dusseldorp, & van der Kooij (2005, pp. 4-5)

Studies were conducted to test the validity of the Two-Factor Theory and determine whether factors work as either motivation or hygiene. Examples are the studies by Ahmed et al. (2010), Chien (2013), and Manisera, Dusseldorp, and van der Kooij (2005). These studies reveal how job satisfaction is largely affected by motivation factors. On the other hand, there are also studies that do not support the Two-Factor Theory. Examples are studies by Greene et al. (n.d.), Oladotun and Ali (2013), and Tan and Waheed (2011). According to these studies, job satisfaction is affected by hygiene factors, instead of motivation factors.

There are also studies that explain why the Two-Factor Theory does not always work in some organizations. First reason is that individual and cultural differences must be taken into consideration. People in diverse occupational levels respond differently to motivation and hygiene factors (Rao & Rao, 1973). Second reason is that, in some instances, motivation factors work if hygiene factors are present. There are cases wherein intrinsic factors will not lead to job satisfaction if there are not enough extrinsic factors (Caston & Braoto, 1985, p. 281 as cited in Pardee, 1990, p. 11). Third reason is that job satisfaction factors also have overlapping qualities as motivation and hygiene factors. As a result, they overlap as sources of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Gaziel, 1986 as cited in Stello, n.d., p. 7). Lastly, some demographic factors also affect job satisfaction. Examples of these factors are age (Lloyd & Streiner, 1994), sex (Scott, Swortzel, & Taylor, 2005), and length of service (Usop, Kadtong, & Usop, 2013).

Significance of Job Satisfaction to Organizations

A number of studies examined the significant impacts of job satisfaction on an organization. Job satisfaction was found to address employee turnover issues. Studies found that job satisfaction decreases turnover intentions (Medina, 2012, p. 3; Saeed et al., 2014, p. 242). The more employees are satisfied with their jobs, the more they are committed to remain in their organization (Lipinskiene, 2008, p. 289). Increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover intentions were also found to contribute to enhancing employee performance (Medina, 2012, p. 3; Pushpakumari, 2008, p. 89).

However, some studies downplayed the significance of job satisfaction. While many early studies point out that the satisfied worker is the productive worker, subsequent researches have testified that there is no necessary connection between productivity and satisfaction (Smith, n.d., p. 272). In some cases, only a modest to weak correlation is found between job satisfaction and job performance (Berghe, 2011, p.45).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study, which is largely derived from the Two-Factor Theory and the NDRRMC's Vision Statement, is illustrated in Figure 1.The theoretical framework is adapted from the frameworks used in the studies on the Two-Factor Theory by Ahmed et al. (2010), Oladotun and Ali (2013), and Tan and Waheed (2011). The frameworks are all based on the Two-Factor Theory. They highlight how job satisfaction is affected by different motivation, hygiene, and other factors.

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study: Motivation Factors, Hygiene Factors, Demographic Factors, Job Satisfaction, and the Vision of the NDRRMC
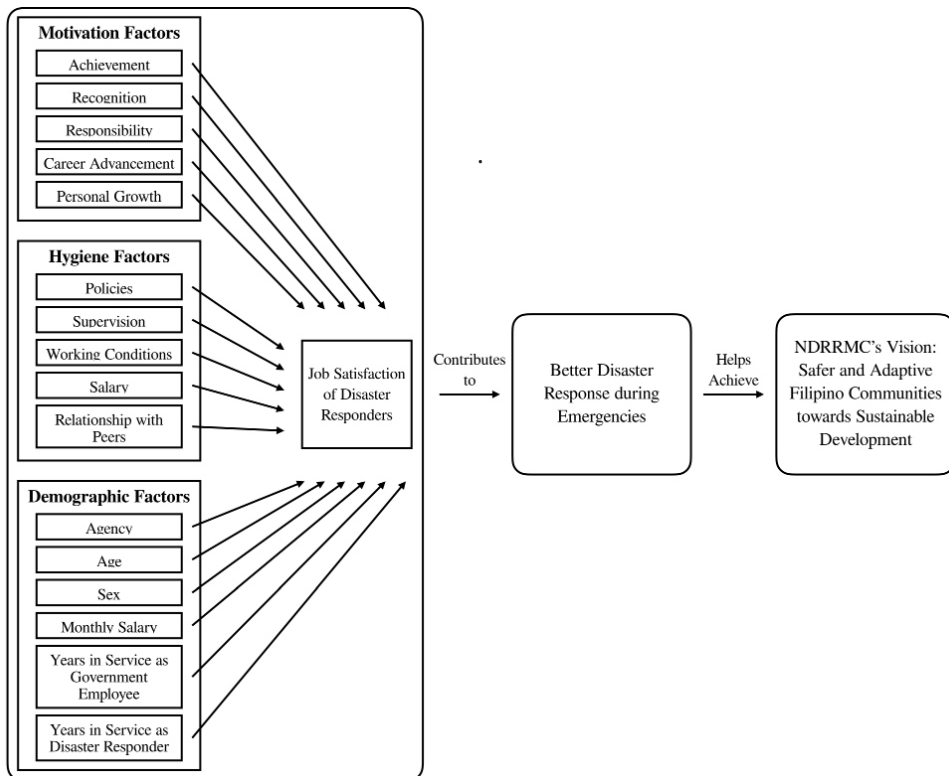
The Two-Factor Theory serves as the overall foundation of the study's framework because of three considerations. First, the Two-Factor Theory highlights the practical use of job enrichment through motivation. Herzberg (1984 as cited in Stello, n.d., p. 17) explains that motivation taps into the potential of the individuals, provides an opportunity to derive satisfaction

out of work and results in long term motivation. Through job enrichment, managers capitalize on the human desire for achievement by putting the right people in the right jobs. This view by Herzberg is founded on the importance of job enrichment in the workplace (Stello, n.d., p. 17). Moreover, the Two-Factor Theory gave rise to numerous other theories and frameworks in human resource development (Herzberg, 1987 as cited in Stello, n.d., p. 3).

Second, the Two-Factor Theory has been replicated by various studies. Logically, the theory has its own share of weaknesses and controversies, just like all other theories in organizational studies. Several studies were even conducted to contest its assumptions. However, substantial evidence confirms its validity. In fact, the original study on the Two-Factor Theory is considered to be the most replicated research, especially at the time it was published (Herzberg, 1987 as cited in Stello, n.d., p. 3). Because of its perceived significance, Hezberg's study was followed by replication, analysis, academic debate, and prolific publication. Although some scholars still discuss the controversy, others regard the theory as an established and valid framework (Stello, n.d., p. 22).

Third, the Two-Factor Theory is one of the frameworks that provide a simple and straightforward explanation to job satisfaction. It offers a practical recommendation for managers to simply focus on internal factors that motivate employees. Thus, despite criticisms against it, the Two-Factor Theory remains appealing because of the intuitiveness and simplicity of its assumptions (Phillips & Gully, 2012, p. 213). It also resonates with both scholars and practitioners because of its common sense approach (Stello, n.d., p. 23).

Following the logical flow of the theoretical framework, the study aims to determine which among the motivation, hygiene, and demographic factors contribute to job satisfaction. Understanding these factors is important in order to help ensure the contentment of disaster responders with their work.

The middle portion of the theoretical framework represents how ensuring the job satisfaction of disaster responders contributes to better execution of the thematic areas of disaster response. This is attributed to the fact that the success of the life-saving interventions of the NDRRMC is affected by the work performance of disaster responders. As emphasized by studies, a satisfied individual is more likely to perform better at work (Medina, 2012, p. 3; Pushpakumari, 2008, p. 89) and remain committed to the organization (Lipinskiene, 2008, p. 289). Job satisfaction also helps prevent disaster responders from leaving their jobs as it addresses turnover issues (Medina, 2012, p. 3; Saeed et al., 2014, p. 242).

It is important to note, though, that disaster response is broad and comprehensive. It entails a lot of considerations to make disaster response work, such as funding support, technological advancements, leadership, multi-stakeholder coordination, and even political will. Ensuring the job satisfaction of

disaster responders is just one of these contributing factors to better and effective disaster response.

The right portion of the theoretical framework presents how better disaster response ultimately helps in achieving the NDRRMC's vision of "A Safer, Adaptive and Disaster Resilient Filipino Communities toward Sustainable Development." This vision is stipulated in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework (NDRRMF), which provides for comprehensive, all hazards, multi-sectoral, inter-agency and community-based approach to DRRM (NDRRMC, 2012, p. 12).

It must be clarified that disaster response is not the only thematic area in the NDRRMC's vision of resilient communities. As seen in the NDRRMF (Figure 2), disaster response should work well with the other three thematic areas: prevention and mitigation, preparedness, and rehabilitation and recovery. Nevertheless, disaster response is a vital component of the NDRRMF as it provides for the timely and efficient delivery of life-saving and life-sustaining services to affected population in times of disaster.

**Figure 2. National Disaster Risk Reduction
and Management Framework**
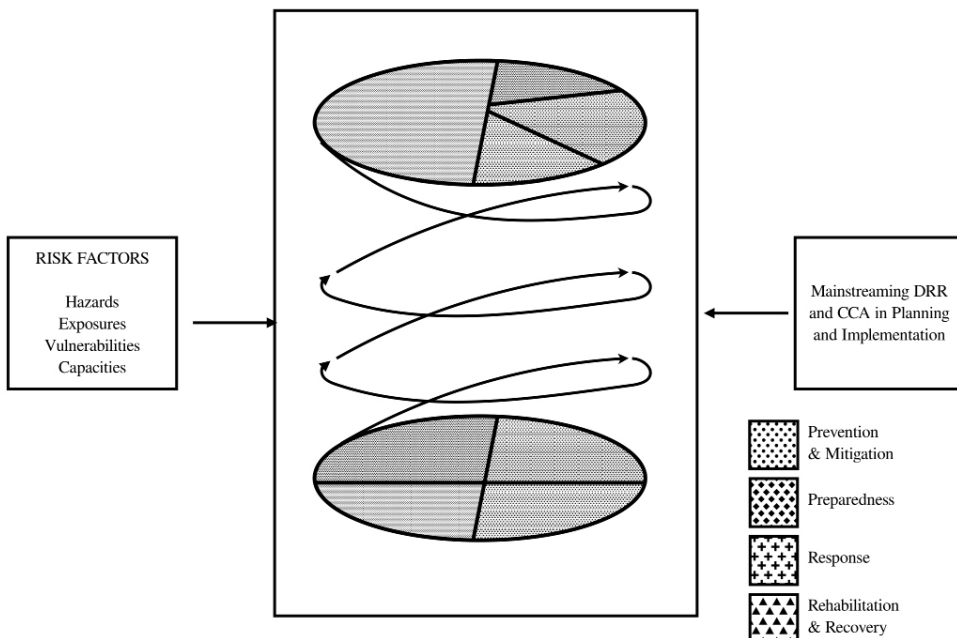
Methodology

The independent variables of the study are motivation, hygiene, and demographic factors, while the dependent variable is job satisfaction (See Table 2).

Content analysis, key informant interview (KII), survey, focus group discussion (FGD), and triangulation were the methodologies used in the study. Data gathering commenced in September 2015, which was the period of preparations for the AELM 2015. During this period content analysis of the different NDRRMC documents related to the AELM 2015 operation was conducted. KIIs with the officials of the NDRRMC were also held.

Table 2. Independent and Dependent Variables

Independent Variables			Dependent Variable
Motivation Factors	Hygiene Factors	Demographic Factors	Job Satisfaction
• Achievement • Recognition • Responsibility • Career Advancement • Personal Growth	• Policies • Supervision • Working Conditions • Salary • Relationship with Peers	• Agency • Age • Sex • Monthly Salary • Years in Service as Government Employee • Years in Service as Disaster Responder	• Satisfied • Not Satisfied

In the absence of a one-size-fits-all instrument for job satisfaction, a survey tool, which contains questions on motivation and hygiene factors in the context of the job of disaster responders, was developed specifically for the study. The survey tool was adapted from surveys used in previous studies on job satisfaction and the Two-Factor Theory. Survey questions were selected and reworded to fit in the setting of disaster response in the Philippines. Examples of surveys referred to are those used in the studies by Ellickson and Logsdon (2001), Glass (1976), Laundry (2000), and Tabaka (1987). High-ranking disaster responders[1] of the NDRRMC were also consulted for the survey design.

The survey questions, which pertain to various job satisfaction factors, are randomly arranged. The responses for each question utilize the five-point Likert scale. Also, the last question on the overall job satisfaction is open-ended to allow the respondents to thoroughly explain the reason for their overall job satisfaction.

A total of 220 respondents participated in the survey. The study practically covered the entire population of disaster responders mobilized by the NDRRMC for APEC. A series of FGDs was subsequently conducted to gather more information.

Findings and Discussion

Survey Results

Most of the disaster responders work at the Bureau of Fire Protection; are less than 30 years old; are males; earn Php 10,001 to Php 20,000; have worked for less than five years as government employees; have worked for less than five years as disaster responders; and were assigned at the Bonifacio Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City during the AELM 2015 operation.

Aside from the demographics, it is also important to look at the frequencies obtained for the motivation factors, hygiene factors, and overall job satisfaction. The survey results reveal that most of them acknowledged the presence of all motivation and hygiene factors except for the availability of hazard pay and insurance (Tables 3 and 4). Lastly, most of the disaster responders are satisfied with their jobs (Table 5).

Table 3. Frequencies: Motivation Factors

Particulars	Not Agree		Agree	
	n	%	n	%
Achievement: Fulfilment in saving people's lives	12	5.5	208	94.5
Achievement: Fulfilment in complying with directives of supervisors	17	7.7	203	92.3
Recognition: Recognition by supervisors	21	9.5	199	90.5
Recognition: Recognition by the general public	64	29.1	156	70.9
Responsibility: Satisfaction with duties and responsibilities	12	5.5	208	94.5
Responsibility: Exercise of autonomy over duties and responsibilities	50	22.7	170	77.3
Career Advancement: Benefit of operation for career advancement	15	6.8	205	93.2
Personal Growth: Practice of knowledge and skills	12	5.5	208	94.5
Personal Growth: Learning new knowledge and skills	18	8.2	202	91.8

Table 4. Frequencies: Hygiene Factors

Particulars	Not Agree		Agree	
	n	%	n	%
Policies: Sufficiency and appropriateness of NDRRMC policies	36	16.4	184	83.6
Policies: Proper implementation of NDRRMC policies	33	15.0	187	85.0
Supervision: Enjoyment working with fellow disaster responders	16	7.3	204	92.7
Supervision: Communication with supervisors	26	11.8	194	88.2
Working Conditions: Availability of equipment and tools	66	30.0	154	70.0
Working Conditions: Availability of provision for meals, accommodation, and personal necessities	50	22.7	170	77.3
Salary: Availability of hazard pay and insurance	120	54.5	100	45.5
Salary: Satisfaction with daily allowance	74	33.6	146	66.4
Relationship with Peers: Enjoyment working with fellow disaster responders	14	6.4	206	93.6
Relationship with Peers: Communication with disaster responders	26	11.8	194	88.2

Table 5. Frequencies: Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction	n	%
Not satisfied	22	10.0
Satisfied	198	90.0
Total	220	100

Logistic regression was used for analyzing the survey results. Findings reveal that among the motivation factors, "recognition: recognition by the general public" and "responsibility: satisfaction with duties and responsibilities" significantly predict job satisfaction since the p-values are less than .05. Moreover, changes in both factors are positively related since the odds ratios are greater than one (1). Among the hygiene factors, "relationship with peers: communication with fellow disaster responders" is found to be significantly and positively related to job satisfaction. Among the demographic factors, "age" significantly predicts satisfaction. However, the relationship is negative since the odds ratio is less than one (Table 6).

Table 6. Results of Logistic Regression

Type of Factor	Particulars	P-Value	Odds Ratio
Motivation	Achievement: Fulfillment in saving people's lives	.052	34.642
Motivation	Achievement: Fulfillment in complying with directives of supervisors	.320	.106
Motivation	Recognition: Recognition by supervisors	.114	.038
Motivation	Recognition: Recognition by the general public	.008	56.004
Motivation	Responsibility: Satisfaction with duties and responsibilities	.015	95.366
Motivation	Responsibility: Exercise of autonomy over duties and responsibilities	.712	.679
Motivation	Career Advancement: Benefit of operation for career advancement	.152	96.085
Motivation	Personal Growth: Practicing new knowledge and skills	.093	.11
Motivation	Personal Growth: Learning new knowledge and skills	.167	.080
Hygiene	Policies: Sufficiency and appropriateness of NDRRMC policies	.957	.924
Hygiene	Policies: Proper implementation of NDRRMC policies	.410	.257
Hygiene	Supervision: Enjoyment working with supervisors	.177	14.654
Hygiene	Supervision: Communication with supervisors	.268	4.292
Hygiene	Working Conditions: Provision of equipment and tools	.720	1.473
Hygiene	Working Conditions: Availability of provision for meals, accommodation, and personal necessities	.120	11.498
Hygiene	Salary: Availability of hazard pay and insurance	.761	.712
Hygiene	Salary: Satisfaction with daily allowance	.213	4.454
Hygiene	Relationship with Peers: Enjoyment working with fellow disaster responders	.380	7.415
Hygiene	Relationship with Peers: Communication with fellow disaster responders	.010	37.367
Demographic	Agency	.444	1.296
Demographic	Age	.045	.275
Demographic	Sex	.248	5.297
Demographic	Monthly Salary	.747	1.227
Demographic	Years in Service as Government Employee	.116	3.765
Demographic	Years in Service as Disaster Responder	.150	.278

Qualitative Findings

To better understand the relationships of the factors affecting job satisfaction, two batches of FGD were conducted to find out why job satisfaction of disaster responders is positively affected by recognition, responsibility, and relationship with peers, but negatively affected by age.

The key difference between the survey and the FGD lies in the number of participants. One may argue that the responses of the very few FGD participants do not necessarily represent the views of the 220 disaster responders who answered the survey. However, it must be made clear that the FGD focused on exploring the possible qualitative meanings of the survey findings. Although differences in views surfaced during the FGD, the participants were able to influence one another in the discussions, leading to eventual consensus and agreements. Also, the recommendations made by external experts helped to ensure that the findings and observations were biased-free and credible.

FGD Results

As earlier mentioned, job satisfaction of disaster responders is positively affected by recognition, responsibility, and relationship with peers. However, it is negatively affected by age. The FGD participants provided qualitative explanations on the significance of the said factors.

Recognition. Disaster responders become satisfied with their jobs if their efforts are recognized. Being appreciated provides them a rewarding feeling. The FGD participants consider recognition as one of their morale boosters. Despite the hardships and difficulties of their job and the dangers they have to face, they remain motivated if they know that people value their efforts. Without recognition, the disaster responders would feel that their hardships do not matter at all.

The FGD participants, however, pointed out that they are not always recognized by their supervisors or respective offices. They added that recognition is sometimes politicized and some of their colleagues receive undeserved credit. In these cases, disaster responders put more weight on the recognition from the general public, particularly from the people they help. This form of recognition pertains to the actual moments wherein they see the disaster survivors grateful, satisfied, and happily reunited with their loved ones as a result of their life-saving services. The people's expression of relief and contentment makes the disaster responders feel fulfilled. They become proud of their work because of the satisfaction from the people. These statements from the FGD participants explain why job satisfaction is positively affected by recognition, particularly the recognition from the general public.

Responsibility. Satisfaction with duties and responsibilities was also found to positively affect job satisfaction. The participants explained that their responsibilities are not as simple as the typical office work. Instead, their job poses great challenges as they deal with disasters and emergencies while protecting human lives. When the emergency situation prolongs, they are even burdened with increasing and overlapping demands that further complicate their responsibilities. They also clarified that rescue operations are just the "tip of the iceberg" because disaster responders also spend time and effort on field assessment, multi-stakeholder coordination, delivery of timely reports, and situation monitoring.

Notably, no matter how difficult and complex their responsibilities are, the FGD participants expressed that they love what they do. They understand the "big picture" as to why they have to work 24/7, undertake multi-tasking, sacrifice work-life balance, and even put their own lives at risk. They do not complain about how difficult their jobs are because they know their hardships and sacrifices are intended "*para sa bayan*" or the greater good of the nation. They explained that given their extensive field experiences and community-oriented achievements, they can always choose to shift to a better-paying career with lighter responsibilities. However, they choose to remain in their work.

Relationship with Peers. According to the FGD participants, life-saving is obviously not a one-man job. No matter how knowledgeable, skillful, and competent a disaster responder is, one cannot accomplish the task alone. This clarifies why communication with peers, which was was early on identified as the component of relationship that significantly determines job satisfaction, positively affects job satisfaction. Working together as a team gives them a sense of belongingness. Even if they come from different agencies and organizations, they find comfort when they work with one another. They also value building friendships, meeting new people, and expanding their networks.

The FGD participants shared that one of the reasons why disaster responders can easily connect with their peers is because they share the common ideals and principles. Regardless of agency or field of expertise, disaster responders operate on the same playing field. Despite their differences in educational background, training, and mandates, they all work for the sake of protecting the people.

In particular, the FGD participants related that communication is crucial because it provides the first step in building good relationships. Goals, objectives, and situation updates must be communicated to all to facilitate collaboration.

Relationship with peers, despite being classified as a hygiene factor, was found to be significantly related to job satisfaction. There are instances wherein motivation and hygiene factors demonstrate overlapping qualities as sources of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Gaziel, 1986 as cited in Stello, n.d., p.

7). Moreover, hygiene factors can also support motivation factors (Caston and Braoto, 1985, p. 281 as cited in Pardee, 1990, p. 11). In this, relationship with peers, a hygiene factor, is inherently significant in life-saving work.

Age. The FGD participants acknowledged the survey findings that job satisfaction is negatively affected by age. The younger a disaster responder is, the more likely he or she is satisfied with his job. One main reason is that younger people are generally idealistic. The FGD participants said that from their experience, their younger colleagues usually demonstrate greater motivation. Also, younger disaster responders seek more opportunities for exposure and field action. They also find the work challenges interesting and they are much willing to face greater risks. Moreover, given their early exposure to a rigorous work environment at a relatively young age, they usually desire to develop their capabilities early. The FGD participants also added that, in their personal experiences, most younger disaster responders have greater strength and stamina especially in working for several days or even weeks of response operation.

The findings on age provide an interesting explanation to job satisfaction of disaster responders. It shows that demographic factors can significantly affect job satisfaction.

Factors That Do Not Affect Job Satisfaction

In addition to recognition, responsibility, relationship with peers, and age, other factors were also tested for their significance as perdictors of job satisfaction. These are: 1) achievement, career advancement, and personal growth under motivation factors; 2) policies, supervision, salary, and working conditions under hygiene factors; and 3) agency, sex, monthly salary, years in service as government employee, and years in service as disaster responder under demographic factors. However, findings reveal that these factors do not likely lead to job satisfaction.

Achievement. When it comes to motivation factors, one factor that was found to be an insignificant pedictor of job satisfaction is achievement. According to the FGD participants, achievement is a subjective concept. Disaster responders have their own indicators of achievement. For some, their main source of achievement is being able to save people's lives. For others, compliance is their measure of accomplishment. This is evident especially among the uniformed personnel, whose achievement is measured by how well they are able to complete their mission requirements and comply with the directives of their commanders. Overall, there are many possible indicators of achievement among disaster responders.

The explanation of the FGD participants on achievement is consistent with the findings of Rao and Rao (1973), which indicate that individuals respond to motivation factors differently depending on their personal circumstances. Another possible reason for achievement unlikely leading to job satisfaction is that the latter is affected by many variables such as cultural influences, domestic situations, and even personal relationships (Mullins, 2010, p. 282).

The FGD participants also related that achievement is not always guaranteed. Mistakes and mishaps are normally encountered during operations. Sometimes, not all people can be saved and rescued. Also, not all directives of the supervisors can be fully satisfied with the work of the disaster responders. During operations, not everything may run according to plan. No matter what disaster responders do, they cannot stop the devastating forces of nature. However, even in the absence of achievement, the FGD participants mentioned that they will have to keep working to save more lives.

Career Advancement. Career advancement is also a motivation factor that did not significantly predict job satisfaction. The FGD participants admitted that they are still ordinary government employees who also look forward to rising from their ranks and get promoted. They join in field deployment during operations because it allows them to gain experiences that are beneficial for their career growth. Moreover, their exposures in the field provide them with better career advantages than those who simply work inside the office.

However, they clarified that career advancement is not among their sources of motivation. Instead, their motivation lies in dedication to public service, regardless of whether they will be promoted or not. The insignificance of career advancement, despite being a motivation factor, is again a manifestation of how individuals respond differently to job satisfaction factors based on personal circumstances (Rao & Rao, 1973).

Personal Growth. Personal growth was found unlikely to lead to job satisfaction. The FGD participants emphasized that their work contributes to their overall personal growth. However, when asked to explain how they attain personal growth, their responses varied. Some attributed personal growth in the form of practicing their knowledge and skills. Others obtained growth from the formal training and schooling opportunities they received in their line of work. Just like in the case of achievement, the subjective concept of personal growth is underscored. Disaster responders have unique personal characteristics that they would like to enhance. Collectively, the FGD participants recognized that their job as disaster responders developed their individual characteristics, although there are other personal aspects that may not necessarily be developed by this type of career.

Findings of the FGD on personal growth are observed to be consistent with the explanation of the literature reviewed. Personal growth is a motivation factor that is subjective in nature. Like achievement, disaster responders treated personal growth differently because of cultural influences and unique personal circumstances (Rao & Rao, 1973; Mullins, 2010).

Policies. As postulated by the Two-Factor Theory, the findings confirmed that policies, categorized as a hygiene factor, do not affect job satisfaction. The FGD participants noted, though, that policies are important to guide and shape the actions of disaster responders. Furthermore, they found the policies as appropriate to the needs of the current times. However, they also emphasized that the policies of the NDRRMC are not yet widely disseminated. There is a need for greater effort to cascade and implement the relevant policies across all levels of governance. Nonetheless, the FGD participants assured that disaster responders will remain committed to saving people's lives even in the absence of clear policies. Should the government regulations fail to work in worst-case disaster situations, disaster responders will continue to cater to the needs of the communities. This explains why policies do not affect their overall job satisfaction.

Supervision. The FGD participants acknowledged the operational advantages of having a good working relationship with their supervisors. Accordingly, an effective supervisor can unify disaster responders and their actions. Yet, the FGD participants emphasized that supervision does not determine their motivation.

Working Conditions. Working condition was also among the hygiene factors that do not affect the job satisfaction of disaster responders. Ideally, to have an enabling working condition, resources must be available, sufficient, and accessible. One aspect of a good working condition is the availability of personal protective gears to safeguard the disaster responders while operating in hazardous environments.

The FGD participants expressed their concern about the government procurement requirements and audit restrictions. It was learned that not all government agencies are allowed to undertake massive procurement and stockpiling of resources for emergency response activities. Given these limitations, the work of disaster responders requires sacrifice. The responders settle with whatever resources they have. Moreover, the responders are trained to operate in uncomfortable working conditions, especially in cases where they just have to rely on themselves. Hence, working conditions were found to be insignificant to job satisfaction.

Salary. The FGD participants asserted that it would really help to have additional compensation given the risks associated with their jobs. Yet, not all of

them receive that much salary. Some are not even provided with any protection at all. Some non-permanent government employees are deployed in the field without any hazard pay or insurance. Moreover, the responders have to work 24/7 even if their off-duty and overtime services are unpaid. Nevertheless, disaster responders are not after any additional compensation.

Agency. One demographic factor that was found to be an insignificant predictor of job satisfaction is agency or affiliation of the disaster responder. Regardless of agency or affiliation, disaster responders work for the common goal of saving people. To accomplish this goal, they have to detach from their agencies' biases, collaborate with their peers, and connect with the communities. The FGD participants referred to such motivation as their "call of duty," in which they are driven by their desire or need to help others, not by the identities of the agencies they represent.

Sex. The FGD participants said that they commit to uphold gender sensitivity and quality in the workplace, even in emergency situations. Everyone can become an effective disaster responder, regardless of sex or gender preference. Hence, job satisfaction is not affected by sex.

Monthly Salary. As mentioned earlier, disaster responders generally do not receive that much. Despite their extensive work hours and shifts, their monthly salaries are even lower than those who work for only eight (8) hours a day such as those employed in private companies. However, despite receiving only a little, disaster responders remain dedicated to work because they find greater fulfilment in protecting people.

Years in Service as Government Employee and as Disaster Responder. Years in service, whether as a government employee or disaster responder, also do not significantly predict job satisfaction. Having more years in service may be advantageous as it gives more time for disaster responders to develop their characteristics and gain additional experiences. However, the FGD participants clarified that their motivation to help others is a personal commitment that is not measured by the length of service. Whether a disaster responder is just new in service or is already a veteran, they will remain satisfied with their job as long as they stay committed to serving the people.

Responses of the FGD participants show that the main source of job satisfaction of disaster responders lies in the innate desire to help other people during emergencies. Connecting such desire for recognition as a motivation factor, disaster responders are motivated by the positive feedback and appreciation from the communities they serve. In terms of responsibility, they are encouraged to do well in their assigned duties and responsibilities as their work ultimately saves people's lives. In terms of relationship with peers, they value multi-stakeholder collaboration and communication to better respond to the needs of

the people. In the case of age, the desire to help others is more evident among the younger disaster responders than the older ones due to their idealistic nature, greater interest for exploration, as well as their strength and stamina. All of these inputs can explain why job satisfaction is positively affected by recognition, responsibility, and relationship with peers, but negatively affected by age.

Other motivation, hygiene, and demographic factors, did not significantly predict job satisfaction. These factors do not form part of the disaster responders' motivation to help others in need. This observation was evident especially for the demographic factors, namely, agency, sex, monthly salary, years in service as government employee, and years in service as disaster responder. In the case of achievement and personal growth, disaster responders may have perceived the significance of these motivation factors differently. In the case of career advancement, it does not form part of the priorities of disaster responders. In the case of policies, supervision, working conditions, and salary may be considered useful in work. Yet, the absence of these factors will not hinder their desire to help the communities in need.

Consistencies of the Findings with the Two-Factor Theory

The study examined motivation factors, hygiene factors, and demographic factors as predictors of job satisfaction. Among the motivation factors, recognition by the general public and satisfaction with responsibility were found to positively affect job satisfaction. Among the hygiene factors, communication with fellow disaster responders was found to positively affect job satisfaction. As regards the demographic factors, age was found to negatively affect job satisfaction. It can also be observed that motivation factors still exceed hygiene factors as significant predictors of job satisfaction. Also, in the case hygiene factors, only one factor was found significant. Therefore, motivation factors generally affect job satisfaction, thereby validating the assumption of the Two-Factor Theory.

Aside from examining the numbers of factors, it is also important to look at the substantive commonalities between the survey findings and that of the FGD. As mentioned earlier in the FGD findings, the main motivation of disaster responders boils down to their desire to help other people. Such motivation is also consistent with the theme of the NDRRMC's Vision Statement: "Safer, Adaptive and Disaster-Resilient Filipino Communities toward Sustainable Development," as depicted in the theoretical framework. This implies that no matter how difficult or compromising the situation of disaster responders is, they remain encouraged by their innate desire to help others in need and ultimately contribute to the safety of the communities.

A key observation on the significant predictors of job satisfaction (i.e., recognition by the general public satisfaction with responsibility and

communication with fellow responders) is that they form part of the main motivation of the FGD participants for helping people during emergencies. In terms of recognition, the disaster responders value the expression of appreciation from the communities benefiting from their life-saving services. Obtaining recognition from the general public is a manifestation that they have successfully fulfilled their desire to protect the people. When it comes to responsibility, disaster responders are contented with their assigned duties and responsibilities during the operation. No matter how difficult or diverse their tasks are, they find fulfilment in doing their work. They recognize that their responsibilities are intended to save people's lives. Thus, they are encouraged to complete their tasks and to perform well. In terms of relationship with peers, disaster responders generally share the same ideals especially when it comes to public service. They consider team collaboration, coordination, and communication as essential to their successful operation. They recognize that harmonious working relationship with their peers is one of the keys to achieving their collective goal of protecting communities. Meanwhile, age can also be considered relevant to the motivation of helping other people. As underscored by the FGD participants, higher motivation is usually evident among the young disaster respnders. This also explains the negative relationship between age and job satisfaction.

The findings confirm that motivation and hygiene factors share overlapping characteristics, thereby making them as sources of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Gaziel, 1986 as cited in Stello, n.d., p. 7). The findings show how people respond differently to motivation and hygiene factors due to individual and cultural differences (Rao & Rao, 1973). They also confirm that, in some instances, motivation works well when hygiene factors are present (Caston and Braoto, 1985, p. 281, as cited in Pardee, 1990, p. 11). Because of the relevance of having good working relationship with peers, disaster responders perceive it as essential part of their motivation to be able to help others. Therefore, even if it is classified as a hygiene factor, the findings suggest that relationship with peers is significant to job satisfaction.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings of the study that job satisfaction is positively affected by recognition by the public, satisfaction with responsibility, and communication with fellow disaster responders. However, it is negatively affected by age. It was also observed that the number of significant motivation factors exceeded hygiene factors. Although communication with fellow responders is classified as hygiene factor, it was found to be significant as it contributes to the innate desire of disaster responders to help others. Nonetheless, the study confirms the assumption of the Two-Factor Theory that motivation factors cause job satisfaction.

Given the above conclusions, the following are specific recommendations that can be considered by the NDRRMC to integrate the significance job satisfaction factors in appropriate government interventions:

1) Conduct activities to recognize the efforts of disaster responders

To help reinforce the motivation of disaster responders through recognition, the NDRRMC must organize and conduct activities intended to acknowledge their responders' dedication to public service. One example is the annual event hosted by the NDRRMC known as Gawad Kalasag, which aims to recognize the best DRRM practices in the country. Specific award categories for Gawad Kalasag can be created to recognize disaster responders with exemplary performance and heroic deeds. Aside from Gawad Kalasag, innovative information, education, and communication campaigns can also be organized, such as fun runs to be participated in by disaster responders and community members. These activities can help promote public awareness that disaster responders are always ready to help. Such will contribute to boosting the morale of disaster responders, thereby making them proud about their work.

Simple acts of recognition can also be undertaken. The NDRRMC must enjoin all other government agencies to regularly initiate gestures of appreciation for disaster responders. Awarding of simple tokens and certificates of commendation will suffice. The provision of incentives should also be universalized to all disaster responders.

2) Maximize the capabilities of disaster responders to effectively perform their responsibilities

To keep disaster responders motivated by responsibility, they should feel comfortable with their assigned tasks. Therefore, disaster responders and designation of responsibilities need to be selected properly. The NDRRMC must develop guidelines and standards for matching of responsibilities with the capabilities of disaster responders and maximizing their full potentials. For example, those with good physical build can do the rescue work while those who are good in communication can undertake needs assessment and report generation.

Furthermore, drills, training, exercises, and other capacity building activities on emergency management should be organized more frequently. This will allow the disaster responders to upgrade their knowledge and skills. At the same time, they will be able to develop mastery over their responsibilities. More stakeholders should also participate so that the capabilities of disaster responders are widely replicated. Supervisors need to ensure that responsibilities are properly turned over to the rank-and-file employees through constant monitoring and coaching.

3) Provide more socialization opportunities and communication mechanisms for disaster responders

Disaster responders need to be able to socialize to improve relationship with peers, not just during actual emergencies but more often in peace times. Inter-agency meetings, training, drills, exercises, and team-building activities are just a few examples of how disaster responders can develop closer ties. Frequent conduct of these socialization opportunities also facilitates recognition of their individual strengths and weaknesses. Hence, when the real emergency strikes, the disaster responders can work together easily, regardless of agency or affiliation. Once they are familiar with each other, they can better communicate and collectively function as a team.

To reinforce good working relationships, mechanisms to promote open communication between and among the disaster responders need to be created. Having a nationwide database of disaster responders of the NDRRMC will enable disaster responders to immediately get in touch with their peers when needed. During actual operations, disaster responders, regardless of rank or affiliation, should be able to express themselves freely, especially in terms of providing inputs and updates, thereby promoting healthy working relationships.

4) Give attention to the needs of disaster responders according to age

The NDRRMC has to attend to the needs of disaster responders according to age. Given that younger disaster responders are more likely to become satisfied with their jobs, it is possible that some of the older disaster responders may already feel dissatisfied. Hence, managers should work to reinforce the motivation of older disaster responders, address their specific concerns, and make sure that they remain satisfied.

5) Make the disaster response career more appealing to the younger generation

As explained in the findings, younger disaster responders tend to be more motivated in their work because of their idealistic nature. However, recruiting young people to join the disaster response career may pose as a challenge. The benefits of working in the government, particularly in the field of emergency management, may not be as good as the offers of private companies. Hence, there is a need to make the disaster response career more appealing to younger generation. This need can be attained by widespread promotion of the advocacy of helping others in need during emergencies. The NDRRMC can participate in school campaigns and job fairs to recruit interested young people to join the disaster response service. Human resource managers can promote how working as a disaster responder can help make a big difference in the community.

However, recruitment should not stop in advocacy-building. NDRRMC regulations need to universalize the provision of incentives and additional compensation for disaster responders to help invite young people to join the pool of NDRRMC's disaster responders.

Endnotes

[1] The researcher consulted the following disaster responders in formulating questions for the survey: Ranny Magno, Fire Chief of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority; Ranulfo Demiar, retired Police Senior Superintendent from the PNP; and Leoncio Cirunay Jr. retired Brigadier General from the Armed Forces of the Philippines Reserve Command. They were asked to elucidate how each of the motivation and hygiene factors can be contextualized in the field of disaster response to form part of the survey questions.

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Borders and Decisionmakers: An Institutional Analysis of Municipal Merger in Japan

Michael A. Tumanut*

Municipal merger has been the structural reform choice in Japan for over a century. For over two decades, it has been integral to the decentralization policy and in addressing economic stagnation, depopulation, and ageing population. While the literature on this is replete with analysis on its outcome (i.e., efficiency), application of an institutional approach particularly explaining decisiveness and temporal variation in municipal merger experience is sparse. Employing a case-study approach, secondary sources and interviews with Japanese ministry officials and academics directly involved in merger, this paper re-examines this policy area framed by simplified and interpreted veto players theory. In municipal merger, Japan is found to have a small, locally-concentrated and cohesive constellation of veto players. Constitutional games played by the National Diet resulted in copious merger laws and amendments to instigate favorable territorial reform rules, and to influence congruence of preferences at collective-choice game played by municipalities. The tripartite function of merger reform agent (the Liberal Democratic Party) is instrumental in influencing cohesion in local councils, in informally invoking the emissary role of prefectural governments to promote merger, and in reshaping preferences of veto players through continuous amendment of merger law and insertion of incentives or disincentives.

Territorial or spatial fluidity in municipalities is integral to Japan's decentralization reform efforts (Koike, 2010; Mabuchi, 2001; Yokomichi, 2007), as well as to planning and policies addressing economic stagnation and demographic shift (OECD, 2016). This, however, is not peculiar to Japan as decentralization, modernization, and fiscal crises are some of the prevalent triggers and backdrops against which structural reform ideas are espoused and presented in many governments' agenda. In many developed countries, municipal merger or enlargement of municipal size is a common structural reform choice (Tumanut, 2015).

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Municipal merger has long been embraced by Japan, and dates back to the Meiji period (1868-1912), where subnational territorial merger had manifested at both prefectural and municipal levels. Presently, territorial reform is occurring solely at the latter. The number and borders of 47 prefectures have remained almost unchanged since 1890 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication [MIC], 2007), despite recurring proposals to abolish them in favor of creating regions (Yokomichi, 2008). Mabuchi (2001) explains that such stability is rooted in the association of prefectural reorganization with democratic regression. As the prefectures epitomize territorial immutability, municipalities are the exact opposite, as they have undergone various transformations.

The first great wave of merger struck the Japanese local government system in the late 1880s, abolishing 55,600 units. Two other waves have swept Japan: one in the 1950s and another in the 2000s. In the accessible[1] literature on municipal merger in Japan, efficiency (see Nakagawa, 2016; Nakazawa, 2013; Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a; Rausch, 2012) and coalition politics (see Hirota & Yunoue, 2011; Horiuchi, Saito, & Yamada, 2014; Kawaura, 2010; Shimuzu, 2012; Weese, 2015; Yamada, 2013) are the most commonly examined research sub-themes. While the literature on merger is abundant, the use of institutional approach to explain outcomes of reform attempts is scant (Tumanut, 2015).

Accordingly, this article's objective is twofold: to attempt to explain why Japan has been decisive in redrawing municipal boundaries, and to illustrate variations of this decisiveness over time. Using a case study approach (embedded in this case are three periods of municipal merger and two recent cases of failed and successful municipal merger), secondary sources (particularly scholars' accounts and official government websites) and key informant interviews (with Japanese ministry officials, academic experts, and local bureaucrats directly involved in merger), municipal merger is analyzed using a simplified and interpreted veto player theory by Tsebelis (2002). It extends and applies Tumanut's (2015) interpretation[2] of the theory in the context of territorial redrawing or structural reform in local government. In this article, adoption of merger policy is a function of the number and cohesion of veto players and congruence of their preferences.

Adopting and simplifying the definition of Tsebelis (2002), veto players (VPs) are those identified by law as formal decisionmakers in the whole process of reforming municipal boundaries. In this article, cohesion is examined at two levels. Collectively, it refers to propensity of local legislators to concur, usually facilitated by party loyalty or party discipline as well as an internal audit mechanism (e.g., one that could lead to council dissolution). Secondly, individual VPs (such as mayor or governor in Japan), particularly those located at the same policy space, may be influenced by norms and dynamics of power-sharing, such as those found in local executive-legislative relations (e.g., logrolling and rubber-stamping) as well as being subject to external audit mechanism (e.g., recall). Hence, a VP may in turn absorb another VP that is in the same position (e.g., executive and legislature) due to such established norms in decisionmaking, thus reducing the number of VPs.

Congruence of preferences is based on the premise that policy preferences are revealed, located, and invariant (Ganghof, 2003). However, as preferences may vary or is latent, measuring congruence is difficult, especially when the constellation of VPs is large. Thus, policy preferences of VPs in this article are simply tagged and presumed as either "programmatic-outcome" (e.g., based on effectiveness or efficiency targets), or 'positional-selective' (e.g., by examining actors' nature of entry and term limit) (see Eaton, 2002; Ganghof, 2003; Kawanaka, 2010). In sum, VPs are expected to act on their rational self-interests, but can cooperate.

Brief Chronology of Municipal Merger in Japan

The first wave of municipal merger, known as the Great Meiji Consolidation, was triggered by several landmark policies: the Municipalities Formation Law, Prefectural Assembly Act, and Local Tax Ordinance, all enacted in 1878, and the City Code and Town and Village Code in 1888. This set of policies, requiring municipalities a minimum of 300 households, drastically reduced its number from 71,497 in 1883 to 15,859 in 1889, equivalent to over 55,600 abolished units (see Table 1). While its main goal was modernization, merger also aimed to "strengthen municipalities as a foundation of the state power" (Shima et al., 1958 as cited in Mabuchi, 2001, p.187) by fortifying central control on municipalities, simplifying inter-local financial relations, and matching municipal size with expanded municipal service portfolio of registration, taxation, and primary education (Mabuchi, 2001).

Merger during this period was a top-down decision, with central government as sole decisionmaker (T. Niikawa, personal communication, January 30, 2014), through prefectural planning and decision of governor[3] consistent with the directions of Minister of Home Affairs (Yokomichi, 2007). This period marked the first wave of municipal consolidation in Japan.

The next wave, the Great Showa Consolidation, started after the Second World War, where the rebuilding process included democratizing the Japanese polity by strengthening local autonomy under the 1946 Constitution and 1947 Local Autonomy Law. The Research Council on Local Administration in 1949 suggested a minimum municipal size of 8,000 residents based on ideal or expected capacity to deliver secondary education, fire prevention, and social welfare services (Mabuchi, 2001; Yokomichi, 2007). The average land area then was 36 km[2] (MIC, 2012).

Table 1. Number of Municipalities in Japan, 1883-2018

Year	Total	Cities	Towns	Villages	Year	Total	Cities	Towns	Villages
1883	71,497	19	12,194	59,284	1975	3,257	643	1,974	640
1888	71,314	No data			1980	3,225	646	1,991	618
1889	15,859	39	15,820		1985	3,254	651	2,001	602
1898	14,289	48	1,173	13,068	1990	3,253	651	2,001	601
1908	12,488	61	1,167	11,220	1995	3,234	663	1,994	577
1922	12,315	91	1,242	10,982	1999	3,229	671	1,990	568
1930	11,929	109	1,528	10,292	2002	3,218	675	1,981	562
1940	11,498	178	1,706	9,614	2003	3,190	677	1,961	552
1945	10.520	205	1,797	8,518	2004	3,100	695	1,872	533
1947	10,505	210	1,784	8,511	2005	2,395	739	1,317	339
1953	9,868	286	1,966	7,616	2006	1,821	777	846	198
1956	4,668	495	1,870	2,303	2009	1,777	783	802	192
1961	3,472	556	1,935	981	2010	1,727	786	757	184
1962	3,453	558	1,982	913	2011	1,720	786	750	184
1965	3,392	560	2,005	827	2014	1,719	789	746	184
1970	3,280	564	2,027	689	2018	1,718	792	743	183

Note: Figures are culled from Konishi (2010), Mabuchi (2001), Okamoto (2012), Yokomichi (2007), and updated from MIC and Statistics Bureau of Japan.

This wave of merger was promoted with the assistance of prefectural governments and with the establishment of Headquarters for Promoting Municipal Amalgamation at the cabinet level, which drew up Municipality Merger Promotion Plan, with the aim of reducing the number of municipalities by one-third (Mabuchi, 2001). Accordingly, two laws were enacted to stoke the flame of merger. Under the 1953 Law for Promotion of Merger of Towns and Villages (1953-1956), the number of municipalities decreased from 9,868 in 1953 to 5,206 in 1955. The subsequent 1956 New Municipality Creation Promotion Law (1956-1961) further reduced the number to 3,472 in 1961 (see Table 1).

Whereas Yokomichi (2007) notes its non-compulsory nature, Mabuchi views it as "amalgamation from above" due to strong national leadership and strategic prefectural push[4] that resulted in around 80% success rate of merger plans (2001, p. 8). The wave dwindled when the law expired in 1961 resulting in the abolition of over 6,300 towns, and threefold increase of average municipality size (27,000 population and 107 km² land area) (MIC, 2012).

Though administrative efficiency was pursued in the first wave, economic development was the main goal in the second (Mabuchi, 2001). Mabuchi describes this period as "amalgamation from below," pertaining to the minimal role of prefectural government (as over 90% of territorial reform was mostly initiated

by local actors, such as mayors, councilmen, residents, and local economic chambers) (2001, p. 8). Even after two great merger waves, many small towns and villages remained intact. Three reasons were identified by Mabuchi (2001): being distant from city center, weak economic viability, and availability of other avenues of municipal cooperation.

Several other merger laws were enacted after this period. From 1965 to 1985, at least three more merger laws were ratified. The Municipal Amalgamation Law was decreed in 1965 and would be periodically amended every decade. This law was characterized by its neutral stance, as merger was promoted as voluntary. The revision in 1995 to introduce local initiative was a landmark policy but was not at first attractive despite incentives on increased local allocation tax (LAT) and issuance of municipal bonds. Accordingly, as shown in Table 1, there was no significant change in the number of municipalities between 1961 and 1999. Instead, this period is characterized by annexation. According to Mabuchi (2001), around 80 percent of 231 cases of reform during this period are enlargements of existing cities pursuing high-growth policy by realigning spheres of socio-economic activities. This was triggered by incentives for industrial development available only for special cities.

The third wave (Great Heisei Consolidation) started from the revised and extended 1995 Municipal Merger Law and 1995 Decentralization Promotion Act. The former was later revised in 1999 to complement the goals of 1999 Omnibus Decentralization Law (Yokomichi, 2007), which formed part of a comprehensive reform package to address economic stagnation (OECD, 2005). This wave was also designed to streamline municipal administration (Yokomichi, 2007), lessen regional disparity (OECD, 2005), address diversifying needs, and expand living space of ageing communities (MIC, 2009; OECD, 2005).

Under the revised law in 1999, governors were expected to lead merger promotion as well as formulate merger patterns (Mabuchi, 2001). The 12% reduction in LAT introduced in 2004 prompted many municipalities to merge to avoid bankruptcy (Yokomichi, 2007). Thus, alongside the promotion on territorial reform was the ongoing reform on local finance that would impact on local autonomy (OECD, 2005).

Due to rising demand for merger, the law was revised in 2004 to extend the period of application, and again in 2005 to extend merger to 2010. Under this law, prefectural governments were again expected to promote merger through the formulation of merger patterns, despite the excpected reduction in LAT (Konishi, 2010). Moreover, it aimed to reduce the number of municipalities to around 1,000 (Koike, 2010). However, Table 1 shows that the number had only been reduced to 1,730 in 2010. In the period 1999-2010, more than 1,500 municipalities were dissolved. In 2010, a new merger law was enacted, which, according to Konishi (2010), was similar to the neutral stance of merger law in 1965. Since 2010, only

a dozen units opted to merge mainly to be elevated to city level, lowering the total to 1,718 in 2018, still far from the 1,000-unit target.

Despite widespread occurrence of merger, several scholars (e.g., Kohara, 2007; Morikawa, 2011 as cited in Rausch, 2012) observe great disparity across Japan, as merger affected mostly the rural areas and western regions of the country (Kohara, 2007).

Institutional Context

Political Institutions (and Veto Players)

Under the current unitary-parliamentary type of government, Japan has three government branches: executive, legislative (Diet), and judiciary. The executive is composed of a Diet-designated prime minister, who is restrained by political parties (which, through the Diet, can unseat the prime minister), the bureaucracy (that crafts most bills), and consensus-style politics. The legislature houses two chambers: House of Councillors (242 members serving for 6-year term) and House of Representatives (475 members, 4-year term). The 15-member judiciary is mostly appointed by the cabinet, except for the chief justice who is appointed by the emperor. At the local level, key political institutions (i.e., veto points) are prefectures (governor and council) and municipalities (mayors and council).

Political Decentralization

The Constitution of Japan guarantees a local autonomy system, and provides for direct election of local government heads. Decentralization was further promoted in the 1990s as encapsulated in the 1995 Decentralization Promotion Law, followed by the enactment of the 1999 Omnibus Decentralization Law, which transferred more autonomy to local governments, clarified central-local roles, and abolished agency-delegated functions (Ikawa, 2008).

Contemporarily, Japan has a two-tier local government system composed of prefecture and municipality (city, town, or village), headed by governor and mayor, respectively. Both executives are elected by plurality for a four-year term, with no term limit (see Table 2). In 2018, there were 47 prefectures, and 1,718 municipalities. The city system in Japan is complex, where cities are classified differently according to history and functions. In 2017, there were 791 cities, which is 46 percent of total number of municipalities. Twenty of these are designated cities, whose functions and authorities are comparable to that of prefectures, and whose combined population account for around 20% of total population of Japan. The other types of cities (based on population) are core cities (48), special case cities (36), and ordinary cities (687). Within Tokyo metropolis, there are 23 special wards or districts that are comparable to cities.

Table 2. Veto Players, Congruence, and Assumed Preferences in Japan

Veto Player (members)	Nature of entry/ term-limit	Assumed preferences
(Political parties: 2 dominant parties)	(LDP has been the ruling party since 1955, except in 1993-94 and 2009-12) (LDP – champion of municipal merger)	Mainly programmatic (i.e., government efficiency)
Prefectural governor (1)	Plurality; 4 years, no term limit	Programmatic[a] & positional[b]
Prefectural assembly (40-120)[c]	Single non-transferable vote (multi-member districts) 4 years, no term limit	Programmatic[a] & positional[b]
City/municipal mayor (1)	Plural 4 years, no term limit	Programmatic[a] & positional[b]
City assembly (26-96)[c] Municipal assembly (12-26)[c]	Single non-transferable vote[d] 4 years, no term limit	Programmatic[a] & positional[b]
(Quasi-VP: citizen-voters)	(mechanisms: initative, non-binding referendum)	(Lower taxes, better services) (Judicious treatment of services and taxes)

Note: Constructed by author using data from various sources; [a]constrained by possible vote of no-confidence; [b]seeking re-election or higher post; [c]varies according to population, [d]Some municipalities have multiple electoral districts

Local legislation rests with local assemblies at the prefectural and municipal levels. Assembly members, who are elected by single-nontransferable vote (multi-member districts in prefectures), vary according to population. The local autonomy system of Japan also gives the executive branch the right to introduce bills to the assembly. Coordination therefore is expected between both branches to avoid impasse. Consistent with other parliamentary systems, political parties in Japan are disciplined and consolidated between two major parties: the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The two-party system and party loyalty in Japan are largely the results of its national-level electoral system (first-past-the-post and single-member district rules), but significant policy changes are not necessarily expected from alternation in Diet leadership (Scheiner, 2012).

Fiscal Decentralization

Vertical fiscal imbalance characterizes central-local fiscal relations in Japan since the 1970s (Mochida, 2007), thus the need for various types of fiscal transfers, of which LAT and central government disbursements account for 90%. The former is derived based on calculation of basic fiscal needs against local government's basic fiscal revenues. The needs are based on maintaining

devolved functions and services. Prefectures are responsible for police, senior high school, salaries of lower schools, commerce and industry, prefectural public works, and others; while municipalities are responsible for social welfare, livelihood protection, sanitation, elementary and junior high schools, municipal public works and fire service, among others. In 2005, subnational expenditure constituted around 60% of overall expenditure in Japan. Expenditure levels of prefectures and municipalities in the abovementioned devolved services were almost identical (Ikawa, 2008).

The fiscal transfer (LAT) is granted through tax-sharing scheme in consumption, tobacco, income, corporate, and liquor taxes (Ikawa, 2007). Capital expenditures are also financed through local bonds under Local Finance Law, where local governments enjoy low interest rates (Aoki, 2008). In 2000, transfer accounted for 28% of budget of municipalities in general. However, figures in 2004 show huge disparity in financial capability of cities (around 80%) and municipalities, the smallest of which can only generate 26% of their overall financial needs (Kido & Nakamura, 2008).

Alongside devolution of more functions and taxing powers, shares from fiscal grants increased throughout the decades until 2004, when the decrease in LAT, which formed part of the Trinity Reform (see Ikawa, 2007), became a prime catalyst for territorial reform in contemporary Japan.

Findings from Veto Player Analysis

Legal Framework for Territorial Reform

The legal framework for territorial reform has continuously changed since the Meiji era. The current merger law is the enabling policy for territorial reform consistent with Article 92 of the Constitution. Several merger laws were enacted since 1947 (i.e., Laws No. 67/1947, No. 258/1953, No. 164/1956, and No. 118/1962). In 1965, Special Law No. 6 was passed and was revised every ten years (i.e., Laws No. 5/1975, No. 14/1985, No. 50/1995) until it was superseded by Law No. 87/1999. The 1999 merger law has been continuously revised to influence preferences of local VPs through the use of incentives and disincentives. The third merger wave ended with the enactment of a merger law effective from 2010 to 2020. This current law promotes voluntary merger.

Merger Procedure and Formal Veto Players

The accessible and extant literature (validated through key informant interviews) shows that the key veto player during the first merger wave was the central government through the assistance of prefectural governors, who were considered bureaucrats due to their appointive nature. In the second wave, local

assemblies were given decisionmaking or veto power in territorial reform issue, while prefectural governments, although directly elected, remained agents of the central government.

In the most recent wave of merger (Heisei period), the procedure for municipal merger starts with the establishment by interested municipalities[5] of a merger consultation committee[6] through assembly voting (and can also be subject to public approval through referendum), wherein issues about name, government/ office location, and other matters are deliberated between representatives of municipalities, and result in a masterplan for proposed merger. On this basis, the municipal assemblies (collective veto players) will forward decision to their respective mayors (individual VPs), who will then lodge merger application to the prefecture, whose governor (another individual VP) will render decision based on collective position of prefectural assembly (another collective VP), and will report outcome to Tokyo through the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communication, who will then issue public notice to enforce the approved merger (MIC, 2009).

In this procedure, six VPs are identified in a typical two-unit merger: municipal assemblies and mayors (two sets), prefectural assembly and prefectural governor, who does not normally veto merger bills (T. Niikawa, personal communication, January 30, 2014). The national government, through MIC, promoted merger by continuously revising the 1965 merger law, and by instructing prefectural governments through government directives to formulate merger patterns[7] under their jurisdictions. All prefectures formulate and submit such plan, and are instructed to facilitate the merger process. Despite its local autonomy, prefectural governments remain supportive of Tokyo given their historical antecedent as central agents.[8]

The LDP-led government was also vocal in its intention to reduce the number of municipalities to 1,000 by including merger in government's major policies for administrative reform, establishing a committee to assist interested municipalities, and holding nationwide campaigns (Koike, 2010; Yokomichi, 2007). Based on results, different patterns of merger are observed. Other than the usual merger classification as successful or failed attempt, merger can be categorized as natural (where merging municipalities are of equal economic status) or forced (where merger is characterised by disparity among merging units) (Rausch, 2012). Failure usually occurs at merger consultation committee level and decisionmaking level of municipal assemblies and mayors. At the level of merger consultation committees, there are municipalities that secede from an established committee, while failures in others are due to dissolved committees (Morikawa, 2011 as cited in Rausch, 2012).

Requisites, Incentives, and Preferences

In the first wave of merger, a minimum household threshold of 300 was sought for municipalities. In the second wave, a minimum population of 8,000

and land area of 30 km^2 were suggested, while incentives in the form of grants-in-aid and special exemptions in purchasing properties were offered (Donoghue & Whitney, 1965). In the third wave, no population requirement was set by the government, but the pioneering study of Hayashi (1995 as cited in Mabuchi, 2001) pegged the optimal municipality size (population) at 115,000.

Instead, Tokyo aimed to reduce the number to 1,000 units. More incentives were provided as stipulated in the Law for Exceptional Measures for Municipal Merger that was revised in 1995 and again in 1999. These include issuance of special bonds to finance infrastructure for newly amalgamated municipalities, special provision for local council members, and non-reduction of LAT for five years, and was extended to 10 years in the revised 1999 law. As a stick approach, the huge reduction in LAT in 2004 was eventually incorporated in the revised merger law in 2005. To further facilitate merger, population requirements for conversion to designated and regular cities were relaxed.

Cohesion and Congruence

The continuing territorial restructuring has affected loyalties of local politicians, who have become more independent of political parties (Shimizu, 2012). Whereas the role of political parties is influential in formulating and revising merger laws at the Diet level (Yamada, 2013), its role in the decision of municipalities to merge may be weaker than what is expected in a parliamentary democracy.

Nonetheless, party loyalty may still indirectly influence collective VP cohesion and congruence of preferences in local assemblies. Although political parties are not identified as institutional VPs in the collective game of reform at the municipal level, they have exerted pressure to local governments through the prefectures, their antecedent agents. Prefectural concurrence (of two VPs: governor and assembly) can be regarded as rubber-stamp, as prefectures serve as conduit and promoter of national government's plan to reduce number of municipalities.

Moreover, while the prefectural governor and assembly have formal veto powers, they do not veto substantially as it would undermine the local autonomy principle (H. Takada, personal communication, April 3, 2014). The salience of prefectural government's role is evident at the agenda-setting stage, as it actively promotes merger through formulation of merger plans. In sum, policy preferences of the central government (non-VP) are channelled through the prefectures (formal VPs), and are therefore congruent. Put differently, their decisions are cohesive and their positions absorbed.

On the other hand, municipal executive-legislative cohesion is also expected to be operative due to rules that allow dismissal of governor/mayor (as internal-

external audit mechanism), as well as dissolution of the assembly (an internal audit mechanism). In the former, the citizens—through exertion of pressure to local officials, particularly the governor/mayor—collectively serve as external auditor.

Lastly, the dominant ideology of efficiency has provided increased leverage for the ruling party (LDP) to indirectly align preferences amid current financial and socio-demographic condition of Japanese local governments.

Citizens as Quasi-VP

Citizen-voters, through initiative and optional referendum, collectively transform into a quasi-VP during the establishment or decision to establish merger committees. The local initiative system was introduced in 1995 due to difficulty of reaching consensus among citizens and municipal VPs. Between 1995 and 2006, 385 initiatives were recorded, but only 22% proceeded to establish committees, and only 9% led to actual consolidation (Koike, 2010). The system was not successful in solving collective action problem as 68% of failed initiatives were vetoed by mayors or local assemblies. This dilemma was corrected by providing more power to the electorate by introducing referendum (additional quasi-veto point) in 2002. However, referendum is optional (only used in deciding controversial issues taken in merger consultation committees). Although not legally binding and final, referendum results are also usually adhered to, thus rendering the public an influential role in merger politics (Koike, 2010). However, in a survey conducted by Japan Research Institute in 2001, local residents were not actively involved by local assemblies or study groups, only a few municipalities held referenda, while many assemblies reported the need for more local leadership and guidance, rather than financial incentives (Rausch, 2005).

Merger Consultation Committee

The number of established merger consultation committees was stable for a few years since its introduction, and rapidly increased in 2004 when significant decrease in LAT (in this case, a form of disincentive) was announced (Konishi, 2010). Once committees are established, various issues are discussed among affected communities. However, not all committees arrive at a consensus. Merger committees can also be abandoned altogether or entirely new merger committees are formed (Miyashita & Nakazawa, 2009, as cited in Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a). When communities can not reach agreement, the issue may be decided in an optional referendum. Out of 305 referenda recorded between 1999 and 2006, 175 cases (57%) were about merger (Koike, 2010).

There are three key stages in the merger process: establishment of merger consultation committee, municipal assembly decision, and prefectural assembly

decision.[9] However, in a study by Morikawa (2011 as cited in Rausch, 2012) there were cases of successful merger attempts that did not rely on establishment of a merger committee. In some cases, committee establishment was difficult to attain due to either low consensus (i.e., congruence) among various actors, or local assemblies (municipal VPs) themselves were not supportive (Koike, 2010). Thus, consensus-building, especially with citizens, has become a pivotal pre-requisite in the decisionmaking process.

Shaping VPs' Preferences

Two main factors promoted merger: financial problems (due to depopulation, ageing society and decrease in LAT), and strong sponsorship by national and prefectural governments (Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a). Efficiency, the dominant ideology driven by decentralization reform, has also been identified as contributory factor (Saito & Yamada, 2011).

At the national level, LDP's promotion of municipal merger was puzzling when it would erode its electoral support base (Saito & Yamada, 2011; Yamada, 2013). Consequently, this aggressive action of the LDP tilted the neutral stance of MIC towards merger (Saito & Yamada, 2011). As previously discussed, LDP's position does not necessarily translate to all-out support from local politicians,[10] particularly those with conservative views who opposed merger despite party affiliation with LDP (T. Niikawa, personal communication, January 30, 2014). For some scholars (e.g., Horiuchi, Saito, & Yamada, 2014; Kawaura, 2010; Yamada, 2013), the reason is primarily political: perpetuation of power, through calculation of expected change in the power balance, is found significant.

The merger option also raised many issues and concerns for citizen-voters. For example, the proposed merger in Hachinohe with seven other municipalities in 2004 was riddled with loss of mayoral seats, centralization of services, ballooning size of local assembly, erosion of local identity, and uncertainty in treatment of taxes and childcare, among others (Toonippo, 2004 as cited in Rausch, 2005). The Japan City Center survey also shows that 69 percent of respondents felt that the municipal government had become far and inconvenient (Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a). From the perspective of local government employees in general, the merits of a balanced and larger organization are countered by a dysfunctional organization (Konishi, 2010). Based on surveys, economic chambers or organizations are mostly supportive of merger (Imai, 2010 as cited in Okamoto, 2012).

If merger is considered, a more decentralized setup is adopted for merged municipalities when the expansion of administrative area, and financial and political differences are both large (Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a). Another key concern is the name to be adopted for merging municipalities. Due to its contentious nature, several policies were formulated to guide municipality naming.[11]

Municipalities with high ratios of LAT to total revenue tend to merge (Hirota, 2007 as cited in Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013b). Nakazawa and Miyashita (2013b) extended this finding to explain factors affecting stages of merger process. They find that population size does not affect time to form a merger committee which is the first stage of the process. However, local public debt per capita and land area render committee formation difficult. Municipalities with high intergovernmental grants ratio and high elderly ratio tend to form committees faster. When committees are established earlier, merger attempt is likely successful. Moreover, municipalities with high debts are likely excluded from committee establishment. While population size is not significant in committee formation, it is significant in annexation, where municipalities with large population lead the discussion.

Similarly, Miyazaki (2014) shows that expected efficiency gains from merger as well as size pattern of merging partners (i.e., small and large municipalities) are factors influencing decision to merge. He argues that as small municipalities are propelled by financial crisis due to depopulation and ageing population, the large ones are partly driven by their large voting power in the merger process. On the other hand, provision of large grants that are unconditional tends to weaken the incentive of merger. Moreover, interaction between population size and financial capability is also found to affect decisions to merge, as well as influence choice of partners (Kido & Nakamura, 2008).

Merger is also a strategy for the merging municipalities to be elevated to an ordinary city, core city, or designated city status. Jacobs (2011) refers to this as a race for local power in an expanding national municipal hierarchy system. The expiration of merger policies also created "pressure without a reason to merge" (Toonippo as cited in Rausch, 2005, para. 34).

The Case of Kawaguchi City and Hatogaya[12]

Using key informant interviews and secondary sources, this case examines the factors and mechanisms of failed and successful attempts to merge municipalities to form a new city. This case describes the successful attempt of Kawaguchi and Hatogaya to merge in 2011 as an outcome of congruent preferences of six VPs, as well as cohesive executive-legislative bodies that resulted in three effective VPs, partly facilitated by the mechanisms of political partisanship and policy learning.

An industrial area adjacent to Tokyo, Kawaguchi is a medium-sized city (estimated population of 580,000 in 2018) in Saitama prefecture. The present city is a result of continuing annexation since the 1930s. The city was established in 1933 as a result of the merger of Kawaguchi and the villages of Aoki, Minami-Hirayanagi, and Yokozone. In 1940, it annexed the town of Hatogaya, and the villages of Shiba, Kamine, and Shingo, while in 1956, it annexed parts of Angyo

village. Eight years after the annexation, Hatogaya de-merged with Kawaguchi City. In 1962, Kawaguchi again expanded its territories by annexing sections of Misono village. And most recently, in October 2011, it re-merged with Hatogaya forming the new Kawaguchi City. The recent enlargement of Kawaguchi City in 2011 is an offshoot of several failed attempts to annex its neighbors.

Failed Attempts of Merger/Annexation

The idea to merge was floated as early as 1997 by residents of Kawaguchi and Hatogaya, but failed to be inserted in the parliamentary agenda of Kawaguchi. In May 2000, a study group was established to consider the merger of five cities: Kawaguchi, Warabi, Soka, Toda, and Hatogaya. Though the group was dissolved in July 2001, informal discussions continued. In May 2002, the four cities (excluding Soka) conducted surveys among their resident-voters. In August 2002, with underwhelming survey results, Toda City assembly decided not to participate. Hence, Kawaguchi, Warabi, and Hatogaya established in December 2002 a preliminary committee on merger. It took one year for the three cities to formally establish, in December 2003, a merger consultation committee. The establishment of the committee required the approval of the mayors and assemblies of all three cities. It comprised of equal number of representatives from each city irrespective of population size (there were 13 voting members per municipality), and two external members (including a prefectural officer-in-charge and Kiyotaka Yokomichi,[13] who has served, since 1999, as chairman or member of other merger consultation committees). The members from each city comprised of the mayor, two representatives of the executive office (vice-mayor and director general), six city assemblymen, and four community representatives.

Within the committee, sectoral meetings and subcommittees were established to conduct research on the details of merger, including choice of city name, timing of merger, treatment of taxes, and services. Many of these were deliberated by the committee as a whole, and later were decided by the assemblies of the concerned cities. Thus, the merger consultation committee had to establish its internal rules and regulations, particularly on deliberating and making decisions.

Among the many controversial decisions were the city name and type of merger. A special subcommittee was tasked to conduct research on this issue by soliciting ideas from the public through an open-ended questionnaire administrated to 28,411 residents in April-May 2004. Majority (52%) preferred Kawaguchi City (as expected due to the huge number of population from Kawaguchi compared to the other two municipalities), whereas only 2% chose the name Bunan. The final selection of the city name was deliberated and decided in July 2004 by the merger committee. Six candidates for city name were chosen. While voting members from Kawaguchi City wanted to keep its name, members from Warabi City wanted to use another name. The choice of city name had

implication on type of merger and identity—whereas the name Bunan would indicate an equal merger, the name Kawaguchi would connote annexation.

While the decision in many items in the draft merger charter was achieved through unanimity, the committee decided to use the name Bunan through a majority vote.[14] Yokomichi recounted that it was a few members of the Hatogaya delegation that decided the fate of the proposed merger. The voting result infuriated the citizens of Kawaguchi, and led to the proposal by the city assembly of Kawaguchi to withdraw from the merger committee as the decision on city name did not reflect the people's will. Thus, in August 2004, the mayor was requested by the assembly to convene a special session, which resulted in the filing of a bill to withdraw from merger committee. The merger consultation committee was formally abolished in September 2004 when the committee confirmed the withdrawal of Kawaguchi.

Hatogaya, being responsible for the breakup of the committee, requested another discussion on merger, this time without Warabi.

Successful Attempt of Annexation

In November 2005, informal talks of merger between Kawaguchi (in 2005, population of 517,000 and land area of 55.8 km^2) and Hatogaya (62,000 residents, 6.2 km^2 land area) was re-established. This eventually led to a formal request of merger discussion by Hatogaya City assembly in January 2009. A few months later, the Kawaguchi mayor and assembly agreed to establish a merger consultation committee. In November 2009, the two cities finally agreed to form a preliminary committee. A formal merger consultation committee was established a year later.

Many items in the agenda, particularly city name, and type of merger (whether consolidation or annexation) had already been deliberated and decided in the 11 meetings conducted between December 2009 and August 2010. As such 16 of the 19 items on the agenda[15] were immediately approved on September 28, 2010, just four days after the formal creation of merger consultation committee. As stipulated in the internal regulations, unanimity was desired, but in case of divided opinion, an affirmative decision required two-thirds of the votes of the attending members.[16]

The committee members were chosen on the basis of recommendation from the chairperson of the two local assemblies. A total of 27 voting members were chosen—12 from each local government (including civil society representatives, and assemblymen who represented various factions), and three experts (a former high-ranking official of Saitama prefecture, a prefectural officer-in-charge, and Kiyotaka Yokomichi, who was elected chairman of the merger consultation committee).

Six more meetings of the merger committee were conducted until the final agreement was reached. The remaining items were settled in December 2010 before finally concluding in January 2011. Hatogaya City assembly immediately filed a resolution to approve the merger in February, while Kawaguchi followed suit in March. The 40-member assembly of Kawaguchi City, however, was not unanimous as members from the Communist Party had reservations and wanted to continue the discussions on merger. The merger was accepted and approved by the 94-member Saitama Prefectural Assembly in July 2011, and was officially established in October 2011 after its publication in the Official Gazette in August 2011.

Veto Players, Cohesion, and Congruence

This case illustrates how the number of veto players and their congruent preferences affect the outcome of a proposed merger. In the first failed attempt in 2000, the preferences of five municipalities (i.e., 12 VPs: five mayors and five local assemblies, including one governor and one prefectural assembly) had to be congruent for merger to proceed. In 2002, in a proposed merger involving four municipalities (10 VPs), one municipality relied on the will of its residents to decide against merger, which rendered the merger option untenable. In the third failed attempt, this time involving three cities (eight VPs), a merger consultation committee was established (i.e., provisional approval from six municipal VPs) but the type of merger (i.e., equal merger vs. annexation), as evident in the choice of city name, led to its break-up. However, in the subsequent attempt, with only two cities or four municipal VPs (and two prefectural VPs), where the smaller city was willing to be annexed to the larger city, congruent preferences were achieved. Its historical antecedent (being once part of Kawaguchi, and the failed attempts) might have influenced cohesion of collective VPs and congruence of their preferences through learning and adjustment of preferences.

Due to the mutual check in place (i.e., strong executive-legislative cohesion) in Japanese local governments (where the assembly can be dissolved by the mayor, and vice versa through a vote of no confidence, the case of Kawaguchi City only involved three effective VPs (i.e., absorption of city mayor and assembly as one effective VP, as well as absorption of prefectural governor and assembly, as another effective VP). Due to legal provision for recall (as form of external audit or accountability test), the position of local officials and local residents may also be absorbed.

Within local assemblies, the role of political party is also operative among members of various group. Local LDP members, for example, were expected to support merger, while the Japanese Communist Party was expected to oppose it. In 2011, when the territorial borders of Kawaguchi City were being redrawn, the ruling coalition of LDP and Komeito influenced the local assembly members with its ideology anchored on efficient local governments. It was LDP that wanted to reduce the number of municipalities across Japan when it continuously amended

the merger law. The prevailing preference of the central government at that time ran parallel with the collective preferences in Kawaguchi and Hatogaya, which acted rationally due to four things: first, merger was endorsed to address spillover problems, and provide efficient service delivery; second, incentives were offered to investment in infrastructure through provision of special bonds; third, special treatment was provided to local assembly members; and fourth, a disincentive of LAT reduction was inserted in the merger law in 2005-2010.

The failed merger case of Kawaguchi-Warabi-Hatogaya also finds similarities with the failed merger of Kishiwada-Tadaoka in Osaka prefecture. The proposed merger aimed to merge Kishiwada City (population of 204,000; land area of 72 km^2) and Tadaoka (population of 18,000; land area of 4 km^2). In its 2003 attempt, six to seven VPs were involved: two municipal mayors, two municipal assemblies, one governor, one prefectural assembly, and the voters of Tadaoka who, through citizen-initiated and assembly-legislated referendum, became a quasi-VP. The negative result of the referendum (70% against merger) in Tadaoka led to the withdrawal of Tadaoka assembly from the merger consultation committee, and the resignation of its mayor.

Temporal Variation on Merger Policy Outcomes in Japan

There is no variation in territorial reform choice in Japan due to the dominance of merger (including annexation) as a boundary reform strategy. This article also adds to the sparse literature on temporal variation of Japanese municipal merger using an institutional approach—merger is attributed to change in formal rules, which in turn affect the number of VPs as well as rules that shape incentives, preferences, and cohesion of VPs in territorial reform process. Using inferences from key informant interviews and accessible literature, the general approaches on and results of reform decisions are indicative of the number of formal VPs involved in territorial reform (see Table 3).

Number of VPs and Rate of Change

During the first wave (1883-1889) of municipal merger when 78% or over 55,600 local governments were abolished, several scholars indicated the dominance of the central government with the aid of prefectural governments (Mabuchi, 2001), and the compulsory nature of reform process (Yokomichi, 2007). The same top-down approach and strong central leadership characterized the second wave. From 1953 to 1961, 65% or over 6,300 municipalities were further abolished through merger or annexation. Although not compulsory (Yokomichi, 2007), the strong pivot from Tokyo, supported by prefectural governments, which at that time were led by national bureaucrats, was again observed (Shibata, 1975 as cited in Mabuchi, 2001). In the third wave (1999-2010), about 1,500 municipalities were dissolved, which account for 46% of the pre-reform total. In this period of decentralization (i.e., promotion of more local autonomy and local democracy), an

average of 4.3 effective VPs were determined: prefectural government (which is still generally supportive of Tokyo despite greater autonomy), and an average of 3.3 merging municipalities. As previously discussed, while merger laws during this period did not impose merger, merger still flourished due to the strong push from Tokyo, continuing prefectural support, legal provision for fiscal incentives or disincentives, and inclusion of sunset or expiration clause.

Table 3. Extent of Municipal Merger in Japan by Period

Period	No. of municipalities (pre-reform)	No. of municipalities (post-reform)	Reduction rate	Effective no. of VPs
1883-1889	71,497	15,820	77.9%	(1 VP) Central (Ministry) / prefectural governments[a]
1953-1961	9,868	3,472	64.8%	(3 VPs) Central/prefectural governments[b] + municipal governments[c]
1999-2010	3,229	1,730	46.4%	(4.3 VPs) Prefectural + municipal governments[d] + optional referendum

Note: [a] In these periods, institutional VPs are based on accessible scholars' accounts and inferred from the literature; [b] optional quasi-VP was introduced (voters via referendum); [c] based on a typical two-unit merger; [d] based on average number (3.3) of merging units during this period.
Source: Culled from various sources

To sum up, when incidence and reduction rates are compared, there is less territorial reform in periods where more VPs are involved due to higher number of preferences that need to be congruent with the preference of reform agents.

Reform Agents and Incentives/Disincentives

In the last two merger waves, the national government or the ruling party (LDP) in Japan is the primary agent of territorial reform through its formulation and revision of merger laws that suit the party's needs (Yamada, 2013). The identity of reform agents affects not only the dynamics of reform politics but also the incentives and disincentives that shape and reshape VP preferences. Although incentives are not explicitly embedded in the VP Theory, they are implicitly assumed as key determinant of VPs' preferences.

The continuous amendments of merger law illustrate the use of strong incentives (or disincentives) in influencing preferences. The last two waves of merger are characterized by strategic use of carrot-and-stick approach, punctuated by a neutral stance. In the second wave, incentives in the form of grants-in-aid and special exemptions in purchasing properties were offered, but only lasted until the merger law expired in 1965. From 1965 until 1999, when the stance on merger was neutral (i.e., no incentive or disincentive), the rate of territorial merger decelerated. Only 163 units were abolished (4.8% from

1965 baseline), whereas the period before 1965, when financial incentives were offered, logged 6,476 abolished units (66% from 1953 baseline) (see Table 4).

Similarly, during the third wave of merger that began in 1999, the effect of financial incentives on territorial reform preference is evident. From 1999 to 2004, several major incentives were offered: issuance of special bonds to finance infrastructure for newly merged municipalities, special provision for local council members, and non-reduction of LAT. However, because the rate of territorial reform during this period was slow-moving (134 dissolved units), a strong disincentive was instead offered in 2004: a 12% reduction on LAT, which prompted the ten-fold abolition of 1,370 units (44.2%) from 2004 to 2010 for municipalities to avoid bankruptcy. From 2011 to 2018, when a neutral merger stance was again adopted, only 12 units were dissolved. Further facilitating this change in number is the expected expiration of merger laws through the insertion of sunset clauses.

Table 4. Municipal Merger and Financial Incentives in Japan (1953-2018)

Year	Total	Number of reduced units	Incentives
1953	9,868	575	Yes. (Grants-in-aid and special exemptions in purchasing properties; in the early 1960s, incentives for industrial development that are only available for special cities.)
1955	5,206	4,662	
1960	3,526	1,680	
1965	3,392	134	
1970	3,280	112	Generally neutral: no financial incentives
1975	3,257	23	
1980	3,255	2	
1985	3,254	1	
1990	3,253	1	
1995	3,234	19	
1999	3,229	5	(In 1999-2004: issuance of special bonds; special provisions for seats of local assembly members; non-reduction of central transfer fund) (In 2005-2010: disincentive of 12-percent reduction on transfer fund; relaxation of population requirements for cities)
2002	3,218	11	
2003	3,190	28	
2004	3,100	90	
2005	2,395	705	
2006	1,821	574	
2009	1,777	44	
2010	1,730	47	
2011	1,720	10	Neutral stance: no financial incentives or disincentives
2014	1,719	1	
2018	1,718	1	

Note: Figures and incentives are culled from various sources cited in this study.

Conclusion

The analysis of subnational territorial reform in Japan, an archetype of a decisive government in this reform area, was framed using an institutional lens, particularly an interpreted and simplified Veto Player Theory of Tsebelis (2002), as well as the related concepts of formal-informal institutions and nested games.

The case of Japan, in the policy area of municipal merger or annexation, exemplifies a VP constellation that is small, cohesive, and locally-concentrated (with an optional, non-binding referendum). In explaining the differences in territorial reform outcomes (incidence or rate of reform) within the country, a small effective number of VPs (derived from VP's cohesion) and congruence of their varied preferences were instructive. The number of VPs is prescribed by formal rules (e.g., merger laws and implementing rules and regulations), whereas cohesion and congruence are determined by both formal (e.g., dissolution-recall mechanisms in executive-legislative relations and electoral rules) and informal rules (e.g., party discipline and shared norms/ideologies).

Constitutional games were played by the National Diet, which resulted in merger laws and regular revisions to instigate favorable territorial reform rules at collective-choice game played by local governments. In this case, the location of ruling government, a predicted VP in Tsebelis' theory, is relegated to a reform agent role in the actual territorial reform game. The preference of the reform agent (LDP) determined the direction of territorial reform choice: merger and annexation.

The tripartite function of LDP as reform agent has been instrumental in the following pathways and mechanisms: firstly, informally invoking the emissary role of prefectural governments to promote municipal merger; secondly, indirectly influencing cohesion in local councils through partisanship (albeit less potent than is expected of a parliamentary) and norms or values (such as efficiency in the context of local autonomy); and thirdly, in reshaping preferences of members of collective VPs through constant amendment of merger laws and the introduction of salient provisions (e.g., incentives or disincentives).

Policy implications of the Japanese case point to several strategies of a decisive polity (i.e., resulting in territorial volatility) that other countries may consider:

• use of carrot-and-stick approach (e.g., formulation and constant revision of merger policies, and provisions for disincentives/incentives, and sunset clause)

• a strong reform agent (e.g., central government through ruling party and/or ministry)

- constitution of an ad hoc committee (e.g., merger consultation committee)

- establishment of clear guidelines for merging units and committees, and

- support of the first-tier or higher-level local government (such as prefectures in Japan) in nominating merging units at the lower level (e.g., municipalities).

Equally important in the outcome of reform efforts is the small number of formal veto players permitted in the rules of the merger game, as well as a strong trigger (e.g., financial crisis) or a turning point for unorthodox reform ideas to be embraced by the right actors. One area for future research that will aid policymakers or bureaucrats in their reform choice (whether to upscale or downscale local government size) is determining the optimal size of different local government tiers.

Endnotes

[1] By accessible, those that are written in English.

[2] See also Tumanut (2016) for an application of interpreted veto player theory in contemporary territorial fragmentation in Indonesia.

[3] Governors at that time were bureaucrats working under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

[4] Although the prefectural governments were democratized in 1947 (i.e., directly elected by citizens and no longer appointed by central government), they remained an important channel for Tokyo to promote policies to municipalities (Niikawa, Tatsuro, 2014, January 30, personal interview, Kyoto, Japan).

[5] Or by the residents themselves through initiative.

[6] Members can be appointed by the governor.

[7] Based on combinations of municipalities that could form a large-scale unit, those that could function as designated or core cities, and those involving smaller cities, towns and villages (particularly those with less than 10,000 population), taking into consideration geographical conditions (MIC, 2009).

[8] Moreover, around one-third of the current elected governors are former bureaucrats (Niikawa, T., 2014, January 30, personal interview, Kyoto, Japan).

[9] The whole process takes an average of 538 days or 1.5 years. Merger can be achieved in as fast as 46 days or as slow as 1,352 days or almost 4 years (Nakazawa & Miyashita, 2013a).

[10] In 2006, despite the stronghold of LDP to 48% of prefectural assemblies, around 26% are independent; while in local assemblies, 76% are independent, and only around 5% are affiliated with LDP (Ohsugi, 2008).

[11] Local Autonomy Law Article 3, Notification of the Administrative Vice-Minister of Home Affairs (1970), and the Manual for Managing Legal Councils for Municipal Mergers (2006) (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism, 2009).

[12] The case description draws from documents and municipal records culled and translated from websites (http://www.city.kawaguchi.lg.jp/, http://uub.jp/) and from interviews with key informants.

[13] Professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, and former Deputy Director of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

[14] Among 41 voting members, 22 voted for Bunan, while 19 voted for Kawaguchi.

[15] These included merger method, date, name, office location, and handling of properties, tenure and staffing, taxation, city ordinances and regulations, public organizations, subsidies and grants, town character, various office-related matters on 30 different areas, business affair and merger plan, among others.

[16] Kawaguchi-shi Hatogaya-shi nin'i gappei kyogi-kai kaigi un'ei kitei (Kawaguchi City-Hatogaya City Merger City Council Meeting Management Regulation).

Acknowledgments

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Reflections from Scholars and Practitioners

Hope: Dealing with Wicked Problems of Government

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This essay explores the possibility of hope in dealing with difficult problems and failures of government through critical analysis and reforms of public planning and policy decisionmaking. It examines the assessments made by different authors of the failures of scientific planning and of the social sciences in informing planning and policy, and their proposals for improving the concepts and methods for social, historical, and policy research. The first section introduces the basic ideas about wicked problems thought inherent in government and life and about hope as a realistic view of goals that are difficult but not impossible to reach. The succeeding sections deal with: (a) alternative modes of planning and decisionmaking; (b) accounts of the persistence and failings of grandiose schemes of "high-modernist" statecraft and prescriptions to make planning more responsive to the complexity of unplanned development; (c) efforts to explain the failures of social science as due to its mistaken emulation of the hard sciences and to re-orient it also toward prudential or practical wisdom; (d) long histories of why the West came to dominate the world, the choices made by some societies that led to their demise or success in overcoming crises and ideas about how to improve history as a science; (e) unconventional innovations advocated in economic development planning and information systems design; and (f) my own concept of a middle-range bridge between competing reform proposals, as suggested by the notions of policy versus basic research and framework for understanding institutional diversity at sub-system or local levels of governance. Given the foregoing premises, we can hope to deal effectively with wicked problems of government.

Can we find hope in desperate situations? Possibly, we can, even in the dire straits in which governments and societies often find themselves. This essay is about this possibility, as gleaned from the relevant literature.

In the past few years, I have been writing about the problems and failures of government—the kind that do not seem to have any lasting solutions—hence, called "wicked problems" by planners and social scientists (Ocampo, 2010). My point was simply that governance is no picnic. But even new students of public administration may not need to be told that. Mass media is full of stories about

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how our government is among the most corrupt, though it has been delisted from a recent league table. It has hardly made a dent on poverty, and our leaders have aggravated inequality by nurturing political dynasties and turning a blind eye on the concentration of wealth in a small minority. Now, we are faced with even worse situations—the tolls taken by climate change on one hand and, on the other, the threat of a big, hostile neighbor claiming a part of our territory.

Yet through all the hardships due to natural and man-made disasters, our people continue to hope for a better life, an aspiration stoked by a new leadership confronting at least the overt problems of corruption. And as I scan the experiences and ideas of people abroad, I would like to offer a more balanced view with accounts about how some authors propose to deal with difficulties of governance, particularly through public planning and administration.

Knowledgeable writers have shown that the problems and failures of governments and societies have been far worse than people might expect. Various kinds abound—market failures that leave basic economic and social needs for governments or other institutions to meet, government failures at different levels, including total state failures that allow banditry and piracy to proliferate. Often the solutions themselves become problems, at least for other segments of society, such as technology, infrastructure, and system failures of the most costly consequences. Technical fixes can combine and cumulate to become threats to human existence, the classic examples being nuclear power, the motor car, other sources of pollution, global warming, and climate change.

Can there be hope in these circumstances? Some sociologists think that failure is inherent in government because of its fundamental "incompleteness," just as life is prone to error due to a basic inadequacy in its provisions. But this is taken philosophically as the reason for life being a problem-solving process.

Hope itself is not just wishful thinking. As the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas said, hope is aimed at a goal that is difficult but not impossible to achieve (Holmes, 2003). If it were easy, hope would be unnecessary, but pointless if impossible to attain. Hope must be based on a realistic view of what is possible, backed by active, determined effort rather than passive waiting, and accompanied by other virtues such as charity (love) and wisdom (Fromm, 1968). While utopian socialists, reformers, revolutionaries, and nationalists have demonstrated the practical possibilities of realizing their ideals, psychologists, philosophers, and social scientists have continued to reflect and act on the promise of hope for humankind.

Planning: Promises and Pitfalls

What makes people think that they can hope to realize their dreams? Aside from religious faith, superstition, and other traditional belief systems to which many people still subscribe, the more modern-minded are likely to point to the virtues of planning based on science and technology. As simply the exercise of foresight in charting a future course of action, planning is generally accepted as a rational process for getting to an individual or community's concept of a good government and a better life. The more comprehensive it is, more fully informed with scientific research, and more systematic in its implementation, the better planning is. This sort of planning has doubtless contributed to great enterprises of state-building, business empires, and economic and socio-cultural development.

However, comprehensive planning has not always been successful and unchallenged. Some critics argue that the great cities today developed in spite of, not because of, the grandiose plans prepared for them. The breakup of the Soviet Union is taken by its critics as proof of the failure of central planning. Alternatives to rationalistic, "synoptic" methods of decisionmaking have thus been proposed. One is a piecemeal approach taking public problems one at a time and at a more manageable scale, so that plans could be better focused, be supported by more current and complete data and simpler organization, and implemented at lower cost. This "incrementalist" alternative, however, has been called into question for being conservative, particularly in places where the problems are bigger and more basic, the setting is unstable, and strong forces outside the plan can overwhelm it. A third option offered has been a "mixed scanning" process that is likened to using two satellite lenses: wide for collecting and processing strategic information, and zooming down for tactical data (Etzioni, 1986, p. 8). Otherwise, it is like using a helicopter to fly high in order to comprehend the whole "forest" and lower to take a closer look at the "trees" of particular interest.

Scientific Planning vs. *Metis*

Meanwhile, more recent accounts show that comprehensive planning dies hard and has produced grand schemes for reform and innovation in various countries in the West and East. Its influence has been due to the basis it claims in modern science and technology, whose methods have resulted in revolutionary progress in agriculture, industry, urbanization, and economic growth during the last two or three centuries. According to political scientist James C. Scott (1998), scientific planning has been a characteristic thrust of "high-modernist" statecraft, which produced the monocropped forestry in Germany; big city plans in France, Brazil and India; rural villagization in Tanzania; and Lenin's ideas for the 1917 Russian Revolution and farm collectivization in the Soviet Union.

The tendency of the high-modernist state, according to Scott (1998), was to simplify and standardize what was complex in nature, such as the diverse way unplanned forests and human communities grow from below. The goal was to make them more "legible" and therefore easier to penetrate and govern—and also to be more productive. A single crop that replaces a virgin forest of various species is so much easier to plant, manage, and harvest. Likewise, straight streets, uniformly designed buildings, and segregated land uses are far easier to supervise and regulate than a jumble of urban pathways and mixed communities. Aside from being more productive, the scientific plan's conceptual and technical schemes can be abstracted, communicated, and taught elsewhere.

The same thrust, though, also proved to be the weakness of scientific planning. Monocropped forestry increased timber harvest and commercial and fiscal gain only in the short run. Otherwise, its productivity soon waned, it was subject to infestation, and it ended in ecological disaster. The grandiose plans that the famous French planner, Le Corbusier, prepared for Brasilia (Brazil) and Chandigarh (India) were not followed and were hardly occupied in their distant locations, with poor people settling outside the plan according to their own rights. Urban development schemes in the United States. have likewise been criticized for (among other things) breaking up neighborhoods that naturally developed an active and beneficial street life in favor of big city blocks that became empty at night.

What the high-modernist state ignores or suppresses, Scott points out, is "precisely the practical skills that underwrite any complex activity… variously called know-how…common sense, experience, a knack, or *metis*" (1998, p. 311). This ancient Greek word (*metis*) is understood as the practical skills and intelligence acquired in responding to constantly changing natural and human environments. Many activities can be learned through practice, but some require more *metis* than others, and some people learn more quickly than others. The best practitioner must have gained experience under many different conditions, in various fields such as sports, diplomacy, politics, and war.

"Rules of thumb" (as distinguished from the "hard-and-fast rules" of science), Scott continues, may be learned through practice but their application to practice may be inadequate. *Metis* is not subject to simplification into deductive principles that can be transmitted through book learning because the environments in which *metis* is exercised are so complex and nonrepeatable that formal decisionmaking procedures are impossible to apply. Local or situational knowledge, therefore, is the key here. "Knowing how and when to apply the rules of thumb in a *concrete situation* is the essence of *metis*" explains Scott (1998, p. 316). It is most useful in settings that are changeable, indeterminate, and particular (Scott, 1998, p.316).

Likening *metis* to incrementalist decisionmaking, Scott (1998) offers some rules of thumb that could make development planning less prone to disaster:

> *Take small steps*. In an experimental approach to social change, presume that we cannot know the consequences of our interventions in advance." *Favor reversibility*. Prefer interventions that can easily be undone if they turn out to be mistakes... *Plan on surprises*. For example, choose plans that can accommodate unforeseen events, such as farm land that can grow several crops, or housing designed to allow changes in family structures or living styles. *Plan on human inventiveness*. Always assume that project participants will develop the experience and insight to improve the design. (p. 345)

Social Science and Phronesis

A similar approach has been prescribed by Flyvbjerg (2011), who seeks to explain social science fails and to suggest how these can better help public planning. In effect, Flyvbjerg confirms the criticism made by natural scientists that the social sciences (economics, sociology, and political science) have failed to correctly inform and guide public policy and planning. To him, this failure has been due to social scientists' efforts to emulate the natural sciences (physics, chemistry) in their methods and objectives in order to generate abstract, formal, and "context-independent" theories, laws, and general conclusions that are universally applicable and can be counted on for accurate prediction. Like Scott, Flyvbjerg thinks that this approach is wrong. Rather than inert materials, the objects of the social sciences are human subjects who can reflect, pretend, and react in ways that can confound the results of research. The social sciences must also grapple with such complications and with the diversity of local contests or settings and circumstances rather than ignore or abstract them away (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Flyvbjerg (2001), too, invokes ancient Greek ideas to point the way to practical knowledge as the appropriate goal of the social sciences. Rather than metis, however, he refers back to Aristotle's notion of *phronesis* (prudence or practical wisdom), as distinguished from *episteme* (scientific knowledge) and *techne* (technical knowledge or know-how). He advocates phronetic research in the social sciences because their aims are or should be different from those of the natural sciences.

While the latter seeks general knowledge, theories, explanations, and accurate predictions, the former aims to develop knowledge and understanding about, and ultimately applicable to, particular time and space contexts in all their complexity and unpredictability. Phronesis calls for judgments and decisions based on experience and intuitive expertise. It is commonly involved in practice, though in the West phronesis has been overshadowed by epistemic and technical knowledge.

The case study method, therefore, is highly recommended for context-dependent social inquiry, together with inductive and ethnographic "thick description" in anthropology. These methods can capture the peculiarities of time, place, and circumstance that an epistemic or technical approach would strip away in favor of the generalizable and comparable features of situations or historical developments. Illustrating his commitment to practical knowledge and its application, Flyvbjerg (2001) concludes his book by recounting his experience as a professional planner in confronting the realities of political and economic power in transforming the car-congested central business district of his town of Aalborg, Denmark. This was a frustrating experience with power defeating rational planning. But it was a mutually learning process that eventually earned Aalborg a European award after it replaced its old planning organization with one allowing more stakeholder participation.

History as Science

Other authors have supported related ideas by stressing the importance of history as a form of knowledge that can be made more scientific and can make better contributions to development policy. Jared Diamond, a physiologist and geographer, has published a Pulitzer Prize-winning account of why European and western countries overtook previous civilizations in material progress. In *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (1999), Diamond tries "to provide a short history of everybody for the last 13,000 years" and argues that "history followed different courses for different peoples because of differences among peoples' environments, not because of biological differences among people themselves" (1999, p. 33). Diamond also notes that since the end of the last Ice Age, some sections of the world "developed literate industrial societies with metal tools, other parts developed only nonliterate farming societies, and still others retained societies of hunter-gatherers with stone tools. Those historical inequalities have cast long shadows on the modern world, because the literate societies with metal tools have conquered or exterminated the other societies" (1999, p.25).

Being an effort to explain how those differences arose, Diamond places emphasis "on the search for ultimate explanations, and on pushing back the chain of historical causation as far as possible" (1999, p.12). Generally, geography or environment is his independent variable (cause) and history or its patterns his dependent variable (effect). However, as shown in its theoretical scheme, the book stretches its causal chain into proximate as well as ultimate factors, where geographic location and resources are ultimately determinative, but with intermediate factors like writing, technology, political organization, and epidemic diseases influencing historical patterns. The author recounts and illustrates the proximate developments in illuminating detail while keeping the influence (or non-influence) of the ultimate factors in view.

In the process, Diamond discloses some unexpected facts that conventional stories tend to overlook. For example, contrary to "heroic theories" of modern technology in which individual inventors like Edison are supposed to have originated their inventions, he shows by several examples that in fact these had had precedents (Diamond, 1999, p.244). Moreover, they were not immediately widely accepted nor did they soon serve their intended purposes; they were not always developed to answer needs, and indeed, where once necessity motivated invention, technology evolved so that invention became "necessity's mother" (Diamond, 1999, p.239).

Guns, Germs, and Steel also carefully describes how and why communities evolved from small bands to chieftains, states, and empires. Regarding the growth of smaller units into more complex societies and centralized states, the author weighs and finds wanting the older theories of state formation. Instead, Diamond traces this process back to the shift of mankind from hunting and food-gathering to sedentary food production, the growth of population in size, density, and social specialization that food surpluses allowed, and the resulting technological superiority that enabled the larger, better organized societies to subjugate weaker ones. He also analyzes the more specific problems that emerged and necessitated organizational centralization. At this point, however, the book briefly mentions how centralization offers opportunities for states to become "kleptocracies" or robber states, thus restating the wicked problem of corruption but going no further with this topic (Diamond, 1999).

Elsewhere in *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, though, Diamond allows for variations in patterns of history even within the same communities, times, and places. He concludes by recommending that history be conceived of as a scientific enterprise like other "historical sciences whose place in science is secure — astronomy, climatology, evolutionary biology, geology, and paleontology" (1999, p. 32). Although the popular image of science is based on physics and other non-historical sciences, he claims that history is as much a science when viewed simply as knowledge that may be obtained by "whatever methods are most appropriate to the particular field" (Diamond, 1999, p. 421). Admittedly, the historical sciences share problems that distinguish them from physics, chemistry, or molecular biology, but these are not insoluble. For instance, while in physics or chemistry, the concepts of "ultimate cause," "purpose," and "function" are meaningless, they are essential for understanding living systems (Diamond, 1999, p. 32). The historical sciences must deal with the complications produced by numerous independent and interacting variables. They can depend only on statistical trends based on large-scale, long-term data sets, not on the deterministic laws and uniform units of analysis that the hard sciences can rely on. The historians' results do not amount to predictability, but they do make predictions, if only "about what future discoveries of data will show us about past events" (Diamond, 1999, p. 422). As to methodology, controlled experiments can play little or no role in the historical sciences, so that they must turn to other

means of obtaining empirical evidence, such as observation, comparison, and "natural experiments" (Diamond, 1999, p. 55).

The comparative method and natural experiments are the ones most strongly recommended by Diamond. Social and biological systems differing in the presence or absence of some causative factor may be compared as they actually exist or evolve in history, not in a laboratory environment. Though vulnerable to some criticisms, comparative natural experiments have been successfully utilized in epidemiology, ecology, and evolutionary biology (Diamond's fields of interest). Thus, Diamond is "optimistic that historical studies of human societies can be pursued as scientifically as studies of dinosaurs." (Diamond, 1999, p. 425)

Failures, Successes, and Hope

In his next book, *Collapse*: *How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (2005), Diamond illustrates his application of the methodology he recommends. Here, he recounts how, over different times and places, certain societies (the Easter Islanders, the Mayans, and the Greenland Norse) failed to survive, while others (the Tikopia Islanders, New Guinea highlanders, and Tokugawa shogunate in Japan) lived for centuries through potentially fatal crises in their respective environments. His explanations of failure or success are at some point circumstantial, such as the presence of a hostile or friendly neighbor. But as the subtitle of *Collapse* indicates, they are crucially the result of human choices or decisions. In summary, he states that "human societies and smaller groups may make disastrous decisions for a whole sequence of reasons: failure to anticipate a problem, failure to perceive it once it has arisen, failure to solve it after it has been perceived, and failure to succeed in attempts to solve it" (Diamond, 2005, p. 438).

Diamond hastens to add, however, that "societies don't regularly fail to solve their problems. If that were true, all of us would now be dead or else living again under the Stone Age conditions of 13,000 years ago" (2005, p. 438). He attributes success mostly to favorable environmental conditions, but adds that these are "only half of the story" and the other half partly "depends on idiosyncrasies of particular individuals and will defy prediction" (Diamond, 2005, p. 239). Elsewhere, he also mentions cultural peculiarities, relative isolation, and political unity as factors of failure or success. Courageous leaders and people are another big success factor—for example, the decision of the Tikopeans to get rid of their pigs, a high-status food source, when they threatened to eat away the island's vegetation. Another example is President John F. Kennedy's switch away from "groupthink" toward more freely participatory cabinet decisionmaking, in order to face up to the Soviet Union in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Such examples, Diamond says, "give me hope ... that this book on a seemingly pessimistic subject is really an optimistic book" (Diamond, 2005, p. 440).

Indeed, in conclusion, Diamond (2005) states his hopes that, while the world's problems are real and must be taken seriously, they can be solved. One reason is that the problems are of our own making and are within our control. We just need political will to solve them, not new technologies—although these could help. Another reason for hope is "the increasing diffusion of environmental thinking among the public around the world" (Diamond, 2005, p. 522). A final reason is the world's increased interconnectedness through advances in scientific knowledge and communication technologies. These give us the greater opportunities to learn from the errors or wisdom of other societies located elsewhere in time and place.

To Diamond's observations and suggestions, we may add those about how history matters to development policy articulated by Woolcock, Szreter, and Lao (2010). Among the significant points raised by the authors is that history, like development itself, is more like a flowing and swirling river with eddies and back currents, rather than a linear path that is determinative of the present (as suggested by the economist's concept of "path dependency"). According to Woolcock et al. (2010), historical study can uncover unexpected long-term shifts in development and overlooked sources of change, such as people's changing tastes, ideologies, and beliefs. Woolcock et al. (2010) further state that history is a never-ending process, and the impact of policy reforms may take much longer to be felt than ordinarily expected (25-50 years rather than 5 -10). Mindful of the unique contexts and processes that occurred before, historians may thus view the past as a foreign country where they do things differently. For such reasons, the study of history requires careful collection, weighing, and verification of evidence from various sources, and professional historians may have different knowledge objectives from those of amateurs.

Unconventional Approaches

A development economist who formed and advocated unconventional ideas was Albert Hirschman. Interestingly, he conceived of a philosophy of "possibilism" to overcome perplexing problems of economic policy and administration (Lepenies, 2008). This idea was his reaction to what he called *fracasomania*, referring to the persistent belief among Latin American leaders that the policies of previous regimes always totally fail (*fracaso*) and so must be totally replaced. In opposition to the popular idea of balanced development, one of his advocacies is for an "unbalancing" development strategy that gives priority to a few leading economic sectors that are expected to induce backward and forward linkages to other sectors. Another is the notion of a blessing (or curse) in disguise, illustrated by the observation that some countries with scarce natural resources (e.g., Japan and Israel) have successfully exerted development efforts to overcome their constraints, while some of those blessed with abundant resources have stagnated without the stimulus of scarcity. Development latecomers and now small island-

nations (Baldocchino, 2006) claim to have similar disguised advantages, though some might complain that theirs have been too well disguised so far.

Inverted sequences of development is another of Hirschman's ideas, challenging the one-way nature of most theoretical approaches to planning and policy. For example, democratic attitudes might develop once the institutions of democracy are in place, not vice versa as critics of elections often argue. Decentralization programs are consistent with this idea, but more so is the autonomous emergence of new institutions or technologies from below, rather than from the top. This has been observed in the emergence of "inverse infrastructures" (Egyedi, Mehos, & Vree, 2009, p. 1). Due to new ICTs, for example, reversals have taken place in the world of music, where consumers can freely download songs from the cloud, and singers now rely more on performances than on records to earn more money (records may be used to promote performances rather than vice versa) (Wikstrom, 2009). More revolutionary reversals have been observed in politics in different countries, as exemplified today by the so-called Arab Spring.

Unconventional ideas may also be found in the field of information systems (IS). A prominent professor here is Claudio Ciborra, whose book *The Labyrinths of Information* (2002) challenges the wisdom of systems and the very idea of method. He also complains about the premises of IS in epistemic science, rationality, and method. Despite the claims of system designers and corporate planners that they do their job in a formal, logical, and scientific manner, he argues that they, in fact, engage in the messy life-world of informal practices and practitioners. *Bricolage* (tinkering and resource-leveraging), hacking, and improvisation are common practices in IS planning and implementation. In some respects, the internet is a product of such processes, including hacking when it was still used and accepted as a positive activity.

A Middle-Range Bridge

Suffice it to say that the foregoing sections have presented exciting innovations worthy of further exploration. However, at this juncture, something should be said still for comprehensive and rational planning and decisionmaking. Despite the critiques of its high-modernist tendencies, the state still needs to engage in some reasonable measure of simplification and standardization in order to facilitate governance, communication, and learning, though with ample respect for the diversity of human culture and natural resources. A middle-range bridge between the contending ideas may be conceived with a view to reconcile them. Something like this was suggested before by the concept of applied or policy research advanced by the sociologist James Coleman, who propounded an interesting set of distinctions with basic or academic research (Coleman, 1972).

According to Coleman (1972), basic research aims to produce theory and general knowledge, so that it is conclusion-oriented and need not prescribe anything more than further research. For its part, policy research aims to produce prescriptions, so that it usually ends with policy recommendations for action in the concrete world. Basic research problems are defined usually by the academe, while policy problems may come from government and other sources and may be defined in different ways. Policy research distinguishes between policy variables (subject to control) and non-policy variables, because policymakers and administrators would want to manipulate the former in order to achieve policy objectives. Basic research has no obligation to make such a distinction. Basic researchers may rely on sample survey data as evidence for their conclusions, while policy researchers must put a premium on accuracy and therefore rely on census data and repetitive studies. Unlike the former who may be satisfied with approximations, the latter must precisely hit the target on the head and, in principle, must leave no child or garbage behind. Finally, Coleman (1972) adds that the basic or academic researcher may complete his study at his leisure and, if delayed, face only the usual risk of publish or perish. The policy researcher has a deadline to beat, or else the sponsor will not pay him, and in view of the sensitive issues that may be involved and of sponsor restrictions on the publication of research results, the risk for the policy researcher may be "publish and perish."

Coleman's distinctions may or may no longer hold in practice. For one thing, academic research has been increasingly of the mission-oriented kind funded by government. The risks just mentioned, though, hint at the political realities that may hinder the influence of policy-oriented researchers of any variety. A general practical advice to deal with this problem is to realize that getting the research results to the policymaker entails a "long march" through the institutions. More specifically, as another Coleman (1991) tells us, decisionmakers in government are often busy people who may rely on the mass media to help determine their policy priorities. Thus, aside from presenting an executive summary, the researcher may well try to get a shorter version of his or her long report published in a newspaper, hoping that the decisionmaker concerned may read it and dig out the longer version the researcher submitted but which was buried under piles of official papers.

While research as well as science had a limited direct influence on policy, Flyvbjerg (2001) suggests that it may have a long-term "enlightenment" or educative impact on policymakers who, after persistent presentations, a researcher may accept some inconvenient truths that they had rejected before. But experience with the theories of evolution and climate change suggest that this may not happen. There is also the observation drawn from decades of replicative studies that short-term policy or project failures may eventually turn out to be successes, provided something is done to turn them around (Sabatier, 1988). This is consistent with the view earlier cited that policy impacts take decades or longer to show up than the short terms of elected officials. Levy

(2001), meanwhile, seriously entertains the possibility that while comprehensive system level schemes may be inclined to fail, the story may turn out to be better at sub-system or local levels. Here, "islands of effectiveness" may thrive even in "difficult governance settings" (Levy, 2011, p. 2).

This optimism has been inspired by the work of a prominent political scientist, Elinor Ostrom, who pursued her prescriptions for analyzing various forms of local governance more thoroughly than most, as shown in her book *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (2005). Here, she and colleagues, developed an Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework for studying local organization and management in a great variety of forestry, fishery, and other common resource areas where it is both very hard to exclude potential beneficiaries and the products involved are subject to high rates of subtraction and overuse. These products she called "common pool goods" as distinguished from public goods which are also non-excludable but subtractable (p. 23). After formulating and explaining the theory, model, grammar, rules, and other tools needed to guide comparative studies and analyses by her and others, she came up with design principles from studies of long-enduring institutions for governing sustainable resources. These principles, she reports, have been successfully tried and tested by her peers.

Conclusion

In the preceding sections, we have examined the possibilities of dealing with difficult problems of government particularly through different modes of planning and decisionmaking. Though some issues may persist, we may share the hope expressed, particularly by Jared Diamond, that the difficult problems that mankind has faced are soluble and that alternative approaches are available for addressing the scientific, technical, and institutional issues of the social sciences, planning, and public administration.

To be sure, the diagnoses and prescriptions may differ, diverge, and compete with the ideas of James Scott and Bent Flyvbjerg tending toward departure from the scientific basis of comprehensive planning and policy, compared to the recommendations of Jared Diamond and others to improve the scientific status of history and its policy contributions even while its basic differences with the "hard sciences" are kept in view.

For my part, I have suggested that such competing views may be reconciled by a middle range bridge to meet the continuing need of states for governability while respecting the claims of local contexts, diversity, and complexity. In this connection, I cited James Coleman's policy research concepts as suggesting such a bridge between contending perspectives, and Elinor Ostrom's IAD framework as an example of a comprehensive, systematic, and thorough effort to deal with the vexing challenges of institutional diversity at local levels.

In conclusion and in line with Albert Hirschman's possibilist philosophy, we can hope to overcome even the wicked problems of government and society, though with guarded optimism.

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