

Gender Mainstreaming in Local Governance: Focus on the Cities in Northern Mindanao (2004-2010)

HILTON J. AGUJA
DARWIN J. MANUBAG
ELAINE M. BAULETE

Abstract

The integration of gender and development (GAD) issues in the Philippine legislative agenda was given impetus by official pronouncements both international and domestic. It is enshrined in the United Nation's Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Consequently, Philippine legislations, budgetary guidelines, and programs were crafted to concretize these GAD policy thrusts.

With the passage of the Philippine Local Government Code (LGC) in 1991, local government units (LGUs) were placed at the forefront of mainstreaming GAD policy in the local development agenda.

HILTON JOYO AGUJA is a faculty member of the Political Science Department, College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) and was formerly the Head of the Center for Local Governance Studies (CLGS), Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension, MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology. He obtained his Master of Arts in International Politics from the International University of Japan and his Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy in International Political Economy from the University of Tsukuba, Japan. He likewise completed an Advanced Course in Human Rights at the Mahidol University in Thailand in cooperation with the Lund University in Sweden. Also, he completed another Advanced Course in International Humanitarian Law from the Geneva Academy of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in Geneva, Switzerland. Currently, he is the Director of the National Service Training Program (NSTP) at MSU-IIT. MANUBAG and BAULETE are faculty members of the Department of Political Science, College of Arts and Social Sciences. Manubag is finishing his Ph.D. in Political Science at the Monash University in Australia. Baulete finished a Master of Arts in Public Administration from the Mindanao State University Main Campus in 2007.

While the national government has already provided the legal mandate for the mainstreaming of GAD concerns in local governance, it remains a problem area. Indeed, having a policy is one thing; its implementation another.

Aiming to bridge implementation gaps through empirically based advocacy work, this study evaluates gender mainstreaming in the eight (8) cities in Northern Mindanao. The evaluation is anchored on primary data on budgetary allocations and local legislations which are content analyzed as to their gender specificity. The data is validated through Key Informant Interviews (KII), Executive Surveys, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) among the local chief executives, city councilors and department heads as research respondents.

The research findings reveal that policy implementation is indeed a problem area that can derail the good intentions of a pronounced policy.

Keywords: Gender, Gender and Development, Gender Mainstreaming, Legislative Agenda, Policy, Policy Implementation.

Introduction

This study focuses on the experiences of the eight (8) cities in Northern Mindanao in mainstreaming Gender and Development (GAD) concerns in local governance. The inclusion of gender issues in the local legislative agenda was prompted by various official pronouncements both international and domestic. Internationally, women's concerns were enshrined in the United Nations' pronouncements embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) among many others. Domestically, a tacit recognition of the role of women in nation building and the fundamental equality before the law of women and men is officially inscribed in the Philippine Constitution (Art. II: section 14). Various other local legislations, budgetary guidelines, and programs were crafted to concretize the Gender and Development (GAD) policy thrusts in the Philippine setting. Amidst such policy environment, the Local Government Code of 1991 assumes a double significance as it devolved powers to the local government units (LGUs) putting them at the forefront of mainstreaming GAD in the local development agenda.

The Philippines has comparatively performed well in providing the overall policy environment favorable to women's issues. It is not found wanting in

providing the legal backing for the mainstreaming of gender concerns in local governance. However, having policies do not automatically translate the mandate into reality. Gaps exist as always. The LGU's compliance or lack thereof is the issue area that this research looks into.

Since "gender concerns" as a conceptual tool may mean different things to different people, this study is also designed to shed light on the concept by providing a clear definitional anchor grounded on a comprehensive analysis of the various national and local policy pronouncements on the matter. Thus, it provides the necessary parameters, on the basis of which gender mainstreaming in the LGUs may be evaluated.

This research is designed to benefit the local functionaries of the LGUs, the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), People's Organizations (POs) and women advocates by equipping them with the necessary research backing for whatever policy advocacy they may put forward as a legislative agenda.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive picture of the overall policy environment impinging on GAD and to pinpoint the gaps between policy pronouncements and policy implementation. The aim is to bridge implementation gaps through policy intervention via an empirically based advocacy work. The institutionalization of gender concerns in the local development agenda is the desired intended effect. The specific objectives are: to provide a comprehensive picture of the overall policy environment on Gender and Development (GAD); to identify gaps between GAD policy pronouncements and its implementation; to provide a research footing for GAD advocacy work; to ascertain the behavioral predispositions of local officials on gender issues and women-specific programs.

Research Significance

That society is male dominated is a given. In the context of male dominance, women's concerns are relegated to the background. Efforts to redress this imbalance, albeit slowly, have already gained significant headway. Policy pronouncements from international organizations like the United Nations have given it cognizance. Likewise, the Philippine Constitution provides in its Declaration of Principles (Art. II, section 14) that: "the state recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men." This Constitutional provision provided the impetus for

domestic laws and programs on gender concerns. Thus, the crafting of the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW 1989-1992); Women in Development and Nation Building Act (RA7192); and the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (1995-2025) among many others were realized. Perhaps, more significantly, the Local Government Code of 1991 has also devolved so much power to the LGUs with a proviso to guaranteeing women's representation in local government administration.

That policies do exist to cater to women's concerns is one thing. Their implementation is another. To ascertain whether the pronounced policies of the government are translated into reality is the main focus from which this study derives its significance. The gaps between the policy statement and policy enforcement is thus to be identified for possible bridging through policy intervention and advocacy work to craft a gender sensitive local development agenda.

Review of Literature

Gender mainstreaming refers to the inclusion of gender concerns in all government plans and programs with the attendant budgetary allocations to carry it out. The necessity to integrate gender concerns in the local development agenda is spawned by efforts to redress existing biases against women-specific concerns. Societies have hitherto been male dominated. Consequently, androcentric biases and the subsequent lack of attention to women's rights have formed the central core of the feminist critique of human rights discourse (Brems, 1997).

Gender is used as a label for the system of expectations held by societies with respect to feminine and masculine roles (Lips, 2001). Even though there is a vast cultural variation all over the world, there remains a belief rooted in their nature that men and women have different propensities and capabilities (Merger, 2002).

Cultural norms still dictate that women should be good wives and mothers. The family remains generally patriarchal and many cultural practices continue to reflect male dominance. Wifeness and motherhood still remain the most significant women's profession as women's opportunity for employment has been limited by their socially assigned responsibilities for childcare and domestic labor (Gatlin, 1987).

Gender roles change with the changes in the social environment. Women's movement for emancipation dates back to the 1800's but has only gained significant headway in the 1970's. Unshackling the age-old hold of traditions, women began asking for the right to participate equally with men in practically all endeavors. Women have penetrated even Military Academies

which hitherto had been the domain of masculine bravado. In the Philippines, the country's premiere military academy has, on several occasions, witnessed women finishing on top of their class. The message is clear: women can be at par, if not outdo men, even in the traditional male occupation of soldiery. Further, the Philippines have already witnessed two female commanders-in-chief in the Philippine Armed Forces. Yet, despite these gains, the centuries old view of women as second-class citizens remain difficult to extricate from the psychological make-up of women themselves (Babaye, 2005).

Responding to the clamor of women for equality, various International Conventions, national legislations and local ordinances were crafted to open avenues for women's full participation in the body politic. With specific significance, on February 12, 1992, the Congress of the Philippines enacted Republic Act 7192 entitled aptly as "An Act Promoting the Integration of Women as Full and Equal Partners of Men in Development and Nation Building and Other Purposes."

Despite the existence in the Philippines of a favorable policy environment for women's participation and the incorporation of gender concerns in local governance, the actual track record is wanting. The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) notes that the policy pronouncements on GAD are generally being ignored or implemented in a half-hearted way. Even at the national level, only 133 of 334 agencies complied with the 5% GAD budget directive. Overall, the NCRFW reports that the allocation for the GAD budget stands at an average of 0.5% of the total General Appropriations for each year of implementation (Budlender & Buenaobra, 2001).

In a related earlier study in 1998, Melissa Toby Monsod concludes that "it is apparent that the more basic confusion persists, namely, taking the budget out of context and treating the GAD budgeting exercise as a process independent from GAD planning, or worse, as a substitute for it". The confusion due to lack of information is illustrated by the fact that out of the more than 300 women local officials attending the GAD conference sponsored by the organization Women in Nation Building, only one in five had heard about the local GAD policy. The rest were ignorant of the policy, and were very glad to learn this possible source of funds (Caharian et al., 2001)

In crafting gender budgets, Diane Elson (1999) suggests a framework to enhance gender budgeting. She stresses the need to focus on unpaid labor and the reproductive sphere or care economy. She argues that mainstream economic policy does not take into account the domestic (or reproductive) and voluntary community work, which together constitutes the unpaid care economy because they are not generally considered economic activities but "social roles". The Philippines, she argues, must investigate the relationship between the large

unpaid care economy and the budget, particularly considering the huge budget deficit, which transfers the burden for social services onto women's shoulders.

In the city of Angeles, what was purportedly a GAD budget allocation had been utilized in non-GAD related expenditures. For instance, the salaries of community workers that would be allocated even without the GAD mandatory budget was charged to it rather than forming part of the regular city budget. There were budgetary items in the GAD allocation which clearly lacked gender focus. It thus appears that the GAD budget is being utilized to cover programs or activities that should have been charged to the regular government funds. Further, it was observed that when the city government undertakes women specific development projects, the initiatives smack of tokenism (Torres et al., 2001).

In a parallel study conducted in the city of Bacolod, the researchers uncovered the unfortunate fact that gender concerns have been embroiled in partisan politics. The party in power perceives the leadership in gender advocacy in the city as belonging to the opposition, thus the difficulty in getting it done (Lizares-Si et al., 2001). Moreover, it was found out that advocates failed to prepare GAD plans for incorporation in the city's development plan. There was therefore no GAD plan upon which a GAD budget can be based.

In the case of Surallah in South Cotabato, while women participate in the Barangay development planning, their participation in the entire planning process has been without gender consciousness (Victa-Labajo & Galang-Eturma, 2001). Consequently, the relatively low spending on women's concerns in Surallah, had been largely due to the absence of a workable plan to address women's development needs as perceived by the women themselves. This is reflective of the fact borne out by a corollary survey of the same study that "69 % of respondents were not aware of the existence of the GAD policy and of any attempt on the part of the government agencies to inform them of it".

This narrative on some literatures on women's concern in local governance has brought home the point that there is still a long way to go insofar as mainstreaming gender in the body politic is concerned. While policies for gender mainstreaming are already in place, many LGUs are not implementing them. For those few who tried to have it implemented, the implementation is severely wanting and out of focus. Worse, GAD concerns are derailed to serve other ends which are not contemplated by the policies themselves. The current state of GAD affairs thus warrants a closer look and for which this study has been designed to do.

Research Methodology

The research design is basically descriptive. It employs a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying and tabulating data and looks at the conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs and processes that are going on, effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing. The description is combined with comparison and contrast involving measurements, classification, interpretation and evaluation (Sanches, 1980).

Primary and secondary data were analyzed to depict an overall picture of the phenomenon under study. Primary data were gathered and validated through Key Informant Interviews (KII), Executive Surveys, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The respondents were the local chief executives, members of the city legislative councils and the department heads whose position and authority in local governance give them key roles in the crafting and execution of nationally mandated GAD policies. Also, focused group discussions were conducted among women advocates from the LGUs, NGOs and POs who are known and are visibly active in advancing the interest of the women in their respective areas of operation.

Further, a content analysis was made with an eye on women-specific thrusts of the local governance structures, legislations, resolutions, programs and projects to ascertain the gender responsiveness of the LGUs. Consequently, using a standardized scoring system with equivalent adjectival ratings, the cities were evaluated, ranked and compared. Towards this end, the respondents self evaluation, on a scale of 1 to 10, of the performance level of their local government with respect to GAD policy concerns is given the following adjectival ratings:

1	Very low
2	Low
3-4	Below Average
5-6	Average
7-8	Above average
9	High
10	Very high

Moreover, in trying to ascertain and gauge the behavioral predispositions of the respondents toward GAD policy concerns using a modified Likert Scale, the following points are assigned to the respective responses:

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Given the above point assignment, the dividing threshold for negative and positive inclinations is set at the neutral threshold of 2.5 i.e., anything below 2.5 is considered negative while above 2.5 ratings are considered positive. In dealing with the negatively phrased statements, the point assignment is simply reversed so as to get consistency in the results.

The cities covered by the study are all the cities in the Region of Northern Mindanao, namely Oroquieta, Ozamiz, Tangub, Iligan, Cagayan de Oro, Malaybalay, Valencia and Gingoog.¹

The Analytical Framework

With the devolution of significant powers and functions to local government units as enshrined in the Local Government Code of 1991, LGUs acquired a particularly significant role in actual administration. In the context of GAD, the policy itself is nationally promulgated for nationwide implementation. That policies do exist to cater to women's concerns is one thing; their implementation is quite another. There is therefore a need to ascertain whether the pronounced policies of the government are translated into reality. Consequently, the gaps if any, between policy statement and policy implementation is thus identified for possible bridging through policy intervention and advocacy work. The ultimate goal is the institutionalization of gender concerns in the local development agenda.

While the national policy on GAD is clearly in place, its implementation is very much left to the LGUs. The focus of analysis is therefore on the LGUs as they are the frontrunners in the execution of GAD policy in their respective areas of jurisdiction. Having the LGU as the focus of analysis, the schematic diagram below is adapted as the research framework for analysis.

¹ During the initial phase of the study, the city of El Salvador is included among the cities to be covered in Northern Mindanao. However, changes in the political fortune of the city warranted its exclusion. The Supreme Court has on several occasions flip-flopped on the actual status of El Salvador and many other similarly situated municipalities whose conversion into cities was questioned by the League of Cities in the Philippines (LCP).

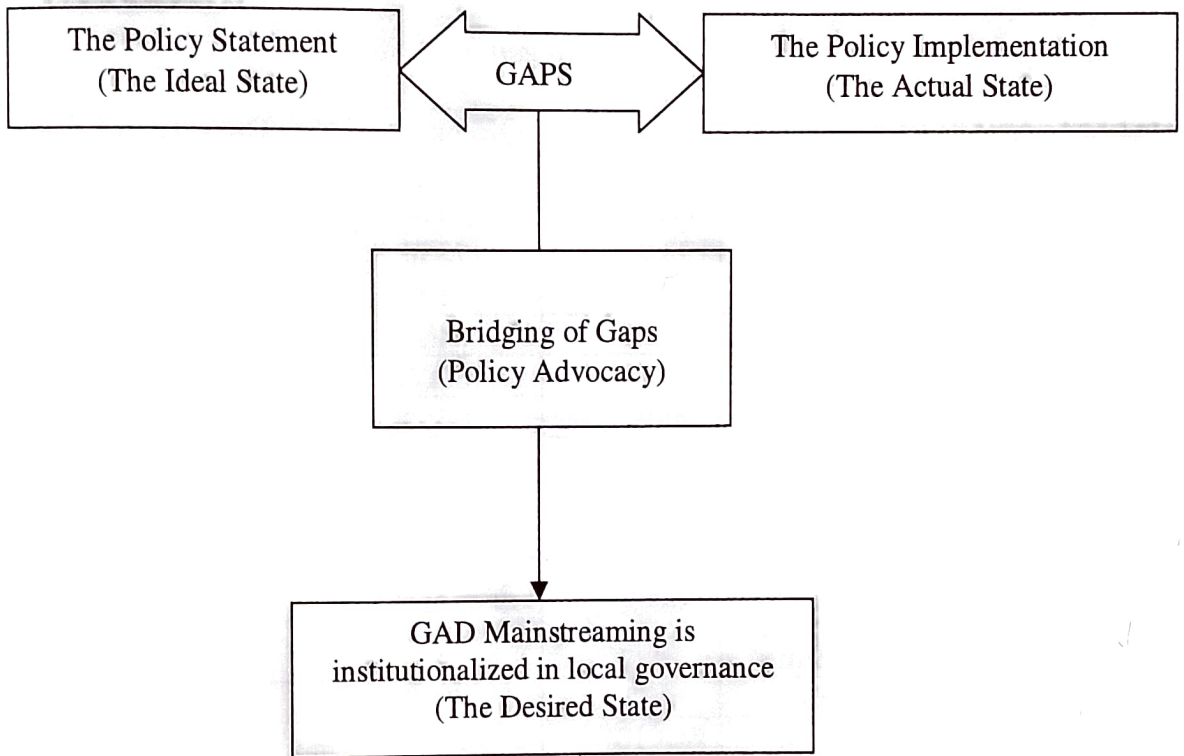


Figure 1: The Analytical Framework

Research Findings

The study evaluates gender mainstreaming in the eight (8) cities in the Northern Mindanao Region. Whether or not these cities have integrated the GAD policy mandate of the government in their respective jurisdictions is the primary focus. Also, the behavioral predispositions of the local officials towards GAD and the extent to which they have mainstreamed GAD in the local development agenda is looked into. In the main, the salient findings of the study are as follows:

Table 1. Respondents' distribution as to gender

City	Gender	Elected Officials		Department Heads	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Oroquieta City	Man	11	78.59	11	78.33
	Woman	3	21.42	4	26.67
Ozamiz City	Man	9	64.29	10	55.56
	Woman	5	35.71	8	44.44
Tangub City	Man	12	85.72	7	53.85
	Woman	2	14.28	6	46.15
Iligan City	Man	13	81.25	10	50
	Woman	3	18.75	10	50
Cagayan de Oro City	Man	17	85	7	46.7
	Woman	3	15	8	53.3
Malaybalay City	Man	11	78.6	6	46
	Woman	3	21.4	7	54
Valencia City	Man	10	71.43	8	53.33
	Woman	4	28.57	7	46.67
Gingoog City	Man	10	66.67	10	76.92
	Woman	5	33.33	3	23.08
Overall composite average	Man	11.62	76.86	8.62	56.56
	Woman	3.5	23.14	6.62	43.44

Men clearly dominate politics particularly in the elective offices. On the average, male elected officials comprise 76.86 %. In this respect, Tangub City registered the highest percentage of male elected officials comprising 85.72 % while Ozamiz City registered the lowest with 64.3 % males.

On the other hand, among the department heads, while the numbers are a bit better, men still predominate comprising 57 %. Gingoog City registered the highest percentage of male head of office comprising 76.92 % while Malaybalay City registered the lowest with 46 % males. In the exceptional cases of the city of Cagayan de Oro and Malaybalay, majority of the department heads are women.

Table 2. *Percentage distribution of respondents affirming the holding of GAD orientation, gender sensitivity trainings and the seminar on the anti-sexual harassment act in their respective cities*

City	GAD Orientation		Gender Sensitivity Training		Seminar on the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act	
	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Oroquieta City	Yes	48.27	Yes	44.83	Yes	44.83
Ozamiz City	Yes	74.07	Yes	51.85	Yes	40.74
Tangub City	Yes	45.83	Yes	12.5	Yes	16.67
Iligan City	Yes	90.91	Yes	81.82	Yes	54.55
Cagayan de Oro City	Yes	88.50	Yes	100	Yes	30.10
Malaybalay City	Yes	80	Yes	60	Yes	40
Valencia City	Yes	58.33	Yes	58.33	Yes	25.00
Gingoog City	Yes	66.67	Yes	44.44	Yes	25.93
Overall Average	Yes	69.07	Yes	56.72	Yes	34.73

Although a substantial majority (96.02 %) of the respondents heard of the GAD policy of the government, implementation of the same is another story. In this regard, majority of the respondents point out that the local government itself has conducted GAD Orientations (69.07 %) and Gender Sensitivity Trainings (GST) (56.72 %). These activities were however not regularly conducted. The most common recollection of respondents point to having these trainings 5-10 years ago. This recollection on the holding of such trainings i.e., 5-10 years ago, coincided with the time when GAD talk was hyped in the media, thus underscoring the influence of the media in highlighting issues in the decisional environment of local officials. In contrast, the holding of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Seminar as mandated by the Civil Service Commission was affirmed by only 34.73 % of all the respondents. Except for Iligan City where 54.6 % of the respondents reply that such seminar was conducted by the local government, all the other cities under study have majority of their respondents indicating otherwise.

Table 3. *Frequency and percentage of respondents affirming the regular allocation of the GAD budget in their respective cities*

City	Respondents affirming regular GAD budget allocation	
	Frequency	Percentage
Oroquieta City	11	37.93
Ozamiz City	16	59.26
Tangub City	15	62.5
Iligan City	15	45.45
Cagayan de Oro City	16	61.5
Malaybalay City	19	76
Valencia City	18	75
Gingoog City	12	44.44
Overall Average	15.25	56.74

The overall average number of respondents affirming the regular allocation of the GAD budget is 56.74 %. Moreover, the three cities of Oroquieta, Iligan and Gingoog have less than majority of the respondents indicating that the GAD budget is regularly allocated. Clearly, the nature of the responses on this issue were based on the respondents own appreciation of the budgetary allocations in their respective jurisdictions which may not at all reflect the truth on the matter. Checked against the actual financial figures on GAD budget allocation, the table that follows reflects actual budgetary allocations earmarked for gender concerns for each city respectively.

Table 4. *Actual percentage of GAD budgetary allocation as a percentage of the overall budget of the cities in Northern Mindanao (2004-2010 average)*

City	Percentage of GAD budget allocation with respect to the city overall budget (2004-2010 average)
Oroquieta City	0.07
Ozamiz City	0.10
Tangub City	0.18
Iligan City	0.15
Cagayan de Oro City	0.07
Malaybalay City	5.4
Valencia City	5
Gingoog City	15.42
Overall Average	3.29

Despite the legal mandate on the 5 % mandatory GAD budget allocation, majority of the cities under study, with the exception of the cities of Gingoog, Valencia and Malaybalay, failed miserably to comply. On the overall average, the cities under study have only allocated 3.29 %. This average figure is even skewed positively because Gingoog City has allocated on occasions 15.4 % of its budget to what it claimed as “GAD concerns”. A deeper look into this claim revealed that much of the expenditures were actually devoid of GAD focus.

The failure to comply with the minimum GAD budget requirement is compounded further when one looks at items charged against it. Many such items are devoid of gender focus. Worst still, many programs and projects claimed under GAD are not even remotely GAD related. To cite a few, these were: Dog Rabies Control Project, Honorarium for Barangay Health Workers, Insurance for Barangay Health Workers, Rural Electrification, Senior Citizens, Cooperative Development Center, Water Services/Facilities, Construction of Reinforced Concrete Dike, Anti Drug Campaign, Re-Channeling/Deepening of River Project etc. All these aforementioned “GAD programs” above could very well represent the entire gamut of expenditures of the city government apart from the salaries of the employees. The variety of programs charged against the so-called GAD budget clearly point to a serious concern with the city’s conceptualization of what GAD really is all about. Indeed, the allocation of the GAD budget is one thing but as to where it is spent on is another matter.

The under spending of the allocated GAD budget is also apparent. While in the main, the general complaint is the lack of budget allocation, some cities have not even fully utilized the meager amount appropriated. This tendency is further compounded by the fact that items actually charged to the GAD budget include items which clearly lacked gender focus.

It is significant to note that the concerns of senior citizens were treated as a part of the GAD mandate and thus charged to the GAD budget. The concerns of senior citizens are by law allocated a separate budget of one percent (1 %) and should therefore not to be charged against the GAD budget (RA 7432 and RA 7876). The same thing holds true in as far as the differently-abled citizens of the country are concerned (RA 7277 as amended by RA 9442 and Proclamation # 240). Further, as to the concerns of children, RA 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006 mandates that one percent (1 %) of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of barangays, municipalities and cities shall be allocated for Local Councils for the Protection of Children (LCPC).

Legitimate GAD projects are mainly pursued in the context of welfare enhancement instead of GAD values reorientation. Since the basis of the present discrepancy of treatment between men and women arose from the historically rooted misogynistic orientation in patriarchal societies, a counter

consciousness raising is therefore a necessary part of the effort to address this concern.

Moreover, despite the mandate by law that a GAD plan should be submitted annually to the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), no prescribed GAD plan is in place in the cities under study. Consequently, GAD related activities, however defined, appear as uncoordinated, superficial and piecemeal in character. In the absence of an actionable GAD plan, what the cities follow as a rudimentary guide in pursuit of GAD activities are very vague general policy statements labeled as "Gender and Development" projects. The lack of clear direction and focus are reflected in the varied activities claimed as being done in compliance with the GAD mandate.

Despite the lapses on the part of the LGUs to implement GAD mandates to the letter, FGD participants still note the prevailing supportive attitude of political leaders toward GAD policies across all cities.

The respondents' evaluation of the performance of their local government in mainstreaming GAD matters (on a scale of 1-10) indicate an average performance across all cities numerically represented by a rating of 6.5. Moreover, on the average, majority (68.9 %) of the respondents in their respective cities are satisfied with the local government's performance in as far as GAD is concerned. Likewise, 85.9 % of the respondents consider their respective cities to be gender sensitive. In this respect, Iligan City took an exception with only 45.5 % of respondents believing that their city is gender sensitive. In the main, majority of the respondents in their respective cities consider their local governments as gender sensitive.

Behavioral Inclinations of Respondents on GAD

The predisposition of the respondents towards GAD policy is very important as they are the prime movers and opinion makers in their respective government units. The respondents as the elected city officials and heads of the different departments in the cities are the policy makers and policy implementers. On this note, it is comforting to see the figures in the table below.

Table 5. Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents positively inclined to make the inclusion of the GAD budget as prerequisite prior to the approval of the city's overall budget.

City	Frequency and percentage of respondents positively inclined to make the GAD budget as prerequisite prior to the approval of the overall budget of their city.	
	Frequency	Percentage
Oroquieta City	28	96.55
Ozamiz City	26	96.30
Tangub City	19	79.17
Iligan City	32	96.96
Cagayan de Oro City	26	100
Malaybalay City	25	100
Valencia City	24	100
Gingoog City	26	96.30
Overall Average	25.75	95.66

A substantial majority of the respondents in their respective cities support the idea that GAD budget allocation should be made as a prerequisite prior to the approval of the city's annual budget. The overall average rating on this matter is 95.66 %. Other details and some variations from city to city are reflected in the same table above.

Table 6. Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents having positive inclination on having a woman sectoral representative in the City Council.

City	Frequency and percentage of respondents positively inclined to have a woman sectoral representative in the City Council.	
	Frequency	Percentage
Oroquieta City	26	88.96
Ozamiz City	18	66.67
Tangub City	9	37.50
Iligan City	29	87.87
Cagayan de Oro City	18	69.2
Malaybalay City	21	84
Valencia City	16	66.66
Gingoog City	21	77.78
Overall Average	19.75	72.33

With the exception of Tangub City where only 37.50 % of the respondents support the idea of having a woman sector representative to the City Council, majority of the respondents across cities are inclined to have a woman sectoral representative in the City Council. The average composite response to this effect is 72.33 %.

Given the dominance of men in the different City Councils, the provision in the Local Government Code of 1991 which requires a representative from the women sector to have a seat in the City Council could have helped redress the gender imbalance. The additional woman member to the Council could be the focal source of initiative for the concerns of women in the legislative agenda. However, this opportunity provided by law remains unrealized. While there is a reservoir of favorable inclination (except in Tangub City) towards having a woman sectoral representative in the City Council, all the cities under study do not have a woman sectoral representative in their respective City Councils yet.

As to the enactment of pertinent GAD related legislations, it is comforting to note that all the cities under study with the exception of the cities of Tangub and Oroquieta have already enacted their respective city GAD Codes. In effect, the GAD Code binds the city concerned to pursue and implement gender sensitive and gender-responsive development policies.

A perusal of the GAD Code enacted by the cities under study show a clear and comprehensive understanding of what GAD is really all about. Unfortunately, with the sole exception of Iligan City whose GAD Code has correctly earmarked the 5 % GAD budget, all other cities under study have wrongly earmarked the corresponding GAD budget. These cities simply earmarked 6 % of the Annual Development Fund as their GAD budget and/or just a fraction of the Official Development Assistance received from donor countries. What the law mandates for the GAD budget is 5 % of the entire budget of the agency, not just a percentage of any fractions thereof. The Annual Development Fund is merely 20 % of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). Consequently, pegging the 5 % GAD budget to the Annual Development Fund necessarily reduces by a significant amount the budget for GAD.

Gauging respondents behavioral predispositions toward GAD through the use of ten (10) declarative statements responded to by the subjects on a modified likert scale format, revealed a promising future for GAD. All the political leaders and department heads in the cities surveyed, though varying in intensity, displayed a positive reservoir of behavioral inclination towards GAD policy. The composite mean rating in this respect is 3.08 which is clearly above the neutral threshold set at 2.5. Thus, the various shortcomings and policy lapses concerning GAD issues may easily be rectified given the positive reservoir of attitudinal predisposition towards the GAD policy of the government.

Conclusion

Perusing and juxtaposing the findings across the cities under study, the following conclusions are warranted:

1. The political sphere as the domain of men remains intact as shown by the dominance of men in the elective positions in the local government. Even the heads of the different departments, men still have the numerical superiority. Along this line, GAD advocates should have been mindful of the Local Government Code (LGC, 1991) which specified the inclusion of women in the *Sangguniang Bayan* (the legislative body of the municipality, LGC, section 446.b); in the *Sangguniang Panlungsod* (the legislative body of the city, LGC, section 457.b); and the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (the legislative body of the province, LGC, section 467.b).

While there were elected city women councilors, they were not elected as women representatives and may not even be sympathetic to the cause of women. They may have won the elections for reasons other than being women. The opportunity provided for by law to guarantee women representation to articulate the concerns of women remains unfulfilled.

2. Across all cities under study, the overall positive predisposition of the local government officials towards GAD policy has not been translated into actual GAD policy implementation particularly with reference to the appropriation of the 5 % percent GAD budget, the drafting of a GAD plan and the election of the women sector representative in the City Council. In this regard, the government should strengthen its GAD auditing procedures. The Commission on Audit (COA) Memorandum 2009-020 on the subject: "Guidelines in the Conduct of the Audit of Gender and Development (GAD) Funds and Activities in Government Agencies", is a good initial move. This memorandum in effect constitutes a gender audit by the COA to ensure and monitor compliance by all government agencies. However, the said memorandum lacks the necessary punitive measures for non-compliance by the LGUs. This is one area where compulsion may emanate to make sure that LGUs will toe the line prescribed by the national government.
3. There is confusion as to what really constitute a legitimate GAD program and project. Also, there is a general lack of understanding of what GAD policy is. This is reflected in the varied claims of the respondents as to the things done in pursuit of GAD policy. Consequently, there is a tendency to charge against the GAD budget even those items which are devoid of GAD focus. Faced with this reality, The Philippine Commission on Women should adopt a new approach in its GAD advocacy campaigns. While it is important

to highlight what GAD is, it is also equally important to approach it by highlighting what GAD is not. This will have the effect of eliminating the tendency of the LGUs of charging against the GAD budget those which are devoid of GAD focus. Corollary to this, there should be another round of GAD orientation seminars for GAD focal persons for them to echo the same in their constituencies. Along this line, the academe, the media, NGOs, religious and other advocacy groups may be tapped to create a mutually reinforcing network of GAD advocates.

4. The most common notion of GAD policy revolves around the need to address the inequality between men and women through efforts providing for economic opportunities for women to redress the existing imbalance. The psychological underpinning of why such inequality exists in the first place is rarely addressed. Along this area, there is a need to raise a counter consciousness to the prevailing misogynistic and patriarchal tendencies in the society today. Since the success of the overall gender advocacy effort requires the changing of the mindset and values that has hitherto been internalized by the people, there is a necessity to come up with counter-consciousness and new values. Along this line, the inclusion of GAD subjects in the curriculum as early as pre-school, kindergarten and the elementary should have the desired effect. To teach GAD later in a person's life (i.e., college) will no longer be as effective because by then, the person's values and prejudices has already hardened with time. Since misogynistic tendencies mainly emanated from the teachings of the male dominated church, it would also be appropriate to work with, and tap the expertise of women Pastors and sympathetic male Pastors in the overall advocacy work for counter-consciousness raising. This is to remove the age old biases and prejudices perpetuated by patriarchal institutions against women.
5. When GAD was hyped in the media years ago, there was a corresponding agitation in the LGUs to pursue GAD policies. In this light, the media should be brought in as a significant partner in the overall GAD advocacy work. Anything hyped by the media necessarily gets the attention whether deserved or not. The media is a potent tool in coming up with a new generated mindset that treats women as full and equal partners in the development of the country. This is a must. Attention to the concerns of women remains wanting. There are too many areas yet to be improved, many roads to be traversed, honest mistakes to be rectified.

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