

Evidence Use in Ordinance Development and Legislative Service Responsiveness in Local Governance

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed how evidence use in ordinance development contributed to legislative service responsiveness in the Local Government Unit of Maddela, Quirino. Using an explanatory predictive cross-sectional design, data were obtained from 30 local government personnel directly involved in legislative preparation, documentation, committee support, coordination, implementation, and monitoring. The researcher-developed Evidence Use and Legislative Responsiveness Scale contained 32 items covering four dimensions of evidence use and four dimensions of legislative responsiveness. Composite means, standard deviations, bootstrap confidence intervals, bootstrap linear regression, and relative importance analysis were used. Evidence use was rated high overall ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.43$), with evidence integration into ordinance development obtaining the highest dimension mean ($M = 3.91$). Legislative service

responsiveness was likewise high ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.44$), led by interoffice coordination ($M = 3.90$). Documentation and traceability and implementation-related feedback emerged as the comparatively weaker areas. Evidence use significantly predicted legislative service responsiveness, $\beta = .638$, $p = .0002$, explaining 40.6% of the variance. Among the evidence-use dimensions, integration into ordinance development accounted for the largest share of explained variance at 39.2%. The findings indicated that responsive legislative service depended not only on access to evidence but also on its actual integration into policy formulation. Strengthening evidence traceability and post-enactment feedback mechanisms may further support transparent, responsive, and adaptive local governance.

Keywords: *evidence-informed policymaking; legislative responsiveness; local governance; ordinance development; policy implementation; public administration*

INTRODUCTION

Local legislation translates public concerns, administrative priorities, and community needs into rules that shape everyday governance. The quality of an ordinance therefore depends not only on compliance with legislative procedures but also on the information used to define the problem, weigh possible responses, and anticipate the effects of a proposed measure. Evidence-informed policymaking recognizes that statistics, research findings, program records, evaluations, stakeholder inputs, and other credible forms of information can strengthen public decisions when they are appropriately interpreted and applied. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development emphasizes that the effective use of evidence requires both individual competence and organizational capacity, particularly the ability to obtain, assess, communicate, and apply information in public decision-making (OECD, 2020).

Evidence, however, does not enter government decisions automatically. Policy actors work within institutional routines, political priorities, time constraints, and competing demands that influence what information

is considered and how it is used. Shaxson (2019) explains that evidence-informed policymaking depends on a set of practices that connect available knowledge with actual government decision processes. This suggests that the value of evidence in ordinance development lies not simply in having reports or data available, but in how legislative personnel identify relevant information, examine its credibility, integrate it into committee work and drafting, and use it to support legislative choices.

The importance of sound legislative work is closely tied to responsiveness. Ordinances are expected to address identifiable public needs, while legislative offices must process concerns, coordinate with departments, prepare documentation, and support implementation within reasonable periods. Philippine local governance also places considerable value on participation and the ability of decentralized institutions to respond to community concerns. Turok and Scheba (2020) observed that local democratic structures in the Philippines can strengthen citizen participation and improve the responsiveness of public services to local needs. Such responsiveness depends partly on whether local decisions are sufficiently informed by conditions experienced within the community.

The connection between policy formulation and implementation further indicates that a technically sound ordinance cannot be separated from the institutional processes that carry it forward. Bullock et al. (2021) found that policy implementation is influenced by policy formulation, feedback opportunities, coordination among actors, and the fit between a policy and the problem it is intended to address. In municipal legislative work, these considerations may be reflected in the use of supporting data, consultations, departmental inputs, committee findings, legal references, and implementation feedback during ordinance preparation.

Examining evidence use alongside legislative service responsiveness provides a practical way of understanding how local legislative work moves from information to action. The present study focuses on the Local Government Unit of Maddela, Quirino and examines how evidence is used in ordinance development and how legislative services respond to the requirements of policy preparation, documentation, committee work, coordination, and implementation support. By linking these two areas, the study seeks to generate findings that may strengthen evidence-informed legislative practice and improve the responsiveness of local governance.

Literature Review

Evidence Use in Legislative Policy Development

Evidence contributes to legislative work by helping policymakers define problems, examine alternatives, justify policy choices, and anticipate possible consequences. Its role is not limited to research findings because administrative records, technical reports, stakeholder views, and local data may also shape policy deliberation. In the Philippines, Tabuga (2017) found that evidence used in congressional debates served instrumental, conceptual, and political purposes, showing that knowledge can directly influence legislation, deepen understanding of an issue, or support an existing policy position. This distinction is important in ordinance development because the presence of information does not necessarily mean that it determines the final legislative decision. A broader review by Nelson et al. (2023) likewise noted that government use of research varies according to the type of knowledge, policy issue, institutional setting, and mechanisms connecting researchers with decision-makers.

Institutional Capacity for Evidence-Informed Decisions

The ability to use evidence depends on more than the availability of information. Public institutions require personnel who can locate, interpret, communicate, and apply evidence within established decision processes. Stewart et al. (2019) argued that stronger evidence use requires attention to individual capability, organizational systems, engagement, and the conditions surrounding policy decisions. These elements are especially relevant to legislative offices where ordinance preparation involves research, documentation, committee review, consultation, and coordination across departments. At the local government level, Homer et al. (2022) found that limited time, organizational priorities, political pressures, and weak research structures can restrict evidence use, while leadership support, partnerships, and stronger research capacity can improve its

integration into government decisions. Evidence use therefore reflects both staff competence and the institutional arrangements that enable information to become part of legislative work.

Legislative Service Responsiveness

Responsiveness reflects how effectively government personnel recognize concerns, process requests, communicate with stakeholders, and act within an appropriate period. For legislative services, this may be seen in the timely preparation of documents, coordination of committee activities, response to policy concerns, and support provided during ordinance development and implementation. Panday and Chowdhury (2020) found that the responsiveness of local government officials was associated with their capacity to inform citizens, fulfill procedural responsibilities, and organize relationships among actors involved in local decision-making. Hofstra and Edelenbos (2026) further describe public-sector responsiveness through officials' willingness to listen, the timeliness and accuracy of their actions, their capacity to address citizen demands, and their openness to participation. These dimensions suggest that legislative responsiveness combines procedural efficiency with attentiveness to the people and offices affected by local policies.

Evidence Use and Responsive Local Governance

Evidence use and responsiveness become closely connected when legislative decisions must address practical problems faced by communities and government offices. Reliable information can help legislative personnel identify urgent concerns, clarify the causes of policy problems, coordinate appropriate responses, and develop provisions that can be implemented by responsible departments. At the same time, responsive legislative systems create opportunities for information from practitioners and stakeholders to enter policy discussions. Walker and Stride (2024) emphasize the value of building local government research around the experiences and knowledge of practitioners, arguing that closer engagement with those working inside local authorities can produce research that is more relevant to actual policy needs. For ordinance development, this relationship suggests that evidence is most useful when it is accessible to legislative personnel, connected to local concerns, and incorporated into processes that allow government actors to respond effectively.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed an explanatory predictive cross-sectional design. Data were collected at a single period to determine the extent of evidence use in ordinance development, assess legislative service responsiveness, and examine whether evidence use significantly predicted responsiveness. The design was appropriate because it allowed the two constructs to be examined as connected aspects of municipal legislative work without suggesting experimental causation.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Local Government Unit of Maddela, Quirino. The locale was suitable because ordinance development involved coordination among legislative personnel, administrative units, and selected municipal offices that provided technical information, documentation, committee assistance, and implementation support. These functions provided a relevant setting for examining how evidence informed legislative work and how promptly legislative services responded to policy-related requirements.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants consisted of 30 local government personnel who had direct involvement in ordinance development and legislative support. They included legislative employees and staff, selected department heads, and designated personnel engaged in policy preparation, documentation, committee activities, technical coordination, implementation, or monitoring. Criterion purposive sampling was employed to select personnel

whose work provided sufficient exposure to the processes examined in the study. This approach ensured that responses came from individuals with actual knowledge of municipal legislative operations rather than from the wider LGU workforce.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered through the researcher-developed Evidence Use and Legislative Responsiveness Scale (EULRS). The instrument contained 32 statements, equally distributed between evidence use in ordinance development and legislative service responsiveness. Evidence use covered evidence sourcing and access, evidence appraisal, integration into ordinance development, and documentation and traceability. Legislative responsiveness covered timeliness of support, interoffice coordination, procedural and documentation response, and implementation-related feedback. Responses were recorded using a five-point agreement scale ranging from 1, *strongly disagree*, to 5, *strongly agree*.

Five qualified experts in local governance, public administration, legislative practice, research, and educational measurement evaluated the instrument. The content validation yielded an S-CVI/Ave of .95, indicating strong item relevance and construct correspondence. The revised instrument was pilot-tested with 30 personnel from a comparable local government setting who were excluded from the actual study. Pilot responses produced an overall Cronbach's alpha of .93, demonstrating high internal consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the appropriate municipal authorities. Coordination with concerned offices followed to identify personnel who satisfied the inclusion criteria and to arrange the administration of the questionnaire. Participants were informed of the purpose and conditions of participation before giving consent. Completed questionnaires were collected, reviewed for completeness, coded, and encoded into the statistical dataset. The entries were subsequently checked for accuracy before analysis.

Data Analysis

Composite means and standard deviations were used to determine the levels of evidence use in ordinance development and legislative service responsiveness. Bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals were also generated to provide more stable estimates given the focused sample.

The predictive contribution of evidence use to legislative service responsiveness was examined through bootstrap linear regression using 5,000 resamples. The analysis reported the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and bootstrap confidence interval for the predictive effect. Dimension-level evidence-use scores were further examined through relative importance analysis to determine which areas contributed most strongly to legislative responsiveness. Statistical decisions were made at the .05 significance level. These procedures were selected because they provided meaningful explanatory estimates while remaining appropriate for the study's relatively small and specialized sample.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and proceeded only after informed consent had been secured. Participants retained the right to decline or withdraw without penalty. Confidentiality and data privacy were protected by excluding personal identifiers from the analytical dataset and reporting results only in aggregate form. Research records were securely stored and accessed solely for authorized scholarly purposes, and all collected information was used exclusively for the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Level of Evidence Use in Ordinance Development by Dimension*

Dimension	Mean	SD	95% Bootstrap CI	Interpretation	Rank
Evidence Integration into Ordinance Development	3.91	0.45	3.74, 4.07	High	1
Evidence Sourcing and Access	3.87	0.48	3.69, 4.04	High	2
Evidence Appraisal	3.60	0.54	3.40, 3.79	High	3
Documentation and Traceability	3.49	0.58	3.28, 3.70	High	4
Overall	3.72	0.43	3.56, 3.87	High	

The overall mean of 3.72 showed that evidence was generally used in ordinance development. The strongest dimension was Evidence Integration into Ordinance Development, indicating that available information was commonly brought into problem definition, deliberation, and formulation of ordinance provisions. Evidence Sourcing and Access also received a strong rating, suggesting that legislative personnel were generally able to obtain relevant municipal records, technical inputs, legal references, and other information needed for policy work.

The weaker dimensions were Evidence Appraisal and Documentation and Traceability. This pattern suggested that information was more consistently accessed and applied than critically examined and systematically documented. The lowest mean for documentation and traceability indicated a possible gap in maintaining a clear record of how evidence influenced successive drafts and final legislative decisions. Such a weakness can limit transparency, institutional learning, and later review of policy choices.

Table 2. *Indicator-Level Results for Evidence Use in Ordinance Development*

Dimension	Indicator	Mean	SD	Rank
Evidence Sourcing and Access	Official records and local data were consulted when legislative issues were identified.	3.98	0.55	2
	Technical and legal references were accessible when needed.	3.91	0.57	4
	Relevant information was obtained from concerned municipal offices.	3.82	0.62	6
	Inputs from stakeholders or affected sectors were obtained when relevant.	3.77	0.66	8
Evidence Appraisal	Credibility of information sources was examined before use.	3.71	0.63	9
	Currency and relevance of evidence were checked before application.	3.64	0.67	10
	Information from different sources was compared before conclusions were reached.	3.56	0.69	12
	Limitations or uncertainties in available evidence were considered.	3.49	0.73	14
Evidence Integration into Ordinance Development	Evidence was used to define the policy problem addressed by an ordinance.	4.04	0.53	1
	Evidence was used to support proposed provisions and policy options.	3.94	0.58	3
	Evidence was considered during committee deliberations.	3.86	0.61	5
	Implementation implications were considered using available evidence.	3.79	0.64	7
Documentation and Traceability	Supporting evidence used during ordinance preparation was properly recorded.	3.62	0.68	11
	The basis for substantive revisions could be traced through legislative records.	3.54	0.71	13

Sources remained traceable across successive ordinance drafts.	3.43	0.72	15
Records clearly showed how evidence supported the final provisions adopted.	3.37	0.76	16

The indicator-level findings showed that evidence was strongest when it was used to define policy problems. Consultation of official records and local data also ranked highly, indicating that ordinance development was generally grounded in available administrative information. Access to technical and legal references and the use of evidence in supporting policy options further strengthened the legislative process.

Within Evidence Appraisal, credibility checking obtained the highest score, while consideration of limitations and uncertainty received the lowest. This suggested that personnel tended to assess whether sources were credible but were less consistent in examining weaknesses, gaps, or conflicting information. This distinction matters because policy decisions may appear evidence-informed even when the available information has not been fully tested for adequacy or relevance.

The clearest weakness appeared under Documentation and Traceability. While supporting documents were generally recorded, the ability to trace evidence through successive drafts and connect it directly with final ordinance provisions was weaker. The lowest mean of 3.37 showed that the documentary trail from evidence to final legislative decision was not always explicit. This finding identified traceability as an area where legislative documentation could be strengthened.

Table 3. *Level of Legislative Service Responsiveness by Dimension*

Dimension	Mean	SD	95% Bootstrap CI	Interpretation	Rank
Interoffice Coordination	3.90	0.47	3.73, 4.07	High	1
Procedural and Documentation Response	3.85	0.46	3.68, 4.02	High	2
Timeliness of Support	3.80	0.51	3.61, 3.98	High	3
Implementation-Related Feedback	3.50	0.60	3.28, 3.71	High	4
Overall	3.76	0.44	3.60, 3.92	High	

The overall mean of 3.76 indicated a generally high level of legislative service responsiveness. Interoffice Coordination ranked first, showing that policy requirements were commonly addressed through cooperation among legislative and concerned municipal offices. Procedural and Documentation Response also obtained a strong result, reflecting reliable handling of legislative records and procedural requirements.

Timeliness of Support remained high but ranked third. This suggested that most legislative requirements were addressed within workable periods, although some delays could arise when requests required coordination, follow-up, or technical inputs from several offices.

The lowest dimension was Implementation-Related Feedback. The result suggested that responsiveness was stronger during ordinance preparation and processing than after enactment. This was an important finding because effective local legislation also depends on whether implementation concerns are relayed back to legislative personnel and used to guide review or amendment.

Table 4. *Indicator-Level Results for Legislative Service Responsiveness*

Dimension	Indicator	Mean	SD	Rank
Timeliness of Support	Legislative documents were prepared within the period in which they were required.	3.92	0.60	4
	Committee requests received timely administrative or technical support.	3.84	0.62	7
	Follow-up requests to concerned offices were acted upon within reasonable periods.	3.76	0.65	10

	Delays or pending legislative requirements were communicated and addressed.	3.68	0.69	12
Interoffice Coordination	Legislative and concerned municipal offices coordinated effectively on policy requirements.	4.02	0.54	1
	Technical inputs from concerned offices were obtained when needed.	3.95	0.58	3
	Responsibilities among offices were clarified during ordinance preparation.	3.86	0.61	6
	Relevant information was adequately shared among participating offices.	3.77	0.64	9
Procedural and Documentation Response	Required legislative records and supporting documents were prepared completely.	3.98	0.56	2
	Procedural requirements were addressed consistently during ordinance processing.	3.91	0.55	5
	Committee-related documents were prepared with sufficient accuracy.	3.79	0.63	8
	Documents required for implementation were transmitted appropriately to concerned units.	3.72	0.66	11
Implementation-Related Feedback	Post-enactment concerns were relayed to appropriate legislative personnel.	3.62	0.70	13
	Implementing offices provided feedback on difficulties encountered in applying ordinances.	3.55	0.72	14
	Evidence arising from ordinance implementation was systematically reviewed.	3.46	0.74	15
	Implementation feedback triggered legislative review or follow-up when necessary.	3.37	0.78	16

The indicator-level results showed that the strongest area of responsiveness was effective coordination among legislative and concerned municipal offices. Access to technical inputs and complete preparation of legislative records also received high ratings. These findings suggested that the LGU had functioning support mechanisms during ordinance preparation and processing.

Within Timeliness of Support, document preparation was relatively strong, while communication and resolution of delayed requirements obtained a lower rating. This indicated that routine legislative tasks were handled more consistently than situations requiring follow-up.

For Procedural and Documentation Response, preparation and completion of records received high scores, but transmission of documents for implementation was weaker. This again suggested that service responsiveness declined slightly as work moved from enactment toward implementation.

The weakest indicators were all found under Implementation-Related Feedback. Although post-enactment concerns were sometimes relayed, systematic review of implementation evidence and conversion of feedback into legislative follow-up were less consistent. The lowest mean of 3.37 showed that feedback from ordinance implementation did not always lead to further legislative action. This pattern identified an important gap in the feedback loop between implementation and policy refinement.

Table 5. *Bootstrap Regression Analysis of Evidence Use and Legislative Service Responsiveness*

Predictor	B	SE	Standardized β	t	p	Bias-Corrected 95% Bootstrap CI
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Constant	1.336	0.553		2.416	.022	0.201, 2.381
Evidence Use in Ordinance Development	0.653	0.149	0.638	4.375	.0002	0.344, 0.927

Model Statistic	Value
R ²	0.406
Adjusted R ²	0.385
F(1, 28)	19.138
Model p	.0002
Cohen's f ²	0.684
Bootstrap Resamples	5,000

Evidence use significantly predicted legislative service responsiveness. The standardized coefficient of $\beta = .638$ indicated a moderately strong positive predictive effect. Higher levels of evidence use were therefore associated with stronger responsiveness in legislative service delivery.

The model explained 40.6% of the variance in legislative service responsiveness. This represented meaningful explanatory power for an organizational outcome influenced by several administrative and institutional factors. The effect size of $f^2 = .684$ further showed that evidence use had substantial practical relevance.

The bootstrap confidence interval for the regression coefficient remained above zero, supporting the stability of the result. The finding suggested that evidence use was not merely present alongside responsive legislative service, but functioned as an important contributor to it. When information was effectively sourced, evaluated, incorporated, and documented, legislative personnel were better positioned to respond to procedural, technical, and implementation requirements.

The remaining 59.4% of unexplained variance indicated that legislative responsiveness was also influenced by other factors not included in the model, such as staffing, workload, administrative coordination, leadership support, procedural complexity, and availability of technical resources.

Table 6. *Relative Importance of Evidence-Use Dimensions in Predicting Legislative Service Responsiveness*

Evidence-Use Dimension	Zero-Order r	Standardized β	Bootstrap p	Relative Weight	Share of Explained Variance
Evidence Integration into Ordinance Development	.62	.36	.038	.192	39.2%
Evidence Sourcing and Access	.56	.24	.121	.130	26.5%
Evidence Appraisal	.48	.16	.263	.096	19.6%
Documentation and Traceability	.44	.11	.426	.072	14.7%
Total				.490	100.0%

Joint model: $R^2 = .490$, Adjusted $R^2 = .408$, $F(4, 25) = 6.005$, $p = .0016$.

The relative importance analysis showed that Evidence Integration into Ordinance Development contributed the largest share of explained variance at 39.2%. It was also the only dimension that retained a statistically significant independent contribution when all four dimensions were considered simultaneously. This showed that evidence had its strongest influence when it was directly incorporated into policy formulation and legislative deliberation.

Evidence Sourcing and Access contributed 26.5% of explained variance. The result indicated that accessibility of information remained important, although its independent contribution was reduced once actual

evidence integration was considered. This suggested that access served mainly as a foundation for later use rather than as an outcome in itself.

Evidence Appraisal accounted for 19.6% of explained variance, while Documentation and Traceability accounted for 14.7%. Their independent coefficients were not statistically significant in the joint model. This did not mean that these dimensions were unimportant. Their contributions overlapped with the broader process of evidence use, and the small sample limited the ability to isolate modest independent effects.

The relative importance results provided a clear sequence. Evidence had to be available, assessed, incorporated into decision-making, and preserved in legislative records. Among these stages, actual integration into ordinance development produced the strongest contribution to responsiveness.

Table 7. *Diagnostic Statistics for the Predictive Models*

Diagnostic Measure	Result	Interpretation
Durbin-Watson statistic	1.92	No meaningful residual dependence
Breusch-Pagan χ^2	0.67	No evidence of heteroscedasticity
Breusch-Pagan p	.413	
Shapiro-Wilk W	.969	
Shapiro-Wilk p	.505	No substantial departure from normality
Maximum Cook's distance	.18	No influential case
Maximum absolute studentized residual	2.21	No extreme residual
VIF, overall model	1.00	No multicollinearity
VIF range, dimension-level model	1.29 to 1.67	No problematic multicollinearity
Tolerance range	.60 to .78	Satisfactory
Maximum condition index	9.30	No serious collinearity concern

The diagnostic results supported the adequacy of the predictive models. No substantial residual dependence, heteroscedasticity, influential observation, or serious multicollinearity was detected. Residual normality was also satisfactory. These findings indicated that the regression estimates were not being driven by obvious violations of the analytical assumptions.

The use of 5,000 bootstrap resamples strengthened the analysis given the focused sample of 30 participants. The consistency between the regression coefficients, bootstrap confidence intervals, effect size, and relative importance analysis provided additional support for the observed relationship between evidence use and legislative responsiveness.

CONCLUSION

Evidence use was a meaningful contributor to legislative service responsiveness in the Local Government Unit of Maddela, Quirino, with the strongest performance observed in the integration of evidence into ordinance development and in interoffice coordination. The findings showed that legislative personnel generally accessed and applied relevant information in policy preparation, but weaker practices remained in evidence appraisal, documentation and traceability, and the systematic use of implementation feedback. These gaps suggested that the legislative process was stronger during ordinance preparation and processing than during post-enactment review and policy learning. It was therefore recommended that the LGU strengthen procedures for documenting the evidentiary basis of ordinance provisions, establish a more consistent mechanism for reviewing implementation feedback, improve critical appraisal of data and technical inputs, and formalize channels through which implementing offices can relay concerns and operational evidence to legislative personnel. Regular capacity-

building activities on evidence assessment, legislative documentation, and policy review may also be undertaken to reinforce these practices and support more responsive, transparent, and adaptive local governance.

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