



TRANSCENDING PUBLIC SERVICE: WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN GOOD GOVERNANCE IN VALENZUELA CITY

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ABSTRACT This study examined the relationships among leadership attributes, challenges encountered, and governance performance of women public servants in Valenzuela City. It was guided by Gender and Development (GAD) Theory, Equity Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory, which explain how leadership and workplace conditions shape governance outcomes.

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining survey data with open-ended responses. The respondents were women public servants actively involved in governance-related roles. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis.

The results showed that women public servants demonstrate strong leadership attributes, particularly in team building and receptivity. Their performance across key areas such as policy implementation, people management, and resource management was also rated positively. While challenges like work–life balance were experienced to some extent, gender bias and other challenges were generally not seen as major barriers.

Further analysis revealed a significant relationship between leadership attributes and governance performance, suggesting that stronger leadership skills are linked to better performance. However, no significant relationship was found between challenges encountered and performance. Differences in challenges were observed based on socio-economic background, indicating that personal circumstances may influence how challenges are experienced.

The study concludes that leadership attributes play an important role in improving governance performance among women public servants. Based on these findings, a Women's Leadership Enhancement and Support Program is proposed to strengthen leadership skills and provide better institutional support.

It is recommended that local government units continue to invest in leadership development, mentoring programs, and gender-responsive policies to support women's participation in governance.



I. INTRODUCTION

Women's electoral representation has become an important marker of democratic development and institutional inclusion. However, even as women's engagement worldwide increases, there are still far fewer women in leadership positions and in political or administrative structures. According to UN Women (2022), enduring inequities and gendered structural barriers limit women's representation at leadership and executive levels. The move towards gender-responsive governance in the Philippines, which initially focused on procedural compliance, has evolved from 2021 to 2026 into an intersectional Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) model (Philippine Commission on Women, 2025).

A significant electoral paradox has characterized the Philippines' governance trajectory over the past five years. In the 2022 National and Local Elections, women made up 51% of registered voters (about 33.6 million), but they won only 30.47% of the total elective positions (Center for Women's Resources, 2025). This gap is expected to grow in the 2025 election cycle, when only 22% of all certified candidates are women, compared to 78% of men (Center for Women's Resources, 2025). Moreover, institutional participation trends from 2020 to 2025 indicate that, although women constitute the majority of participants in GAD-related training (78%), their advancement into senior executive and decision-making positions remains constrained (Philippine Commission on Women, 2026).

At the local level, Valenzuela City demonstrates a sustained commitment to gender-responsive governance. The city's performance is reflected in several recognitions, including the 2018 Galing Pook Award, the 2024 Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG), and the 2024 Galing Pook Award for its Child Protection Policy and Center (City Government of Valenzuela, 2024; Galing Pook Foundation, 2024). According to the City Gender and Development (GAD) Office (2023), women currently hold approximately 40% of key administrative positions, reflecting progress toward more inclusive leadership. This institutional progress is further strengthened through Valenzuela City Ordinance No. 1184 (Series of 2024), also known as the Valenzuela City Child Welfare Code of 2024, which reinforces the local legal framework for GAD mandates.

Despite these gains, recent Scopus-indexed studies point to a persistent technical concern. While Philippine local government units (LGUs) demonstrate strong engagement in gender and development (GAD) planning, the database mechanism, particularly the management of sex-disaggregated data (SDD), remains the weakest component, showing only a moderate level of implementation (SM = 3.44) (Laganhon, 2026). In high-performing cities such as Valenzuela, the challenge lies in aligning award-winning program delivery with a more robust data-driven system capable of capturing intersectional impacts (Laganhon, 2026). Addressing this gap has become more urgent following the 2022 implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling, which expanded LGUs' fiscal space to support localized women-focused programming (Philippine Commission on Women, 2022).

Modern scholarship frequently characterizes good governance as a multifaceted concept that includes transparency, accountability, and meaningful public participation (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2021; Pierre & Peters, 2022). From this perspective, women's participation in leadership is particularly significant. Leadership traits often associated with women, such as ethical decision-making, relational leadership, and collaborative approaches, are frequently linked to more responsive models of governance. In the Philippine context, the Philippine Commission on Women (2021) notes that female leaders often emphasize consensus-building and social welfare, suggesting that gender representation may influence institutional performance and responsiveness to public needs.

This study draws on Mukasa's (2014) framework on women's political participation in governance and adapts it to examine leadership dynamics within Valenzuela City's three-tier administrative structure. The study is also situated within the policy framework of Republic Act No. 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women, which mandates gender mainstreaming across all levels of governance (Philippine Commission on Women, 2025). Despite this policy mandate, implementation across institutions remains uneven due to bureaucratic constraints and limitations in monitoring mechanisms (Philippine Commission on Women, 2025). By examining the roles and participation of women within Valenzuela City's governance structure, the study seeks to generate insights that may help strengthen inclusive governance practices at the local level.

Although women's participation in governance has expanded, and gender-responsive initiatives have gained increasing institutional recognition, empirical studies examining how women's leadership attributes and institutional challenges influence governance effectiveness in local government units remain limited, particularly in highly urbanized cities such as Valenzuela. Understanding why governance outcomes vary even in contexts where women are actively represented in leadership positions is therefore essential for strengthening inclusive and responsive local governance systems.

Despite the growing participation of women in public administration, empirical studies examining the relationships among leadership attributes, governance challenges, and performance outcomes remain limited, particularly in highly urbanized local government units. While existing studies describe women's leadership styles and barriers to participation, few have quantitatively examined how these factors interact to influence governance outcomes at the city level. This research addresses this gap by empirically examining women public servants in Valenzuela City and by developing a model to strengthen women's leadership in local governance.

Existing studies largely focus on describing women's leadership styles and documenting barriers to gender participation. However, limited empirical research examines how leadership attributes, governance challenges, and institutional contexts interact to influence governance outcomes. This study addresses this gap by examining the relationships among these factors among women public servants in Valenzuela City and by proposing a leadership-strengthening model that supports gender-responsive governance.

Theoretical Framework

Equity Theory, Gender and Development (GAD) Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory serve as the theoretical foundations of this study and explain how women's leadership can sustain good governance in local government units.

Equity Theory. Equity Theory, developed by Adams (1963), posits that individuals seek fairness in the distribution of rewards, responsibilities, and recognition. When applied to governance, the theory suggests that leaders who perceive equitable treatment are more likely to demonstrate higher motivation and improved performance. In contrast, gender bias, unequal opportunities, and limited recognition may negatively affect morale and organizational effectiveness. In this study, Equity Theory provides a behavioral lens for examining how fairness in access to resources, representation, and leadership roles influences the performance of women public servants in Valenzuela City, as well as the gender-related challenges they encounter in pursuing good governance.

Gender and Development (GAD) Theory. Recognizing women as important actors in social and institutional change, rather than passive beneficiaries, reinforces gender mainstreaming in policymaking, planning, and governance processes (Moser, 1993). This perspective underlines the need for policies that ensure women and men participate equally in decision-making at all levels of local government, contributing to inclusive, accountable, and sustainable development.

In the Philippines, GAD has been institutionalized through the enactment of Republic Act No. 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women, which mandates gender mainstreaming across all public institutions. Thus, GAD Theory provides the institutional and policy context for this study by showing how decision-making bodies can enable women to participate in transparency, accountability, and community empowerment mechanisms in Valenzuela City.

Transformational Leadership Theory. Transformational Leadership Theory, proposed by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985), emphasizes leaders who inspire, motivate, and empower individuals to achieve collective goals. Transformational leaders prioritize integrity, teamwork, and the development of their members attributes commonly associated in the literature with women’s leadership, such as empathy, responsiveness, and collaborative decision-making. In the context of public administration, transformational leadership is linked to innovation, ethical governance, and community engagement. This theory suggests that women public servants in Valenzuela City may function as agents of change by influencing policies and programs that promote transparency, social justice, and citizen-centered governance, thereby contributing to the quality and sustainability of governance outcomes.

Taken together, Gender and Development Theory provides the institutional and policy context for gender inclusion in governance, Equity Theory explains how perceptions of fairness, recognition, and access to resources influence motivation and performance, and Transformational Leadership Theory accounts for the relational and behavioral attributes through which leaders inspire participatory and ethical governance. The integration of these theories enables a holistic examination of women public servants in Valenzuela City by clarifying the structural conditions, behavioral dynamics, and leadership capacities that shape their participation, challenges, and performance in advancing good governance.



Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

Conceptual Framework

This study is guided by Gender and Development (GAD) Theory, Equity Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. These theories explain how leadership and workplace conditions influence the effectiveness of women public servants in local governance. In this framework, leadership attributes such as professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team building are considered key factors that contribute to governance performance. At the same time, challenges encountered, including gender bias, work-life balance, and other workplace pressures, may affect how effectively women perform their roles. Leadership attributes and challenges encountered are treated as independent variables, while governance performance is the dependent variable. Performance is measured in terms of policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management. The findings of the study serve as the basis for proposing a Women’s Leadership Strengthening Program or Policy to support and improve women’s participation in local governance.

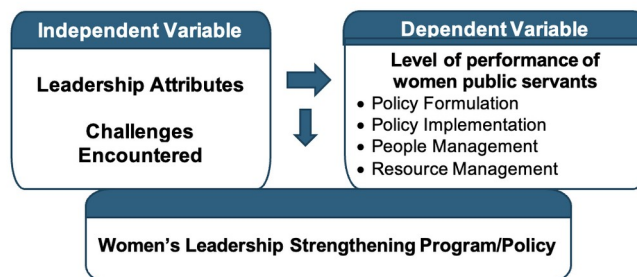


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

In this framework, leadership attributes and the challenges encountered serve as independent variables that influence governance performance. Governance performance represents the dependent variable and is measured through policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management.

The interaction among these variables provides the analytical basis for developing a Women’s Leadership Strengthening Model for Valenzuela City.

Table 1

Conceptual Alignment of the Study

Variable	Theory Anchored	Indicators	Measurement Tool
Leadership Attributes	Transformational Leadership Theory	Professionalism, Integrity, Teamwork	Part II Survey
Challenges	Equity Theory	Gender Bias, Work-life Balance	Part III Survey
Performance	GAD Theory	Policy Implementation, People Management	Part IV Survey

Table 1 illustrates the alignment of the study variables with the theories of Transformational Leadership, Equity, and GAD to ensure theoretical consistency in the analysis.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to examine women’s participation in good governance in Valenzuela City by exploring their leadership attributes, the challenges they encounter, and their leadership performance. It seeks to determine how these factors influence the effectiveness and inclusivity of local governance.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How may the dominant leadership attributes of women public servants be described in terms of professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team building?
2. How may the challenges encountered by women public servants be described in terms of work-life balance, gender bias, performance expectations, and work style?
3. How may the level of performance of women public servants be described in terms of policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management?
4. Are there significant differences when profiles of women public servants are considered on the following:
 - 4.1 dominant attributes among women public servants; and
 - 4.2 Challenges encountered?
5. Is there a significant relationship between leadership attributes and the challenges encountered by women public servants in terms of performance?
6. What insights can be drawn from the responses regarding the challenges encountered by women public servants and their perspective on leadership attributes?

7. Based on the findings, what policy or program may be proposed to strengthen women's participation in local governance?

Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to assess the participation and contributions of women public servants in promoting good governance in Valenzuela City, with emphasis on how their attributes, challenges, and performance influence governance outcomes.

Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Identify and analyze the dominant leadership attributes of women public servants.
2. Determine the challenges they encounter in performing their governance roles.
3. Assess their performance across policy formulation, implementation, people management, and resource management.
4. Examine whether there are significant differences in their leadership attributes and challenges across profiles.
5. Examine whether a significant relationship exists in their leadership attributes and challenges to their performance.
6. To explore insights from women public servants regarding the challenges they encounter and their perspectives on leadership attributes in Valenzuela City.
7. To propose a policy or program to strengthen women's participation in local governance.

Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁. There is no significant difference in the leadership attributes of women public servants across profiles defined by age, educational attainment, socio-economic background, and involvement in public governance.

H₀₂. There is no significant difference in the challenges encountered by women public servants across profiles, including age, educational attainment, socio-economic background, and involvement in public governance.

H₀₃. There is no significant relationship between leadership attributes, the challenges women public servants face, and their performance levels.

These hypotheses were tested to determine whether demographic and professional attributes shape differences in the traits, issues, and performance of women public servants. The findings served as the basis for a theoretical model of women's leadership for effective, gender-responsive governance in Valenzuela City.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for deepening the understanding of women's participation and leadership in public governance. By examining the experiences, attributes, and challenges of women public leaders and servants in Valenzuela City, the research seeks to contribute to existing literature on gender equality, leadership development, and good governance in local government settings. It also provides practical insights that may help strengthen institutional mechanisms for inclusive and equitable governance.

For Local Government Officials. The findings of this study may serve as a basis for developing gender-responsive policies, programs, and leadership frameworks that support women's engagement in governance. By examining the relationship among leadership attributes, challenges, and performance, the study may guide local administrators in enhancing inclusivity, fairness, and transparency in public management. The results may also inform performance evaluation systems and capacity-building programs that integrate gender perspectives into leadership development.

For Women Public Servants and Aspiring Public Servants. This study may support women currently serving or aspiring to serve in government by highlighting professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and teamwork as attributes of effective leadership. By identifying challenges related to gender bias, work-life balance, and performance expectations, the study may encourage women public servants to develop adaptive strategies and engage in mentorship initiatives that strengthen leadership capacity.

For Policymakers and Advocacy Groups. The study provides empirical evidence that may inform the formulation or refinement of gender equality policies, leadership development programs, and initiatives aligned with the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710). The findings may also assist Gender and Development (GAD) focal persons and local administrators in reviewing gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRP) tools to better integrate women's leadership development into local government performance frameworks. This linkage emphasizes the operationalization of gender equity within local governance processes.

For the Academic Community. This study contributes to scholarly discourse on women's leadership, local governance, and equity. It may serve as a reference for researchers, educators, and students in Public Administration, Political Science, and Gender Studies, particularly those examining gender and governance in urban contexts. The proposed model may also provide a foundation for future comparative or longitudinal studies.

For the Community. By supporting gender-inclusive governance, the study contributes to the development of transparent, accountable, and responsive local institutions that address the needs of diverse stakeholders. Women's participation in decision-making processes may contribute to social inclusivity, strengthened civic engagement, and sustainable local development.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on women public servants in the Valenzuela City Government who are currently serving in elected, appointed, managerial, supervisory, or administrative positions, including staff officers and personnel involved in policy formulation, program implementation, administrative management, or community relations. It examines respondents' profile characteristics, dominant leadership attributes (professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team-building), challenges encountered (work-life balance, gender bias, performance expectations, and work style), and performance in policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management.

Delimitation of the Study

This study is limited to women public servants in Valenzuela City and does not include women working exclusively in the private sector or non-government organizations. Male leaders were excluded because the study explicitly focuses on women's contributions and experiences in local governance. Consequently, the study's findings cannot be used to make direct comparisons between male and female leadership performance in local governance. The findings and the proposed model are based on data collected from a purposive sample and, therefore, cannot be generalized to all women public servants in the Philippines. Moreover, the study captures experiences during the specific period of data collection; subsequent policy or institutional changes fall beyond the scope of this research.

The study relied on self-reported measures collected via a single survey instrument administered at a single point in time. As such, the relationships among attributes, challenges, and performance may be subject to common method variance, which can inflate observed correlations. Future studies may incorporate multi-source data or objective performance indicators to reduce this potential bias.

Definition of Terms

The following key terms are defined conceptually and operationally to ensure a common understanding of how they are used in this study:

Challenges Encountered. The obstacles women public servants face in fulfilling their governance responsibilities. In this study, challenges refer to issues related to work–life balance, gender bias, performance expectations, and work style, **as measured through respondents' self-ratings using a Likert-scale survey instrument.**

Dominant Attributes. These refer to the key personal and professional qualities that characterize women public servants. In this study, dominant attributes include professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team building, **as measured through respondents' self-assessment using a Likert-scale questionnaire designed to capture leadership attributes.**

Gender and Development (GAD). A government approach that integrates gender perspectives into policymaking, planning, and governance to ensure equality and inclusion. It is institutionalized in the Philippines through the Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) and serves as one of the theoretical foundations of this study.

Good Governance. Defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as governance that is effective, transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of the people. In this study, good governance refers to the contribution of women public servants in Valenzuela City to effective policy formulation, implementation, and resource management.

Leadership Performance. The extent to which women public servants effectively perform their roles and achieve organizational goals. In this study, leadership performance is operationalized through **self-rated responses on a Likert-scale survey** covering policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management.

Local Governance. The organization and management of city or municipal public affairs by local government units are guided by the principles of participation, accountability, and transparency.

Participation. Participation pertains to the engagement of women public servants in governance-related functions within the Valenzuela City Government **as reflected in their roles in policy formulation, decision-making, and administrative responsibilities.**

Transformational Leadership. A leadership style in which leaders inspire, motivate, and guide individuals toward achieving shared organizational goals. It emphasizes qualities such as vision, integrity, empathy, and collaboration, and serves as one of the theoretical foundations of this study.

Women Leaders. Female elected and appointed officials of the Valenzuela City Government, including barangay officials, department heads, division chiefs, and other officials with formal decision-making authority.

Women Public Servants. Female personnel of the Valenzuela City Government, including staff officers and rank-and-file employees who contribute to the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of government

programs and services.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design using a mixed-methods approach. The descriptive component aimed to present the profile characteristics, leadership attributes, challenges, and performance levels of women public servants in Valenzuela City. The correlational component examined the relationships among these variables, particularly across demographic profiles and governance roles.

The quantitative component utilized a structured survey to collect measurable data from respondents. The qualitative component included key informant interviews (KIIs) to generate in-depth insights into the lived experiences, leadership values, and governance contributions of women public servants.

This research design was considered appropriate as it integrates both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing a more comprehensive understanding of how women's participation relates to good governance.

This design is appropriate because it captures both numerical and narrative perspectives, allowing a comprehensive understanding of how women's participation influences good governance.

This approach directly addresses the research gap identified in Chapter 2, which highlighted the limited empirical studies examining these relationships within highly urbanized local government units.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in Valenzuela City, a highly urbanized city in Metro Manila, Philippines. Valenzuela City has been recognized for its local governance initiatives, administrative practices, and active community engagement. The city government implements Gender and Development (GAD) programs that promote gender equality, making it a suitable setting for examining the roles and effectiveness of women public servants in local governance.

Data were collected from various city government offices and barangays in Valenzuela City, where women occupy leadership positions in policymaking, administration, and public service delivery.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study consisted of women public servants in the Valenzuela City Government who met the following criteria: (a) currently serving in a public office within Valenzuela City; (b) holding elected, appointed, managerial, supervisory, administrative, or staff positions; (c) actively involved in policy formulation, program implementation, administrative management, or community relations; and (d) having at least one year of experience in public service and governance-related functions.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that respondents possess direct experience in governance-related functions. Although this sampling approach may limit statistical generalizability, it allows the study to obtain meaningful insights from women public servants who are actively involved in policy formulation, program implementation, and administrative leadership within Valenzuela City. A target of at least 100 respondents was set to ensure sufficient participation across different governance roles while remaining feasible within the local government context. The inclusion criteria were also designed to minimize selection bias by requiring respondents to have at least one year of institutional experience in governance-related functions.

Research Instruments

The study utilized a structured survey questionnaire as the primary data-gathering instrument. The questionnaire was administered in both printed and digitized formats via Google Forms. The printed version was intended for respondents with limited access to digital devices or internet connectivity. In contrast, the online version facilitated wider, more efficient distribution to women public leaders and personnel in Valenzuela City. Both formats contained identical questions and response options to ensure data consistency.

The questionnaire was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data relevant to the study's objectives. It was divided into five major parts, each corresponding to a specific variable in the research framework.

Part I – Profile of Respondents. This section gathered demographic information, including age, educational attainment, socio-economic background, and involvement in public governance. These variables were used to describe respondents' profiles and examine their relationships with leadership attributes, challenges, and performance levels.

Educational attainment was classified into the following categories: Postgraduate, Bachelor's degree, and Others. The "Others" category included respondents with college-level education, secondary education, associate degrees, and vocational or technical training. For statistical analysis, selected categories were grouped to ensure meaningful comparisons and adequate cell sizes for inferential tests.

Part II – Dominant Leadership Attributes. This section measured the leadership attributes of women public servants, specifically professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team-building skills. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This section assessed the personal and professional characteristics associated with effective women's leadership in governance.

Part III – Challenges Encountered. This section identified challenges faced by women public servants in governance, including work-life balance, gender bias, performance expectations, and work style. Respondents evaluated the extent to which these challenges affected their leadership roles and effectiveness in public service.

Part IV – Level of Performance. This section assessed respondents' performance across key governance functions, namely policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management. Using the same five-point Likert scale, this section evaluated how effectively women public servants performed their responsibilities in promoting good governance.

Part V – Open-Ended Questions. The final section consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit qualitative insights and personal reflections from respondents. This section aimed to capture experiences, perspectives, and opinions that may not be fully expressed through structured survey items.

The questionnaire was reviewed and validated by a psychometrician from Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela to ensure content validity and alignment with the study's objectives.

The instrument employed a five-point Likert scale with the following response options:

- 5 – Strongly Agree
- 4 – Agree
- 3 – Neutral
- 2 – Disagree
- 1 – Strongly Disagree

Likert-type scales are commonly used in social science research to measure perceptions and attitudes because they allow respondents to express varying degrees of agreement (Creswell, 2014).

Validation of the Instrument

The internal consistency reliability of the survey instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated reliability coefficients of $\alpha = 0.60$ for Leadership Attributes, $\alpha = 0.86$ for Challenges Encountered, and $\alpha = 0.95$ for Governance Performance. In many methodological guidelines, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 is considered the minimum acceptable level of reliability for established scales (George & Mallery, 2003). However, in exploratory studies involving complex behavioral constructs, lower values may still be considered acceptable. Hair et al. (2010) note that reliability coefficients as low as 0.60 may be tolerated in early-stage research. Thus, while the reliability coefficient for Leadership Attributes is slightly below the conventional threshold, it is considered marginally acceptable for exploratory analysis. Meanwhile, the higher coefficients obtained for Challenges Encountered and Governance Performance indicate very good internal consistency of the respective scales.

All pilot respondents (32) were included in the reliability analysis, and no missing data were recorded, indicating that the instrument was reliable and suitable for full-scale data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection commenced, the researcher obtained formal approval from the thesis adviser and the institution's research committee to ensure compliance with academic and ethical standards. Authorization was likewise secured from the Valenzuela City Government to conduct the study and distribute the research instruments to identified women public servants across various local government offices and barangays. This coordination process was essential to ensure institutional cooperation and the credibility of the study's implementation.

Following approval, the validated questionnaires were distributed to selected respondents through both personal and electronic means. Personal distribution was conducted in accessible city offices, while electronic copies were sent through official communication channels to accommodate respondents with limited availability for face-to-face participation. The researcher clearly explained the study's purpose and provided the necessary instructions for completing the questionnaire.

Completed questionnaires were collected either in person or through electronic submission. Follow-up communication was undertaken to enhance response rates and ensure data completeness. Selected respondents also participated in key informant interviews (KIIs) to provide in-depth qualitative insights into their experiences, leadership attributes, and challenges as women public servants in governance. These interviews were conducted confidentially and professionally, with each session documented and transcribed for analysis.

After data collection was completed, the researcher encoded, classified, and tabulated the responses to facilitate systematic analysis. Quantitative survey data were processed using appropriate statistical tools, while qualitative interview responses were organized and analyzed thematically. This process ensured that both numerical findings and narrative insights were accurately interpreted in relation to the study's objectives.

Data Analysis

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze data collected from women public servants in Valenzuela City. Statistical techniques were used to describe respondent profiles, assess levels of leadership attributes, challenges, and performance, and examine variations and relationships among variables. Thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data to provide deeper insights and to complement the quantitative findings.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings followed a convergent mixed-methods approach, in which qualitative insights were used to explain, validate, and contextualize the statistical patterns observed in the survey results.

A. Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics. Frequency and percentage distributions were employed to describe age, level of education, socio-economic status, and type of involvement in governance.

To determine respondents' ratings of leadership attributes, challenges encountered, and levels of leadership performance, the weighted mean was utilized.

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted using appropriate tests. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine significant differences in dominant leadership attributes, challenges, and performance across groups defined by profile characteristics. These analyses addressed Research Question 4. Tukey HSD post hoc tests were applied to identify specific group differences following statistically significant ANOVA results.

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationships among leadership attributes, challenges encountered, and leadership performance, thereby addressing Research Question 5. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify predictors of leadership performance based on leadership attributes.

All quantitative data were encoded, processed, and analyzed using standard statistical software. A significance level of 0.05 was applied in all statistical tests.

Although Likert-type items are ordinal in nature, composite scores derived from multiple Likert items were treated as approximately interval-level data. Methodological literature suggests that when Likert scales with five or more response categories are aggregated into composite measures, parametric tests such as t-tests, ANOVAs, and Pearson correlations are robust and appropriate for analysis. Given the sample size and use of composite mean scores, parametric procedures were deemed suitable (Norman, 2010).

Given that multiple comparisons were conducted across profile variables, the potential for inflated Type I error was considered. Results were therefore interpreted cautiously. Where statistical significance emerged, robustness checks using non-parametric procedures were performed to assess the stability of findings. Additionally, a Bonferroni-adjusted significance threshold was examined; under this criterion, no results remained statistically significant.

B. Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to responses from the open-ended survey questions and key informant interviews (KIIs). The analysis involved familiarization with the data, coding of meaningful units, and grouping of codes into recurring themes.

The qualitative findings provided narrative explanations that supported and enriched the quantitative results. Themes such as motivation, gender bias, work-life balance strategies, leadership styles, and empowerment helped explain observed patterns in teamwork and receptivity, as well as the limited impact of challenges on leadership performance. This integration reinforced the mixed-methods approach by adding depth, contextual meaning, and validation beyond numerical results.

Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was conducted during the study's interpretation phase. To strengthen this process, a joint display matrix was developed to align key quantitative results with qualitative themes derived from open-ended responses and key informant interviews. This approach enabled the researcher to examine areas of convergence, complementarity, and divergence between statistical patterns and narrative

insights. By systematically linking numerical findings with qualitative evidence, the joint display enhanced the explanatory depth and credibility of the convergent mixed-methods design. Through this integration, the study provided a more comprehensive understanding of how women public servants contribute to good governance in Valenzuela City.

It should also be acknowledged that the study relied primarily on self-reported survey responses to measure leadership attributes, challenges, and performance. Self-report measures may be susceptible to social desirability bias, in which respondents may provide answers that portray their leadership behaviors in a positive light. In addition, using a single survey instrument to measure multiple constructs may introduce common-method bias. To mitigate these risks, anonymity and confidentiality were emphasized during data collection to encourage honest responses. Furthermore, qualitative data from open-ended responses and key informant interviews were used to triangulate and contextualize the quantitative findings.

Ethical Considerations

This study complied with established ethical standards for academic research involving human participants. Before data collection, the researcher obtained formal approval from the thesis adviser and the institution's research committee to ensure that the study's objectives, instruments, and procedures conformed to ethical and academic requirements. Authorization was also secured from the Valenzuela City Government and relevant local agencies to conduct the research and distribute survey instruments to qualified respondents.

All participants were provided with an informed consent form that explained the purpose, scope, and procedures of the study. The consent form clearly indicated that participation was voluntary and that respondents could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or adverse consequences. The researcher ensured that all personal and professional information provided by respondents was kept strictly confidential and used solely for academic and research purposes. No names or other identifying information appeared in the research report or in any resulting publications.

During data collection, the researcher maintained a professional, nonjudgmental approach to ensure respondents felt comfortable and free to express their views. All collected data were securely stored in password-protected digital files. Upon completion of the study, the data will be disposed of in accordance with institutional data management and ethical guidelines.

By adhering to these ethical procedures, the researcher upheld the principles of integrity, respect, transparency, and responsibility throughout the research process. These measures ensured that the study was conducted fairly and professionally, consistent with institutional ethics requirements and broader standards of social science research.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Profile of the Respondents

This section presents the profile of the respondents, as shown in the four (4) tables covering age, level of education, socio economic status and involvement in governance, which serve as a basis for comparative analysis in this study.

Table 2

Age Profile of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
21-30	45	45.00%
31-40	23	23.00%
41-50	24	24.00%
51 and Above	8	8.00%
Total	100	100.00%
<i>Estimated Mean Age</i>	35*	

* Mean age was calculated using midpoints of each age group.

As shown in Table 2, the largest proportion of the respondents (45%) was between 21 and 30 years old. The respondents aged 31–40 (23%) and 41–50 (24%) each accounted for almost similar proportions, while only 8% were 51 years and above. Considering that the mean age was approximately 35 years, most participants were at an early-to-mid career stage.

The age distribution suggests that the results mostly reflect the perspectives of women in younger and middle-aged age groups. The small proportion of those aged over 51 means there is limited representation in the data for views based on longer-term institutional experience. As such, results should be interpreted in light of the sample's demographic makeup.

Philippine studies on women public servants similarly identify research subjects as young to middle-aged women engaged in processes within organizations and governance (Ochangco, 2023; Manalo, 2024). The consistency supports the study's contextual relevance.

Table 3

Level of Education of the Respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Postgraduate	11	11.00%
Bachelors	74	74.00%
Others	15	15.00%
Total	100	100.00%

The respondents' educational levels are shown in Table 3. The majority (74%) of respondents are college graduates. The smallest proportion (11%) has attained postgraduate education, while the remaining 15% are classified as "Others," which encompasses college-level, secondary, associate-degree, and vocational training.

This distribution suggests that the majority of respondents reached tertiary education. Nevertheless, the sample was underrepresented in participants with postgraduate qualifications (11%). Although comparable trends have been observed in the Philippines, research on local governance indicates that most women are college-educated (Calva, 2024; Mariano & Nisperos, 2023). However, the results should be considered in the context of the respondents' educational background.

Table 4

Socio-Economic Level of the Respondents

Socio Economic Level	Frequency	Percentage
Upper Class	0	0.00%
Upper-Middle Class	3	3.00%
Middle Class	84	84.00%
Lower Class	13	13.00%
Total	100	100.00%

The survey results, as shown in Table 4, indicate that 84% of respondents were from a middle-class background. A smaller proportion, 13%, identified as lower class, and only 3% considered themselves upper-middle class. No one in the survey was from the highest socio-economic group. The majority of respondents were middle class, with limited engagement from both lower- and higher-income demographics, which may compromise the ability to determine whether the findings are applicable across a spectrum of socioeconomic classes.

Consistent with previous studies among Filipino women public servants, Narit et al. (2024) claim that women from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds often encounter challenges in participation and empowerment. On the other hand, Lagmay and Soler (2024) found that economic security generally fosters more women's involvement in political and governance functions. These overall findings highlight the significance of socio-economic status in assessing women's leadership and participation within governmental institutions.

Table 5

Nature of Involvement in Governance of the Women Public Servants

Governance	Frequency	Percentage
Policy Formulation	5	5.00%
Program Implementation	22	22.00%

Administrative Management	37	37.00%
Community Relations	36	36.00%
Total	100	100.00%

Based on Table 5, most respondents were involved in administrative management (37%) and community relations (36%), while a smaller proportion were involved in program implementation (22%). Only 5% of respondents reported involvement in formulating policy.

This distribution indicates that the roles of women public servants in Valenzuela City were mainly concentrated in operational and community-relations governance functions. These roles facilitate the implementation of policies into delivered programs and services. The relatively small proportion engaged in policy formulation also shows low representation at the strategic and agenda-setting level. Nonetheless, this trend does not indicate a lack of qualified leaders; rather, it points to the structural arrangement of roles within local government units.

Similar trends have been observed in studies in the Philippines, where women public servants are more often engaged in administrative and community relations functions, with fewer represented in policy formulation (Ramos & De Guzman, 2023; Soriano et al., 2024). The results were in line with wider trends around role allocation within local governance contexts.

B. Leadership Attributes

This section describes the respondents' perceptions of their leadership capabilities. It examines essential characteristics of effective group or community leaders, such as professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team-building. The table presents the average scores for each attribute to analyze trends in perceived leadership attributes. The research delineates areas of comparative strength and variation among these traits and assesses their significance to organizational performance decision-making processes and community participation. The information addresses research question number one (1).

Table 6

Mean Scores of Leadership Attributes of the Women Public Servants

Leadership Attributes	Mean	Description
Professionalism	4.09	Agree
Integrity	3.73	Agree
Receptivity	4.52	Strongly Agree
Team Building	4.59	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.23	Agree

Legend:

4.51–5.00 = Strongly Agree

3.51–4.50 = Agree

2.51–3.50 = Neutral

1.51–2.50 = Disagree

1.00–1.50 = Strongly Disagree

Table 6 presents the respondents' mean scores on their perceived leadership attributes. It shows that Team Building (4.59) and Receptivity (4.52) are the dominant leadership attributes of women public servants, as indicated by the "Strongly Agree" responses. At the same time, Integrity (3.73) received the lowest mean score, which falls under the "Agree" range. The overall rating (4.23) suggests a generally favorable perception of leadership attributes among respondents.

The dominance of team building and receptivity highlights the importance of relational leadership in local governance. These attributes reflect a collaborative leadership approach that supports coordination, inclusivity, and stakeholder engagement within government operations. This finding aligns with Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes interpersonal relationships, responsiveness, and team-oriented leadership as key drivers of organizational effectiveness.

The results suggest that women public servants tend to adopt participatory leadership styles that strengthen communication and collective decision-making. In the context of local governance, such leadership behaviors contribute to more responsive and citizen-centered public service delivery.

The higher ratings in Team Building and Receptivity suggest a stronger emphasis on relational and participatory competencies than on procedural and ethical dimensions of leadership. This pattern may reflect the governance environment in which the respondents are involved, where collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and adaptability are fundamental to administrative practice. However, the comparatively lower Integrity rating still falls under "Agree" and may merit closer examination, given its foundational importance to public accountability and ethical governance.

The emphasis on relational leadership attributes may also reflect societal expectations often associated with women public servants, where collaborative and empathetic leadership styles are socially reinforced.

Similar trends were observed in local governance studies focused on women's leadership in the Philippines. Ramos and Delos Santos (2023) found that most women demonstrate strong collaborative and communication-oriented approaches in the workplace across various mid- to senior-level career stages. Likewise, Villanueva and Cruz (2024) found that women in local government commonly adopt participatory and community engagement practices. The findings are consistent with these studies and indicate that relational leadership behaviors are notable traits of women public servants in local governance contexts.

Since leadership performance was measured through self-reported responses, the results may reflect a degree of self-enhancement bias, in which respondents tend to evaluate their own performance more favorably. Social desirability bias may also influence responses, particularly in governance contexts where professionalism and integrity are highly valued norms. Future studies may address this limitation by incorporating supervisor ratings or objective performance indicators.

C. Challenges Encountered by Women Public Servants

This section examined the challenges women face in the workplace and in their communities. It examines factors such as work-life balance, gender bias, performance expectations, and differences in work styles.

Understanding these challenges provides insight into how they may affect leadership performance. This section revealed the answer to research question number two (2).

Table 7

Mean Scores on the Challenges Encountered by the Women Public Servants

Challenges	Mean	Description
Work-Life Balance	3.68	Agree
Gender Bias	2.53	Neutral
Performance Expectations	2.54	Neutral
Work Style	2.74	Neutral
Overall Mean	2.87	Neutral

Legend:

4.51–5.00 = *Strongly Agree*

3.51–4.50 = *Agree*

2.51–3.50 = *Neutral*

1.51–2.50 = *Disagree*

1.00–1.50 = *Strongly Disagree*

Table 7 presents the challenges faced by women public servants. An overall mean of 2.87 (Neutral) indicates that these are factors, but not generally perceived as major hindrances to leadership performance. Among the variables, work–life balance had the highest mean (3.68), which indicates that balancing professional and personal responsibilities remains a continuing concern. Attributes related to gender discrimination (2.53), performance expectations (2.54), and work style differences (2.74) were rated as Neutral, indicating that these characteristics were not widely perceived as significant barriers. The predominance of neutral responses suggests that participants had different experiences. While no major structural barriers were identified, the relatively higher rating for work–life balance highlights the ongoing challenges women in decision-making roles face. Neutral perceptions of gender bias and performance expectations do not imply they are nonexistent; instead, these biases may be subtle or context-dependent (e.g., social identity threat in academic settings).

The relatively neutral rating of gender bias may also be influenced by broader societal and organizational norms in which gender inequalities are often normalized or subtle. In many institutional settings, gender bias may not be recognized or openly acknowledged by individuals, particularly when it is embedded in everyday organizational culture. As a result, respondents may perceive gender bias as less explicit even when structural inequalities persist.

The present findings are consistent with recent research from the Philippines that women in public leadership positions often handle integrating work, life, and organizational demands with their leadership role (Panalo, 2023; Dagohoy & Gascon, 2025). Results suggest that women public servants manage to perform their roles despite moderate challenges, particularly with work–life balance.

The generally neutral perception of challenges suggests that while barriers exist, they may not be experienced as overt constraints within the institutional environment. This may indicate that women public servants have developed adaptive strategies that allow them to function effectively despite structural and organizational pressures.

From the perspective of Equity Theory, this finding may reflect a perceived balance between effort and opportunity, where respondents do not strongly associate their challenges with unfair treatment. However, the presence of moderate work–life balance concerns indicates that gender-related expectations continue to influence women’s experiences in governance roles, even if these are not always explicitly recognized.

These findings reflect principles emphasized in Gender and Development (GAD) frameworks, which recognize that women’s leadership experiences are shaped not only by formal institutional structures but also by gendered social expectations.

D. Level of Performance of the Respondents

This section evaluated the leadership performance of women public servants across four governance dimensions: policy formulation, policy implementation, people management, and resource management. It addressed research question number three (3).

Table 8

Mean Scores of the Level of Performance of the Women Public Servants

Performance	Mean	Description
Policy Formulation	3.97	Agree
Policy Implementation	4.19	Agree
People Management	4.13	Agree
Resources Management	4.33	Agree
Overall Mean	4.16	Agree

Legend:

4.51–5.00 = Strongly Agree

3.51–4.50 = Agree

2.51–3.50 = Neutral

1.51–2.50 = Disagree

1.00–1.50 = Strongly Disagree

Table 8 indicates that all governance dimensions were rated “Agree,” indicating that respondents are generally positive in their self-assessments of leadership performance. Among the dimensions, resource management had the highest mean (4.33), indicating that respondents believed they were effective in managing financial and organizational resources.

The consistently positive performance ratings across governance dimensions suggest that women public servants are capable of effectively managing both administrative and operational responsibilities. This reflects a strong alignment between leadership attributes and functional performance in governance contexts.

These findings support Gender and Development (GAD) principles, which emphasize the importance of inclusive participation in achieving effective governance outcomes. The results imply that when women are actively engaged in governance roles, they contribute meaningfully to policy implementation, organizational management, and resource utilization.

On the other hand, Policy formulation received the lowest mean (3.97), although it remained within the “Agree” range, indicating comparatively lower, yet still favorable confidence. Respondents also rated policy implementation (4.19) and people management (4.13) positively, indicating they believed they could execute plans and manage personnel effectively. A mean score of 4.16, on the other hand, suggests that women public servants generally perceived themselves as performing effectively across governance dimensions.

Because leadership performance was measured through self-reported responses, the findings may be subject to self-enhancement bias, in which respondents tend to rate their own leadership performance positively. Social desirability bias may also influence responses, as public servants may wish to present themselves in a favorable light that aligns with professional expectations.

In addition, societal expectations placed on public officials may also influence how respondents evaluate their own performance. Women in leadership roles may feel a heightened need to demonstrate competence and effectiveness, which can shape how they report their leadership behaviors and achievements.

The results are consistent with previous studies in the Philippines, which show that women serving in local government offices possess strong competencies for administrative and managerial tasks. For instance, Dela Cruz and Mendoza (2023) found that female public servants demonstrated competence in policy implementation and organizational management, while Soriano and Almeda (2022) reported positive leadership performance by female administrators in community and local governance settings. The present findings are consistent with this research stream, indicating that women public servants perceive themselves as competent across governance dimensions.

The dominance of team building and receptivity reflects leadership behaviors associated with transformational leadership theory, particularly the dimensions of individualized consideration and collaborative engagement.

E. Significant Differences in Dominant Attributes and Challenges Encountered Across Profiles of Women Public Servants

This section examined whether significant differences exist in the dominant leadership traits and challenges of women public servants across profile variables. It addresses Research Question 4, which seeks to determine whether selected profile characteristics are associated with significant differences in leadership attributes and experienced challenges.

Table 9

Test of Significant Differences in Dominant Attributes Across Profiles of Women Public Servants

Profile Variable	Sum of Squares (Between Groups)	df	F Value	p- Value	Decision at 0.05	Interpretation
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Age	0.30	3	0.37	0.78	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	0.81	2	1.53	0.221	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Socio Economic Status	1.05	2	2.02	0.14	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Involvement	0.66	3	0.83	0.48	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Note. In a one-way ANOVA, the F-statistic is the ratio of the between-groups mean square to the within-groups mean square, with significance indicating variability attributable to the independent variable.

Table 9 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA examining differences in dominant attributes across profile variables. The findings revealed no statistically significant differences when grouped according to age, $F(3, 96) = 0.37, p = .78$; educational attainment, $F(2, 97) = 1.53, p = .221$; socio-economic status, $F(2, 97) = 2.02, p = .14$; and nature of involvement in governance, $F(3, 96) = 0.83, p = .48$.

Although the Shapiro–Wilk test indicated deviations from normality in some groups, the one-way ANOVA is considered robust to moderate violations of normality, particularly when group sizes are reasonably large and comparable. Therefore, the parametric analysis was retained.

Thus, the null hypotheses were retained. These findings indicate that dominant leadership attributes are consistently manifested regardless of demographic and professional profile characteristics.

Although the ANOVA results did not indicate statistically significant differences across profile variables, further examination of subgroup patterns suggests that variations in leadership attributes may still be influenced by differences in educational attainment and governance involvement. Respondents with postgraduate education tended to report relatively higher scores in leadership attributes such as professionalism and team building. This pattern suggests that higher education and leadership training may contribute to the development of governance-related competencies among women public servants.

The absence of significant differences in leadership attributes across profile variables suggests that these competencies are consistently demonstrated regardless of demographic characteristics. This indicates that leadership effectiveness among women public servants is not confined to specific age groups, educational levels, or governance roles, but is instead broadly distributed across the workforce.

This finding highlights the potential of women public servants to perform effectively across diverse institutional contexts. It also suggests that leadership development initiatives may be applied broadly rather than targeted exclusively to specific demographic groups.

Table 10

Test of Significant Differences on Challenges Encountered Across Profiles of Women Public Servants

Profile Variable	Sum of Squares (Between Groups)	df	F Value	p- Value	Decision at 0.05	Interpretation
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Age	4.47	3	1.76	0.16	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	3.89	3	1.52	0.23	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Socio Economic Status	7.591	2	4.72	0.01	Reject Ho	Significant
Nature of Involvement	3.64	3	1.42	0.24	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Table 10 presents the results of the one-way ANOVA examining differences in challenges encountered across selected profile variables. Before inferential testing, assumptions were assessed. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that challenge scores were approximately normally distributed across most profile groups, with only minor deviations observed in isolated categories. Homogeneity of variance was examined using Levene’s test, which indicated that the assumption of equal variances was met, $F(2, 97) = 2.679, p = .074$. Thus, the standard one-way ANOVA was deemed appropriate.

The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in challenges encountered when grouped according to age, $F(3, 96) = 1.76, p = .16$; educational attainment, $F(3, 96) = 1.52, p = .23$; and nature of involvement in governance, $F(3, 96) = 1.42, p = .24$. These results suggest that the challenges experienced by women public servants are generally consistent across variations in age, formal education, and functional role in governance. The absence of significant differences across these variables indicates that professional challenges may be systemic rather than age- or position-specific, reflecting shared structural conditions within the public service environment.

However, a statistically significant difference was observed when challenges were grouped according to socio-economic status, $F(2, 97) = 4.72, p = .011$. The effect size was moderate ($\eta^2 = .089$), indicating that socioeconomic status accounts for approximately 8.9% of the variance in perceived challenges. This suggests that, while not overwhelming, the difference has practical relevance. This finding indicates that socio-economic background significantly influences the level of challenges encountered. To determine the source of this difference, a Tukey HSD post hoc test was conducted.

Post hoc analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between respondents from lower-class and middle-class socio-economic backgrounds (Mean Difference = 0.81, $p = .009$). Specifically, women from lower socio-economic backgrounds reported significantly higher levels of challenges compared to their middle-class counterparts. No statistically significant differences were found between lower and mid-upper class groups ($p = .714$) or between middle and mid-upper class groups ($p = .773$).

Critically, this pattern suggests that socio-economic positioning functions as a structural determinant of professional experience. Women from lower socio-economic backgrounds may encounter compounded constraints, including limited access to social capital, fewer institutional support networks, and reduced resource buffers that facilitate professional advancement. The absence of significant differences within the mid-upper class group should be interpreted cautiously, given the very small sample size ($n = 3$), which limits statistical power and generalizability.

The significant difference observed across socio-economic groups indicates that structural conditions influence how challenges are experienced. Women from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face additional constraints, such as limited access to resources, support systems, and professional networks.

This finding reinforces Equity Theory, which emphasizes that unequal access to opportunities and resources can shape individual experiences within organizations. It highlights the importance of considering socio-economic factors in designing policies and support mechanisms for women in governance.

Overall, the findings imply that while leadership challenges are broadly shared among women public servants, socio-economic background introduces differential vulnerability. This underscores the importance of considering class-based structural inequalities when examining women’s professional experiences in governance contexts. Programs aimed at supporting women public servants may therefore need to incorporate socio-economic sensitivity to ensure equitable institutional support mechanisms.

This pattern can be interpreted through the lens of Equity Theory, which suggests that individuals evaluate fairness based on the balance between their contributions and the resources or opportunities available to them.

F. Relationship between Leadership Attributes and Challenges Encountered and Leadership Performance

This section examines the relationship between women public servants’ leadership attributes and the challenges they encounter regarding their overall leadership performance. Using Pearson correlation analysis, Table 10 examines whether these factors are significantly associated with performance outcomes, highlighting the strength and direction of the relationships and determining which variables meaningfully influence leadership effectiveness.

Table 11

Test of Relationship on Leadership Attributes and Challenges Encountered

Variables	Pearson r	p- Value	Decision at 0.05	Interpretation
Leadership Attributes and Performance	0.67	0.00	Reject Ho	Significant
Challenges Encountered and Performance	0.01	0.95	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Note: Pearson correlation is robust to minor normality violations when the sample size is sufficiently large (n ≥ 30).

Table 11 presents the test of relationships among leadership attributes, challenges encountered, and leadership performance. Before correlation analysis, distributional assumptions were examined using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Results indicated that Leadership Attributes (p < .001) and Leadership Performance (p < .001) significantly deviated from normality, whereas Challenges Encountered did not (p = .143). While these results suggest non-normality for two variables, the sample size (n = 100) exceeds the conventional threshold at which parametric procedures are considered robust to moderate violations of normality. In large samples, sampling distributions of correlation coefficients approximate normality due to the Central Limit Theorem, thereby reducing sensitivity to minor distributional irregularities.

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between leadership attributes and leadership performance (r = .667, p < .001). This indicates that higher levels of

demonstrated leadership attributes are associated with higher reported leadership performance. In contrast, the correlation between challenges encountered and performance was negligible and non-significant ($r = .006$, $p = .951$), suggesting no direct linear association at the bivariate level.

The results indicate that leadership attributes such as professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team-building are significantly associated with higher levels of governance performance, suggesting that relational and ethical leadership behaviors contribute to more effective public administration practices.

These findings reinforce Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes relational leadership behaviors such as collaboration, responsiveness, and empowerment as drivers of effective organizational performance.

To evaluate the robustness of these findings under relaxed distributional assumptions, Spearman's rho was computed. The non-parametric results corroborated the significant positive association between leadership attributes and performance ($\rho = .473$, $p < .001$), though with a more moderate magnitude. Importantly, the decision regarding statistical significance remained unchanged across parametric and non-parametric approaches. Similarly, Spearman found no significant relationship between challenges encountered and performance ($\rho = -.064$, $p = .527$). The convergence of statistical decisions across Pearson and Spearman analyses strengthens confidence that the observed associations are not artifacts of distributional assumptions.

To further examine the combined association between leadership attributes, challenges, and performance, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(2, 97) = 44.617$, $p < .001$, explaining 47.9% of the variance in leadership performance ($R^2 = .479$; Adjusted $R^2 = .468$). This indicates that nearly half of the variability in performance scores is associated with the two explanatory variables considered jointly.

A supplementary multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the combined contribution of leadership attribute dimensions to performance (see Appendix B).

Importantly, the regression findings do not contradict the correlational results but rather extend them. Pearson's correlation establishes the presence or absence of a linear association, whereas regression clarifies the relative contributions of variables when examined simultaneously. The strong effect of leadership attributes across both correlation and regression analyses indicates a consistent and robust association with performance. Meanwhile, the small negative regression coefficient for challenges suggests a contextual influence that is not evident in simple bivariate correlation but emerges when accounting for competency-related factors.

The significant positive relationship between leadership attributes and governance performance underscores the importance of individual leadership capacity in achieving effective governance outcomes. This suggests that competencies such as professionalism, integrity, receptivity, and team building are key drivers of performance among women public servants.

This finding strongly supports Transformational Leadership Theory, which posits that leaders who demonstrate strong interpersonal and ethical qualities are more effective in motivating teams and achieving organizational goals. It implies that leadership effectiveness in local governance is not solely determined by structural conditions but is largely influenced by the quality of leadership behaviors.

In contrast, the absence of a significant relationship between challenges encountered and performance suggests that women public servants are able to maintain performance levels despite experiencing workplace challenges. This may indicate resilience and adaptability in navigating institutional and social pressures.

Overall, the convergence of Pearson, Spearman, and regression results supports the methodological decision to retain Pearson's correlation despite minor deviations from normality. Statistical significance decisions remain consistent across analytic techniques, and the regression model further demonstrates that leadership

attributes are the dominant predictor of performance. These findings should be interpreted as associative rather than causal, reflecting statistical relationships within the observed sample.

G. Insights from Open-Ended Questions

Qualitative open-ended survey results are presented in this section. These questions sought to elicit women public servants' personal experiences, perspectives, and issues that quantitative assessments could not capture. Responses were analyzed thematically. This required identifying, labeling, and categorizing recurring motifs. These comments help explain contextual factors that affect leadership traits and performance, complementing quantitative results.

The qualitative findings reinforce the quantitative results by highlighting the internal motivations, values, and coping strategies of women public servants. Themes such as commitment to service, resilience, and adaptability provide deeper insight into how leadership attributes are translated into practice.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings strengthens the overall interpretation of the study, demonstrating that leadership effectiveness is shaped by both measurable competencies and lived experiences within governance contexts.

Motivations of Women Public Servants

The majority of the participants indicated leadership stems from a strong sense of service, moral purpose, and a commitment to helping others. Women public servants reported that their work has a positive impact and that their desire to empower other women motivates them.

Many respondents claimed serving the community is their primary motivation. One councilor in Valenzuela commented, "*Seeing the impact of the projects on people motivates me,*" and another elected official said, "*My passion is to help the community.*" Along with service, many women see leadership as a way to help others. One respondent stated, "*I want every female to feel connected,*" and another said, "*I know what women can add to the table.*"

Strong religious and spiritual orientation also grounded them. One individual added, "*Ginagawa ko ito para sa Panginoon,*" demonstrating how faith keeps them leading. These experiences show that women's leadership is based on competence, purpose, representation, and relational connectedness.

Challenges Encountered

Despite their contributions to amplifying public voices in policy processes, female public servants persistently encounter obstacles and impediments associated with their gender, stereotypes, and systemic disadvantages. A considerable number of respondents indicated that they are often undervalued in comparison to their male counterparts.

One of the respondents stated, "Some people think men are better than women in leadership", while another shared, "Hindi ako kinukuha seriously dahil babae ako". These sentiments reflect a persistent belief that leadership is predominantly a male sphere.

Participants also recognized structural obstacles inside political institutions. "*Politics is difficult, you always have to prove yourself,*" one respondent articulated, highlighting the strain linked to women's prominence in leadership positions, limited resources and institutional support further compound these challenges.

The theme suggests that the obstacles encountered by female public servants arise not from their abilities, but from systematic and ingrained gender norms. These gender norms are aligned with prevailing societal and corporate expectations.

Strategies for Maintaining Work-Life Balance

The importance of work-life balance is consistently emphasized by women public servants. Ensuring effective leadership performance without compromising time for their families is a significant challenge, particularly for married people with children.

One respondent stated, "*By setting clear boundaries and respecting them,*" and another person said, "*I prioritize tasks and delegate when needed.*" Women take ownership of their lives while balancing various roles.

Support systems, especially family, were crucial. One participant commented, "*My family supports me, and that helps a lot.*" This assistance allows women to lead without sacrificing their personal lives.

This theme suggests that women are better leaders when they have personal and organizational support systems to help them navigate challenging situations.

Leadership Qualities and Styles

Participants highlighted qualities that are favorable in governance roles that require listening and mutual understanding. Statements such as "Women lead with empathy and compassion" and "Women talk better and listen more" are framed as relational strengths that contribute to trust-building and inclusive decision-making.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of resilience, alongside relational skills, as women public servants demonstrated persistence in the face of challenges, balancing emotional intelligence with determination. One person noted: "Resilient, brave, and strong." This theme suggests that effective female leadership is more about connecting with, relating to, and responding to the needs of their community than about skills alone.

Recommendation for Future Women Public Servants

Participants identified several strategies to enhance women's involvement in leadership, including capacity-building, inclusive environments, and supportive policies. These suggestions show that people are highly aware of both the problems and the ways to gain power.

People often suggested training and mentoring. One person said, "*Provide leadership training for women,*" and another said, "*Mentorship from experienced leaders.*" It was also important to make safe and welcoming spaces: "*Create safe spaces so women can speak freely.*"

Recommendations also included institutional support, such as ensuring women have the same opportunities to make decisions and participate in programs that involve women. These comments reflect a group's call for places that recognize and support women in growing as leaders.

Contextual Influences and Environment

Cultural and domestic expectations are considered constraints on performing leadership roles. Taking care of others, running a household, and adhering to social norms are among the challenges women public servants face.

One participant said, "Family responsibilities hold women back," and another said, "Takot silang i-judge kapag nagkamali." These responses show how internal and external pressures, such as fear of judgment, affect women's willingness to take on leadership roles.

Thematic Insights

Respondents stated societal and domestic expectations hinder women's complete participation in leadership positions, despite their leadership capabilities. Caregiving, household management, and compliance with societal standards were found to be factors influencing leadership engagement.

Participants stated, "Family responsibilities hold women back," and "They are afraid of being judged if they make a mistake." These narratives demonstrate how personal and environmental factors can shape women's readiness to take on leadership roles.

Some respondents identified low confidence and limited access to training opportunities as challenges linked to cultural norms. These findings indicate that initiatives targeting both organizational frameworks and ingrained cultural norms around gender roles may be necessary.

The study's findings provide empirical insights that can be interpreted through several theoretical perspectives on leadership and gender in governance. First, the prominence of team building and receptivity as dominant leadership attributes reflects characteristics associated with transformational leadership theory, particularly the emphasis on collaboration, responsiveness, and relationship-building in effective leadership. Second, the persistence of work-life balance challenges and the subtle presence of gender-related barriers are consistent with Gender and Development (GAD) frameworks, which recognize that both institutional structures and gendered social expectations shape women's leadership experiences. Finally, the significant differences in challenges across socio-economic status may be interpreted through the lens of Equity Theory, suggesting that variations in access to resources, social capital, and institutional support may influence how women experience professional barriers within governance settings. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a broader conceptual lens for understanding women's participation and leadership in local governance.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

To provide a comprehensive interpretation of the results, the study integrated the quantitative survey findings with qualitative insights derived from open-ended responses and key informant interviews. A joint display matrix was constructed to examine areas where statistical patterns converged with the narratives of women public servants. This integration allowed the study to contextualize numerical trends with lived experiences and leadership perspectives within Valenzuela City's governance environment.

Table 12

Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings on Women's Leadership in Governance

Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Themes	Integrated Interpretation
Team building (M = 4.59) and receptivity (M = 4.52) were the highest leadership attributes.	Respondents described women public servants as empathetic, collaborative, and attentive listeners. Statements such as "Women lead with empathy and compassion" and "Women talk better and participatory governance and strengthen	Both data sources indicate that relational and collaborative leadership styles are dominant characteristics among women public servants. These competencies support and strengthen

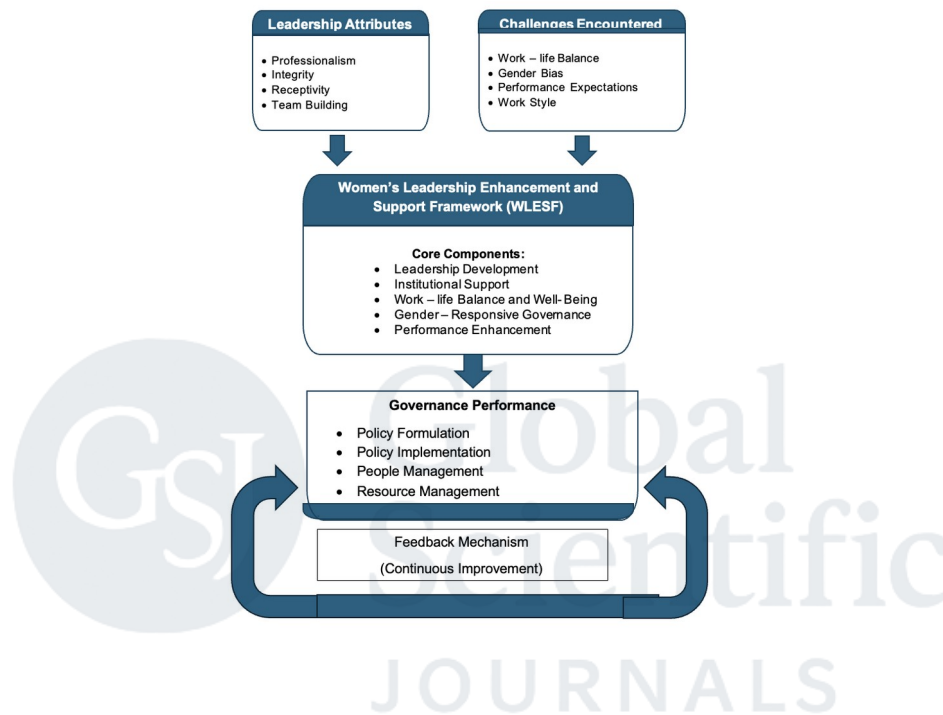
Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Themes	Integrated Interpretation
Integrity received the lowest attribute mean (M = 3.73) though rated "Agree."	<p>listen more" were common.</p> <p>Respondents emphasized moral purpose, service orientation, and spiritual motivation such as "Ginagawa ko ito para sa Panginoon."</p>	<p>teamwork in public institutions.</p> <p>While integrity received the lowest relative rating among attributes, qualitative responses suggest that ethical commitment remains a strong motivational foundation for women public servants.</p>
Work-life balance was the highest challenge (M = 3.68), while gender bias and performance expectations were rated neutral.	<p>Respondents shared strategies such as delegating tasks, setting boundaries, and relying on family support systems.</p>	<p>The integration indicates that women public servants acknowledge work-life balance challenges but actively manage them through adaptive coping strategies and social support.</p>
Leadership performance across governance was rated positively (overall M = 4.16).	<p>Participants emphasized resilience, dedication to service, and commitment to community impact.</p>	<p>Quantitative perceptions of strong leadership performance are reinforced by qualitative narratives highlighting resilience, motivation, and commitment to public service.</p>
Leadership attributes were strongly correlated with leadership performance (r = .67).	<p>Respondents highlighted leadership qualities such as empathy, resilience, and strong communication skills.</p>	<p>The convergence of findings suggests that leadership attributes play a critical role in shaping effective governance performance among women public servants.</p>
Socio-economic status showed significant differences in challenges encountered.	<p>Some respondents noted limited resources and institutional barriers affecting their professional experience.</p>	<p>Both findings suggest that socio-economic background may shape access to support systems and influence the level of challenges experienced by women in governance roles.</p>

Table 12 shows the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study highlight the leadership strengths of women public servants, particularly in relational leadership attributes such as team building and receptivity. It also revealed structural limitations in policy participation and socio-economic influences on leadership challenges. These findings provide an empirical basis for developing a proposed model to strengthen women's participation in local governance.

IV. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Based on the findings of the study, a Women’s Leadership Enhancement and Support Framework (WLESF) is proposed. The framework integrates leadership development, institutional support, work–life balance initiatives, gender-responsive governance, and performance enhancement mechanisms.

The framework aims to strengthen leadership capacity, address workplace challenges, and promote inclusive and effective governance among women public servants.



V. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that leadership attributes play a significant role in enhancing governance performance among women public servants in Valenzuela City. Strong competencies in team building, receptivity, professionalism, and integrity contribute to effective performance across key governance functions, including policy implementation, people management, and resource management. These findings highlight the importance of relational and participatory leadership, consistent with Transformational Leadership Theory and Gender and Development (GAD) principles.

While challenges such as work–life balance are present, they do not significantly hinder performance, indicating resilience and adaptability among women public servants. However, the influence of socio-economic status on the level of challenges experienced suggests that structural conditions remain relevant in shaping leadership experiences. Overall, the study emphasizes the need to strengthen leadership development and institutional support mechanisms to promote inclusive, gender-responsive, and effective local governance.

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