



IPED
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

CURRENT ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 21

SPRING 2024

FORDHAM | IPED

Fordham University's graduate program in International Political Economy and Development trains graduate students in the advanced interdisciplinary analysis of global economic relations and international development issues. Graduates frequently pursue professional careers in global finance and banking, international economic policy, and international relief and development.

Current Issues in Development is a student-run newsletter of Fordham's IPED program. It shares IPED's analysis and experience in economic and humanitarian development with prospective students and friends in the academic, non-profit, government, and corporate community.

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Jesse Loper Defends Housing Rights in Denver

Jesse Loper (IPED 2009) was already attending Fordham School of Law before joining the IPED program. Jesse looks to his work with a community center in Hell's Kitchen as influencing his decision to add an IPED degree to his credentials. "I realized that this is what I really wanted to do. So, I signed up for the dual-degree program, and completed both degrees in three years."

After IPED, Jesse worked at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) serving as legal counselor and advisor for the single-family real estate portfolio and doing community economic development work. He later moved to Denver, Colorado and served in the general counsel's office. He also worked as a teaching fellow at the University of Denver in the school's Community Economic Development Clinic, helping law students get practical experience representing local business, nonprofits, and other community-based organizations.

Today, Jesse is Director of Foreclosure Defense at the Community Economic Defense Project (CEDP). Founded in 2020, CEDP started with a Facebook post by one of its founders offering legal assistance to people with housing issues. More than 500 responded to the post. More attorneys joined the effort on a volunteer basis, but subsequently, decided to start an organization to serve the community's needs. "The wave of evictions in the city increased significantly since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic." The team has now grown well over 100 employees.

Jesse leads the Foreclosure Defense, representing homeowners facing foreclosures and other threats to homeownership, mobile owners facing eviction from their lots or predatory foreclosures. CEDP has other people working on the Finance team, legal advocates providing one-on-one assistance, and payments-processing teams, for tenants and homeowners alike. "We connect them



to resources they need to help pay their rent or mortgage through emergency mortgage and rental assistance programs. We also negotiate with landlords on our clients' behalf to allow more time. It really depends on the case. Lastly, the CEDP has people working on policy reform to help protect tenants and homeowners.

Jesse credits the IPED culture for pursuing community-driven work. "The Law school is huge. The IPED class was smaller with a phenomenal sense of community. We also had a lot of people with an eye for development and creating positive change... you will find similar-minded people in other programs but it's a more shared vision in IPED than it is in other programs. You also realize that you are connecting with people across so many different sectors, from banking or United Nations work, and so on. It is similar to my job in that I have to understand the financing side in order to know what legal routes to take in a given case. I also need to communicate with and depend on people from other professional backgrounds."

Higher Education Scholarship Programs and Their Influence on Student Dropout

BY ANA BARRAGAN

Higher education has proven beneficial to individuals, families, and societies, both in economic and non-economic aspects. Benefits of obtaining higher education include improved skills, higher income, and increased life expectancy on an individual level, and political stability, economic growth, and environmental sustainability on a societal level. However, one of the impediments to education is high dropout rates that persist even in the most developed nations. One of the actions widely taken to address dropouts are scholarship programs. This study seeks to answer whether financial support in the shape of scholarships decreases the probability of dropping out among students of higher education by evaluating a dataset from the Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre.

Despite the considerable private and social returns of higher education, dropout rates continue to hamper the potential of many. On average, 31% of students in member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) drop out of tertiary education, with only 39% of bachelor's degree students graduating within the expected timeframe of their program (OECD, 2022). Among the factors leading students dropping out are poverty, lack of educational infrastructure, crisis or emergency, geographical mobility, and discrimination.

Multiple personal and external factors can lead to these results. Among them are the students' abilities, and to a lesser extent, previous learning outcomes (Namoun & Alshantqi, 2021). Environmental factors such as poverty, crisis and emergency, lack of educational infrastructure, geographical mobility, and discrimination are some of the principal barriers to ensure access and completion rates in tertiary education.

I ran a series of logistic regressions to determine the main factors influencing a student abandoning their studies. The results indicate that scholarship holders present 77.2% less probability of dropping out than



Image by iStock

non-scholarship holders. Other significant factors are the student being male, a debtor, having a higher age at the time of enrollment, and obtaining low grades in the second semester.

Finally, the interpretation of the odds ratio indicates that scholarship holders are 75.6% less likely to abandon higher education studies without a degree than non-holders, *ceteris paribus*. We can also identify the odds of dropping out considering other factors. Holding all other variables fixed, men are 89.8% more likely to desert university than women. On the other hand, international students are approximately 44.6% less likely to drop out than national students, similar to students with higher grades at the end of the second semester, who for every extracurricular unit have 26.5% less chances of dropping out, *ceteris paribus*. Holding all variables fixed, the odds of dropping out increase by 5% for every extra year of age a student has at the time of enrollment, and likewise, the odds of dropping out increase if the student holds a debt, with results pointing out that for every 1.0 non-debtor that drops out almost 7 debtors will.

It is worth noting that, although not statistically significant in our model, all students whose fathers' qualifications were unknown dropped out of school. The number of students who presented this

characteristic was small (81 out of 3,360 individuals in the sample), however, this strong relationship can help the institution identify students at risk early on, and direct efforts to decrease their chances of dropping out either through scholarships or other support programs.

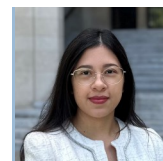
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The Model

$$\text{Pr}(\text{student status} = 1) = F(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{scholarship status}_i^{***} + \beta_2 \text{marital status}_i + \beta_3 \text{male}_i^{***} + \beta_4 \text{age}_i^{***} + \beta_5 \text{immigration status}_i + \beta_6 \text{previous qualification}_i + \beta_7 \text{special needs}_i + \beta_8 \text{debtor}_i^{***} + \beta_9 \text{course}_i^{***} + \beta_{10} \text{grades1semi}_i + \beta_{11} \text{grades2semi}_i^{***} + \beta_{12} \text{mothers qualifications}_i + \beta_{13} \text{fathers qualifications}_i + \beta_{14} \text{unemployment rate}_i + \beta_{15} \text{inflation rate}_i + \beta_{16} \text{GDP}_i + \epsilon_i)$$

Notes: *** = statistically significant at 99%; * = statistically significant at 90%
Data sources: BMCC, UNESCO, World Bank, OECD



Ana Barragán is a Fulbright Scholar pursuing her master's degree in Fordham University's IPED program.

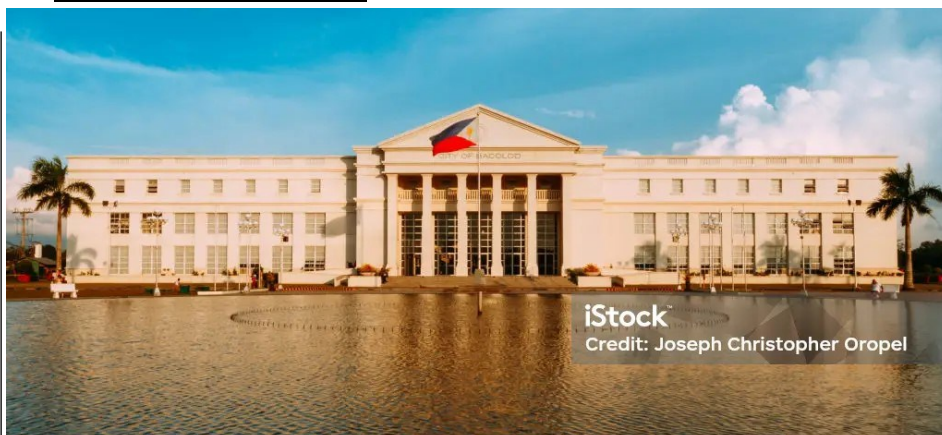
Determinants for Attainment of Seal of Good Local Governance in the Philippines

BY FATIMA VILLAMOR

The seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) is a progressive performance assessment system in the Philippines that gives distinction to local governments at the provincial, city, and municipal level for meeting standards across key governance areas. The framework of the award is harmonized with national target outcomes such as financial administration, disaster preparedness, social protection, peace and order, business friendliness and competitiveness, environmental protection, and tourism, culture, and the arts. This paper examines whether leadership under dynastic families at the local government level (province, city, and municipality), dependency on local revenue collection, and budget for services are determinants of the local government's ability to attain the SGLG in the Philippines. By analyzing data from the 2016 local elections and SGLG, revenue collection, and services budget data from 2017 to 2019, this study seeks to understand the factors that determine good performance in local government service delivery.

The provision of basic services once delivered by the national government in the areas of health, social services, the environment, and agriculture, to name a few, are now performed by local governments as stipulated in the Local Government Code of 1991. With the increased responsibilities for local governments, it is vital to properly assess their ability to effectively meet the demands of their increased mandate. This paper hypothesizes that the state of political capture, where interests of the dominant dynastic leader is prioritized over their constituents, is a predictor of poor performance in the delivery of basic services as measured by the SGLG.

Past literature has examined political dynasties and bureaucratic deficiencies as hindrances to government service delivery in



Presidential Palace in the Philippines. Image by iStock

the Philippines. Resiliency of dynasties has been associated with “rent-seeking and allocation of state resources to further private interests.” The concentration of political power increases the “risk of political capture” where policies and institutions benefit only a narrow set of interests

Across all descriptive statistics of the dataset, the results show little deviation in the local government's services budget and local revenue dependency levels from 2017 to 2019. Several local governments in the municipality cluster have a budget allocated all towards services expenditures and none on investments. Furthermore, *ceteris paribus*, provinces with a higher local revenue dependency are associated with greater odds of 14% in 2017, 7% in 2018, and 9% in 2019, of attaining the award. This confirms the hypothesis that ability to generate more revenue is a predictor for attainment of the award, but the effect, although consistent, is minimal. The consistency of the effect across the three years may just be an indicator that the revenue collection did not vary much across the three years.

Excluding the city variable in 2017, the dynastic leadership has no significant effect across other types of local governments receiving the award. Future analyses may look

at the proportion and concentration of dynastic elected officials within different local governments, as has been done in previous studies. Political dynasties also persist over time, and future studies may want to account for the longevity of dynasties as an alternative specification for dynastic leadership.

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THE MODEL

$$\text{Attainment of Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) Award} = B_0 + B_1 \text{Dynastic local government leadership} + B_2 \text{Percentage of local revenue dependence} + B_3 \text{Percentage of services budget} + e$$

Data Sources: *American Economic Review*, *World Bank*, *ASEAN*, *Ateneo Policy Center*, *Philippines Government*

Dynastic local leadership is defined when at the minimum, the Local Chief Executive (mayor for cities and municipalities, and governor for provinces) belongs to a “fat dynasty”. An elected official is defined as coming from a fat dynasty, defined as having more than one other family member in the province elected during the same election year.



Fatima Villamor is an Arrupe Fellow pursuing an MA in Fordham University's IPED Program.

Book Feature: *The Rich Flee The Poor Take the Bus* by Dr. Troy Tassier

Prof. Troy Tassier is Professor of Economics at Fordham University. His recent book, *"The Rich Flee The Poor Take the Bus,"* calls on his expertise in Social Networks and Economic Epidemiology to document and draw lessons from the Covid-19 Pandemic. He finds striking similarities to historical epidemics in cities such as the Plague in 1625 London, the Yellow Fever in 1793 Philadelphia, and Cholera in 1832 New York.

"Unfortunately, there isn't a lot that is different about Covid-19 compared to previous pandemics. The damage was physically, economically, and health-wise more significant to disadvantaged groups." Marginalized groups in the US tend to stay in overcrowded housing, lack economic opportunities, and are at the frontlines of pandemics. Furthermore, once things settle down for the privileged groups, the situation remains unfavorable for those living in areas with higher rates of poverty. Dr. Tassier used mobile data that track people's cellphones to study their movements. The data shows that only 5% percent of New York City's



Credit: *Beth Boyland Photography*

population left during the pandemic. However, if segregating the fleeing population by neighborhood, 50-60% were residents of areas with the top 1 to 5% of NYC's incomes. Comparatively, almost nobody left the Bronx, Queens, and many parts of Brooklyn. Furthermore, the middle-income folks who stayed in the city were largely working from home, ordering groceries for delivery, driving instead of taking the subway, and taking other safety measures those in impoverished neighborhoods could not afford to.

"I found that lower-income areas experienced little change in their daily activities than their more affluent counterparts. The ability to shelter oneself was vastly contrasting." Dr. Tassier's success in correlating mobility to infection reflects other studies estimating a 20% decrease in total cases per capita for every ten percentage point fall in mobility in five major US cities (Glaeser et al, 2020).

"It's important to look beyond general population density when analyzing the mobility and closeness of people that leads to infection. Richer neighborhoods can

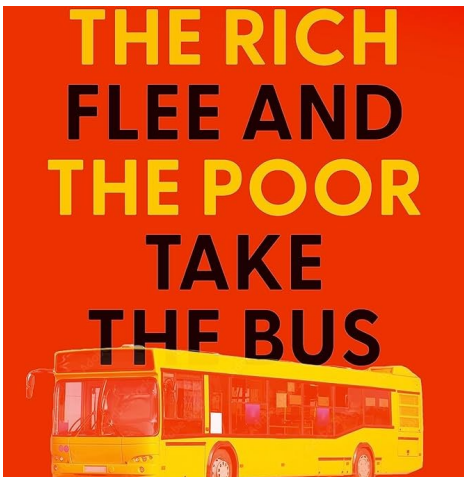
accommodate a lot of people in skyscrapers with 'upper density' that provides each household with a lot of space; they also have bigger sidewalks, parks, and other amenities. Poorer neighborhoods, have 'inward density' that packs a lot people in apartment buildings and other smaller spaces with little breathing room."

Speaking on the response to the pandemic, Dr. Tassier finds that our policies didn't differentiate enough who needed relief checks from who didn't. "They didn't target vaccines to the most vulnerable and the highly infectious areas first. Rates of testing were much lower in the same underserved areas. The marginalized groups were harmed both in terms of health and economics."

Similar to pandemics from centuries prior, the socioeconomic standing of people determined people's welfare, life or death in many cases, and who fled from who stayed. New policies can only be effective with structural changes if our society is to deal better with future epidemics.

Arrupe Fellowship

Designed to attract highly qualified full-time students who have a strong interest in pursuing a career with an international development and relief organization, the Arrupe Fellowship consists of a tuition scholarship, a generous living stipend, and an additional stipend for an overseas summer field placement either in Latin America, Africa, or Asia. Eligibility criteria are: relevant work experience in a developing country; professional proficiency in a language widely used in international development, preferably French; intention to apply for an International Development Fellowship with Catholic Relief Services; and willingness to complete the Project Management course sequence. The application deadline is early January. For further information, go to iped.fordham.edu and follow the link to "Financial Aid."



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