

# Characteristics, Competencies, and Approaches of Good Governance: Insights from Young Public Servants in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Marie Abigail Betay  
School of Education, Arts and  
Sciences  
University of Saint Louis  
Tuguegarao City, Philippines

John Vincent Ciubal  
School of Education, Arts and  
Sciences  
University of Saint Louis  
Tuguegarao City, Philippines

Domenick Mariano  
School of Education, Arts and  
Sciences  
University of Saint Louis  
Tuguegarao City, Philippines

**Abstract**— Public service is a critical aspect of any functioning society, as it plays a central role in delivering essential services and promoting the common good. With the emergence of modernization, an increase in the number of young politicians joining public service is evident. It is, therefore, important to look at the practices and roles of young politicians in the process of good governance in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public service. This basic qualitative study was conducted to understand the characteristics, competencies, and approaches associated with good governance exhibited by young politicians for effective leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century political landscape. This research utilized a qualitative method employing a case study research method. Five (5) public servants were selected as informants of the study using a purposive sampling technique. The researchers interviewed the politicians, and the data gathered were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researchers identified a set of qualities linked with public servants of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, wit, Characteristics and Competencies of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Servants, including Trailblazer, Humble, Tenacious, Visionary, and Generative. In addition, Leadership Approaches to public service in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are as follows: Lifelong Learning Approach to Leadership, Grounded Approach to Leadership, Community Direct Approach to Leadership, and Ethical Approach to Leadership. It was found that these characteristics, competencies, and strategies enable them to act on their responsibilities in serving the public. Furthermore, the study offers recommendations for creating a framework and validation from experts to establish a well-developed framework. Hence, this study provides recommendations to public servants, government agencies, lawmakers, political experts, political scientists, and future researchers.

**Keywords**— 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Servants, Public Service, Characteristics and Competencies, Strategies, Good Governance.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Governance is the effective and accountable management of state affairs, characterized by transparency, participation, the rule of law, and responsiveness to the needs and visions of the citizens (Zaitul et al., 2023). It has been a crucial point for policy implementation and decision-making (Pomeranz and Stedman, 2020), including local and central administration. As humans are enmeshed in politics, the crux of exploring politics and governance is rewarding, both intellectually and practically, as it involves great issues that arise in the real world (Duverger, 2012). It has been widely argued that governments worldwide are currently wobbling on the verge of significant transformation. Such broad and drastic transformation is unprecedented, but it is vital to ensure that future public services will be fit for purpose within a new framework as the world is evolving rapidly (Dickinson & Sullivan, 2014).

Public servants' challenges today are more complicated than ever (Warren, 2022). In the Philippine context, history has shown that governance has been characterized by excessive politics (Barnes, 2019), hence emphasizing the characteristics as way more critical in Philippine politics (Brillantes, 2012). This is true in governing contemporary politics, which requires good public administration (Henry, 2015), especially since the collective demands entail competency in delivering good governance to the general public. The Global Competitiveness Report 2021 shows that the Philippines is one of the states that have had the least improvements in terms of management (Pulse Asia Survey, 2022). This exemplifies that the Philippines is weak but not a failed state (Abinales, 2013). Zaldarriaga (2022) asserts that among these challenges, the administration can improve the state's global competitiveness by focusing on the long-old-century-issues of corruption and poverty while promoting innovation.

With the emergence of modernization, young politicians tend to actively participate in the development process (Marques, 2013), as evidenced by remaining engaged in the local and national political scene to this day. Young politicians tend to be more emotionally stable, extravert-assertive, deliberate-conscientious, and open and more honest, but also slightly more disagreeable, many of which are linked with leadership, political ambition, and increased media prominence (Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020). The Philippines recognizes and views diverse politics as essential in achieving a certain goal. These young politicians also tend to work rigorously and flexibly, pushing forward in the right direction while dealing with emergence, uncertainty, and adaptability along with their fellows (Trayner, 2020). Thus, to make a long-lasting impact, the participation of young politicians in formal political processes has a role in shaping today's and tomorrow's politics. It is also crucial for maintaining stable and peaceful communities and adopting policies that address the special needs of younger generations (Ace Project, 2018).

Numerous studies, books, essays, and op-ed pieces are directed against preparing government employees for future challenges and the global forces that will alter how governments operate (Van der Wal, 2017). However, these sources frequently forget that despite being united in their calling to serve the public, servants face extremely diverse obstacles and operate in varied environments depending on their location (Mussalogo, 2020). By virtue of public and servants, politicians everywhere share serving the public, providing services, and improving people's lives as their ultimate objectives. However, this universality of goal frequently obscures significant contextual variations. Additionally, the tools and abilities necessary to address these challenges will not likely be the same wherever they are (Gurtoo, 2015). Public service is under tremendous pressure and cannot expect to remain the same for decades at a time like the bureaucratic structures of the past in the rapidly developing world where new technologies emerge every day, news coverage happens at the speed of lightning, and citizens' scrutiny and demand are relentless and omnipresent (Hitchcock, 2017). Hence, there is a need to spark a discussion that could result in context-based insights on the different kinds of skills public servants need to prepare for the future (Kruyen and Van Genugten, 2019).

The Philippines rightfully recognizes young politicians as an ignition source of change. In past elections, young leaders came up, ran for office, and gained seats in some of the most crucial posts in the government (Cable News Network, 2019). They are a strong sign of what many young people fear as they offer a good indicator in today's generation on good governance, sustainability and inclusiveness, education, healthcare, and social services (Berse, 2022). This explains that young leaders joining and contributing to the modern political landscape can be a starting point for

the development of public service. On the contrary, those seeking government posts must pledge to meet these various demands to encourage broader political and civic participation from them. Thus, this paper examines the experiences of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public servants in public service. It specifically explores the characteristics, competencies, and approaches to the challenges they face while serving the public.

## II. METHODS

The study utilized the qualitative method, employing the case study research method. This method was used to examine the experiences and practices of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Servants towards social responsibility, effective and efficient leadership, and good governance. Five (5) public servants participated in the study, handling a position or office in the executive, legislative, and judiciary, those who knew administration by virtue of their professional roles, expertise, and experiences in the government.

The informants were purposively selected through the following criteria:

- a) Public Servant must be a millennial;
- b) Public Servant must be serving in the political arena beginning in 2000 or onwards;
- c) Public Servant holds a position in the Local Government Unit; and
- d) Public Servant demonstrates a willingness to participate.

An in-depth interview was utilized to obtain public servants' experiences and strategies during their duties to adapt and cope with the emerging needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The checklist was utilized to determine the demographic profile (i.e., sex, position in public service, political affiliation, etc.) of the participants in the study. The guide question answers four major topics essential in the study: their experiences, issues and challenges, strategy or approach in overcoming such, and the characteristics and competencies of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public servants. The data was gathered through an audio recording.

The researchers analyzed the gathered data through Thematic Analysis. According to Maguire and Delahun (2017), there are six steps. The first step is to become familiar with the data. In this step, the researchers re-read the data they have gathered and took down notes that are significant to the study. The second step is gathering the initial code. The researchers systematically organized the important data connected to the research question. Third is searching for the theme; the researchers created a theme that is connected to the data that have been gathered. Fourth, reviewing the themes, the researchers modified the theme and

checked if the theme made sense or was associated with the data. In this step, the researchers could eliminate, merge, and create new themes. The fifth step is defining the themes. The researchers identified the importance of the themes and how such are related to each other. Lastly, in the write-up, the researchers wrote the report on the thematic analysis of the study.

The researchers transcribed the audio-recorded data. The researchers highlighted all statements that have significance to the research problem; these significant statements were transferred to a table to facilitate the extraction of meanings for the coding and generating themes. Meanings were then formulated for each statement identified. Those meanings that had similar ideas were grouped into a common theme. The researchers then identified major themes. The themes were used to formulate a description and fundamental structure of how millennial politicians contribute to good governance.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the outset of this research is the qualitative exploration of the different characters and leadership approaches of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public service. After a thorough evaluation of the focused group conversation with the informants through the interview transcript, pieces of information with comparable ideas were grouped into themes. Hence, it can be revealed in the following results the different characters and leadership approaches of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public service.

#### ***Theme 1: Characteristics of a 21st Century Public Servant***

##### **a. Trailblazer**

Trailblazer is a pioneer, who willing to take risks and is prepared to take chances and follow a road that has not been established. Trailblazer leaders are those who lead by example and break new ground. They are not afraid to challenge the status quo and are willing to take risks to achieve their goals. They inspire others to think outside the box and to embrace change. Always seeking to do something different and approaching things with an innovative mindset. They should be comfortable doing things openly and welcoming new ideas and perspectives. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are as follows:

*PS03: "What leaders need is that they should be able to adapt to the present situations and not be afraid to take risks..."*

*PS05: "I want to do something different all the time, and I am comfortable doing things*

*openly. I face every challenge that may come my way because, in that manner, I know I will grow by being open-minded."*

Politicians' responses show that to be effective leaders, they must be receptive in such a way that will improve human societies through their political action. Their ideas must jive with what the sign of times demands and can balance the present and anticipate the future. Goncalves (2015) stated that progressive leaders prioritize the well-being of people. Thus, Baron (2023) explained that a receptive politician establishes criteria for assessing thought in terms of our thinking and the thinking of others. Furthermore, progressive leaders have had a tremendous impact on developing societies and promoting innovative change in a variety of fields. Kovisto and Sintonen (2020) specified that progressive leaders had a role in advancing social, political, and economic advancement, and they give lessons for prospective leaders and politicians wanting to effect good change. In their daily interactions with public entities, citizens increasingly demand great service quality (Luu, 2017). Public services can only be enhanced when civil officials are driven. Horth and Vehar (2012) highlighted the importance of such quality in effective leadership. Leaders are more likely to foster innovation and creativity within organizations if they are open to different ideas and perspectives. The capacity to promote innovative ideas and techniques is also crucial for effective leadership in modern times. This may lead to better decision-making, increased productivity, and a more engaged workforce (Amabile and Khaire, 2008).

##### **b. Humble**

Humble leaders support their team members' ideas, appreciate divergent viewpoints, and advocate the greatest ones. Humble leaders are ready to use everyone's ideas to further the organization's purpose. Public servants must acknowledge that they do not know everything, and there is always room for learning and improvement. They should be humble, open to suggestions, and willing to seek help and guidance from others, even in positions of authority. Humble leadership relates to a leader's approachable nature, which is defined by a desire to see oneself honestly, a willingness to show respect for others, and a teachable nature (Owens et al., 2013). Leader's humility is viewed as an interpersonal quality that followers may see in how the leader behaves in social situations. Having a precise, non-defensive, and objective self-examination is correctly represented by the behavioral traits of humble leaders, such as expressing a willingness to analyze oneself without exaggeration. Verbalizations of the informants are as follows:

*PS03: "I will not be ashamed to say that I still have many things to learn as a politician."*

*PS04: "Management at present is already complex hence a need to embrace the fact that we do not know everything."*

Based on the responses, a public servant can do better work by listening to others and building relationships with their constituents, building more meaningful lives. Suttie (2020) stated that humility might effectively overcome political divide. This is because humility allows individuals to let go of their defensiveness, accept the knowledge that contradicts their political beliefs, and recognize the humanity in those on the opposite side of the political spectrum. In a continually changing environment, the leader cannot possibly know the solution or even have the best knowledge. In dynamic circumstances, successful leaders spend less time depending on what they already know and more time exploring new thoughts and ideas. That is, gaining humility is not thinking less of what you already know but less of what you already know (Tarling et al., 2022).

Among these leadership philosophies, humble leadership has the potential to be a powerful project success indicator. Even though humility was listed as a need for project managers Briere et al. (2015), we have not yet looked at the empirical link between modest leadership and project success. Humble leadership shows generous respect to all team members through various methods, such as accepting their criticism, empowering them through power delegation, and soliciting their suggestions (Owens and Hekman, 2012). Research has found that humble leadership substantially impacts team performance and goal attainment (Owens and Hekman, 2016) and team effectiveness (Rego & Simpson, 2018), which ultimately impact humble leadership on project process.

Owens et al. (2013) strengthened the idea and established a standard for humble leadership. In the review process, they notice that humble leadership is positively associated with task performance (Al Wali et al., 2022), voice (Li et al., 2018), creativity (Ye et al., 2020), leader- member exchange (Wang et al., 2021), affective commitment (Wang et al., 2022), affective trust (Liborius and Kiewitz, 2022), job satisfaction (Owens et al., 2013); self-efficacy (Ma et al., 2019), and engagement (Nguyen et al., 2020). Motivated followers tend to follow humble leaders. For example, humble leaders value the contributions of their followers (Owens et al., 2013).

### c. Tenacious

A tenacious leader motivates his constituents to achieve one's goals. A leader needs to be tenacious in pursuing an objective, possess strong ideas, and exude confidence. Public servants who promote character development and values formation possess a solid foundation for personal and professional growth. Despite the continuous changes in modern places, these help them navigate challenges, build resilience, and make ethical decisions. Public servants can boost their well-being, effectiveness, and ability to serve their communities by devoting their own development.

Intuition, self-awareness, collaboration, and personal determination make up tenacious leadership. In addition, they can empower their team to perform to the greatest extent possible while also setting and achieving their own objectives, regardless of their circumstances. Harms (2016) mentioned that fundamentals for leadership like honesty, integrity, and a tenacious pursuit of the truth are among the most crucial qualities a leader can possess. Leadership may be exhibited in one's daily life by several methods. For instance, showing initiative when chosen or hired to lead in conventional sense, an institution. Leadership can also be exhibited in engagement in professional lives. Throughout these situations, tenacious leaders are vital.

A 21<sup>st</sup>-century public servant should embrace a growth mindset, viewing challenges and setbacks as opportunities to learn and improve themselves. They should persist in facing obstacles and challenges and move forward even when things are difficult. Some of the testimonies of the informants are:

*PS01: "The grassroots of leadership is hard work."*

*PS02: "We should embrace our imperfections, and we do this by knowing which areas we should improve."*

*PS04: "A leader that can balance the present and anticipate the future."*

The statements made by the politicians reveal that in the modern political landscape, a leader must embody the advocacies and identities to which they work for better reasons, one who works with commitment and dedication to serve the people. Anello (2018) suggests that public servants must demonstrate moral leadership in changing society's institutions for these values to be applied consistently and systematically. However, in today's time, public servants have high confidence. This confidence is increased when respondents are aware of the number of reported wrongdoings and their outcomes, and greater awareness of whistleblowing protections

reduces the legitimacy of unauthorized public disclosures (such as leaks to the media) of alleged wrongdoing (Doberstein, 2020).

A growth mindset is vital for anyone working in public service because it encourages adaptation, resilience, and ongoing progress in people and organizations. Similarly, perseverance is crucial in public service in their efforts to confront complicated challenges and produce effective and sustainable solutions. The association between the growth mindset and perseverance in local government settings tends to demonstrate higher levels of intrinsic motivation, which can support their engagement and performance in public service roles (Aycan and Bugay, 2017). Bold et al. (2018) exemplify that these characteristics positively impact service outcomes and satisfaction in the public sector. Therefore, having these qualities and skills in the present day will affect how well they accomplish their duties (Beckett & Dineen, 2019).

What makes government work great is possessing the characteristics of public servants: efficacy, camaraderie, challenge, empowerment, and service (Jones, 2021). Character development may be an effective technique to improve public servants' performance, promoting ethical conduct and increasing the overall efficacy of public service delivery. By incorporating character development and values formation as a strategy, public servants contribute to a healthy corporate culture and improvement of public service delivery. It encourages ethical conduct, builds public trust, improves leadership abilities, stimulates teamwork, and facilitates professional progress.

#### d. Visionary

A visionary has a strong vision of the future and knows how to connect with people. Visionary leadership aims to inspire people to share their vision for the future and work together to make it a reality. It entails establishing specific objectives, developing a feeling of purpose, and inspiring others to act to attain the intended result. Public servants should understand the value of building relationships and nurturing connections with their constituents and community. They should listen to others and practice servant leadership, always putting the needs of the people first. Building a compassionate and empathetic community can create a culture that cares about meaningful lives. Westley & Mintzberg (2012) equate visionary leadership not just with an idea per se but with the communicated idea. Here, the study is concerned with the profoundly symbolic nature of visionary leadership. What distinguishes visionary leadership is that through words and actions, the leader gets the followers to 'see' his or her vision – to see a new way to think and act – to join their leader in realizing it. How the vision is communicated thus becomes as important as what is communicated. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are:

PS02: *“You can do our work better as public servants by listening to others and building relationships with your constituents. In truly being there for one another, we build a community that has compassion and empathy.”*

PS03: *“I rub elbow-to-elbow with my constituents to hear what they need; from there, I foresee how I will respond to such issues.”*

PS04: *“To be a competent leader, one must be a good follower and a listener.”*

The response of the public servant indicates that entering public service involves helping them achieve an easier life. It shows that they should always be open and aware of their biases by consistently acknowledging everything relevant to their work. They do not limit their job to something they only want, rather be inclusive to share and exchange ideas to others as a basis to build a relationship and connect to the constituents. Dobel (2016) states that politicians who possess the ideal of personal integrity can balance many spheres of opinion while maintaining some degree of consistency in their behavior and life. It is also presupposed by any ideas of personal accountability to foster positive relationships with others. It offers a helpful foundation for discussing how these public employees may manage several responsibilities while doing so in an ethically acceptable way. Furthermore, a leader who always thinks of a good foundation not only for the co-workers but also to build a connection with people and to create and improve collaborations to achieve the common goal for the people and by the people (Jawadi et al., 2013). Vigoda (2012) states that answering their needs is vital for the government and public administration systems that seek extensive legitimization and high performance. On the other hand, collaboration highlights a moral value of genuine cooperation and teamwork between citizens and leaders, where each party is neither a pure servant nor the master but a social player in the theatre of the state. Visionary leadership is one of the leadership models that can be carried out by an educational leader in facing the era of the industrial revolution. Education is not only focused on the use of technology but also must be able to build quality educational institutions and satisfy all customers in the educational institutions (Prestia et al., 2019).

#### e. Generative

A generative is defined as someone who can create and think of an innovative solution in solving societal issues and problems. Public servants should listen to their constituents, deliver consistently high work standards, and think of innovative solutions. They should engage the community more abundantly and create opportunities for development and growth. Generative public servants should know how to solve problems in the best possible way. Verbalizations of the informants are:

*PS02: "A servant leader is someone who leads from a place of integrity, puts the needs of others before their own, and leads from the heart."*

*PS03: "I do believe that the younger generation you called to is more aggressive, and they have wider perspective or ideas to share in coming up solutions for societal problems."*

*PS04: "A 21st century leader is someone who can advocate new ideas, innovations, and creativity. They must have the ability to improve."*

Based on the response, public servants need to become more creative and innovative to meet modern society's demands. A generative is someone who leads from a place of integrity, puts the needs of others before their own, and leads from the heart. Florida (2014) asserts that the creativity and innovation of politicians have always been the driving force to seek new possibilities as consciousness expands. However, Rittel & Webber (2013) reiterated that innovations are frequently seen as adversaries rather than partners. To address these issues collectively, new political structures might be required. Interactive policymaking and other types of citizen interaction have been promoted and implemented to deepen democracy (Goodin & Dryzek, 2016).

Surie & Hazy (2016) suggest that generative leadership includes managing complexity and institutionalizing innovation to strike a balance between connectedness and interaction among people and groups in complex systems. Our theory offers fresh perspectives for leadership research as well as policy implications for managers by emphasizing how generative leaders provide an environment that fosters innovation rather than individual attributes or creativity (Bushe, 2019). Generative leadership calls for determining the problem or issue that must be addressed and phrasing it in a way that encourages the various parties to become part of the problem by bringing up fresh concepts. They are welcomed into discussions aimed at inspiring several self-initiated, fail-safe solutions to explore what works. Then, successful innovations are ramped up and fostered. As opposed to a top-down, identify and implement the

best solution strategy, this is a top-down-bottom-up, learn-as-you-go strategy.

## **Theme 2: Leadership approach of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Servants**

### **a. Lifelong Learning Approach to Leadership**

The need for continuous learning, adaptation, and innovation to keep up with the fast-paced changes and complexities of the 21st century world is emphasized. This includes being open to new ideas, challenging traditional ways of thinking, and seeking opportunities for growth and improvement. A lifelong approach to leadership is an integral part of becoming a successful leader. Learning, whether formal or informal, helps us expand our views, comprehend different points of view, and become more receptive to new chances. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are:

*PS02: "We should embrace our imperfections, and we do this by knowing which areas we should improve on; we welcome criticisms and embrace them as opportunities to improve oneself."*

*PS03: "I seek the help of the department heads who I know have more experience than me. That just proves that one really does not know everything."*

*PS04: "We have different parameters and institutions that we wanted to maintain but I am passionate about sticking to the plans of making Ilagan as a liveable city."*

The responses of the public servants revealed that politics is a continuous learning process. A leader should know how to embrace the reality that one does not know everything. A public servant has to always be humble and open to suggestions - to welcome criticisms and embrace them as opportunities to improve oneself and persist in the face of setbacks. According to Bekkers et al. (2012), public servants who are willing to learn and can make new things aim to strengthen their connections to constituents and serve as strategies for realizing certain interests in the community. This is supported by Koch et al. (2015), stating that their personal and professional development should be linked with organizational change and are expected to lead to successful organizational change in society. Lastly, they must view Innovative skills as the intentional and proactive process that involves the generation, practical adoption, and spread of new and creative ideas, which would help them learn and gather more fundamental

skills in doing their job as politicians (Sorensen & Torfing, 2013).

*b. Grounded Approach to Leadership*

A grounded leader focuses on creating activities to actualize their followers' visions of who they can become. Leaders and participants started outlining their visions and associated activities after the fundamental idea had been decided. They must focus on the value of self-awareness, self-reflection, and personal development as means to become a more effective and authentic public servants. This includes recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses, seeking feedback, learning from mistakes, and continuously striving to improve oneself. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are:

*PS01: "As I enter public service, I realize that one must have to be strong and must have a heart in public service."*

*PS02: "It is my belief that character development and values formation are vital in the formation of oneself."*

*PS04: "It is good that one leader must have the knowledge of what position he had entered."*

*PS05: "Profession, experiences, and personality is a plus in public service."*

The responses of the public servants indicate that being self-aware means taking a deeper look at your emotions, why you feel a certain way, and how your sentiments could turn into reactions. Hence, without self-awareness, leaders can appear arrogant if they cannot be personable or know when crossing a line. According to Arruda (2023), public servants should be aware of what may come their way. Caritativo & Caritativo (2020) also assert that more mindful elected

officials were more likely to improve their work performance. This is further substantiated by Johansson and Mattila (2015), who pointed out that politicians must constantly learn while doing their duties to improve political situations and become more effective in their responsibilities. Politicians who participate in continual learning are more likely to succeed in their careers and are better prepared to handle the complicated and ever-changing world of politics.

*c. Community Direct Approach to Leadership*

This points out to emphasizing the need for a more personal, relational, and community-centered approach to public service beyond mere compliance with rules and regulations. It involves building meaningful connections with constituents, understanding their needs and aspirations, and tailoring solutions responsive to their unique contexts and circumstances. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are:

*PS01: "I entered public service to help more people by making good ordinances." PS02: "For me, public service should extend to a more "personal service."*

*PS03: "I started from the grassroots, by being a barangay captain in Lallo, I work hand-in-hand with my constituents, to hear what they need because by doing so, I can eventually address these problems."*

*PS04: "I started my term as an SK Chairman, and from there, we started to aim for a progressive Ilagan. We are all inspired to achieve the status of being a livable city."*

*PS05: "I have established federations that involve solo parents, as well as debate. I have also established organizations that address different issues not only in Cagayan but to those that are affected...."*

*d. Ethical approach to leadership*

Ethical leaders display good values through their words and actions, highlighting the importance of integrity, honesty, and accountability as essential qualities for effective public service in the 21st century. This includes upholding high ethical standards, being transparent and accountable for one's actions and decisions, and prioritizing the public interest over personal gain. Some of the verbalizations of the informants are:

*PS01: "I work for the people; my intention is pure and that is to help the people."*

PS02: "I have seen the importance of having local officials that have the interest and welfare of the people at heart."

PS03: "I see that younger politicians are more driven, and our decisions are more radical than those in traditional ones. However, I must always be humble and open to suggestions because I admit that my decisions are not always correct even if I perceive them to be one."

Accountable government is a democratic prerequisite (Luhmann et al., 2020). Services from the government need to be rendered and delivered well to the people since their goal is to strengthen human welfare and achieve economic growth stability (Bhattacharya et al., 2016). Aside from that, it should also be rendered with integrity and must be responsive to everyone's needs, most particularly to those in the marginalized sectors of the community (Ringold et al., 2013). Thus, this notion stems from the principle of safeguarding democracy, which holds elected government officials who spend tax income responsible to the public who pay taxes (Christiano, 2018).

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Public service in the 21st century is under tremendous pressure and cannot be expected to remain the same, hence understanding the characteristics, competencies, and approaches public servants exhibit while fulfilling their responsibilities. Based on the combined responses of young public servants, it was revealed that a politician must possess certain characteristics to respond to his/her constituents' needs. Furthermore, the findings revealed the characteristics, competencies, and approaches of young politicians in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public service serve as a gateway towards a better way of leading. These characteristics they exhibit in their journey in the political landscape are trailblazer, humble, tenacious, visionary, and generative, which have helped them do their duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. In doing public service in the process of promoting social equity, enhancing the well-being of the citizens, and ensuring effective governance, they often encounter numerous complexities that require strategic approaches. These are a lifelong learning approach to leadership, a grounded approach to leadership, a community-direct approach to leadership, and an ethical approach to leadership. Thus, understanding the complex nature of good governance in the 21st century helps identify the key factors and best practices contributing to effective governance.

#### REFERENCES

Abueva J.V. (2012). Towards the Filipino Vision of the Good Society and an Authentic Democracy: From Development to Social Transformation. In Bautista et al. Introduction to Public Administration in the Philippines: A Reader. Quezon City: NCPAG. pp. 268–280. <http://www.cfc.net.org>

- Ace Project (2018). Young Politics and Election. *Ace Website*. Retrieved From: <https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/yt/yt10/default>
- Alesina, A., Cassidy, T., & Troiano, U. (2019). Old and young politicians. *Economica*, 86(344), 689-727. doi:10.1111/ecca.12287
- Allen, W. A., & Wood, G. (2006). Defining and achieving financial stability. *Journal of Financial Stability*, 2(2), 152–172. doi: 10.1016/j.jfs.2005.10.001
- Anello, E. (2018). A framework for good governance in the public pharmaceutical sector. *World Health Organization, Department of Essential Medicines and Pharmaceutical Policies, Geneva*.
- Ardichvili, A., Natt och Dag, K., & Manderscheid, S. (2016). Leadership Development: Current and Emerging Models and Practices. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 18(3), 275–285. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422316645506>
- Back, S. H. (2021). Towards a Conceptual Framework for Political Leadership Theory and Practice: A Thematic Analysis of Literature. *Open Journal of Leadership*, 10, 193– 213. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2021.103013>
- Batley, R., & McLoughlin, C. (2015). The politics of public services: A service characteristics approach. *World Development*, 74, 275-285. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.05.018>
- Bevan PA, Gosetto I, Jenkins ER, Barnes I, Ioannou CC. (2018) Regulation between personality traits: individual social tendencies modulate whether boldness and leadership are correlated. *Proc. R. Soc. B* 285: 20180829. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2018.0829>
- Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Marturano, A. & Dennison, P. (2003). A Review of Leadership Theory and Competency Frameworks. *Centre for Leadership Studies, University of Exeter, Cross mead Barley Lane Dunsford Hill Exeter EX4 1TF United Kingdom*. DOI: 10.12691/education-2-12- 22
- Briere, S., Proulx, D., Flores, O.N. and Laporte, M. (2015), "Competencies of project managers in international NGOs: perceptions of practitioners", *International Journal of Project Management*, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 116-125. DOI 10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0230
- Burns, J. M. (2012). Leadership. *Open Road Media*. Retrieved from: <https://openroadmedia.com/ebook/leadership/9781453245170>
- Bushe, G. R. (2019). Generative leadership. *Canadian Journal of Physician Leadership*, 5(3), 141-147. Retrieved from
- Cohen, S., Manes Rossi, F., Caperchione, E., & Brusca, I. (2019). Local government administration systems and local government accounting information needs: is there a mismatch. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 85(4), 708-725. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852317748732>
- Covell, C. (2016). Sustainable Development for Public Administration: Effective Management Administrative System of the 21st Century Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 6(2). DOI:10.5296/jpag.v6i2.9368
- Dalakoura, A. (2010). Differentiating leader and leadership development: A collective framework for leadership development. *Journal of Management Development*. Retrieved on November 19, 2022 from [www.emeraldinsight.com/0262-1711](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/0262-1711)
- Dantzer, M. R. (2014). Leadership requirements in the 21st century: the perceptions of Canadian public sector leaders. *Andrews University*. Retrieved on November 18, 2022 from <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/1531>
- Dickinson, & Sullivan, (2014). Imagining the 21st-century public service workforce. *Birmingham: University of Birmingham*. Retrieved on November 17, 2022 from <https://apo.org.au/node/42256>
- Dobel, J. P. (2016). Integrity in the public service. *Dobel, JP (1990). Integrity in the Public Service. Public Administration Review*, 50(3), 354-66. [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2769133](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2769133)
- Doberstein, C., & Charbonneau, É. (2020). The origins and effects of public servant confidence in whistleblowing protection regimes. *Public Administration*, 98(3), 643 <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12644>
- Florida, R. (2014) Why is creativity the most important political concept of the 21st Century? <https://www.thersa.org/blog/2014/01/why-is-creativity-the-most-important-political-concept-of-the-21st-century>
- Goncalves, (2015) Progressive Leadership Begins with a Progressive Leader.



- <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/progressive-leadership-begins-leader-marcus-goncalves-ed-d->
- Goodin, R. E., & Dryzek, J. S. (2016). Deliberative impacts: The macro-political uptake of mini-publics. *Politics & society*, 34(2), 219-244. doi:10.1177/0032329206288152.
- Lloyd-Walker, B., & Walker, D. (2011). Authentic leadership for 21st century project delivery. *International Journal of Project Management*, 29(4), 383-395. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijproman.2011.02.004
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars. *AISHE-J*, 9, 3351. Retrieved from <http://ojs.aish.org/index.php/aish-j/article/view/3354>
- Mangan, C. (2017). The 21st-century public servant-what roles and skills do we need from public servants to deliver better outcomes for citizens. *International Journal of Integrated Care*, 17(5). DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/ijic.3405>
- Marijani, R. (2017). Public service leadership competency framework [PSLCF]: is it a holy grail of service delivery. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(10), 169-184. DOI: 10.4236/jss.2017.510015
- Marques, D. (2013). Young politicians: different politics? *European view*, 12(2), 289-297. DOI 10.1007/s12290-013-0275-1
- Mbandlwa, Z., Dorasamy, N., & Fagbadebo, O. M. (2020). Leadership challenges in the South African local government system. *Journal of Critical reviews*. DOI:10.31838/jcr.07.13.260
- Megheirkouni, M. and Mejheirkouni, A. (2020), "Leadership development trends and challenges in the twenty-first century: rethinking the priorities". *Journal of Management Development*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 97-124. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-04-2019-0114>
- Mussagulova, (2021). The Twenty-First-Century Public Servant: A Developing Country Perspective. In: Sullivan, H., Dickinson, H., Henderson, H. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of the Public Servant*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-29980-4\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-29980-4_31)
- Needham, C., & Mangan, C. (2014). The 21st century public servant. Birmingham: *University of Birmingham*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2016.1162592>
- Nemenzo, F. (2012) "Beyond the Classroom: UP's Responsibility in Helping Rebuild a Damaged Nation." UP Centennial Lecture delivered at the National Institute of Mathematics and Science Education Development, UP Diliman, Quezon City (15 February 2008).
- Neo et al., (2022). "Core Values for Ideal Civil Servants: Service-Oriented, Responsive and Dedicated." *Public Administration Review* 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13583>
- O'Connell, P. K. (2014). A simplified framework for 21st century leader development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(2), 183-203 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.06.001>
- Ofosu-Anim, D. O., & Back, S. -H. (2021). Towards a Conceptual Framework for Political Leadership Theory and Practice: A Thematic Analysis of Literature. *Open Journal of Leadership*, 10, 193-213. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2021.103013>
- Omeje, P. N. (2014). Review of Bureaucracy: A 21st Century Public Administration Imperative. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2, 125-129. Retrieved from [www.irssh.com](http://www.irssh.com)
- Owens, B.P. and Hekman, D.R. (2012), "Modeling how to grow: an inductive examination of humble leader behaviors, contingencies, and outcomes", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 55 No. 4, pp. 787-818. DOI 10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0230
- Owens, B.P. and Hekman, D.R. (2016), "How does leader humility influence team performance? Exploring the mechanisms of contagion and collective promotion focus", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 59 No. 3, pp. 1088-1111. DOI 10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0230
- Owens, B.P., Johnson, M.D. and Mitchell, T.R. (2013), "Expressed humility in organizations: implications for performance, teams, and leadership", *Organization Science*, Vol. 24 No. 5, pp. 1517-1538.
- Peña-López, (2017). Skills for a High Performing Civil Service, *OECD Public Governance Reviews*, *OECD Publishing, Paris*. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264280724-en>
- Pilet, J. B., Talukder, D., Sanhueza, M. J., & Rangoni, S. (2020). Do citizens perceive elected politicians, experts and citizens as alternative or complementary policy-makers A study of Belgian citizens. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 2, 567297. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2020.567297>
- Pomeranz & Stedman (2020). Measuring good governance: Piloting an instrument for evaluating good governance principles. *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning* 22: 428-40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2020.1753181>
- Prestiadi, D., Zulkarnain, W., & Sumarsono, R. B. (2019, December). Visionary leadership in total quality management: efforts to improve the quality of education in the industrial revolution
- 4.0. In *The 4th International Conference on Education and Management (COEMA 2019)* (pp. 202-206). Atlantis Press. Retrieved from <https://www.atlantispress.com/proceedings/coema-19/125926240>
- Rego and Simpson (2018), "The perceived impact of leaders' humility on team effectiveness: an empirical study", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 148 No. 1, pp. 205-218. DOI 10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0230
- Rittel, H., and M. Webber. 2013. "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning." *Policy Sciences* 4 (2): 155-169. doi:10.1007/BF01405730.
- Schreurs, M. A., & Steuwer, S. D. (2015). *Autonomous Driving - Political, Legal, Social, and Sustainability Dimensions*. *Autonomes Fahren*, 151-173. doi:10.1007/978-3-662-45854-9\_8
- Simonton, D.K. (2014). *The Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders: Conceptions of Leadership*. Jepson Studies in Leadership. Palgrave Macmillan, New York. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137472038\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137472038_4)
- Skorková, Z. (2016). Competency models in the public sector. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 230, 226-234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.09.029>
- Sørensen & Torfing (2011). *Accountable Government through Collaborative Governance*. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci11040127>
- Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2011). Enhancing collaborative innovation in the public sector. *Administration & society*, 43(8), 842-868. doi:10.1177/0095399711418768
- Surie, G., & Hazy, J. K. (2016). Generative leadership: Nurturing innovation in complex systems. *EMERGENCE-MAHWAH-LAWRENCE ERLBAUM-*, 8(4), 13. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/James-Hazy/publication/220041958\\_Generative\\_leadership\\_Nurturing\\_innovation\\_in\\_complex\\_systems/links/09e4150ab7a21e1f3e00000/Generative-leadership-Nurturing-innovation-in-complex-systems.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/James-Hazy/publication/220041958_Generative_leadership_Nurturing_innovation_in_complex_systems/links/09e4150ab7a21e1f3e00000/Generative-leadership-Nurturing-innovation-in-complex-systems.pdf)
- Sutcliffe, M., & Bannister, S. (2020). Research on the 4th industrial revolution: Implications for local government in the context of skills development. *City Insight*, 1-115. Retrieved on November 19, 2022 from: <http://www.cityinsight.co.za/>
- Suttie, (2020) How Humility Can Help Us Bridge Our Political Divides. Retrieved from [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_humility\\_can\\_help\\_us\\_bridge\\_our\\_political\\_divides](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_humility_can_help_us_bridge_our_political_divides)
- Tarling, et al., 2022, Humility in learning, The surprising leadership capability for a digital age. Retrieved from <https://www.imd.org/research-knowledge/articles/humility-in-learning/>
- Thomas, R. J., & Cheese, P. (2005). Leadership: Experience is the best teacher. *Strategy & Leadership*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1108/sd.2006.05622dad.007>
- Tuominen, T. and Hasu, M. (2020). "Public servants coping with competing demands on their agency in client relationships", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 595-611. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-05-2019-0120>
- Van der Wal, Z. 2017. *The 21st century public manager*. London: Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Warren, (2022). Six qualities public service leaders need in the 21st-century. Retrieved from: <https://apolitical.co/solution-articles/en/6-qualities-public-service-leaders-need-in-the-21st-century>
- Westley, F., & Mintzberg, H. (2012). Visionary leadership and strategic management. *Strategic management journal*, 10(S1), 17-32. Retrieved from <http://nezamivand.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/VIS-IONARY-LEADERSHIP-AND-STRATEGIC-MANAGEMENT.pdf>
- World Economic Forum (2013). *Methodology* Retrieved from <https://reports.we.forum.org/global-competitiveness-report-2014-2015/methodology/>

Zaitul et al., (2023) Good Governance in Rural Local Administration.  
Administrative Sciences 13: 19. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci130100>

---

The author/s retain the copyright to this article, with IJAESSI granted first publication rights. This article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), allowing for open access.