The Politics of Gender and Development in the Environmental/Urban Planning Realm

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Abstract - Politics defined as activities of co-operation, negotiation and conflict within and between societies. Women, friendship and dissent as it embodies the role of political science in gender and development forging ties and partnerships and the advantages and disadvantages of interaction of such ideology as politics playing a distinctive form of rule whereby people act together through institutionalized procedures to resolve differences is highly operative. Gender and development in the Philippines, institutionalized and operationalized by Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as, the Magna Carta for Women, elucidates the view of development perspective and process that is participatory, empowering, equitable, sustainable, free from violence, respectful of human rights, supportive of self-determination and actualization of human potentials. The politics involved in gender and development as it affects during the urban planning process, particularly, in the policy process involved in development of sustainable communities is highly operative. This paper wants to answer the question: How does gender and development awareness contribute to the urban/environmental planning process. An academic essay a form of expository research is focused piece of writing that develops as idea or argument using evidence, analysis and interpretation. This study shall espouse existing issues and concerns on awareness of politics in gender and development to the urban planning process. Urban planning is the process of developing and designing urban areas to meet the needs of a community. The practice draws multi-disciplinary professionals to strive to prepare cities and town for sustainable future. The use of this study could be a basis fir future research and policy review process.

Keywords - Gender and Development, Public Administration, Participatory Development, Urban Planning, Politics and Gender

Introduction

Politics will always be connected to corruption. The growing reports of abuse of funds under the guise of the promotion and institutionalization of gender and development concepts, theories, and principles for purposes of embedding the idea to societal system has been the trending topic when there is a question of where an idea as a program or project will derive its budgetary requirements. The Philippines being one of the first democratic countries in Asia due to its rich history and culture, values and political dynamics of the Martial Law era and the growing complexity of interaction of leaders and constituents, makes it a suitable model for emerging Asia to understand the promotion of sustainable development in societies and communities, inevitably, connected to good practice of environmental/urban planning field.

Politics and Administration Dichotomy

Scholars of the mother social science of public administration, which is political science could be very well appreciated, knowing the meaning of the two words, politics as activities of co-operation, negotiation and conflict within and between societies, and, science as learned process or study. Cooperation in a society maybe attributed to obedience or willingness of the subordinates or constituents to follow their leaders. If there are different views then negotiation shall come into play, and it must start with a fair and stable ground of the opposing forces. When an agreement or meeting at a certain point fails, then conflict starts and if not solutioned, will eventually be the start of the so called "crack" which it could lead to future brokenness and falling apart of the societal foundation.

Public Administration is a sub-science of political science, but scholars of this field believe that it has a more concrete and stable body of knowledge as it applies - both the heart and the machine in decision making. Public Administration is deeply concerned in management and governance, while political science explains the reason of people act in a

given situation or scenario, the public opinion, where at any second may vary depending on the pulse of the general public.

Dichotomy is a contrast of the two, as the foundation knowledge in public administration says that there is contrast in politics and administration. Public Administration do not intend to veer-away from its mother science or and build its own empire due to introduction of the private sector concepts in management which promote to be effective and efficient in the management of people and operations. Public Administrators become more client-centric, cost-efficient, risk management savvy, forgetting that public office is public trust, and the trust is derived from the people believing that these individuals would govern in accordance with their will and satisfaction.

The shift from traditional public administration style to modern public administration which are:	Advantage	Disadvantage
Client-centric	Good popularity based on public opinion surveys. Public Acceptance	Abuse of the transacting public Self-entitlement Disrespect to government process, procedures and legal requirements
Cost Efficient	Safeguard against bad spending of the government Improved budgeting process Avoidance of public funds wastage	Tight financial measures due to by the book rules and guidelines Time delay Tedious documentation and paper works
Risk Management Savvy	Aids in decision-making Improve critical and analytical thinking in governance	Some principles must not be totally applied in public governance setting

Urban/Environmental Planning Realm

Urban planning is one of the trending topics in Asia. Facebook Webpage-ASEAN Urbanist showcases a lot of featured issues and trends depicted in pictures and small captions, with over a hundred thousand likes and two hundred thousand followers, it is a platform that espouses areas of urban planning such as physical/built environment, natural habitat/environment, transportation, housing/human settlements, landmarks, societal happenings, and trends, continues to draw public attention.

Sustainable development defined by the United Nations Primer on Sustainable Development Goals is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. On the other hand in the Philippines, the practice of environmental planning is governed by Republic Act No. 10587 and it defined environmental planning also known as, urban and regional planning, city planning, town and country planning, and/or human settlements planning, refers to the multi-disciplinary art and science of analyzing, specifying, clarifying, harmonizing, managing and regulating the use and development of land and water resources, in relation to their environs, for the development of sustainable communities and ecosystems.

The relation of sustainable development and environmental planning is deeply connected. Environmental Planning realm is everyone's world and concern. No one can have an excuse that it should be neglected, especially those in public administration. Environmental Planning is "inevitably policy", since, all must be written and documented, so that knowledge generated will be carried out sustainably. The policy wheel as an imperative for policy makers and implementers to understand and shall make environmental planning a distinct practice and field of specialization not to shy away practical/logical or streetwise decisions, in some respects. Policy wheel comprising of different, independent but inter-related phases which are: problem definition; understanding alternative solutions; analyzation; recommendations; policy passage or enactment, implementation and evaluation. The institutionalization of reforms for the good of the community is done by following the policy process.

Different professions are all important in environmental/urban planning realm, as the organic law regulating the practice in the Philippines, multi-disciplinary fields in the natural sciences, built environment sciences, social sciences and others contribute to effective planning of sustainable communities. Rivalry of professions cannot be set aside as different fields have different systems and approaches, the people in these fields come from different walks of life the

values, morals and norms of each distinct individual could be a stumbling block to a collaborative professional undertaking. Intra-profession dispute must be resolved based on existing laws, rules and regulations, scope of professional practice, the code of ethics and other accepted norms, values and culture of the profession. Somewhat logic dictates that if those who have the same profession do not understand or not in unison as to their views and stand on issues and matters of public interest relating to their profession, the more they cannot relate with other professions, the reason there is inter-profession dispute. Inter-profession dispute may be attributed to allied disciplines overlapping the scope or practice, or the attitude of superiority complex over other professions. Superiority complex over other professions arising from the level of training, the culture and curriculum of the training school; the norms, values and culture within the profession; or the norms, values and culture as a person.

Hence, the key answer for an effective professional collaboration is being nice to one another, no matter what. Environmental Planners should be the role model and example as well as the promoter of "effective working together" of different actors of the society to achieve sustainable communities in the future.

Gender and Development

Valuing equality, protecting those who are weak, removing marginalization, breaking barriers and borders these are common related concepts of gender and development and sustainable development.

- Valuing equality. The old and traditional frame of mind that no one is equal because each one is distinct person, cannot be set aside. It was the physiological, psychological, and social background of persons that makes a person unique. But we cannot discount the fact that there are groups, and people join these groups, for purposes of recognition and hearing their voice/s. Democracy made it possible that those not heard are now to be heard. The call for equality in sexes is a long-standing debate, the branding of the "inferior and superior" are still rampant in different environments. International organizations like the United Nations recognized this call and the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations in 1979 and took effect on 3 September 1981. The CEDAW is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. The Convention defines discrimination against women as "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other fields."

- Protecting those who are weak. Believing in "Gender and Development" principles and theories, must be stressed out that it should not be used as a tool to abuse anyone in the society, a woman abusing her husband or son, or a lesbian abusing his partner, amongst others. The society must be able to protect not the "weak" in its negative sense, but those who are abused and could not defend themselves.

- Removing marginalization. Calls and cries for equality of men and women in some respects are rampant mostly in western countries. But these groups tend to come together only for their commonalities and those who want to join them, rejects some out comers, and creates marginalization or sub-groups. While we recognized every human's right to associate or group with those who share the same values, norms or beliefs, the call and cry for equality will be more credible if no one shall be set aside or discriminated to become part of the general group that fights for these rights.

- Breaking barriers and borders. The modern world wants that everyone has the same and equal rights to be enjoyed by anyone regardless of any reason at all. This is the ideal world, where man becomes a perfect being, always does good and never abuses.

With the above, knowledge and belief in "Gender and Development" principles and theories as it plays great role in every society, no one can set aside, such field, when sustainable development is the main course, because, out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) the following are closely connected to Gender and Development" principles and theories:

- SDG 3 – Good Health and Well Being, as this goal promotes women's physiological and psycho-social health.
- SDG 4 – Quality Education, as knowledge and embedding to the system on Gender and Development" principles and theories, is needed to promote the idea of equality;
- SDG 5 – Gender Equality, the main topic in Gender and Development" principles and theories;

- SDG10 – Reduced inequalities, combatting the ills of deprivation of basic human rights connection to Gender and Development" principles and theories;
- SDG 11- Sustainable Cities and communities, the end goal of a gender-sensitive group of persons; and
- SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, because people are mature and living harmoniously under the rule of law and politico-legal systems are in placed due to promotion of Gender and Development" principles and theories.

The objective of this paper is to connect an analysis on politics involved in the practice of environmental planning and its major interaction in gender and development, the sustainable development goals, corruption concepts, to conclude claims and recommend measures as an addition to the body of knowledge.

Statement of the Problem

How does gender and development awareness contribute to the urban/environmental planning process. The following questions were posted to be answered:

1. Demographics of the respondents as to sex;
2. If the respondent is a planner;
3. Does your workplace employ "Gender and Development" theory or principle;
4. In your own perspective, is your local chief executive/superior, a believer of "Gender and Development" theory or principle;
5. In your own perspective, does "Gender and Development" theory or principle an important consideration in any urban planning process;
6. What is your perspective on who is/are beneficiaries of "Gender and Development" theory or principle?
7. In a scale of 1-5, kindly rate the level of your organization's acceptance of "Gender and Development" theory or principle?

Materials and Methods

An academic essay a form of expository research is a focused piece of writing that develops an idea or argument using evidence, analysis and interpretation. Considered as one kind of qualitative research, this method cannot be a final determination of a theory or claim but needs to be validated by further studies in the same field of specialization, by using mixed method through validation focus group discussions, survey questionnaire and key informant expert interviews. An imperative to the modern-day research is the integration of the heart and soul in every research paper, which, is research ethics and data protection derived from respondents. The online survey lasted for a month and one hundred seventy (170) respondents participated, these are Masters in Environmental Planning students of the author, whom by profession are: lawyers, architects, engineers, real estate professionals (consultant, appraiser and/or broker), teachers, foresters, environmental scientist or regulators, local and national government planners, among others.

Results and Discussions

1. Respondents Sex identification. Sex is usually categorized as female or male. On the other hand, gender is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. This question is posted to check awareness level of the respondents at the start on sex and gender difference and its connection to gender and development principles and theories.

Gender	Percentage
Male	52
Female	48
Rather Not Say	0

Majority of the respondents identified themselves as "male", which is fifty two percent and there are forty eight percent identified themselves as "female; no one indicated as "rather not say".

2. Identification of the Respondent's Line of Work as a Planner. Republic Act No. 10587 defines a planner who is a person who is registered and licensed to practice environmental planning and who holds a valid Certificate of Registration and a valid Professional Identification Card from the Board of Environmental Planning and the Professional Regulation Commission. On the other hand, a Planning Professional in any government office maybe not as defined by the Environmental Planning Law, but employed in the government or private sector, with the same qualifications of any licensed planner and the nature of work is related to environmental planning. The purpose of this question is to connect the awareness of the respondent if he/she is a planner in gender and development theories and principles.

Response	Percentage
Yes	52
No	48

Majority of the respondents identified themselves as "planners", which is fifty two percent and there are forty eight percent identified themselves as "non-planners". It can now be assumed that response to subsequent questions are reliable as to basic understanding of gender and development, for the reason that, gender and development principles and theories and sustainable development concepts are integrated in the planning discussions at the planning school and in the workplace.

3. Work Environment and Gender and Development. Organizational ambience or atmosphere contribute to the institutionalization of Gender and Development theories and principles.

Response to Does your workplace employ "Gender and Development" theory or principle	Percentage
Yes	95
No	5

Majority of the respondents which is ninety five percent answered that their workplace employ "Gender and Development" theories and principles while surprisingly there are remaining among the respondents which is five percent who answered that their workplace does not employ "Gender and Development" theories and principles, which could be a reason is that they might be employed in private entities or not employed or practicing professionals, or they maybe those that identified themselves as non-planners who have organizations who might be applying "Gender and Development" theories and principles, that are not aware.

4. Work Superior or Boss or Local Chief Executive awareness of Gender and Development. An organization may not be availing the thoughts of "Gender and Development" principles and theories, because there is no setting the tone from the top. Leadership is a common term for an office or the person representing such. Leadership must be connected with the sound practice of ethics, connected to a given set of norms, moral, conduct and organizational culture, in every aspect of the society.

Response to Does your immediate supervisor/boss a believer of "Gender and Development" theory or principle	Percentage
Yes	95
No	5

Majority of the respondents which is ninety five percent answered that their workplace superior, immediate supervisor or boss or local chief executive do employ "Gender and Development" theories and principles while surprisingly there are remaining among the respondents which is five percent who answered that their superiors or boss or local chief executives does not employ "Gender and Development" theories and principles. This could be connected to organizational or workplace ambience or atmosphere as to the belief of "gender and development" principles and theories.

5. Relationship of "Gender and Development" principles and theories to Urban Planning. As discussed in this paper, these concepts are inevitably connected and must be stressed that cannot be separated nor be treated

independently. Urban Planning is all about building sustainable communities, this is connected and all about people interaction in a given place.

Response to Does "Gender and Development" principle and theories is an important consideration in urban planning	Percentage
Yes	95
No	5

Majority of the respondents which is ninety five percent answered that "Gender and Development" principles and theories is an important consideration in urban planning, while there are remaining five percent said no. Urban Planning activities such as proper placing of buildings, road networks, plans, programs and projects must be "gender and development" principles and theories compliant. In the local planning setting, where the comprehensive land use plan is a mandate to local governments in the Philippines in order to have a basis for the Zoning Ordinance, the population projections in the next 10 years of both men and women not only gives decision makers a depiction of the future, but also aids the local chief executives to focus on what design of infrastructure should be built for the constituents. A proliferation of a gender-neutral comfort rooms in some government offices, is a trend, complying to the "Gender and Development" principles and theories.

6. Beneficiaries of "Gender and Development" principles and theories. We must understand even though "Gender and Development" principles and theories came to existent because of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the local law which is Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as, the Magna Carta for Women, the author asked the respondents in their own perspective who is the beneficiary/ies of "Gender and Development" principles and theories.

Response to their perspective on who is/are beneficiaries of "Gender and Development" theory or principle	Percentage
All About Women	8
Men and Women	78
LGBTQ+	9
No One	5

Majority of the respondents comprising of seventy eight percent said it correctly that the beneficiaries in the "Gender and Development" theory or principle are both sexes "men and women". Quite surprising the survey responses for "all about Women" is eight percent and close to those who benefit are the "LGTBQ+" who are nine percent of the respondents. Consistently the five percent individuals who answered negatively in the preceding questions are still evident.

7. Individual's perception as to their organization's level of acceptance using a 5-point Likert Scale, five being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

Response to their perspective on who is/are beneficiaries of "Gender and Development" theory or principle	Number of Respondents	Percentage
5-highest	73	44
4	65	39
3-neutral	29	17
2	1	.5
1-lowest	2	.5

Forty four percent of the respondents gave a perfect rating of 5 as to their individual perception - that their organization accepts the "Gender and Development" principles or theories. Thirty Nine percent gave a rating of "4" which is not bad at all. Seventeen percent gave a neutral rating of "3" this neither do not accept nor accept. From the foregoing survey results, it cures the five percent negative answers from the earlier questions. Safe to assume that ninety nine percent of the total respondents, who are students of Master in Environmental Planning, have awareness that Gender and Development principles and theories is connected to urban planning.

Conclusion

The politics of gender and development in the environmental/urban planning realm, in the Philippine setting, becomes more of compliance to law, an avenue of corruption and a common "ningas-kugon" attribute of Filipinos, study of gender and development theories and principles became a closed study of some scholars making them the sole and only experts of such specialization, for reasons of fame and livelihood and bosses/superiors/local chief executives becoming more of belief they are still beholden of the old and traditional public administration and the old values of the place.

- Compliance to law. Because there are penal sanctions if not cascaded, implemented nor institutionalized.
- Avenue of corruption. It became rampant the use of funding of certain government agency projects without budget, to include a gender and development component so that, funding could not be a problem. This might be considered as institutional corruption, not so wrong, could be wrong, but it could be legally remedied, and becomes regular and legal.
- Ningas-Kugon. A common tagalog/filipino term, that when you light a fire to a kugon grass it flames immediately but dies down also fast. At first, it became a trend, it becomes so popular and then people will lose interest and it dies down after a certain time or period.
- An exclusive and closed and hard to enter field of study. It became the bread and butter of those who first became famous experts in the field. Therefore, institutionalization of the true essence of Gender and Development principles and theories, becomes stagnant and soon it shall die down, if there will be no new blood to introduce a much simple and easy to understand communication tactics and plan. Gender and Development principles and theories became just a classroom talk and a very difficult subject to venture, until one learns the importance and the simplicity of the message it wants to convey, the very essence of its conceptualization.
- Private bosses/superiors/local chief executives are still beholden of the old and traditional public administration and/or the old values of the place. "Home is the best learning place for an individual", it is the place where the foundation of values, knowledge and wisdom flows to the deepest being of every person. If foundation values, knowledge and wisdom are not obtained from the home of an individual, comes now the role of the school, to provide these things for such rational being. Author's observation in provinces, is that the old and traditional values, culture and norms still subsist and the developmental thinking like what is happening in the cities and the former, had a wide gap. If people will not change their views and be aware of the gender and development principles and theories soon, urban planning with consideration to the former, will never come to a reality. This is the current politics of gender and development in environmental/urban planning realm. Those in power will always have the say and will mislead or left behind those that do not understand or wishes not to understand.

Hence, it is deeply recommended by the author of this paper, to validate the claims mention in this treatise; and most importantly make knowledge and institutionalization of gender and development principles and theories be known to all, the simplest and fastest.

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