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Performance of the Party List Groups in the Philippines and the Public Trust

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ABSTRACT

This study determines the strength of the relationship between the party list groups' performance, projects and programs and public trust. Using survey questionnaires, the 120 randomly selected respondents from the towns of Pila, Sta. Cruz and Siniloan, province of Laguna, Philippines were asked about their level of awareness and satisfaction regarding the party list groups' performance, projects and program. Frequency and percentage distribution, mean and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to analyze the data and information given by the respondents. It was found in this research that there is a positive correlation between the performance of the party list groups and the public trust. It is also manifested herein that there is a positive correlation between the projects and programs of the party list groups and the public trust. The respondents' level of trust towards the party list groups is affected by the performance and implementation of the projects and programs of the latter. The more projects and programs are implemented in the communities, the higher is the public trust. If the respondents are satisfied with the efficient and timely delivery of goods and services, the incidence of public trust is high. After the data have been gathered and analyzed, the researcher recommends the following : 1) Build infrastructure projects like farm – to - market roads which will spur economic growth and therefore will create more awareness and trust in the rural areas; 2.) Implement more projects and programs in the far-flung areas like the upland barangays in Siniloan, Laguna 3) Intensify information dissemination program specially in the social media platforms like Facebook, Tiktok, Youtube and others to better inform the public on bills and resolutions filed by the party list groups in Congress.

INTRODUCTION

The party list system in the Philippines is enshrined in the 1987 Constitution, a provision that can not be found in the previous Constitutions of the Philippines. The intent for this is to give representation to the marginalized and disadvantaged sectors of the society in the House of Representatives. The framers of the 1987 Constitution thought that it is time for the poor and underprivileged sectors to have a say and take part in the legislative process. Hence, the party list groups can now register with the Commission on Elections, join in the election and represent their groups in the House of Representatives, which is the lawmaking body in the Philippines. As stated in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the 20% seats in the House of Representatives should be given to the party list groups. The marginalized and underrepresented sectors in the society are permitted to be represented in the House of Representatives through the party list system. In this way these groups can create laws that can realize their advocacies and causes which can also be beneficial to the nation. At least 204 party list representatives have served in Congress since 1998. They have represented multi sectoral groups like teachers, nurses, women, fishermen, farmers, regional groups and so on. In 2019 polls, it was observed that half of the party list groups who joined the election came from big businesses and the influential political clans and dynasties thereby defeating the clear intent of the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Bueza, 2020).

Public trust has not been quantified but in this study the researcher tries to measure the public trust as against the party list groups. In the Philippine context, public trust usually means how the people perceive the performance of the public servants. Integrity will be a big criterion in the determination of the trustworthiness of the political actors. The expectation of the people is another factor in determining public trust and so with how efficient , effective and timely is the delivery of goods and services in the communities. Therefore, a research that will ascertain the performance and projects and programs of the party list groups is very timely to establish its relationship to the incidence of public trust.

This study generally aims to determine the incidence of public trust on the performance of the party list groups. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of public trust on the party list groups' performance as perceived by the respondents?
2. What is the level of awareness of the respondents on the existence of the party list groups in the area?
3. What is the level of awareness of the respondents on the programs and projects of party list groups ?
4. What is the level of satisfaction of the respondents regarding the laws enacted, programs and projects implemented by the party list groups ?
5. What is the level of perception on the impact of the laws enacted, programs and projects of the party list groups ?

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6. Is there a significant relationship between the party list groups' programs, projects and performance and the public trust?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The historical occurrence of the marginalized and underrepresented sectors who would not have a chance to win in the national elections has guided the framers of the 1987 Constitution to allow more democratic representation in the legislative process of the House of Representatives. Republic Act 7941 provides that party list representatives shall be elected in the national level and this is quite unique in the Philippines. The difference with their district based counterparts lies in the fact that the party list groups are elected nationally. According to Republic Act 7941, a party list group must receive at least 2 per cent of the total nationwide votes in order to be entitled to one seat in the House of Representatives (Tigno, 2019).

Through the years, there is an increasing awareness of the party list groups. Pulse Asia Survey released the result of a survey in March, 2019, stating that three in four Filipino voters have heard, read or watched something about the party list system. A similar survey in 2001 done by the Social Weather Stations stated that a third (35%) heard of the party list system only during the survey itself. This encourages more participation among the party list groups as the public increases its awareness of the existence of the party list system (Tigno, 2019).

The Supreme Court of the Philippines in its 2013 ruling, stated that the party list groups do not need to represent any marginalized and underrepresented sector. The intent of the Court in this landmark ruling is to emphasize congressional representation more rather than the sectoral representation itself. Because of the 2013 decision, many traditional and elitist politicians form or join party list groups to allow them to have more influence and power in the House of Representatives (Tigno, 2019).

The party list system has been utilized to further marginalize the already underprivileged groups. And this is true as the Commission on Elections accepted that there is control of the big and the accord of the small since 1995. The 2013 Supreme Court decision has strengthened this by letting the party list nominees run even if they do not belong to the marginalized sectors that they represent. This is contrary to the SC decision promulgated in 2001 that party list representatives should be part of the group that they claim to represent (Arao, 2022).

The rich and mighty use the party list system as another means to preserve their grip and power in Congress. Mikee Romero who is the richest Congressman representing the party list group One Patriotic Coalition of Marginalized Nationals has a net worth of US\$ 135 million. Relatives of the congressional district representatives get additional seats in Congress in a way which can be described as an abuse of the party list system. Those local officials affected by term limits see the party list system as another opportunity to gain power and influence and

prepare themselves for a different position in the next election (Arao, 2022).

Reacting to claims that the rich and mighty dominate the party list system, the COMELEC stated that they have no power to deal with it and amending the law is the solution that they are contemplating on. But it has yet to fully utilize its quasi – judicial and quasi – legislative function in order to realize the intent of the party list law. Voters should be proactive in knowing the objectives and the process of the party list system in the absence of the political will and credibility of the COMELEC. Awareness on the part of the people is another thing. The greater challenge lies in voting the right party list groups in the next election (Arao, 2022).

All interdependent relationships are held together by trust. Outside of the family institutions, trust is more critical in the domain of public service. There is a surrender of rights by the citizens in a social contract knowing that laws will govern all the transactions mutually agreed upon. Anarchy will result if confidence will be lost among the people regarding their best interest. Then this can result to loss of morale and commitment among public servants to uphold their duties and responsibilities. Trust plays a very important role in the lives of people in every nation. (Asuncion, et.al., 2016).

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2017) stated that actual results are just as relevant as the act of policy making and its process of motivation. Effective policies to improve socio – economic conditions should be paired with irreproachable actions when there is high unemployment and gross inequality in any society. There are three critical dimensions of trustworthiness when it comes to these expectations which are integrity, openness and fairness. There is a theoretical way to better link the discussion of strategy on trust to actionable reform agenda as found out by OECD (2017). This is called the competence – values framework. From this and in relation to public service, trust can be defined as : A citizen's credence that the institutions of government satisfy their mandates with proficiency and integrity, acting in pursuit of the broader benefit society.

In this proposition, the people appraise government from the perspective of both the effectiveness and uprightness of the policy – making process and result and their experiences in the delivery of service. This proposition can give direction on calculating trust on its tracking over time and on scrutinizing the elements that may propel it – in other words opening the door to another set of data which is presently accessible.

Government institutions in its public policy approach can inspire public trust in such a way that high trust begets collaboration while low trust begets aversion even if those things will benefit them. There is a close parallel between the strategies of the government institutions to create trust and the means and methods the private sectors do to gain more clients through intended and well- planned trust plan of actions. (OECD, 2017).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The descriptive method of research was utilized in this study. This method deals with a situation demanding various techniques of data gathering such as : on the post observation and questionnaires which eventually is under the option of the researcher at the time the process of investigation is made.

Sampling

Data collection was done among the 120 respondents in the towns of Sta. Cruz, Pila and Siniloan, province of Laguna, Philippines and they were selected on a random basis, While selecting the sample, efforts were made to cover the 4th district of Laguna in its entirety so as to have wide representation of samples within the geographic location.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data were gathered through survey using structured

questionnaires. The researcher used several channels in the distribution and retrieval of the survey questionnaires. The said questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher or coursed through her friends to intended respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data gathered, analysis and interpretation of the results using appropriate statistical tools and treatments are presented in this section.

Answers to the problems formulated are also discussed herein. One of the goals of this research is to devise a way to quantify public trust and determine afterwards if there is a significant relation between the performance of the party list groups and the public trust.

Measuring public trust will eventually help the party list groups to determine if they are performing effectively and if they have efficiently delivered the needed and desired goods and services to the people.

Table 1: Perceived Public Trust on Party List Groups in Terms of Its Performance

Indicative Statement	Mean	Remark
1. The party list groups can perform its duties at the right time and quality.	3.61	Agree
2. I can rely on party list groups that they are doing their jobs.	3.60	Agree
3. The party list groups are just and fair in the way that they treat me.	3.64	Agree
4. The party list groups are able to fulfill their promises.	3.56	Agree
5. I am contented with the delivery of services of the party list groups on person like me.	3.55	Agree
6. The projects of the party list groups are needed and beneficial to our community.	3.62	Agree
7. I get better benefits from the projects being implemented by the party list groups in our communities.	3.47	Moderately Agree
Overall Mean	3.58	The public trust on the party list groups is high

Legend: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree/Very High, 3.50-4.49 Agree/High, 2.50-3.49 Moderately Agree/Moderately High, 1.50-2.49 Disagree/Low, 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree/Very Low

Table 1 shows that public trust on the party list groups is high. The party list groups were able to deliver goods and services to the people efficiently and effectively and the needs of the people were taken into consideration along the way. There was a degree of competence on the part of the party list groups to implement projects and programs that can alleviate poverty and improve the quality of their lives such as scholarships, medical assistance and training programs. These are needed by the respondents and perceived by them as beneficial to the communities and rural areas. There was a perception of fairness among the constituents because they felt that they have real voice in the process and that they were treated with respect. The respondents felt that in the implementation of the different projects and programs in their respective congressional districts, the party list groups were fair and

they selected the beneficiaries based on their needs and capabilities. This positive perception of fairness in the process resulted to the high mark of public trust among the respondents. The question on getting better benefits from the projects of the party list groups got the lowest rating which is moderately agree. Some respondents were not able to avail of some projects which are quite limited in their areas so they did not answer positively the last question. Medical assistance programs are not available in some communities because the big hospitals nearest them were not allotted the medical assistance fund by the party list groups. Scholarships are limited in some areas because of the numerous number of applicants. Party list groups are given only certain amount of funds for the educational assistance. And so they have to work within that limited budget.

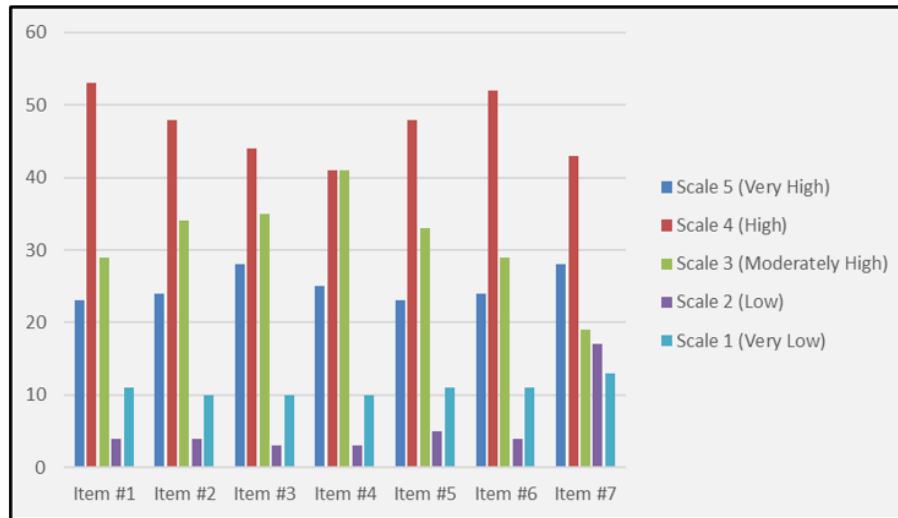


Figure 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Trust on the Party List Groups as to its Performance.

As shown in Figure 1, the public trust on the performance of the party list groups is high. The high rating is due to the fact that there is an efficient delivery of services to the respondents and they were able to avail of the different programs and projects of the party list groups such as the medical assistance, TUPAD (temporary work program) , scholarship and TESDA (livelihood training program). With these projects and programs, the respondents and other constituents were able to feel the presence of the

party list groups. Respondents put their trust on the party list groups when they can avail of the varied projects and programs executed by them. Scholarships, medical assistance, temporary employment and training programs are very relevant in their everyday lives. They can feel now that these party list groups are really looking after their welfare. Good performance for them is about the timely and effective delivery of goods and services.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Awareness on the Existence of ANGKLA Party List and other Party List Groups

Party List groups	Frequency	Percentage
Angkla	60	50.0
Kalinga	1	0.01
Buhay	2	0.02
Bagong Henerasyon	10	8.3
Ave	4	0.04
None	29	24.2
No Answer	25	20.8

Table 2 illustrates that 50% of the respondents are aware of the existence of Angkla because it is the party list which has implemented the most number of projects and programs in Laguna such as the medical assistance, scholarship, and TESDA training programs. Bagong Henerasyon Partylist has implemented TESDA Training Programs and other projects in the area. Other Party List Groups have implemented few programs & projects in the 4th District of Laguna. The respondents who answered none or they are not aware of any party list groups came from the upland area of Siniloan, Laguna. No program and project of the party list groups has ever reached their barangays. The trust and awareness of the respondents are low in areas that have poor access to the delivery of goods and services. These people do not even know what a party list group is and in previous

elections, they were not able to vote for the party list groups for lack of awareness about the existence of party list groups. They only voted for the congressman or representative that would represent their district in the House of Representatives. It is safe to conclude that the programs and projects of the party list groups contribute much to the awareness of the respondents regarding their existence. Unlike the congressmen who represent each district in the Philippines, the party list groups do not enjoy the popularity of the former. These congressmen usually come from the districts that they represent so their constituents know them very well. It is only through these projects and programs that the party list groups are being known by the people. If they do not implement any program in a certain district, then the awareness of the people is zero.

Table 3: Respondents' Awareness on the Programs and Projects of Party List Groups

Projects and Programs	Frequency	%
Medical Assistance	31	20.7
TUPAD Program	14	9.3
Scholarship	63	42.0
TESDA Training	30	20.0
Infrastructure	12	8.0

Scholarship program got the highest rating in terms of awareness because first, this is a program that is so responsive to the needs of the respondents and it is accessible to them. Students can easily avail of the scholarship and the slots provided for are numerous. Next to scholarship are the medical assistance and TESDA training programs. Patients can easily avail of the medical assistance through the offices of the party list groups. The livelihood training programs are offered to trainees very near the places where they reside. The different programs and projects create awareness because of the improved public service in terms of access,

quality and responsiveness. Through word of mouth and coordination with the local government units, the people were made aware of the projects and programs of the party list groups.

In order to efficiently and effectively implement those projects and programs, the staff of the party list groups coordinate with the offices of the municipal mayors and barangay captains to disseminate information on the availability of the said projects and programs and eventually ask their assistance in the process of application. Since the LGUs know their constituents well, the beneficiaries are easily identified.

Table 4: Level of Satisfaction of the Respondents on the Programs and Projects and Laws Enacted by Party List Groups

Indicative Statement	Mean	Remark
1. Are you happy with the projects and programs of the party list groups in your community?	3.94	Satisfied
2. Are you happy with the Medical Assistance Program of the party list groups in your community?	3.63	Satisfied
3. Are you happy with the TUPAD Program of the party list groups in your community?	3.61	Satisfied
4. Are you happy with the Scholarship Program of party list groups in your community?	4.33	Satisfied
5. Are you happy with the TESDA Training Program of the party list groups in your community?	3.64	Satisfied
6. Are you happy with the Bridge/Road Project of the party list in your community?	3.32	Moderately Satisfied
7. Are the laws enacted by party list groups beneficial in your life?	3.76	Satisfied
Overall Mean	3.75	The level of satisfaction is high

Legend: 4.50-5.00 Very High Satisfaction, 3.50-4.49 High Satisfaction, 2.50-3.49 Moderate Satisfaction, 1.50-2.49 Low Satisfaction, 1.00-1.49 Very Low Satisfaction

As illustrated in Table 4, the level of satisfaction for the programs and projects such as medical assistance, TUPAD, Scholarship, TESDA training and laws enacted by party list groups is high while for the infrastructure such as roads and bridges, the level of satisfaction is moderate. The overall mean for the level of satisfaction is 3.75 which is high. Therefore, the respondents are satisfied with the projects and programs and laws enacted by the party list groups because the respondents are the beneficiaries of the said programs and projects. Effective and efficient delivery of services is the main driver for the incidence of public trust on the party list groups. No party list group has ever built farm- to- market roads in

the district so the respondents are moderately satisfied regarding the question on infrastructure. Farm- to- market roads are usually built through the congressional funds of the congressman of the 4th district of Laguna. This is one area where the party list groups should allocate funds for the infrastructure program to gain more trust from the people. The scholarship got the highest rating for satisfaction because many respondents were able to avail of the program for their children and education is valued so much by the people. They firmly believe that through education their lives will greatly improve. Effective and efficient delivery of services is the main driver for the incidence of public trust on the party list groups. If their

needs are being met by the implementation of several programs, then the level of satisfaction on them will be increased. The main job of the party list groups and the congressmen is lawmaking and not the implantation of projects and programs.

But for the people, the indicator of good performance by the party list groups and legislators is if they are able to

bring goods and services to the people. This is how the people perceive and gauge if they are performing well as public servants.

As shown in Figure 2, 40% of the respondents are satisfied with the Scholarship Program implemented by the party list groups. Many children of the respondents and constituents were able to avail of the scholarship so

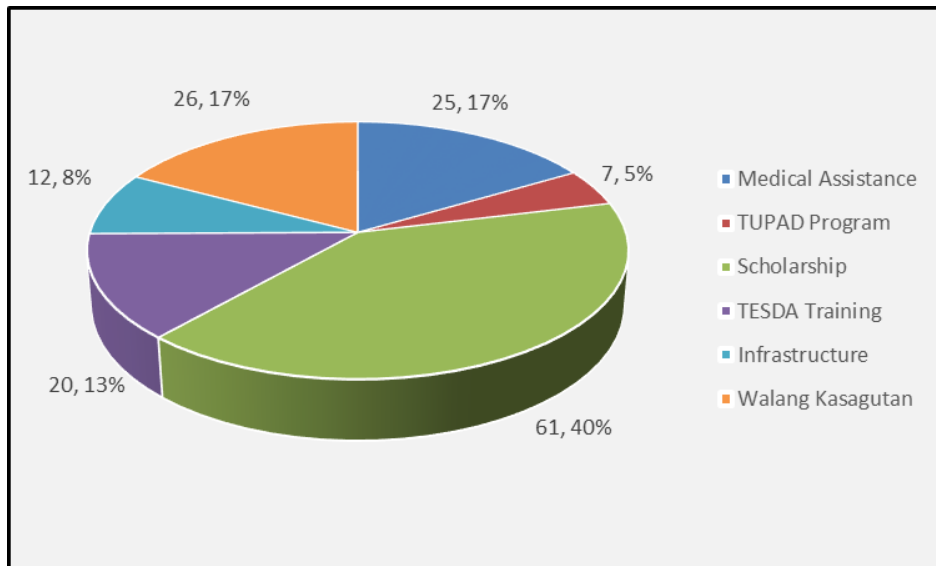


Figure 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Programs and Projects of Party List Groups Benefited from as Perceived by the Respondents

this program got the highest rating. On the other hand, 17% did not give any answer because they were those living in the upland areas of Siniloan, Laguna who were not able to avail of the scholarship and other programs. Access to the projects and programs of the party list groups and the government is the one which drives the trust and satisfaction of the respondents. Because of the location of the upland areas of Siniloan, Laguna, no party list group has reached the place to implement several programs. But ANGKLA Party List initiated the

implementation of temporary work program or TUPAD after this researcher called the attention of the party list group to the prevailing situation in the said community. Several residents of that area were identified by the barangay captain and selected by ANGKLA Party List to participate in the temporary work program.

Table 5 illustrates that for the respondents, the projects, programs and laws enacted by the party list groups are important and beneficial in their lives. They agree on the statements that there are enough projects, programs and

Table 5: Level of Perception on the Impact of the Laws Enacted, Programs and Projects of the Party List Groups

Statement	Mean	Remark
1. How important are the projects and programs of the party list groups in your community?	3.92	Important
2. How important are the laws enacted by the party list groups in your community?	4.00	Important
3. What is the effect of the implementation of the projects and programs by the party list groups in your life?	3.61	Beneficial
4. What is the effect of the laws enacted by the party list groups in your life?	4.33	Beneficial
5. There are enough number of projects and programs by the party list groups in your community	3.64	Agree
6. There are enough laws enacted by the party list groups	3.32	Agree
Overall Mean	3.80	There is high regard for the projects, programs and laws enacted by the party list groups.

laws enacted by the party list groups. The respondents have high regard for the projects, programs and laws enacted by ANGKLA and other party list groups because they are satisfied with the efficient delivery of services that has helped improve their lives. The laws enacted by the party list groups are relevant in the society, therefore they are also beneficial to them. The question on if there are enough laws enacted by the party list groups got the lowest rating. This is due to the fact that there is lack of information dissemination on the part of the party list groups to inform the people on the laws that they have crafted in the House of Representatives. The people are

left in the dark on the aspect of legislative function of the party list groups.

Hence, these party list groups should use the social media platforms like Tiktok, Youtube, Facebooks and others to relay to the people the bills and resolutions they have filed in the House of Representatives. Doing your job and part is one thing but getting them known by the citizens is another thing.

As illustrated in Table 6, the high *r* value of 0.817 implies that there is a significant and very strong relationship between the party list groups' performance and the public trust. The relationship of the party list groups' projects

Table 6: Relationship between the Party List Groups' Performance, and Programs/Projects and the Public Trust

Indicator	Public Trust			
	Beta	R	Int.	Sig.
Performance	.574	.817	Very Strong Relationship	p<.01
Projects and Programs	.325	.666	Strong Relationship	p<.01
Adjusted R-Squared		52.86%		

and programs with public trust, is strong as shown by the high *r* value of 0.666.

This research shows that the delivery of services to the people and responsiveness to the needs of the people have a great impact on the trust that they have on the party list groups. The trust of the respondents depended on the number and quality of projects and programs that they have in the different barangays that are beneficial to the people. As more projects and programs are implemented, the higher the trust is given to the party list groups. The performance of the party list groups in lawmaking and the implementation of beneficial programs and projects have a very strong relationship with the trust given by the respondents. If they perceive the party list groups as trustworthy and competent partner in their everyday lives, then the public trust is strengthened. They regard good performance as a measure of trust and confidence.

CONCLUSION

This research finds that there is a positive correlation between the performance of the party list groups and the public trust. It is also manifested in the study that there is a positive correlation between the projects and programs of the party list groups and the public trust.

The respondents' level of trust towards the party list groups is affected by the performance and the projects and programs of the latter. The more projects and programs like medical assistance, scholarships, TUPAD or temporary work and TESDA training programs are implemented in the communities, the higher is the public trust on the party list groups. Among the projects and programs of the party list groups, the infrastructure project got the lowest rating which is translated to moderate satisfaction. Respondents from upland barangays of Siniloan, Laguna were not aware of the party list groups because no program and project was ever implemented in their area. If the respondents are

satisfied with the delivery of services, the incidence of public trust is high among the respondents. Therefore, the performance of the party list groups is perceived by the number and quality of projects and programs that it has in the different areas and barangays. The delivery of services to the people greatly affects the trust that they have on the party list groups. It is the key component and main driver of public trust on the performance of the party list groups.

This study including the data gathered show that the party list groups can influence the public trust on them by improving the awareness and satisfaction level on the delivery of goods and services to the communities.

Based on the conclusions drawn and after an exhaustive analysis of the findings, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Build infrastructure projects such as farm- to- market roads that will spur economic growth in the rural areas and therefore will create awareness and trust on the party list groups;
2. Implement more projects and programs in the far-flung areas like the upland barangays in Siniloan, Laguna in order to increase the awareness and incidence of public trust among the people situated in those communities;
3. Intensify information dissemination program specially in the social media platforms like Facebook, Tiktok, Youtube and others to better inform the public on the bills and resolutions filed by the party list groups in Congress

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