

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2023, Vol. 4, No. 11, 3808 – 3813

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.11.02>

Research Article

Analyzing the Factors Affecting Case Disposition Efficiency in The Office of Quezon City Prosecutor's Office

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Article history:

Submission November 2023

Revised November 2023

Accepted November 2023

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, aiming to understand the importance of efficient case disposition in the legal system. It used a comprehensive research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate various aspects of the prosecutors' work. The quantitative analysis highlighted the role of caseload volume, case complexity, and time management in case disposition efficiency. However, the qualitative component, based on conversations with prosecutors, provided valuable depth to their recommendations and emphasized the advantages of a centralized system. In conclusion, this research has broader implications beyond Quezon City and serves as a blueprint for legal system reform. It has the potential to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of the justice system, contributing to a safer and more orderly society.

Keywords: *Case disposition, Case management, Criminal justice system, Efficiency, Philippines, Legal studies, Prosecutor*

Introduction

This research aims to delve into the complexity of the legal system within Quezon City, a vibrant urban center in the Philippines and the largest city in Metro Manila. The study scrutinizes the complexity of the case disposition process within the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, exploring the multifaceted factors that influence the efficiency of this critical aspect of the local justice system. By narrowing the

scope to this specific geographic area, a more profound understanding of the dynamics at play can be gained, and potential avenues for enhancing case disposition efficiency can be identified. The findings of this research will not only contribute to local improvements but may also hold broader implications for the Asian legal landscape, where efficient case disposition remains a shared pursuit in the pursuit of justice and social harmony

How to cite:

Ablang, K. B., Caina, J. D. D., Guardian, P. E., Torres, J. M., & Malang, B. P. (2023). Analyzing the Factors Affecting Case Disposition Efficiency in The Office of Quezon City Prosecutor's Office. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 4(11), 3808 – 3813. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.04.11.02

Methods

The researchers of the study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research designs, emphasizing a descriptive approach. This choice allowed them to analyze potential outcomes and confirm the accuracy of the results gathered for the study. The primary objective of the study is to narrow down and explain the causes and effects of the ineffectiveness of the influence within the Quezon City, Prosecutors Office.

A validation process was undertaken to assess the accuracy and reliability of the instrument, involving various methods such as defining research objectives, selecting or creating the instrument, assessing content, construct, and criterion validity, ensuring reliability, conducting pilot testing, and refining the instrument based on the results. This comprehensive approach was employed to ensure the instrument's suitability for the research objectives.

Results and Discussion

Based from the answers of the respondents, each of them has an already vast number of experiences as Prosecutors. Majority of their respective ages range from 30 to late 50's. In terms of rank, nearly half of them are Deputy

City Prosecutors or Senior Assistant City Prosecutors. In terms of tenure, majority of them have at least between a year to more than 10 years in position as City Prosecutors. The rest of the respondents (indexed as others of the table below), have between seven to ten years and four to six years, respectively. Also, most of the respondents receive at between 16 to 20 cases a month. This relates to a relatively high number since cases are not always resolved, nor even reviewed thoroughly overnight. It takes a relatively longer time to do so such since it is justice that is carried out, as the future of the people involved rests in their wisdom and judgment.

In relation to the percentage of cases disposed per month, the percentages are evenly distributed. Half of what they receive in a month will already have a decision (dismissal or grounds for a probable cause). Further computation shows that in such a rate, a case will have a decision from their end in 1.5 months. The rate can be considered as relatively fast, although more and much further improvements can still be made given the ratio of how many cases they receive vis-à-vis their dispositions.

Table 1. Type of cases that respondents find most difficult to resolve

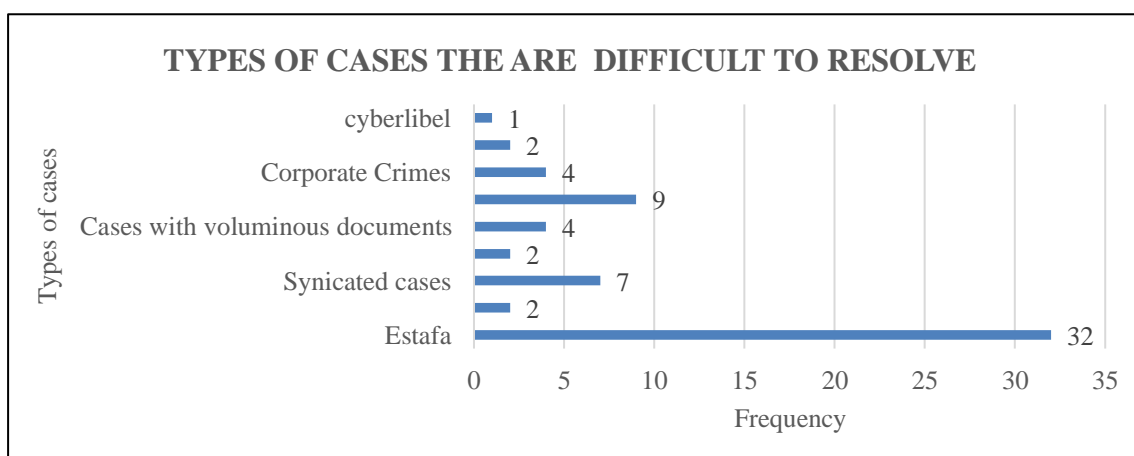


Table shows that the most common cases that they find difficult to resolve are *estafa*, syncicated cases and some corporate cases. Each case has no definitive and template in terms of the number of days or weeks before having a promulgation. But there are instances in each

of the mentioned cases wherein it would take only days (noted between 2 to 3 days) to a week or even a month. This depends on the evidences presented – which is naturally expected from any Prosecutor-level case.

Table 2. The respondents recommended strategies towards speedy case disposition

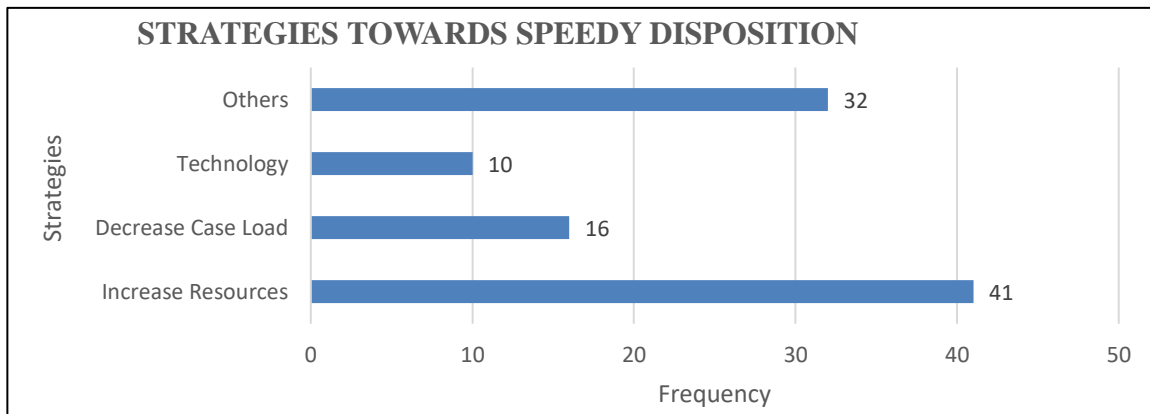


Table shows the apparent recommendations of the respondents in order to achieve a more efficient and effective case management in their department.

The answers are the exact opposites of those that were mentioned in Table 1. Increased Resources matched with decreased case loading will definitely help each Prosecutor carry out their tasks. They will have more time to focus on each case – simply.

The Likert-Scale part of the research yielded a general result that majority of the responses prefer to at least having an inclination that having a centralized management system would achieve better case management by expediting certain procedures.

A total of 44 prosecutors answered. Most of the answers fall under the Agree criterion, followed by neither or neutral. The weighted mean is at 3.57 – which is higher than the neutral rate of 3.00. This still presents a higher level of preference. Statistically speaking, using correlation-analysis and logistical binary wherein all positive responses will be given a 1.0 binary rating while neutral and negative factors shall have a 0.0 binary, the responses were compared accordingly.

To simplify, any response on Pearson-Correlation that exceed a R-Value of 0.40 is considered to be of high correlation and relevance. Ergo, a certain action or recommendation can be implemented. Given the results of a 0.7707 R-Value or result definitely mean that the recommendations of the respondents will indeed have a significant impact on the perceived improvements in their department.

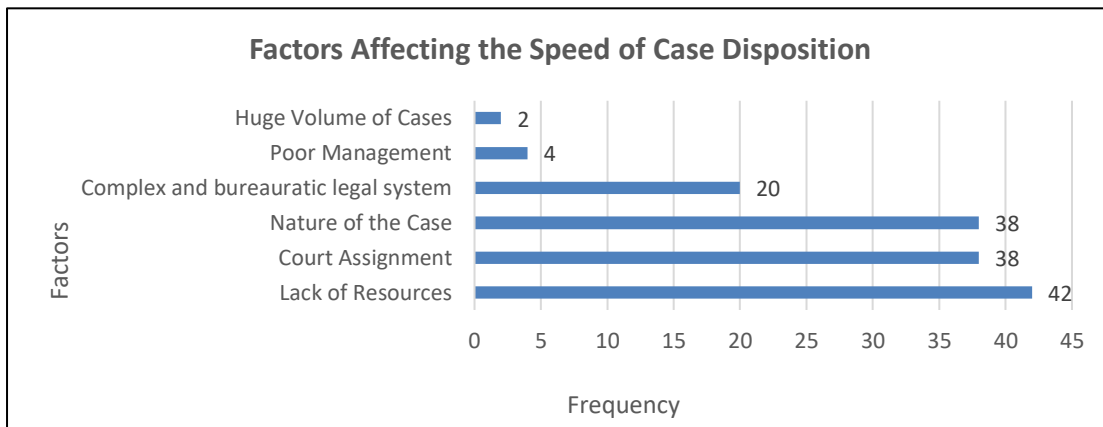
In testing whether there is a significant difference on the respondents' impression on the ability of centralized case management to expedite the resolution of cases across number of years of experience, number of cases receive per month, and percentage of cases dispose per month. The following are the findings: First, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is not a statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of their impression on the ability of centralized case management to expedite length of service. In other words, the results suggest that respondents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on the no. of years the respondents are in service. This is consistent with the finding from the previous query, which showed that respondents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on length of service. Second, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is not a statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of their impression on the ability of centralized case management to expedite the number of cases received per month. In other words, the results suggest that respondents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on how many cases they receive per month. This is consistent with the finding from the previous query, which showed that respondents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on length of service. Third, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is not a statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of their

impression on the ability of centralized case management to expedite in the percentage of the disposed cases of the respondents. In other words, the results suggest that respondents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on the percentage of the disposed cases of the respondents. This is consistent with the findings from the previous queries, which showed that respond-

ents' impressions of centralized case management do not have a significant impact on either the number of cases received per month or length of service.

There are certain factors that affect the speedy disposition and decision towards a case. This part presents the most pre-dominant attributes.

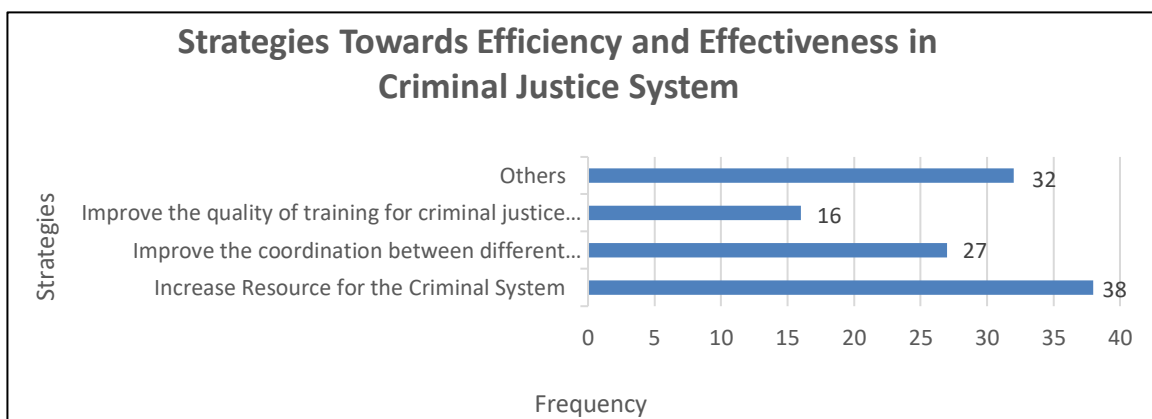
Table 3. Factors affecting the speed of case disposition in Quezon City Prosecutor's Office



Lack of resources contribute the most towards any delay in proceedings. Whether it be in terms of time relative to the number of cases received, or due to other factors such as the means to analyze and review all cases – these factors affect the disposition of the Prosecutors. Court Assignments and Nature of Cases also play a significant part. Definitely, a case would also depend, as mentioned above, on its nature and the number evidences for review.

Other aspects include bureaucracy and management concerns – which can be traced to the system of how the department carries out their functions. When further probed, the respondents suggested certain interventions such as inclusion of filing fees in relation to the gravity of the case (e.g. Unjust Vexation). This will sort out the items that need further resolution from the rather petty ones. Some also indicate the need to have more Prosecutors in order to distribute the load further.

Table 4. Strategies towards efficiency and effectiveness in criminal justice system



On a macro-level, the following presents the interventions that they respondents deem imperative in order to improve the overall justice system. The respondents cited that, once more, resources play a crucial part. Coordination between them and the other agencies is also imperative since the presentation of evidences and other juridical matters contribute to the overall proficiency in the management of cases. These include trainings and other parameters that will hone the skills of the respondents.

When further probed, the respondents cited interventions that, based from their experience and wisdom, will further improve the system and their efficiency. To wit:

"One must always take into consideration the volume of crimes being committed in the in the city that results in the filing of the complaints and information."

"Court hearing break" meaning arrangement can be made with the courts wherein there will be a week for prosecutors to resolve cases, as such the court shall not set cases hearing during the period."

"Limit court appearances for prosecutors in order for them to dispose their cases. It should be limited to 4 hrs. per day for 3 times a week."

"Just add more prosecutors and assign to prosecutors to RTC courts."

"There are simply "too many" cases vis-a-vid the number of prosecutors."

These are all experience-based responses that will provide or at least pave way towards the gradual improvement of the system.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the recommendations put forth for the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office offer a holistic and forward-thinking approach to address the issues of efficiency and backlog. By increasing the number of prosecutors and support staff, promoting specialization, and implementing a modern case management system,

the office can significantly enhance its operations. Moreover, the emphasis on ongoing training and collaboration with external stakeholders sets a high standard for legal institutions, not only in the Philippines but worldwide, ensuring that staff are well-equipped to adapt to the ever-evolving legal landscape. Furthermore, the establishment of regular performance assessments and feedback mechanisms fosters transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, not only within Quezon City but also serving as an inspiring example for legal systems globally. Ultimately, the proposed strategies can serve as a model for courts in the Philippines and beyond, offering a path to improving the quality of legal services on a broader scale.

Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to World Citi Colleges – Cubao Graduate School headed by Dean Marmelo Abante for generously providing us with the opportunity to conduct our research. Additionally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for granting us the privilege to carry out our survey within their jurisdiction. We are also deeply thankful to our dedicated adviser, Dr. Bernardo Malang, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the research process. Your unwavering assistance has been instrumental in the successful completion of our study.

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