

Evaluative Criteria for Good Governance of Local Governments According to the Viewpoint of Local Government Executives

Supatra Assavasukee*

Abstract

The Royal Decree on Criteria and Procedures for Good Governance B.E. 2546 (A.D. 2003) stipulates that “the performance of every agency must be evaluated” (Pairuchvet, 2010:12). According to the standard approach, local governments are evaluated by the Department of Local Administration (DLA), the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), and the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), with a set of criteria that target 7 goals. Whether this top-down approach is sufficient and satisfactory remains debatable.

An opposite approach is the bottom-up approach, where the criterion of participation is one of the principles of good governance of local governments. Furthermore, the criteria center on six principles set forth in the aforementioned Royal Decree: 1) rule of law; 2) ethics; 3) transparency; 4) participation; 5) accountability; and 6) cost effectiveness.

This study focus on the evaluative criteria for good governance of local governments according to the viewpoint of local government executives. The author attempts to establish theory-based evaluative criteria where a theoretical linkage to each criterion is discussed. Three evaluative criteria are obtained for each principle of good governance, making a total of 18 criteria. The study also employs Likert-type rating scales for each criterion in order to ascertain the level of importance. Two sets of survey are conducted, one to gain for “standard” rating scales and the other “actual” rating scales, for comparison purposes.

Keywords: Evaluative criteria, good governance, principles of good governance, local governments, executives, bottom-up viewpoints, theory-based approach

*Cargill Meats (Thailand) Limited, E-mail: supatra.niji@gmail.com

เกณฑ์การประเมินหลักธรรมาภิบาลขององค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ในมุมมองของผู้บริหารองค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น

สุพัตรา อัศวสุข*

บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาเรื่อง เกณฑ์การประเมินหลักธรรมาภิบาลขององค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ในมุมมองของผู้บริหารองค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น เน้นหลักเกณฑ์การประเมินสำหรับหลักธรรมาภิบาลขององค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่นในมุมมองของผู้บริหารองค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ผู้เขียนพยายามที่จะสร้างหลักเกณฑ์การประเมินที่อยู่บนพื้นฐานของหลักธรรมาภิบาล ซึ่งหลักธรรมาภิบาลประกอบไปด้วย 1) หลักนิติธรรม 2) หลักคุณธรรม 3) หลักความโปร่งใส 4) หลักการมีส่วนร่วม 5) หลักสำนึกรับผิดชอบ และ 6) หลักความคุ้มค่า โดยที่หลักธรรมาภิบาลแต่ละหลักจะประกอบด้วย หลักเกณฑ์การประเมิน 3 หลักเกณฑ์ ซึ่งจะทำให้มีหลักเกณฑ์การประเมินทั้งสิ้น 18 หลักเกณฑ์ การศึกษานี้ได้ใช้มาตราส่วนการประเมิน 5 ระดับ ของวิธีตามทฤษฎีคิริท สำหรับใช้ในเกณฑ์การประเมินแต่ละเกณฑ์ โดยการสร้างแบบสำรวจสองชุด ประกอบด้วย ชุดที่ 1) ชุดมาตรฐาน และ ชุดที่ 2) ชุดที่เกิดขึ้นจริง

คำสำคัญ: เกณฑ์การประเมิน หลักธรรมาภิบาล เกณฑ์การประเมินหลักธรรมาภิบาล องค์กรปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ผู้บริหาร มุมมองการบริหารจากล่างขึ้นบน วิธีการตามทฤษฎี

*Cargill Meats (Thailand) Limited อีเมล์: supatra.niji@gmail.com

Introduction

Due to the 1997 economic crisis, the Thai government was economically devastated and needed urgent financial assistance from the World Bank and the IMF. Therefore, in consultation with the banks the Thai government collaborated on a plan to reform Thai bureaucracy as a necessary condition for the recovery of the Thai economy. Subsequently, there was further development of good governance in the form of the Proposal for Promoting Good Governance of 1999 and the Royal Decree on the Principles and Methods of Good Governance of 2003 (the 2003 Royal Decree). Although good governance has been enforced for more than fifteen years, problems of corruption, segregation of duties between the central government and local governments, insufficiency of public participation, and lack of transparency still exist. This reveals that there is sluggishness in the governance of the local governments in terms of implementation and practice. It is therefore essential to have an independent evaluation and appropriate criteria for good governance of local governments.

Scope of the Study

The study aimed to obtain applicable and practical evaluative criteria of good governance for Thailand's local governments according to the viewpoint of local government executives that are centered on 6 principles set forth in the 2003 Royal Decree. Three types of local governments (LGs) or local administrative organizations (LAOs) are covered- Provincial Administration Organizations (PAOs), Thesanban (municipalities), and Tambon Administration Organizations (TAOs); however two special types are excluded-the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and the city of Pattaya. The term "executive" in Thailand is loosely used and is often confused between city mayors or chairmen and the permanent secretary of local governments. In this study this term refers to a person at a high level within a local administration that has both executive and administrative power and authority over the local administrative organization and that is responsible for the local administration, and manages and conducts the affairs of such an organization.

The constituents of this study, in brief, are as follows: 1) applicable and practical evaluative criteria of good governance for Thailand's local governments; 2) a rating scale for each evaluative criterion of good governance; 3) an actual rating scale of those evaluative criteria of good governance; and 4) the evaluative criteria of good governance that are critical problems in the current local governments in Thailand. The theory-based approach was employed to acquire evaluative indicators and then the criteria. Each principle of good governance has its own applicable theory or approach.

After obtaining the total 18 evaluative criteria, the study also obtained both the rating scales (defined as "standard") and actual rating scales (defined as "actual") of the criteria. The means (\bar{x}) were calculated to compare the level of importance between the acquired standard and actual rating scales. The gap in those means can lead to the identification of the criteria that are critical problems in the current local governments in Thailand, thereby realizing the true success or problems of good governance in order to further improvement.

Top-down Approach versus Bottom-up Approach

The conventional and current approach of establishing evaluative criteria is top-down. Obtaining the criteria from the viewpoint of local government executives, which this study is centered on, is a bottom-up approach. The old-school concept of the top-down approach emphasizes target-driven management and a democratic system of government (Bogason & Sørensen, 1998). In actual practice the central government has better control to accomplish set policy or goal-based evaluation. A criticism of this approach concerns whether it is democratic or creates power of control. Furthermore, the approach does not employ the participation principle from LGs in the process of constructing the criteria. Krogstrup (2003) remarked that "[m]ost street-level bureaucrats do not believe that indicators, which have been established at the top of the organization, reflect reality."

The bottom-up approach aims to balance the shortfall in the democratic process and control power in the central government. This approach emphasizes user participation and the knowledge embodied in the LGs, where the organizations have to implement and practice the 6 principles of good governance. Therefore, the users' capabilities are the key elements of this approach. While the criteria are obtained from the viewpoint of local government executives, the evaluation is carried out by the central evaluators that possess the power.

One criticism may arise—that the players (local government executives) write their own rules of the game (evaluative criteria). The bottom-up approach of obtaining the evaluative criteria may become a concern if the local government executives abuse the criteria by lowering those criteria standards of good governance for the sake of their own preferences or benefits. The way to avoid the lowering of criteria standards is to have viewpoints from all types of LAOs, and to have repeated rounds of interviews and questionnaires. The repeated rounds will help revise their earlier answers. The range of the answers will be reduced and the most similar answers can be selected. The executives are regarded as experts in providing their viewpoints, according to the definition of the Delphi technique. In addition, there may be guidelines set to select the criteria in order to eliminate personal preferences.

Research Methodology

This study employed qualitative and quantitative research methods. The population of this study was composed of 3 types of LAOs, the Office of the Decentralization to Local Government Organization Committee (ODLOC), and academics.

A modified Delphi technique was applied to the qualitative research method in order to obtain the 18 evaluative criteria for the 6 principles of good governance. Each principle equally had 3 acquired criteria. One contribution from the author was the literature reviewed to bring about 18 evaluative criteria as

one of the top-down viewpoints. These criteria were added into the in-depth interview group conducted with the ODLOC. This group included the chairman and 3 directors from all types of directors, and one academic as a key informant. Another group for an in-depth interview included 9 local government executives from PAOs, municipalities, and SAOs. This group and the remaining groups were viewed from a bottom-up viewpoint. There were three rounds of surveys: 1) to acquire the evaluative indicators; 2) to obtain the evaluative criteria with the standard rating scales; and 3) to gain the actual rating scales. From the aggregate of 7,851 LAOs, the three rounds of questionnaires were delivered to 64 executives of PAOs, 329 executives of municipalities, and 360 executives of SAOs. Therefore, there were 753 samples distributed for each round.

After obtaining the standard and actual rating scales, the means (\bar{x}) were calculated. The results of the means belonging to the actual rating scales as opposed to the means of the standard rating scales indicated the critical problems of current good governance in Thailand's local governments.

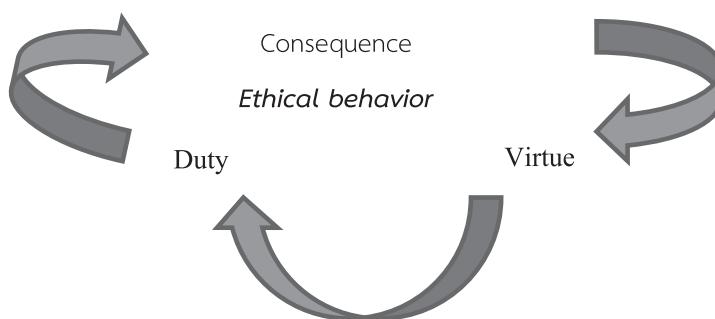
How Does the Theory or Approach Relate to the Indicators and Evaluative Criteria?

It is helpful to go through the selection application of related theory or approaches to each principle of good governance, indicators, and eventually the evaluative criteria. Each theory is a fundamental element of each principle of good governance, and simplifies and frames the development of the evaluative indicators and criteria.

Rule of Law vs. Bottom-up Approach: The rule of law regulates and protects the rights, freedom, and equity of all members. The bottom-up approach is focused on "justice as fairness." Bottom-up fairness means having "equal rights to basic liberties and benefit, and equal opportunity in terms of offices and positions". Bottom-up justice means that whenever a dispute or grievance arises, there are accessibility mechanisms to bring forth fair resolutions. Evaluative indicators and criteria should have the elements of providing fairness with equal

rights, freedom, and opportunity for all people without any disparity. These indicators and criteria should also lay justice mechanisms to cope with potential disputations.

Ethics vs. Consequence, Virtue, and Duty Theory: Ethics refers to the observance of righteousness and encouragement given to people to seek self-development in order that the Thai people can display such positive qualities. The theory of consequence, virtue, and duty is interrelated and reinforces the principle of ethics. The hoped-for consequences (Gensler, 2006) are developed to improve ethical behavior. Duty theory embraces such behavior and follows by intended action and develops to the final phase of moral character (Mizzoni, 2010). Between consequence and duty theory, virtue theory displays goodness and develops the good ethics of the individuals (Gensler, 2006).



Established evaluative indicators and criteria should have the constituents of recognition and reward systems or programs to promote good ethics, and training programs for ethical development.

Transparency vs. Transparency Theory: Transparency refers to all categories of conduct and actions that are the opposites, or near opposites, of corrupt practices. Transparency theory has the function of supporting the principle of transparency in three aspects-economic, public and academic (ibid: 4-6). The economic aspect focuses on disclosure with sufficient information to enhance risk assessments and the benefits of transactions. The public aspect requires publicity about performance in order to deter corruption and poor

performance. Academic discussions strengthen fairness, risks, benefits, and costs in order to ascertain the efficiency of all of the disclosed information. In conclusion:

Transparency theory = Economic aspect + Public aspect + Academic discussions

Evaluative indicators and criteria should disclose information to the public, with appropriate means of accessibility and measurement of transparency.

Participation vs. Fairness and Competence: Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (1969) and participation from the perspective of Rowe and Frewer (2000) focus on achieving effective participation by the "practice of involving members of the public in agenda-setting, decision-making, and policy-forming activities of organizations/institutions responsible for public development." Fairness and competence are fundamental principles of participation. Fairness encourages open participation, which then can contribute to the final decision. Competence, in like manner, contributes the most reliable methodological techniques to validate conflicts and debates. Evaluative indicators and criteria should display the fairness and competence attributes of public participation, and how decision making is publicly engaged.

Accountability vs. Goal, Process, and Outcome Approach: Accountability refers to the awareness of one's rights and duties, awareness of one's accountability to society, showing concern for public issues and enthusiasm in solving those problems, as well as having respect and tolerance for differences of opinion and the courage to face up to the good and disastrous consequences of one's actions. Alkin (1972) defines accountability according to three approaches: 1) goal accountability concentrates on sound and appropriate goals being established at the upper levels; 2) process accountability ensures sound and appropriate procedures in accomplishing those goals at operational levels; and 3) outcome accountability expresses the degree of achieving established goals at the levels of management and operators in being responsible for outcomes. The three approaches can be summarized as follows.

Goal accountability  Process accountability  Outcome accountability

Accountability involves the system more than behavior. Evaluative indicators and criteria should display the established system and the rights and duties of employees, how the given authority is carried out, and how the operation is measured at a satisfactory level.

Value for Money vs.3Es: Value for money provides the optimization of limited resources for all by launching campaigns to convince the Thai people of the value of economy and wise use of things. The 3 Es are economy + efficiency + effectiveness. Value for money can be determined in terms of either qualitative or quantitative measurement or both through the windows of the 3 Es. Economy measures the input costs of acquiring, running, and disposing of assets or resources. Efficiency measures the productivity between inputs and outputs. Effectiveness measures the relationship between outputs and outcomes, both qualitative and quantitative, in delivering the intended objectives. As a consequence of limited resources, evaluative indicators and criteria should display how the LGs utilize their local resources in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

How Are the Indicators of Good Governance Evaluation Established?

The indicators are bound by the definition of the six principles of good governance. They are also established in correlation with the theory-based approach and the principles of good governance. The selection of the total of 18 indicators is discussed in the next section. The acquired indicators were intended to make it easy for the respondents to provide their viewpoints of the evaluative criteria. Figure 1 is a mind-map and provides a guideline for the questionnaire in obtaining the evaluative criteria.

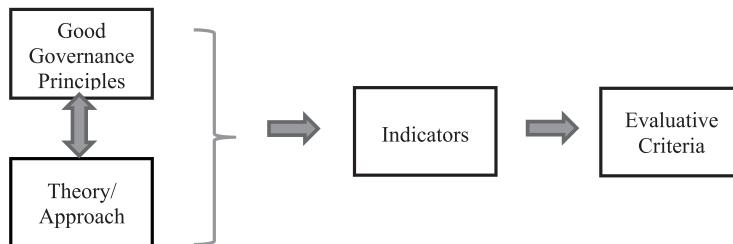


Figure 1: Mind-Map of Evaluative Criteria

Source: author's compilation

Findings and Discussion

From the 175 respondents of the 753 samples, the author categorized them according to LAO types-PAO, municipality, and SAO-from the data collection. Eighteen indicators of good governance were acquired for each type of LAO. Three indicators in each principle, which accounted for the most scores from the top rank to the third rank, were selected. These top three for each good governance principle from the PAO, municipality, and SAO types were then further selected by comparing the scores cumulatively. Within each good governance principle, only those indicators of the top three ranks that had high scores and corresponded to the theory or approach of that particular principle were finalized as indicators of good governance. Therefore, the six principles resulted in 18 indicators as the base to further obtain the evaluative criteria of good governance. The results are illustrated in Table A-1. The 18 indicators of good governance principles directed the respondents to construct their viewpoints within the frame of each indicator under a particular principle. For instance, the third indicator of the participation principle was “selection of committee from the public to participate in public hearings and decision-making.” The respondents had to establish an evaluative criterion that provided information about how the committee was selected, how the selection process or the service of the committee was justified, what the qualifications of the selected committee were, and so on.

From the data collection of the evaluative criteria there were five types of units of analysis: 1) Office of the Decentralization to Local Government Organization Committee (ODLOC); 2) academics; 3) PAOs; 4) municipalities; and 5) TAOs. Some were derived from the literature review as well. Considering the different viewpoints, the author analyzed the collected data in accordance with their types of unit of analysis. Group 1 comprised the ODLOC, academics, and the literature review. These involved the top-down viewpoint, while the remainder represented the bottom-up viewpoint. Since the functions and population sizes differed for each type of local government, groups 2, 3 and 4 were PAOs, municipalities, and TAOs respectively. Group 5 was a combination of all types.

Collectively, the same or similar viewpoints from the interviewees and /or from the questionnaire respondents were counted, as well as the given rating scales. The top score, the runner up, and the third were selected for only those that were relevant to the provided indicators to be representative of the evaluative criteria or indicators of good governance for that specific governance principal. The relevant theory bases were factored into each good governance principle as governed parameters. The selection was thus based on these two dimensions. Here, the indicators were then qualified to be the first filter. Similarly, the selection of rating scales applied the same approach as those of the evaluative criteria in terms of their frequency. The three evaluative criteria for each principle of good governance that were selected were arranged according to the sequence set forth by the above indicators (Table A-1). Final results of evaluative criteria and rating scales were illustrated in Table A-2.

The evaluative criteria obtained from the local governments' viewpoints represented the bottom-up approach. They implied the needs of the local administration and public. The bottom-up approach is one of the alternatives for establishing evaluative criteria besides the top-down approach. The other approach is a hybrid of both the top-down and bottom-up approaches.

Top-down and Bottom-up Viewpoints

It was evident that there were different viewpoints from group one, representing top-down viewpoints, and the other four groups, representing the bottom-up viewpoints of the local government executives. The results of the evaluative criteria from group one had commonalities with the other four groups: 1) at least one criterion in each principle of good governance; and 2) two criteria on the principles of participation and value for money. Group one had the least commonalities of evaluative criteria when compared with the other groups. In the future study, evaluative criteria may be obtained by employing an open-ended questionnaire without providing evaluative indicators as a guideline. However, in this study the theory-based approach and indicators were used as guidelines to generate the criteria.

Table A-1 in the Appendix Summarizes the indicators for the six principles of good governance.

Findings

Table A-2 provides the final results of all 18 evaluative criteria and rating scales, which were regarded as “standard” scales. These scales yielded most results at level 5. Only two criteria were at level four. Those rating scales that were designated as “actual” were treated as if the local officers had self-evaluation regarding their current conduct of good governance in their LAO. Such rating scores were rather scattered at all levels. Table 1 illustrates the results of the actual rating scales and means. The respondents provided rating scales for all 5 levels. Level five still showed the most frequency given to all criteria. The second was level four and some at level three, but very few at levels two and one. Except for the last two criteria of the value for money principle, the criterion for the principle of value for money for “one-stop-service” had 417 respondents. One hundred and sixty-eight respondents gave a rating on level five, 168 respondents on level four, 32 respondents on level three, and 49 respondents on level one. The other 236 respondents for the criterion “policy for training courses and job

rotation at least once a year” gave a rating from level five to level two at 83 for level five, 236 for level four, 66 for level two, and 32 for level two.

The means for the standard and actual rating scales were as follows:

Rule of Law: 5 vs. 4.27

Ethics: 5 vs. 4.43

Transparency: 5 vs. 4.63

Accountability: 5 vs. 4.48

Accountability: 4.67 vs. 4.42

Value for Money: 4.67 vs. 4.18

The means for the standard rating scales for the first four principles were 5.0, while the evaluative criteria for the principles of accountability and value for money were the same at 4.67. The means for the actual rating scales were above 4.0 but they were below those of the standard rating scales. If the means of the actual rating scale were higher than those of the standard, it may imply that the local governments are in good shape in terms of good governance. If it is the opposite, that is, the means of the actual rating scale were less than those of the standard, it may imply that the local governments may have problems with their good governance. If the two means of the same principle were not too different, it may imply that their good governance was still fine or reliable.

Table 1: Results of Actual Rating Scales and Means

Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x					1) Rule of Law	372	15	15		15
x					1.1 Set legal code and three year Local Development Plans on an annual basis	185	117	32		83
x					1.2 Circular letter sent out within determined time after enactment of legal code, rules and regulations with returned signature	253	66	83		15
					1.3 No complaint or objection filing on law enforcement or its disparity					
5						4.27				
Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x					2) Ethics	265	149			
x					2.1 Annual meeting of executives and officers to determine standard of good governance	200	151	66		
x					2.2 Training for public and officers to build ethics and integrity twice a year	205	141	59		9
					2.3 Pay for agreed goals on salary increment and bonus for all levels					
5						4.43				

Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x					3) Transparency 3.1 Disclose all plans, projects and activities to the public 3.2 Determine definite and number of communication channels 3.3 Having an internal control system and independent auditor to perform audit at least twice a year	318	99			
x						302	115			
x						219	150	48		
5						4.63				
Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x					4) Participation 4.1 Receive public opinion through public hearings, opinion box, hotline, community committee and website 4.2 Records on participant list and signature of participants in attending local development planning 4.3 Having transparent and systematic system to elect committee from all kinds of stakeholders for 2-year service with 2 terms maximum	285	132			
x						320	83	14		
x						170	93	154		
5						4.48				

Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x	x				5) Accountability	271	114	32		
					5.1 Clear command assignments designated to all officers and signed off upon receipt	218	134	65		
x					5.2 Traceability record and system trail for job command	202	168	32	15	
					5.3 Annual survey report for public satisfaction performed by audit unit or outsource agent					
4.67						4.42				
Rating Scales “Standard”					Evaluative Criteria	Rating Scales “Actual”				
5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1
x					6) Value for Money	285	132			
					6.1 Fiscal budget and procurement set according to Local Plans and spending accordingly	168	168	32		49
x	x				6.2 One-stop-service” to increase convenience and speed of service within specified time	83	236	66	32	
					6.3 Policy for training courses and job rotation at least once a year					
4.67						4.18				

A comparison of the calculated means of the standard and actual rating scales provided information on the critical problems of good governance in the current local governments in Thailand. Meanwhile, we can realize the true success or failure of our local governments in order to improve their conduct of good governance. The means of all of the actual rating scales were below those of the standard but were still in a good range, exceeding level 4. This indicated that the majority of LAOs have good governance in a higher zone. For those that were at the level of 3, 2 and 1 it may indicate that the LAOs have less focus on those areas of criteria being evaluated. Particularly, 154 respondents assigned level 3 to the participation principle. This was a relatively high frequency. Therefore, it gives a signal to the central government to especially oversee the matter of a transparent and systematic system in electing committees and members' qualifications. Meanwhile, the local government executives have to have this feedback in order to make improvements. Others at level 3 as well as level 2 and 1 were the areas where the both central and local governments have to pay attention to what the root causes of a low level of good governance are and how to improve them. After the improvement is implemented, the evaluation will result in a report of the progress of the good governance of the LAOs.

In summary, the levels of the rating scales can be seen in at least 3 aspects. First, they reflect how well good governance is currently practiced in the local governments. Second, they show well the central government oversees the local governments regarding the notion of good governance. Last, it is a matter of what, how, and when to make corrections and changes and improve those areas.

Conclusions and Implications

Theory-based evaluative criteria are rare. From the perspective of E. Jane Davidson (2005), it is a common view that “the use of evaluation logic and methodology is somehow the antithesis of theory-based evaluation.” Meanwhile Davidson, a father of the evaluation-specific logic, comments that theories are “a luxury for the evaluator, since they are not even essential for explanations

and explanations are not essential for 99% of all evaluations" (Scriven, 1991). However, with the theory-based evaluative criteria, there are some grounds to vindicate what are the fundamental elements behind such criteria. It provides alternative models in constructing criteria.

When adopting a theory-based or realistic approach to evaluative criteria, it can be used to redefine or improve criteria. This study has contributed to theoretical perspectives. The theory-based criteria potentially bridge the gap of evaluators and those being evaluated. Both parties have the fundamental elements of theory for support if there is any area of disagreement. Conclusively, this study is expected to enhance future research regarding better evaluative criteria of good governance for local governments or even for the central government and other organizations. Finally, it may lead to future research on other types of evaluative criteria so as to offer viable approaches.

In contributing to policy and implementations, good governance has an important role for the both central and local governments. The first player is the policy maker, which is the central government, and the second player is the implementers, which are the local governments or LAOs.

First, the central government as a policy maker and the local governments as implementers can come up with bottom-up or hybrid (top-down and bottom-up) criteria to use in the evaluation of good governance. Group one in this study represents the top-down criteria and all remaining groups represent bottom-up criteria. This may cause the establishment of two-way accessed criteria. In this way, both will be satisfied and the implementers will be evaluated according to the assessed criteria.

Second, there has been little research conducted to develop relevant criteria or key indicators for all six principles, as repeatedly mentioned. In Thailand, only King Prajadhipok's Institute (2002) has carried out such research to come up with key indicators of good governance in accord with the 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans. Therefore, to serve the

purpose of the Royal Decree and the inspiration of the author, this study aimed to acquire applicable and practicable evaluative criteria for all six principles of good governance set forth in the 2003 Royal Decree on the Principles and Methods of Good Governance.

Third, it seems that all of the indicators, as shown in Table A-1, may already have been in place and often used when evaluating the local good governance awards each year by the National Decentralization Committee, and also by the Ministry of Interior's Core Team. The author has been able to improve this by employing a theory-based approach as the fundamental element of indicators and the advancement of the criteria construction.

Fourth, the eventual intention was to bring the results and findings of the study into the actual practice of future evaluation of good governance for local governments. Additionally, it was expected that the findings in this study would have generalizations not only for other organizations, including the central government in Thailand, but also for those beyond the boundaries of Thailand.

Fifth, the findings in this study may shed light on the existing problems or improvements of unsatisfactory conditions. The rule of law may apply rigidly only to those that have no power or authority but not to those that are in high positions or the elites. The obtained evaluative criteria from this study have eliminated the disparity in this treatment. It indeed provides fairness and justice as the elements of the bottom-up approach for the good governance principle. All other criteria employ the same construction principles. By eliminating existing problems, it may bring about the self-improvement of each local government and administrative reform or reform in local government decentralization from the central government.

Finally, the findings in this study regarding the participation principle of good governance may help citizens' participation in filing complaints or providing feed-back for good governance of the local governments, either to

the local governments for their self-improvement or directly to the central government for administrative reform. There are various kinds of communication channels and local activities open for public participation.

As new public management (NPM) has been expanded globally, Thailand is one of the nations that have attempted to apply what is deemed fit for its political, social, cultural, and economic context. Good governance is one of the headlines and top spots in NPM. Therefore, in evaluating and accessing good governance it is essential to have advanced criteria. Such criteria can render better measures of good governance that are based upon process, implementation, and outcome.

From the breakthroughs of this study, research can be conducted in other areas, such as on the evaluative criteria of corporate governance. Research can also be conducted on the evaluative criteria of other kinds of evaluation; namely, corruption, innovation, and budget spending.

The scope of the research could be extended to the area of how effective and efficient good governance evaluation is for either the central government or local governments or for both. It is interesting to understand that the different methods used yield different results. The study can also be extended to the qualifications and competence of local government executives. It is believed that this study is meaningful for both theoretical and practical purposes.

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Appendix:

Table A-1: Indicators for the Six Principles of Good Governance

Theory/Approach	Good Governance			Rating Scale				
	Principle	Indicators	Evaluative Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Bottom-up Approach</i>	Rule of Law	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appropriateness of legal code, rules, and regulations 2. Enactment of set of rules, regulations and statutes pertaining to authority 3. Equitable enforcement of legal code, rules, and regulations with the public 						
<i>Consequence Theory (Gensler, 2006: 138) Virtue Theory, Duty Theory (Mizzoni, 2010: 105)</i>	Ethics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aligning work process with good governance principles 2. Campaign to promote employees to work with integrity 3. Pay for performance as appropriate and just according to clarified indicator 						
<i>Transparency Theory</i>	Transparency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disclosure of important information thoroughly to the public 2. Accessibility of information through provided channels 3. Having an audit and evaluation system in place 						

<i>Fairness and Competence Theory (Rowe & Frewer, 2000)</i>	Participation	1. Multi-channels open for public participation 2. Public participation open for establishing Local Development Plans 3. Selection of committee from the public to participate in public hearings and decision-making							
<i>Goal, Process and Outcome Approach (Alkin, 1972)</i>	Accountability	1. Clear determination of authority, duty and responsibility 2. Good operational system to trace back commands 3. Public satisfaction measurement							
<i>3 Es Theory (Barnett et al., 2010)</i>	Value for Money	1. Resource utilization 2. Providing public services with optimality and speed 3. Human resource development for multifunctions							

Table A-2: Final Results of the Evaluative Criteria and Rating Scales

Theory/Approach	Good Governance			Rating Scale				
	Principle	Indicators	Evaluative Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
<i>Bottom-up Approach</i>	Rule of Law	1. Appropriateness of legal code, rules, and regulations 2. Enactment of set of rules, regulations and statutes pertaining to authority 3. Equitably enforcement of legal code, rules, and regulations with the public	1. Set legal code and three-year Local Development Plans on an annual basis 2. Circular letter sent out within determined time after enactment of legal code, rules and regulations with returned signature 3. No complaint or objection filing on law enforcement or its disparity	x				
<i>Consequence Theory (Gensler, 2006: 138) Virtue Theory, Duty Theory (Mizzoni, 2010: 105)</i>	Ethics	1. Aligning work process with good governance principles 2. Campaign to promote employees to work with integrity 3. Pay for performance as appropriate and just in according with clarified indicator	1. Annual meeting of executives and officers to determine standard of good governance 2. Training for public and officers to build ethics and integrity twice a year 3. Pay for agreed goals on salary increment and bonus for all levels	x				

<p><i>Transparency Theory</i></p>	<p>Transparency</p>	<p>1. Disclosure of important information thoroughly to the public 2. Accessibility of information through provided channels 3. Having an audit and evaluation system in place</p>	<p>1. Disclose all plans, projects, and activities to the public 2. Determine definite number of communication channels 3. Having an internal control system and independent auditor to perform audit at least twice a year</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p></p>
<p><i>Fairness and Competence Theory (Rowe & Frewer, 2000)</i></p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>1. Multi-channels open for public participation 2. Public participation open for establishing Local Development Plans 3. Selection of committee from the public to participate in public hearings and decision-making</p>	<p>1. Receive public opinion through public hearings, opinion box, hotline, community committee and website 2. Records on participant list and signature of participants attending local development planning 3. Having transparent and systematic system to elect committee from all kinds of stakeholders for 2-year service for 2 terms maximum</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p>x</p>	<p></p>

<p><i>Goal, Process and Outcome Approach (Alkin, 1972)</i></p>	<p>Accountability</p>	<p>1. Clear determination of authority, duty, and responsibility 2. Good operational system to trace back commands 3. Public satisfaction measurement</p>	<p>1. Clear command assignments designated to all officers and signed off upon receipt 2. Traceability record and system trail for job command 3. Annual survey report for public satisfaction performed by audit unit or outsource agent</p>	x	x				
<p><i>3 Es Theory (Barnett et al., 2010)</i></p>	<p>Value for Money</p>	<p>1. Resource utilization 2. Providing public services with optimality and speed 3. Human resource development for multi-functions</p>	<p>1. Fiscal budget and procurement set according to Local Plans and spending accordingly 2. One-stop-service to increase convenience and speed of service within specified time 3. Policy for training courses and job rotation at least once a year</p>	x	x				