

## Reviewer 1 Report

Manuscript title: Digital Readiness and Organizational Adaptability of Barangays in Poblacion District, Davao City: Basis for an ICT Capacity Enhancement Framework  
Version: 1

### Comments:

The manuscript tackles a timely governance concern by empirically linking ICT readiness to organizational adaptability at the barangay level. The topic is well matched to public sector reform discourse, and the overall organization of the paper is straightforward, moving logically from policy context to measurement, then to correlation and regression findings. The abstract communicates the major findings clearly, including the claim that ICT readiness dimensions jointly explain a substantial portion of variability in adaptability.

From a design standpoint, the descriptive-correlational approach is appropriate for an initial diagnostic, and the sample coverage across all 40 barangays gives the paper a practical constituency. However, the sampling description should be handled with more precision because the study uses purposive selection of three officials per barangay, emphasizing those engaged in administrative or ICT-related tasks. That choice is defensible for studying ICT utilization, but it should be stated plainly as a limitation on generalizability because the most ICT-exposed officials are likely to rate proficiency and utilization higher than the average barangay workforce. A brief justification of why three officials per barangay is methodologically sufficient, beyond “statistical power,” would improve rigor, particularly if barangays differ in staffing structure and task allocation.

The measurement section is generally adequate, with clear domain coverage for access, proficiency, utilization, and adaptability, and the paper reports that content validation and pilot testing produced Cronbach’s alpha values above .80 for all scales. Still, the paper would benefit from sharper reporting transparency: include the exact alpha values per subscale, indicate the number of items per construct, and clarify the response anchors used for each section if they varied (the manuscript notes a five-point Likert format “typically” anchored from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Because all variables are self-reported and collected at a single time point, the manuscript should also acknowledge common method variance more explicitly and consider at least one procedural or analytic mitigation discussion (even if only as a limitation with suggested remedies for future research).

The results are strong in descriptive clarity and provide interpretable summaries: ICT access is reported as very high overall (mean 4.75), proficiency as high (3.92), utilization as high (4.09), and adaptability as high (4.15). The inferential findings are coherent with the narrative: correlations with adaptability are positive across access, proficiency, and utilization, and utilization is reported as the strongest correlate ( $r = .72$ ) and the strongest predictor in regression ( $\beta = .41$ ), with the model explaining 65% of the variance ( $R^2 = .65$ ). These are compelling statistics, but the reporting would meet journal expectations more consistently if the manuscript avoided “ $p = .000$ ,” reported p-values as  $p < .001$  where appropriate, and

included unstandardized coefficients (B), standard errors, and confidence intervals. It would also strengthen the regression section to mention whether assumptions were checked and whether multicollinearity diagnostics were assessed, given that proficiency and utilization are conceptually close and empirically related.

The discussion is engaging and generally aligned with the results, particularly the argument that infrastructure is no longer the primary bottleneck once access is high, and that “what institutions do with technology” is decisive. The manuscript would become more actionable if it translated the proposed ICT Capacity Enhancement Framework into at least a concise outline of components and sequencing that directly map to the findings, especially since the title positions the study as a basis for a framework. At present, the reader can infer the framework direction from the narrative, but a clearer articulation of what the framework contains, and how it prioritizes utilization and capability-building over additional hardware investments, would complete the paper’s promise.

Overall recommendation: Minor revision. The study is publishable after strengthening methodological transparency (sampling implications, reliability details), improving statistical reporting completeness, and making the proposed capacity enhancement framework more explicit and directly traceable to the empirical results.

## Reviewer 2 Report

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Version: 1

### Comments:

This manuscript reads as an applied governance paper with a clear message: barangays in an urban district can already possess the hardware and connectivity needed for digital work, and the real differentiator becomes everyday use and institutional habits. I appreciate that the paper does not romanticize “digital transformation” as a technology-shopping exercise; the results and discussion argue, with evidence, that utilization and competence are where the action is. For local governments and capacity-building units, this is the kind of finding that can shift program design away from procurement and toward practice.

The empirical story is clean and easy to track. Access is rated very high overall, proficiency and utilization are high, and adaptability is high, which fits an urban Poblacion context where interactions with city agencies and citizens are frequent. The inferential pattern strengthens the argument: utilization is most strongly associated with adaptability and emerges as the strongest predictor when access, proficiency, and utilization are modeled together, with the predictors jointly explaining a large share of variance in adaptability ( $R^2 = .65$ ). That is a non-trivial effect size in organizational studies and, if interpreted carefully, it supports the paper’s main claim that technology only becomes transformative once it is routinized in core governance tasks.

What I want the authors to guard against is overconfidence that high self-reported means automatically indicate mature digital governance. Because all measures come from the same respondents using the same instrument at the same time, the paper is vulnerable to positivity bias, social desirability, and halo effects, especially when respondents are officials who may equate “being competent” with “being compliant” in the presence of city-level digitalization expectations. The sampling approach also concentrates on those “most exposed” to ICT tasks, which is reasonable for studying utilization but makes the results more reflective of the barangay’s digitally active core than of the full organizational system. These are not fatal issues, but the manuscript should openly frame them as boundary conditions: the study diagnoses readiness among ICT-facing officials, not necessarily the entire barangay apparatus, and the numbers should be read as a strong starting signal rather than a definitive maturity certification.

Conceptually, the paper gestures to UTAUT and to the idea that facilitating conditions and perceived usefulness shape adoption. I think the manuscript could sharpen its theoretical contribution by more explicitly connecting the measured constructs to the UTAUT mechanisms it invokes. For example, utilization is treated as the strongest predictor of adaptability, but the discussion could make clearer whether utilization here is functioning as a proxy for institutional learning and workflow redesign, or as a behavioral outcome shaped

by facilitating conditions and leadership influence. In practical terms, this matters because a capacity enhancement framework should specify whether it is aiming to increase utilization by improving systems usability, strengthening incentives, formalizing procedures, or reducing friction in inter-agency coordination. The paper is very close to this, but it needs one more step to turn a persuasive narrative into a replicable intervention logic.

I also encourage the authors to push the framework component from implied to explicit. The conclusion correctly calls for investments in competencies, workflow redesign, and adaptive leadership, and it suggests mixed-methods and longitudinal work as the next step. Still, because the title and abstract promise an ICT Capacity Enhancement Framework, the reader expects at least a concise framework presentation that shows domains, target competencies (for example, spreadsheets and digital systems where proficiency is relatively lower), and implementation supports for procedural flexibility and resource allocation, which were slightly lower than leadership support and openness to change. A simple visual or structured description of the framework, even in text, would be enough to satisfy that expectation and would markedly improve the paper's applied value.

Overall recommendation: Revise and resubmit (minor). The findings are strong and relevant, but the manuscript should explicitly acknowledge self-report and sampling boundaries, tighten the linkage between the cited adoption theory and the modeled predictors, and present the promised capacity enhancement framework in a clearer, more implementable form.

## Reviewer 1 Report

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### Comments:

The requested changes have been incorporated; therefore, the paper is suitable for publication.

## Reviewer 2 Report

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Version: 2

### Comments:

Publication is recommended now that the revisions have been substantially addressed.