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## Measuring political dynasties in Metro Manila

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This paper aims to measure the intensity of political dynasties within the local governments of Metro Manila. Specifically, it tries to answer some questions: Which cities have the highest incidence of political dynasties? Do they necessarily exhibit low levels of political competition? Which families hold the highest intensity of political dynasty in the region?

Using official local election results since 1988, we construct and apply a political dynasty index that provides a quantifiable and comparable measure of the prominence of different political families in different localities. We assign weights to family members holding local government positions to measure their horizontal and vertical linkages. Horizontal linkages refer to the relationships among family members holding different positions during a given political term, while vertical linkages refer to the ties among family members in office between two consecutive terms. The degree of entrenchment in power of a ruling family is measured by aggregating the values of its horizontal and vertical linkages.

**JEL classification:** D70, I39, O53, P16

**Keywords:** political dynasties, political competition

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### 1. Introduction

Democracy in principle offers a platform that provides the people in a country with equal access to opportunities for public service, making the executive and legislative affairs of the country more inclusive and fairly representative. However, regardless of the form of democracy constituted in a country, institutions can still be impaired by deficiencies that confine the opportunity to govern to be confined

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only to the few, as in the case of political dynasties. These deficiencies may not be attributes of a democratic system per se, but its existing processes may allow some organizational or cultural imperfections to persist, leading to inequality in the distribution of political power.

### *1.1. Historical background*

In the country's political history, dynastic families can be traced to the pre-Spanish era, during which the ruling class led by the *datus*, *maharlikas*, and *rajahs* embraced an ideology of kinship ties to strengthen their hold on power (Constantino [1982]; Tuazon [2012]). This system of linkages was recognized and further promoted during the Spanish and American regimes, as the favored land-owning families were transformed into political-economic elites. As the years went on, these local political families have become deeply so embedded in the "democratic" system that even the presence of continuous pressures from the widened and informed voting public seemed useless. New political families would even emerge through time and eventually joined in dominating the game of politics [Hutchcroft and Rocamora 2003]. In contrast to the preceding periods, some of them now came from simple backgrounds and might not even have ties to inherited wealth [de Dios 2007].

The Philippine government has not remained oblivious to the glaring persistence of political dynasties in the country and has initiated some efforts to restrain their power. The 1987 Constitution, for instance, provides all Filipinos a level political field to participate in public service. More specifically, Article II Section 26 of said Constitution declares that "the State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law".

However, despite this constitutional attempt to widen the democratic space, the courts lack the power to enforce this provision for want of statutory legislation that even defines "political dynasty." The Constitution has at most only managed to arrest unfair competition for public office by mandating term limits for incumbents (Article VI Section 4), although this in no way prevents them from fielding their relatives to take their posts once their term is over. In fact, at least one study finds that the imposition of term limits aggravated the incidence of political dynasties in the country due to its failure to address familial succession.

To this day, dynastic families continue to dominate the political arena and remain widely unchallenged. For example, the Abadillas from Ilocos Norte have remained in continuous control of the town of Banna for over 46 years from 1971 until 2016. Similarly, the Albanos of Isabela (first district), the Cojuangcos of Tarlac (first district), and the Ortegas of La Union (first district) have been voted into congressional seats for over 39 years since 1978 [Tiongson-Mayrina 2013]. Despite looming controversies involving their members, dynastic clans somehow find the fuel to remain in power. Moreover, this situation seems unlikely to change

in the near future despite emerging support for a proposed anti-dynasty law, since those in power to pass such a law are members of dynasties themselves.

While the Philippines is not the only country plagued by political dynasties, the problem is observed to be more widespread here than in other countries. Studies show that while 6.9 percent of legislators in the United States are part of political dynasties [Dal Bó et al. 2009] and 10 percent in Argentina [Rossi 2009], a staggering 70 percent of members of the Philippine Congress are part of dynastic clans [Beja et al. 2012]. Moreover, the dynastic landscapes in other countries are now gradually changing as many of them become more receptive to a new breed of rulers.<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore of interest to know why in modern times, where information, education, and varying opinions are more accessible, political dynasties can remain so entrenched in the political systems of countries like the Philippines.

### *1.2. Evolution and consequences*

One interesting argument for the persistence of political dynasties in many societies is that it is just a reflection of the fact that there are families who are more politically talented and driven than others. If being lawyers, doctors, and singers can run in the family, why can't being politicians be also seen as a family's comparative advantage? Dal Bó, Dal Bó, and Synder [2009] refuted this claim by arguing that political power in the United States is indeed self-perpetuating and that dynasties are not merely a reflection of differences in ability across families. Using two instrumental-variable techniques, they found that staying in the legislative house for more than one term increases the probability of having a relative entering the same house in the future. They showed that the dynastic behavior observed in politics is more extensive than those in other occupations, suggesting that superior family traits cannot be the entire explanation for this phenomenon. It is therefore commonly argued that the presence of economies of scale, which allows members of dynastic clans to enter politics at a much cheaper cost, plays a very important role. Family members may have benefited from their predecessors' political investments which can come in various forms such as partisan connection, family name recall, and political machinery.

In the Philippines, Beja, Mendoza, Venida, and Yap [2012] showed that by mapping political dynasties through the possession of same surname, 70 percent of the legislators in the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress are related to legislators from the 12<sup>th</sup> until the 15<sup>th</sup> Congress or government officials elected from 2001 to 2010. On the other

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<sup>1</sup> The Gandhis of India were finally dethroned by Narendra Modi ending the long-standing reign of the Nehru-Gandhi clan. The Razak family's influence in Malaysian parliament has started to dwindle as shown by the dramatic decrease in their win margin despite coming from a ruling electoral bloc. Former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's son, Lee Hsien Loong, was considered by many Singaporeans to be far from the rank of his father, especially during 2011, when their party had a dismal performance in its entire election history [Bershidsky 2015].

hand, Querubin [2012] tested the effects of term limits on the probability of starting political dynasties and found that of the 83 members of Congress who reached their maximum tenure, 43 percent were replaced by a relative in the next election.

Given the dominance of these political families in public office, a more interesting issue is their effects on welfare and development. The study by Beja et al. [2012] shows that dynastic families are located mostly in areas with higher poverty levels and inequalities. Moreover, these families tend to be richer than their non-dynastic counterparts. While it does not necessarily show causation, these results suggest correlation among the variables. Other studies also point towards the “predatory” capabilities of these dynastic politicians (Hutchcroft and Rocamora [2003]; McCoy [1994]; Coronel [2007]).

However, other literature disputes all these “predatory” claims and provides an alternate perspective in viewing these families. For instance, dynastic politicians may possess longer time horizons which could lengthen the time in planning of provision of socioeconomic development projects. In line with the work of Olson [2003], a dynastic official can be likened to a stationary bandit due to longer tenure in office, who will find it optimal to develop the productivity of his domain, perhaps through long-term investments, as this will reap more benefits for himself and his constituents.

A study by Solon, Fabella, and Capuno [2009] discharges the pessimistic claims on the effects of political dynasties on local development, instead connecting their detrimental effect on the lack of political competition. The authors show that regardless of whether an incumbent governor is a dynasty member, the threat of competition forces him to perform well in order to be reelected. They also find that attracting voters actually involves spending on local development projects and will be augmented should rivalry come into the picture. This is consistent with the notion that political dynasties in themselves are merely default forms of political organization because impersonal political parties are more difficult to organize [de Dios 2007]. As such, whether dynasties are pro- or anti-development will depend on the circumstances and agendas of the families that form them.

Although the presence of political dynasties has long been observed in the Philippine government and their effects on welfare and development have been widely studied, no quantifiable parameter has been created to measure its intensity, which can cover many features (e.g. kinship links, types of government positions, number of family members in a given term and across different terms). So far, studies that have quantified the incidence of political dynasties in Congress are solely based on kinship links by employing the basic strategy of matching surnames of politicians across time to identify political dynasties. The works of Capuno et al. [2009] and Beja et al. [2012], for example, have identified a government official belonging to a dynastic clan if he or she shares the same surname with at least one other politician elected in the previous assemblies. To account for the intensity and scope of these dynastic families, both studies

have set up different descriptive categories where officials can be classified.<sup>2</sup> The limitation of this method is that these classifications may still prove to be too restrictive that some dynasties may be excluded in the count.

In our proposed index, this problem is avoided since a political dynasty is measured from a minimum level of two relatives occupying government positions in either executive or legislative branch. Any increase in the number of family members in office expands the intensity and coverage of the dynasty through a network of links defined by the type of positions being held. Consequently, this index provides a continuous and a more refined measure of dynastic intensity as compared to the descriptive and discrete characterization used in previous studies. Moreover, our index covers a wider period from 1988 to 2013, which not only allows the inclusion of low-intensity dynasties in our study but also provides a better picture of the magnitude of high-intensity dynasties.

### 1.3. Measuring dynasties

This paper introduces a political dynasty index within Metro Manila using the local government election results from COMELEC from 1988 to 2013. This intends to measure a ruling family's prominence in a certain locality through the weighted binary linkages of all its members involved in government office. This may not contribute to the debate on the negative or positive effects of these dynasties, but it is a major step towards having a more objective understanding of their consequences in our society. Arguably, a big part of the ambiguous results presented in the literature on the relationship between dynasties and development may be due to the crudeness of the measure being currently used. We try to address this in this study, along with an attempt to draw some conclusions on the link between political competition and dynasties, which can be helpful in the future in resolving issues about the dynasty's socioeconomic impacts.

The measure of this index is two-fold: a *horizontal measure*, which involves linkages across different offices at a particular time; and a *vertical measure*, which includes all linkages through time. The magnitude of a dynastic family can be gauged using the sum of these two linkages. One of the main features of this index shows that an additional family member elected in a government office will greatly magnify its intensity. It then follows that any dynasty will deepen its hold on the government by ensuring that family members are elected across different terms.

Finally, our research offers a benchmark for quantitatively assessing the extent of political dynasties in specific areas. It seeks to answer questions such as: Which cities in the National Capital Region have the highest concentration of

<sup>2</sup> Capuno et al. [2009] use the categories "political clan1" (with only one relative in the previous Congress) and "political clan2" (with at least two relatives...), while Beja et al. [2012] provide a more extensive classification with "Dynasty1, -2 -3, and - 0". Later, Beja et al. [2013] compress these into just two, calling them "thin" and "fat" dynasties.

political dynasty? Do they necessarily have low levels of political competition? Which families hold the highest intensity of political dynasty in this region?

The subsequent sections discuss the framework used throughout the study and present figures for the analysis of the results. The final section concludes.

## 2. Framework

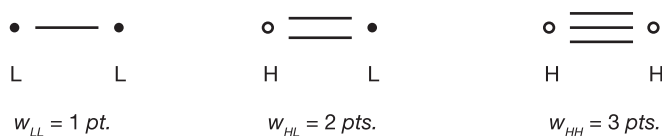
To present a concrete and comparable measure of a ruling family's prominence in a certain locality, the proposed dynastic index is anchored on the weighted number of binary linkages of all family members elected to local government positions. Its main features are as follows:

- Different government positions are categorized into just two types:  $H$  = high and  $L$  = low positions. The  $H$  type consists of several possible positions,  $H = \{\text{Mayor, Vice Mayor, Congressman}\}$ , whereas the  $L$  type has only one element,  $L = \{\text{Councilor}\}$ .
- A relationship between two government officials can be considered familial if it falls within the third degree of consanguinity.
- The index has a twofold measure: the **vertical measure** involves linkages *across time* while the **horizontal measure** includes linkages across different offices *at a given time*.
- The horizontal measure gives the ruling family some dynastic points at every term while the vertical measure is computed for every two consecutive terms (*i.e.* at terms  $t$  and  $t+1$ ).

This index therefore puts a dynastic score every time there are two relatives occupying public positions in the same area. This may happen during the same term or in two successive regimes, and their link is weighed based on the type of positions they hold. Clearly, any increase in the number of family members in the office raises drastically the dynastic score as it generates more binary linkages.

### 2.1. Horizontal measure

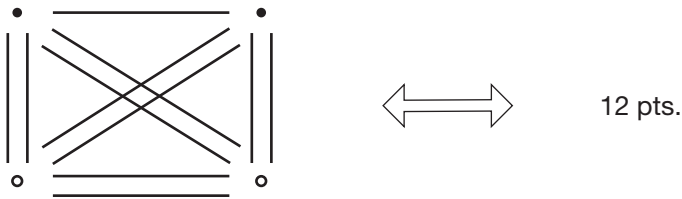
To measure the connections among family members who are occupying different local positions at a given term, the following weights are used:



The dots represent the types of position held by any two relatives, while the number of lines between them signifies the weight of the linkage.

**EXAMPLE 1**

Suppose in a given term, there are four family members who are elected to four government positions, two *H* and two *L*. Therefore, the weighted measure of their linkages is equal to 12, as shown below:



The total weighted measure of all binary linkages in any period *t* is generalized using the following formula:

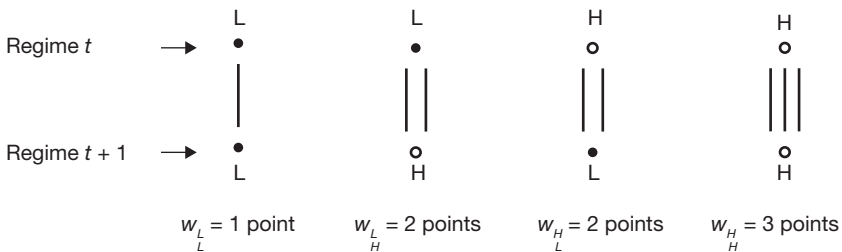
$$D_t = w_{HL} \binom{S}{2} + (w_{HH} - w_{HL}) \binom{H}{2} + (w_{LL} - w_{HL}) \binom{L}{2}$$

where  $\binom{n}{2} = \frac{n!}{(n-2)!2!}$ , *H* and *L* are the number of high and low posts being occupied respectively, and *S* = *H* + *L*. Applying this generalized formula to the given example above, we obtain

$$D_t = 2 \binom{4}{2} + \binom{2}{2} - \binom{2}{2} = 12 \text{ points}$$

**2.1. Vertical measure**

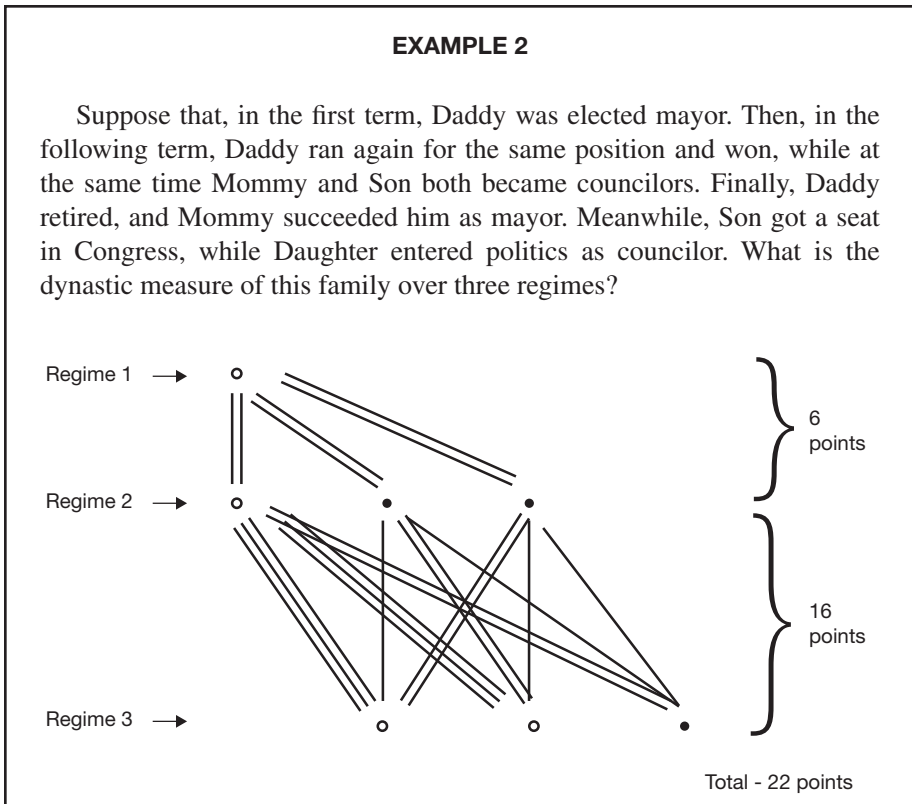
On the other hand, to measure the dynastic linkages of family members over time, the following weights are used for any two consecutive regimes:



The weights depicted by the above intertemporal linkages are between two distinct family members. However, if the link pertains to the same person at different time periods, the corresponding weight is then reduced by 1 point



(i.e.,  $w_L = 0$ ,  $w_L = 1 = w_H$ , and  $w_H = 2$ ). In principle, a political post that is held by the same person over time does not constitute a dynasty. However, we still apply a (reduced) score for this case since it enhances the prominence of a family name in a given area and increases the probability of occurrence of actual dynasty in the future [Dal Bó et al. 2009].



Finding the measure using a diagram:

$$D_{t,t+1} = w_H H_t H_{t+1} + w_H H_t L_{t+1} + w_L L_t H_{t+1} + w_L L_t L_{t+1} - Z_{t,t+1}.$$

We generalize this dynastic measure between two successive regimes using the following formula:

where  $H_t$  and  $L_t$  are the respective number of family members at regime  $t$  who are in the high and low positions of public office.  $Z_{t,t+1}$  is the number of links between  $t$  and  $t+1$  that refers only to the same individual.

In example 2, note that:

Regime 1:  $H = 1, L = 0$

Regime 2:  $H = 1, L = 2, Z_{1,2} = 1$

Regime 3:  $H = 2, L = 1, Z_{2,3} = 2$

By following the generalized equation above, we obtain:

$$D_{1,2} = 3(1)(1) + 2(1)(2) + 2(0)(1) + 1(0)(2) - 1 = 6 \text{ points}$$

and

$$D_{2,3} = 3(1)(2) + 2(1)(1) + 2(2)(2) + 1(2)(1) - 2 = 16 \text{ points}$$

Thus,  $D_{vertical} = 22$  points.

We can now compute for the total “intensity” of the political family given in Example 2. From the discussion of the horizontal measure, we derive  $D_1 = 0, D_2 = 5$ , and  $D_3 = 7$ . Since  $D_{horizontal} = D_1 + D_2 + D_3$ , we have:

$$Dynastic \ Index = D_{horizontal} + D_{vertical} = 34 \text{ points}$$

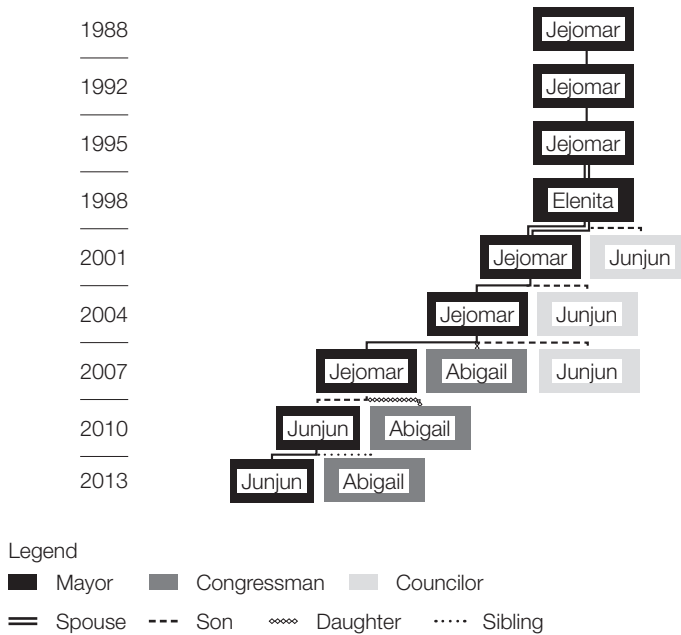
### 2.3. Creating a dynastree

To facilitate the calibration of horizontal and vertical measures, each political family is depicted as a network tree, indicating the position occupied by each family member across different terms. This procedure is applied to all ruling families within the National Capital Region based on the 1988 to 2013 election results.

For example, based on the Binay political tree (see diagram), the family garnered a total horizontal score of 17 points for the years during which at least two of its members are in office, i.e. from 2001 to 2013. For its vertical score, the family collected a total of 53 points from 1988 to 2013. Thus, the Binays have accumulated a total dynastic score of 70 points for its 25 years in power in the city of Makati.

A limitation of this index is that it does not take into account family members who are elected to national office. As these people may have clear influence on their family’s local prominence (e.g. the Caytanos and the Estradas in the Senate, Binay in the Office of Vice President), this index however is confined only to specific territorial posts.

We present later in our analysis a summary of our results derived from the different dynastrees of ruling families from different cities.



**FIGURE 1. Binay dynastree**

*2.4. Power share and power concentration*

A dynastic score obtained for a specific period does not necessarily suggest a degree of political dominance that a ruling family enjoys over a particular city. Its extent of influence must be measured with respect to those of other dynasties in the area. We call this parameter  $S_i$ , which is the share of power that a dynasty  $i$  obtains in an area where  $n$  dynasties exist. We compute this by dividing  $i$ 's political dynasty score,  $D_i$ , by the aggregate score of all the dynasties in the area, i.e.

$$S_i = \frac{D_i}{\sum_{j=1}^n D_j} .$$

In general, it would be also interesting to assess the overall level of power concentration that is present in each locality. We use here the normalized Herfindahl-Hirschman index, which is typically applied for measuring the level of industry competitiveness. We denote this by  $C$  and is computed as follows:

The closer the value of the parameter to 1, the higher is the level of power concentration in the city. In contrast, a very low  $C$  signifies a strong level of political competition in the area.

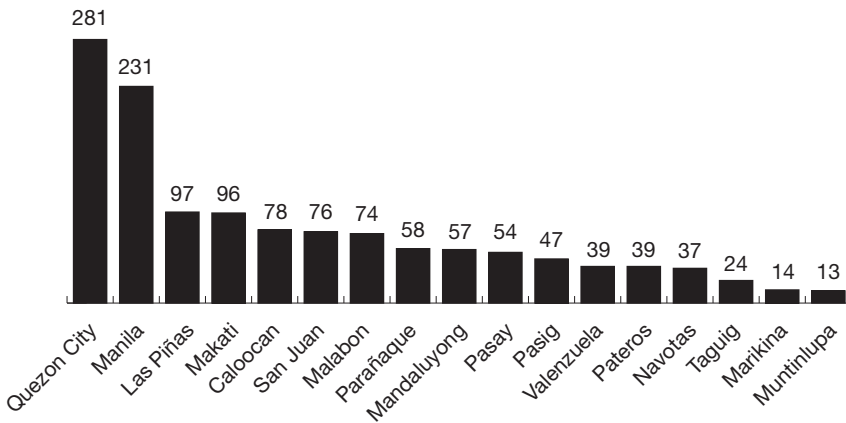
$$C = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n S_i^2 - 1/n}{1 - 1/n}$$

### 3. Results and analysis

Our first result is on the prevalence of political dynasties in different areas, which is obtained by aggregating the scores of all dynastic families coming from the same city. From Figure 2, Quezon City shows the highest incidence of political dynasties in the region with a total score of 281 points. It is followed closely by the city of Manila with 231 points and then by Las Piñas a far third with 97 points. The high scores obtained by the top two cities are mainly due to the presence of a large number of dynastic families. These cities have a relatively higher number of districts compared to other areas, which allows many dynastic families to emerge without necessarily making them very dominant.

**FIGURE 2. The incidence of political dynasties per city**

In Figure 3, we show that this is actually the case in Quezon City and in Manila, where strong competition thrives despite the large incidence of political

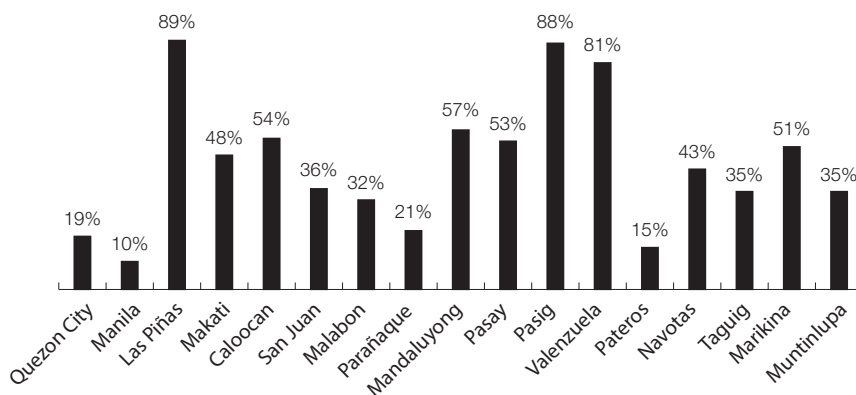


dynasties. Using the normalized Herfindahl-Hirschman index, Manila obtained the lowest percentage of power concentration with only 10 percent, while Quezon City is not far behind with 19 percent. Las Piñas, on the contrary, manages to translate its high dynastic score into high power concentration by obtaining the highest level at 89 percent. It represents a case where a dynastic family becomes so dominant that it naturally limits the growth of other ruling families, making political power in the area more concentrated. However, in general (as can be glimpsed from the first two figures), our results show no strong correlation between the incidence of dynasties and the degree of political competition. This does not sound supportive of the studies that claim a negative correlation between the two (e.g. Balisacan and Fuwa [2004]; Dal Bó et al. [2009]; Mendoza et al. [2012]). An immediate explanation for this can be drawn from the observation that not all dynasties discourage the emergence of other dynasties. In some areas

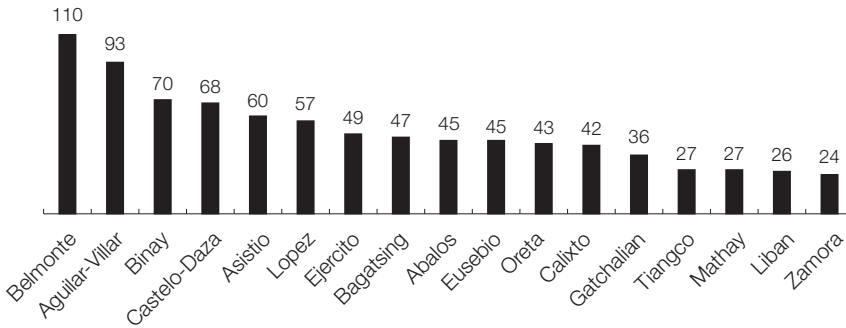
like Manila, the formation of dynasties becomes a natural and viable means of maintaining a strong competition against any ruling clan. This is especially true in the Philippine context where families become the preferred form of political organization since they are easier to mobilize and more reliable than impersonal political parties [de Dios 2007].

**FIGURE 3. The concentration of political power per city**

The dynastic families all over Metro Manila are also ranked based on their



individual score. In Figure 4, the Belmonte family from Quezon City scored highest with 110 points. This family gathered most of its points in 2013 (with 60 points), when two of its family members became congressmen, one became vice mayor, and two became councilors. The Aguilar-Villar family from Las Piñas follows closely with a total of 93 points. Its high score is mainly due to a marriage that happened between the city's two ruling families (Aguilar and Villar), which technically merged thereafter their dynastic scores.



**FIGURE 4. The incidence of political dynasties per family**

While the raw dynastic scores in Figure 4 may be deemed objective and comparable across families, they still do not reflect the degree of influence and control of each family in their respective localities. In the tables that follow, we derive the share of political power of each family, which is computed by dividing the family’s dynastic score into the total dynastic score in its area.

Table 1 shows that the Belmonte family holds 39.1 percent of the political power in Quezon City, followed by the Castelo-Daza clan with 24.2 percent. This shows that the Belmontes do not control the majority of city posts, given the presence of other political families who are vying for the same government positions.

**TABLE 1. The share of political power in Quezon City (1988-2013)**

Political Family	Political power (%)
Belmonte	39.1
Castelo-Daza	24.2
Mathay	9.6
Liban	9.3
Crisologo	3.9
Defensor	3.9
Others	10

The city of Manila (Table 2) displays greater competition among political dynasties for the control of office. The Lopez family assumes 24.7 percent of the power share, followed by the Bagatsing family with 20.3 percent. The dynasties of Atiienza, Ocampo, and Lacuna are not far behind with 12.1 percent, 11.3 percent, and 10.8 percent, respectively.

**TABLE 2. The share of political power in the City of Manila (1988-2013)**

<b>Political Family</b>	<b>Political power (%)</b>
Lopez	24.7
Bagatsing	20.3
Atienza	12.1
Ocampo	11.3
Lacuna	10.8
Others	20.8

The city of Las Piñas exhibits an alarming case of lack of substantial competition for public office (Table 3). A staggering 95.9 percent of the political power is held by the Aguilar-Villar family, with the Riguera family a very distant second with only 2.1 percent share. This same one-family dominance is also observed in Makati (Table 4), where the Binays obtain a power share of 72.9 percent. They are followed the Ibays, Yabuts, and Magpantays with minimal shares.

**TABLE 3. The share of political power in Las Piñas City (1988-2013)**

<b>Political Family</b>	<b>Political power (%)</b>
Aguilar-Vilar	95.9
Riguera	2.1
Dela Cruz	1
Hernandez	1

**TABLE 4. The share of political power in Makati City (1988-2013)**

<b>Political Family</b>	<b>Political power (%)</b>
Binay	72.9
Ibay	8.3
Yabut	6.3
Magpantay	5.2
Pangilinan	2.1
Puno	1
Others	4.2

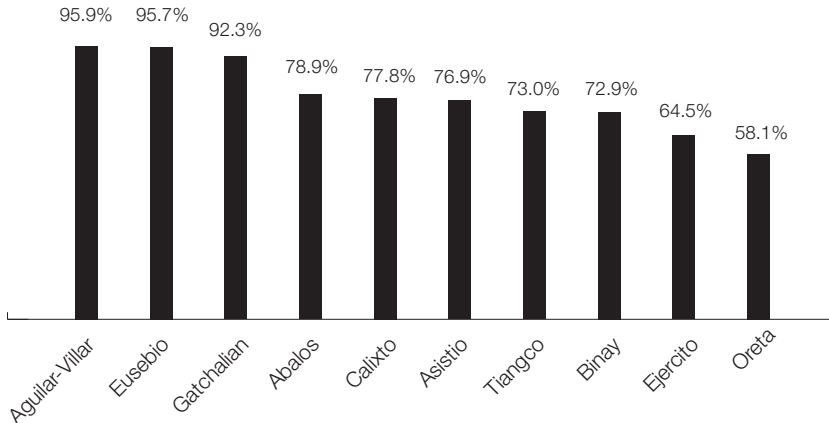
Lastly, the case of Caloocan City also shows another example of power concentration, particularly in the hands of the Asistios (Table 5). They are followed from afar by the Malapitans with 16.7 percent and then by the Roscas with 2.6 percent share.

**TABLE 5. The share of political power in Caloocan City (1988-2013)**

Political Family	Political power (%)
Asistio	76.9
Malapitan	16.7
Rosca	2.6
Mabagos	1.3
Cunanan	1.3
Aruelo	1.3

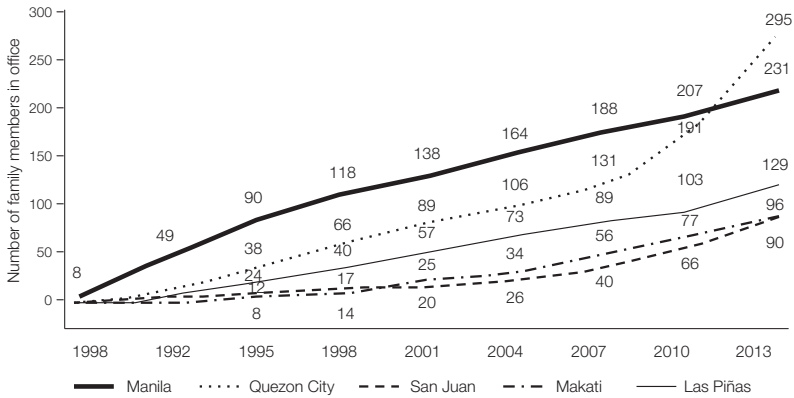
As the tables above provide information on the degree of influence of these dynastic families in their respective constituencies, we present in Figure 5 the top ten most influential political families in the region. Closely following the Aguilar-Villar family at the top position are the Eusebios of Pasig (95.7 percent) and the Gatchalian of Valenzuela (92.3 percent).

It is interesting to note that even though the Eusebios only scored a total of 45 points and settled for 9<sup>th</sup> place using the dynasty index, they still manage to maintain almost complete control of the city because of poor competition. On the other hand, the Belmontes, who placed first in the index, are nowhere to be found in the top ten most powerful dynasties.

**FIGURE 5. The dominance ranking of political dynasties**

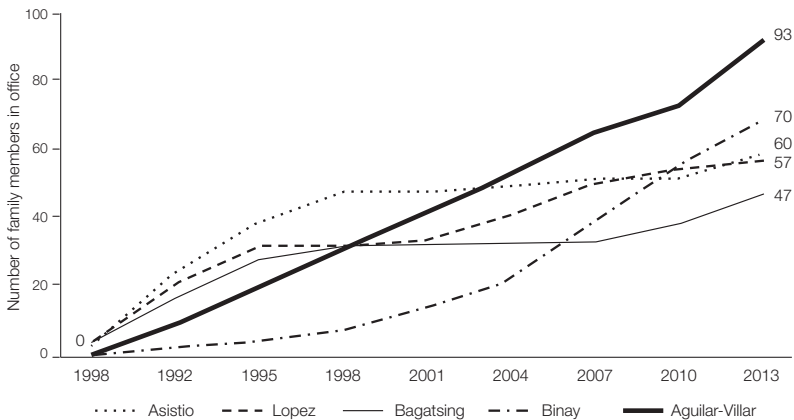
It is also interesting to show how these political dynasties have grown throughout the years. Figure 6 shows the top five cities with the fastest growth of political dynasties. It is shown that the political dynasties in Quezon City suddenly spiked from 2007 to 2013 and surpassed the traditional dynasties of Manila by 2010.





**FIGURE 6. The persistence of political dynasties over time (cities)**

The growth of the top persistent families all over National Capital Region is likewise presented in a graph (Figure 7). During the initial years, the Lopezes, the Asistios, and the Bagatsings were the clear frontrunners in the region. The years 2004 and beyond saw more members of the Binay and Aguilar families joining public office, which brought forth political dynasties to the next level. All in all, the general picture of dynasties throughout the years is marked by a consistent growth which allows the political families to secure their hold of power.



**FIGURE 7. The top 5 most persistent political dynasties**

There is a common story of how these families persist in power. By the time an incumbent official reaches his term limit, a relative takes over to maintain the family’s hold on the position. We find this typically happening in the person of the patriarch’s spouse or sibling who will take on an interim role as the term limit is observed, until the patriarch is eligible again to run for office.

Meanwhile, the next generation members of these families who are expected to succeed the patriarch will start to serve first at the councilor level. We observe that

the councilor level is used as a training ground for the family's next generation of politicians. Young officials gain strong name recognition and credibility at this level, which they use when they run for a higher position in the future. This story remains true even when a non-dynastic candidate defeats a dynastic incumbent. The new official will soon set a start-up dynasty knowing that the losing clan will soon get back in the succeeding terms to vie for the same position. A political dynasty thus becomes the best defense against another political dynasty, and so the cycle continues.

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper proposes and applies an objective and quantifiable method of comparing political dynasties across cities and families. While the existence of dynasties in the country has long been observed and studied, we try to contribute further to the discussion by recommending a method of measuring the extent of these dynasties which can be useful for assessing socioeconomic impacts.

An evident feature of our dynasty index is that its measure is amplified whenever a new family member is elected to a government office. As the number of family members increases across different terms, dynastic points increase geometrically because of the increased number of binary linkages.

Thus, there is a need to limit the ways in which dynasties increase their scope and successions of power to prevent them from expanding their web of power. A policy that would prohibit a family member from immediately succeeding a high-ranking official would weaken the vertical linkages of these dynasties. On the other hand, a policy that would limit the number of positions families can occupy in both executive and legislative branches in any given term would weaken the horizontal linkages, leading to a decrease in the concentration of power.

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