Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra1013 | SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.619 ISSN: 2347-4378
EPRA International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies (EBMS)
Volume: 12 | Issue: 4 | April 2025 -Peer-Reviewed Journal

THE IMPACT OF RIGHTSIZING: A PRE-IMPLEMENTATION STUDY ON OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND WORKFORCE WELL-BEING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS -EASTERN SAMAR DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION
Background of the Study

This study explored the impact of the upcoming implementation of the National Government Rightsizing Program (NGRP) in the Department of Public Works and Highways - Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO), particularly for its expected effect on both operational efficiency and employee welfare. This reform aims to create a leaner, efficient and effective government by reducing or, if possible, eliminating redundancies, overlaps and duplications in existing agencies, rules and regulations, systems, and processes (Diokno-Sicat, 2018). Thus, rightsizing will simplify government processes for it to become more productive and be able to provide efficient public service to the Filipino people.

This program was set to be implemented not only in the said office but also in other national government agencies. The governing principles, policies, standards, and guidelines, as well as the conditions and limitations provided in this Act, shall be followed in the implementation of the Rightsizing Program by the other branches of government. Constitutional Commissions, Commission on Human Rights, Office of the Ombudsman, and the LGUs (S.B. 1779, 2023). Moreover, this study focused on DPWH - Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO) and will bring hope for better operational efficiency by facilitating office workflow systems and quickly solving infrastructure problems in the province of Eastern Samar. Efficiency is vital for the district office such as Eastern Samar with its frequent natural disasters requiring rapid infrastructure repair and rehabilitation. The program will hopefully enable the department to be able to act faster and more responsively in dealing with development needs that are specific only for this region and allowed it resource allocation privileges.

But making rightsizing happen also presents its own sets of obstacles, especially for the DPWH workforce. This could involve replacing employees, increasing the workload of others and concerns about job security. Changes like this can affect morale and overall career satisfaction, particularly for employees who may be left wondering where they fit in or are under added strain because of the work share. Any changes in the employees' work environment affect employees' work-life balance and vice versa (Soliman, 2023). Studies have shown that employees low in well-being and productivity were less likely to stay on the job, seek support for a personal problem related to work, or receive clear behavioral expectations which all can be compromised by organizational changes such as rightsizing. Employees with a positive attitude towards work are fully committed to the organization and positively influence their productivity (Ahmed et al., 2017). Also, as much as the expected operational savings are significant, we should also be aware of things like impact on employee morale and job satisfaction levels or overall mental well-being. The work environment is a universal belief established by employees regarding the extent to which the organization values them, their contributions, and their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Jeong & Kim, 2021).

In the context of the Department of Public Works and Highways - Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO), there is limited empirical evidence on how rightsizing affects operational efficiency, workforce morale, and employee well-being. While studies like those of Wong et al. (2023) and Thomas (2023) suggest that aligning workforce capabilities with organizational needs can improve productivity, the unique challenges faced by government agencies, including resource constraints and bureaucratic processes, remain underexplored.

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As a result, a pre-implementation study was proposed that aimed to offer an overall insight about the anticipated operational advantages and labor effects as well. The study pursued to provide specific impacts of rightsizing on DPWH-ESDEO, with a focus on operational efficiency, workforce morale, and the relationship between employee well-being and productivity. The findings can act as an important resource for policy-makers and department heads by helping identify expected challenges, employee perceptions and operational preparedness. By building on existing literature and identifying actionable strategies, this research aimed to provide valuable insights into the nuanced effects of rightsizing and inform evidence-based policymaking.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine how the rightsizing initiative of the government will impact the operational efficiency and workforce well-being in the Department of Public Works and Highways – Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO).

Specifically, it pursued to address the following questions:

a. How is rightsizing expected to impact in the operational efficiency of the said office?
b. What are the perceived effects of this program on workforce well-being, particularly in terms of employee morale, job satisfaction, and workload management, as described by employees and stakeholders?
c. What are the challenges and risks of the program in this office, and how it might impact the successful implementations of the program?
d. What strategies can be suggested to support a smooth transition that balances operational improvements with workforce morale and job satisfaction?

Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it provided a greater understanding of the possible impacts of rightsizing on both operational efficiency and workforce well-being in the Department of Public Works and Highways – Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO). As the Philippine government searched to implement the said program in various government agencies, this study can be beneficial to the following:

DPWH-Eastern Samar DEO. This study held out significant value to the office as it provided comprehensive insight how rightsizing could improve the operational processes, resource allocation, and overall productivity. By identifying potential efficiency gains, the department can prepare targeted action plans and allocate resources effectively to meet its goals.

DPWH-ESDEO Employees. This study was significant to the stakeholders or employees of the said office as it highlighted how restructuring may affect job satisfaction, workload and overall job security. This awareness allowed the department to design programs that will support the employees concerns and encourage a positive work environment. If the program guided to increase of responsibilities or changes of roles, this can also be seen as an opportunity for personal and professional growth, allowing employees to adapt and develop within the department.

Other Agencies and Stakeholders. This study provided valuable insights for other government agencies and stakeholders by highlighting the potential benefits and challenges of implementing a rightsizing initiative. By examining the pre-implementation phase, the study offered actionable recommendations and strategies that can be adapted to similar organizational settings. Furthermore, the findings served as a benchmark for agencies aiming to balance operational efficiency with workforce well-being, fostering a more effective and sustainable public service.

Policy-Makers. This study was significant to the government as they can use the findings to adjust the program's policies, ensuring that they align with both efficiency goals and employee welfare through identifying the best practices and potential risks. Insights from this study can support the government's goal of creating more efficient, effective and responsive public sector. As a result, the Philippine government can strengthen its commitment to public service reform, establishing practices that promote sustainability and appropriate resources across the various departments.

Future Researchers. This study was significant as it will contribute to the limited academic research on rightsizing in the province of Eastern Samar. Future researchers can use this study as a fundamental step to explore

similar initiatives in other government sectors or regions, comparing outcomes and developing new frameworks for evaluating public sector reforms.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused in the determination of expected effects on operational efficiency and workforce well-being due to rightsizing within DPWH - ESDEO. The researcher gathered insights through face-to-face interview about the expected benefits and potential challenges from the said office personnel from administrative executives down to job order or contractual employees.

The study was limited only to the DPWH – ESDEO and did not extend to any other DPWH regional or district offices outside of Eastern Samar. This was a pre-implementation study, as the researcher did not look at actual outcomes post-implementation or the effects of rightsizing across multiple government agencies. The scope was limited to the individual perspectives of DPWH-ESDEO who were affected by the proposed rightsizing excluding contractors, co-contractors, and third-party partners as well as other reported stakeholders to any degree.

The study was focused only on operational and workforce well-being and did not address other impacts such as financial savings or long-term policy and how external service recipients in an agency's broader community are affected by rightsizing.

Chapter II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter provided an understanding of rightsizing in the public sector, specifically focusing on the impact of this program on operational efficiency, employee morale and productivity. Therefore, this study includes similar relevant studies that will provide insights.

The relationship between rightsizing and employee morale is complex. Reichers et al. (2023) highlight that while rightsizing can improve clarity in roles and foster professional development, it often leads to job insecurity, reduced morale, and increased stress among employees. Similarly, Smith et al. (2023) emphasize that restructuring initiatives must be complemented by robust employee support mechanisms, including transparent communication and mental health resources, to mitigate negative outcomes. The study underscores that morale significantly influences the success of rightsizing initiatives, as demoralized employees are less likely to engage productively in the workplace.

A growing body of research underscores the importance of workforce well-being in maintaining productivity during organizational transitions. Thomas (2023) found that employees experiencing lower stress and higher satisfaction are more likely to exhibit increased focus, creativity, and output. Yulianti (2023) builds on this finding, asserting that organizations prioritizing well-being initiatives—such as reskilling programs and stress management workshops—tend to see better overall performance outcomes during restructuring. These findings highlight a critical link between workforce well-being and the operational success of rightsizing efforts.

Rightsizing in the public sector presents unique challenges, including resistance to change, bureaucratic inertia, and the need for inclusive stakeholder engagement. Miller and Santos (2023) emphasize that effective rightsizing requires careful planning, transparent communication, and comprehensive support systems to minimize disruptions and resistance. Greenfield and Carter (2022) note that while rightsizing can significantly improve efficiency, its success depends on addressing employee concerns and ensuring alignment with the organization's broader strategic objectives.

Moreover, best practices for implementing rightsizing initiatives include engaging employees early in the process, providing opportunities for professional growth, and offering clear communication about the rationale and expected outcomes of the restructuring. Wong et al. (2023) recommend fostering a culture of inclusion and collaboration to reduce resistance and build trust. Similarly, Smith et al. (2023) advocate for integrating employee assistance programs, such as career counseling and reskilling initiatives, to support employees through the transition.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework visually organized how rightsizing was expected to impact two major components in DPWH - ESDEO:

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Operational Efficiency. Rightsizing is hypothesized to streamline the said office operations, potentially reducing redundancies and improving response times or project completion rates. Indicators for measuring efficiency may include project turnaround times, resource allocation metrics, and departmental productivity comparisons pre- and post-rightsizing.

Workforce Well-being. Rightsizing may affect employee morale, motivation, and job satisfaction. Drawing from Herzberg's and Job Insecurity theories, workforce well-being could be measured through job satisfaction surveys, employee turnover rates, and productivity indicators. These outcomes will help assess the impact of organizational changes on individual employees and the department as a whole.
The foregoing discussions are illustrated below:

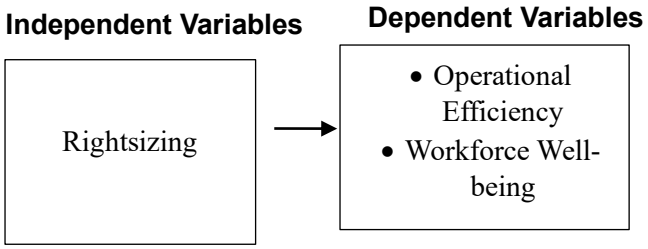


Figure 1. The Relationship of the variables in this study.

Hypotheses of the Study
The following hypotheses were guide for this study to focus on rightsizing in the Department of Public Works and Highways – Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO):

a. Rightsizing significantly improved operational efficiency, as measured by productivity metrics and resource allocation effectiveness.
b. Rightsizing had a significant impact on employee morale, with higher levels of job insecurity expected to reduce overall job satisfaction and motivation.
c. There was a significant relationship between workforce well-being and employee productivity in the context of rightsizing at DPWH-ESDEO.

These hypotheses allowed the study to examine the potential benefits and drawbacks of rightsizing, particularly in terms of achieving efficiency goals and maintaining a productive, motivated workforce within the department.

Chapter III
METHODOLOGY

Research Design
This study utilized a case study qualitative research design to explore the anticipated effects of rightsizing on operational efficiency and workforce well-being within the DPWH-ESDEO. It was suitable to obtain in-depth insights from selected employees about their view of the current state of workforce morale, job security perceptions, and anticipated operational changes within the organization.

By using this design, the study aimed to draw reliable conclusions that not only reflect employee opinion but also help anticipate potential challenges and benefits unique to the DPWH's rightsizing implementation.

Locale of the Study
The locale of this study was the Department of Public Works and Highways – Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO). It was located at Borongan City, Eastern Samar and the office responsible for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure facilities, especially the national highways, flood control and water resources development system, and other public works in accordance with national development objectives. This locale was chosen due to its upcoming rightsizing program which is anticipated to be implemented in 2026. The said office provided an ideal setting to examine the potential impacts of rightsizing on operational efficiency and employee morale within a public-sector context.

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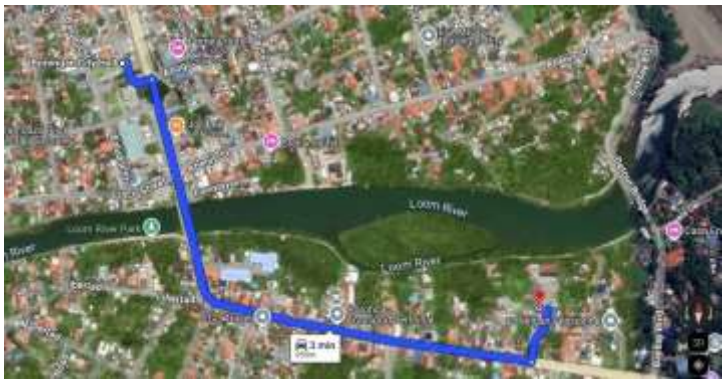


Figure 2. Department of Public Works and Highways – Eastern Samar District Engineering Office (DPWH-ESDEO) from Borongan City Hall.

Research Instrument

The study primarily used the semi-structured interview guide as the research instrument to collect qualitative data from the respondents of DPWH – ESDEO. Semi-structured interviews were suitable as it is an open-ended question and conversational that will allow the respondents to discuss their perspectives further while enabling the researcher to probe further into specific areas as needed.

Through this technique, the respondents had freedom to express their insights and experiences. This allowed a deeper understanding of the said program that how it might have impact on operational efficiency and workforce well-being.

Chapter IV
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented the findings derived from the narratives of employees and stakeholders within the DPWH - ESDEO, focused on their perceptions and experiences regarding the upcoming rightsizing initiative. Using narrative analysis, the data were interpreted to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to operational efficiency, workforce well-being, and attitudes toward the program.

A. Perception of Rightsizing

The interview responses reflected a positive perception of rightsizing as a reform initiative aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations. According to Respondent B provided a more detailed perspective, highlighting rightsizing as a strategy to enhance public service delivery by eliminating redundant and overlapping functions, modernizing processes, and fostering a responsive and productive bureaucracy. However, both respondents emphasized the importance of thoughtful and inclusive execution to realize its potential benefits.

"The government's rightsizing initiative is a significant step towards enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. By streamlining and modernizing government systems and processes, this initiative aims to eliminate redundant and overlapping functions, ultimately leading to a more responsive and productive bureaucracy. This move holds great promise for improving government operations and service delivery, provided it is executed thoughtfully and inclusively." (Respondent B)

The perceptions shared by the respondents aligned with contemporary literature on public sector reform initiatives. Rightsizing is widely recognized as a mechanism to streamline government operations and improve service delivery. According to Green and Carter (2023), rightsizing initiatives aim to optimize resources by addressing inefficiencies, thereby enhancing organizational performance. This supported respondent's view of rightsizing as a means to improve government organization and public transaction processes.

B. The Impact of Rightsizing in Operational Efficiency

The result from the interviews revealed that rightsizing can positively influenced operational efficiency within the DPWH-ESDEO, although potential challenges should be considered. Rightsizing could clarify roles and responsibilities, which would reduce redundancy and enhance efficiency. Furthermore, with fewer staff, departmental resources could be better allocated to training and professional development, ultimately increasing work efficiency.

"The rightsizing can positively impact productivity in our department as it will clarify responsibilities among the members, and with fewer staff, the department's resources can be use for trainings and professional development that will increase the staff's work efficiency. On the negative side, the reduction in staff may cause the remaining staff to be burdened by the additional workload assignments, if will not be properly distributed." (Respondent A)

These findings aligned with recent literature on rightsizing and operational efficiency. Studies show that clearly defined roles and responsibilities can reduce role ambiguity, leading to increased productivity (Smith & Brown, 2023). Moreover, reallocating resources toward training and development has been linked to improved performance at both individual and organizational levels (Jones et al., 2022). The benefits of shifting from temporary to permanent staff are also supported by research, which suggests that permanent employees exhibit higher engagement and commitment, contributing to sustained operational efficiency (Wong et al., 2023).

C. The Effects of Workforce Well-Being

The interview responses provided differing perspectives on the effects of rightsizing on workforce well-being. Respondent E discussed both the positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, rightsizing could enhanced employee morale by fostering a focused, dynamic workplace with clear roles and responsibilities, which creates a more sustainable and friendly environment. However, there was also a downside, as rightsizing may generate uncertainty or anxiety among employees, potentially leading to reduced morale, lower productivity, and higher turnover.

"There are pros and cons to this. The good side is that it can improve employee morale by creating a more focused and dynamic workplace or more sustainable work and friendly environment with clear defining duties and responsibilities. While the bad side is that sometimes, this often creates anxiety or uncertainty to the employee's which could lead to lower productivity, morale and increased turnover." (Respondent E)

Research suggested that while rightsizing can clarify roles and responsibilities, it could also cause significant anxiety among employees if not carefully managed. This reflects the concerns raised by one of the respondents. A study by Fisher (2023) showed that job insecurity due to organizational changes can negatively impact employee mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and lower job satisfaction.

D. Challenges and Risk of Rightsizing

The interview responses indicated that while rightsizing has the potential to enhance efficiency and provide growth opportunities, it also posed significant challenges and risks that could impact the success of the program. Respondent A acknowledged the positive aspects of rightsizing, such as cost reallocation and the redirection of funds to training and professional development. These initiatives are expected to improve employee efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace. However, the respondent also noted the challenges of balancing this redistribution of resources, which could potentially strain the budget and delay the implementation of other projects.

"Once rightsizing is implemented, there will expectation of cost reallocation or budget to the projects of the organization as a result of the elimination of redundant positions. As to workload distribution, more funds will be allocated to training or professional development programs that will improve employee's efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace." (Respondent A)

The challenges and risks identified in the interviews align with existing literature on the complexities of rightsizing. While rightsizing can streamline operations and lead to cost savings, it can also introduce significant operational challenges, particularly if not managed carefully. For example, the reallocation of resources to training programs, as noted by Respondent A, may help improve efficiency but could also divert attention from other important tasks or projects (Harris et al., 2023). Additionally, budget constraints may exacerbate these challenges, especially if departments are left with insufficient funds to support the full scope of their operations.

E. Strategies for Smooth Implementation

The result of Respondent A's answer emphasized fairness and transparency in hiring additional permanent employees, advocating for decisions based on credentials and qualifications rather than political affiliations or third-party influence. They also highlighted the importance of organization-wide discussions to inform employees about the goals, objectives, and potential risks of rightsizing, ensuring they are well-prepared for its effects on job security, workloads, morale, and satisfaction. Additionally, they suggested providing alternative employment opportunities for those at risk of losing their positions.

"Firstly, I thinks that the agency should be just and fair in hiring additional permanent employees, basing solely on the applicants' credentials, qualifications, and capabilities without third party intervention and not discriminated because of their political affiliation. Also, during the rightsizing process, it is best that there may be organization-wide discussions involving all employees in order to gain perception and knowledge as to what the rightsizing is all about, its goals and objectives as well as its risks to existing employees and the change it will bring to the organization. This is to prepare employees of how rightsizing will affect everyone, in terms of security of employment, workload assignments, morale, job satisfactions, and all other aspects that may be affected thereto. Finally, I guess that it will be best to provide the rightsizing will risk their current employment in the district." (Respondent A)

The role of employee assistance programs was well-documented. Reskilling and career development programs can boost employee morale and reduce resistance to change, as indicated by Thomas (2023). This supported the Respondent C's suggestion of reskilling initiatives to aligned employee capabilities with organizational needs. Counseling services, as part of employee assistance programs, could also mitigate the psychological impact of restructuring by addressing employees' concerns and uncertainties (Smith et al., 2023).

Chapter V
CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provided evidence supporting the hypotheses regarding the implications of rightsizing within DPWH-ESDEO.

A. Improvement in Operational Efficiency

The study demonstrated that rightsizing could significantly improve operational efficiency by optimizing resource allocation and clarifying workforce responsibilities. This aligned with Greenfield and Carter (2022), who argued that rightsizing eliminates redundancies and enhances productivity by aligning resources with organizational needs. Additionally, streamlined workflows and targeted training programs further contribute to operational improvements, as noted by Wong et al. (2023). However, the success of such initiatives relies on strategic implementation and proactive management of potential challenges, such as balancing workloads and resource redistribution.

B. Impact on Employee Morale

The findings revealed that rightsizing has a dual effect on employee morale. While opportunities for skill development and professional growth may boost motivation, heightened job insecurity could lead to reduced satisfaction and lower morale. This observation supported the work of Reichers et al. (2023), who highlighted that perceived job insecurity during restructuring is a significant predictor of decreased motivation and commitment. Similarly, Smith et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of transparent communication and support programs to mitigate these adverse effects, fostering a sense of security and engagement among employees.

C. Relationship Between Workforce Well-being and Productivity

The study confirmed a significant relationship between workforce well-being and employee productivity in the context of rightsizing. Employees with improved well-being through fair workload distribution, clear communication, and support mechanisms tend to exhibit higher productivity levels. This aligned with Thomas (2023), who found that organizations prioritizing employee well-being during structural changes experience better performance outcomes. Furthermore, Yulianti (2023) asserted that reducing stress and anxiety through well-being initiatives enhances employees' focus and efficiency, critical for the successful implementation of rightsizing strategies.

In conclusion, rightsizing presents opportunities for enhancing operational efficiency and productivity at DPWH-ESDEO, provided it is executed with consideration for workforce well-being and morale. Strategic planning, transparent communication, and employee-centered support mechanisms are essential to balancing operational goals with the human aspect of organizational change.

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