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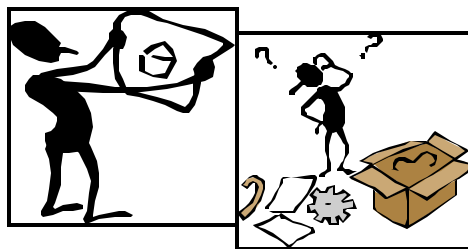
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Training Needs of Local Government Officials in Baguio City: An Assessment

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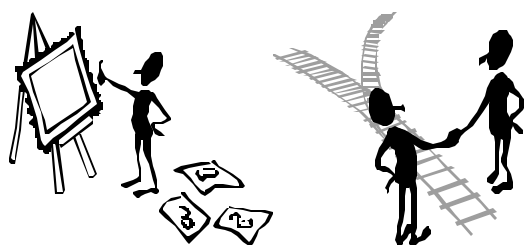


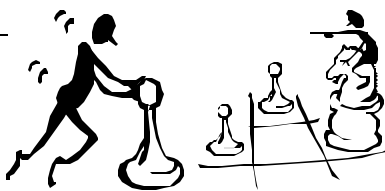
The implementation of the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991 brought changes in local governance. Today, the roles, functions and responsibilities of local officials expand to proportions that demand much skill and ability. Local Government Units (LGUs) are now garbed with more power and authority to manage their resources to become self-reliant communities towards the attainment of national goals. This vision of the LGC of 1991 believes that local development, when taken together, brings about national development.

However, the devolution and de-concentration of government powers and de-bureaucratization of administrative processes to the LGU requires re-orientation. Many of these local government officials lack the skills and capabilities to perform these new tasks.

This study shows that local government officials of Baguio, both from the City and barangay level, realize that the LGC of 1991 requires roles and responsibilities. It is important that local officials know their perceived roles as public officials; as well as how they perceive the various problems confronting the community and those besetting local government administration. This knowledge will help in the identification of their training needs.

To address the need for training, the study focused on the following: perceived roles, perceived City/community problems and perceived problems in LGU administration. The assessment of the kind of roles these local government officials perform shows the difference in the perceived roles of these two levels of local governance. Baguio City hall officials perceive their primary role as legislators and policy-makers while barangay officials see their role more as leaders. Nonetheless, both share the belief that their roles are as leaders, administrators, planners, peace-makers and initiators of development policies and programs.





With regard to perceived problems in Baguio City, barangay officials consider the poor water system, high cost of living and garbage collection as the main issues and concerns. On the other hand, Baguio City hall officials see squatting, poverty and peace and order as the problems confronting the City. The research justifies the difference in perceived problems as a matter of jurisdiction.

On the matter of administration, the study found that both barangay officials and City hall officials agree that the most serious problem is the lack of financial resources. All of the officials also agree on the other serious problems of administration as: 1) negative values, attitudes and practices of employees and officials; 2) lack of personnel; 3) poor coordination of government organizational units; and 4) graft and corruption.

To confront the new roles and responsibilities, the study found that these barangay officials and City hall officials agree on the need for training. All the respondents believe that the foremost training need is on development planning and implementation. Other relevant training needs determined by the study are: 1) resource generation and fiscal management; 2) management capability building; 3) project development and management; 4) local government code orientation; 5) policy analysis and effective legislation; 6) bureaucratic re-orientation; and 7) local personnel.

The results of the study underscore almost 30 training topics believed to be very important to enhance LGU capabilities. For the barangay officials, the foremost training topics mentioned are: 1) leadership; 2) project feasibility study; 3) barangay budgeting, expenditures, accounting and accountability; 4) community organization; and 5) barangay justice system. In contrast, Baguio City hall officials identified their top five training topics as: 1) values; 2) leadership; 3) project feasibility study; 4) problem-solving and decision-making; and 5) motivation and maximum performance.

In view of the research findings, the study recommends a training program designed to enhance the multiple perceived roles of LGU officials of Baguio City. This training should be focused on developing their conceptual, human and technical skills. Furthermore, this study recommends that these training programs should address the perceived problems affecting the City and local administrations.

This study has limitations but it is one step closer in contributing to the the enhancement of local governance. Peter Cosalan (the session's discussant), summarizes the need for training, thus: the capability and success of these officials in administering the affairs of the State, regardless of their level in the bureaucracy, depend much on their 'education' and 'training' in these basic skills required of administrators.

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