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 **International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research and Innovation** is an international peer-reviewed academic journal that highly values the importance of developing knowledge in the field of multidisciplinary educational and innovative research. The journal's scope is broad, with the goals of disseminating information and providing a place for discussion, theoretical inquiry, practical applications, research discoveries, and experimentations in the field of education.

Recommended Citation

Estuche, R., Valencia, M. K. Z., & Tenedero, C. (2024). The Impact of Learning and Development Programs on the Core Competencies of Pasay City Government. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research and Innovation*, 2(1), 108- 116. <https://doi.org/10.17613/k7sn-jp23>.

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THE IMPACT OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF PASAY CITY GOVERNMENT

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Received: November 2023

Revised: December 2023

Accepted: January 2024

Available: February 2024

ABSTRACT

Learning and Development (L&D) is an organizational process which helps in the development of knowledge and achievement of individual and organizational goals. This is quantitative research employed a descriptive method to determine the impact of Learning and Development Programs on the Core Competencies of Level II employees of the Pasay City Government. The respondents of this study were the two hundred forty-two (242) randomly selected PCG Level II employees of the City Government of Pasay. This research used a survey technique in terms of identifying the impact of L&D programs on the level II employees' core competencies. The study found out that the participants perceived as competent and advanced level, which means that they are knowledgeable, can perform the actions associated with this skill without assistance from others, and can mentor/coach others in terms of applying the core competencies to perform official functions in reaching operational targets. The result shows that r value is 0.480; and 0.484, respectively, which indicates that there is a positive correlation between variables. Moreover, the P value is less than the significance level of 0.05, thus, it rejects the null hypothesis and support the notion that a relationship exists between the extent of implementation of L&D Programs and proficiency level of core competencies of Level II employees. It is recommended for organizations to evaluate the effectiveness and capability of their training programs to produce desired results relevant to the organizational goals and objectives. A proposed enhancement program may be considered for the inclusion in the implementation matrix of the HRD (L&D) Plan of the City Government for Level II employees.

Keywords: government employees, learning, development, core competencies, Pasay City Government

INTRODUCTION

Learning and Development (L&D) is an important Human Resource Core System. It is vital to institutionalize meritocracy and excellence in Human Resource Management and necessary not just for personal development, but for the total improvement of the entire organization. Managers, supervisors, and employees handling critical designations serve as the implementers of system practices. The senior leaders direct the adoption of programs, projects, and activities, while the officers in middle management level help in pursuing the execution of these orders.

The Republic of the Philippines provided the role of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), as the central personnel agency, which shall integrate all Human Resource Development (HRD) programs for all levels and ranks and institutionalize a management climate conducive to public accountability. The Commission helps government agencies to improve the status of their L&D core system through launching various L&D programs to improve the competencies of the general workforce.



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L&D is one of the four (4) HR Core Systems that it aims to assess, assist, and recognize. L&D is a critical core function of the HRM that aims to upgrade the capability and expertise of employees in the organization. It seeks to address and respond to the multi-faceted Human Resource Development (HRD) needs of the Philippine government workers. L&D shall be based on development needs as determined by competency and performance assessment exercises. The challenge is to find out the worthiness of its implementation in government sectors like the Pasay City Government(PCG).

A core competencies are also treated as organizational competencies. Yang(2015) believed that core competencies and capabilities drive core competitiveness, which force long-term development and excellent business. Alexander and Martin (2013) stated that the competitiveness of a company is based on the ability to develop core competencies. A core competency is a specialized knowledge, technique and skills that is difficult to be imitated by other organizations.

The development and improvement of the core competencies brings an organization to its competitive edge. To equip employees with core competencies they need to execute their duties and responsibilities for the organization, the PCG-Human Resource Management and Development Office (HRMDO). PCG-HRMDO has been adopting strategies that improve the learning engagement and application upon attendance to L&D programs of employees by focusing on. These competencies are vital in reaching organizational vision, mission and developmental goals and objectives.

Moreover, it is not enough that training or L&D programs are conducted nor implemented. Its impact should be determined and measured. It should provide a clear assessment on its effects on: the core competencies of employees; changes in the attitudes, skills, and behaviors of employees that affect the stability and resiliency of an organization; contribution to the betterment of a company or an agency; working strategies that should be practiced in workplaces; accomplishment of work targets considering the performance measures of efficiency (quantity), effectiveness (quality), and timeliness; and feedback of the general public to the products and services offered by the organization after the training application.

Training evaluation is important in determining the training's success or effectiveness. This training assessment is usually determined based on the achievement of the earlier objectives and results, considering the needs, methods, and other areas of training administration. Training programs should be evaluated right after its implementation. Reactions are significant in terms of gathering feedback and comments concerning to the implementation of L&D programs. L&D is always connected with achieving not just individual, but organizational goals. It recognizes the advantages of collaboration and other L&D approaches to promote diversity. Since L&D is a pro-organization act, it targets the core competencies of employees through the administration of training programs.

Employees without being informed of their development will remain stagnant and complacent. Likewise, the HRMDO will continue implementing L&D Programs unyielding the necessary corrections and adjustments. Consequently, this affects the L&D cycle and the development of core competencies of Level II employees needed for future organizational goals.

In this context, knowing the extent of implementation of L&D programs and the core competencies of Level II employees based on the target respondents are essential, as these will provide concrete bases for the appropriate feedback needed. Hence, this study determines the impact of L&D programs of the PCG-HRMDO on the core competencies of PCG Level II employees. This also examines the extent implementation of the L&D programs of the PCG-HRMDO. Further, this investigates the level of proficiency of PCG Level II employees relative to: Accountability and Dependability, Building Commitment, Delivering Service Excellence, Networking and Partnering and Teamwork and Cooperation.

This paper tests the null hypothesis to wit; there is no significant relationship between the extent of implementation of L&D programs and the level of core competencies of Level II employees.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This is a quantitative employed a descriptive method type of research to determine the impact of PCG-HRMDO Learning and Development Programs on the Core Competencies of Level II employees of the Pasay City Government. The said method accurately and systematically describes a population, and situation. It focuses on answering “what” questions of the research study rather than the “whys” thereof.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this study were the two hundred forty-two (242) randomly selected PCG Level II employees of the City Government of Pasay. Respondents with direct knowledge to assess the status of the core competencies and implementation of the L&D Programs were randomly selected. Level II employees are those occupying professional, technical, or scientific positions, in a non-supervisory or supervisory capacity, requiring at least four (4) years of college work up to Division Chief level. Usually, they are the main personnel who help leaders and executives in implementing the PPAs of the City Government. They help execute and cascade communication plans for every change initiative.

In terms of education, they have atleast completed four(4) years of studies in college; as to work experience, it ranges from none required (for entry-level positions) to three (3) years of relevant experience (for division chef positions); as to training, it starts from none required (for entry level positions) to sixteen (16) hours of relevant trainings (for division chef positions). In terms of eligibility, they have at least passed the Career Service Professional Examination or possessed R.A. 1080 license/s or any government eligibilities, equivalent to Second Level Eligibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the data gathered from the questionnaires distributed to the respondents. The presentation was made through the use of tables. Analysis and interpretation of data were done through the tabular presentation.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of Respondents According to Age Bracket

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
20-30	28	11.6%
31-40	75	31%
41-50	73	30.2%
51-60	55	22.7%
61-65	11	4.5%
TOTAL	242	100%

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 31-40, with the most significant percentage of 31%, equal to the number of 75 out of 242 level respondents; while the lowest rate of 4.5%, equal to 11 numbers of respondents are those who belong to age group of 61-65. The age bracket of 41-50 got a frequency of 73 or 30.2%. The remaining age groups of 51-60 and 20-30 got 55 or 22.7% and 28 or 11.6%, respectively.

The result proved that most of the Level II respondents are from young to middle-age group adults.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of Respondents According to Sex

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	99	40.9%



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Female	143	59.1%
TOTAL	242	100%

In Table 2, 143 or 59.1% of the respondents are females, and 99 or 40.9% are males. The result proved that female employees of the City Government have become quite competitive in the organization for achieving such a percentage in terms of occupying Level II positions.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of Respondents According to Highest Educational Attainment

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
College Degree	161	66.5%
Masteral Level	25	10.3%
Masteral Degree	25	10.3%
Doctoral Level	15	6.2%
Doctoral Degree	16	6.6%
TOTAL	242	100%

As shown in Table 3, respondents who earned College Degree got the frequency of 161, with the most significant percentage of 66.5%. It is followed by the respondents who reached Masteral Level and Masteral Degree with the same rate of 10.3% (frequency of 25). Other respondents who have attained Doctoral Degree and Doctoral Level, with 16 and 15 counts, obtained the rate of 6.6%, and 6.2%, respectively.

It was evident that majority of the respondents are college degree holder since a completed four year degree is the entry qualification standard requirement when it comes to education to be appointed to Level II position.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of Respondents According to Length of Government Service

LENGTH OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1-5 year/s	38	15.7%
6-10 years	72	29.8%
11-15 years	56	23.1
16-20 years	38	15.7%
21 years and above	38	15.7%
TOTAL	242	100%

As displayed in Table 3, most of the respondents are 6-10 years bracket with a frequency of 72 or 29.8%, when it comes to their tenure in the government service. It was followed by 11-15 years bracket earning 56 counts or 23.1%. Lastly, 1-5 years, 16-20 years, and 21 years and above brackets shared the same frequency of 38 or 15.7%.

It was evident that most of the respondents are still quite approaching the maturity age in the government service. In the study of Daguplo, Alma, and Daguplo (2019) it was stated that as to job experiences, employees upon employment would be satisfied and complimented when they are given with opportunities to enhance and expand more their knowledge and expertise by sending them to various training and seminars.



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Learning and Development (L&D) Programs

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage of Distribution of Respondents According to Number of L&D Programs Attended

NUMBER OF L&D PROGRAMS ATTENDED	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1-5	123	50.8%
6-10	75	31%
11-15	24	9.9%
16 and above	20	8.3%
TOTAL	242	100%

It is evident in the Table 5 that respondents who have attended 1-5 L&D Programs got the frequency of 123, with the largest percentage of 50.8%. It was followed by the respondents who completed 6-10 L&D Programs with a percentage of 31%, frequency of 75. Other respondents with 11-15, and 16 and above L&D programs obtained the rate of 9.9% (24), and 8.3% (20), respectively.

It was clear that the majority of the respondents are still in need of L&D Programs and other HRD interventions to further their competencies. According to Yaqoot et. (2021) the importance of training is truly obvious in delivering the required knowledge and capabilities. Organizations achieve their strategic objectives through various interventions and one of these is the training which provides a competitive edge. It cannot be denied how training keeps the organization alive. It creates synergy and nurtures high performing organizations. The benefit that it brings helps keep the latter active and responsive to global trends. It will help agencies and companies to survive various changes by acquiring that unique set of core competencies through smooth and proper implementation thereof. A published article *"The Training Cycle"* by The Peak Performance Center (2021), stated that training cycle is a systematic approach to the development, delivery, and continuous improvement of a training program. The cycle consists of a series of stages to help and ensure the desired and intended training results.

Al-Zu'bi and Al-kharabsheh (2016) further emphasized that training is a planned effort of the company to facilitate staff learning work-related skills, which includes knowledge, skills or to achieve successful job performance. It can improve the efficiency of employees when it comes to job performance since training is a systematic process that can either change or influence the behavior and feelings of individuals.

Summary Assessment of Proficiency Level of Core Competencies

Table 6. Summary Assessment of Proficiency Level of Core Competencies of Level II Employees

#	CORE COMPETENCIES	WM	VI	R
1	Accountability and Dependability	4.35	Advanced	3
2	Building Commitment	4.38	Advanced	2
3	Delivering Service Excellence	4.32	Advanced	4
4	Networking and partnering	4.26	Advanced	5
5	Teamwork and Cooperation	4.42	Advanced	1
OVERALL WEIGHTED MEAN		4.35	Advanced	

In the Table 6, the overall assessment of respondents when it comes to the proficiency level of their core competencies is "Advanced", with the grand mean of 4.35.

This revealed that the participants perceived themselves as competent enough. Advanced level means that they are knowledgeable, can perform the actions associated with this skill without assistance from others, and can mentor/coach others in terms of applying the core competencies to perform official functions in reaching operational targets.



Also, core competencies at the advanced level implied that respondents act as a reliable guide of people in the organization in accomplishing assigned tasks. The result of this assessment confirmed in the study of Juneja (2015) which emphasized the importance of core competencies when it comes to providing framework for the organization, wherein, they can identify their core strengths and strategy accordingly. It decides the organization's future through ensuring the delivery of quality outputs and services to clients.

As per result of this study, indicator #5 – Teamwork and Cooperation, got the highest weighted mean of 4.42 interpreted as, "Advanced". This is very true considering that the city government has been giving performance-based bonuses for the past years. It means that departments/offices in the agency have been sharing their contributions in reaching organizational goals through validated team performance results.

Regrading indicator #4 – Networking and Partnering, it received the lowest weighted mean of 4.26, yet, interpreted as, "Advanced". In some cases, an extra effort to improve this competency should be exerted through maintaining and advancing relations with possible and reliable contacts. This will broaden the edge of this organization in hitting new trends and achieving best practices. Gupta (2013), as regarded by Edgar and Lockwood (2012), emphasized that the capabilities by people within the firm are seen as a core competency, in such a way that it is applied through corporate operational process to create products and services. In the published article of Singh et.al (2021), they found out that for the organizations to stay competitive in the market, they have to put emphasis on core competency. Core competencies are important in a learning and moving organization. It will always serve as a source of valued resources that will lead to fruitful advantages. If core competencies are well developed, the organization can withstand the tests of time, and will continue to be dynamic and proficient in n terms of capacity building.

Table 7. Significant Relationship between the Extent of Implementation of L&D Programs affecting the Proficiency Level of Core Competencies of Level II Employees

Execution Lenses	Core Competencies' Proficiency Levels	r value	P Value*	Decision
Systems and Practices Lenses	Core Competencies' Proficiency Levels	0.480	.000	Reject the Null Hypothesis
Competencies Lenses	Core Competencies' Proficiency Levels	0.484	.000	Reject the Null Hypothesis

Table 7 presents the computation of Pearson's *r* across the two (2) lenses of PRIME-HRM-L&D-Execution Lenses. The two lenses of Systems and Practices and Competencies show that *r* value is 0.480 and 0.484, respectively, which indicates that there is a positive correlation between the variables. Moreover, the table also shows that *P* value ($p= 0.000$) is less than the significance level of 0.05, thus it reject the null hypothesis and support the notion that a relationship exists between the extent of implementation of L&D Programs and proficiency level of the core competencies of Level II employees. This result is significant, thus, it find light that the extent of implementation of L&D programs has an impact with the proficiency level of core competencies of the respondents.

Despite the implementation of various L&D programs, there are still challenges regarding system adaptations and applications in workplaces. These can be reflected in the work outputs of employees prompting possible remedies such as continuous implementation of L&D programs, or administration of other HRD interventions. It is therefore necessary that terminal and session objectives of L&D Programs will somehow or shall lead to the development of core competencies.

CONCLUSION

Learning and Development (L&D) bridges performance and competency gaps. To achieve effective management, especially in terms of planning and implementation of large projects, the acquisition and development of core competencies should be develop and given priority. In addition, the competencies must relate to the organizational goals, objectives, and strategies. The success of an organization and



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its ability to meet a changing environment can be achieved through the development and improvement of core competencies.

One can never be competent in performing their duties and responsibilities for the organization without empowering and improving themselves. They must continuously attend and participate in various L&D programs that will teach, guide and equip them for their better performance. Pasay City Government (PCG) is continuously providing a L&D programs and other HRD interventions not just for technical and supervisory competencies, but also to the core competencies. Improving the proficiency levels of core competencies of Level II employees has always been the target of the PCG-Human Resource Management and Development Office (HRMDO).

Further, the organizations need to evaluate the effectiveness and capability of their training programs to produce desired results relevant to the organizational goals and objectives. Employees must attend training programs to acquire a necessary skills for their personal and professional growth. A proposed enhancement program may be considered for the inclusion in the implementation matrix of the HRD (L&D) Plan of the City Government for the Level II employees.

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