Resource Mobilization and Linkages for Curricular Development

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Largely attributed to the lack of public managers with administrative capability, management crisis can be averted through an education and training program responsive to the bureaucrats' needs. Resource constraints, admittedly crippling and retrogressive to management education curriculum or program development, pose the challenge both to the administrator and the faculty to be more resourceful and innovative. The administrator and faculty can strengthen their capabilities to acquire or produce resources either by (a) pooling with external agencies in forward or backward linkages or (b) supplementing its own institutional resources by tapping local and international funding sources to finance distinct research and training projects, actively participating in the activities of government agencies at national and subnational levels as well as the nongovernmental organizations, and advertising and enhancing public relations.

Introduction

In order to achieve productivity goals, organizations need to draw on resources in the world around them. The quantity and quality of available resources can exert a considerable influence on decisions made in pursuit of goals.

Resource mobilization and linkaging is an imperative in today's state of Public Management education in the country. Management education is enjoying a boom these days. On the whole, educational institutions experience a quantitative increase of management courses and subsequently an increasing trend in enrolment. As this occurs we also begin to feel more sharply the pressure on our meager resources. That we live in a world today marked by scarcity of resources and competition has been a long established fact. The challenge is to focus on getting more and using more of what one has to an advantage, usually towards the achievement of some goals or objectives.

Defined simply for our purposes, a resource is anything that satisfies the needs or wants of a curriculum or a management education program. Like other educational programs, the need for resources to enhance the curriculum is probably the same but I tend to see things differently for the public management sector.

I carry the bias that a management crisis exists today as Stifel *et al.* (1977) points out. This crisis is attributed to the lack of public managers or administrators with administrative capability that serves as a major constraint in the implementation of

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national programs. Furthermore, this crisis can be met through management education and training. Finally, the success of this endeavor depends to a large extent, among others, to what Caiden and Wildavsky (1974) would call the redundancy factor, the availability of resources that enables a program to succeed.

There is a need to emphasize the wealth of resources, services, skills and materials that should be made available to an individual or to groups endeavoring to improve learning experiences. But the reality is that there is instead a dearth of needed resources for curriculum development. Almost all members of the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines, Inc. (ASPAP) interviewed in a recent survey expressed the need for resources that could contribute greatly to curriculum development.

This paper then is an attempt to highlight the need for resources critical to the successful implementation of Public Management education programs and offers suggestions as to how the lack of resources may be overcome.

To ably demonstrate this, I would like to use the initial findings of the recently initiated survey of ASPAP member schools, my experiences then as a program leader of the Management of Rural Development program of the University of the Philippines (UP) at Los Baños, and observations as current administrator of the School of Development Management (SDM). Ideally, a more comprehensive and in-depth interview of those involved in curriculum development would yield better data useful for this paper but the time constraint has made this difficult so I intend to lean more on my experiences, using the realities of the SDM as a case in point.

The School was established on 22 December 1981 and is uniquely situated by virtue of its offerings, i.e., undergraduate degrees leading to a BS in Management and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) major in Accounting and Marketing and also at the masters level, the Master of Management (MM) major in Public Management and the MM major in Business Management. Thus, we have the enviable mix of both the public management and business management traditions.

Resource Identification and Assessment

Before resources necessary for curriculum development are identified, it is essential to first determine our educational objectives. The type of objectives we draw and the methods we outline to achieve them will determine to a large extent the nature, type, quantity and quality of resources we will need.

Basically, what we need today is foremost a curriculum that develops maximum effectiveness in meeting the problems of modern living or public bureaucracies, one that makes use of the immediate situations learners face as a basis for developing competencies and understanding for future actions.

Youker (1979) says that from learning theory, research, and experience, management training results in behavioral change when the training:

(1) is built around local systems, procedures and cases;

(2) involves a team from an organization rather than only an individual;

(3) is experientially based so that the students can gain confidence in their new skills;

(4) promotes among students the need for the training and the belief in its relevance to their problems; and,

(5) involves follow-up on the job so as to integrate the training into the local administrative environment.

There are a number of teaching styles which are suitable for use in management education programs and which dictate the kind and sophistication of materials or atmosphere needed. An example is the guided discovery method, an appropriate strategy for concept development, particularly if the student ought to master the concept. Other styles include demonstrations, questions and answers supplemented with examples, lectures, inquiry training, problem solving, games and simulations, and computer-aided instruction.

Human Resources

One type of resource that exerts a pivotal influence is people. Human beings vary tremendously in personality, characteristics, abilities, knowledge, skills, and so on. Some organizations invariably require different mixes of these characteristics, that is, different kinds of people to achieve various task goals. In some instances, the type of human resources needed are readily available, thus facilitating goal achievement. In most cases, the type of people a program requires is in short supply and the result is a major constraint on the decision alternatives that can realistically be selected.

The teacher is the most valuable resource in a curricular undertaking. The teacher who has held jobs in the fields in which the students will be involved has an important advantage. That person knows the field, the types of jobs available, the characteristics of successful workers, and the demands on students.

Faculty members who have done research to determine the sizes and types of firms in the business community or agencies in the bureaucracy operating in the area or region are able to speak with authority about the academic program and its development needs.

In the ASPAP survey as well as in the survey recently conducted by the Management Education Council, the lack of qualified faculty members remain a constraint to program development. In the SDM for example, we experience a faculty to student ratio of 1:30. Reasons for lack of faculty include: those being sent on fellowships have

not returned or are currently in the process of finishing their studies, the growing trend of appointing most of the faculty of the School to higher administrative positions, and the lack of items which are competitive with those offered by other schools and organizations.

This lack of faculty inhibits our capabilities to respond adequately to the opportunities offered by the environment. It also poses difficulties for our teachers to do more extension and research activities since they are mostly overloaded with teaching assignments.

Another human resource for curriculum development would be the alumni and the community at large. Through the alumni we get important feedbacks regarding the effectiveness of our programs. We also get many kinds of valuable support from them such as financing, hiring of program graduates, and facilitating requests for goods and services from the organizations where they belong. At the SDM, and probably in most units, the Alumni Association is actively involved with the program. Our graduates who are well positioned in many regional and provincial offices provide us the much needed support in our activities.

Our clients are likewise valuable source of program support. Conducting training programs for them in the past and assisting them in feasibility studies as well as other types of study and consultancy have developed a mutually satisfying relationship between the clients and the faculty.

Elements of the human resource as a component in the school setting that are considered in curriculum development encompass the students and the administrators of the program or the institution. For example, the extent that the administrator is facilitative and sympathetic to the program, becomes an invaluable factor that hastens the process of curriculum development.

The students, the object and subject of our efforts, are largely untapped sources of valuable program support. In most management programs, the bulk of the studentry occupy middle and top level management positions. Their presence in our programs often allow us easy access to files and records we need for conducting research. The wealth of experiences they carry with them that they can share given the right motivation also enriches the curriculum.

Financial Resources

Financial resources or monetary resources may vary in their availability. Money is essential not only to start a program but to operate it and to finance growth. The extent to which money can be obtained greatly influences organizational or school decisions. For example, funds are necessary for developing and maintaining a professional library, purchasing instruments for gathering data, obtaining necessary

instructional materials, or securing other assistance for carrying out curricular research.

For the administrator, preparation of the annual budget is the most important administrative job of the year. The institutional budget is a management instrument. It is also a policy document reflecting institutional priorities and changes in academic direction. Most often, the care and effort administrators put into the act of budgeting is not really rewarded. In the end, he sees the usual incremental change, which sometimes works to the opposite direction. Our budgetary system still uses the incremental approach and indicates no shift in priority towards improving the lot of management education.

The lack of funds can be operationally crippling and demoralizing. Almost every ASPAP member stressed their urgent need of financial support in order to maintain their operations and innovational ventures into activities that will boost their present resources.

Using the SDM as a case in point, it can be observed that the School only gets more or less 5% of the total amount alloted to academic units in terms of maintenance and operating expenditures and personnel. This meager allocation still declines as trend shows. For instance, the current year's budget is the same despite the increased costs of materials. This deficiency in financial support to the program does not take into account the fact that the School has the biggest enrolment when compared to any existing academic program within the university.

Facilities and Equipment

Facilities move aspirations closer to realization; they provide the conditions that help insure success of training programs (Ramos and Manalo, Jr. 1985). It is the function of the administration to provide a good teaching environment and to hold the teacher responsible for its maintenance. When the administration fails to create good teaching environment then it can be said to be failing in its essential purpose.

Necessary facilities include a decent school building with adequate classrooms and faculty rooms with libraries and study areas. At present, the SDM for example, is renting the second floor of the Alumni Building on campus with an estimated ratio of one personnel or equipment per square feet. Student counseling is quite difficult to accomplish when faculty rooms do not encourage private consultations. Needless to add that there are also no student or faculty lounges or closed conference room. As a matter of fact, students have been pressuring for a workroom for the School's student organ but the lack of classrooms prevented the granting of one.

Learning resources are likewise vital which include among others, textbooks, instructional recordings, videotapes, slide-tape programs and transparencies. These

resources are badly needed in order to have a good management program. Towards such an end, Learning Centers should be established in every school and current efforts should be doubled towards modernizing library resources and other learning equipment.

In many ASPAP member schools, the same predicament has been reported, i.e., having no building facility, lack of learning resources, the absence of transportation facilities and professional libraries, insufficient maintenance of available equipment, and to a certain extent, the need for more office equipment.

Office equipment are important like typewriters, micro and word processors, storage cabinet and files, bulletin boards, wall charts and chalkboards. These equipment are hard to come by and, usually, the process to acquire them takes quite some time.

Indeed, resources are scarce, but on top of this, the authorities who make the final budget decisions do not seem to know how differently a management school has to be run. The value of efficiency that is taught and inculcated by the faculty must be observed by the students. A management school has to reflect the ideal requirements of its client environment to a certain extent. To be able to do this would require resource support from higher administrators. For example, the use of field trips, films, slides and computers are popular among students nowadays and are deemed effective, yet, also expensive. Our attitude however should be that any device that furthers effective teaching should be obtained.

Mobilizing Resources and Linkaging

There are a number of strategies and activities an educational institution can resort to in order to mobilize resources for curriculum development. Basically, an educational institution saddled with serious resource needs can embark on a two-pronged strategy of increasing its capabilities to acquire more resources on one hand while at the same time pooling resources with others who are similarly situated on the other hand. For example, regional educational institutions may group themselves into an association or be members of one national association and share or exchange learning resources.

In the past, ASPAP members have expressed willingness to be part of a faculty pool that can be relied upon to assist regional units in curriculum development. Experience has however shown that while there was initial success, the high financial costs and continuous commitment required of faculty members in the pool could not be sustained. Thus, there is a need to formalize commitment and explore new ways and means to finance such an undertaking.

ASPAP can be utilized as a central coordinating mechanism for resource linking. The central office can act as a source of information on current trends in Public

Management education, books and other learning resource materials. ASPAP can also establish linkages with government offices and recommend faculty members with expertise to serve as regional resource persons or consultants. It can also make available to members information on grants and other funding sources as well as the requirements for availing them. To effectively assume the abovementioned activities and roles, ASPAP should embark on two program thrusts, namely, the strengthening of local regional units and partnership in research and extension collaboration.

A strategy for beefing up resources which is quite familiar these days is the creation of research proposals and training projects that can either be funded internationally or locally. International donors and foundations can be tapped to finance these projects. Often, visits or communications to the foreign embassies known to be interested supporters of such projects could yield positive results. Once the project gets approved however, the local national runs the risk of getting less professional fees than his international counterpart who is usually a part of the project. Nevertheless, such a strategy enables educational institutions to acquire the much needed resources.

Local funding sources can likewise be tapped. Regional units however are constrained by the fact that the big projects are approved and decided in Manila usually with the consultant already built into the package. Local experts often just have to gather data for these consultants.

An educational institution or association whose expertise is widely sought can engage in policy researches or project management activities designed to assist national and local agencies achieve their goals. A unified body like ASPAP for example can, through its pooled expertise, embark on policy researches designed to solve development problems while at the same time determine ways whereby such policies can be made implementable.

At the regional level, the various ASPAP members can participate meaningfully and actively in the different subnational planning bodies by serving in the various committees that will invariably require its expertise on future projects. The SDM for example, represents the University in the Economic Development Council of Region 6 and is thus attuned to the training and research needs of the region. Being in a position to assist also opens avenues for resource linking and increasing one's resource capabilities.

Educational institutions can also enter into contracts or arrangements whereby the supply of a given material resource would be assured for quite some time. For example, a university can assure itself of supply of paper by signing a long-term contract with a manufacturer. Along this vein, collaborative arrangements can be made, for example, with other institutions in the area to undertake a development project where the sharing of resources is a necessity. Such a collaboration is often attractive to donors interested primarily in institution building.

Educational institutions can provide services to or collaborate with representatives of important environmental domain into the organization. Giving leaders of local community a stake in the future of the school inspires them to take the interest of the school into account in planning their own operations.

Participation in the activities of regional government agencies like the National Economic and Development Authority and the development councils, line agencies, as well as the nongovernmental organizations, and establishing official and personal relationships with the actors in these fields will invariably promote not only the schools' interests but area interests as well. Through such services, linkages could be made that provide the basis for future collaborative efforts.

The SDM has pursued this strategy quite effectively as evidenced by the growing trend of organizations both public and private that seek its assistance in policymaking as in the case of the Western Visayas Prawn Council; training as in the case of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC); organizational research as in the case of the Provincial Governments of Iloilo and Capiz; assisting an agribusiness firm in the Subprovince of Guimaras; and, evaluation of the performance of local NGOs.

Lastly, there are quite a number of activities that can be pursued to mobilize resources and establish linkages that could be described as falling under the strategy of advertising and public relations such as the following:

(1) Informing students about the curriculum, through faculty visits to local feeder schools to inform them of the program and answer questions about it;

(2) Printing of brochures outlining the various types of work experiences the school offers and eligibility requirements for the program;

(3) Informing the community of the program by giving speeches at civic clubs or making announcements during business meetings;

(4) Inviting prominent local government officials to award ceremonies where public administration graduates are honored;

(5) Tapping agencies to play host to field trips by students;

(6) Offering local radio and television stations the possibility of a packaged program where students enroled are interviewed to demonstrate the advantages of the program; and,

(7) Developing a management newsletter that caters to the needs of both private and public managers in the region.

These strategies and activities are designed to increase one's resource capabilities. To effectively mobilize resources, one has to establish linkages first. The economic value of a resource is often dependent on how the user intends to utilize the resource.

Conclusion

In retrospect, there are a lot of needs that are ever present but our responses may be limited. Some limitations are natural while others are man-made. In the final analysis, the usual response to these scarcities fall on the administrator of the program. While it is true to a certain extent that the administrator is responsible for the overall success of the academic programs by virtue of the principle of command responsibility, it is also true that part of the burden of resource mobilization and linkaging must fall as well on the faculty of the school. In a situation where all else have failed, it is usually the faculty who must come up with innovative ideas in order to compensate for the lack of resource support.

Rather than adapting to the environment of less resource and negative perception regarding their administrators, faculty members should instead pursue active and adaptive strategies on their own designed to correspond their resources and capabilities on the one hand, and current environmental risks and opportunities on the other.

It is therefore important that the faculty of a program must exist in an organizational atmosphere where there is a lot of trust and confidence and mutual support. Faculty and administrators must pool their resources towards such an end.

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