

**DIMENSIONS OF POOR SERVICE DELIVERY AND BEST PRACTICES  
IN THE CITY ENGINEER'S OFFICE OF DAVAO: A CASE STUDY**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study aimed to identify the dimensions of poor service delivery present in the City Engineer's Office of Davao. As a case study, three department heads from the construction division, programming and design division, and development fund for local community units were chosen as research key informants. Qualitative data analysis using thematic content analysis was utilized in processing and interpreting the data.

The study found out that with the three departments under the office of the city engineer's had a common concept of factors affecting service delivery. These factors include manpower, transportation, proof of ownership, facilities, role of technology, and impact of corruption.

Also, the three are in sync in the best practices in terms of Commission on Audit compliance and coordination with agencies tasked for safety. In construction though, close monitoring of implemented project, issuance of notices, and change order and recommending termination of contract is practiced.

The study concluded with the formulation of a framework showing the dimensions present on the delivery of service of the office of the city engineers of Davao.

**Keywords:**

Case Study, Qualitative Research, Dimensions, Poor Service Delivery, Best Practices

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**INTRODUCTION**

Development is synonymous to sustainability. According to Samihah and Adelabu (2010), in pursuit of development, access to resources ought to be available for government to deliver the required welfare services. Lawal (2000) also pointed out that development remains insignificant if development does not positively affect the lives of the people in the society thus, highlighting the importance of service delivery.

Service delivery pertains to the government's distribution of basic resources. Providing the most common interface between the people and the state, these basic resources especially in infrastructure, highlights the role played by the government in the lives of their citizens. Service delivery, in turn shapes the people's sense of trust and expectations of government and as well underpins human welfare and economic growth. With Development, delays are also inevitable. Suggested by Navarro and Tanghal (2016), they stated that most government agencies have problems in the preliminary or the planning stages of procurement which results to the failure of biddings that delays the disbursement of funds and eventually delaying the program. Among the recurring reasons for delays is the lack of knowledge and technical know-how on the part of the end- users and procurement teams about Republic Act 9184 which is the Government Procurement Reform Act of 2003.

The City of Davao, since upon taking office of President Rodrigo R. Duterte, a former mayor of the city, has been blessed with a boom in infrastructure project as part of his Build, Build, Build Program. Thus giving the City engineer's office the major task in the monitoring and implementation of infrastructure projects within its jurisdiction which includes the 182 local community units (which pertains to the smallest administrative division in the Philippines) and ensure they adhere to budgetary and environmental requirements. With this reason, an interest was derived in studying the identification of problems associated with the delivery of service of the City Engineers office of Davao.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to divulge the dimensions present on the delivery of service of the city engineer's office of Davao. Accordingly, it focused in investigating the problems encountered in the implementation of projects and the best practices of the agency in the implementation of projects.

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using qualitative design, which stresses the socially constructed nature of reality and seeking answers to questions that how social experiences is created and put into meaning Denzin and Lincoln (2005). Case study was employed to exemplify the departments under the office of the city engineers of Davao as the sample. The participants of the study are the three division heads under the office. With the use of key informant interview, data was collected to extract the information that answers the statements: What are the problems encountered in the implementation of projects? And what are the best practices of the agency in the implementation of the projects? With the statements as basis, documentary evidence were gathered-up from existing policies, modules or manuals and other write-ups that support the study. Especially, the study is anchored on a model suggested by Alwi (2002) which suggest that projects can be delayed for a large number of reasons and usually impact on cost and time. Interpretation, patterns of themes were synthesized through thematic content analysis to extract the most common problems present among the three departments and come-up with the dimensions of the delivery of service of the office of the city engineers of Davao.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the extracted dimensions of the poor delivery of service of the City Engineer's Office of Davao. These dimensions provided insights on the factors faced by the office in terms of implementation of projects and the office's best practices.

**Manpower.** With Davao City having 182 local community units through its jurisdiction. The office has been bombarded with workloads of projects approved by the Mayor apart from extra projects granted by the national government. The number of staffing is not sufficient enough to cater to the number of projects given to the office. Also, most of the technical personnel are Job Orders, this means that there is no security of tenure of their personnel. Another, because most of the technical personnel are Job Orders, the office has no authority to hold them if ever they decide to resigned. The administration will hire new technical personnel as replacement to the personnel who render resignation; the office now will need to train these newly hired personnel for them to be efficient.

**Transportation.** The office itself only utilized one vehicle coming from the office of the city mayor. With this, the office is only able to use the vehicle on certain schedules assigned and has to utilize the extent of the trip to get the job done.

**Proof of Ownership.** This pertains to the verified ownership of the land wherein the project would be executed. This is a major factor affecting the process of implementation since this needs documentary proof that the land is public owned since time in memorial.

**Security.** Since most of the local community units included in the territory of Davao City are located on the outskirts of the city and most have undeveloped roads or located on areas of conflict, also cause delay.

**Facilities.** The office does not have sufficient space to cater the number of technical personnel. Working areas are not standard; they are not comfortable to work with it.

**Technology.** This pertains to the program/ software that Programming Design Division is being used for the preparation of Plans and Program of Works. The office still uses Excel and AutoCAD while the latest software is Detailed Unit Price Analysis (DUPA).

**Corruption.** This issue arises between the end user and the contractors. End users ask something before they will sign the certificate of completion which is not included in the program of works.

On the other hand, the office has shown best practices in the delivery of service. These are the following:

**Compliance.** Pertaining to COA (Commission on Audit) requirements. This is crucial in order to avoid irregularities with regards to implementing the project and with the mandate to examine, audit and settle all accounts, expenditures, and specially properties owned by the government.

**Coordination.** Also highlighted that to ensure that the inspectors are safe upon site inspection, the office coordinates with the Peace 911(peace and development response unit) together with the Task Force (the military) and Local Community Unit Council.

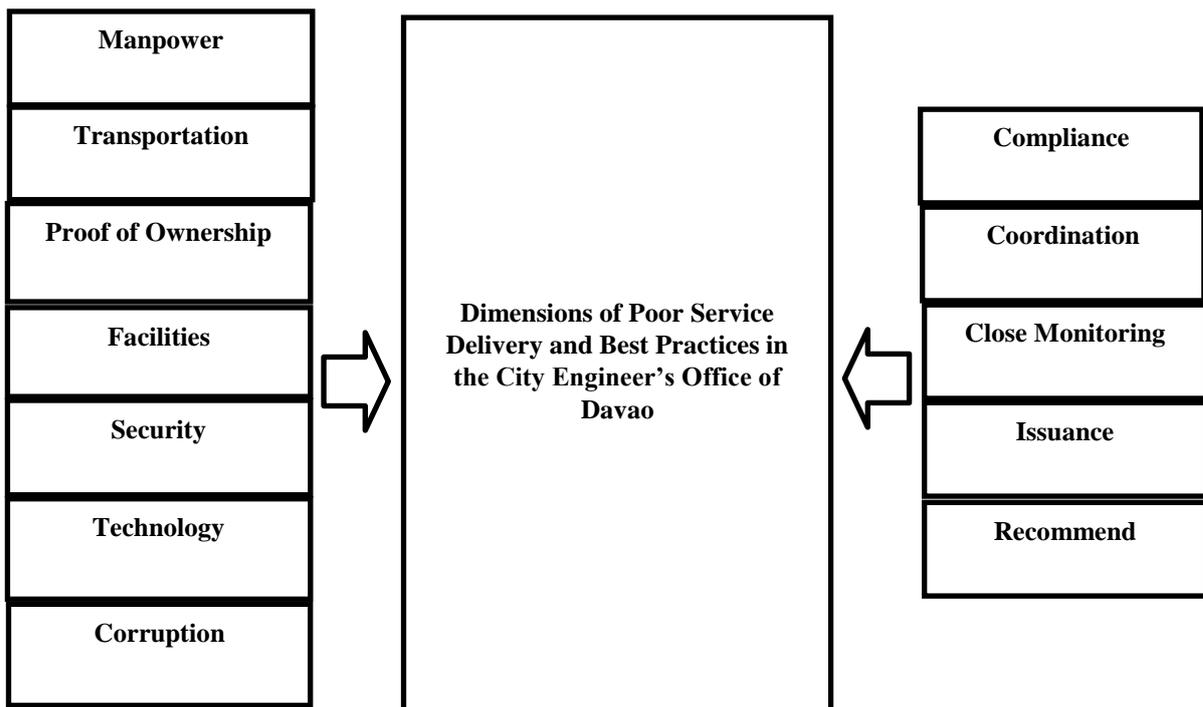
**Close Monitoring.** This will be done in the duration of the construction period.

**Issuance.** Notices will be issued such as Notice of Suspension and Notice of Negative Slippage whenever problems on the project site arise. As well, the Construction Division facilitates Change Orders when the plans and program of works does not suit the actual condition of the site. And in addressing corruption, the office issues Post Completion signed by the City Mayor which may be as well represented by the City Administrator. Complains of the end user are entertained. Retention of the contractors will hold unless complains will be addressed.

**Recommend.** Also, the office recommends termination of contract to the contractors who do not act their obligation well.

### FRAMEWORK

Presented below is the suggested framework showing the perceived dimensions on the service delivery of the office of the city engineers of Davao.



*Figure: Framework on the Dimensions of Poor Service Delivery and Best Practices in the City Engineer's Office of Davao.*

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings presented through the use of key informant interview, the study concluded that the office of the city engineer had a common concept of the factors affecting service delivery present in the different departments under. Manpower in which staffing does not suffice the volume of projects to work on. Transportation affects the progress since the office is only able to utilize one vehicle in a fixed schedule. Proof of ownership needed since validity of the land in question is crucial and avoid any future irregularities. Security in which under the 182 local community units totaling, some are on the outskirts of the city and may also be in an area wherein conflict is present. Facilities in which the implementing body have difficulty with not conducive as a workplace. Technology since the office is not up to date with the newest trends needed planning. And lastly, Corruption in the form of End-user factor. Utmost, in the best practices. The office highlights the value of the Compliance with the requirements under the Commission on Audit. Coordination with agencies tasked for safety. Close Monitoring of the implemented project. Issuance of notices and if needed, Change Order would be put into place. And finally, to Recommend, termination of contract if found the project questionable.

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