

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MILAN, JOANNE VHALE C. APRIL 2013. Evaluation of Benguet State University Students on Cordillera Regional Autonomy Comic Book Produced by Regional Development Council. Benguet State University, La Trinidad Benguet.

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to evaluate the comic book on CAR autonomy in Benguet State University.

Specifically, the study determined the socio demographic profile of the respondents, their evaluation on the comic book in terms of general content, layout and graphics and illustrations. It also identified the common problems encountered by the respondents in reading the comic book, the effects of the comic book to the knowledge of the respondents and the suggestions of the respondents for the improvement of the comic book. Data were gathered through guided survey questionnaire. Key informant interview was also used for background information.

Results revealed that majority of the respondents were females. Although some of the respondents failed during the pre-test, all of them passed in the post test implying that they have retained knowledge about CAR autonomy after reading the comic book.



In terms of general content, layout and graphics and illustrations, the comic book generated the same rating (average). General content got the lowest rating from the respondents. The general rating of the comic book was average, too. Respondents found difficulty in understanding the technical words used in the comic book. They also observed that there were too much graphics and illustrations in the comic book but some of the important information were not given representations. It was also found out the 49% of the respondents are pro-CAR autonomy, 11% are against it and 40% are still undecided.

It was recommended that simple and understandable words should be used in producing campaign materials. Graphics and illustrations that go along with the text was recommended too.



INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Effective Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials are essential in every communication campaign because they lead to easier and better understanding of what is being campaigned about.

IEC materials can be said effective when they are relevant, clear, communicate specific messages, are easily remembered, and if they reflect and correspond into the interest and preferences of the intended audience.

One of the most commonly used IEC material is the comic book. Although a comic book is just a booklet of words and pictures (McGlaun, 2008), it is the relationship between the words and the pictures that says so much more. Comic books can have unexpected influences on people. It offers readers a world in which ordinary people are able to achieve extra ordinary things. As writers and artists create stories revolving around the characters, the readers can find themselves considering possibilities. Along with that, comics can also move people into action.

Moreover, contents are easily processed and memorized when illustrated (Yang, 2007), as what is shown in comic books. The question and answer format and the conversations in a comic book also contribute in the comprehensibility of its contents.

It is then these potentials of the comic book that brought National Economic and Development Authority to use it in the pursuit for regional autonomy in the region.



The Cordilleran leaders, determined to direct and sustain their development in a manner that is appropriate to their conditions, have expressed desire to establish an autonomous region.

When the first two plebiscites of an Organic Act creating a Cordillera Autonomous region were passed to Congress, both were rejected because only two provinces voted for it; Ifugao for the first attempt, and Apayao for the second one.

Several reasons were cited to be the causes of the previous rejections. One of such is the lack of information about the concept of regional autonomy. In a recent interview,

NardzAndanan, a Cordillera Regional Autonomy and Development Plan (CRADP) Technician under National Economic and Development Authority- Cordillera Administrative Region (NEDA – CAR) also added that the people who participated in the past two plebiscites played safe and voted —nol for what they did not understand.

In response to this information need, Regional Development Council (RDC-CAR), being the primary committee in charge of disseminating information on regional autonomy, has produced numerous campaign materials. One of such is the comic book produced and was first distributed in the different provinces of CAR sometime in 2011. At present, the comic books have already reached the different municipalities of the region.

For autonomy to attain lasting effect and eventually achieve its promised economic development and improvement in the lives of the target constituents, its concept must be understood, appreciated, and accepted by the very people covered by its provisions.



Andanan further stated that it is imperative to know how Cordillerans assess the produced comic book on regional autonomy.

Since the effects of the comic book are still not determined, it is important for the people to evaluate the produced comic book. The opinions, suggestions, and attitudes of the respondents towards the comics on regional autonomy will be providing the framework for the decision of an appropriate material based on the findings of the evaluation.

Statement of the Problem

The study evaluated the comic book on Cordillera Regional Autonomy to further improve it.

Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents?
2. How did the respondents rate the comic book in terms of content, graphics and illustrations, language used and layout?
3. What were the common problems encountered by the respondents in reading the comic book?
4. What were the effects of the comic book to the knowledge of the respondents?
5. What were the suggestions of the respondents for the improvement of the comic book?



Objectives of the Study

Generally, the study evaluated a comic book on Cordillera Regional Autonomy.

Specifically, the study:

1. determined the socio-demographic profile of the respondents;
2. determined the evaluation of the respondents to the Comic book in terms of general content, graphics and illustration, and layout;
3. determined the common problems encountered by the respondents in reading the comic book;
4. determined the effects of the comic book to the knowledge of the respondents; and
5. determined the suggestions of the respondents for the improvement of the comic book.

Importance of the Study

There have been two previous attempts to make Cordillera an autonomous region, but both have failed. According to NardzAndanan of RDC-CAR, previous studies have proved that Cordillerans rejected the move for autonomy, not because they do not like the region to be autonomous, but because they do not know what autonomy is (personal interview, 2012).

This study recognizes the importance of knowing the views and opinions of certain groups that have influence and authority in some communities in the Cordillera regarding the issue of regional autonomy.



The findings of the study may serve as basis for sound and effective decision making in the conceptualization of IEC materials on Cordillera autonomy, especially for NEDA-CAR.

Further, on the process of the study, the campaign material to be used will help in informing the respondents about autonomy.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study focused on the evaluation of a comic book on Cordillera Regional Autonomy. It involved the determination of the respondents' awareness on regional autonomy, their stand, common problems they encountered while reading the comic book, and their suggestions for the improvement of the material.

While the study evaluated the layout, graphics and illustration, and the language used in the campaign material, it focused more on the comic book's content.

The evaluation form used during the study is for evaluating IEC materials in general and not specifically for comic books.



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cordillera Regional Autonomy

Regional autonomy is the establishment of a regional government to which will be transferred certain powers, functions and duties with corresponding financial and other empowerment from the national government in accordance with the Constitution. It speaks of the establishment of a regional government by the people living in the areas within who share a distinct culture, history, heritage and socio economic conditions and independence or the right to decide what is good for them. Aside from the transfer of government powers and resources, and free determination of how we govern or manage ourselves in accordance with law and acceptable Cordillera customs and practices, Cordillera regional autonomy also means the preservation of the territorial and political aggregation of the six (6) Cordillera provinces and the City of Baguio, whose people commonly share certain peculiarities, cultural heritage, aspirations and dreams (Regional Development Council – CAR, 2011).

There are also five (5) basic principles of regional autonomy. These are: 1) Establishment of a permanent regional identity; 2) Non diminution of existing powers and benefits. 3)Nationally paid officials and employees will continue to be nationally paid; 4)The national government will provide subsidy package and other sources of revenues; and 5)The national government will continue to provide for the budgetary needs of the region to ensure its sustainability (RDC –CAR, 2011).

However, there are twelve (12) limitations of an autonomous regional government. These are: 1)Foreign affairs; 2)National defense and security; 3)Postal service;



4)Coinage, fiscal and monetary policies; 5)Administration of justice; 6)Quarantine;
7)Customs and tariff; 8)Citizenship; 9)Naturalization, immigration and deportation;
10)General auditing, civil service and elections; 11)Foreign trade; and 12)Statistics and
civil registration services (RDC –CAR, 2011).

The RDC-CAR also emphasized that Regional Autonomy does not mean that the regional government will be independent and separate from the national government. The regional government can only exercise those powers that are allowed by the constitution.

The Cordillera Studies Center (1991) further added that the concept of autonomy is an indigenous development which plays a major role in the functioning of Cordillera communities. The indigenous concept of autonomy means that no other community imposes its own rules, laws, or will on any other. Kimeu (1990) also said many people hope that this approach will allow the Cordilleras to set up a locally based government which best suits their interest, culture, and religious practices (Kimeu, 1990).

Evaluating Communication Materials

Evaluation refers to a periodic process of gathering data and then analyzing or ordering it in such a way that the resulting information can be used to determine whether your organization is effectively carrying out planned activities, and the extent to which it is achieving its stated objectives and anticipated results (Martinez, 2012). Trochim (2006) further defined evaluating communication materials as the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback on the materials.



Trochim(2006) also emphasized the goals of evaluating IEC materials saying that the goal of most evaluations is to provide "useful feedback" to a variety of audiences including sponsors, donors, client-groups, administrators, staff, and other relevant constituencies. Most often, feedback is perceived as "useful" if it aids in decisionmaking. But the relationship between an evaluation and its impact is not a simple one -- studies that seem critical sometimes fail to influence short-term decisions, and studies that initially seem to have no influence can have a delayed impact when more congenial conditions arise. Despite this, there is broad consensus that the major goal of evaluation should be to influence decision-making or policy formulation through the provision of empirically-driven feedback.

Evaluation can, and should, however, be used as an ongoing management and learning tool to improve an organization's effectiveness. Effective IEC materials are those that can demonstrate the achievement of results. Results are derived from good management. Good management is based on good decision making. Good decision making depends on good information. Good information requires good data and careful analysis of the data. These are all critical elements of evaluation (Martinez, 2012). IEC materials evaluation, conducted on a regular basis, can greatly improve the management and effectiveness of the materials. To do so requires understanding the differences between monitoring and evaluation, making evaluation an integral part of regular program planning and implementation, and collecting the different types of information needed by managers at different levels of the organization.

Evaluating IEC materials can help in providing evidence of benefits and impacts of IEC by identifying successes as well as the problems and weaknesses so they can be



rectified thus, aiding to further development. Results of the evaluation can also guide future plans by securing funds for further IEC development and identifying staff training and development needs (Evidence Base, 2006).

Economic Development and Training Institute (n.d.) summarized the importance of evaluating IEC materials saying that insight and knowledge always come before advancement.

IEC Materials

According to ATI (2010), as cited by Siddayao (2012), IEC materials are very relevant to strengthening industry participation and raising awareness among its stakeholders. IEC material is an approach, which attempts to reinforce a set of behaviors in a target audience regarding a specific product or service. It generally combines strategies, approaches and methods that enable individuals, groups, and communities to play active roles in achieving the set goals.

Dunning (2011) added that IEC materials are an important component of mass communication or public information campaigns. Their effectiveness depends on the nature of the materials and their combination with other communication techniques, such as face-to-face education.

Communication materials can reflect community experiences, challenge common attitudes and behaviors, stimulate critical thinking and move people to take action.



(Raising Voices, 2)
Comic Book

A Comic Book is defined as a booklet of words and pictures integrated into a flexible and powerful printed format. A comic book uses everyday language in dialogue balloons to communicate a point quickly and directly. By using a series or sequence of pictures, a cast of characters that the audience can relate to, and lots of dialogue and text within the picture, the creators of comic books draw their readers to their creation. Writers and Illustrators tend to use stereotypes of basic characters and clichés to express their meaning (McGlaun, 2008).

According to Arnott (2009), there are several parts of a comic book. The Panel is the basic unit of a comic book page, consisting of a single illustration. It is most often contained within a square or rectangular frame, although circular panels are not uncommon, and irregularly shaped panels are also possible. Panels allow comic book action to be broken up into distinct moments in time.

The Gutter is the space on a comic book page that is outside the panels. The gutter is most often narrow and uniform, and doesn't contain any other graphic elements. However, objects or speech balloons within the panels can stick out to some degree. Some artists exploit this convention more boldly.

Balloons come in two basic kinds: speech or dialogue balloons, and thought balloons. Speech balloons are usually round, and contain the text of what a particular character is saying. Thought balloons depict what a character is thinking, and are conventionally drawn with lumpy edges, like clouds.



Balloons are called fumetti ("clouds") in Italian, because they were originally made to look like the characters were breathing out the words as they spoke. Pointers, also called the Tails of speech balloons, indicate which character is speaking the words in the balloon. For that reason, they point at the mouth or head whenever possible. Thought balloons have Bubbles which lead to the character which they belong to.

Lettering refers to most of the text in a comic book. Until the 1990s, most comics were hand-lettered, though a few featured typeset text. Now, most lettering is done on computers, though the style and conventions of hand lettering remain. As in typesetting, Bold Letters are an option for emphasis, and are used freely.

Indicia refers to the publication and other technical information not part of the comic book story itself. Indicia may include the name and address of the publisher, copyright notices, and subscription information. The indicia in a graphic novel may have its own inside page, much as in a regular novel; monthly comics usually have the indicia in fine print at the bottom of the splash page to save space.

Knowledge Level through Information Material

California School Boards Association (n.d.) defined informational material as any item which serves primarily to convey information and which is provided for the purpose of assisting the recipient in the performance of his or her duties. Informational material may include books, reports, pamphlets, calendars, periodicals, videotapes, or free or discounted admission to informational conferences or seminars.



On the other hand, Denning (2009) defined knowledge as the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. In practice, though, there are many possible, equally plausible definitions of knowledge.

A frequently used definition of knowledge is the ideas or understandings which an entity possesses that are used to take effective action to achieve the entity's goal(s). This knowledge is specific to the entity which created it.

He further added that knowledge requires some grasp of its relationship to information. In everyday language, it has long been the practice to distinguish between information — data arranged in meaningful patterns — and knowledge — which has historically been regarded as something that is believed, that is true and that is reliable. Reading informational materials exhibits a principle of expertise: the more one does it the more skilled one is likely to become both in the activity and in content knowledge. Reading in general has been shown to be responsible for the acquisition of vocabulary and general knowledge (Mar *et al.*, 2008).

One of the best sources of knowledge are information materials. There are millions and millions of information materials written throughout the world in every language and on almost any topic imaginable. Whatever problem you are facing must have been faced by somebody else before, and its solution is likely to have been preserved. If you are serious about gaining knowledge on a topic, then read any information materials such as book, magazine, articles and other informational materials (Syd, 2007).



Operational Definition of Terms

Comic Book. This pertains to the comic book produced by RDC that talks about CAR autonomy.



METHODOLOGY

Locale and Time of the Study

Benguet State University is a 90-year old state university that is nestled in the heart of La Trinidad, Benguet the strawberry capital of the Philippines. Its name is originally La Trinidad Agricultural High School, which was later changed to La Trinidad National Agricultural School (LTNAS). When the school was nationalized, its name was changed to Mountain National Agricultural School (MNAS). It was soon converted into the Mountain National College (MNAC); Mountain Agricultural College (MAC); and eventually, the Mountain State Agricultural College (MSAC) in 1969 through RA 5923. On January 12, 1986, the school was converted into a chartered state university by virtue of Presidential Decree 2010.

The university was chosen as the locale of the study because it is important to inform and hear the voices of the youth, such as the students, about the issue on autonomy since they are the ones who will benefit from it. Also, the respondents come from different provinces in CAR, making the study more significant.

The study was conducted from January to February 2013.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 800 college students of Benguet State University who were chosen through purposive sampling. They were 18 years old and above. Ideally, the respondents should be representing different province in CAR. However, during the conduct of the study, the respondents represented three provinces only.



Subject of the Study

The comic book was produced in 2011 by RDC-CAR in partnership with Technical Education and Skills Development Authority-CAR to respond to the urgent need for an IEC material that discusses and introduces CAR autonomy. While the comic book targeted the youth, the academe, and those in charge of technical-vocational institutions, the comic book is functionally useful to everyone who gets the chance to see and read.

The comic book discussed the history of CAR autonomy including its legal basis and the two previous attempts to make CAR autonomous. It also includes the basic information such as the definition of regional autonomy, its basic principles, scope and authority, limitation and the sources of funds of an autonomous region.

It has 21 pages, including some evaluation activities. Pictures of RDC activities were placed in the last few pages. The comic book is colored and used Filipino and English languages. The said material measures 8.5" x 11".



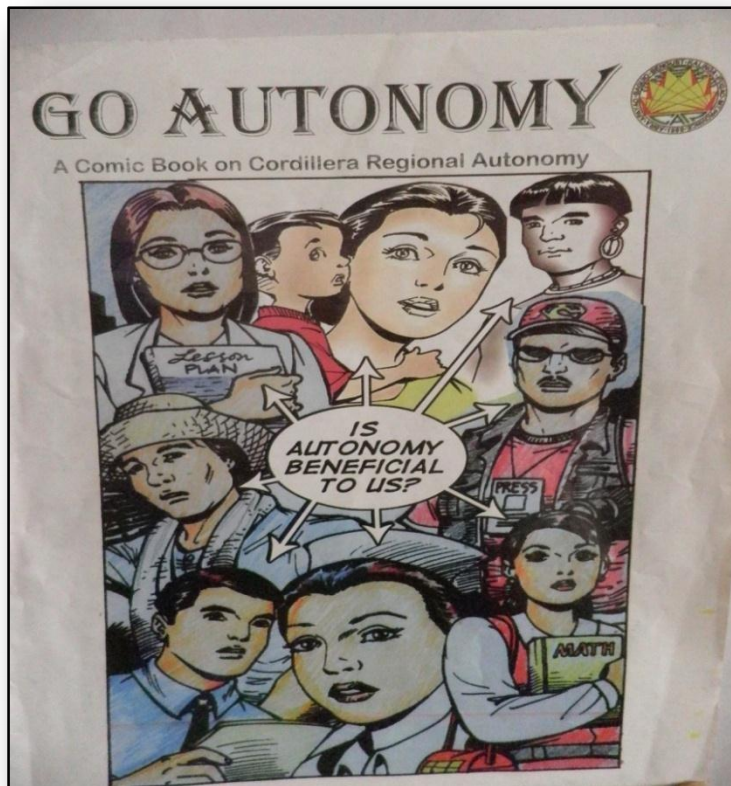


Figure 1. Cover of the Comic Book showing the subject of the study

Data Collection

The researcher interviewed a focal person from the Regional Development Council regarding the basic information on CAR autonomy. The results of the interview were used as the basis for the pre- and post-test.

The researcher also categorized the information into two, the history of CAR autonomy and its basic information.



The history talks about how the move for autonomy started and the previous attempts for CAR autonomy. On the other hand, the basic information on CAR autonomy presents the fundamental and essential details about it.

A guided survey questionnaire was used in gathering the needed information. A pre-test was given to the respondents to assess their existing knowledge on regional autonomy. Once they were done answering, the comic book was administered to the respondents, and they started answering the guided survey questionnaire. After which, the questionnaire and the comic book were collected, and they proceeded to the post-test to check if the comic book had affected their knowledge on regional autonomy. Questions in the pre- and post- tests were the same.

Data Gathered

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents and their evaluation on the comic book in terms of content, graphics and illustrations, language used, and lay-out were gathered during the study. It also included the common problems they encountered in reading the comic book and their suggestions for the improvement of the comic book. The awareness level of the respondents were also gathered through the pre- and post- tests.

Data Analysis

The gathered were tabulated, consolidated, analyzed and interpreted using percentage counts and descriptive analysis.



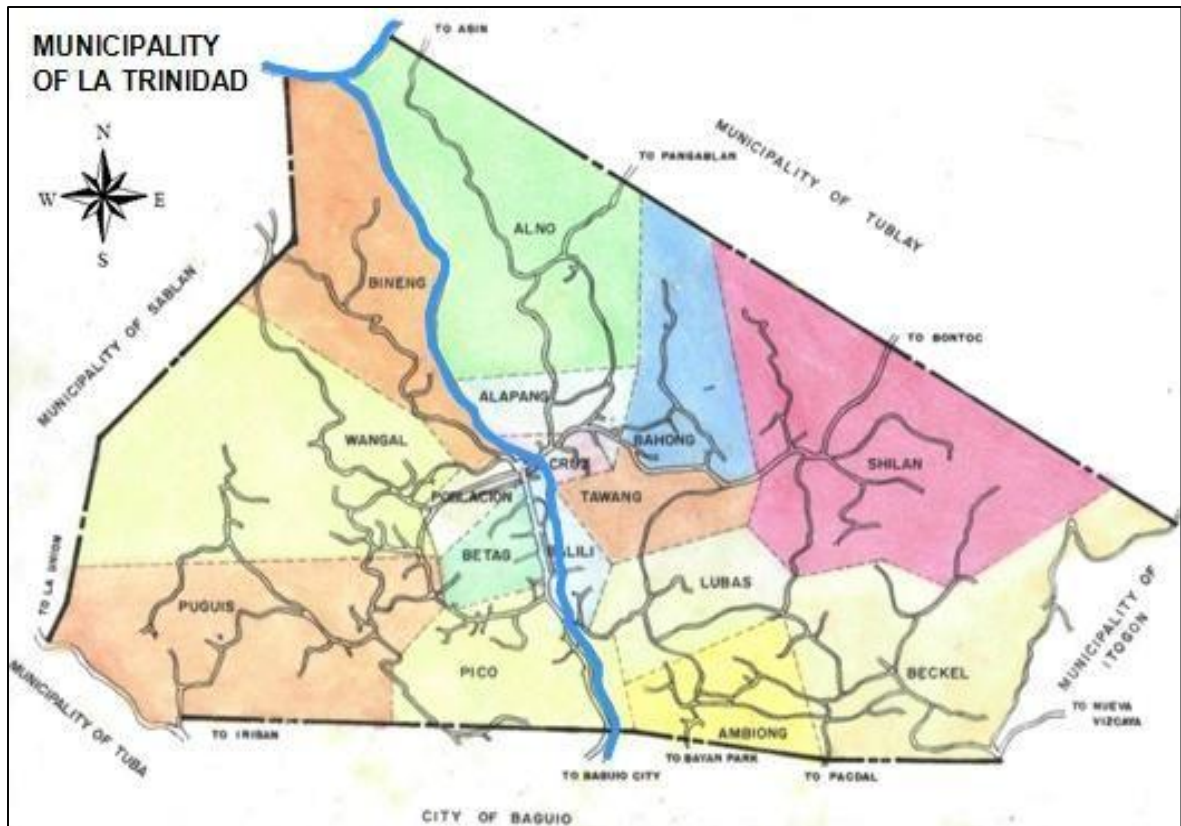


Figure 2. Map of La Trinidad, Benguet showing the location of the study



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic profile of the 800 respondents of the study. It presents their sex, age, civil status, college, and the province where they came from. Majority (56%) of the respondents were female while 44% of them were male. All of them were single.

Greater part of the respondents belonged to the age bracket 18-19 (56%) while 44% belonged to the age bracket of 20-21.

Results also show that majority of the respondents (76%) were from the Provinces of Benguet while 24% were from Mt. Province. There were also two respondents from the Province of Abra. Such would imply that all of them are qualified voters for the region, thus may be interested in the autonomy issue.

Table 1. Socio-demographic Profile of the Respondents

CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY n= 800	PERCENTAGE 100%
Sex		
Male	448	56
Female	352	44
TOTAL	800	100
Age		
18-19	448	56



Table 1 continued...

CHARACTERISTICS	FREQUENCY n= 800	PERCENTAGE 100%
Age		
20-21	352	44
TOTAL	800	100
Civil Status		
Single	800	100
TOTAL	800	100
College		
College of Agriculture	100	12.5
College of Arts and Sciences	100	12.5
College of Engineering and Applied Technology	100	12.5
College of Forestry	100	12.5
College of Home Economics and Technology	100	12.5
College of Nursing	100	12.5
College of Teacher Education	100	12.5
College of Veterinary Medicine	100	12.5
TOTAL	800	100
Province		
Benguet	610	76.25
Mt. Province	190	23.75
Abra	2	.25
TOTAL	800	100



Respondents' Knowledge on CAR Autonomy
as Affected by the Comic Book

To determine the effect of the comic book on the knowledge of the respondents on regional autonomy, pre- and post-tests were given to the respondents. The questions were categorized into two: a) History; and b) Basic information. Results show that all of the respondents' tests scores increased after reading the comic book.

The researcher also formulated a rating scale to determine the knowledge of the respondents as reflected by their test scores as follows: 0-5 (not knowledgeable), 6-10 (slightly knowledgeable), 11-15 (knowledgeable) and 16-20 (very knowledgeable).

Tables 2 and 3 show that more respondents were knowledgeable in the history of Cordillera Regional Autonomy, than its basic information, both in the pre- and post-tests. This may be an indication that even after reading the comic book, some of the respondents were still not able to understand the concept, which were reflected in there test scores.

Table 2. Respondents' awareness on Cordillera Regional Autonomy history

PRE-TEST		POST-TEST					
RS	F n= 800	P	I	RS	F n= 800	P	I
0-2	620	77.5	NK	0-2 24	K 3-5 776	3%	NK
3-5	180	22.5				97%	K
TOTAL	800	100		800	100		

LEGEND FOR TABLE 2:

RS: Respondents' Scores NK:NotKnowledgeable
F: Frequency K: Knowledgeable



P: Percentage
 I: Interpretation

Table 3. Respondents' awareness on the basic information of CAR Autonomy

RS	PRE-TEST			POST-TEST			
	F n= 800	P	I	RS	F n= 800	P	I
		100%				100%	
0-4	320	40.5	NK	0-4	100	12.5	NK
5-7	260	32.5	SK	5-7	380	47.4	SK
8-11	216	27	K	8-11	320	40	K
TOTAL	800	100		800	100		

LEGEND FOR TABLE 3:

RS: Respondents' Scores NK: Not Knowledgeable
 F: Frequency K: Knowledgeable
 P: Percentage SK: Slightly Knowledgeable

As portrayed in Table 4, the results of the general awareness of the respondents during the pre-test show that majority (74%) of the respondents passed and 26% of them failed. However, during the post-test, all of the respondents passed. Majority (54%) of them are knowledgeable on Cordillera Autonomy. Twenty eight percent of them are slightly knowledgeable while 18% of them are very knowledgeable. Such results would show that although autonomy has long been an occurring issue in the region, still many of the respondents are only slightly knowledgeable about the topic.

This is supported by Quitasol (2012) wherein she mentioned in her article that in 2012, 53.12% of respondents were not aware of the new push for autonomy which is higher



than the 41.4% in the 2007 survey. Further, 46.88% said they are aware a decrease from the 57.5% in 2007.

In the same article, she also mentioned that Information Education Campaign (IEC) on the new bid for regional autonomy is inadequate. This may be a contributing factor why some of the respondents are not very knowledgeable on Cordillera Autonomy. Although some of the respondents already have prior knowledge on regional autonomy, some of them also admitted that they only gained more knowledge on about it after having been exposed to the comic book.

Further, 80% of the respondents failed in the pre-test. However, all of them passed the post-test implying that they have retained knowledge about CAR autonomy after reading the comic book.

This result supports Mar (2008) who noted that reading information materials such as the comic book exhibits a principle of expertise that the more one does it, the more one is likely to become both in activity and in content knowledge. Reading in general has been shown to be responsible for acquisition of vocabulary and general knowledge.

This is also supported by one of the respondents saying that his misinterpretations on regional autonomy were corrected, which can be seen when his scores in the pre- and post-tests were compared.



Table 4. Respondents' general awareness on Cordillera Regional Autonomy

RS	PRE-T EST			POST-T ES			
	F n= 800	P 100%	I	RS	F n= 800%	P 100%	I
0-5	205	26	NK	6-10	224	28	SK
6-10	410	51	SK	11-15	432	54	K
11-15	185	23	K	16-20	144	18	VK
TOTAL	800	100		800	100		

LEGEND FOR TABLE 4:

RS: Respondents' Scores NK: Not Knowledgeable
 F: Frequency SK: Slightly Knowledgeable
 P: Percentage K: Knowledgeable
 I: Interpretation VK: Very Knowledgeable

Generally, the respondents' test scores increased in the post-test both for the history of CAR autonomy and its basic information. This implies that they have retained knowledge for both categories after being exposed to the comic book.

Further, as shown in Table 4, the number of respondents who scored 0-5 during the pre-test significantly decreased during the post-test (from 26% to 0 %). This shows that the comic book was effective in increasing the awareness level of the respondents.



Respondents' Evaluation on the Comic Book

Tables 5, 6 and 7 show the evaluation of the comic book by the respondents. The mean rates for each criterion were taken and were interpreted using the formula: Mean (μ) = $(\sum fX)/(\sum f)$. Mean of 1-1.99 is equivalent to —Poor||; mean of 2-2.99 is —Fair||; mean of 3-3.99 is —Average||; mean of 4-4.99 is —Good||; and mean of 5-5.99 is —Excellent||.

General content. The respondents evaluated the general content of the comic book in terms of its purpose, usefulness of the information in correcting misconceptions, clarity, organization of information, simplicity of words, appropriateness of language and grammar and spelling.

Under such criterion, the respondents evaluated if the comic book was able to inform the respondents in a way that is easily understood, interesting and substantial in content.

Purpose. The respondents evaluated if the comic book served its purpose which was to explain what CAR autonomy is and to provide its basic information. As shown in Table 5, the respondents rated it average with a mean of 3.9 which is equivalent to average.

Ngalob (2011) noted in his message in the cover of the comic book that the material's purpose is to respond to the urgent need to discuss and introduce regional development and autonomy.

In the study, majority of the respondents claimed that they gained knowledge about CAR autonomy through the comic book since it presented the basic information about the



topic. However, the rating signifies that the general content of the comic book have not satisfactorily pleased some of the respondents in terms of purpose.

Some asserted that the comic book is —one-sided as it does not present the disadvantages having regional autonomy in CAR. One of the evaluators said, —it seems that the book leads the readers to readily approve autonomy and not to let them decide whether to vote yes or no by presenting all information, including the disadvantages. Another respondent also said that the positive and negative sides must be presented for these are considered in good decision making. This supports Martinez (2005) who believed that good decision making depends on good information while good information requires good data and careful analysis of data.

Usefulness in correcting misconceptions. The mean for the usefulness in correcting misconceptions is 3.7 which means that it is rated average.

Many of the respondents thought that only those who are from the different provinces inside CAR are considered Cordillerans. However, after being exposed to the comic book, this false impression was corrected. The respondents also said that the contents of the comic book aided for better understanding about regional autonomy.

Some of them thought at first that being an autonomous region means —being separated from the national government. But after reading the comic book, their misconceptions were corrected.

But, the usefulness of the contents for correcting misconceptions still got a rating of —average from the respondents because according to some of them, the comic book



lacks some essential information such as the disadvantages of having regional autonomy in CAR and a more elaborated explanation and definition of what CAR autonomy is. These information may have helped the respondents to be more enlightened about the topic.

Clarity and completeness of information. Under the clarity and completeness of information, the respondents assessed if their needed information about CAR autonomy present in the comic book were complete. Aside from this, they also assessed if these information were clearly and sufficiently explained.

The 3.4 mean which is equivalent to average rating from the respondents implies that although many information were presented in the comic book, the respondents said that it lacks explanation especially on the basic information on regional autonomy.

One of the respondents said that many —basic information on regional autonomy were just enumerated but were not explained|| such as the limitations of an autonomous region.

Also, many of the respondents still needed further definition of the regional autonomy.

In Figure 3, the information on the limitations of an autonomous region were enumerated but were not explained. The same manner of presenting information was observed in other parts of the comic book.

As backed up by the responses of the respondents, such imply that the content of the comic book lacks explanation in some aspects.

Respondents further claimed that they have questions which were not answered in the comic book. These include: 1) What are the disadvantages of regional autonomy? 2) Why



are those who do not have Cordilleran blood allowed to vote while in fact they do not know yet the culture and traditions of the Cordillerans? 3) How can we ensure that autonomy is the best for the Cordillera?; and 4) What is the difference between an administrative and autonomous region?

Organization of information. How the information on CAR autonomy was put together and arranged were evaluated by the respondents under this criterion.

Further, they assessed if the ordering of information were organized and did not confuse the respondents.

As seen in Table 5, the respondents rated the comic book —averagel with 3.4 mean in terms of organization of information.



Figure 3. A page of the Comic Book Showing some of the Enumerated Information about the limitations of an autonomous region

The history of Cordillera Regional Autonomy was first presented in the comic book. This was followed by the basic information of regional autonomy which included the definition of regional autonomy, its five basic principles, the scope and authority of an autonomous region, the limitations, and the sources of revenues for an autonomous region.

The respondents said that the contents were structured and organized. According to them, it is good that each basic information was placed together in a single area making it easier for them to find which topic they would like to know better. They also mentioned that proper organization and placing of the information, such as from the most to the least important, aids for easier understanding.

This is supported by Blake (2002) who explained that the organization of your material determines whether the main points are effectively communicated to the readers. People want to get to the main message without going through lots of irrelevant information.

He further added that readers also like to know where they can find the information they were expecting. If readers believe the information is important to them, they may read the report even if it is poorly written. If it is poorly organized, they will not.

However, the researcher observed that some of the information such as who a Cordilleran is and the legal basis for the move for autonomy were placed in the latter part of the comic book, while they should have been placed in the earlier pages since they are also part of CAR autonomy's history. This may have contributed to the low mean of the comic book in terms of organization of information.



Simplicity of words. The criterion for the simplicity of words got a mean of 2.2 and a fair rating from the respondents. Although Ngalob (2011) noted in his message in the cover of the comic book that the said campaign material targets the youth and the academe, the criteria of —understandable words‖ got the lowest mean from the respondents among all the other criteria implying that some words used in the comic book are not simple and easy to understand for the respondents.

Figure 4 shows some of the difficult words found in the comic book that were enumerated by the respondents such as—ancestral domain,‖—fiscal,‖—monetary,‖—quarantine,‖—tariffs‖ and —corporate entity.‖

Some sentences were also hard to understand such as —block grants derived from economic agreements, donations, foreign assistance and other forms of aid,‖ —government powers which cannot be devolved to an autonomous region include coinage and fiscal, customs and tariffs.‖

This implies that some of the contents were not that comprehensive, also making it more difficult for the readers to understand what is being talked about



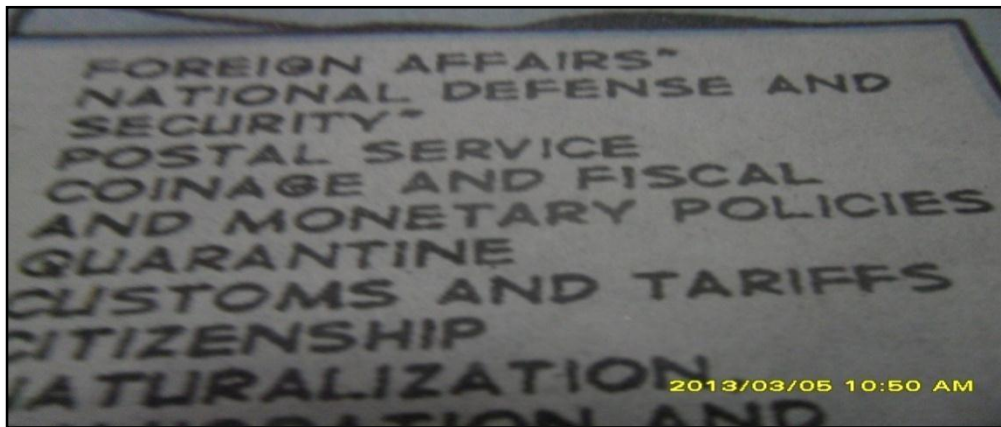


Figure 4. Page in the Comic Book Showing some of the difficult words and sentence

The comments of the respondents can be related to the study of Plain Language Association International which explained that clearest words possible should be used to describe actions, objects and people.

The respondents further discussed that technical words should be avoided whenever possible. If it is a must to use a technical term, it is best to define it - either by giving a definition or by giving an example.

Appropriateness of language used. Table 5 shows that —Appropriate Language| got an average rating from the respondents. According to them, the two languages (English and Filipino) used in the comic book were appropriate.

One of the respondents further added that the use of the English language is most appropriate since the issue on Cordillera regional autonomy is very —technicall and technical words can be better explained in English.



However, some respondents also said that the use of Filipino Language is better since it is the most common language used in the region and everyone will be able to understand topics discussed in this language.

As discussed by Padilla (2012) in his article entitled Filipino language, he mentioned that Filipino is widely spoken not just in the region and in the country, but in the Philippine communities all over the world. It helps in easy interaction and communication

Grammar and spelling. Among all the criteria, grammar and spelling got one of the highest ratings from the respondents showing that no or minimal grammar and spelling errors were seen in the comic book.

Such was also observed by the researcher. Grammar rules were observed in the discussion of CAR autonomy such as correct tenses, subject-verb agreement and spelling.

In their article titled Importance of Grammar and Spelling, Email Marketing Digest (2010) explained that the main content of the any information material has to be free of any spelling or grammar mistakes. Any such mistake leaves a certain impression with the reader, that the publisher is not fully well versed with the particular subject or lacks the knowledge of the English language. Further, the reader also starts building the image of the sender as not seriously interested in his matter or the sender is disorganized and may be lacking the basic education.



Table 5. Respondents' evaluation on the general content of the comic book

CRITERIA	MEAN	RATING
Purpose	3.9	Average
Usefulness in Correcting Misconceptions	3.7	Average
Clarity and Completeness of Information	3.4	Average
Organization of Information	3.4	Average
Simplicity of Words	2.2	Fair
Appropriateness of Language Used	3.6	Average
Grammar and Spelling	4.5	Good
TOTAL	3.53	Average

As presented in Table 5, the overall rating of the comic book in terms of its general content is a mean of 3.53 (average). This implies that the said material still has to be improved most especially in terms of simplicity of words, which got the lowest mean. *Layout.* In terms of layout, the respondents evaluated its alignment and balance, white spaces and headings and fonts. The respondents assessed if the text, graphics and illustrations complement each other in the comic book.

Alignment and Balance. Under this criterion, the respondents evaluated if the graphics and illustrations were properly aligned with the text in the comic book. They also evaluated if neither the text nor the graphics and illustrations were too overpowering, creating a balanced and pleasing layout.



The texts, graphics and illustrations present in the comic book were evaluated as —Good‖ by the respondents with 4.2 mean. Some respondents also claimed that the balance and alignment among graphics, illustrations and texts make the comic book catchy and more interesting to read. These respondents also noted that the graphics are evenly spread in all the pages and not just in certain or single page.

Pennissi (2011) explained in her article entitled Effective Graphic Design that balanced layout keeps the readers focused and makes the content easy to read. She further explained that a balanced layout helps in creating emphasis, illustrating importance and directing the reader's eyes.

However, few of them mentioned that the graphics and illustrations placed in the comic book were —too much‖ especially that they are colored.

White spaces. Aside from the alignment and balance, the respondents also evaluated if the comic book has enough white spaces. Under such criterion, they assessed if the said material has enough open of breathing spaces for pauses and rests.

While the criteria for white spaces got an —Average‖ rating from the respondents, some of them still said that the comic book has too much graphics and colors. One of the respondents noted that every corner of the pages have both texts and graphics. According to the respondent who claimed such remark, the presence of the text and graphics can be tiring to the eyes.

As what can be seen in Figure 4, some of the pages in the comic book are filled with texts, graphics, and colors. The researcher also observed in the comic book that each



statement of the characters has an equivalent graphic or illustration which made some of the pages a bit overcrowded.

In his article, Optimuz (2006) explained that white space is used to create a balanced and harmonious layout. They create breathing room, balance and it makes things less cramped, uncluttered and easier to read. He further added that if an informational material is too crammed, the reader can feel suffocated. This happens when the word, paragraphs and graphics on a page are not properly spaced out, in this case, the readers are unable to get a proper comprehension and understanding of what is being said because the page is too busy and makes them feel uncomfortable.



Figure 5. Pages in the Comic Book showing little amount of white spaces



Heading and fonts. The respondents evaluated if there were enough headings in the comic book to signify that a new topic was being discussed and if the fonts used were readable. Such criterion got a 3.2 mean from the respondents.

In terms of headings and fonts in the comic book, the respondents said that these are readable although everything in the comic book was written in the same font size. The researcher observed that the subheadings used in the material were in the form of captions and/or questions since there were most appropriate considering that the material is a comic book.

Such is seen in Figure 6 where a new topic was being introduced through question and caption.

This is supported by Even Grounds Inc. (2007) by saying that headings help in organizing informational materials by indicating where a particular section ends and where a new one begins. Also, headings can help readers quickly find the section a reader wants to read. In addition, if the page content is divided into headings, people will find it very organized and well thought-out. Readers would then be able to understand the overall structure and get the information they need at once.





Figure 6.A page in the Comic Book showing that the subheadings were in the form of question/caption
 Table 6. Respondents' Evaluation on the Comic Book's Layout

CRITERIA	MEAN	RATING
Layout		
Alignment and Balance	4.2	Good
White Spaces	3.2	Average
Headings and Fonts	4.3	Good
TOTAL	3.9	Average



The overall mean in terms of the comic book's layout is 3.9 (average) which was near to the rating —good. The layout also got a higher rating than the general content. This implies that the respondents were more pleased with the layout than with the discussed information in the comic book.

Graphics and illustrations. The graphics and illustrations of the comic book were evaluated by the respondents in terms of their relevance, essentiality, visibility and if these images are eye catching. They assessed if these graphics and illustrations helped in portraying the message of the text, if these were helpful in understanding CAR autonomy and if these were visible enough for the respondents.

Relevance. The respondents further evaluated if the graphics and illustrations support what is being discussed in the comic book. As reflected in Table 7, the mean for the relevance of graphics and illustrations is 3.5 (average).

Some respondents said that the placement of the different graphics such as pictures of students, indigenous groups and teachers were effective since they are indeed very much involved in the ongoing issue of CAR autonomy.

However, although the respondents noted that most of the graphics placed in the pages are related and appropriated to what is being discussed, some of them also observed that there were too much pictures in some of the pages, but were portraying the same idea. Such was also observed by the researcher, as seen in Figure 7.

The topic being discussed was about the sources of funds for an autonomous region but there are only picture of parks, coliseums and other public utilities, which was only a



part of the topic. Other sources of funds such as share in the proceeds from utilization of natural resources and blocked grants were not given representations.



Figure 7. Pages in the comic book showing relevant graphics

Table 7. Respondents' evaluation on the comic book's graphics and illustrations

CRITERIA	MEAN	RATING
Graphics and Illustrations		
Relevance	3.5	Average
Visibility	4.5	Good
Eye Catching	3.5	Average
TOTAL	3.8	Average



The respondents rated the general content, layout, and graphics and illustrations of the comic book as —average— which means that the comic book has to be improved in such areas.

The criteria for the General content got the lowest rating (3.53) whereas the criteria for layout got the highest (3.9). Graphics and illustrations got a mean of 3.8.

The overall rating of the comic book is also average (3.74). This means that the respondents have not been fully contented with the presentation of the comic book and have seen many areas to be improved.

Table 8. Respondents' general evaluation on the comic book

CRITERIA	MEAN	RATING
General Content	3.53	Average
Layout	3.9	Average
Graphics and Illustrations	3.8	Average
GENERAL TOTAL	3.74	Average

Problems Encountered by and Suggestions of the Respondents toward the Comic Book

Content. Some of the respondents said that the comic book is too technical. Many words were too deep and were not explained especially on the basic information of CAR autonomy.



The evaluators recommended that the words used should be understood by the common people. Information contained in the comic book should be simplified for better understanding. Examples can also be placed when necessary.

The respondents also noted that the comic book lacks information since it only presented the advantages of the comic book and not the disadvantages, which were also important things to be considered.

This led to the suggestion that the disadvantages of having an autonomous region should also be presented so that the respondents can weigh whether to decide in favor or against CAR autonomy.

The respondents also stated that the use of two languages in the comic book made it confusing. Some of them said that the comic book should also be translated in other language and dialects such as Filipino and Ilokano. According to them, it is not only the students who will read the comic book but those who were not able to go to school as well.

Layout. The respondents suggested that the layout of the comic book should be improved. More white spaces should be placed and there should be lesser graphics since some of the pages appeared too crowded for the respondents.

Graphics and illustrations. The respondents further claimed that the comic book has too much graphics and color. They suggested that those graphics which portray the same idea should be lessened and those important information which do not have graphics should be given representations, too. Increased information dissemination on Cordillera Regional Autonomy was also recommended by the respondents.



Respondents' Stand on Cordillera Regional Autonomy

Towards the last part of the evaluation of the comic book, the respondents were asked regarding their stand on CAR autonomy. Table 8 shows that majority (49%) of the respondents voted for regional autonomy. Eleven percent are against it and 40% are still undecided.

The respondents who voted —Yes‡ claimed that the Cordillerans can already manage their own resources. They further added that Cordillerans are the ones who should benefit from their resources and this can be done if we become autonomous. According to some of the respondents, autonomy is what is best for the region.

On the other hand, those who voted —No‡ said that the Cordillerans are not yet ready to become autonomous. Accordingly, they still cannot handle to be independent from the national government and they are contented with the regional situation at present.

Majority of those who are still undecided have neither voted for —Yes‡ nor —No‡ because they still do not understand what regional autonomy is and its difference from our present condition. One of the respondents also said, —whether we are autonomous or administrative, the respondents will still do the same.‡

As reflected in Table 9, there is only little difference between those respondents who were pro (49%) and those who were still undecided (40%). This may imply that those respondents who were undecided still needed more information dissemination to be convinced in favor of CAR autonomy.



Table 9. Respondents' Stand on Cordillera Regional Autonomy

VOTE	FREQUENCY n= 800	PERCENTAGE 100%
Pro	392	49
Anti	88	11
Undecided	320	40
TOTAL	800	100



SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study was conducted to evaluate the comic book on Cordillera Regional Autonomy. Specifically, it aimed to: determine the evaluation of the respondents to the comic book in terms of General Content, Layout and Graphics and Illustrations; determine the problems encountered by the respondents in reading the comic book and their suggestions; and determine the effect of the comic book to the knowledge of the respondents. The study was conducted at Benguet State University, La Trinidad Benguet on January-February 2013.

Survey Questionnaires were used to gather the necessary data from the respondents who evaluated the Comic Book on Cordillera Regional Autonomy. Moreover, Key Informant Interview was done to gather supporting details and background information.

The respondents were college students of Benguet State University and should at least be 18 years old.

The data collected include the socio-demographic profile of the respondents; respondents' knowledge on Cordillera regional autonomy; respondents' evaluation on the comic book in terms of general content, layout, graphics and illustrations; and respondents' suggestions for the improvement of the comic book.

The scores of the respondents in the post- test increased implying that they have retained knowledge about Cordillera autonomy after reading the comic book.



Also, the comic book generated an —Average rating in terms of general content, layout, graphics and illustrations. Its general rating is also —average.

The respondents encountered several problems in reading the comic book such as technicality and difficulty of words, lack of information, too much color and graphics and the use of the English language.

To achieve better rating, the evaluators recommended that the words used should be simple and clear. They also suggested the more information should be placed such as the disadvantages an autonomous region and more explanation on what CAR autonomy is. They also included that the comic book should have translations in Tagalog or Ilocano and the layout should be improved by taking out irrelevant graphics.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. People retain knowledge after being exposed to the comic book as seen in their increased scores during the post-test.
2. People prefer the use of simple words and sufficient explanation when discussing the content.
3. People prefer the use of appropriate graphics that go with what is being discussed.
4. People prefer reading campaign materials that are not too complex and easily understood.



5. Positive stand may occur when people are sufficiently informed about an issue.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were derived:

1. RDC may consider using simple and understandable words in their campaign materials.
2. In terms of layout, RDC may also consider placing graphics and illustrations that compliment what is being discussed.
3. Continuous information dissemination on CAR autonomy may be conducted since many of the respondents are still undecided.
4. RDC may consider coming up with an updated version of the comic book.



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