

PERCEPTION OF BARANGAY MAKILING RESIDENTS TOWARDS ISR PROGRAMS OF LPU

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Abstract

The study was conducted to assess how Barangay Makiling residents perceive the Institutional Social Responsibility (ISR) programs of LPU-Laguna using a researcher made survey questionnaire. The instrument measures the respondents' level of understanding, knowledge, awareness and attitude towards ISR programs which gives the general perception of the community towards LPU-Laguna's community extension programs. The result of the study is vital in enhancing the institutions commitment to social responsibility, thus, creating more projects that will address the needs and problems of the community. The results will also serve as realizations on the strengths and weakness of ISR's current status. The study found out that Barangay Makiling residents do have a concrete knowledge of what ISR means. They are also fully aware of the different ISR projects LPU-Laguna is doing in their community. The respondents also agreed on the favorable behaviors the community members have towards LPU-Laguna's ISR. These results generally give a positive perception of Barangay Makiling residents towards ISR programs of the institution.

Key words: ISR, community members, perception, knowledge, awareness, attitude

INTRODUCTION

Every individual, being a member of a community, has a responsibility placed in his or her shoulders. This, though is not limited on the individual level but more so in any corporation, industry or institutional level. Social responsibility is where members of an organization or institution may share and develop mutually beneficial relationship within the society and community that it operates. It is an ethical responsibility for organizations to positively impact their respective communities through different facets, from environmental to economic to health and to education.

Community extension program also helps individuals learn and

acquire knowledge outside the four corners of their rooms and houses. It does not just deal with the learning through books but focuses more on its application in the real world (Rubio et al., 2016).

Developing a community through community extensions with the utmost assistance of different institutions such as academe is an act of helping and fulfilling the society's mission as well as that of the academic institutions (Laguador & Chavez, 2013). It does not just respond to the needs of a community but also to the mission and vision of the host agency, organization or institution that led such programs (Gonzales, 2008). Thus, community extension program includes people and organizations that are willing to help those who are underprivileged and less fortunate.

Community extension services respond to the expectations to make education accessible to the poor and to "pursue an excellent and socially relevant education centered on the young, poor and the youth at risk; and promote the Filipino spirit of solidarity by upholding justice and human dignity" (Gonzales, 2008).

Furthermore, community extension program is an activity wherein every individual can participate and experience a different way of learning. It helps in cultivating different qualities of such as leadership skills, public speaking, self-confidence, etc. (Chua et al., 2014).

Diem and Nikola (2005) believed that a program that addresses the needs identified by the people themselves tends to be more effective in eliciting people's participation. It follows that any program must recognize the value of the people's participation starting from the conceptualization phase. This is done by undertaking a community study that would explore the actual concerns of the people. These in turn must be translated into a workable program or project responsive to the identified needs or concerns.

The community extension is one of the tri-fold functions of an academic institution as mandated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and is reflected in Republic Act 7722 where CHED encourages higher educational institutions to take part in nation-building.

To undertake socially responsive and relevant initiatives and projects in partnership with industries and professional organizations for the benefit of target stakeholders and communities, the Institutional Social Responsibility Office (ISRO) of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Laguna (LPU-Laguna) spearheads various projects related to community extensions. Its vision is to be a center of development on social transformation that espouses the ideals of its founder, Jose P. Laurel.

Along with the initiative and support of LPU-Laguna's five colleges and different administrative departments, students, staff and faculty members are engaged in various activities such as communication

and computer literacy programs, livelihood and relief operations, as well as seminars related to environment and health aspects, personality development and career and employment preparations that are routinely being conducted.

In the study of Diem and Nikola (2005), they emphasized the importance of the beneficiaries' participation in planning stage, a practice that needs to be reinforced in order to have more responsive programs for the community. There are instances that a program given does not fit the needs of the community. The perception of beneficiaries of a certain extension is very important in determining if it is indeed successful.

To institutionalize the community extension programs of the university, LPU-Laguna embraces Barangay Makiling as its adopted community.

This study was done to determine the perceived image of Barangay Makiling residents towards the ISR programs of LPU-Laguna. Also with this study, ISR would be able to recognize the barriers of the activities offered to the community. Thus, this will help the institution create better community extension projects where both the benefactor and beneficiaries would learn the value of social responsibility.

Research framework

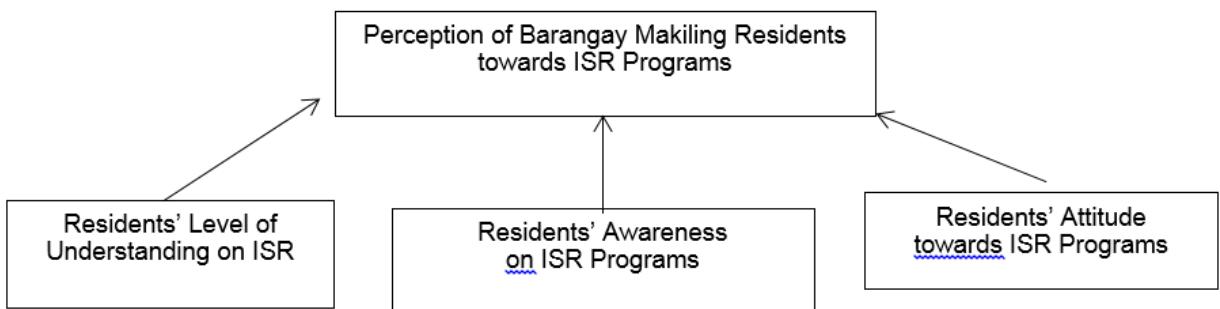


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

The level of understanding of the residents towards different community extension activities requires open mindedness and willingness to evaluate programs (Anderson et al., 2003). Community members need to clearly understand the community extension programs implemented in their community in order for them to perceive well its impact in the individual and societal level (Soria & Mitchell, 2016).

The community residents' awareness on the existing community extension projects, on the other hand, affects their perception towards the program since they will clearly see how these projects address the needs and problems of the community (Corbet & Kendall, 1999). Thus, if residents are actively participating and interacting in the community extension program, they would be able to perceive what the programs are all about. However, lack of awareness contributes to limited, oftentimes, negative perception of the community members towards the projects being delivered to them by the organizations, agencies or institutions (Soria & Mitchell, 2016).

According to the study of Chao (2010), residents' attitude towards community development and their understanding about the needs and problems of their community make them participate and engage themselves in community development programs. Though, it is also acknowledged by Chao (2010) that residents' lengths of stay in the community do affect their understanding of the community needs and the purposes and limitations of community extension programs.

Objectives of the study

This study aimed to determine the perception of Barangay Makiling residents towards the community extension program of LPU-Laguna. Specifically, it addressed the following:

- to determine the respondents' level of understanding of ISR;
- to find out the level of awareness of residents on ISR programs; and
- to describe the respondent's attitude towards LPU-Laguna's ISR programs.

METHOD

Data were gathered from the residents of Barangay Makiling, Calamba, Laguna. The researcher-made questionnaire contains a combination of checklist and Likert scale statements/questions that elicit information on the respondents' level of understanding or knowledge, awareness and attitude towards LPU-Laguna's ISR Programs. Data were graphed and tabulated in frequency distribution and percentage, while weighted means with verbal interpretations summarized the responses in the Likert scale.

The following figures show the distribution of respondents as to their gender, age, civil status and educational attainment. A total of 190 Barangay Makiling residents took part in the study. It is noticeable that

majority of the respondents are females, aged 42 years old and above, married, high school undergraduates and are currently employed or self-employed.

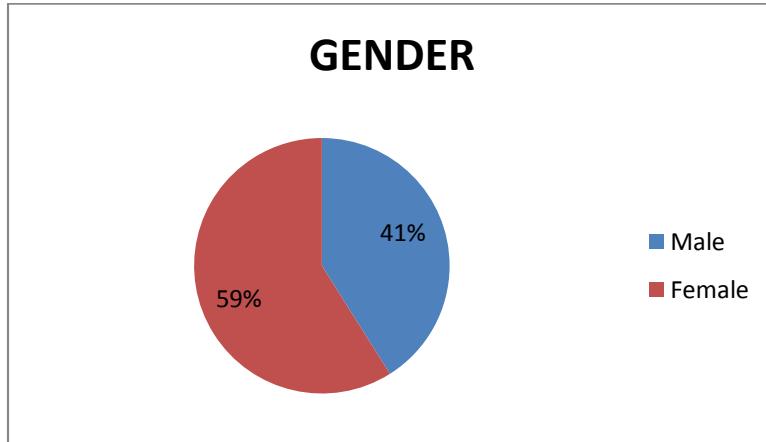


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents as to gender

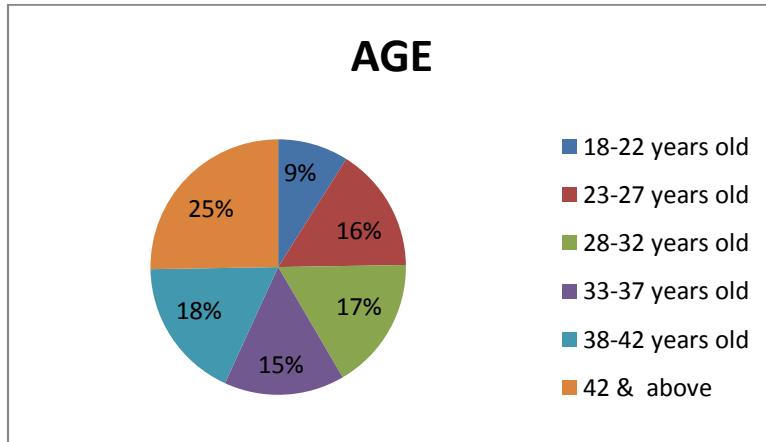


Figure 2. Distribution of respondents as to age

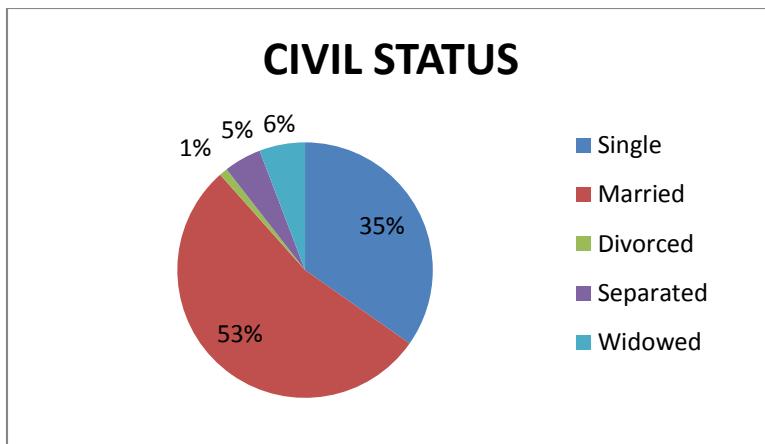


Figure 3. Distribution of respondents as to civil status

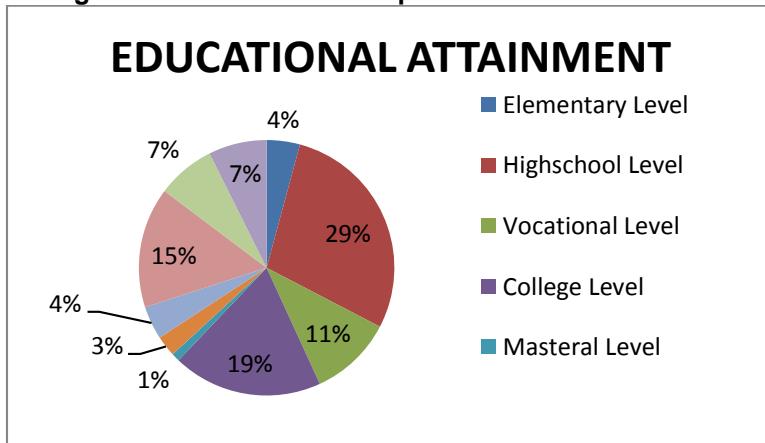


Figure 4. Distribution of respondents as to educational attainment

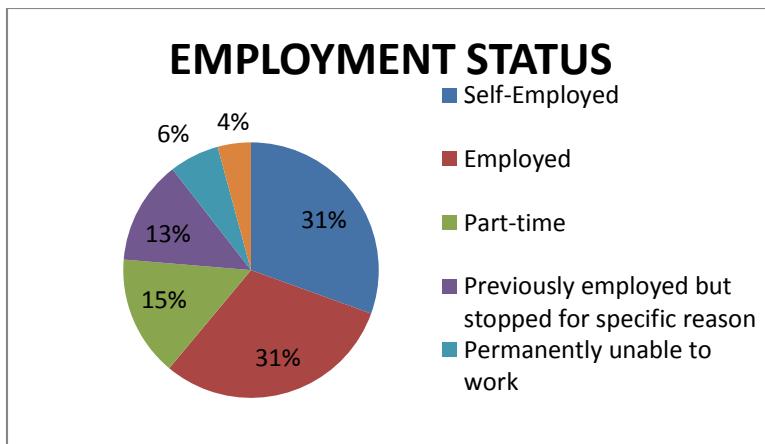


Figure 5. Distribution of respondents as to employment status

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below are the results of the gathered data:

Table 1 shows the level of understanding or knowledge of the respondents on what institutional social responsibility is. With all the statements agreed by the respondents and getting a mean score of 3.10 interpreted as *agree*, it only shows that respondents do understand what ISR is in general. The result also gauged their recognition of the ISR initiatives, coverage and goals.

The data was consistent with the study done by Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration in 2008 entitled 'Awareness Raising for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Sustainable Public Procurement and Socially Responsible Investment'. It stated that CSR policies, in general, are recognized in their respective locations particularly reflected in a community in Europe where it underwent several formal trainings and conferences that were aimed towards increasing public awareness of the programs that were about to conduct. Some means of spreading information was through websites and campaigns made by the institutions themselves. Various efforts such as these resulted in more than half of the population being knowledgeable on what ISR's motivation and objectives in conducting the projects were.

Table 1. Respondents' understanding on ISR programs

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
ISR aims to improve community welfare.	3.33	Agree
ISR is a means for companies to establish relationship with the community through philanthropic assistances.	3.28	Agree
ISR projects cover all levels of community members: children, and adults.	3.22	Agree
ISR is directed at enhancing the sponsors (school) image.	3.21	Agree
ISR aims to enhance community trust and support.	3.21	Agree
ISR projects respond to our needs.	3.02	Agree
ISR projects are just repetition of the Barangay Projects.	2.99	Agree
ISR is always conducted in our community.	2.91	Agree
I know what ISR is.	2.75	Agree
TOTAL	3.10	Agree

*Legend: 1-1.49 Strongly Disagree, 1.5-2.49 Disagree, 2.5-3.49 Agree, 3.5-4 Strongly Agree

Table 2 shows the list of ISR programs being conducted in Barangay Makiling. More than half of the respondents (53%) identified community projects as the well-known program implemented in the barangay followed by healthcare projects (48%) and educational projects (32%).

The result is affirmed by the study of Sharma and Kiran (2012) concerning the types of ISR or CSR initiatives commonly conducted in communities. Sharma and Kiran (2012) measured the top performing companies on CSR and examined what kind of activities and projects they primarily carried out. Locale of their study is prominently dominated by IT industries though there are also some food industries in the area. One company, TCS mainly focuses on educational efforts, through computer literacy services for adults in their community which teaches unemployed or willing adults on using computers. IBM's CSR initiatives are primarily focused on environmental aspects. They often conduct industrial hygiene and safety trainings in coordination with employers, customers and the surrounding community. Infosys, like TCS, also focuses on education but with children instead of adults. Infosys regularly conducts computer

literacy programs aimed towards out-of-school youth in an effort to keep them out of delinquency and to be able to share computer knowledge to them as well. Wipro is concerned with health and community development. They have a program known as Wipro Cares that focuses on improving health in migrated communities and disaster management. And lastly, Nestlé Multinational focuses on charitable donations and being able to provide jobs for community development. The milk factories that they have established have given farmers in their community ample jobs and resources in order to flourish.

Table 2. Types of ISR programs

Program	Frequency	Percentage
Community Projects	100	53
Healthcare	91	48
Educational Projects	60	32
Sports	52	27
Charitable Donations	23	12
Arts and Cultural Projects	18	9
Adoption of Charities/Non-Profit Organizations	7	4
Others	6	3

Table 3 shows the list of participants involved, in any way, in ISR projects. Forty-one (41%) of the respondents stated that the entire community is engaged in the ISR projects followed by LPU-Laguna students (37%) and employees (34%). This only shows that employees of institutions (in many cases, students if the institution is a school) are the main participants in CSR activities, though it is already given that the main participants involved will always be the entire community since they are the benefactors.

According to Vellios (2011), the motivation of employee-corporation relationships in participating in CSR efforts are determinants in enhancing business performance. He also reiterates the importance of employees' participation in effective ISR implementation as they are more well-informed and possess more accurate perceptions.

It is also noted that in an academic institution, participants in social responsibility endeavors commonly involved students. Students are expected to partake in social responsibility efforts as illustrated in a BC Performance Standards study regarding social responsibility in among Grades 8 to 10 students. Through the guidance of teachers, these students are trained to have the ability to enhance community issues. This paves the way for broader and more global issues to be tackled during their secondary years (Vellios, 2011).

Table 3. List of ISR participants

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Community	78	41
Students	70	37
LPU Employees	64	34
Government Agency	59	31
Parents	54	28
NGOs/Special Interest Groups	9	5
Media	7	4
Others	6	3

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents have positive thoughts and feeling towards ISR program; 75% of them even look at the projects as life-changing. Though the respondents still think that it would be helpful to conduct orientations prior to implementing various projects, they still agree that enough information is disseminated and even added that ISR projects should be conducted more often.

Table 4. Respondents' thoughts on ISR projects

	YES	%	NO	%
Do you think LPU's ISR should conduct more programs in your community?	178	94	12	6
Do you think LPU's ISRO should conduct orientation of the programs in your community?	179	94	11	6
Do you think enough information is disseminated before an ISR project is conducted?	149	78	41	22
Do you think your life changed because of LPU-Laguna's ISR projects?	142	75	48	25

Table 5 shows the respondents' attitudes towards ISR programs. Attitudes, in this study, measure the favorable and unfavorable evaluation of the respondents' behavior towards ISR projects. With a mean score of 3.50, respondents agreed positively on how ISR programs benefit them as well as how responsive they are in the call of participation. This also reflects how open-minded and responsive they are with all the programs being conducted to them.

The respondents also agreed in stating that ISR projects around their community positively improved their quality of life and enhanced their well-being without being detrimental to the ecological and the community life-support systems. They also believe that successful ISR practices are indicated by good governance.

Luo and Bhattacharya (2006) found out that community members are universally more satisfied with companies that have social responsibility efforts embedded in their businesses. This yields to a more positive reaction towards their business offerings. Furthermore, they discovered that institutions that have a better public following due to their CSR initiatives are more likely to have better customer satisfaction than those who do not.

Table 5. Respondents' attitude towards ISR programs

	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
ISR is compatible with responsiveness.	3.56	Agree
Services offered by the school thru ISR will improve positively the quality of life of people.	3.55	Agree
ISR projects help in improving our lives	3.55	Agree
Good governance is a good indicator of effective or successful ISR.	3.53	Agree
Schools thru CSR can enhance well-being without damaging ecological and community life-support systems.	3.52	Agree
In order to be part of the solution, schools have to pursue ISR directed at solving the community's social and environmental problems.	3.49	Neutral
Community consultation and soliciting their feedback are practical steps for successful ISR.	3.48	Neutral
Investing in social entrepreneurship is a worthwhile undertaking.	3.45	Neutral
Our barangay officials encourage us to join ISR projects.	3.44	Neutral
ISR concept is easy to understand.	3.37	Neutral
TOTAL	3.50	Agree

*Legend: 1-1.49 Strongly Disagree, 1.5-2.49 Disagree, 2.5-3.49 Neutral, 3.5-4.49 Agree, 4.5-5 Strongly Agree

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based from the findings of the study, the significance of social responsibility in the form of ISR projects is evident in the community. The respondents understand what ISR is and its intentions, who are benefactors and beneficiaries, why it is being conducted in a community, and how it is being implemented.

Barangay Makiling residents are fully aware on the ISR programs being conducted in their community where more than half of those are community-based as well as health related services. These projects are known to be participated by the community members and the institution's students and employees. While respondents have suggested that it would be helpful to conduct orientations prior to the activities, they still agreed

that enough information is being disseminated and even added that LPU-Laguna's ISR projects should be conducted more frequently. Majority also believe that their lives have changed because of the ISR activities being held in their community.

As for the community's attitude towards the programs, they all agreed positively on what ISR programs can do and can bring to them alongside their own accountabilities. The community positively perceived ISR programs initiatives as projects that help improve the community's quality of living without anything being compromised. This holds key to building successful institution-community relationships.

The community recognizes the effects of ISR program by stating that ISR projects have made significant impacts in their lives. It could be assumed that the active participation and volunteer efforts of students, university employees, and parents are correlated with the positive feedback that ISR projects have received. People usually respond positively to sincere action and if the institutional representatives are seen by the residents as keen and enthusiastic in conducting these projects, a positive effect would be made.

Though the perception of the community on LPU-Laguna's ISR program is generally positive, there are still areas for improvement and enhancement to consider to make ISR more valuable to both the institution and the adopted community. Recommendations include the following: (1) the projects must be carefully planned, organized and systematically be implemented in order to have greater impact to both the institution and the adopted community; (2) a needs assessment survey must be done first in order to suit the interests of the adopted community as well as program evaluation of every partner college or department must be undertaken to further understand limitation or issues met during the project's implementation; (3) different departments and colleges should discuss ways on how to improve their community extension projects that will help strengthen ISR's vision and mission; and (4) more programs with thorough information dissemination that would further empower the partner communities should be provided.

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