

**COMMUNICATING COVID-19 HEALTH INFORMATION DURING
PANDEMIC: THE CASE OF LGU-SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ, NUEVA ECIJA**

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by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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7. Abstract:

7.1 Rationale/Background

People's lives have changed tremendously since the COVID-19 disease epidemic. It has wreaked havoc on the world's ecological, political, social, and economic systems, with massive ramifications for all communities and individuals. Since the virus continues to spread, millions of people have been affected, resulting in significant losses in terms of human life, jobs, financial resources, support services, and the inability to readily communicate with others, as well as radical changes in lifestyles. As an outcome of this,

governments declared ECQ because they have been altered, impacted, and adjusted.

The creation and implementation of group action at the local level is known as local governance. Later on, a local government maintains communal life, supplies community amenities, and carries out initiatives that improve people's quality of existence (According to Shah (2006)). The pandemic that began in 2020 and was declared by the World Health Organization, the local government unit of the Philippines acts as the front line. Emergency and danger outreach represent several of the sector's most crucial roles in order to allay community fears, lessen the harm the pandemic causes, and encourage the reinforcement of precautionary measures to stop the worldwide transmission of COVID-19. This study looked into the LGU-Science City of Muñoz communication strategies to address this knowledge gap through information dissemination within its authority.

7.2 Summary

The general objectives of this study were to identify the communication strategies used by the LGU of Science City of Muñoz in disseminating COVID-19 information during pandemic. Specifically, the study aimed to (1) determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of sex, occupation, educational attainment, monthly income, lives in the household beside themselves, number of families in household, if they have been infected with COVID-19, vaccinated; (2)

identify the and Communication Characteristics and Communication Strategies utilized by LGU in dissemination of COVID -19 Health Information, including print materials, electronic materials/broadcast, intrapersonal communication, and traditional media; (3) identify the types of IEC materials and information received; (4) identify the Communication Problems Encountered by Respondents in Accessing COVID-19 Information; (5) actions taken by the community towards the information received; (6) determine the association between socio-demographic characteristics, communication strategies, types of IEC materials, communication problems, actions taken among the respondents.

The study used a Descriptive Research Design to gather data from among 72 Household at Barangay Villa Santos through a survey questionnaire conducted on face-to-face interaction. The sample was selected using non-probability sampling and the data was collected from May 6-7, 2023. The data was examined using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentage, and means).

7.3 Major Findings

The study has determined the communicating COVID-19 health information utilized by the Local Government Unit of Science City of Munoz. The study used Descriptive research design. The total sample used in the study were 72 which serve as respondents of the study. It also used non-probability sampling to select the respondents that will participate in answering the survey questionnaire. The researcher used a survey questionnaire that was conducted through face to face to collect the needed data and to fulfill the objectives of the study.

The findings showed that the majority of the respondents identified as female, 66.67 percent and housewife's 36.11 percent, their primary source of information was TV under the broadcast media with 88.89 percent and 79.17 percent of them spent 0-2 hours using TV for watching news since majority of them are housewives, they don't have time to spent much time in watching TV subsequently they have children that needs to be taken care of. They rely on TV because majority of them never received printed materials from LGU but in terms of getting COVID information, the barangay health worker used ambulance to disseminate information for the public. When community receive information through social media, traditional media, mass communication the content they always read and saw was about health protocols. Furthermore, in receiving information with this kind of communication strategies, resulting survey participants main problem was encountering fake news specifically the negative side effects of the vaccines to people but even though the communication strategies were poor and not maximized the community of Villa Santos still knows how to follow safety protocols.

7.4 Conclusions

Since the local government of Science City in Munoz, Nueva Ecija, rarely received COVID-19 health information, the Barangay Health Worker is the primary source of information for Barangay Villa Santos. Due to physical restrictions, isolations, health regulations, lockdowns, travel prohibitions, and ECQ, the LGU's

communication tactics are insufficient for obtaining information for Barangay Villa Santos.

To help people understand how the LGU communicates health information, print materials such as leaflets, posters, flyers, tarpaulins, and printed newspapers are employed as part of its communication strategy. Third is Intrapersonal Communication, which includes Face-to-Face and Interviews, and then there is Electronic Materials/ Broadcast, which includes LED TV, Facebook, SMS, and AVP. The traditional media, which includes TV, radio, and barangay announcements, is the final form of communication. However, the community of Barangay Villa Santos acquired communication tactics such as in-barangay results announcements and using Facebook to obtain health information.

7.5 Recommendations

The study provides several recommendations. Firstly, the barangay health workers of barangay Villa Santos should encourage the community to join if there are health awareness campaigns. This will help the community to understand the importance of their health and safety. With this, they can keep their community safe from COVID-19. So, the community should be active in attending the programs in their barangay so to increase their knowledge about COVID and not just to attend aid. Next, The Local Government Unit of Science of Munoz should monitor if the barangay that their jurisdiction gets all municipal programs and whether all their platforms are being disseminate too public. Third, for the LGU, the Information, Education, Communication materials should be done attainment

that everyone needs the information and multiple sources such as print materials and intrapersonal communication. Next, local Government Unit should improve social mobilization and strategic communication. Furthermore, conduct a bigger sample size for future researcher. Additionally, conduct the same barangay study to other preferred communication channel. Following, encourage everyone in the community to invest to their barangay so that their barangay can be better and more people can increase their knowledge not only about COVID but in all aspects. Moreover, Encourage the community to take care of their selves by providing personal protective equipment. Next, LGU should continue trainings for Barangay Health workers and barangay leaders. Besides, Empower Barangay Health workers because they are very critical in managing DRRM situation in terms of disseminating. So, government should invest and add more BHW for trainings and opportunities. Also, LGU should continue to adopt communicating strategies for community. They should improve the communicating health information and strategies related in risk management information specifically about COVID-19. Moreover, LGU needs to identify what makes people hesitant about the information received. Following, Community should specify the gadgets they own in getting COVID information. Besides, Public Information Office needs to help local government unit and barangay health workers for flourishing of information. Additionally, LGU needs to conduct profiling so they better understand the opinions and lifestyle of community and also to know what kins of communication channel they preferred

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