

PERCEPTION OF CALAMBEÑOS ON THE COMMUNICATION TOOL USED IN ADOPT-A-RIVER PROGRAM

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Abstract

Communication at any rate serves to be a major factor why an individual gathers, understands, and learns new things that can be added to a person's cognition. While every individual has his own way to relate himself to the world through verbal and non-verbal communication, other dynamics such as media communications attend to the needs of the world to support hunger for information and to further involve the importance of knowing how communication can change lives and the environment. The perception of the Calambeños on the communication tools used in "Adopt-a-River" Program, one of the projects of Calamba City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), is basically a descriptive-quantitative research study that aims to prove the essentials of media communications particularly on the use of print media tools to inform the public about a specific environmental campaign. The materials used to promote the program are flyers, posters, and streamers. The main purpose of doing this study is to weigh the three communication materials in terms of their structures concerning the content, design, and clarity of the message through the help of selected Calambeños as the target respondents of the researchers in seven different barangays. The researchers prepared a self-made questionnaire for the respondents during the pre-test and also throughout the actual survey. There were several statistical methods that were used to compute the results of the study. These methods helped the researchers arrive with the exact answers needed in the completion of the study. Since the researchers were doing a quantitative research, the results of the study were written in figures and had verbal interpretation. The results showed that majority of the respondents are female, younger ones of 30 years and below, and have attained secondary level of education. Majority of the respondents were familiar with the flyers. The results also indicated that in terms of content, design, and clarity of message, the flyers got the highest perception of the respondents which is "strongly agree." There is also a significant difference on the perception of respondents on the content of flyers when grouped according to age and

educational attainment. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers would like to suggest to Calamba CENRO to produce more copies of flyers so that more people could have a copy of the material. Since respondents were not familiar with the poster, the researchers would like to suggest the CENRO to also produce more copies of the poster and post them in strategic public areas so that many people would see the local advertisement. Despite the fact that there were so many studies that focus on communication tools, the researchers still believe that their study was unique because they just focused on print media and not on the other types of media.

Keywords: *perception, communication tools, environmental program, print media*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process by which information is transferred from one person to another. It could be in the form of verbal and non-verbal communication. It can also be delivered through the use of media (Grolier Encyclopedia of Knowledge, 2003).

Through communication, individuals and organizations could disseminate their message not just to a single person but also to a large number of people. An organization conducts a certain program or campaign in order to solve a specific problem in the community.

The function of these programs is to inform, educate and persuade the members of the community to participate and interact with the activities and discussions done in the area.

The public organizations like the local government use communication tools particularly the print media in disseminating the message through all the members of the community. Print media is said to be the easiest and the most convenient to use because the information could be stored and the production cost is low (Kipphan, 2001).

Several government offices collide to make a certain project possible and one of their concerns is to make sure that the environment was taken cared of. In order to do that, they organize projects and programs to secure that the environment resources will not be damaged. One example of this is the maintenance operation of rivers and creeks. Polluted water will lead to different kinds of diseases. That is why the government offices make sure that cleanliness be strictly observed within these areas.

CENRO in Calamba Laguna has a program that aims to encourage the participation of public and private sectors to take part in the rehabilitation and maintenance of the rivers and creeks. This program is a project of CENRO and it was formally launched last February 14, 2011. The name of this project is Adopt-A-River and it has seven components namely Bantay Ilog, River Clean Up, River Restoration, Reforestation, River Campaigns, River Maintenance, Flood Protection Program, Housing and Resettlement. Each group has its own action plan for the implementation of the project. The companies, establishments, hospitals and commercial institutions along San Juan River, San Cristobal River and the Baranca de Sipit Creek are the public partners of this program while the barangay captains, DepEd, CENRO and the office of the mayor serve as the public sectors.

The river clean up is headed by the officers of the program together with the public and private sectors.

In an interview with an Environmental Management Specialist II (M.Agnes, personal communication, July 23, 2013), she stated that Canlubang, Barangay I, Bucal, Mayapa and Paciano Rizal are the five major active barangays in the program.

This program uses several communication tools in circulating the information to the public especially to the sectors who are involved in this

program but the researchers are merely focused on a certain kind of media, the print media.

In an interview with the Senior Environmental Management Specialist (O.Alcasid, personal communication, July 23, 2013), he mentioned that this program made use of streamers, posters and flyers in giving out the information to the public. He said that they produce 110 copies of flyers quarterly and distribute them to all the barangays involved in the program. Their disseminators are the students from Lyceum of the Philippines-Laguna, Perpetual Help University, Canossa College, San Juan de Letran and other private partners such as Jollibee, Samsung and SMYPC. Print media is the type of media that they commonly used in promoting the “Adopt-A-River” program because printed materials such as flyers and tarpaulins are easy to produce, reproduce and disseminate.

The researchers would like to conduct a study on how the respondents perceive print media as the main communication tool used in the Adopt-A-River program.

Evaluation of the print media will be done using the three characteristics of an effective media tool such as content, design and clarity of the message. The researchers aimed to determine the perception of the Calambeños on the print materials that are commonly used in the “Adopt-A-River” program.

Conceptual Framework

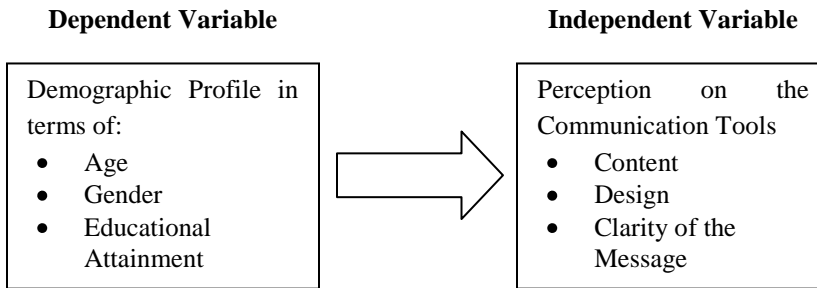


Figure 1. The paradigm of the study

This conceptual framework describes the relationship of the demographic profile of the respondents to the other factors in this study.

The dependent variable refers to the demographic profile of the respondents including age, gender and educational attainment. The demographic profile serves as the dependent variable.

On the other hand, independent variable refers to the perception of the respondents on the communication tools used in Adopt-A-River program.

METHOD

Descriptive quantitative research was used in this study. The researchers chose 30 respondents from Barangay Turbina for the pre-test while 100 respondents from barangay 1, Canlubang, Paciano Rizal, Mayapa and Bucal for the actual survey.

The instrument that they used is a self-made questionnaire. It has three parts. The first part is a check list for the demographic profile of the respondents. The second part is also a checklist for the communication tools

in which the respondents are exposed to. The third and the last part is a four-point Likert scale in which the respondents will rate strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree with the statements written on the questionnaire.

The researchers used various statistical methods for each statement of the problem. For the first and second part, they used the frequency distribution formula to find out the demographic profile and the most common communication tool for the respondents. For the third part, they used the weighted mean formula to measure the perception of the respondents regarding the communication tools used in Adopt-A-River program. For the last part, they used the T-test to find out the significant difference on the perception of the respondents on the communication tools when grouped according to gender and ANOVA when grouped according to age and educational attainment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile of the respondents is composed of age, gender, and educational attainment. The variables were seemed to have a difference on the perception of the Calambeños on the communication tools used in “Adopt-a-River” Program.

Table 1 shows the gender of the respondents. This indicates that majority of the respondents were female (70%) while least of them are male (30%).

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	30	30.0
Female	70	70.0
Total	100	100.00

The age range of the respondents is shown in Table 2. It was clearly presented that most of the respondents are between the ages of 30 years old and below (47%) while least of them are between the ages of 41 years old and above (23%).

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percent
30 years old and Below	47	47.0
31-40 years old	30	30.0
41 years old and above	23	23.0
Total	100	100.00

Table 3 shows the educational attainment of the respondents. The results indicate that majority of the respondents attained high school level (63%) while least of them reached the elementary level (2%).

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by education

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Elementary	2	2.0
Secondary	63	63.0
Tertiary	35	35.0
Total	100	100.00

Table 4 shows the communication tools used in the program in which the respondents are exposed to. This indicates that most respondents are more familiar with the flyers. They got the highest percentage of 73 percent, while the posters got the lowest percentage of 8 percent. Therefore, the researchers concluded that among the three communication tools, the flyers are the most common.

Parker (1997) mentioned that a flyer is a very useful material that is used to convey a message to a limited number of people. Even though there is a few number of flyer distribution around Calamba, the flyers tend to be the most common communication tool that most Calambeños are able to remember. One of the disadvantages of flyers is that they cannot control the feedback from the target audience but despite their disadvantages, there are also several advantages of flyers that made them stand out among the communication tools used in this program and some of these are: flyers can be easily disseminated in public areas like markets and streets; they are also cheaper than posters and streamers since flyers are smaller and can be printed in black and white (Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Types of Media, 2011).

Table 4. Communication tools used in the program

Communication Tool	Frequency	Percent
Flyers	73	73.0
Posters	8	8.0
Streamers	19	19.0
Total	100	100.00

The researchers used the four-point Likert scale to find out the perception of the respondents on the communication tools when grouped according to content, design, and clarity of the message.

The perception of the respondents on the communication tools in terms of content is shown in Table 5. In the first statement, the results indicated that the respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.84), posters (3.63), and streamers (3.74) *strongly agreed* that these three communication tools were able to give complete information about the program. The second statement indicated that this program was able to inform the people about the possible effects of garbage and other waste materials thrown in the river.

From this statement, the respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.86) and posters (3.63) said that they *strongly agreed*, but the people who were exposed to streamers (3.42) said that they just *agreed*. The respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.64) and posters (3.50) said that they *strongly agreed* that those communication tools on “Adopt-a-River” Program gave them the interest to join this kind of program because they contain good message, while the respondents who were exposed to streamers (3.47) said that they *agreed* with the same statement. All the respondents *strongly agreed* on the fourth statement that states that all communication materials such as flyers (3.60), posters (3.75), and streamers (3.63) provided news and updates about the program. In terms of content, it was shown that among the three communication materials, flyers got the highest composite mean of 3.74. This means that the perception of the respondents on the content of flyers was *strongly agreed*.

According to the WIPO program activities (n.d.), the content usually contains facts, figures, slogans, and quotes which are evident to the three communication tools used in “Adopt-a-River” Program—flyers, posters, and streamers. It is also a fact that none of the respondents *disagreed* that these three communication tools did not complement with the four statements under content.

Table 5. Perception of the respondents on the communication tool in terms of content

Content	Flyers	Posters	Streamers
1. This instrument contains complete information about the program. (Ang instrumentong ito ay naglalaman ng kumpletong impormasyon tungkol sa programa.)	3.84	3.63	3.74
2. It gave the possible effects of the garbage and other waste materials when thrown into the river. (Ito ay nagbigay kaalaman sa mga posibleng epekto ng mga basura at iba pang dumi sa mga ilog na pinangangalagaan ng programang ito.)	3.86	3.63	3.42
3. I became interested to join this program because it	3.64	3.50	3.47

contains good content. (Naging interesado akong makilahok sa programang ito dahil maganda ang mensaheng nilalaman nito.)				
4. All communication materials provide news and update about the "Adopt-a-River" Program. (Ito ay naglalaman ng mga impormasyon at balita tungkol sa programang "Adopt-a-River.")	3.60	3.75	3.63	
Composite Mean	3.74	3.64	3.57	
Legend: (1.0-1.49)-Strongly Disagree, (1.5-2.49)-Disagree, (2.5-3.49)-Agree, (3.5-4.0)-Strongly Agree				

Table 6 shows the perception of the respondents on the communications tools in terms of design. On the fifth statement, the result indicates that the respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.70), posters (3.50), and streamers (3.58) *strongly agreed* that the graphics and color of these three instruments attracted their attention. On the sixth statement, the respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.63), posters (3.63), and streamers (3.58) *strongly agreed* that these three instruments used more text than graphics. On the seventh statement, the respondents *strongly agreed* that flyers (3.73) and posters (3.50) used a design that is appropriate for the theme of the program, while the respondents who were exposed to streamers *agreed* on the same statement. On the eighth statement, the respondents *strongly agreed* that flyers (3.79), posters (3.63), and streamers (3.63) used an appropriate and readable font size. Based on the results shown below, the flyers got the highest composite mean of 3.71. This means that in terms of design, the flyers got the highest perception of respondents interpreted as *strongly agree*.

Farley (2009) mentioned that the main function of design is to attract the target audience to read a certain communication material. The results clearly showed that the respondents who were exposed to flyers, posters, and streamers were really attracted with their designs because their responses were *strongly agree*.

Table 6. Perception of the respondents on the communication tool in terms of design

Design	Flyers	Posters	Streamers
5. The graphics and color of this instrument can easily attract my attention. (Ang grapiks at kulay ay madaling makapukaw ng atensyon.)	3.70	3.50	3.58
6. This instrument used more text than graphics. (Ang instrumentong ito ay gumamit ng maraming tekstwal na impormasyon kaysa grapiks.)	3.63	3.63	3.58
7. The design of this instrument is appropriate to the theme of the program. (Ang disenyo ng instrumentong ito ay naaangkop sa tema ng programa.)	3.73	3.50	3.42
8. The font size used in this instrument was easy to read. (Ang sukat ng mga letrang ginamit sa instrumentong ito ay madaling mabasa.)	3.79	3.63	3.63
Composite Mean	3.71	3.58	3.55

Legend: (1.0-1.49)-Strongly Disagree, (1.5-2.49)-Disagree, (2.5-3.49)-Agree, (3.5-4.0)-Strongly Agree

Table 7 shows the perception of the respondents on the communication tools in terms of clarity of message. On the ninth statement, respondents who were exposed to flyers (3.73), posters (3.75), and streamers (3.53) *strongly agreed* that these three communication tools used simple words. On the 10th statement, the respondents *strongly agreed* that the information written on flyers (3.78) and posters (3.75) were properly arranged and had correct grammar while the respondents who were exposed to streamers *agreed* (3.42) on the same statement. In terms of clarity of message, flyers (3.75) and posters (3.75) both got the highest composite mean. This means that they got the highest perception of respondents interpreted as *strongly agree*.

Design requires a good balance. Therefore, the information written on the materials must be well organized so that it will be easy for the readers

to understand its message (Farley, 2009). The clarity of message has something to do with the content and design, so if the respondents have a positive perception about it, therefore, the respondents will also understand the over-all content of the material.

Table 7. Perception of the respondents on the communication tool in terms of clarity of message

Clarity of Message	Flyers	Posters	Streamers
9. Simple lang ang salitang ginamit sa kampanya kaya madali itong maunawaan.	3.73	3.75	3.53
10. Tama ang pagkakaayos ng impormasyon at ginamitan ito ng wastong salita.	3.78	3.75	3.32
Composite Mean	3.75	3.75	3.42

Legend: (1.0-1.49)-Strongly Disagree, (1.5-2.49)-Disagree, (2.5-3.49)-Agree, (3.5-4.0)-Strongly Agree

The results show that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of the male and female respondents in terms of content, design and clarity of message for flyers, posters, and streamers as denoted by the computed significant values which are all greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

This means that the perceptions of both male and female on the communication tools do not differ. The result of the study contradicts the statement of Gamble & Gamble (2002) which indicates that females perceive more differently than men because the result shows that gender does not affect the perception of the people towards the communication tools that they have seen.

Table 8. Comparative analysis of the perception when grouped by gender

	t-value	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation	Decision Ho
FLYERS				
Content	-1.944	0.066	Not Significant	Accept
Design	-1.386	0.173	Not Significant	Accept
Message	-1.464	0.158	Not Significant	Accept
POSTER				
Content	0.633	0.550	Not Significant	Accept
Design	1.846	0.126	Not Significant	Accept
Message	1.225	0.277	Not Significant	Accept
STREAMERS				
Content	0.157	0.877	Not Significant	Accept
Design	-0.023	0.982	Not Significant	Accept
Message	0.187	0.854	Not Significant	Accept

Table 9 shows that there is a significant difference in the perception of respondents when they are grouped according to education in terms of content of flyers as denoted by the computed significant value of 0.043 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that those respondents who reached secondary education (3.79) have significantly higher perception in the content of information that can be found in the flyers compared to the perceptions of respondents who reached elementary and tertiary education, as seen in Appendix B.

However, there is no significant difference in the responses of the three groups with different level of educational attainment in terms of content, design, and clarity of message of posters and streamer, as well as the design and clarity of message of flyers, as indicated by the computed significant values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Gamble & Gamble (2002) mentioned that the educational attainment affects the way of thinking and decision-making of a person. Therefore, educational attainment plays a big factor on how people analyze and understand the content or the meaning of any reading material that he/she has seen or read.

Table 9. Comparative analysis of the perception when grouped by education

	F-value	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation	Decision Ho
FLYERS				
Content	3.290	0.043	Significant	Reject
Design	0.682	0.519	Not Significant	Accept
Message	0.188	0.847	Not Significant	Accept
POSTERS				
Content	0.805	0.404	Not Significant	Accept
Design	2.356	0.176	Not Significant	Accept
Message	3.000	0.134	Not Significant	Accept
STREAMERS				
Content	0.037	0.849	Not Significant	Accept
Design	0.004	0.951	Not Significant	Accept
Message	0.108	0.746	Not Significant	Accept

Table 10 shows that there is a significant difference among the three age brackets in terms of content of flyers, as denoted by the computed significant value of 0.001 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that those respondents belong to 30 years old and below (3.72) age bracket have significantly higher perception on the content of the flyers, compared to the responses of two other age groups (3.50).

However, there is no significant difference in the responses of the three age brackets in terms of content, design and clarity of message of

posters and streamer, as well as the design and clarity of message of flyers as indicated by the computed significant values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The method that was used was T-test because there were only two means of samples that are compared.

Ayers & Dador (2011) cited the statement of Sanz de Acedo, et al. (2007) that age is one factor that affects the mental capacity and decision-making of a person. Gamble (2002) mentioned in a research that younger individuals are more interested in absorbing new ideas while older ones are less active and cooperative. This statement complements the results of the study because majority of the total number of the respondents belong to the age of 30 years old and below, and it means that younger individuals are more interested in reading communication materials that are related to environment. Based on the results of the study, the researchers concluded that age is one of the major factors that may influence the perception of the respondents towards the communication tools that they have seen, read, and touched.

The researchers used the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in computing for the results because there are several means of samples that are compared.

Table 10. Comparative analysis of the perception when grouped by age

	F	Sig.	Verbal Interpretation	Decision Ho
FLYERS				
Content	7.231	0.001	Significant	Reject
Design	0.824	0.443	Not Significant	Accept
Message	0.173	0.841	Not Significant	Accept

POSTERS				
Content	0.131	0.882	Not Significant	Accept
Design	0.847	0.487	Not Significant	Accept
Message	0.505	0.629	Not Significant	Accept
STREAMERS				
Content	2.123	0.152	Not Significant	Accept
Design	0.868	0.439	Not Significant	Accept
Message	1.459	0.262	Not Significant	Accept

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The researchers made a conclusion based from the findings of their study.

The researchers included the gender, age, and educational attainment in the demographic profile of the respondents. Most of their respondents belong to the age range of 30 years old and below. There are also more females than male respondents, and most of them attained high school level.

The “Adopt-a-River” Program used the print media to deliver the message of the program to the Calamba City residents. The communication tools that were commonly used are flyers, posters and streamers. The findings show that most of the respondents are exposed to flyers while there are only few respondents who have seen posters and streamers. The researchers concluded that a flyer is the most common tool for most of the respondents because among the three communication tools, a flyer is the only tool that can be browsed anytime and anywhere because the reader could easily have a hard copy of it.

The findings show that most of the respondents *strongly agreed* that flyers, posters, and streamers gave complete information about the program, and the possible effects of improper disposal of garbage, and they also contained updates about the activities of the program.

Aside from the content, design is also a factor that is essential in a print material like flyers, posters, and streamers. The findings show that all respondents *strongly agreed* that the design of these three communication tools attracted the attention of the readers, used more texts than graphics, and used font styles and sizes that are easy to read.

Another factor to be considered on a printed material is the clarity of message. The findings show that the respondents who are both exposed to flyers and posters *strongly agreed* that these two materials used simple words to convey the message of the program. All respondents *agreed* that the information is properly arranged and the words that were used are properly chosen.

The findings show that there is a significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the content of flyers when grouped according to age and educational attainment. This means that the answers of respondents with different age range and educational levels are not the same. The perceptions of the respondents with the age range of 31-40 years old were significantly highest among the respondents from other age ranges. The respondents who attained high school level have the highest significant perception among other educational levels.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that all respondents seem to have a positive perception about the communication materials used in “Adopt-a-River” Program even when they were grouped according to demographic profile. The researchers also noticed that most of

the respondents are the younger ones (30 years old and below) and majority of them attained high school level. Demographic profile is very essential in finding out the type of audience who can read a certain communication material. If the material is intended for all genders, ages and classes, the material should be easy to understand. Based on the findings of the study, the respondents who were exposed to flyers, posters and streamers understood the message written on the materials. Even though there were few respondents who were exposed to posters and streamers, they still have a positive perception on the overall content, design, and clarity of message of these materials.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions mentioned above, the researchers recommend that CENRO should focus more on producing and disseminating communication materials like flyers because people could have a hard copy of them. It is also recommended that CENRO reproduce more copies of posters and post them in strategic public areas of Calamba City so that more people could see them and get familiar with the information being disseminated through these materials.

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