

Short Paper

Clientele Satisfaction on the COVID-19 Community Isolation Facility Operated by the Local Government Unit of Gubat, Sorsogon, Philippines

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Abstract

The conduct of clientele satisfaction is one of the approaches in tracking the direction of the project or program implementation to improve its performance. The focus of this study is to find out the perception of the Community Isolation Facility (CIF) clientele regarding the project implementation and the perceived degree of satisfaction with the services given by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Gubat personnel in terms of professionalism, caring, courtesy, friendliness, advising, helpfulness, counseling, and timeliness of service. The study used mixed qualitative and quantitative research methods in determining the results. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select 329 clients. Data were collected using a questionnaire and structured interviews with the CIU clients. The respondents were composed of 161 males and 168 females, ages 18 to 55 years old, 139 were married and 179 were single. About 98.48% of the clients agreed that the establishment of the community isolation facility is a must. They registered an overall satisfaction rating of 47.74% on the following aspects, 58.5% professionalism, caring 57.75%, courtesy 53.19%, friendliness, 55.40% advising 43.46% helpfulness, 39.51% counseling 38.81%, and timeliness of service 35.26%. The management of the Community Isolation Facility practiced the concepts of inclusivity in the clients' services in terms of



sex, age, and marital status. The clients support the importance of establishing the CIF and have shown their cooperation by submitting to the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) guidelines. However, services to clients must be improved in terms of dealing with psycho-social care. The Local Government Unit may capacitate more front liners to manage emergencies on aspects of managing vulnerable groups and extending mental health services. All programs and services of the Local Government Unit may be subjected to clientele satisfaction research to further improve it.

Keywords – COVID-19, clientele satisfaction, community isolation facility, Local Government Unit

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of the Corona Virus disease has caused severe societal and economic disorder and recession around the globe (Gopinath (2020). It also brought confusion and disturbance in people's lives (Nicomedes & Avila, 2020). This incidence widely affected all the sectors of the community such as public and private organizations, education, communications and media, business, religion, indigenous cultures, micro-communities, and other sectors of society (Mofijur et al., 2021). Globally, governments developed mitigating measures to combat the pandemic.

Nationally in the Philippines, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) was organized and activated to plan, monitor and regulate actions to lessen the effects of COVID-19 (ops.gov.ph, 2020). Locally, the Local Government Units (LGUs) were directed to operationalize the municipal Inter-Agency Task Force and were required to establish and operate its community isolation facilities (Caliwan, 2020). Partnership engagement with State Colleges and Universities and the Department of Education was sought by LGUs to avail of the physical facilities of academic institutions to serve as community isolation units. The Local Government of the Municipality of Gubat identified Bicol University Gubat Campus as its partner considering the location of the campus which is far from residences (Jadie, 2022).

Additionally, the Monitoring Team composed of the BUGC Director of Gubat was organized and tasked to conduct weekly assessments of the operation of the facility, particularly the maintenance of physical facilities, and medical supplies, as well as the safety and security of the people in the facility. Alongside this is the need to monitor client satisfaction and the perceptions of the clients in the facility.

Client satisfaction is one of the factors determining the success of the project implementation. It will also boost the value and relevance of the services given by the local government unit. Ratings must be thought of well and must serve as an avenue for the local government units and other health service units in improving their services (Reyes, 2013).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general aim of the study was to find out the perception of the clientele on the services rendered by the Local Government Unit health service providers during the operation of the Community Isolation Unit in mitigating COVID-19 in the Municipality of Gubat. It primarily aimed to:

1. To determine the demographic profile of the clients in terms of age, gender, and place of travel origin;
2. To determine the perception of the clientele regarding the need to establish the community isolation unit;
3. To determine the perceived degree of clientele satisfaction with the services given in the community isolation unit in terms of courtesy, helpfulness, friendliness, counseling, advising, caring, professionalism, and timeliness of services.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Related Studies

The preparation, organization, and operation of the quarantine procedure according to prescribed standards is a key factor in the experiences of clients in the facility. Clients should be well informed of the protocol. A shorter quarantine duration should be implemented to minimize costs. Additionally, isolation facilities should be monitored and evaluated regularly for appropriateness and adherence to the guidelines (Ndejjo et al., 2021).

The study by Deriba (2020), showed low-level customer satisfaction (44.60%) during the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of the availability of drugs, hand sanitizers, and alcohol for hand washing and observance of social distancing. Hence, improving the quality of service through social distancing and the availability of supplies of alcohol must be prioritized by the service providers.

Alhowaymel et al. (2022), revealed that customers' attitudes and perceptions are important in assessing the services rendered by the frontliners. This can aid in determining the weaknesses and strengths of the service providers and can lead to the development of new strategies in the future. The COVID-19 pandemic calls for future-proofing and new studies particularly in assessing clientele satisfaction as an essential tool to improve services (Hawrysz & Bitkowska, 2021).

In Kupfer and Bond's (2012) study, they relate that the measurement of the patient's satisfaction is related to the manner of service rendered that meets the expectation of the client. If the service surpasses expectations, they judge it to be high and if it is below expectations, they judge it low. Customers' satisfaction is influenced by their beliefs, culture, feelings, and exposure to service providers.

De Mesa et al (2019) study, revealed the need to improve primary healthcare services by digitizing health records, providing funds for laboratory and medical services, and reskilling staff to patient satisfaction. These findings relate to the present study since it also recommends further training for the medical frontliners to gain a higher level of clientele satisfaction.

Calong Calong and Commendador (2019) discovered that the people in the rural community of Rizal, Philippines, rated the health care access as good on aspects of approachability, availability, affordability, and acceptability. Additionally, the authors also claimed that appraisal of health care access is a significant measure of the effectiveness of health care services among clients.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a mixed research design to gather and collate data. The qualitative data was administered through survey questionnaires and interviews conducted weekly by the researchers with the help of the LGU frontliners. The quantitative research was conducted using frequency counts and percentages which were validated by a statistician.

Respondents

The respondents were purposively chosen from among 2,252 clients of the Community Isolation Facility using raosoft.com and calculator net formula with a margin error of 5% and 95% confidence level. The respondents were composed of 329 people with an age range between 18 to 55 years old.

Research Instrument and Data Gathering Procedure

The procedure for gathering the data started by asking permission from the Municipal Mayor of the Local Government of Gubat, which was favorably granted by the latter. Then, a meeting with the frontliners of the facility was conducted to discuss and validate the research instrument and the mechanics of the conduct of the data collection. The frontliners administered the instruments before sending off the clients to their respective homes, observing the IATF protocols of using a facemask, a face shield, handwashing, and social distancing.

Statistical Analysis of the Data

The statistical analysis of the data was collated using frequency counts and percentages. The findings of the study were validated with the assistance of the healthcare providers assigned to the community isolation unit.

RESULTS

The results of the study are reflected in Figures 1, 2, and 3 demographic profile of clients in terms of gender, age, and civil status.

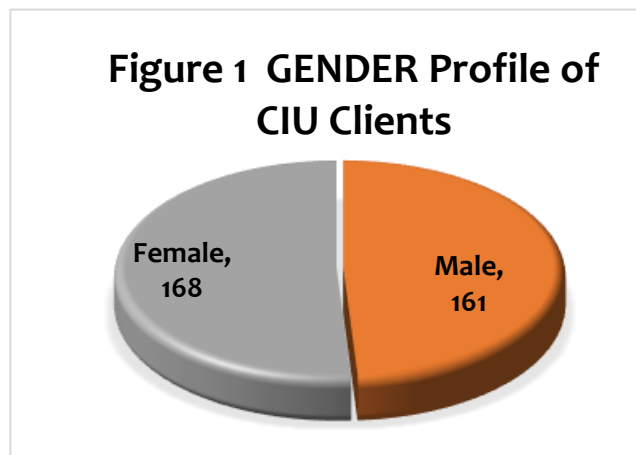


Figure 1. Gender Profile of CIU Clients

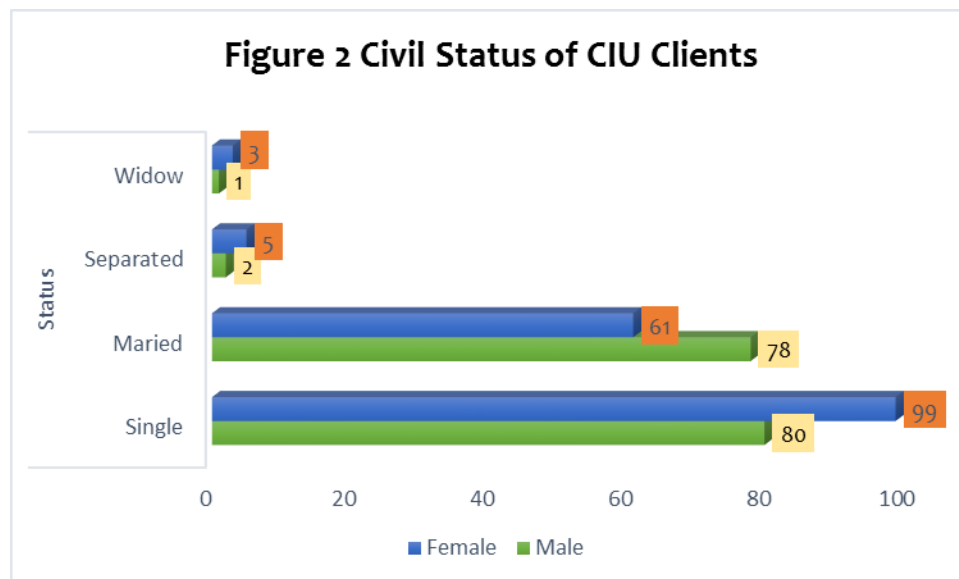


Figure 2. Civil Status of CIU Clients

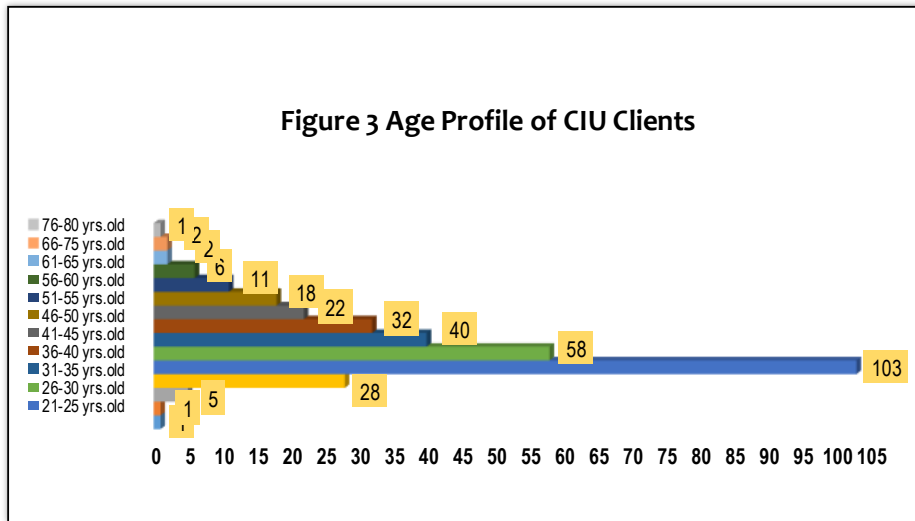


Figure 3. Age Profile of CIU Clients

Table 1. This table reflects the place of origin of the community isolation unit clients.

Table 1 Place of Origin			
Place	Total	Place	Total
Laguna	46	Muntinlupa	6
Cavite	31	Zambales	5
Batangas	14	Marikina	3
Torbina	2	Baguio	2
Makati	10	Pampanga	6
Quezon City	24	Bataan	1
Marikina	3	Masbate	4
Parañaque	8	Quezon Province	5
Bulacan	12	Naga, Camarines Sur	3
Antipolo	8	Cebu	1
Valenzuela City	4	Davao	1
Pasay	12	Bohol, Leyte	3
Las Piñas	5	OFW- South Korea	1
Mandaluyong	2	OFW-France	1
Rizal	10	OFW- U.A.E	5
Taguig	9	OFW-Qatar	2
Malabon	1	OFW-United kingdom	1
Pasig	7		
Manila	34		
Caloocan	10		
		TOTAL	329

Figure 4 shows the clients are amenable to the necessity to establish the community isolation unit.

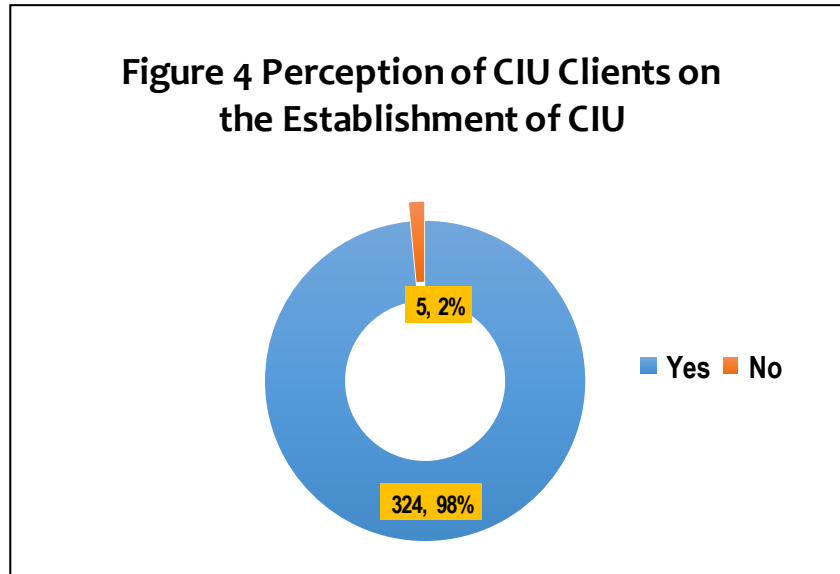


Figure 4. Perceptions of CIU Clients on the Establishment of CIU

Figure 5 disclosed the overall clientele satisfaction rating for the frontliners services and attitude shown during their stay at the community isolation unit.

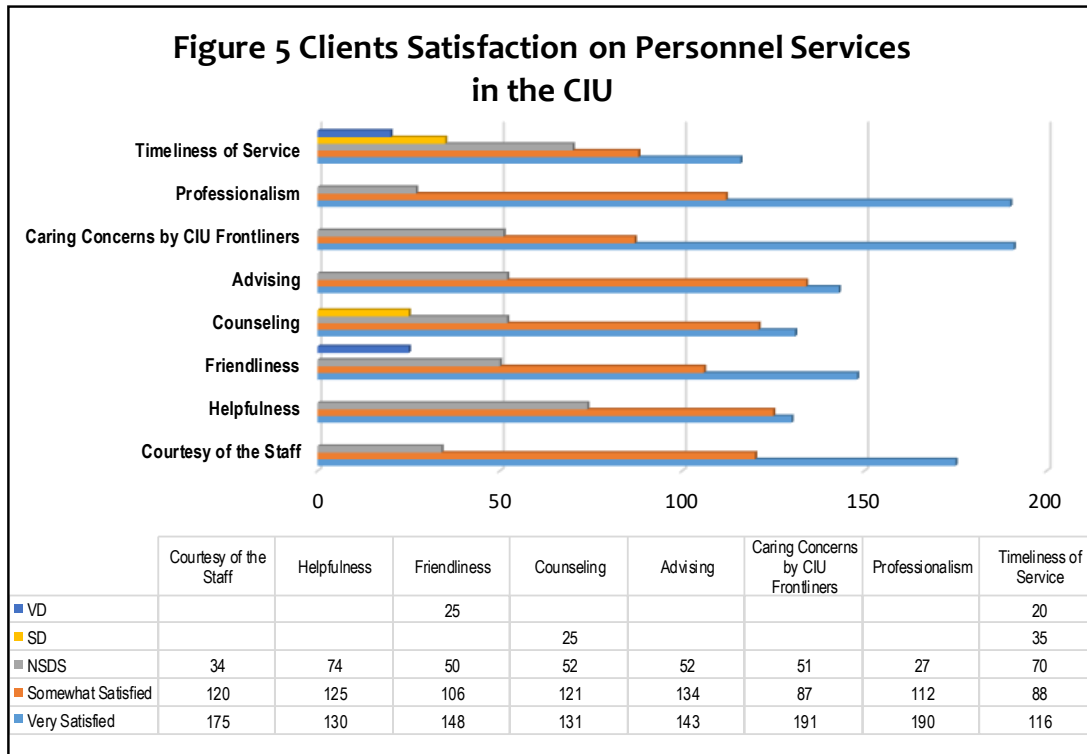


Figure 5. Clients' Satisfaction on Personnel Services in the CIU

DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Clients in terms of Gender Age, Civil Status, and Place of Origin

The researcher purposively identified the clients and was able to retrieve 2,006 questionnaires and purposely selected on random sampling 329 clients. In general, the clients were of productive age composed of young adults ages 21-25 years old, 51.07% females and 48.93% males, 56.83% single, and 48.32% were married and came from different places outside of the province of Sorsogon (Figure 1,2,3). The young clients were having on-the-job training sessions in Laguna while the elder age was out of town to work. But unfortunately, because of the lockdown caused by COVID-19, they decided to go back to the municipality so they can be with their families.

Clientele Perception of the Need to Establish the Community Isolation Unit

Good project implementation can be vouched by client feedback on whether they believe that it is a necessity to establish a community isolation facility in the municipality to protect the welfare of the residents. The result was a resounding yes from the clients where 98.48% registered a yes vote for the establishment of the community isolation unit. Given the situation, the clients felt the urgency for the facility because they want to be sure that their families are safe (Figure 3). As a result of the CIU establishment, all the clients in the isolation units easily recovered (Jadie, 2022). Although there are three cases of death in the municipality, those persons were not clients of the Community Isolation Unit that was operated by the Local Government Unit of Gubat.

Perceived Degree of Clientele Satisfaction with The Services in terms of Courtesy, Helpfulness, Friendliness, Counseling, Advising, Caring, Professionalism, and Timeliness Of Service

The most prevailing interpreter for service excellence is client satisfaction. Customers were more particular about the behavior of the service providers in terms of respect and politeness. For them, this part was much more significant than the technical competence of the provider (Mendoza et al 2001). The study revealed that the clients gave an overall Very Satisfied (VS) rating of 47.74 % for the frontliners services and attitude shown during their stay at the community isolation unit, broken down as follows: professionalism = 58.5%, caring = 57.75%, courtesy = 53.19%, friendliness = 55.40 %, advising = 43.46%, helpfulness = 39.51%, counseling = 38.81%, and timeliness of service = 35.26%. Additionally, some clients rated them with an overall Satisfied (S) rating of 34.47% broken down as follows: courtesy = 36.47%, helpfulness = 37.99%, friendliness = 32.22%, counseling = 36.79%, advising = 40.72%, caring = 26.44%, professionalism = 34.04%, and timeliness of service = 26.74%.

The total VS and S rating of 82.21%, signifies that despite the situation, the frontliners attempted to serve well the clients. This also means that the combined VS and S result signifies that the overall rating of the Local Government of Gubat is categorized as Good based on the weather assistance program of America's Fighting Poverty Network (2019).

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that the clients in the community isolation units are mainly female, of legal age, single, who traveled from Metro Manila and other neighboring places to be with the family. Most of them agreed on the move of the government unit to establish the facility for the safety and security purposes of its constituents. The clients of the Community Isolation Facility displayed honesty and sincerity in expressing their thoughts and feelings of satisfaction with the services rendered by the frontliners. The responses to the questionnaires revealed positive results, but still, an improvement in service delivery and human relations is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All health frontliners in the Local Government Units must not only focus on service delivery but should also give attention to the clientele feedback. They may provide training to the health personnel on an aspect of good human relations and psycho-social care. All programs and services of the local government unit may also be subjected to in-depth research on clientele satisfaction to further improve service delivery. The local government unit may construct a permanent isolation structure that will offer facilities to cater to the needs of the clients per age and gender. The facility will serve as a halfway home for residents coming from other places or those who would like to seek assistance for safety reasons.

IMPLICATIONS

This study is significant in providing documentation on customers' satisfaction with the services rendered by the Local Government Units' frontliners. This may serve as a training needs assessment of the personnel for future human resource development. This will open more avenues for future partnerships particularly academic institutions like Bicol University in extending technical assistance on personnel training, which will contribute to the improvement of service delivery. The clients will also realize the importance of expressing their feedback to improve the services.

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DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest exists between the authors that might be considered important to the content of the article.

Informed Consent and Ethical Approval

A letter of consent allowing the authors to publish the article was approved by the Municipal Mayor. Ethical approval was also granted by the same.

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