



# **EFFECTS OF AWARENESS, ACCESSIBILITY, PERCEIVED RELEVANCE OF PROGRAMS, AND TRUST IN BARANGAY LEADERSHIP ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN BARANGAY POBLACION II, SANTA CRUZ, LAGUNA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated whether awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of barangay programs, and trust in barangay leadership influence community engagement among residents of Barangay Poblacion II, Santa Cruz, Laguna. Using a quantitative descriptive-explanatory design, data from 150 randomly selected residents were analyzed through descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. The findings showed that respondents generally agreed that these factors and community engagement were present at positive levels. However, none of the four variables significantly predicted community engagement, with the regression model explaining only 1.4% of its variance. The study concludes that other factors likely influence community engagement and proposes an intervention plan to strengthen citizen participation.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

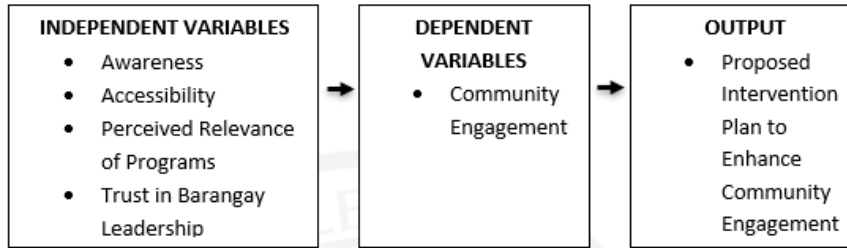
Community engagement is a fundamental component of effective local governance and sustainable community development. It enables citizens to actively participate in planning, decision-making, and implementing programs that directly affect their welfare. In the Philippine local governance system, the barangay serves as the smallest political unit and the primary venue for grassroots participation. Active community engagement promotes transparency, accountability, responsive public service, and collaboration between citizens and local officials, thereby contributing to more inclusive and sustainable local development. Previous studies have shown that engaged communities are more likely to support government initiatives, strengthen institutional effectiveness, and improve the delivery of public services.

Barangay Poblacion II in Santa Cruz, Laguna regularly implements programs related to health, sanitation, environmental protection, peace and order, disaster preparedness, and social services to address the needs of its residents. Despite the availability of these programs, varying levels of community participation continue to be observed. While some barangay activities receive strong public involvement, others experience relatively low participation. These differences suggest that factors beyond the availability of programs may influence residents' willingness to engage in barangay activities and local governance.

Existing literature identifies awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in leadership as important determinants of community engagement. Residents who are well informed about barangay programs are generally more likely to participate in community activities because they are aware of available opportunities and services. Likewise, accessibility influences participation by reducing logistical barriers such as location, transportation, and scheduling constraints. Residents are also more inclined to participate when they perceive barangay programs as relevant to their needs and beneficial to the community. Furthermore, trust in barangay leadership strengthens cooperation between citizens and local officials by fostering confidence in the integrity, transparency, and responsiveness of local governance. Collectively, these governance-related factors have been recognized as important contributors to civic participation and effective local governance.

This study is anchored on the principles of participatory governance and sustainable local development, which emphasize the importance of citizen involvement in achieving responsive and accountable public service. Although previous studies have examined awareness, accessibility, program relevance, and trust in leadership in broader local government settings and urban communities, limited empirical evidence exists at the barangay level, particularly within the context of Barangay Poblacion II, Santa Cruz, Laguna. Moreover, few studies have simultaneously examined the combined effects of these governance-related variables on community engagement using a quantitative explanatory approach. Addressing this gap provides localized evidence that may assist barangay officials and policymakers in developing evidence-based strategies to strengthen citizen participation and improve governance outcomes.

This study aimed to determine the effects of awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership on community engagement among residents of Barangay Poblacion II, Santa Cruz, Laguna. Specifically, it assessed the levels of these governance-related variables and examined their influence on community engagement through multiple linear regression analysis. The findings of the study served as the basis for developing a proposed intervention plan to enhance community engagement and promote more responsive, participatory, and sustainable local governance.



**Figure 1. Research Paradigm**

Figure 1 presents the Independent Variable–Dependent Variable (IV–DV) framework of the study. The independent variables consist of awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership, while community engagement serves as the dependent variable. The framework assumes that these governance-related factors influence residents' participation in barangay programs and activities. The findings of the regression analysis provide the basis for the development of a proposed intervention plan aimed at enhancing community engagement in Barangay Poblacion II.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-explanatory research design to determine the effects of awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership on community engagement among residents of Barangay Poblacion II, Santa Cruz, Laguna. The respondents consisted of 150 residents selected through simple random sampling. A researcher-made questionnaire adapted from validated instruments was used to gather data. The questionnaire comprised three sections: the respondents' demographic profile, the independent variables (awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership), and the dependent variable (community engagement). Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale. The instrument underwent content validation by experts, and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha confirmed acceptable internal consistency.

The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and multiple linear regression analysis to determine the levels of the study variables and examine their effects on community engagement at the 0.05 level of significance. Ethical standards were observed throughout the study. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the concerned authorities, participation was voluntary, informed consent was secured from all respondents, and the confidentiality of the participants' information was maintained in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Awareness	2.89	0.44	Agree
Accessibility	2.85	0.46	Agree
Perceived Relevance of Programs	2.87	0.41	Agree
Trust in Barangay Leadership	2.89	0.43	Agree
Community Engagement	2.92	0.42	Agree

The findings revealed that residents of Barangay Poblacion II generally exhibited positive perceptions of the governance-related variables examined in the study. Awareness (M = 2.89), accessibility (M = 2.85), perceived relevance of programs (M = 2.87), and trust in barangay leadership (M = 2.89) were all interpreted as Agree, indicating that respondents were generally informed about barangay programs, considered these programs accessible and relevant, and expressed confidence in their barangay leaders. Likewise, community engagement obtained an overall mean of 2.92 (Agree), suggesting that residents generally participated in barangay activities, attended community programs, shared feedback, and supported local initiatives. Overall, the findings indicate that Barangay Poblacion II maintains a generally positive environment for citizen participation and local governance.



**Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Effects of Awareness, Accessibility, Perceived Relevance of Programs, and Trust in Barangay Leadership on Community Engagement**

Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	2.305	0.497	—	4.635	.000
Awareness	0.020	0.080	0.020	0.247	.805
Accessibility	0.023	0.078	0.024	0.290	.772
Perceived Relevance of Programs	0.066	0.088	0.063	0.742	.459
Trust in Barangay Leadership	0.105	0.083	0.106	1.269	.207

**Model Fit:**  $R^2 = .014$ ;  $F(4,145) = 0.530$ ;  $p = .714$

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis showed that awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership did not significantly predict community engagement. The regression model was not statistically significant,  $F(4,145) = 0.530$ ,  $p = .714$ , with an  $R^2$  value of .014, indicating that only 1.4% of the variance in community engagement was explained by the combined influence of the four governance-related variables. Likewise, none of the individual predictors demonstrated a statistically significant effect on community engagement ( $p > .05$ ). These findings suggest that while residents generally hold favorable perceptions of barangay programs and leadership, these factors alone do not necessarily translate into higher levels of community engagement. Other social, economic, cultural, or personal factors not included in the study may have a greater influence on residents' participation in barangay activities.

The findings imply that although awareness, accessibility, perceived relevance of programs, and trust in barangay leadership remain important aspects of effective local governance, increasing community engagement may require broader strategies that address additional determinants of citizen participation. These results provide a basis for developing interventions that encourage more active and sustained community involvement while exploring other factors that may better explain community engagement within the barangay.

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## AI Declaration

The researcher used ChatGPT (OpenAI) and Grammarly as AI-assisted tools during the preparation of this manuscript. Their use was limited to improving grammar, sentence structure, language clarity, organization, and formatting. AI was also used to assist in summarizing sections and enhancing readability. The conceptualization of the study, literature review, research design, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, and conclusions were performed by the researcher under the guidance of the thesis adviser. All AI-generated suggestions were critically reviewed, verified, and revised before incorporation into the final manuscript. No AI tool was used to generate or interpret research findings independently.