



Public Perception on Corporate Social Responsibilities of Various Agricultural Industries in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, Philippines

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Abstract

Recent influx of multinational agri-companies (PMFT, Del Monte, Dole) has changed the socio-economic and agro-ecosystems dynamics of the municipality of Claveria, Misamis Oriental. Conventional cropping systems, such as vegetable and corn production, have been replaced by corporate-dictated commodities, namely, tobacco, pineapple, and banana. These firms operate with the corporate social responsibility (CSR) as the company's commitment to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve their quality of life. However, to have a real impact among locals, CSR must be thoroughly understood and local perception must be gauged. A series of focus group discussions involving key stakeholders and local officials and a survey involving more than 200 respondents within the study site were conducted. Survey questionnaires were translated to local dialect, pretested, and administered. Responses were collated and analyzed using central tendencies (mean, median, mode) and revalidated. Results show that the companies' existence made a positive impression with the local government, but low to very low awareness on the issue of CSR within the general public was shown. Perceived awareness of any initiatives at improving social or environmental conditions in the community was indeed very low and most respondents claimed to have no idea at all. The community has not fully appreciated the efforts of these companies and failed to fully understand that the scope of corporate responsibility may operate beyond the companies' normal commercial environment or traditional business operations and can thus benefit the community.