

Clients' Satisfaction and Expectations on the Frontline Services of the Denr - Penro in Sorsogon

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Abstract— This study aimed to determine the degree of client satisfaction, expectations and some issues and problems encountered with the frontline services of DENR-PENRO, Sorsogon for the Fiscal Year 2018. It used a descriptive-survey method and a survey questionnaire was devised for the gathering of the primary data as reflected in the problem. The respondents were 142 clients of DENR-PENRO, Sorsogon which were purposively chosen. The statistical tools utilized were the frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and ranking and for expectations of clients to the personnel, process and product, a descriptive method was used. The study revealed that the frontline services mostly availed by the clients of the DENR-PENRO Sorsogon are found in the Protected Area services hand-in-hand with the Administrative and Support Services. The clients are very satisfied with the personnel on the frontline services. However, they are satisfied with the process and products. Majority of the clients met their expectations satisfactorily in consideration of the three indicators and measures of satisfaction. However, clients are expecting for some improvements in terms of personnel, process and products. The client's satisfaction survey is highly significant to the agency aside from improvement on personnel's traits and values towards dealing with the clients. In addition, it is pertinent as a basis for continual improvement and designing follow through actions and in crafting a new action plan. The action plan is proposed in order to improve the client's satisfaction of the frontline services of DENR-PENRO Sorsogon.

Keywords— satisfaction, expectations, personnel, process, product.

I. INTRODUCTION

The client's satisfaction and expectation survey has become a global approach in performance evaluation of an Office /agency of a public or private entity, to check on the degree of customer's satisfaction along with the personnel, process and product. Based on the Quality Management System (QMS) Manual of the DENR-CO (2018) with ISO certification in 2018, the client's satisfaction cuts across all the DENR processes. This is a critical drive of the department for continual improvement of the QMS. Also, this is a form of feedback mechanism by the DENR to gather both positive and negative impressions on the operationalization of services and issuances of products. Likewise, this feedback mechanism provided an open-ended clause to encourage suggestions and comments from clients and to improve towards better customer service. (DENR Special Order No. 2010 – 12: Creation of the Public Assistance Unit). The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the executive department of the Philippine government responsible for governing and supervising exploration, development, utilization and conservation of Natural Resources. Several reorganizations took place therefore on June 10, 1987 through the Executive Order (EO) No. 192, the Department was re-structured hence finally named as the "Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)".

Through the EO 192, series of 1987, the DENR is mandated to be responsible for the conservation, management and development, and proper use of the country's environment and natural resources specifically forest and grazing lands, mineral resources, including those in reservation and watershed areas, and lands of public domain, as well as the licensing and regulation of all natural resources as maybe provided by law in order to ensure equitable sharing of the benefits derived therefrom for the welfare of the present and future generations of Filipinos. (Manual of Operations, 1987). To carry out its mandate, accomplish its ultimate goal and achieve its vision which is "A nation enjoying and sustaining its natural resources and clean and healthy environment", several frontline services were offered by the DENR, as follows: Forest Management Services which catering for the conservation, development, proper utilization and management of the forest's environment and its natural resources. Some of the services offered under this are: processing and issuance of Tenurial Instruments like Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA), Special Forest Land Use Agreement (FLAg), Special Forest Land Use Agreement for Tourism (FLAgT), Special Land Use Permit (SLUP), Cutting Permits including Special / Tree Cutting Permit (S/TCP), Special / Private Land Timber Permit (PLTP), Rattan Cutting Contract (RCC) and Ordinary Minor Forest Product License (OMFPL); Transport Permit which includes Certificate of Timber Origin (CTO), Certificate

of Lumber Origin (CLO), Certificate of Minor Forest Product Origin (CMFPO), Certificate of Verification (COV), Certificate of Transshipment (COT) and Certificate of Tree Plantation Ownership (CTPO), Trade Certificates and Chainsaw Permits to include Chainsaw Registration, Permit to Purchase Chainsaw, and related permits to chainsaw use including permit to sell or dispose or distribute or transfer Ownership of Chainsaw. This study focused on major frontline services under forestry including chainsaw registration and cutting permit from DPWH and private individuals.

Second is Land Management Services. All matters concerning Lands both forest land, alienable and disposable lands and foreshore lands, its management, survey, disposition and utilization are with the Land Management Service. Specific services are land survey and administration which focus on Cadastral Survey, Public Land Surveys (under CARP), Isolated Land Surveys, Survey of Residential Lands, Inspection/ Verification and Approval of all types of Surveys (IVAS), Computerization of Base Minor Forest Product Maps and Data Integration to PRS92. However, the focus of this study on land management are Land Disposition which included Patent Issuance both for Agricultural (CARP) and Residential Patents (RA 10023), Miscellaneous Sales Patents (Industrial, Commercial and Residential), and Special Patents for Government Sites and other Quasi-Public Use.

Third is Biodiversity Management Services. There are three major frontline services provided to clients under this which include Protected Areas and Other Ecosystems Management and Development. These services provide for the CITES permit consisting of 2 types namely: CITES Import Permit and CITES Export Permit, CITES Re-Export Permit, Gratuitous Permit and MOA for Biodiversity Research and the Bioprospecting Undertaking for Terrestrial Biological Resources. Additional services provided are related to Wildlife Resources Conservation and Management.

The fourth is Administrative and Support Services. Along with the scope and coverage of the frontline services, an audit policy be it external or internal must be conducted and implemented for possible improvement and advancement of the strategies, activities, program and projects. These services cut across the other services as well which provide for the payment services of the clients and applicants.

In the recently approved DENR Quality Manual and Central Office – Based certification on ISO 9001:2015, particularly on article V named Management Process

specifically on section V.4.4 Stakeholder Satisfaction, emphasis is on the stakeholder feedback process which is a critical part of the Department's drive for continual improvement of its QMS. This feedback mechanism included gathering of positive and negative impressions on the provision of products/services, as well as an open ended clause to encourage suggestions and comments from clients. The feedback is summarized and reported on a regular basis to measure the degree of satisfaction of DENR's clientele and collect suggestions on how to provide better customer services to its stakeholders.

Under the Memorandum Circular No. 2019–1 dated September 3, 2019, subject Guideline on the Grant of Performance – Based Bonus (PBB) for Fiscal Year 2019, under Executive Order No. 80, s. 2012 and Executive Order No. 21, S. 2016, section 3 on Eligibility Criteria and particularly on 3.2. a Performance Targets of Agencies, it stated that for National Government Agencies and GOCCs covered by DBM, agencies should achieve the streamlining requirements of government services, achieve higher citizen and client's satisfaction, and achieve fiscal discipline. Furthermore, under section 5 of the same Executive Order, particularly on section 5.2, it requires citizen/clients satisfaction. The objective of which is to determine the effectiveness and process improvements initiated by agencies, the satisfaction level of citizens/clients shall be measured and reported.

The goal provided for a functional government structure is "Excellence in Service" (Civil Service Commission, 2017). The DENR – PENRO Sorsogon has been existing for more than three (3) decades now and has been offering almost the same government services related to forestry management, land management, protected areas and critical habitat management services, coastal and marine services, law enforcement services and other operational and management services. Evaluation as to the quality, efficiency and timeliness of the services offered to clients were seldom conducted and only required on compliance to PBB. It is in this light, that we wanted to evaluate our organizational performance through feedback mechanism or the most familiar clients' satisfaction survey (CSS). The customer satisfaction survey is used to understand customer's satisfaction level with the organization's products, services, or experiences and gain a deeper understanding of whether or not the organization is meeting the customer's expectations. This is one type of customer experience survey that is used to gauge customer's needs, understand problems with the products and/or services,

or segment customers by their scores on their dealings with the personnel, process and products.

The need to conduct the Client’s Satisfaction survey is highly significant for the agency not only as compliance to DBM Circulars and memorandum and other pertinent laws but this serves as basis for improvement and designing a follow through actions, crafting of new plans, programs and activities relevant to the achievement of the vision, mission, and goals of the department.

This study is a pioneering research undertakings in DENR PENRO Sorsogon since evaluation with the use of a survey tool covers Clients’ satisfaction on the personnel, process, product, clients’ expectations and problems with the frontline services and categorical recommendations were formulated. In this survey, we analyzed the level of satisfaction of our clients in terms of the personnel providing services with the clients, processes involved in the application, and product or output provided to clients.

Table 1: *The respondents and sample for the survey, CY 2018.*

DENR – PENRO SERVICES	5% sample size Respondents	Percent % distribution of respondents
Forestry Management Services	13	9.00
Land Management Service	16	11.00
Protected Area Services / Support to Management Services	113	80.00
Total	142	100

Finally, this study would like to recommend policies to further improve the services provided and extended to the clients in line with the personnel, processes, and product.

This study aimed to determine the client’s satisfaction and their expectations on the frontline services as well as to identify and rank the existing problems with the personnel, process and products of DENR – PENRO Sorsogon for the Fiscal Year 2018. Specifically, it aimed to (1) determine the frontline services mostly availed of by the clients of the DENR – PENRO, Sorsogon in terms of Land Services, Forest Management Services, and Protected Area Services; (2) determine the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of the DENR–PENRO in terms of: personnel, process, and products; (3) find out the expectations of the Clients on the frontline services of the DENR – PENRO along the identified variables; (4) identify the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of the DENR-PENRO along the identified variables; and (5) propose an action plan.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the descriptive-survey method since a questionnaire was used in gathering the primary data. A structured survey questionnaire was used as a tool in collecting data from the respondents and had already been reviewed and pre-tested to measure the level of satisfaction of the customers in terms of the personnel dealing with the clients, the process, and the product. It adopted the 5-point Likert scale from 1 which is the lowest and 5 as the highest score. Various

statistical tools were used such as frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and ranking in analyzing the data. In terms of Expectations from the Clients, the descriptive type of narrative report and analysis was adopted.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were analyzed and interpretation of the data gathered from respondents were presented with the use of appropriate tables that are sequentially arranged to answer the problem in the study. Tables were used in presenting the results of the data analysis.

1) Frontline services mostly availed by the clients of the DENR-PENRO Sorsogon.

Table 2 contains the frequency and percentage of the frontline services mostly availed by the clients of the DENR-PENRO Sorsogon in terms of forestry management services, land services, and Administrative and Support Services which is cutting across the Protected Area Management Services. The frequency and percentage were used in analyzing the data and in checking the validity of the respondents and the sampling size. There were 142 total respondents who were interviewed and 100% retrieval of the questionnaire.

For the Forest Management Service, respondents were those applicants who availed of the Chainsaw registration, and applicants for Tree Cutting Permits and transport permit. The core processes under the Land Management Service are those applications for land disposition or Free Patent Issuances both for residential and agricultural and applications for land certification.

Under Protected Area Management Services and Support to Management Services, the respondents here were those who availed of the requests and payments for certification and those who paid for claims and other services which were mostly availed by the clients and this is composed of 113 frequency (f) value and represented by 80% of the total clients. These majority of the clients got the highest percentage value because all of the other services have to pass through the

administrative and support services through the payments of claims and payment of the services including the payment of patent applications, forestry related permits and certificates, revenues collected from protected areas known as Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF) and any other product picked – up by the applicant has to be dealt with the management frontline-service provider.

Table 2: Frontline Services Mostly Availed by the Clients.

Frontline Services	Frequency (f)	Percentage(%)
Forestry Management Service	13	9
Land Management Service	16	11
Protected Area Management Services / Admin and Support to Management Services	113	80
Total	142	100

From among the 142 respondent samples, there were 13 applicants for forest management services and 8 of them were applicants for chainsaw registrations, and 5 for cutting permits. Also, there were 16 applicants on land titling both for residential and agricultural; and 113 for payment of claims and other support services under Administrative and Support Services including Protected Area Management Services. The total number of clients of the identified and pre-determined respondents were represented by 5% sampling size equivalent to 142 individuals, which were taken from a total client’s transaction record of clients over the year (2018). This is the frontline service mostly availed of by the clients because all other services offered and

availed of by the clients had to pass through the management services. Most of the end-products of other services have their corresponding cost that clients has to settle obligations before pick-up of any form of end-product.

2. Level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO Personnel

This section covers the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO in terms of personnel, process, and products. The weighted mean was used in analyzing the data.

Table 3-A: Level of Satisfaction of the Clients on the Frontline Services in terms of personnel.

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Ability to communicate with clients in simple and easy to understand language.	4.80	Very Satisfied
2. Ability to provide clear and specific answers to questions.	4.77	Very Satisfied
3. Openness to receiving Comments and feedbacks.	4.65	Very Satisfied
4. Promptness in attending the Clients.	4.77	Very Satisfied
5. Politeness towards clients.	4.84	Very Satisfied
6. Fair treatment to clients.	4.77	Very Satisfied
7. Competence in providing service.	4.74	Very Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	4.76	Very Satisfied

Personnel. Table 3-A presents the weighted mean and interpretation of the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO in terms of personnel. There were seven (7) indicator listed to evaluate the level of satisfaction of the clients in terms of their dealings with the personnel of the DENR – PENRO, Sorsogon. The indicators were: ability to

communicate with the clients in simple and understandable language, ability to provide clear and specific answers to questions, openness to receiving comments and feedbacks, promptness in attending the clients, politeness towards clients, fair treatment to clients, and competence in providing service.

In terms of the ability to communicate with clients in simple and understandable language, out of the 142 respondents, there were 114 respondents who exceeded their expectation and were very satisfied in communicating with our personnel, with a percentage rating of 80.28% and a 4.80 mean average rating indicating that clients were very satisfied. There were about 28 respondents or 19.72% who were satisfied and no respondent under this indicator had said that they were dissatisfied neither very dissatisfied, and not even one stood in the neutral ground. This means that language and communication are very vital in attending to clients. Really, communication and language are the soul of a good relationship, develop understanding and attract more clients.

Under the indicator referring to the ability to provide clear and specific answers to questions of clients by service provider, there were 80.28% corresponding to 109 against 142 respondents who were very much satisfied with our personnel. This has a mean average score of 4.77 providing an impression that clients were very satisfied with the personnel. Our frontline service providers were able to provide answers to specific questions of the clients and are oriented on the policies, procedures, issues and concerns that they are handling at. There were 33 or 23.24% individual clients who were satisfied. No dissatisfaction recorded.

Similarly, this result is conforming with the First Quarter 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey Results of Pampanga Serbilis Outlet on June 27, 2019, the customer satisfaction regarding the employees of the Serbilis Outlet was listed as 84% and 79.8% for the 1st quarter of 2019 and 2018, respectively who were satisfied with the employees, service, guideline and facilities of the outlet, and only 7.8% and 2.8% said that clients were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied with the outlet service, respectively. Furthermore, the outlet had a good outcome regarding their employees or frontline service providers since only 1.2% ticked the dissatisfied option and nobody had chosen the very dissatisfied option.

Openness to receiving comments and feedbacks was another indicator evaluated with the people dealing to clients. There were 94 respondents of about 66.20% who were very satisfied and 47 respondents corresponding to 33.10% who were satisfied. However, one (1) respondent with a rating of 0.70% was dissatisfied. It is presumed that an inquiry or suggestion from a client was not given special attention and/or not properly accepted and addressed by a certain personnel, thus the dissatisfaction rating. Generally, the clients' answered

that they were very satisfied with this indicator at 4.65 weighted mean (WM).

There were 111 individuals against 142 total respondents who answered that they were very satisfied with the promptness of the frontline service providers in attending to Clients. About 29 of them or 20.4% were also satisfied and only two (2) clients corresponding to 1.4% were dissatisfied. Promptness in attending the clients got 4.77 WM indicating the majority of the respondents were very satisfied to the service providers. Clients could hardly wait in the line, thus immediate attention and fast responses would be highly appreciated by them. It could be surmised that the clients were not given a chance to wait for so long while on official transaction with the service provider, thus their level of satisfaction was very high. Time element is essential in the process undertaken and clients had a very high expectation in dealing with their application, it was handled properly by the personnel thus the rating was met satisfactorily.

Furthermore, in the indicator for politeness towards clients, there were 119 or 83.8% respondents who were very satisfied on the traits practiced by the service provider; there were 23 or 16.2% respondents who were dissatisfied. Majority of the clients said that the traits of the people in the DENR-PENRO providing services to the clients were polite. The WM is 4.84 indicating that clients were very satisfied. In this case, adding a personal touch to your client and showing respect would make your client happier and more contented.

This study showed that the clients were treated fairly, with a percentage rating of 77.446% (VS) and represented by 110 respondents. There were about 32 respondents who were also satisfied with corresponding rating of 54%. No dissatisfaction remark was recorded. Fair treatment to clients got 4.77 WM indicating very satisfactory rating. This goes to show that service providers in the DENR-PENRO, Sorsogon follow the rule of numbers, who comes first shall be served first. Though this is not discounting the rule for the Senior Citizens (SCs) and the Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) who are always given the priority lane.

In terms of the peoples' competence in providing services, majority of the clients were very satisfied with the sense of authority in the field of expertise and the services the personnel were providing with to the clients. The rating was corresponding to 74.65% which is very satisfactory (VS). There were 34 clients or 23.94% who were satisfied with regards to the competence shown by the service providers and an insignificant number of

respondents was neutral at 0.70%. The WM is 4.74 and indicating very satisfactory rating. The implication of the result of the study is that the DENR–PENRO is serving with high confidence relative to the services they are offering and clients would not be in doubt of the process and requirements being asked from them.

This data can be cross-checked with the study on Clients’ Satisfaction on the Frontline Services of a Government Higher Education Institution conducted by Perez and Ilagan (2020), the area on competence got the highest satisfaction rating while the area on basic facilities got the lowest satisfaction. The government HEI managed to deliver good quality services but with gaps and not enough to earn high satisfaction among its clients.

Among the seven (7) indicators of satisfaction relative to traits as expected from the DENR-PENRO personnel, the overall weighted mean is 4.76 which is interpreted as very satisfactory. The PENRO, Sorsogon met and exceeded the expectation of the Clients on the aspects of attitudes and traits in dealing with the clients. And, among those traits and attitudes, “politeness to the clients” got the highest rating among the traits and showed highest degree of satisfaction among the clients at 83.8%. This was followed by the “ability to communicate well with the client in simple and understandable language” at 80.28% which is very satisfactory, as well. These two (2) traits are very important aspects in making the clients happier and

contented. In the publication of Gregory (2009) entitled: Five Ways to Please Your Clients and Five Reasons Why You Should, two (2) of the most important traits and indicators which she emphasized which were rated by clients very satisfactory were: effective communication and honesty. This trait will definitely retain your clients and the Office will get that good branding, which would finally encourage more client’s to come to you.

In contrary, the aspect on the people’s dealing and traits with the clients that needs improvement is “openness to receiving comments and feedback”. This indicator of satisfaction got the lowest rating at 66.20% among the seven indicators. According to the article published by Baldassarre (2015), it costs five times more to find a new customer than to retain a current customer. The Service providers need to listen and value Client’s point-of-view. Baldassarre mentioned in his article that clients are experts in their field, thus one has to listen to ideas and inputs from the clients because they have worked with their own product. So, the service providers have to be open and listen to the needs of the clients and personalize service to each and respective client to gain their trust.

Process: Table 3-B presents the weighted mean and interpretation of the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO in terms of process.

Table 3-B: Level of Satisfaction of the Clients on the Frontline Services in Terms of Process

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Number of steps involved.	4.46	Satisfied
2. Clarity of procedures	4.53	Very Satisfied
3. Amount of fees and charges paid.	4.52	Very Satisfied
4. Number of documentary requirements.	4.49	Satisfied
5. Ease of complying with documentary requirements.	4.43	Satisfied
6. Length of processing time to complete the transaction.	4.45	Satisfied
7. Easy access to the approving authority.	4.42	Satisfied
Overall Weighted Mean	4.47	Satisfied

Under this category, there were seven (7) indicators provided for the clients to gauge their satisfaction level. The 7 indicators included: Number of steps involved, clarity of procedures and steps involved, amount of fees and charges paid, number of documentary requirements, ease of complying with documentary requirements, length of processing time to complete the transaction, and easy access to the approving authority.

In terms of results-based output, the overall weighted mean for seven indicators of satisfaction of clients to the process that they underwent was 4.47 WM and interpreted satisfactory. This implies of this is that the clients were satisfied with the processes involved during their application until the product was picked-up, but somehow there is a certain gap and something is lacking to make the clients happier, more satisfied and exceed their expectations. For the indicator referring to the number of steps involved, there were 72 clients who said they were very satisfied and had exceeded their

expectation, meaning the steps they underwent during their application was conforming with the client's expectation for a rating of 50.90%, a very satisfactory rating. Under this indicator, the clients were significantly favoring the number of steps involved in the processing of their applications. However, if there would be a chance to reduce the number of steps involved, it would be a pleasure to the clients. There were 65 respondents or 45.77% clients who were satisfied and about four (4) or 2.82% clients expressed dissatisfaction, and another 0.70% of the clients indicated their disappointment. It is implied that the service provider may have to find time to review the processes of respective services and introduce improvement to reduce the process steps.

The indicator pertaining to the clarity of procedures, there were 79 respondents or 55.63% clients who were very satisfied; 59 respondents or 41.55% among the clients were satisfied; and 4 or 2.82% expressed dissatisfaction. These 2.82% were those who did not understand fully well the procedural guidelines, and maybe their application and attachment as documentary evidence were rejected, therefore they have to go back to step one, review and repeat the process.

In terms of the amount of fees and charges paid, there were 79 respondents or 55.63% clients who were very satisfied, there were 58 or 40.85% clients who expressed satisfaction and 5 or 3.52% clients were dissatisfied. Majority of the clients said that the fees collected and paid by them are enough, fair and affordable. These few number of clients who expressed dissatisfaction, had to be inquired to learn from them the reasons why they were dissatisfied and finally recommend solutions and to finally ease the burden of requirements.

According to the number of documentary requirements, there were 76 or 53.52% clients who were very satisfied with the requirements asked for; there were 60 or 42.25% clients who were satisfied and a minimal number of 6 respondents or 4.23% clients re dissatisfied, and declared that documentary requirements are difficult to comply.

For the ease of complying with documentary requirements, there were 72 respondent or 50.70% clients who replied that they are very satisfied, and about 62 or 43.66% clients were satisfied; an insignificant respondent (3) of 2.11% clients were dissatisfied and 1.41% clients (2) were neutral or did not bother to answer. This data would still mean that clients experienced difficulty in securing for the requirements necessary in the issuance of a certain product-output as

indicated by 43% of the clients. This case is true because some of the documentary requirements are requested and secured from other government agencies and authorized certifying body. For instance, in the application for Residential Patent or Agricultural Patent, the documentary requirement that is quite difficult to comply is the attached approved survey plan of the lot applied for. This is tedious and a bit costly. This is why most applicants cannot immediately comply with this requirement. Moreover, this And that requirement was apart from the required Tax Declaration, lot certification, proof of claim and mode of conveyances, and some other legal documents that would support one's claim of the residential/agricultural lot applied for.

In terms of length of processing time to complete the transaction, there were 58 or 40.85% respondents who were very satisfied; about a significant 51.41% or 73 respondents were satisfied; very few got an insignificant rating of 5.63% were dissatisfied; and 3 or 2.11% did not comment whether the processing time is long or short. It is implied that with clients who were dissatisfied and do not have comment, time involved in the processing of any application is of utmost importance. If it can still be reduced, the clients would be more contented.

For the indicator related to easy access to the approving authority, majority of the respondents said that the approving authority is accessible, hence a satisfactory to very satisfactory rating, 43.66% (62) and 50.70% (72), respectively. There were about 3.52% clients or 5 respondents who were undecided or neutral, and just take it as it is.

Our objective is to leave no client in the brim of disappointment. We wanted that majority of the clients are excellently served and this aspect challenges one to give its best shot and build a good reputation especially the approving authorities to be approachable and accessible. If the approving authorities were able to build a good reputation, by word of mouth, clients will be absolutely happy and encouraged to come back and avail of the services again.

Finally, from among the indicators pertaining to the process involved during application, "clarity of the process and steps involve" got the highest rating of satisfaction to a very high satisfaction rating. This was followed by the aspect on the "amount of fees paid or collected" and the "number of documentary requirements attached to the application" which got satisfactory to very satisfactory rating, respectively.

Under these indicators, the challenge is on the improvement of the processing time to complete one transaction. For instance, in the application for Chainsaw registration under Forestry Services, if the turn-around time to complete the process can be reduced from 5 hours to 3 hours and for tree cutting permit from 40 days to only 30 days or one month, and under Land Management Services, the turn-around-time for patent issuance both for residential and agricultural would only stick to 120 days, then the DENR – PENRO would be gaining more very satisfied clients.

Products. Table 3-C lists the weighted mean and interpretation of the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO in terms of

products. The overall weighted mean is also included in the table.

In Table 3-C, there were seven indicators (7) to evaluate the level of satisfaction of the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO in terms of the product. These are usefulness of the product; accuracy of the information written on the permit, certification, title/patents, etc.; completeness of the information written on the permit, certification, patents; clarity of the information written on the permit, certification, title or patents, etc.; period of validity; readability of the document/product; and overall appearance and paper quality.

Table 3-C: Level of Satisfaction of the Clients on the Frontline services in terms of products

Indicators	WM	I
1. Usefulness of the product.	4.73	VS
2. Accuracy of the information written on the permit, Certification, title/patents, etc.	4.44	S
3. Completeness of the information written on the permit, certification, patents, etc.	4.46	S
4. Clarity of the information written on the permit, certification, title or patents, etc.	4.38	S
5. Period of validity	4.56	S
6. Readability of the document/ product	4.38	VS
7. Overall appearance and paper quality	4.46	S
Overall Weighted Mean	4.49	S

On the usefulness of the product, majority of the clients expressed their satisfaction as to its functionality, and that it serves its very purpose, proving this study a rating of 73.24%. There were 104 respondents or 73.24% clients who were very satisfied and 38 or 29.79% clients who expressed that they were also satisfied. There was no remarks recorded for dissatisfaction on this indicator.

About the completeness of the information written on the permit, certification, patents, etc., majority were very satisfied with a score of 76 or 55.63% clients. There were 56 or 39.44% clients who were satisfied and an insignificant rating 0.70% expressed dissatisfaction. Also, there were 11 or 7.75% clients who failed to answer that item. With that score, the respondents were extremely happy as to the completeness of information they got from the documents they received except for the minimal number of clients who felt dissatisfied.

On aspect of clarity of the information written on the permit, certification, title or patents, etc., majority of the clients were contented with the end product they got, as shown by 50% rating of the clients. No dissatisfaction was recorded from the clients.

The period of validity seemed to be highly acceptable from the responses of the majority of the clients at 49 respondents or 34.51% clients were satisfied with the product they got. However, there were 2 or 1.41% who expressed their disappointment. The implication of this item is that these 1.41% clients who expressed want that the validity of the product they got had to be extended. Meaning, in a certain period of the utility of the product, that 1.41% clients experienced rejection of permit or certification, or validity of the document had lapsed already before it served its purpose. This condition is possible and can be experienced during the enforcement of a transport permit issued under Forest Management Services. Usually, the validity period for transport permit is 3 days, however, if the applicant is not ready or have not anticipated for the duration of its travel time, the transport covered period for the said permit lapsed and the same applicant will apply for another permit. In this case, holder of the permit should apply for extension before the certificate lapses.

In terms of readability of the document /product, 65 respondents or 45.77% of the clients can read it well and 68 respondents or 47.89% were satisfied with the product. However, there were 9 or 6.34% who did not respond to the questionnaire. Maybe, those clients neither need assistance in reading the content of the

document or the document were very clear to them that they need not question it anymore.

For the overall appearance and paper quality, 80 respondents or 56.33% of the clients were very satisfied, and 54 or 38.02 clients were satisfied, others did not answer (3.32%) or neutral, 3.32% Clients. Similarly, the issued permits from Forest Management Services, appearance of the certificates and permits can still be improved. The findings here imply that there are clients who wish that the document or any product they are going to receive from DENR – PENRO after their application is a much improved quality not only good in appearance.

The level of satisfaction of the clients on the seven indicators on product is satisfactory with an average weighted mean of 4.49. The implication is that the whole package of the product being requested for may be improved and the weak factors under this category maybe given attention. To mention some of the criteria for the best idea - justifying your innovative choice, Bacharach, et. al. (2016) considered “clarity, usability, stability, scalability, stickiness, integration and profitability.” The end-product may consider, too this criterion to provide the best one possible.

3. Expectations of the Clients to the Frontline Services

This portion encompasses the expectations of the clients to the frontline services along personnel, process and products.

Personnel. In general, the people at DENR – PENRO, Sorsogon had exceeded the expectations of the clients in terms of the seven (7) identified traits and indicators and measures of satisfaction in dealing with the clients as stated above. Some said: “Satisfied naman kaya wala ng maisuhestiyon.” Others commented that they do not expect for more and further said: “Just maintain the good work, keep it up and maintain it.” However, there were some clients who were also expecting more from personnel whom they are dealing with. One really cannot please all, there were clients who said that personnel should be firm and decisive. Some clients said, “Sana mapanindigan nila ang mga binitiwang salita,” and that is what clients expected from personnel”

Among the attitude expected by clients from Frontline service providers that gave highest scores were: “politeness towards clients” and “ability to communicate with clients in simple and understanding

language”; and “promptness in attending the clients”. Some clients commented that the “DENR have prompt and polite employees and wanting that personnel to just keep up that quality service, and not emulate the negative attitude shown by other personnel of the other government agencies.

Openness to receiving comments and feedbacks has to be exercised. Clients and personnel must both be open to communication. “Customer satisfaction is a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure that results from obtaining what one hopes for and expects from an appealing product and/or service (Kotler and Keller, 2006)

Under this aspect, still the personnel are being reminded to provide a room for improvement and the clients suggested to the management to allocate and maintain a suggestion box for clients’ ready access to their suggestion and comments and / or request the clients’ to list down concerns in the client satisfaction survey (CSS) form. The clients were expecting that the personnel would be more open to suggestions on how to improve the traits and manners of service provider’s dealing with the clients.

The clients said further that the frontline service providers are prompt and polite. Majority of the clients said the frontline service providers have the ability to provide clear and specific answers to questions, however, based on listed expectations, clients were expecting that the service providers would provide them list/s of all the necessary and needed information, and open to communication. Maybe, this is to follow – up and get updated status of their application and other clarity concerns, thus clients are expecting for a facility for an open window transaction. This expectation is supported by Baldassarre (2015) who states that Ten Ways to Keep Making Your Customer Happier, “communication makes everything easier. Schedule periodical calls with your customers to share updates about how things are going and how happy they are with your service on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the best.”

Despite the high satisfaction rating on “promptness and politeness of the service providers”, clients were expecting from service providers a fast and easy access to information, process and authority.

The clients were expecting from the Office to increase the number of service providers. Maybe, the clients here experienced long and queuing time before she got an access to the service providers.

As expected, the people at DENR-PENRO followed rules and guidelines. An insignificant number of client said that it was indeed expected that people from DENR will keep and stand on what they said and had written in the guidelines. In support to this, here are some of the of the best ways to increase customer retention for service businesses (Baldassarre, 2015): “become an authority in your field”, this is striving to be the best in your service for people will keep on looking for you, clients will likely stick to you; “be decisive”, avoiding “if” and showing confidence in your field and decisions; and “be clear and transparent”, stating clearly what to do and how you deliver your services and stating clearly what clients can expect from you. With that, clients will be greatly satisfied with the personnel providing quality services.

Process. In connection with the expectations of clients to process involved during their application, majority were very satisfied with the processes involved in the frontline services discussed here. The following aspects and indicators exceeded clients’ expectations including: “clarity of procedures and steps involved, and “the amount of fees and charges. However, on the length of processing time, majority of the clients had just met their expectations. So, the clients were expecting for improvement in turn-around-time during their application. Some clients were hoping and expecting that there will be reduction in the number of hours/ days and also a reduction in the documentary requirements listed the next time they avail of the DENR-PENRO’s services, “Sana mapadali, mapaiksi, at maging simple ang proseso, lalo na sa residential patent, sana makuha agad namin ang Titulo ng lupa.” This is because, in certain occasions, issuance of patent is delayed due to difficulty of securing the requirements from other service providers and/or other signatories due to claimant of the land were not available or others signatories are residing abroad. However, clients were expecting still that processing be made fast, and hopeful to receive their documents within the prescribed period.

There were clients who expressed that their expectations were not met, and some were expecting that the Office also updates and upgrades along with the improving / advancing technology, and wanting to have an online processing of their applications: “Akala namin, magkakaroon ng on-line application.”. These expectations were supported by the clamor these days that the COVID 19 pandemic is up in its surge. To optimize the use of technology, there would be better number of clients reached out and who will in return will be highly appreciative of the office initiatives.

There were significant answers from the majority of clients that the process was just fine and remarked to keep –up the good work. Some clients are requesting from the service providers some updates on the status of the documents they were applying for: “Sana magpadala ng schedule kung kelan makukuha ang dokumento, at sana mapadali ang proseso. Sana sumusunod sa ipinalabas na schedule.” These expectations complement with the publication of Gregory, et.al. (2009) who give reasons to please clients and one of which is to be “ultra-responsive”, which means that when you get a message from client, you get back to them soon and if you cannot respond in details, let them know you have information so that they are not left hanging. Also, “reply to emails promptly”. It is much more effective to reply saying that you received an email and that you will reply as soon as possible than to keep them waiting. Lastly, “be realistic”, do not promise, for it is better to under promise and over deliver than to deliver nothing at all. (Baldassarre, 2015)

Products. In terms of the end- product or the documents that the clients are requesting, majority of them were very satisfied of what they get, particularly on the aspect of the usefulness of the product. In terms of validity of the end product, majority of the clients answered that it exceeded their expectations based on the previous findings while some others said it had just met their expectations. Very minimal number of clients were expecting that the validity period of the documents received will be extended. This is true for those applications on cutting permits, and transport permit especially those who would travel outside the province to bring the wood product. For agricultural and residential patents, it guarantees a lifetime validity, the reason why majority of the clients were satisfied to very satisfied on this.

There were clients whose expectations on the appearance and paper quality were just met or highly exceeded their expectations. However, still some would want it received good, clear, neat and on official paper. Along this line, special paper is suggested to be used in the issuance of cutting permit, transport permit and chainsaw registry which are all under the Forestry Management Services because these are printed only in a white bond paper and can easily be torn and rended.

4. Problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO

This part included the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along personnel, process, and products. The frequency and rank were used in data analysis.

Tables 4-A: Problems Encountered by the Clients on the Frontline Services Along Personnel

Problems	f (n=142)	Rank
1. Difficulty on communication between service provider and the clients i.e. dialect or language barrier.	75	4
2. Inability to provide clear and direct answers to query/ies.	88	3
3. Delayed responses and late accommodation to the Client’s needs.	111	1
4. Aggressive, negative treatment to clients.	62	5
5. Poor competency performance, not well trained.	94	2

Personnel. Table 4-A presents the frequency and rank of the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along personnel. In terms of problems, issues and concerns encountered by the clients on the frontline services of the DENR – PENRO, Sorsogon and its personnel, the clients have checked some of the indicators provided for. It was summarized and answers were ranked according to the number of frequency that the clients ticked and answered. Below is the table providing a clearer picture of what the clients want to achieve and the concerns they needed and wanted to be addressed and resolved. Likewise, the result provided the DENR-PENRO, Sorsogon a list of concerns which they can prioritize and improve to better serve the clients and achieve the expected excellence in the service of the people.

Under these concerns, the indicator that needs immediate action is the “delayed responses and late accommodation to the client’s needs” which got a frequency of 111, ranking as number one (1) among all concerns. Such concern is supported by the previous data on the degree of satisfaction found in the Table 3-A.

There had been a recorded dissatisfaction of clients in terms of “promptness in attending the clients, and openness to receiving comments and feedbacks”. The challenge is for the personnel to learn how to listen well to the clients, open communication effectively, and answer them promptly and there is no reason not to do this because of the technology.

“Poor competency performance, not well trained personnel appeared to be in the second rank, with 88 clients raising this as concern. In the previous pages on client satisfaction report, a suggestion to increase the number of frontline service provider surfaced, and that additional augmentation should also be directly involved with the process, a process owner. Baldassarre (2015) said that to keep your clients satisfied with the services you are offering, service providers must be an authority to the field, an expert that if a client asks anything under the sun he/she is ready to answer.

The existing condition in the front desk is that there is an Officer of the day, and the process owner is on-call from their respective desk. Maybe, some clients were immediately giving their concerns to the officer of the day, and the clients felt disappointed because they have to wait for the process owner to answer them immediately and correctly. This can be correlated to the “inability to provide clear and direct answers to query/ies” which rank 3rd in the list. Ranking on the 4th is the “difficulty on communication between service provider and the clients at frequency of 75. Generally, the frontline service providers are polite towards the clients. Attitude issue and “being aggressive, negative treatment to clients” is not an issue, with frequency of 62, a figure considered on minority among the total number of the clients.

Process: Table 4-B presents the frequency and rank of the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along process

Tables 4-B: Problems Encountered by the Clients on the Frontline Services Along Process

Problems	f (n=142)	Rank
1. Too many steps involved.	101	2
2. Procedures and steps involved are not clear.	91	4.5
3. Not affordable fees and charges collected.	91	4.5
4. Too many documentary requirements to serve as attachment to requests.	96	3
5. Too long to complete one (1) Transaction (1-day transaction).	122	1

In connection with the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along process, primary concern and issue here is the period and

longevity or the turn-around-time involve to complete one (1) transaction process. The existing process requires enough time to complete the whole process

until the product is picked up by the applicant. Some process lasts for 120 days particularly on patent issuances both for agricultural and residential patents. Similarly, for tree cutting permit, it is completed

until approved by the Regional Executive Director in 40 days or would depend on the type of document requested like the chainsaw registration is released within the day and for transport permit, it is released within 3 days. The process involved is guided by Department Administrative Order (DAO), Citizen’s Charter (CC) and Manual of Operations (MOO) of the DENR. The approval of the applications was dependent on the ability of the clients, too to comply and conform with documentary requirements of each process, thus some or majority of the clients experienced dissatisfaction in terms of the length and time requirement to complete one (1) transaction process.

From table 4-B, it appeared that top in the rank or number one (1) issues that needed attention and solution is the “length of processing time to complete one (1) transaction process, second issue/ concern is: “Too many steps involved in the process. This aspect or indicator as shown by 122 clients wanted that the steps involved be reduced and shortened, shown by 101 clients. Next in the rank was: “too many steps documentary requirements with 96% clients on the process with 96 clients and the amount of fees/ charges collected for the processing services ranked 4th and 5th. Products. Table 4-C presents the frequency and percentage of the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along products.

Tables 4-C: Problems Encountered by the Clients on the Frontline Services Along Products

Problems	f (n=142)	Rank
1. Usefulness of the product, not clear and poor paper quality.	64	5
2. Inadequate / irrelevant information were written on the permit, certification, title/patents, etc.	110	3
3. Incomplete information written on the permit, certification, patents, etc.	112	2
4. Clarity of the information written on the permit, certification, title/ patents,	120	1
5. Inappropriate period of validity.	91	4

Relative to the problems encountered by the clients on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO along products, the table showed a picture of the primary concern and the least concern. On top is with reference to the “clarity of the information written on the permit, certification, title/patents” with 120 respondents, and next is referring to the completeness of information written on the permit, certification, patents, etc. with 112 clients-respondents and rank 2. Ranking as number 3 is the aspect on the “inadequacy / relevance of the information written on the permit, certification, title/patents, etc.” with 110 respondents. Issue on validity to some clients should be extended, have 91 client-respondents and ranked 4. In this case, the issue is relevant. This is true to the “validity of transport permit and cutting permits”, wherein some applicants particularly those who will transport products from point of origin to destination, and those seeking for approval of their document, this is an issue because there are cases that their permit expires prior to the transport schedule. In terms of the “usefulness of the product, not clear and poor paper quality of end-product, there were 64 clients who signified that this is least concern. However, it is being recommended that paper quality must be improved and was a suggestion that special paper be used for transport

permit, cutting permit and maybe a quality sticker for the chainsaw registry.

For the Land Management Services, paper quality is highly acceptable to clients. The Certificate of Title or Owners Certificate of Title is a proof of ownership and its validity is for a lifetime, and is transferrable following due process, thus, it is highly appreciated by the clients.

Perez and Ilagan (2020) recommended in their study: to the management of government HEI to consider the problem observed and should take necessary mechanisms to improve the satisfaction of its clients. The same is being claimed by this study that measures for improvement be considered and identified problems and gaps among the frontline service providers or personnel, process and products be addressed and provide necessary mechanism in order that clients achieve a higher degree of satisfaction and exceed expectations.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results, it can be concluded that the frontline services mostly availed by the clients of the DENR-

PENRO Sorsogon is catered under the Protected Area Services hand-in-hand with the Administrative and Support Services. The clients are very satisfied with the personnel on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO. However, they are satisfied with the process and products. The majority of the Clients met their expectations satisfactorily in the three indicators and measures of satisfaction, however, they are expecting still some improvements in terms of personnel, process and products. The clients have encountered varied problems on the frontline services of DENR-PENRO relative to personnel, process, and products. An action plan is proposed in order to improve the client's satisfaction of the frontline services of DENR-PENRO Sorsogon.

This study recommends that to provide a venue where clients can give their feedbacks and suggestions. A suggestion box is recommended to be maintained which is visible and accessible to clients for their comments and suggestions or an on-line link can be provided to the clients, as well. It is being recommended that the DENR-PENRO Sorsogon increase the number of personnel to attend to the client and these personnel must be well trained and oriented with the aspects of the services being applied for by the clients or at least trained to handle inquiries. It is recommended that a review be conducted regularly for updates on policies which will ultimately improve staff-to-client interaction. Also, it is recommended that review of existing documentary requirements be conducted, if possible do away or remove those unnecessary requirements. A review the DENR Manual of Operation and Manual of Authorities be conducted and if necessary update the processes involve in one frontline services for compliance to the "ease of doing business" (RA 1132) and request for the amendment of the process which may be considered in the revision of the Citizen Charter of the Office. A policy: "incomplete or non-conforming application to requirements, no acceptance policy" be issued and posted for guidance to the clients. Notify clients immediately when documents are available for release or when there are lacking documents that clients need to comply. Develop a database to reduce the processing time through automation of existing processes. Clients must submit complete and compliant documents with consideration of the transport vehicle to avoid delay and not affect the validity period. Set proper expectations from clients at the onset of the application so that they are properly guided with the documentary requirements; process steps, processing time, and expected date when the document will be available for pick up. Put up a signage outside the DENR-PENRO Office that displays the flow

chart and documentary requirements. Prevent damage or loss of documents while processing to comply with the requirements on ease of doing business. In terms of products, paper quality be adjusted and improved to a much better appearance.

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