



## KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES TOWARD TOXIC AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES: THE CASE OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN BULACAN, PHILIPPINES

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**Abstract** - Meycauyan City and Marilao in Bulacan, Philippines were listed as two of the most polluted cities in the developing world due to the industrial wastes haphazardly dumped into the Meycauyan, Marilao and Obando River System (MMORS) (Blacksmith Institute, 2007). For decades, these towns were known for beautiful jewelries and fine leathers. However, in recent years, these areas had become the biggest producers of the used lead acid battery (ULAB) in the country and in Southeast Asia. The presence of industries producing poisonous substances is believed to have contributed much to the heavy pollution of toxic materials in these communities and their river systems. This study was conducted to determine the knowledge, attitude and perception of the people in Meycauyan and Marilao towards toxic and hazardous substances present in their respective communities.

A survey using a structured interview schedule was conducted to gather data. Results showed that the respondents were aware of the toxic substances that can harm their community and their environment. Many of them associated their diseases to their exposures to the chemicals and fumes from the industries mentioned. However, they have undecided attitude and perception towards these industries since they recognized the economic benefits of these industries to their families and to the community people as well. While the local government units concerned and other civil society groups have started to work together to address this pressing problem, identifying the knowledge, attitudes and behavior of the community people towards this pressing problem is deemed very important.

*Key words: knowledge, attitude, perception, toxic and hazardous substances*



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