

## ABSTRACT

**DELA TORRE, RUDY MENDOZA**, University of the Philippines in the Visayas, March 2002. Modified Drift Gill Net (*Pakaroy*) Operation in Guimaras Strait: An Analysis of Its Effects to Traditional Fishing Practices.

Special Problem Adviser: Prof. Louise Annette B. Escoto

The study was conducted to determine the effects of *pakaroy* (modified drift gill net) on the operation of traditional fishing gears like *pukot* (gill net) and *labay* (long line), and the acceptability of using *pakaroy* among the fisherfolks in selected fishing communities of the Province of Guimaras. The data were obtained through personal interviews conducted on 24 respondents using a guided questionnaire which was translated to the local dialect.

The results of the study reveal that the majority of the respondents are sustenance fisherfolks, 67% are members of fisherfolk organizations, and 21% have been fishing in Guimaras Strait for more than 10 years. All the respondents own their fishing gears but only eight percent have constructed a *pakaroy*. The study also highlights the fact that 75% of the respondents concede that *pakaroy* is an excellent and very effective fishing gear compared to *pukot* and *labay*. However, 80% say that its operations adversely affect the operations of *pukot* and *labay* in the form of net/hook entanglement (90%) and encroachment of fishing areas of *pukot* and *labay* (11%). There is also the issue on the *pakaroy* destroying fish habitat.

The allegation that it is destructive to fish habitat can be open to dispute – *pakaroy* is operated in areas free of corals to avoid net damage. Furthermore, the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (R.A. 8550) stipulates the three-cm. legal mesh size for nets; *pakaroy* nets are constructed with a mesh size larger than three cm. A strong contention remains, however, in areas where the *pakaroy* drifts into areas where *pukot* or *labay* nets are also operating, specifically in areas without warning devices. Hence, the encroachment issue appears to be a valid one.

Despite the majority's stand that *pakaroy* is destructive to fish habitat and adversely affects the fishing operation of other gears, almost 60% said that they prefer to put up *pakaroy* if given financial assistance. It is safe to conclude that economic considerations largely define the choice of fishing gears. The more effective a fishing gear is, the higher the volumes of fish catch, and the higher the income that will be derived.

A cost-and-return analysis for these three fishing gears can help understand fisherfolks' preference and contribute worthwhile insights that may lead to the formulation of policies with regard to fishing gear operation, as well as to programs to

assist fisherfolks that may be implemented in the future. Also, further research on the actual operation of *pakaroy* must be done to determine the merits or demerits of the contention that it destroys fish habitat. A periodic stock assessment done every five years can serve as a good basis for regulations regarding the issuance of fishery licenses for specific fishing gears to be operated in certain areas. Such regulations will then be embodied in a Municipal Fishery Ordinance. Regulations on the operation of different types of fishing gears can also be given considerations depending on the results of the stock assessment in order to observe the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) as prescribed under Section 8 of R.A. 8550. Zoning ordinances on the proper utilization of the municipal waters can then be promulgated after a thorough and in-depth study of the fishing areas using the results of stock assessment survey.

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