

Strategic Priority 7

Scouting's Profile – strengthening, communications, partnerships and resources



The World Organization of the Scout Movement



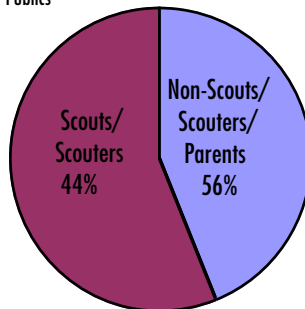
Image of Scouting – Asia-Pacific Region

PROMISING PRACTICES

The Results

The study determined the knowledge and attitudes towards Scouting of 6,258 respondents from two groups of target publics - Scouts/Scouters and non-Scouts/Scouters together with their parents. Respondents were from 16 countries of the Asia-Pacific Region (APR): Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Scouts of China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

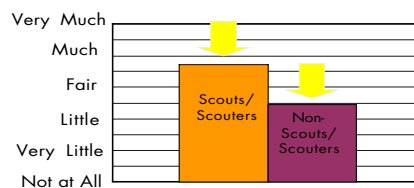
Target Publics



6,258 Total Respondents

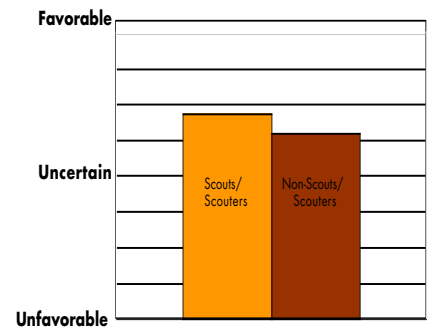
In the countries of the APR, responses about Scouting *knowledge* range from 'Fair' to 'Much' among the Scouts and Scouters. On the other hand, the knowledge of Scouting of non-Scouts/Scouters in each country ranges from 'Little' to 'Fair' with almost equal distribution.

Knowledge of Scouting - in the APR



In general, Scouts/Scouters of the Region have a favourable *attitude* towards Scouting, while non-Scouts/Scouters are less certain about their attitude towards Scouting.

Attitude Towards Scouting in the APR



The study identified that Scouting in APR can be improved or enhanced by the following actions:

1. Introduce higher skills;
2. Promote fun in Scouting;
3. Promote leader image;
4. Promote youth exchange programmes;
5. Create balance in the programme;
6. Improve training and ensure support of adult leaders;
7. Introduce co-education in Scouting.



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In the light of the results of the study, the following recommendations are offered to countries that might find them relevant:

1. Develop a systematic Public Relations (PR) programme under a well organised PR structure:
 - that improves internal and external communication - The advent of computers should facilitate networking among the associations and slowly phase out the slow step-by-step communication from national headquarters to councils, areas, districts, institutions, and finally to the units;
 - that maximizes the use of
 - Scouting and their leaders.
 - Scouting activities and special events, e.g. Jamborees, Moots, exhibition of Scout skills, community development and community service, and less of Scout-marching in parades. Special events are the best means for promoting or rejuvenating Scouting.
 - Sponsoring institutions.
 - traditional (magazines, posters, etc.) and non-traditional media (Internet, multi-media presentations, etc.) in promotional and advertising campaigns that are professionally packaged. Use mass media and interpersonal communication to complement each other.
 - with emphasis on the following specific aspects:
 - General facts about Scouting.
 - Scouting is fun with a purpose.
 - Projecting an image of Scouts who are disciplined, independent and respected.
 - Projecting a wholesome image of Scout leaders who are committed and who practice what they preach
 - targeting specific groups: members of the Movement, potential Scouts/Scouters, school people, parents, companies, stockholders, key people in the community, and financial supporters. After identifying the target groups, select the appropriate media for each target audience.
2. Review the Scouting programme to consider the following key areas:
 - determine its relevance to the needs and interests of today's youth and to society
 - integrate the development of higher skills
 - create a balanced programme to attain the aims of the Movement
 - promote a youth exchange programme
 - maintain the interest of older Scouts
 - develop a new vision, if necessary.
3. Review the adult resources development policy, particularly along the following aspects:
 - improved leader training, specifically on the development of commitment and role-model type of leadership
 - sustained support for adult leaders.
4. Consider incorporating Scouting in the school's extra-curricular activities
5. Re-study the financial requirements to enable a young person to join and stay in the Movement at less expense.

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The Reasons

In recent years, it has been observed that while membership in Scouting has been radically increasing in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific Region, it has been steadily decreasing in highly industrialised countries. There is likewise an observed decrease in public support and a concern for financial instability in the Movement.

Many believe that the prevailing situation is caused by the way Scouting is perceived by society today. There seems to be an apparent change in the attitude and behaviour of the public towards Scouting. Others believe that aside from the change of perception of Scouting, the image of the Movement itself has evolved through time.

The WOSM document "Towards a Strategy for Scouting" (1988) states that although some associations are aware of having an "image" problem, few have done any research to determine where there is a problem, what are its causes, and how the image can be changed, if necessary.

The image study was conducted so that its results might serve as a tool for policy formulation and decision-making in projecting a good image of the Scout Movement through a relevant Public Relations programme, with the end in view of generating more and better public support for it, increasing its membership, and improving its performance.

The World Scout Committee will find this study helpful in its search for the image of Scouting. At least, in the Asia-Pacific Region, the image of Scouting has been empirically defined. Other regions of WOSM and their national associations can also be guided by the APR experience in their quest for their own image of Scouting so that they, too, may be able to plan out their own Public Relations programme more efficiently. It is likewise anticipated that the findings of the research will encourage further studies

on the image of Scouting, how it can be enhanced, and other related concerns. This study may well serve as a benchmark for succeeding studies in the future.

The Methods

With the APR Office as project coordinator, the study involved over 80 people in the Region - consisting of a professional Research Team with active Scouting experience and background, a Survey Team in each country who are mostly volunteers, and the APR Public Relations Committee (1998-2001). The cost effectiveness of this research (US\$3,000) is greatly attributed to the volunteers who carried out the research with enthusiasm and dedication.

The Research Team developed the survey instrument and also interpreted and analysed the data. To administer the survey in the National Scout Organizations, the Survey Team of each country took charge of administering and collecting the questionnaires and then summarising the results. In all, 7,700 questionnaires were sent to the Scout associations and of this 6,258 or 81.28% were retrieved.

Our Learning

On the course of this study, the Asia-Pacific Regional office collected related studies made by a handful of countries. Gists of these studies are cited in the Image of Scouting in the Asia-Pacific Region report published by the regional office. The related studies show that in general, Scouting still enjoys a favourable image, as compared with the other youth organizations in the countries studied.

Our Future Plans

Based on the outcome of the study, the Asia-Pacific Region will:

1. Identify the concerned associations and assist them in their efforts to develop a well-organised PR programme, review their Scouting programme, and review the adult resources development policy.
2. Follow-up this study to determine the impact of specific interventions on membership, performance, and public support to Scouting.

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Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout



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