This study determined the social and economic impacts of road network development along road influenced areas in Laoag City.

The study utilized the descriptive research method using the social survey in gathering data through an interview schedule. There were five sets of interview schedules used in the study (for farmers, fishermen, employees, tricycle/jeepney operators and drivers and businessmen/entrepreneurs). Pre-testing of the instrument was done among households not included in the study but along the road influences areas covered in the study to establish the validity and reliability of the instrument. The instrument was translated in the vernacular to facilitate the conduct of interviews.

Documentary analysis with use of data sheet was also used in the study. To facilitate data collection, two (2) well trained enumerators were hired. Permission to conduct the study in the city and various barangays were taken from the city mayor and barangay chairmen covered by the study. Validation of the respondents’ responses was done by the enumerators and the researcher.

Involved in the study were 364 household who were chosen using the Slovin’s formula and proportionately drawn from the different barangays along the road influenced areas. Households with tricycles/jeepneys, cargo trucks, vans were purposively chosen being the primary road users. The data gathered were tabulated and analyzed using frequencies, means, percentages and t-test.

The results showed that a considerable amount has been spent by Laoag City road network development and majority of the funds came from the city government (LGU) and some national fund counterparts. Significant length/sections of initially unpaved roads has been transformed into Portland cement concrete (PCC) roads. Construction/ improvement of bridges
and culverts has been accomplished which resulted to more efficient mode of transportation by reduced travel time, vehicle maintenance and better travel convenience.

As to the social impacts of the road network development significant changes occurred in terms of access to health and educational facilities/services. Modes of transportation in going to the various facilities shifted from the predominantly walking to the use of vehicles such as tricycle, motorcycle, jeepney/jeep, kuliglig/tractor, etc. generally, travel time going to health and educational facilities were shortened by the road network development.

Further, on the economic impacts to the communities significant changes occurred along various aspects brought about by the road network development. While there was minimal establishment/expansion of business in the road influences areas there was an increase in the social and economic activities in other aspects. There was improvement in the procurement of production inputs/goods/machineries and equipment and in the system of marketing products and commodity exchange. The average monthly or daily incomes of the different respondents (farmers, fishermen, tricycle/jeepney drivers and operators, entrepreneurs) considerably improved.

As a whole, there was a significant positive impact on the social and economic aspects of the lives of people along the road influenced areas resulting to better quality of life.

The road network development is spearheaded by the city government of Laoag. Significant diversity on the modes of transportation in the communities were brought by the road network development. Minimal effects on business expansion along the road influenced was observed, however, it improved the systems of procurement of goods/inputs among entrepreneurs, farmers, fishermen. Better systems of marketing products and commodity exchanges among farmers and fishermen were instituted. As a result of better education brought by increased access to educational facilities employment of beneficiaries was enhanced.

The government (city and national) should increase and continue allocating budget for road network development and road maintenance as this is vital for rural development as supplementary projects (e.g. financial and technical assistance) to increase productivity and efficiency along the road influence areas. Political impacts of road network development should be included in similar studies in the future. The results of this study should be disseminated to the members of the
Sangguniang Panlungsod to motivate them in increasing allotment for road network development and the barangay folks so that they will be more cooperative in safeguarding the road networks.